

NEWSLETTER

Communication Workers of America
108 West Main St.
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Got CWA-COPE?

September 10, 2009

Sept. 14 is opening day for CWA's campaign to build participants and contributions to CWA-COPE, our union's political action program.

The message for CWAers: If we're serious about real health care reform, restoring bargaining rights, strengthening our union contracts and building the middle class, we need to be a part of CWA-COPE.

Locals will be going head to head and contacting members to raise additional CWA-COPE funds. Prizes for the winning locals will be announced at the end of the six-week campaign.

Executive Vice President Annie Hill called on locals to remind members that the benefits and gains CWA wins at the bargaining table can be taken away by the actions of national, state and local elected officials. "We won't let that happen," she said.

Stay tuned for updates on the campaign.

Grievance Report - CWA Local 4671

Status as of September 1, 2009

Century Link

There are no outstanding Grievance's at this time.

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. (Waiting for top step answer.) 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. (Received answer, will be appealed to 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 first step meeting.) North Area

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



CWA Local 4671 Scholarship Winners

Dillon Ellner.....Debbie Hunter (Verizon - Antigo - Construction Detailer)
Joshua Susee.....Judy Susee (Verizon - Sun Prairie - VRRRC)
Kevin Higgins.....Keith & Susan Higgins (Verizon - Sun Prairie - Construction/VRRRC)
Katie Marek.....Steve & Lynette Marek (Verizon - Two Rivers - Construction/Engineering)
Adam Bragee.....Ken Bragee (Century - Hixton - Customer Zone Tech)
Mary LaMay.....Mike LaMay (Verizon - Marshfield - Switching Tech)
Tyler Schwartz.....Amy Mundt (Verizon - Sun Prairie - VRRRC)
Travis Ludy.....Brian & Wanda Ludy (Verizon - Sun Prairie - Switching Tech/VRRRC)

Keep us informed

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

Secretary: Timothy D. Gile

N2856 U.S. Hwy. 12 Humbird, WI. 54746

Home: 715-964-7011

Email: tg-gg@centurytel.net

HEALTH CARE - THE NATIONAL DEBATE or "WHO CARES"

For 15 years or more now the issue of out of control health care costs has been the 900 pound gorilla at every bargaining table we've been at with every employer. We are conditioned to settle for peanuts in real wage increases for fear of losing our "health care". And still nothing is accomplished that would reign in the spiraling costs. And it will continue in that way for the foreseeable future. Why? Because politicians, while they love to run campaigns based on health care, in actuality care little for really solving the problem.

The politicians on the Republican side have never really been interested in making health care changes. After all, most of them have their health care needs met, at the expense of the taxpayers. And let's not forget that they are for the most part in the pockets of the health insurance interests and the drug companies. They would sacrifice that which would benefit all of us for the sake of protecting their re-election coffers. So that leaves us with our "friends" the Democrats. Where did they disappear to all of a sudden. For years they told us "we need to be in the majority" then we can get it done! Well? Voters all across this country showed up by the millions and handed the democrats both Houses of Congress and the White House. So we should be able to expect some positive changes. Right? Not so far. Apparently the democrats have lost their nerve (if they ever had any) to make the changes! The Republicans in congress are happy to do nothing, hoping that the efforts by the democrats will fail, that it will be perceived as Obama's failure and then they will use it to bash him in the next presidential election. The second they are out of power their collective action is all designed to get them back in power and if abandoning us is what it takes then they will do that without a second thought.



The Democrats, on the other hand, are frozen with fear. Fear that whatever they do will be scorned by the knee jerk reactionary groups and they too will then suffer at the next election. It seems to be all about who's in power, who's not, and how to reverse your fortunes or keep it as is, depending on if you are on the inside or outside of the power structure.

So we can expect rising, out of control, health care costs to plague us at the next round of negotiations once again. The really sad part of it all is that health care costs are bankrupting our nation, one employer at a time. If it doesn't change and change soon, no one will win the game, neither Democrat or Republican, liberal or conservative. We spend 18% of our national wealth on health care costs. (More than any other country on the planet) Health care that only serves about 50% of the population. Wouldn't you think we could do better than that? I certainly do. Make your sound, take a stand, be you a democrat or a republican. Contact your representative and demand that he or she act to save our health care right now!

NEGOTIATIONS AT VERIZON SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER

This year's bargaining team will consist of 5 union members from the 5 state region. I will be representing the Wisconsin contingent. Our District 4 Staff Rep, Hetty Scofield, will be assisting us. We are scheduled to begin November 30, go for two weeks, break for Christmas and then resume again the first work day in January. Exactly where the negotiations will take place has not been completely worked out yet. The Union bargaining committee will be meeting the week of October 17th in Cincinnati to put together our bargaining proposals based on the surveys we have been getting back from all the members in CWA District 4. I have been tabulating the results of those surveys from Wisconsin union members and health care and job security, i.e.; the sale to Frontier, are top priorities according to those who have sent their surveys in. Unfortunately, information about the proposed sell out to Frontier is slow in developing. Both companies are currently hiding behind a so called "quiet period" and will not come out for constructive dialog until we drag them out. Both unions, the CWA and the IBEW continue their fight against the sale as it is proposed right now. For the most part both companies have told us to wait and see, be calm, it will be OK. You don't believe either company's propaganda and neither do I. The corporate big shots at Verizon could care less how it turns out for you and I. Doing what's good for themselves is all they are concerned with. It's never really been any different than that. It's just that Ivan never found anyone so foolish or desperate as Frontier so he could never act on his long held dream of ejecting the core wire line business from his orbit! Our futures stand in the balance and right now it does not look very good. We are being sold by a company that doesn't want us, to a company that can't afford us. The fight continues. Be it 18 months after the sale or 3 years after, Frontier has no intention of continuing our benefit stream as it exists today. We will be left to band together to do what is right for us. We can't count on Verizon or Frontier to do it.

Get involved, get informed, get ready.

Yours in the Union,

Mike Oliver



Membership Meeting Minutes

CWA Local 4671

September 1, 2009

Call To Order

President Mike Oliver called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Victorian Village in Elkhart Lake, WI.

Minutes

Secretary Tim Gile took roll call. All executive board members were present except for Carey Adkins.

Secretary Tim Gile gave the grievance report. President Mike Oliver discussed some of the grievances more specifically. Secretary Tim Gile discussed the resolution that was passed by the executive board pertaining to retirees coming back as contractors. Ann McNeary said that we should change the resolution to include Local 4672 and 4675 for retirees.

Craig Bartz gave a report on 2 BSW Techs taking lineman jobs. One moved to Plymouth and the other went to Sun Prairie.

Dave Tollison spoke about the Sun Printing contract being due in December. He also talked about the BTL members. He doesn't know if they will be going to Frontier.

Dave spoke about Frontier Telephone holding a meeting. They were asked to vote on taking 12 unpaid furlough days per year. The vote did not pass.

Dave spoke about retirees returning as contractors. He stated that he was not in favor of this.

Brian Keller talked about the splicer job. Randy Gillam said that he has to test Thursday and that he called Bob Burger and talked to him about job testing. There was discussion on jobs and Job Line.

It was suggested that the Local get the voice portal information added to the bulletin boards.

There was discussion on when contracts are due.

Members also talked about I&R having too much drive time

Steve Kotel has the seniority list and will get it to the executive board.

There was discussion about Century Link and their layoffs. Steve Kotel spoke about working conditions within Century Link. Some buildings are rat infested pig sties and that union members shouldn't have to accept this.

President Mike Oliver told the members that the Local office in Sun Prairie burned to the ground recently. Some of the board has met with the insurance company.

(MEMBER MINUTES CONT.)

The Local is currently looking for a new office or there will be a forthcoming discussion on the possibility of not replacing the lost office.

Vice President Jane Snethen gave the financial report. This report was accepted as read.

Jane also spoke about the Voice department having a surplus of 10 people. The company wants to send them to the repair side of the house. Some of these job functions are being moved to other states. Jane feels that this is because of the preparation of the Frontier purchase.

Jane stated that the Edgerton contract is up in December and that bargaining will begin in December.

President Mike Oliver talked about bargaining contracts and that the Verizon contract will begin bargaining at the end of the year. A survey has been mailed out to employees. President Oliver also mentioned that he doesn't feel that Frontier Telephone will tamper with the negotiations. There followed a fair amount of discussion on this issue. Mark Hess asked what states were involved with the sale. President Oliver replied that there are 14 states. Bob Kleinhans asked about retirement and when would be a good time to go and would the company give some kind of notice when the sale will be finalized. President Oliver stated that no one needs to panic and that information will be coming out. There was also a lot of discussion on line loss. A lot of customers are getting rid of their land lines and sticking solely with a cell phone. Bob Kleinhans stated that Verizon is putting fiber to all their cell towers. He feels that Verizon is doing this to steal back customers after they sell everything to Frontier.

Jay Graff spoke about an employee being disciplined for having mud on his shoes in a customer's home. Jay didn't know all the facts yet but stated that a grievance may be written in the future. Jay asked Secretary Tim Gile if he had digital copies of the grievance report. Tim replied that he would email all the necessary forms that he needs.

Dick Endsley asked President Mike Oliver if a grievance could be written in order to get his credited service date back. President Oliver stated that he would make an attempt but didn't know how far this would go.

Adjournment

Randy Gillam made a motion for adjournment at 9:20 p.m. This was seconded by Tom McCarty. The meeting was adjourned.

The Local received a Thank you note from scholarship winner Katie Marek Daughter of Steve and Lynette Marek Verizon Two Rivers she will be attending University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee. Good Luck Katie

