

CWA Local 2108 Officer Nominations and Election

Nominations will be conducted at the **October 11, 2017** membership meeting for the positions of President, Executive Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer and the two (2) Vice Presidents. If the October membership meeting is cancelled, nominations will be held at the November membership meeting.

Any member in good standing of Local 2108 may run for office if they wish.

Candidates must be present in order to be nominated. If a candidate cannot be present due to extenuating circumstances a letter of acceptance, written and signed by the candidate, must be presented to **Christopher Smith**, Election Committee Chairperson, prior to the nominations.

Ballots will be mailed on **Friday, October 27, 2017**, and will be picked up from the Post Office and counted on **Friday, November 17, 2017**, beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Nominees may observe the process of assembling and mailing of ballots and the counting of ballots, or may appoint an observer to represent them, provided that individual is a member in good standing of the Local and has a letter from the candidate appointing them as observer. This may not be done on union-paid time.

Any candidate wishing to use the Local's facilities for the purpose of mailing out campaign literature should contact Christopher Smith at the Local on 301.595.2108. As membership list labels are no longer printed, any candidate who wishes to mail campaign literature should forward their envelopes or flyers to the Local. Within four business days the names and addresses of all members in good standing will be imprinted on the material. None of this may be done on union-paid time. Expenses for campaign literature and postage will be borne by the candidate.

Any members needing a duplicate ballot should contact the Local no later than noon on **Thursday, November 9th** to request it.

The election will be handled in accordance with Local 2108 Bylaws, the CWA Constitution and federal regulations. A copy of our Election Committee Rules is available on the Local website (cwalocal2108.org) and will be printed and made available at the September and October membership meetings. Any questions regarding the election should be directed to Election Committee Chairperson Christopher Smith at the Local.



CWA Challenges Verizon Over Planned Launch of New App

On Wednesday, September 20th, the CWA Bargaining Committee met with Verizon Labor Relations to discuss a program Verizon is looking to introduce to "promote a better customer experience" after a technician gets dispatched on an installation or repair.

Once the Technician dispatches to a customer's location, the FiOS APP would automatically send the customer the technician's name, the picture that is associated with that technician's Verizon I.D., the current GPS location of the technician and it would allow two way dialogue between the customer and the technician until arrival. Verizon indicated that a number of service providers like Safelite and Comcast currently employ this technology to improve customer relations.

With so many technicians getting giggered over the years for having electronic devices in the cab of their vehicles, CWA's initial apprehension focused on whether this policy had been changed to accommodate the new technology. Verizon responded that it hadn't and said that those two-way conversations would be intercepted by the DRC if the customer initiated them. They indicated that safety was still paramount while driving a company vehicle and technicians should never be on an electronic device while driving.



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CWA's main concerns revolved around the technician's personal safety and the potential to utilize that technician's name and likeness in a manner that could jeopardize personal information. We pointed out that searches through the internet have become so sophisticated, that with just a name and photo, anyone could generate numerous avenues to track personal information of that technician. And even though they had fallen prey to one of the largest hacking attacks in history, Verizon didn't see that as a potential problem nor did they feel that providing a customer with the technician's current location at the time of dispatch was an issue either.

CWA also expressed concerns about the expanded use of GPS and the potential impact it could play in administering discipline. We demanded bargaining over the planned launch of this new program because we feel this is a change in the term and conditions of employment. Verizon responded that they would consider our concerns and get back to the Union. Please stay in touch with our website (www.cwalocal2108.org) or our Facebook page ([CWA Local 2108](https://www.facebook.com/CWA Local 2108)) for any additional updates.



Are you "WEARING RED" on Thursdays?

Open Enrollment, the opportunity for our members who work for Verizon to choose their 2018 benefits, will take place between October 10th and October 19th this year. Because no action is required if you want to continue your current benefits into next year (assuming the Medical Plan you subscribe to in 2017 is available next year), many of our members don't take the time to thoroughly review their Open Enrollment options any longer. I think this is the perfect time to take stock of all your benefits so you can determine if your coverage is adequate, or if changes are needed. Whether your goal is to increase coverage or to decrease premiums, taking the time to read all of the Open Enrollment literature can help you choose the plan that is best for you and your dependents.



The following comparisons are a small sampling of 2018 rates that I put together to illustrate how your medical choices can save you money:

- The Managed Care Network (MCN) In-Network annual deductible for an employee-only plan is \$150, compared to a \$575 deductible with the Medical Expense Plan (MEP).
- The MCN and MEP employee-only monthly premium (with both the non-tobacco user and completed Health Assessment credits) is the same at \$102. Compare that to the maximum monthly premium for an employee-only plan with the EPO or an HMO option (with no credits for non-tobacco user or completed Health Assessment) at \$211.33 per month.
- Pre-Medicare retirees who retired before 01-01-13 pay \$0/month with the MCN or MEP, while those who retired on/after 01-01-13 pay \$41.69/month. Their monthly premiums are up to \$153, however, if they chose the EPO or an HMO.
- Medicare-Eligible retirees can make choices which will result in significant savings, too. The MCN Advantage Plan (for retiree only and for the family plan) costs \$0/month, compared with an HMO monthly premium of up to \$61 for a retiree only, or up to \$94 for a family plan.

Our plans have changed over the years, and Open Enrollment is the perfect time to review and get familiar with your options. In addition to reviewing your medical plan options and their costs, don't forget to also:

- Review your dependents, and add or remove as appropriate, after reading who can be covered as your dependent in the Summary Plan Description (SPD)
- Assess your Supplemental Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) Insurance. Is it sufficient, or should it be increased?
- Are your beneficiaries for your Life Insurance and AD&D up-to-date?
- If you are unmarried, verify that you have named a beneficiary for your pension or Deferred Vested Pension (DVP), which is earned once you reach five years of service. Should you pass away while still an active employee, your pension benefit would be paid to your estate if you had no beneficiary named. This could have tax consequences and would not allow you to name who that pension money is paid to. (By law, the pension money would be paid to your spouse if you are married.)
- Would a Health Care and/or Dependent Day Care Spending Account save you money? Calculate your yearly expenses, and read about how putting pre-tax dollars into these types of accounts might offer you significant savings, depending on your situation.

Remember that annual enrollment is generally the only time during the year when changes can be made to your benefits coverage, unless you

have a qualified life event such as the birth of a child or marriage. For more than half a century, we, along with the CWA members who preceded us, have fought for the excellent benefits package we enjoy today. Benefits needs are unique to each of us, and very personal. Take the time to learn about all of your options, so you can choose what is best for you and your dependents.

In Solidarity,

Marilyn

By: Matt Klingman - Vice President

Responsibilities

Let's take a moment to discuss responsibilities. It is Verizon's responsibility to issue their employees the equipment we need to perform our jobs safely and correctly. It is our responsibility to take proper care of that equipment, by using it in the proper manner and by securing it to prevent it from being lost, stolen or broken. While it is our responsibility to report any defects in our tools to the company so we can be issued a replacement, it is not our responsibility to use the defective equipment to work unsafely so we can "get the job done" or not be a bother to the boss.

If we do not have the proper tools, equipment and safety gear to perform our jobs safely, it is our responsibility to inform our supervisor of the situation, and to ask for other work to do until and unless a safe work environment can be provided. It is not our responsibility to work unsafely, nor is it our job to purchase our own tools. Our members tell us they can't get their tool requests filled, while Verizon directors say that all tool requests are approved. Which is it? I know there certainly is no reason for this Fortune 15 corporation to purchase tools for us if we are willing to buy them ourselves!

There is another responsibility that I feel we have that I no longer hear Verizon speak about. We "seasoned" employees have a responsibility to look out for our newer members and to bring them along. We shouldn't look the other way when they aren't issued body belts in pole climbing school, and therefore use the belt on whatever truck they are assigned today, even if that belt belongs to someone twice their circumference. We should make sure the new folks know to check the dates on their rubber gloves and hard hat, and when it is appropriate to wear them. We should remind them to never take shortcuts as far as safety is concerned. If they are missing any personal protective equipment, we should march to the supervisor's office with them, and point out to the boss what they need in order to work safely. Not only will this illustrate to the new members that we care and want them to live to go home at the end of the day, they will also learn that you can point out safety issues to the boss without reprisal. That's a true win-win situation, and should set the stage for them to speak up for themselves next time.

In addition to safety, I also think it is our responsibility to teach our newer members what it means to be represented by a union. Remind them not to fall for the old supervisory okey-doke of "Come into my office and let's just talk," to put them at ease so they don't ask for union representation during investigations or disciplinary meetings. Weingarten Rights give our members the legal right to representation during an investigation, and our contract gives us that right during a disciplinary meeting, but in both cases, **we must request the union representation**. The company is under no obligation to offer it. Union stewards tell our members about this during new member orientation, but it's any easy thing for them to forget while they focusing on learning a new job. Supervisors try to limit our interactions with each other by rushing everyone out of the garage each morning, and I know that makes it difficult to talk to and look out for each other. Since we are all still a) employed and b) alive, I bet someone made it their responsibility to take us under their wing and look out for us in years past. Let's make it our responsibility to pay it forward.

On September 18, 2017 Verizon notified CWA they were declaring a "Special EISP" offer in the Potomac Region. Packages were distributed to eligible employees on September 18, 2017. The volunteer period began on September 25, 2017 and will conclude on October 24, 2017. Volunteers whose applications for the Special EISP are accepted will have an off payroll date of November 5, 2017.

Under the terms of this Special EISP offer, employees will receive a "supplemental" voluntary termination bonus of \$40,000, in addition to the \$10,000 voluntary termination bonus. Employees will also receive \$2200 for each year of service up to 40 years and a waiver of age based pension reductions for early commencement. There will also be an acceleration of the next pension band increase.

In CWA Local 2108, all of the affected job titles are located at the Chesapeake Complex. While many different job titles were included in this offer, Consultants and numerous clerical positions made up the majority of the targeted surplus announcement. If you are unsure if your group was included in this "voluntary" surplus, contact CWA Local 2108 on 301-595-2108.

CWA Local 2108 recommends anyone who is considering this Special EISP speak with a financial advisor prior to accepting this package to maximize your retirement portfolio and avoid costly tax penalties. CWA Local 2108 has been working with Networth Financial Services in hosting financial planning seminars throughout the year and would encourage members to utilize these seminars for retirement planning.

Networth Financial Services has scheduled a number of seminars for the month of October for your retirement planning needs. Sign up today to see if this EISP offer is right for you and your family.



COMPLIMENTARY DINNER
FOR CWA MEMBERS AND SPOUSES



Retirement Exploration Workshop

Elks Lodge, 2210 Old Washington Rd, Waldorf
October 4, 2017 - 6:30pm

Retirement Benefits Workshop

Gordon Biersch, 200 E Middle Lane A, Rockville
October 17, 2017 - 6:30pm

Retirement Exploration Workshop

CWA Local 2108, 10786 Rhode Island Ave, Beltsville
October 7, 2017 - 10am

Retirement Exploration Workshop

Ruth's Chris, 301 Severn Ave, Annapolis
October 24, 2017 - 6:30pm

Retirement Benefits Workshop

Ruth's Chris, 1777 Reisterstown, Pikesville
October 26, 2017 - 6:30pm

Seats are limited. RSVP to attend.

Online Registration: www.networth.net/marylanddcvirginia
24-Hour Recording: 800-859-2212

Hosted By: NetWorth Financial Group
Scott Ferguson & Jeff Plesser
Financial Advisors*

Don't Leave the Money on the Table

As a result of contract negotiations in 2012, Verizon established a Health Reimbursement Account for eligible employees in the amount of \$850. A bank card was issued to enable employees to utilize these funds to help offset medical expenses. While many of our members have already utilized these funds, a number of folks have varying amounts still credited to their account.

Upon conclusion of the 2016 contract negotiations, CWA and Verizon agreed that for any employee who maintains a positive balance in his/her HRA account as of December 31, 2017, such amount shall be forfeited. Be sure to use all of the money in your HRA account before the deadlines so you don't lose this negotiated benefit.

If you lost the HRA debit card which was issued in 2013, a new card can be requested by calling the Verizon Benefits Center at 855-489-2367. Questions can be directed to the Verizon Benefits Center on 855-489-2367, to Ines Millard, our Health Care Benefits Coordinator on 888-571-7218, or to the Local office on 301-595-2108.

If you are unsure of your remaining balance, simply logon to:

www.verizon.com/benefitsconnection

Personals

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

Margie Olson, a retired member who died on July 22, 2017.

Betty Irby, a retired member who died on September 1, 2017.

Moe Tremblay, a retired member who died on September 8, 2017.

Linn Tai, father of **Linette Tai-Parks** who died on September 24, 2017.

Congratulations to:

Paul Goldbeck, on the birth of his granddaughter, **Maggie Rae**, born September 7, 2017.

Welcome to Local 2108

New Members

Scot McElroy
Timothy Conway
Matthew Tusing
Terrence Song
Josh Faircloth

Tony Meeks
Ronald Davis, Jr
Stefan T Scott
Mike Foster
Justin Deloatch

Tonie Price
Joel Murray



Congratulations to Recent Retirees:



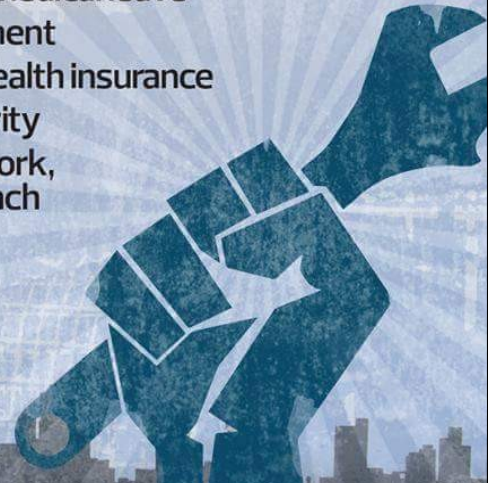
John D Snipes
Jeffery Hines
Rhonda Jones



Union Contributions

Did you know that labor unions made the following 10 things possible?

1. 8-hour workday and 40-hour work week
2. Paid sick leave, holidays and vacations
3. Overtime pay
4. Minimum wage
5. Child labor laws
6. Family and medical leave
7. Unemployment
8. Employer health insurance
9. Social security
10. Breaks at work, including lunch





Support the AFL-CIO Community Services Agency Through the United Way Campaign

The mission of the Community Services Agency is to improve the lives of workers and their families by meeting their human and social services needs; by building diverse coalitions to promote and protect dignity and justice for workers; and by empowering workers and their unions to make their communities better places to live, work, raise a family and retire. Some of the critical services provided by the Community Services Agency are:

Emergency Assistance Fund

CSA raises and spends approximately \$120,000 annually and assists about 350 families with emergency financial needs- prevention of utility cut-offs and evictions, needed prescriptions, transportation so members can keep working, food, child care and other needs. Eligibility criteria apply.

Information and Referral Services

CSA annually refers hundreds of metro area residents to community resources for all kinds of social services assistance.

Lay-off and Strike Preparation and Support for workers and their families

CSA provides assistance preparing for interruption in work and income due to layoff, RIF or strike, as well as help accessing available services.

Educational Workshops for Unions and Their Members

CSA provides information and workshops on a variety of topics including budgeting and financial management, retirement planning, preparing for lay-off and job loss, helping co-workers with substance abuse problems, finding care for aging parents, and other topics of interest to workers.

Please support the Community Services Agency using these Designation Numbers: United Way and DC One Fund

**Campaigns: #8253 * Combined Federal Campaign: #19579
Maryland Charity Campaign: #9320**

Local 2108 Calendar

OCTOBER 2017

- 4 Chief Stewards Meeting - 9:30am
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 4 Finance Committee Meeting - 4:30pm
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 11 RMC 2108 Meeting - 11:00am
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 11 Membership Meeting / CWA 2108 Officer Nominations - 6:00pm
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 27 Officer Election Ballots Mailed
- 31 Halloween

NOVEMBER 2017

- 5 Daylight Savings Time Ends
Set clocks back one hour.
- 8 RMC 2108 Meeting - 11:00am
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 8 Membership Meeting - 6:00pm
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 11 Veterans Day
- 17 Ballots Counted for Officer Elections
- 23-24 Thanksgiving Holiday
Local Office Closed



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, October 11, 2017, 6:00pm RMC 2108 Meeting - Wednesday, October 11, 2017, 11:00am



10782 Rhode Island Avenue, Beltsville, MD 20705

Web Address: 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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LOCAL 2108

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