

Local 2001

AFL-CIO AFFILIATE



Advisor

VOLUME 49, NUMBER 3

JULY 2009

COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA

THE BIG SELL OUT

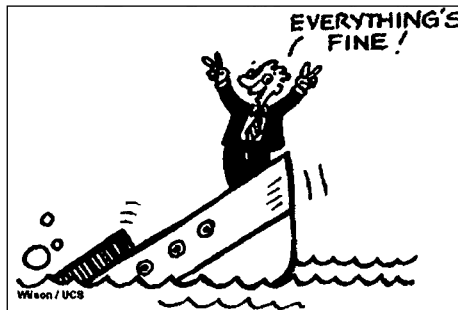
Verizon announced on May 13, plans to sell its wireline, long distance and broadband assets in 14 states, including West Virginia, for \$8.6 billion to Frontier Communications. Frontier will give Verizon shareholders \$5.3 billion in Frontier stock and give Verizon 3.3 billion in cash. Frontier is the same company we told you about in the April 2009 CWA Advisor that requested its employees take 12 unpaid days a year due to the negative current economic conditions and the need to generate company savings to avoid lay offs. Now, less than a month later they have billions to buy Verizon? This is a bad deal for Verizon and Frontier employees, WV consumers and our state.

No prior hint of a possible sell off or potential buyer had been made. The news was shocking to all of us that day. The phones rang off the hook at the union hall. What were we going to do? Concerns for our jobs, our benefits, our retirement, our future, were voiced by CWA members throughout West Virginia, especially when you consider the demise of other recent sell offs. Hawaiian Telcom bought assets from Verizon in 2005 and is now in bankruptcy. FairPoint Communications and Verizon had a similar deal in 2008. FairPoint has now hired a financial advisor to evaluate the company's financial situation and explore "restructuring" of its debt, an action viewed by many as a precursor to bankruptcy. Also, Idearc, the yellow pages company Verizon spun off in 2006, is in bankruptcy. Yes, we have reason to be concerned.

Verizon's message to its aban-

doned employees and customers is all is well, don't worry, everything is fine.

It may be for them when you consider the tax free transaction known as the Reverse Morris Trust that Verizon utilizes when it spins off its wireline companies. This enables Verizon to avoid paying taxes on the 3.3 BILLION cash part of the deal. CWA President Larry Cohen defined the Reverse Morris Trust



as "Corporate greed at its worst. Its obscene when a corporation is permitted to pocket billions of dollars tax free in a deal that will erode essential telephone and internet service to millions of customers and stifle investment and job creation." Those remarks were made prior to the finalizing of the FairPoint deal. Verizon told those employees and customers all would be well also.

Back to, what are WE going to do? The WE can not be referenced as "the Union." YOU are the Union. So when referencing WE, this means all of us. WE need to be willing to participate in efforts to STOP THE SALE. Whether it is writing a letter to your elected representative, and the PSC or informational picketing, WE need to be involved. CWA Local 2001 has created a committee, "STOP THE SALE". STS Commit-

tee members are Mike Smith, Dorothy Wilson, Ken Williams and Anita Atkinson. The purpose of the committee is to gather, share and implement ideas that can be instrumental in our fight. This is only the beginning of the STS committee. We want activists, volunteers (yes you,) our members to be the heart of the committee. This effort has to be bigger than a four person team. Check the local website, www.cwa2001.org for updates and new information. Also, check your union bulletin boards at work. CWA is committed to providing factual information. Unless we can provide factual answers, we may not be able to give you an answer right away.

Completion of the "spin off" is expected to take approximately twelve months. Approval is required through the Federal Communications Commission and state regulatory agencies such as the Public Service Commission. CWA has filed to intervene in the PSC proceedings, and will be filing to intervene in the FCC proceedings.

Approximately 8000 CWA and IBEW union members will be affected throughout the fourteen states. CWA District 2 Vice President Ron Collins, and staff members, Elaine Harris and Linda Miller, have already taken active roles with Union Presidents and Officers throughout the state, providing leadership and direction. Ron will be in West Virginia frequently to help with our efforts to stop the sale.

WE have a lot of work to do. WE have a major challenge ahead of us. WE must work together for the benefit of all.

EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT ELECTION RESULTS

The election committee tabulated ballots June 6th for the recent Executive Vice President election. The EVP office was vacated as a result of Linda Miller accepting a CWA Staff Representative position and Lee Perry filling the vacant President position. Under CWA Local 2001 bylaws, the Executive Vice President succeeds the office of President for the unexpired term in the event the office becomes vacant.

Number of eligible voters:	1008
Total number of ballots printed:	1025
Number of voted ballots:	284
Number of spoiled ballots:	1
Number of duplicates:	2
Number of challenged ballots:	4
Number of unused ballots:	15

Candidate	Votes
Ken "Mister" Williams	248
Biff Larch	31

LETHA "LEE" PERRY CWA LOCAL 2001 NEW PRESIDENT

Lee Perry, CWA 2001's previous Executive Vice-president, has assumed the President's role upon Linda Miller's acceptance of a CWA Staff Representative position.

Lee has served our members with dedication during her tenure as EVP, treasurer, member of the executive board, and

was previously branded a "rowdy" job steward by the company. The position of President will allow her to continue this commitment to our members. Lee's knowledge of our issues, her ability and willingness to defend our members are traits vital to this office. Congratulations Lee!

CONGRATULATIONS KEN WILLIAMS

Ken Williams is the new CWA Local 2001 Executive Vice-President. Ken fills the EVP position vacancy created when Lee Perry assumed the role of President.

Ken serves our local as a job steward, chairperson of the Orga-

nizing Committee, and previously as an executive board member. As a CWA member, Ken is a Verizon lineman working out of the Rock Branch storeroom.

We know Ken will continue to serve our members with his

Communications Workers of America AFL-CIO Local 2001 Advisor Published Monthly by CWA Local 2001	
Letha "Lee" Perry.....	President
Ken Williams.....	Executive Vice-President
Delinda Johnson.....	Treasurer
Robin Young.....	Recording Secretary
Anita Atkins.....	Vice-President
Brian Breitreutz.....	Vice-President
Burma Lawson.....	Vice-President
Mike Smith.....	Vice-President
Dorothy Wilson.....	Vice-President
Vacant.....	Vice-President
Delinda Johnson.....	Editor
Circulation.....	1100
Robin Young.....	Legislative Committee
Burma Lawson.....	Education Committee
Mary Aliff.....	Union Labels Committee
Vacant.....	Community Services Committee
Robin Young.....	Safety Committee
Kenny Williams.....	Organizing Committee
Elwood Brown.....	Golden Age Club
Norm Connard.....	Audit Committee
Anita Atkinson.....	Entertainment Committee
Michael Walker.....	Civil Rights & Equity Committee
Dorothy Wilson.....	Women's Concern Committee
Debby Burdette.....	Election Committee
Anita Atkinson.....	Mobilization Committee

Some Information from articles in this newsletter were obtained from the CWA website (www.cwa-union.org) or from other union newsletters.

Visit your Local's website www.cwa2001.org

knowledge, enthusiasm and loyalty. Prior to becoming a CWA member Ken was a member of UMWA. Ken has a strong belief in the union and its crucial role in rebuilding middle class in America. Congratulations Ken!

CWA DISTRICT 2 VP RON COLLINS VISITS WEST VIRGINIA

Ron Collins, CWA District 2 Vice President, visited West Virginia recently. Ron spent time at different Locals throughout the state during his week long stay, gathering and sharing information and strategies regarding Verizon's proposed sale of West Virginia's landlines to Frontier Communications. On Tuesday, June 16, Ron was at 1500 MacCorkle Avenue bright and early to spend a few minutes with members on their way to work. The following evening, a special meeting with Ron and the Assistant to District 2 VP, Jimmy Tarlau, was held at Local 2001's Union Hall. We welcomed members from Huntington's CWA Local 2009 to the meeting also.

Ron shared projected time

lines and different phases of the proposed sale, along with CWA's plans to fight the sale. Ron was able to secure a nearly \$1 million budget to support our fight and has made this a top priority for District 2. Verizon has filed with the Federal Communications Commission and requested an expedited process. CWA has asked for an extensive comprehensive review and will file to intervene. Verizon has also filed with the West Virginia Public Service Commission. CWA has filed to intervene in the PSC proceedings.

CWA has engaged a team of professionals to help in the fight but the most important people in this fight are our members. It is imperative that members step up and do their part. You

know the saying "put your money where your mouth is"; well it's time to "put your mouth where your money is."

If you are asked to write a letter, then write a letter. If you are asked to call elected representatives or do hand outs or informational picketing then do it. This is not the time to be timid or too busy. These are our jobs, our benefits, our future and most definitely worth fighting for. Contact one of your STOP THE SALE committee members or call the union hall and add your name to the list of people who are going to take a stand, speak out and be active in this effort to preserve our jobs.

Will we be successful? We will never know if we don't try. There is a lot at stake!

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

Michael Evans, son of Brian Evans CWA member and consultant in the Verizon Customer Financial Services Group, is the 2009 CWA Local 2001 Community Services Scholarship Winner.

Michael wrote his essay on Labor and will put the \$500 scholarship to good use while attending WVU.

Each year CWA Local 2001 Community Services Committee makes available a \$500

scholarship to any member in good standing, their children, or legal ward. Scholarship applications and essays are accepted each spring.

Congratulations to Michael and good luck at WVU!

CWA ANNUAL PICNIC

Mark your calendar! Local 2001's annual picnic will be held August 16th at Shawnee Park in Dunbar, Shelters 2 and 3, from 1p – 5p. Music will be provided by DJ Jeff Woody. Bring the children! They are sure to have fun with the inflatable bouncer and slide, plus the little ones always enjoy the face painting. Hope to see everyone on Sunday, August 16th.



EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT (EFCA)

Workers must be able to bargain, not borrow their way to a better life...

Serious discussions to design a meaningful Employee Free Choice Act which can pass the Senate continue. Unions and allies are conferring with their Representatives.

Wednesday, June 24th, was a lobby day with 2,500 delegates seeking support for the Employee Free Choice Act and other CWA priority issues.

Support for EFCA is also coming from the business world, the latest sign that many voices in the business community think that the right to organize is good

for the economy. A group of responsible investors has endorsed the Employee Free Choice Act. The investors, who manage over \$372 billion in assets, delivered a letter to Congress saying that the "current workplace laws regarding worker organizing and unionization unacceptably tilt towards the employer."

"As investors, we understand that constructive and positive labor relations are essential for improving corporate performance, efficiency and workplace safety" and "believe that the proposed

legislation would help balance the relationship between worker and employer in the U.S."

The investors' coalition joins other business voices in recognizing that the Employee Free Choice Act is good for workers, business and society at large. Managing director of Domini Social Investments, Adam Kanzer, noted in an interview, "The business community has come out really aggressively against this bill, but not all businesses of investors are unified in their thinking."

WOMEN'S CONCERNS COMMITTEE SCHOLARSHIP

The Women's Concerns Committee will be accepting essays for the annual scholarship now through Tuesday, August 4, 2009. The subject for this year's essay is "The Stimulus Package, Buy American", and must total no less than 500 words. Competing essays will be judged by an independent panel and the winner of the \$500 scholarship will be notified by August 12. The award check will be payable to the scholarship winner's school.

All members, their children or

legal wards of members in good standing of CWA Local 2001 are eligible to compete. Also eligible are the children of legal wards of disabled, retired or deceased members who were in good standing of Local 2001 at the time of retirement or death.

Applications are available by calling the local at 344-2001. Please return the application and essay to the local by August 4, 2009. It may be mailed to or dropped by the local office at 2512 Kanawha Boulevard E, Charleston.

AFL-CIO RALLY

The AFL-CIO is sponsoring a rally for West Virginia's working people at the West Virginia State Capital Sunday August 2nd, from 1pm - 5pm.

Join us for free hotdogs and drinks plus entertainment for all. There will be games for the children also. Guest speakers will be Rich Trumka, Secretary-Treasurer of the AFL-CIO, and Stewart Acuff, special assistant to AFL-CIO President John Sweeney and spearhead of the Employee Free Choice Act effort.

We encourage everyone to come out and enjoy the afternoon with their union brothers and sisters.

HEALTH CARE RALLY

As legislation is moving through the House and Senate chambers, CWA Local 2001 showed a strong presence joining with thousands of others in Washington, DC for our nation's largest-ever health care rally. This rally coincided with the conclusion of

the CWA 2009 Convention and Legislative Political Conference which was held June 22-25 in Washington, DC.

CWA has identified four vital areas to health care reform:

- Benefits should not be taxed
- Retirees must be protected

- Choice of private or public insurance plans
 - Every employer must pay
- Meetings were held with elected officials and key leaders in the Obama Administration on issues important to working people and families.

TENTATIVE AGREEMENT REACHED AT AVAYA

CWA reached a tentative agreement with Avaya that protects health care benefits for active and retired workers, increases wages, and meets other critical bargaining goals.

After the Avaya contract expired May 23, 2009, CWA's bargaining team stood firm against management's demands for cutbacks and concessions, particularly in health care. Because of

support for the bargaining team from the members, including an over 90% strike authorization vote, and mobilization efforts, a successful tentative agreement was reached on June 3, 2009.

The three-year agreement covers more than 1,500 CWA represented workers, maintains health care benefits for workers and retirees. The agreement also provides a \$1250 lump

sum in the first year and wage increases of 2.75% in the second and third contract years. Other improvements include a 4% pension increase for active workers and job security gains, including a no-layoff pledge for workers in all job titles for 9 months.

Ratification ballots will go out shortly and the results will be tabulated by July 22, 2009.

GOLDEN AGE CLUB NEWS

This information has been in our newsletter before, but is worth reprinting as we have many new and many soon-to-be retirees. The goal of CWA Retiree Chapters is to provide a forum for members to air their concerns and share information. The Retired Members' Council focuses on critical issues facing retirees. Through

the Council, CWA retirees have input into key retiree programs as they are shaped through contract negotiations and/or legislation. The Retired Members' Council works to safeguard and enhance its members' retirement in many ways, such as: monitoring company pensions and health care policies; tracking national legislation affecting

CWA retired members; monitoring federal, state, and local politicians and legislation in support of members' goals and interests; and representing retired members' concerns and issues with CWA bargaining councils before and during contract negotiations. Visit www.cwa-union.org/rmc to learn more.

NLRB NOMINEES PRO-WORKER

President Obama's nomination of two new members to the National Labor Relations Board finally restores fairness for workers.

The nominees – Mark Pearce and Craig Becker – have years of experience in advocating for and defending workers' rights. The nominations must be confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

Once confirmed, Pearce and Becker will join board member Wilma Liebman, a longtime supporter of workers' organizing and bargaining rights. The Board's other member, Peter Carey Schaumber, was appointed by former President Bush. One position remains vacant and will be filled with a Republican member.

NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING

THURSDAY, July 9TH, 2009

7:00 PM

2512 KANAWHA BLVD., EAST

CWA LOCAL 2001

UNION OFFICE

You can contact us at

cwa2001newsletter@verizon.net

**EMPLOYEE
FREE
CHOICE
ACT**

It will take every one of us.

It will be worth it.

Get involved.

Sympathy

The officers and members of CWA Local 2001 would like to extend their heartfelt sympathy to these members in their loss of a loved one and a prayer that God will be with them to give the strength and courage to meet each new tomorrow.

Leila Hodges – Loss of Grandmother

Diana White – Loss of Mother

Richard White – Loss of Mother-in-Law

Mitzi Richmond – Loss of Grandmother

Becky Combs – Loss of Mother

Laura Beard – Loss of Mother

AFT CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

CWA Local 2001 members with American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Staff began contract negotiations on June 29, 2009. Elaine Harris, CWA International Representative, Letha Perry, President

CWA Local 2001 and Sid Fragale, CWA-AFT Staff member, served as the bargaining committee. A tentative agreement has been reached. The contract expired June 30, 2009.

PENSION BAND INCREASE

Effective October 1, 2009, the contractually negotiated increase in the pension bands will be 3.5%.

**SAVE THE DATE!
AUGUST 16, 2009
CWA Local 2001 ANNUAL PICNIC
Shawnee Park, Institute
Additional details on page 3.**

**Remember Your
CWA Dress Code:
Wear Red on
Thursdays**

**LOCAL 2001, C.W.A.
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