

NEWSLETTER

Communication Workers of America

108 West Main St.

Sun Prairie, WI 53590

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RETIREMENT TALK

Lately there's a lot of talk going around about employees retiring from Verizon before the Company is sold to Frontier. Much of that talk is generated by the general lack of confidence on the part of those employees that the new Frontier will be able to financially stand up under the huge debt load that they will be servicing. For anyone thinking of retirement and who have a pension based on years of service and age added together, you should keep in mind that "hire date" or "start date" as it is sometimes referred to, means very little. Accredited Service added to your age is the formula used to determine your eligibility. For many employees the Accredited Service Date and the "hire date" are one and the same. But for those employees who had a break in service, were part time for a period or took certain unpaid leaves of absence, the Accredited Service Date and the hire date can be quite different from one another. So if there is any doubt about it, ask before you make your decision so that you have all the facts.

CENTURY LINK SHIFTS HEALTH CARE COSTS TO EMPLOYEES

Century Link (formerly Century Telephone) has just announced to it's employees that they are shifting huge amounts of the health care costs, in the form of premiums, to the employees beginning January 2010. Depending on the type of plan the employee subscribes to the costs are increasing an additional 100\$ a month or more for a full family plan! And what is worse yet, the Company says it plans to do the same thing again next January and increase it by another 100\$. So by January 2011 a family plan could cost the employee over 400\$ a month just for the premium! There are also cost sharing co-pays and deductibles when they use the plan! This has gotten way out of hand! Of course the Company is leaning on the weak excuse that since they merged with Embarq to form Century Link, they have decided to shift to Embarq's cost sharing scheme which is way worse than Century Tel had in place. Way to go Century, move to the plan that costs our members more! I suppose it never occurred to them to give the former Embarq employees a break and let them have the health care for the price our Century members were paying! But it doesn't end there. In areas where the company has non union employees, who do not work near union employees, they are charging the non union employees the higher 400\$ a month fee beginning in January of 2010, those poor devils don't even get a year

to brace themselves. But for the non union employees who work in areas near the union employees the company is giving the one year break that the union employees get. The company wants no part of giving the non union employees any incentive to organize. It's time to encourage all our union brothers and sisters to prepare to walk the line for health care in the 2011 bargaining talks with Century Link!

VERIZON CANS THE POPULAR HMO'S

In a very unpopular move Verizon has decided to not offer the HMO's that had been in the yearly health care offering for years. Now active and retirees will have to choose from a couple of plans (a PPO and an EPO) hand picked by Verizon. It never ceases to amaze me just how non caring corporations like Verizon and Century Link can be. If there was a rug under you they'd be the first to pull it out! So many active and retired employees will be made to find new doctors, clinics and hospitals by 1/1/2010. Thanks for thinking of us Ivan!

NEGOTIATIONS TO BEGIN SOON

Negotiations with Verizon will begin January 7th of 2010 and (hopefully) conclude by January 29th. They will be held in Marion, Ohio. High on the list of priorities are health care and pensions. Big ticket items to say the least. The Bargaining Team (which I am a part of) met in Cincinnati the week of October 12th. We have discovered some insecurities in our retiree health care provisions with regards to the sale to Frontier and we will do everything necessary to mend those while we are at those negotiations. I would ask each and every one of you to be prepared to do your part to support those efforts. Without that, it is unlikely that we will be successful. The Executive Board will be determining the best ways to communicate our progress (or lack of it) to the membership and you are encouraged to access our web site and bulletin boards on a regular basis. Any suggestions that you might have for communications would be welcome. We are also in contract negotiations with the City of Edgerton for the municipal group. VP Jane Snethen is in charge of those. We will be opening bargaining talks with Sun Printing in Wausau in December. VP Snethen, North Area Union Rep Tollison and myself will all have a part in that. Speaking of Wausau, the Local now has a new office. As you recall, our previous office which was located in Sun Prairie, burned to the ground last August. We will now be located in the Labor Temple building in downtown Wausau. New paint and carpet is being installed as we speak! Those items that could be salvaged from the fire are just about ready to be returned to us from the restoration service that we hired. We were fortunate to have adequate insurance coverage to pay for the repairs and replacements.

Happy holidays to all of you and your families. You earned a break be sure to take it this season and enjoy what is to many the best time of the year! Unless you are a turkey or a big buck then it may not be the best time of the year for you!

Yours in Unity,

Mike Oliver CWA Local 4671

In Maryland, Verizon Wants a Sweet Deal at Consumers' Expense

CWAers, community activists, consumer groups and others want the Maryland Public Service Commission to say yes to quality service for Maryland telephone customers and no to Verizon's attempt to avoid service standards for residential customers.

This week in Baltimore, the Maryland PSC held a two-day hearing on whether to accept a deal that would let Verizon continue its record of missed service appointments and delays for Maryland residents and even raise telephone rates.

CWA District 2 Vice President Ron Collins said CWA was working with state officials to require Verizon to meet quality service standards and not agree to a deal that is "good for Verizon but bad for Maryland."

Grievance Report - CWA Local 4671

Status as of November 2, 2009

Century Link

Employee requested union representation at a disciplinary meeting which the company ignored. (Waiting for answer from the first step meeting.)

The company issued a letter of discipline which included a suspension of one day off without pay. (Waiting for answer from the first step meeting.)

Frontier Telephone C.O.

Management employee transferring to craft wanting time bridged for seniority recognition. (Appealed to arbitration.)



Verizon Unit

Employee was terminated for attendance issues. (Received answer, appealed to arbitration for approval.) Call Center.

Salaried non union employees are writing work orders and de-loading cable pairs. Which should be done by union employees. (Appealed to arbitration for approval.) South area.

Employee was wrongly denied the option to bump (displace) a junior employee in the most recent force reduction. (Received answer, will be appealed to arbitration.) North area.

Employees not receiving there overtime meals as outlined in contract. (Has been accepted and approved for arbitration.) Call Center.

Company has failed to maintain Central Office work force, And allow CZT I employees the freedom of movement from job to job. (Waiting for answer from first step meeting.) North Area

Employee was denied access to the hourly staffing process. (Waiting for answer from first step meeting.) North area.

Employee was denied access to the transfer process. (Waiting for answer from first step meeting.) South area.

Employee was denied access to the transfer process. (Waiting for answer from first step meeting.) North area.

Employee was denied access to the transfer process. (Waiting for answer from first step meeting.) North area.

Employee was denied access to the transfer process. (Waiting for answer from first step meeting.) North area.

Employee was terminated for attendance issue. (First step meeting scheduled.) Call center.

Compiled/submitted by Timothy D. Gile, Secretary CWA Local 4671.

Keep us informed. If you move please let us know your new contact information, please send that information to:

Secretary: Timothy D. GileN2856 U.S. Hwy. 12 Humbird, WI. 54746 Home: 715-964-7011

Email: tg-gg@centurytel.net

Call Center Update

In the EVRC we are seeing the transformation taking place of becoming a 14 state operation. Job functions that the Sun Prairie Center was responsible for are in the process of moving to the States that are remaining with Verizon. Our VRRC Offline Dept will be reducing its size due to the Florida VRRC opening up 24/7 and will start doing work that was done in the Sun Prairie Office. The VOICe(Pending Orders) in Sun Prairie has had to reduce by 9 members in the last month now that Florida will be taking over some their job responsibilities. Due to members previously leaving the Repair Dept, the 9 members in the VOICe Dept were able to transfer to Repair and no bump or layoff had to take place.

Edgerton City Members are in the process of bargaining their Contract. Members on the Bargaining Committee are Wendy Loveland, Tom Pennekamp, Kevin Gehrke & Jane Snethen. We have been in contact with the City and will continue bargaining sessions in December.

Have a Safe & Happy Holiday Season.....
Jane Snethen
Vice President/Call Center Area Rep.

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[Obama DOL Wins \\$1.2 Million for Puerto Rico Workers](#)

When a Puerto Rico newspaper publisher raided the union workers' retirement fund, the Bush administration didn't do much. But under President Obama's Labor Department, workers will get most of their money back. DOL lawyers went to U.S. federal court on behalf of the El Vocero workers and won a \$1.28 million settlement that restores most of the funds that were taken, as well as promised employer contributions that were not made between 2003 and 2006.



MILITARY IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS OF CWA LOCAL 4671 DEPLOYED....

The Motion was made by Jane Snethen and 2nd by Tim Gile and voted in favor by the Executive Board regarding any CWA Local 4671 immediate family member that gets deployed overseas, our Local will be sending them a care package. If you have an immediate family member that is serving overseas let your Area Rep. or an Officer of our Local know, so we can send them a package. The package will contain approximately \$25 worth of items but most of all let the service member know that our Local is proud to have them serving our Country.

Membership Meeting Minutes (Highlights only)

Steve Kotel discussed the layoff within Century Link and there was some discussion on this issue. There was also discussion about Century Link's equipment shortages for the techs. Ed Crary asked if a grievance could be written pertaining to safety issues when making a CZT I do the work of a CZT II considering that CZT I's do not have the tools or education that a CZT II has. President Mike Oliver stated that they could meet with Derrick Eastman in order to write a grievance on this issue.

Treasurer Carey Adkins reviewed the budget for 2009-2010. There was some discussion on the budget and east area rep Brian Keller made a motion to accept the budget. This was seconded by south area rep Craig Bartz and the motion passed.

Brian Keller introduced himself and discussed some grievances within Century Link. There was also discussion pertaining to switchmen's work within Verizon.

Steve Kotel had a conference call with health care for Century Link. The \$300.00 monthly family plan will go into effect on January 1, 2010. If a spouse has insurance and the member does not take the spouse's insurance, a \$100.00 surcharge will be charged to the member. If the member is a smoker, the price rises an additional \$80.00/mth.

Vice President Jane Snethen discussed Call Center employees and reductions due to the decrease in call volume.

Vice President Snethen discussed the Edgerton bargaining and that more information will be coming out on this subject.

Craig Bartz discussed the Net Worth and Principal Financial services. These services are available to all members.

Dave Tollison introduced himself and stated that his area represents 5 companies: Century Link, Frontier, Sun Printing, Verizon and L&S Printing. Dave also discussed the BTL and CO techs not being able to transfer to other jobs. There was also discussion on the Frontier unpaid furlough days. The company continues to push this issue.

President Mike Oliver talked about the Verizon bargaining and when and where this will be taking place. Discussion followed among the group following his statement.

