

The Contactor

The Union for the Information Age

Published monthly by



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AFL-CIO, CLC**

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Rallies at AT&T - Supporting a Fair Contract for AT&T Video and AT&T Internet Services

Rally at One Bell Center



Thank you to everyone who came out to all of the rallies at One AT&T Center (left), 330 North Florissant (below), and AT&T - ASI (not pictured). Our Brothers and Sisters in the Video and Internet Services departments are still working without a contract (since August 2007).

Its up to us to show AT&T that we mean business. All members deserve a fair contract, whether it be Video & Internet Services now, or the AT&T Southwest contact expiring in April 2009. More rallies will be coming up. Check with your Local Steward or contact the Local office at 314-576-6310 for more information. We look forward to seeing you there!

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Rally at 330 North Florissant



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

-BY TONY ELLEBRACHT

Many of you have heard, read, or participated in the mobilization against AT&T. Video and Internet Services members have been working without a contract since August 2007. Those members overwhelmingly voted down an attentive agreement. The company proposal included major takeaways in health care coverage. I have included the AT&T Medical plan (National Alternative Provisions - see table below)

This fight is not just those few who work for Video Services or Internet Services, it's a fight for all of us, active and retired. AT&T management has shown the unwillingness to make any changes because CWA suspects this will be the foundation of the medical plan that will be offered in 2009 bargaining for the core contract.

AT&T isn't the only company that is changing the way they provide health care for their members. CenturyTel is making changes in 2008. That is the result of the current contract. CWA will enter into

bargaining with CenturyTel in 2008.

I am asking everyone to check and find out when the next mobilization rally is taking place. CWA has been doing a rally at different AT&T locations in the area for the last couple of weeks to protest the company wanting it's employees and CWA members to start paying a part of their health care.



Tony Ellebracht—President

Plan	AT&T Medical Plan (National Internet Alternative Provisions)				
Contributions	Individual: 7% Dependent: 11%				
Deductible	Individual + 1 Family	Network Deductible		Maximums	
		1% of base wages		\$500	
		2% of base wages		\$1,000	
		3% of base wages		\$1,500	
	A 10% co-insurance payment applies once the deductible has been met.				
Out-of-Pocket Maximums (OOP)		Employees who earn \$50,000 or less a year		Employees who earn more than \$50,000	
	Individual + 1 Family	Network	Maximum	Network	Maximum
		4%	\$2,000	4%	\$2,750
		6%	\$3,000	6%	\$4,125
		8%	\$4,000	8%	\$5,500
Prescription Drug Copays	Retail - Network Copays* (Up to 30-day supply, limited to 2 fills for Maintenance.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generic: \$8 • Formulary: \$17 • Non-Formulary: \$35 Mail Order Copays* (Up to 90-day supply) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generic: \$17 • Formulary: \$35 • Non-Formulary: \$70 				
	*Note: Copay escalators do not apply.				

** Both plans provide preventative/wellness coverage at no cost.

Photos from the United Way Care Fair at AT&T - ASI



Thank you to everyone that came out to support the United Way. With your help, we will once again show that Union Members come out to support the community. With your United Way pledges AT&T employees will once again be one of the largest United Way contributors in the nation. A special thank you to everyone that worked and volunteered to help with this event!

Good & Welfare

Deaths

Peter Bishop - Grandfather
 Lisa Ann Colbert - Father-In-Law
 Natalie Courland - Aunt
 LaTonya Dillingham-Phipps - Aunt
 Sabrina Frey - Grandmother
 Michelle Harris - Aunt
 Kai Henderson - Aunt
 Charles Manges - Member
 Jerry Repovich - Aunt & Mother-In-Law
 Bill Richard - Grandfather
 Abralyn Smith - Uncle
 Dale Troske - Member

Retirements

Kara Brown - 30 years
 Patricia Guerin - 25 years
 George Hasekamp - 37 years
 Ruth McPherson - 25 years
 Christopher Morgan - 30 years
 Gerald Wellen - 41 years

Letters

I'd like to thank my fellow brothers and sisters for allowing me to attend the Organizing Institute in Kansas City October 6-7th. I found the class to be very informative, energetic and a must attend for anyone involved in union organizing. I'm looking forward to putting

Mobilization at AT&T

By Sonja Gholston-Byrd, Mobilization Chair

I would like to thank everyone that participated in the informational pickets held on October 4, 2007 at One AT&T Center and ASI. I had the opportunity to walk with our brothers and sisters of ASI and there were many familiar faces, as well as new ones. Between the two locations we had close to a hundred or more members marching. It is our hope to have more members on the line at future events. A "NOON Informational Rally" was also scheduled on **THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2007 AT 330 NORTH FLORISSANT.**

The purpose of last week's march as well as Thursdays, was to show AT&T that the proposed offers made at the AT&T Video Services and AT&T Internet Services bargaining is **TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE**. Since August 25th our members have been working without a contract. This is due to substantial increases to members' healthcare cost, the demand of a two-tier pension and the elimination of the lump sum pension.

We picket now because this is an **INSULT TO ALL MEMBERS!** AT&T has forgotten that *WE* built this company into the largest and richest telecommunications corporation that it is today, **not once but TWICE!** To draw attention to fact that AT&T is bargaining unfairly, we will confront them and meet them head on.

Going forth, we need your participation and your support when we assemble at the different work locations. Join us on your break or lunch; **take the time to get involved!** Our strength lies in our numbers. If you should observe a rally at your work location, exercise your rights to protest and join those who feel that we deserve better!

BE A PART OF YOUR OWN FUTURE!

Remember to wear your CWA shirt, bring an umbrella and be ready to show AT&T that we are engage in this battle NOW and we will not wait quietly until 2009.

In Solidarity,
 Sonja Gholston-Byrd
 CWA Local 6310
 Mobilization Chair

these new skills to work for the local...

Jeff Allan, Sergeant-at-Arms CWA Local 6310

Dear [Local 6310],

I just wanted to drop you a line and tell you how much I appreciated the watch that the members of your Local gave to me. I am wearing it regularly and showing it off to many of my friends. I feel that it is an honor representing your Union members and others who continue to fight for justice in the work place. I am also thankful for the many friends I have made over the years from your Local. I hope I will always be able to help any member in need.

Thanks again,
 Michael Goldberg

Hey [Local 6310],

How are you doing, all is well here with me. I just wanted to drop you a line to say thanks for making my birthday a special day. The flyer you sent is on my wall so I get to see it on a daily basis. Things here are well just taking it one day at a time. Well take care of yourself and always know that I'm so grateful for all the love that you have shown to me. May God's Blessings be upon your life.

God Bless,
 Sgt. Myron Jamerson, Iraq 07

Legal Advice

By Mike Goldberg, Attorney at Law

Whether you are involved in an automobile accident or a workers compensation accident, one important thing to be aware of is how the medical bills are paid. If your own health insurance ends up paying for some or all of the medical care, you will probably receive a letter from the carrier claiming a right to be reimbursed for any payments that are made. This is especially important to remember if you or anyone you know of who seeks medical care that is covered by Medicare. The failure to recognize that the insurance company may have a lien on any money you receive could very well leave you in a position of being sued for the money or even worse being denied coverage if you need additional care down the road. As health insurance rates have increased and the system has grown more complex, the insurance companies along with Government sponsored plans like Medicare have stepped up their efforts to recover money from anyone who used their insurance for an injury situation. You are going to have to prove to the providers that in fact you are not going to receive benefits from an accident situation or work out an arrangement for reimbursement. If you think that you can simply blow off these companies, you are really taking a risk

of committing fraud and if discovered, you will pay the consequences of your actions. There are ways to try and deal with this situation and avoid problems. Many times you can get a reduction on the amount to be paid back. Sometimes depending on the type of policy you have, you may even receive a waiver. This is something you need to investigate before you settle anything or take the money and spend it. I recommend legal help if you have any significant amount of medical bills to at least to advise you of your options. There are appeal rights available to help reduce the amount of the reimbursement and there is always an opportunity to try and negotiate a discount. The results depend on the facts of your case and how they are used in connection with the law governing these situations.

I want to also note that in addition to paying back Medicare, you will also have to come to an agreement with Medicare as to whether you will need additional future medical care. That is important as you do not want a denial in the future. It is your responsibility to work this out before settlement. You do not want to be caught in a situation where you need care but it is denied later on down the road because you failed to protect yourself.



Mike C. Goldberg

If you have any questions in regard to this issue, you are welcome to call and ask about them. I never charge Union members or their family to answer their questions. Please feel free to call me directly and ask for some advice on this or any other legal matter. If it is something I do not know, I will try and give you the name of a Union friendly attorney that deals with the issues you raise.

Michael C. Goldberg, Esq.
1800-489-2891
314-621-8363

At the Meeting October 10, 2007

By Debbie Williams, Secretary



- ☞ Motion Gary Shelton second Peter Bishop to purchase one ticket to attend the Retirement Dinner for Richard Mantia, cost \$125.00. Richard has been active with the St. Louis Labor Council for many years Tony also sits on that board. If we truly want to be accepted in the labor community we must participate in events such as this. MC
- ☞ Motion Vicki Jordan second Pam Fagen to send two to the Greater St. Louis Labor council Labor Summit, cost conference will allow participants to gain valuable knowledge in dealing with the media and projecting a good image. MC
- ☞ Motion Rick Ellebracht second Carolyn Daily to purchase 12 tickets to the Circus to Save Lives command union performance November 18, at the family arena. Proceeds benefit the Siteman Cancer Center. Ticket \$10.00 each total \$120.00. Tickets will be given away in 3 sets of 4 at the next membership meeting as attendance prices in a random draw. MC
- ☞ Motion Peter Bishop second Carolyn Daily to send 7 to the CWA District 6 and District 4 Civil rights and Equity Conference November 16-18 in Irving Texas. Total cost would be \$3619.80 COE committee would pay registration of \$525.00. All but two would take a vacation day that Friday to reduce lost time. MC
- ☞ Motion Joe Stout second Shawn Bland to send three to the combined C&T conference in Dallas, TX March 9-12. Centurytel will be facing hard bargaining and AVAYA is being sold it would be good for us to be there. The three attending would probably be Mike, Tony and Gene. MC
- ☞ Motion Bill Morton second Sonja Gohlston-Byrd to send two to the rally in San Antonio TX Oct 18th for Video and Internet bargaining. Fights approx 390.00 plus hotel cost. MC
- ☞ Motion Shawn Bland second Bill Morton to combine Locals 6310 & 6320 Christmas Party this year. MD
- ☞ Motion Bill Morton second Shawn Bland that the next time we buy coffee for the Local we buy a second box for members in Iraq. MC
- ☞ Motion Pam Fagan second Peter Bishop that we set out a container to collect contributions for our members in Iraq starting with the next meeting. MC
- ☞ Motion Peter Bishop second Alex Platipodis to file grievance against AT&T regarding all the issue with Open Benefit enrollment. MC

Verizon Condemned for Trampling Rights in Independent Report

A blistering report from American Rights at Work (ARAW) denounces Verizon for interfering with workers trying to organize, taking a "low-road" approach to what were once good jobs, and letting service quality deteriorate for millions of customers.

"Broken Promises: Verizon Neglects Its Commitment to Provide Good Jobs and Quality Service," details how the company uses aggressive and illegal tactics to stop workers from exercising their rights to associate and organize.

"This report documents the lengths to which a corporation will go to trample its employees' rights, even to the detriment of quality service to millions of its customers and the future of good jobs in the industry," CWA President Larry Cohen said. Read the report at

www.americanrightsatwork.org.

ARAW will be sending the report to members of Congress, all the presidential candidates and politicians around the country that have expressed support for the Employee Free Choice Act and have condemned Verizon's actions.

The report by the independent workers' rights group provides first-hand accounts of management's abusive and intimidating behavior

from Verizon Business technicians who have tried to organize through CWA and the IBEW. It describes how a technician at a Verizon Business facility in Monsey, N.Y., was disciplined and made an example of for posting a pro-union advertisement. To keep an eye on the worker, the company assigned a manager to sit directly behind his desk.

"I remember sitting in the parking lot, horrified, my stomach turning. . . My manager is sitting right behind me. I gotta worry if I hit the wrong key stroke. It was a horrible experience," described the worker, Christopher Bloncourt. Verizon faces NLRB hearings shortly for its anti-union tactics in this and another Verizon Business location in Pennsylvania.

Verizon's assault on workers was so fierce at an Orangeburg, N.Y., Verizon Wireless worksite in 2003 that management banned employees from talking about the union even while on lunch breaks. The NLRB later found the company guilty of that and other abuses. In Long Beach, Calif., where 170 DSL technicians were determined to organize in early 2007, a senior executive flew in from New Jersey just before the vote. The night before and day of the election, the official went cubicle to cubicle telling workers -- illegally -- that there'd be no raises if the union came in.

Verizon's threatening — and following through on threats — to shut down worksites if employees organize is a common tactic, the report found. In 2001, Verizon said it would close down its Woburn, Mass., call center if the workers voted to unionize. Faced with NLRB charges over these threats and other illegalities, Verizon settled the case and posted a notice agreeing not to break the law. Yet soon afterward, it shut down the facility and moved the work to South Carolina. The report said the company closed down two other call centers where workers were organizing — in Orangeburg, N.Y., and Morristown, N.J. — moving the

work to South Carolina, North Carolina and Arizona, all states with "right-to-work" laws that weaken unions.

The report says Verizon management has followed a "textbook example of 'double-breasting,'" since its creation in 2000, to keep workers in its union-represented division separate from workers at Verizon Business and Verizon Wireless. The company refuses to honor the card-check results that show at least 65 to 75 percent of Verizon Business's technicians in New York and New England want to organize.

ARAW found that the company's customers aren't treated much better, stating that Verizon management has "shirked its responsibilities as a public utility, pursuing a race-to-the-bottom, low-road business model that is detrimental to both employees and customers." The report criticizes Verizon for failing to maintain or upgrade service for its landline operations while it is diverting its resources to the more profitable fiber optic, or FiOS network. It also slams the company for threatening future service quality to millions of its existing customers by selling off its rural landline access lines.

"Under Verizon's current business model, tens of thousands of secure, well-paying jobs are at the risk of disappearing," ARAW concludes.

"The consequences of Verizon's actions go beyond its workforce, as communities lose good jobs, and customers suffer poor service while missing out on the benefits of high-speed broadband."

Help Keep Internet Access Costs Down

AT&T has notified our members and asked them to contact their member of Congress about extending the moratorium on states and municipalities taxing Internet access (See Letter Below). We are asking that each Local contact their members about this request and ask them to add a message to the web mail that they send to their member of Congress. The message would be as follows:

"I also want you to know that we have AT&T workers who have been working without a Union contract at AT&T Video Services for over a month now. I am also asking you to get involved with this issue by contacting AT&T's Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Randall Stephenson, at 210-351-2200 and asking him to resolve any outstanding issues. I appreciate your attention to these matters."

The letter from AT&T follows:

Dear Fellow Employee:

For nearly a decade, Congress has supported a moratorium on states and municipalities taxing Internet access. This hands-off approach has been a tremendous success - giving companies a reason to invest, consumers a choice in affordable broadband services, and the U.S. a policy framework to realize exponential growth in Internet access.

All these gains are now in jeopardy. On November 1, the Internet Tax Moratorium is set to expire - leaving, the Internet exposed and consumers vulnerable to higher Internet access costs. The Association for Competitive Technology predicts that if the moratorium is lifted, a consumer could expect Internet access cost increases of \$85 or more a year.

But you can help by encouraging your members of Congress to actively support extending the moratorium. It's simple to do. Go to http://ga3.org/campaign/dtow_att and send either a customized letter or the one provided. By entering your name, address and ZIP code, you'll ensure your message is emailed directly to your members of Congress. You may also want to encourage friends and relatives to contact their representatives as well by going to the website.

Thanks for your support,
Jim Cicconi
Senior Executive Vice President
External and Legislative Affairs

Tips for Dealing with Difficult Supervisors

You'd love your job -- if only your boss wasn't such a jerk. But instead of whistling through the workday, you drill holes in your keyboard while stewing over a string of indignities.

Once you've made sure that the problem really is your boss, and not you, there may be little recourse but to quit or ask for another assignment. But before bailing out, here are some coping strategies for a variety of scenarios. First, put yourself in your boss's wingtips: Would such an approach work with you? If you think it might, then give these tactics a try:

- 1. Your boss is unfairly critical.** Approach your boss with a positive spin. Explain that you really want to be a good employee and ask what you should be doing differently. If you're lucky, he'll thank you for taking the initiative and vow to give more praise and less criticism. More likely, however, you'll be told you need to improve, so be prepared for unflattering news. In either case, you'll gain a bit of respect -- all but the most insecure boss will appreciate the fact that you solicited feedback and didn't blame him.
- 2. Your boss is a micromanager.** Again, emphasize that you want to solve a problem and improve your performance: "I hope you can help me with something. I've noticed that you monitor my work very closely. Are you worried I can't or won't do the work? Is there anything I can do to give you more confidence in me?"
- 3. Your boss is a hothead.** Anger is a physiological response to stress or annoyance, and some people secrete more adrenaline than others. So:

Recognize that when the boss is yelling, it's his physiology talking. That may help keep your own adrenaline in check and quell the natural instinct to blast back at him.

- Let him explode; interrupting might just add fuel to the fire.
- If you walk out, be aware that it will be taken as disrespect.
- Take deep breaths and try to listen to the substance of what he's saying -- just because his tone is wrong doesn't mean his point is.
- When he's finished, have a measured response ready so you don't react impulsively: "I want to think seriously about what you've said. Can we get together later to discuss it?" Then address the issues once the boss has cooled down.
- If the tirades are abusive or too frequent, then of course you may have no choice but to report them to a higher-level manager. Or leave.

4. Your boss is ineffectual. He might be in over his head, distracted by family issues, burned out, or lazy. Nonetheless, you need to realize that you won't change your boss. Instead, get help from coworkers or more senior supervisors. Before going over your boss's head, first seek permission in a way that will allow him to save face: "I know you're busy. Would you mind if I asked Supervisor X for a bit of guidance?" Or "Could I speak with Y about that. He's an expert." If your boss says no (a sign that he probably is a poor manager), then you may have to go over his head without permission.

5. Your boss is unethical. Alas, it happens often, whether to line one's pockets, take credit for somebody else's ideas, or simply dodge work. Confronting your boss on this issue, no matter how tactfully, probably won't work, since you'll be challenging his honesty and maybe even threatening his own job. And tattling to someone else will probably invite reprisals. Unless you're willing to take that risk, you have only two real options: Live with the status quo, or leave for more ethical pastures.

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"It's the sprinkler system, sir... employee burnout keeps setting it off."

Current Issues at ASI

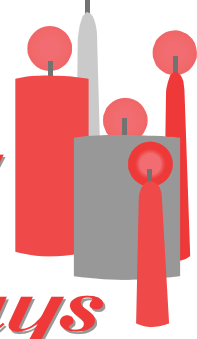
By Jason Vellmer, VP - ASI

Where can I possibly start with the issues going on right now at ASI? We have an issue with some of our members being complacent with these issues occurring right now in the center. A lot of people like to believe that the current Tier 1 trial is not a big deal; that it is just a trial. This couldn't be further from the truth, as the Company just extended the trial because they did not get the numbers they wanted. We need to step back and look at the push to take away work from NCT's. A couple of years ago we did every function on a DSL trouble report, but now you have CSR's taking some of our functions away and it has been a nightmare keeping after the Company to make sure they are not crossing the line in what functions they are doing. We are currently pursuing another grievance because we feel some of the things they are doing are crossing over into NCT functions. Will keep everyone updated on that. Next we have this

Tier 1 trial going on and they are doing more than what the CSR's have ever been doing. Now what makes them different is that they are contractors and are not governed under our core agreement, but we are still pursuing a grievance on the issue. The real issue falls in the future with the 3000 plus jobs coming back from overseas that will be a Customer Assistant title under the Internet Services Contract. For the longest time at ASI there has always been a sense of security but now in the current direction the company is headed, with two tier wage scales, and shifting working out of the core contract we have one heck of a fight coming up fast. Another issue that has come back up, after a couple of years, is Little Rock being broke off onto their own schedule, which is being pursued as we speak. What this boils down to is that **the management at ASI feels that they can do as they please because they know the membership is not united.** They see the turn out we have for a rally and I applaud all who showed up, but we need to do better. I may sound like a broken record but we need to come together and push back as one. **IF NOT NOW...WHEN?!**



Happy Holidays



CWA LOCAL 6310 MEMBER'S HOLIDAY PARTY

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2007 7:00 P.M
Maryland Heights Centre
2344 McKelvey Road, Maryland Heights, MO

One guest permitted – Cost \$10.00 for Guest

ALL MEMBERS AND GUEST MUST RSVP

To the Local office, 314-576-6310 or email to hmehringer@cwalocal6310.org NO LATER THAN NOVEMBER 29, 2007.

Names Verified at Door



The Community Services Committee is collecting toys and nonperishable food items for food pantries and shelters. It would be appreciated if each person attending the party donated one new toy, Cash donations accepted.



Children's Holiday Party

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2007 11:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.
Maryland Heights Centre
2344 McKelvey Road, Maryland Heights, MO
Cookies and Refreshments will be served.

Join us for a fun time. Santa will have goodies for the Kids
This event is only for the children and grandchildren of Local
6310 members THROUGH AGE 11



RSVP A MUST BY NOVEMBER 29, 2007! CALL 314-576-6310 or email your RSVP to hmehringer@cwalocal6310.org. We will need the age and gender of the children and the number of adults.



Retirees' Corner

**FOR NEWS AND
UPDATES VISIT
US ON THE
WEB AT**

www.cwalocal6310.org

**Register for our
Forums to receive
Email updates!**



Greater St. Louis Retirees' Chapter Meeting
Monday, November 12, 2007
Graphic Communications Hall
105 Progress Pkwy, Maryland Heights, MO

Meeting Time: 11:30 AM
Cost is \$12/person
(guest welcome)

Reservations are a must! Please call Tony Hill (618) 541-9119, Bill Konecnik (636) 225-3174, or Mary Ostertag (618) 632-5456 **by Noon Thursday, before the meeting.**

Retirees' Meeting October 8th 2007, 11:30 A.M.—

- President Hill opened the meeting with The Pledge and prayer.
- Deaths: James Patton and Amand Theime.
- New Members: Marie Ann Bub, Sandy McPherson, and Louise Taylor.

- The meeting minutes and financial report for September 2007 were read and approved.
- President Hill reported on Bud Brinkman's health.
- A sign up sheet was passed around for members to help when needed.
- Secretary Konecnik reported on Local 6355 bargaining with the State of Missouri.
- Bob Huss, President—Local 6350 reported on C.W.A. bargaining in the Video and Internet group with AT&T. The Company wants to raise health care deductables to \$3,000.
- Meeting adjourned at 12:09 P.M. and lunch was served.

Bill Konecnik
Secretary, Retirees Council

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