

## The Right To Refuse Unsafe Work

Thousands of workers die or are injured because of on-the-job accidents each year. Many more are exposed to unhealthy conditions that cause serious illnesses years later.

### When does a worker have the right to refuse dangerous work?

On February 26, 1980, the United States Supreme Court issued a landmark ruling which more clearly defined a worker's right to refuse work where an employee(s) has (have) reasonable apprehension that death or serious injury or illness might occur as a result of performing the work. The unanimous decision came in a 1974 case against Whirlpool Corporation in which two workers refused to crawl out on a screen from which a co-worker had fallen to his death only nine days earlier.

In its decision, the court emphasized that the OSHAct provides a worker with the right to choose not to perform an assigned task due to reasonable apprehension of death or serious injury coupled with a reasonable belief that no less drastic alternative is available. Further, the Court held that a worker who utilizes this OSHAct protection may not be discriminated against for such action.

### In light of the Supreme Court's decision, what should CWA members who are faced with an imminent danger situation do?

The Supreme Court has said that a worker may refuse unsafe work where she/he has refused the job in good faith. Good faith may be interpreted as an honest belief that the job was unsafe and unusually and objectively dangerous.

### Good faith can be demonstrated by the manner by which you refuse unsafe work:

- Explain the hazard to the supervisor and your steward,
- Offer to do other, safe work until the hazard is corrected,
- Give management a chance to respond before doing anything else,
- If the condition isn't corrected, call OSHA and request an "imminent danger" inspection,
- Do not walk off the job. If management won't fix the hazard, force them to take the next step. Make sure you have expressed your reasons for refusing the job and your willingness to do other work, clearly and in the presence of your steward and/or other workers.

### If you're fired or disciplined:

- File a grievance immediately,
- File an unfair labor practice charge with the NLRB immediately but within 180 days, and
- File a Section 11(c) discrimination complaint with OSHA immediately but within 30 days.

The bottom line is to stay cool. Don't let management provoke you into rash action that could hurt your case later.



## LABOR NIGHT AT CAMDEN YARDS

Friday, July 12, 2019 - 7:05PM



## Baltimore Orioles –vs– Tampa Bay Rays

Tickets are \$12.00 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 !!

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Three years ago this week we were returning to our jobs after a 49-day strike that was the most difficult, and yet most successful, of my career. Even after Veri-greedy Verizon cancelled the benefits of our members and their dependants, the great majority of our members not only weathered the storm, but WERE the storm, remaining strong on the picket lines until an equitable three-year contract was negotiated. That contract was set to expire in August of 2019, meaning we would be spending this year conducting strike authorization votes and creating picket schedules, preparing for a possible strike this summer.



Not wanting a repeat of 2016, Verizon approached CWA last year and we negotiated and ratified a four-year contract extension, which won't expire until August, 2023, as you know.

You all know what happened in 2016 and 2018, though, so you probably wonder why I'm recapping it now. **It's because I want to see us strategically use these next four years to our advantage.** Now is not the time to rest on our laurels and forget about our union.

How should we spend our next four years? We should pay down debt and increase our savings, to prepare for whatever the future may hold. Thanks to our 2.5% raise on June 23, a Cable Splicer at top pay will receive an annual increase of over \$2050! No matter what the amount of your raise is, put it to work for you by making extra payments and/or increasing your savings account or 401(k) contributions.

We should also stay connected to our union and our fellow union members. Solidarity isn't a concept that happens every time a contract expires. It should be our daily mantra. Reading the 2108News, emails, texts and newsletters from our International Union and attending monthly Membership Meetings on a regular basis will help you to stay informed about changes taking place within our union and our employers.

Last, but certainly not least, we must actively participate in the process of electing worker-friendly legislators, at all levels of government. We need our elected officials to share our priorities; to view affordable, quality healthcare for all, the creation of good, safe, fairly-compensated jobs for Americans, the protection of our right to join and participate in a union and the right to retire with dignity to be non-negotiable. Voluntary contributions to the CWA Political Action Fund (PAF) through payroll deduction is a painless way to join with other union members to support candidates who share our values. This allows working people to take back power from the 1%, for less money than many spend at Starbucks each week.

Be proud of our past, but be prepared to fight for our future!

In Solidarity,

*Marilyn*

# Changes to Verizon's Tuition Assistance Program

For those of you taking advantage of this CWA negotiated benefit, the Verizon Tuition Assistance Program Administration will be transitioning to a new vendor, GP Strategies, on July 1, 2019. The last day to access the EdAssist Tuition Portal will be June 14<sup>th</sup>. After this day, you will NOT be able to access the tuition portal, which will mean that you will not be able to submit new applications, grades, documentation, update applications or submit reimbursement requests. EdAssist will not be issuing any payments, reimbursements or LOC's during this time.



On July 1<sup>st</sup>, the GP Strategies tuition portal will become available.

If you have not received an approval email from EdAssist relating to your applications, grade submissions or reimbursement requests by June 27<sup>th</sup>, you will need to resubmit your requests to GP Strategies on or after July 1<sup>st</sup>.

## REPAYMENTS

If you are making repayments for your outstanding tuition balance via check or money order, please ensure that your payments are mailed to:

Verizon Tuition Assistance Program – GP Strategies  
P O Box 1770  
Troy, MI 48099

Note: Payments received in the EdAssist lockbox after May 31<sup>st</sup> will continue to be automatically processed by EdAssist through the end of September, but there will be a delay in getting the information updated on your application once everything has transitioned to GP Strategies.

## GRACE PERIOD

Verizon will be providing the following grace period:

- July 15<sup>th</sup> – deadline for submitting applications having a course start date between 6/15 – 6/30
- July 31<sup>st</sup> – deadline for submitting grades, reimbursement requests and receipts for courses having a deadline 6/1 – 6/30
- July 31<sup>st</sup> – deadline for repayment arrangements for Mid-Atlantic and Northeast associates whose 90 day deadline was between 6/1 – 6/30

Note: The grace period does NOT imply or guarantee approval. All information will be reviewed in accordance with the overall TAP guidelines that pertain to your employment with Verizon. As a reminder, courses taken without receiving approval may result in out-of-pocket expenses to you.

## TAP PORTAL ACCESS CHANGES EFFECTIVE JULY 1<sup>ST</sup>

The changes shown below will impact how employees will access their tuition benefit. The Verizon Tuition Assistance home page will be the main access page. Additional communications will be provided as we get closer to July 1<sup>st</sup>.

- All employees who wish to participate in the tuition assistance program will be required to opt-in and provide consent to have their employee date sent to the tuition vendor.
- All employees who are participating in the tuition assistance program will only be able to access the tuition portal via SSO.

For additional information and other TAP benefit changes, please visit the Tuition Program Updates at <https://aboutyou.verizon.com/HRGuidelines/TrainingAndCareer/YourDevelopment/TuitionAssistance>

# Verizon Wage Schedules To Increase on June 23, 2019

CWA Local 2108 has received a number of inquiries about when the next scheduled wage increase will take place at Verizon. The next scheduled wage increase will go into effect on June 23, 2019. A 2.5% increase will be applied to all wage steps in all wage tables of the current collective bargaining agreement.

## 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:

**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)**

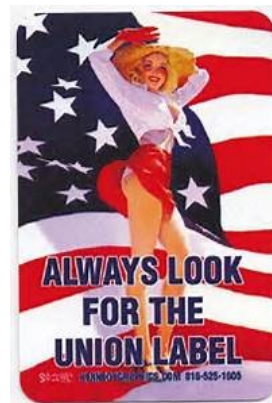
**Red Wing Shoes (UFCW)**

**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.

## RMC 2108 Retirees Corner

For those of us that have been around awhile, you may recall when the "Chained CPI and the Personal Consumption Expenditures Index" had been floated as a gauge that would be used to determine who would be eligible for critical federal support. We retirees should also remember that due in part to our efforts along with the Alliance for Retired Americans, we successfully fought attempts to cut our Social Security benefits using the "Chained CPI" formula.

But like a bad check, the Trump administration is pushing an agenda where we retirees may have to fight the "Chained CPI" again. CWA and the ARA will keep us updated on these proposals that could put many senior programs at risk. There are many proposals that this administration would like to use to lower the Federal Poverty Line and many other basic programs which could have a direct impact on senior citizens. These moves do not require Congressional approval. We should all be prepared to respond to the many actions that will come at us retirees and I predict that the CWA -RMC will be very active in this legislative season. We have proved it before, united, we can win!!

Our RMC luncheon meeting this month will be on June 12, 2019 at 11:00am. Come and join us for an informative meeting and a nice luncheon!!

**Calvin C Foster Jr**  
**President- RMC 2108**


If you have been around the ol' phone factory for any length of time, no doubt you have heard a rumor or two. They spring up like chickweed in your yard and spread like wildfire. Most of the time it's fairly easy to pinpoint where the rumor started, but in the case regarding a substantial buyout package, this rumor has snowballed to all four corners of the Verizon universe with no crumbs to follow to find the culprit who started said prophecy.

We have had calls at the Local wanting to verify the always popular 5&5 offer (that's 5 years of service and age), the "Flat \$250,000 Payout" and of course the always popular negotiated EISP & Special Enhanced EISP packages that the company has always had the ability to offer.

Multiple workgroups have been told, without a doubt by Verizon supervisors, that a package was on the way. The scary part about this scenario is the trusting employee puts the retirement wheels in action while banking on the offer to come down the pike.


Keep this in mind for future buyout rumors. **The company has the requirement to negotiate with the Union any buyout package that is currently not part of the General Agreement.** If a significant offer other than what the company can contractually tender comes into play, the Bargaining Committee would get involved and members would know that negotiations were underway.

At the time **2108News** goes to press, there are no pending ISP, EISP or Special EISP offers nor has there been any correspondence with Verizon regarding any upcoming offers.



**LABOR NIGHT AT  
NATIONALS PARK**

Friday, June 22, 2019 - 7:15PM



**Washington Nationals –vs– Atlanta Braves**

Tickets are \$16.00 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 !!

## Thinking About Retirement?

You may want to check out one of these important workshops presented by **Networth Financial** Group to see if the reality of retirement is on your horizon and get treated to a free meal!!

**Find out how prepared you are for retirement with our Retirement Preparedness Score - RPS**

**Thursday, June 6th @ 6:30 PM - Yellowfin, 2840 Solomon's Island Rd., Edgewater, Md.**

**Saturday, June 29th @ 10:00 AM - CWA Local 2107, 1825 George Ave., Suite 3, Annapolis, Md.**

Reservations are required and to RSVP you may call Networth at (800)-859-2212, or register online at [Networth.net](http://Networth.net). **Space is limited and the workshop is limited to CWA members 55 and older with 15+ years of net credited service and their spouse only.**

### Personals

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

**Michael Coyle**, a retiree who passed away on December 22, 2018.

**Vernon Carter**, a retiree who passed away on February 12, 2019.

**Maria Aragon**, mother of **Margarita Lopez** who passed away on March 6, 2019.

**Harold Herman**, husband of retired member **Aileen Herman** who passed away on March 20, 2019.

**Tynise Hicks-Gladden**, daughter of **Deborah McCracken** who passed away on April 5, 2019.

**Attilio Abate**, a retiree who passed away on April 9, 2019.

**Shannon Tolbert**, son of **Victor Lee Johnson** who passed away on April 10, 2019.

**Kenneth Howard**, a retiree who passed away on April 13, 2019.

**Mike Watson**, a retiree who passed away on April 23, 2019.

**Charles Danny Martin**, a former member who passed away on May 2, 2019.

**Wade "Gunner" Harris**, a retiree who passed away on May 5, 2019.

**Irmgard Stanford**, mother of retired member **Harold Stanford** who passed away on May 17, 2019.

**Michael G. Winston** brother of **Kevin Hockaday** who passed away on May 21, 2019.

**Elizabeth A. Stickel**, mother of District 2-13 Staff Representative **Lisa Fazzini**, who passed away on May 25, 2019.

### Congratulations to


**Donte Christian** on the birth of his daughter, **Phoenix** on April 30, 2019.

### Welcome to Local 2108


#### Transferred Members

<b><u>Teresa Thomas</u></b>	Tracy Jackson	Amanda Miller
Monica Rodriguez	Johnny Jairrels	Michael Moses
Haywood Thrower	Monique Alford	Christopher Worthy
Kiana Johnson	Tonye Andre Martial	Willie Taylor
Darryl Butler	Eric Hatcher	Nadia Meredith
Jorge Felix	Aaron Holden	Andra Bishop

### Congratulations to Recent Retirees:



Mary Dulaney  
Robert W Clark  
Brian K Peters  
Lynn Yankosky  
Sergio Gomez



# CWA Political Action Fund: The Best Investment You'll Ever Make!

There is plenty at stake and you can make a difference!!

It's a simple reality: Everything we win at the bargaining table can be taken away by the state legislature, an act of Congress or the stroke of the President's pen. Wealthy, powerful special interest groups are spending hundreds of millions of dollars trying to do just that in an attempt to silence the voice of working families in our nation.

That's why we've got to use our voice and demand our seat at the table where political decisions are made that affect our lives.



In politics, money matters. Like it or not, campaign contributions are critical to electing friends of working families. As Union members, we will never have the money to match Corporate America. But we have a resource the wealthy special interest can never match – people.

CWA-PAC is the political action committee of the Communications Workers of America. Your voluntary contribution – as little as \$1.00 a week – combined with the donations of thousands of other CWA members, make us a powerful voice.

Your contribution to CWA-PAC makes a difference by help-

ing us:

- Mobilize CWA Members in support of political candidates who support our issues;
- Make campaign contributions to candidates who support working families;
- Inform you and other CWA members about where the candidates stand on the issues, Ensure that when we speak, our elected officials listen and respond.

Politics is not a spectator sport. If we sit on the sidelines, we lose. But this is no game. The consequences involve everything that matters to us, our jobs, our standard of living, our health insurance, our children's education, our retirement security, and so much more.

Invest in your future. Sign up for CWA-PAC by contacting CWA Local 2108 on 301-595-2108 or talk with the Union Stewards in your workplace today.

# Local 2108 Calendar

## JUNE 2019

- 5 Chief Stewards Meeting - 9:30am  
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 12 RMC 2108 Meeting - 11:00am  
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 12 Membership Meeting - 6:00pm  
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 16 Father's Day

### Happy Father's Day



## JULY 2019

- 4 Independence Day  
Local Office Closed



- 10 RMC 2108 Meeting - 11:00am  
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 10 Membership Meeting - 6:00pm  
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 29-31 2019 CWA Bi-Annual Convention  
Las Vegas, NV

### 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 12, 2019, 6:00pm RMC 2108 Meeting - Wednesday, June 12, 2019, 11:00am



10782 Rhode Island Avenue, Beltsville, MD 20705

Web Address: [www.cwalocal2108.org](http://www.cwalocal2108.org)

Local Office: (301) 595-2108 :: Local Fax: (301) 595-2412

Matt Klingman - Vice President

LaTasha Carpenter - Vice President

Johnny Brown - Secretary-Treasurer

Amory Proctor - Executive Vice President

Marilyn Irwin - President

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