

# 20/20 Vision



Volume 26/No. 7  
July 2006

The Official Voice of CWA Local 6320

## VICTORY at DirecTECH Southwest

On June 1<sup>st</sup> 2006, 64 employees of DirecTECH Southwest, Paducah, Kentucky were successful in their bid to gain union representation. By a margin of almost 2 to 1, technicians and customer service representatives voted to join Communications Workers of America (CWA) Local 6320. DirecTECH Southwest provides installations and repair services for DirecTV in southeast Missouri, southern Illinois and the western Kentucky area. Working with CWA 6320 Organizers Sonja Gholsten-Byrd, Dave Hoyt and Dawn Jennewein, the employee led committee gathered signatures of co-workers and filed a petition



for election with the National Labor Relations Board. Contract negotiations between the parties are expected to begin mid-August.

## Support Karla May for Missouri State House

By Debora Murray and Michell Morrow

Proud CWA member and candidate for State Representative of the 57th District, Karla May is "ASKING FOR YOUR VOTE" in August. Karla has been in the political arena since she was a child, tirelessly campaigning for her mother and friends in politics. She has noticed some very important

issues on the table that no one seems to be doing anything about. Ms. May's



Candidate Karla May receiving check and CWA Local 6320's endorsement from President Kevin Kujawa

website, [www.votemay.com](http://www.votemay.com), states "Our state government is faced with very important issues that impact the lives of all Missourians and we need a committed voice to protect the interests of our working families in regards to Healthcare, Education, Jobs, Equal Justice and Equal Opportunity." Karla May's voice is this voice.

Karla will make staying in touch with the people of the community a top priority when elected. She feels the legislature must know what the community needs and desires. As she sees it, her job will be to empower the people, to lobby fellow legislators, and to help citizens build coalitions for their issues.

Ms. May feels that Healthcare definitely needs to be reformed. She states, "Everyone needs healthcare, we all end up paying

for it one way or another." She feels FMLA was good when it was instituted and that it is still a good thing; however, changes need to be made. People should not be off work without pay, it defeats the purpose and, there should be a way to accumulate paid time off. Her views on education are just as strong: "Every child needs an education. We cannot give up on our children. Our children are our future and we must educate them." *continued on page 3*

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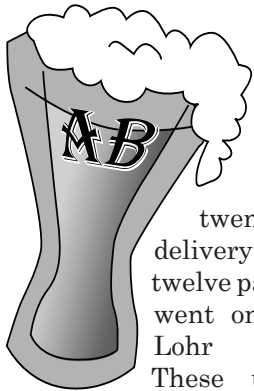
Your Next General Membership Meeting: July 19 - 7:00pm

Glazier Hall  
5916 Wilson Ave.



### A Strike Gone Bad

By Kevin Kujawa, President



On May 22, 2005 twenty-four full-time delivery drivers and twelve part-time workers went on strike against Lohr Distributing. These union Brothers are members of Teamsters Local 600. The issues at hand are very common: the company proposed pay cuts and wanted to pass on the rising cost of healthcare to the employees. These are issues familiar to every unionized industry. After months of strike, Lohr's hired replacement drivers late last year. On June 19 of this year these replacement workers,

or scabs, voted to decertify the union. The irony of this is that the striking workers who have been on the picket line for some 13 months, and were members of the union, did not get to vote in the election. This is a maneuver a lot of anti-union companies use to bust unions. They hire replacement workers, get one of these leeches on society to file a petition for decertification with the NLRB, and then get his co-workers to vote the union out. All the while, the members of the union who are on strike and who in my opinion are the rightful holders of said jobs get no say in the matter.

want this type of disruption in their hometown, especially during baseball season. The striking workers asked all of us to boycott AB products sold in the city of St Louis. AB products in the county were ok because they were delivered by union drivers with another distributor. At first a small number of city restaurants and bars agreed to the boycott and supported the union drivers, unfortunately not enough to make a difference. As the strike continued and demand for that product brewed on Pestalozzi Street continued to remain high, this support waned.

This move removes Lohr Distributing of any legal obligation to bargain with the Teamsters. In reality, this strike was doomed to fail early on. Back in the day when we proudly exclaimed St Louis as a "union" town, it would have been absolutely unthinkable to hire scabs to deliver the King of Beers. In fact, most business establishments would have refused such a delivery and the demand for the product would have been minimal at best.

In the middle of the strike, the Teamsters decided to pull out of the AFL-CIO and that certainly caused confusion in the St Louis Labor Community. The question most AFL-CIO unions asked was "do we still support them?" Of course organized labor did the right thing and stood behind the striking workers. All in all, if this is the end of the strike and the end of the Teamsters at Lohr's, the failure of the strike can be blamed on this city itself. When we support a business that treats its workers unfairly and we don't support the strike we are sending a very clear message to that company: do what you want, we will still buy your products. The only punishment we can inflict upon a business is a loss of profits. It is the only thing they understand. When that fails all is lost for the worker, and when one union goes down the repercussions affect us all.

After failing to make any progress at the bargaining table, the Teamster's 600 members did what they thought they had to do and called a strike. Now I will be the first to admit that calling a strike in a bargaining unit of 36 members is certainly a risky proposition. Be that as it may, their leadership and membership felt it was the appropriate strategy.

The Teamster drivers I have spoken with felt from the beginning that the company was trying to break the union with the harsh pay cutbacks they were demanding in a very lucrative industry. Almost to a man, they felt they could count on support from the community, that the brewery would certainly not

While I personally believe this vote does not end this strike, we will see what the future holds. The next time you happen to be at a Cardinal game and get ready to order a beer, think about how that beer got to the stadium and order a soda. *It's the Labor thing to do.*

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Office Hours: 8am to 5pm M - F  
Phone: 314-781-6320  
www.cwalocal6320.com

**Kevin Kujawa, President**  
kkujawa@cwalocal6320.com

**Danny Compton, Executive VP**  
dcompton@cwalocal6320.com

**Virginia Anderson-Dunbar, Secretary/Treasurer**  
vanderson@cwalocal6320.com

**Ron Munford, Vice-President A**  
rmunford@cwalocal6320.com

**Claudia Kitchen, Vice-President B**  
ckitchen@cwalocal6320.com

**Jim Kolve, Vice-President C**  
jkolve@cwalocal6320.com

**Gail DiSilvester, Vice-President D**  
gdisilvester@cwalocal6320.com

Newsletter Editors/Graphics:  
**Betty McKeown**  
**Deloris Rose**  
**Michell Morrow**

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## New Job Title-Premise Installer

By Ron Munford, Vice-President A

After on again, off again bargaining sessions for the Premises Installer job title, an agreement has been reached. The objective to get this unit into the core contract has been attained and the job title "Premises

Installer" has now been rolled into the core AT&T contract. A new Appendix was established addressing the title Premises Installer (Appendix J). The wage scale top pay is \$670.00 per week at 60 months of service. See

your steward for information the terms of the MOA.



## FMLA Help, Crash Not Trash

By Claudia Kitchen, Vice-President B

Most of you have heard about the "Crash Team" but some do not realize that the people on the Team also work for the company. They hold full-time jobs and perform the extra duties mostly on their own time. The team does the best it can with a limited amount of people. In fact, sometimes it is difficult to keep up with the number of requests received. It is not always possible to get to everything they have to do in a short time span (turn around depends on the number of cases received).

I have heard criticism from some of our members when they cannot get

their FMLA or Disability approved. The Crash Team can not guarantee they can get you approved. If you are not approved, they can investigate and tell you what is needed either from the member or the health care provider. At that time, the member should either let the healthcare provider know what would help get their time off approved or, if nothing can be done, the member will know that also.

We all need to realize these members work full-time jobs, have families and do need some time for themselves, as do we all. This is done on a voluntary basis to try and help members if they possibly can. So please be patient. It is not necessary

to be unkind or abrupt when you feel that they have not gotten back to you in a timely manner.

We all have a responsibility to try and work together on these issues. The member has the responsibility of making sure you ask for the forms, the paperwork is filled out by the physician and faxed to the appropriate person in the time allotted. I know you do not fill the paperwork out, but you can follow-up to make sure it was received. If paperwork was not received, have your physician fax it again. Do everything you possibly can before referring your case to the Crash Team.



## Karla May

continued from front page —

Ms. May is "One hundred percent Labor" and feels that Unions are needed now more than ever. "If I have anything to do with it, Missouri being a 'Right to Work' state WILL NOT be an option." This is an issue that needs a coalition of concerned citizens and unionists to help hold the line.

Karla has been employed with AT&T for seven years. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration



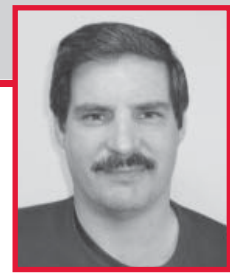
from St. Louis University and a Master of Arts in Teaching from Lindenwood

University. A very spiritual person, Karla has strong beliefs in her faith and family. She has a deep passion for children and education believing "no child is unreachable, we should not give up on them." Karla has personally assisted many children in her community to find their way when others have given up on them.

Don't forget to vote in the August 8, 2006 election. And, if in the 57<sup>th</sup> District, please vote for Karla May.

## Sage Group New Training Vendor

President Kevin Kujawa has again led the charge for new ways to serve CWA members. Local 6320 has an additional vendor to provide training along with CWA/NETT, our online training source. The Sage Group will be offering instructor-led classes on subjects ranging from technical CWNA suite to clerical MS Office suite; personal development courses such as Spanish and Critical thinking skills. In order to start a class we need 8 members. Call Ron Munford or Darryl Ivy for details 781-6320 x225



## Ready to Retire?

By Jim Kolve, Vice-President C

Are you ready to retire? If so, call your financial planner first. Second, call another financial planner. Third, call another financial planner. You can never get enough advice on when to retire or what to do with your money. Remember, it is your money and you have the final say. Should I take the lump sum? Should I take the monthly annuity? Big questions only you can answer.

I do not believe many of our members fully understand how the bond rate affects their lump sum. I will explain briefly. The lower the annual GATT rate the higher the lump sum. Now what happens if the GATT rate goes up year after year after year? Yes, you will see a lower lump sum pay

out. At the bargaining table one small caveat was negotiated that will save you some of the heartburn of increasing quarterly GATT rates. Both the Telco and the Yellow Pages contracts have adopted the method of using the annual GATT rate of November of the previous year for the next full calendar year. This will save you the trouble of figuring out which quarter is best to retire in, you will be able to use one rate for the full year. With rates going up from fifty year lows, this will slow the effect of reduced lump sum options. I suggest, if you want to know more about this effect on your lump sum, please call a financial planner.

Our Local encourages our members

to call at least three financial planners. Why? Simply to find someone you can trust and someone you feel comfortable with. Following are three financial advisors CWA Local 6320 endorses.

**Ameriprise Financial** call  
John Beaudoin at 314-446-0426

**Principal Financial** call  
Matt Muccigrosso at 636-449-0725

**Keystone Financial** call  
Mike Corgiat at 314-997-1947

All three will give personal service to help our CWA union members. ***MOST IMPORTANTLY, GO WITH SOMEONE YOU TRUST.***

## Community Services

Mike Corgiat of Keystone Financial donated two St. Louis Cardinal's Baseball tickets which were raffled off for Community Services. At the June membership meeting, after nearly \$300 in sales, Carol Garrett from AT&T Yellow Pages' name was pulled from the jar. Congratulations Carol.

The first Dinner and Auction to benefit Voices for Children St. Louis was held June 1<sup>st</sup> at Windows Off Washington. Local 6320 was represented by Chief Steward Michell Morrow who reported over \$500,000 raised for this worthy cause. Voices for Children provides an advocate in the courts and with Division of Family Services for abused and neglected children in the City of St. Louis. The funds raised will be used to train additional advocates, provide kits for children removed from their homes with nothing but the clothes on their backs, for school supplies and necessities.

## Civil Rights & Equity Conference

By Debora Murray

Philadelphia, the birthplace of our nation, was host to the CWA National Civil Rights and Equity Conference held April 27-30, 2006. We were addressed by several CWA national officers, Philadelphia's mayor, ministers and state representatives who reminded us of the wonderful history of this city and of the Labor's part in it.

The theme for the conference was appropriately titled "Liberty and Justice for All."

Several workshops were offered and we attended two of our choice. "Resolution 1" took precedence at the conference. In a town hall meeting we were asked: "How can Resolution 1 help minority constituents?" It was determined that the National Committee on Equity would submit a recommendation to include a Vice President position in the restructuring of the National Executive Board. This elected official would have the specific

responsibilities of addressing issues of diversity and have full inclusion on the Board.

The message most often communicated was "we must prepare ourselves for the future. We must educate ourselves and strengthen our bargaining power." Diversity must be a part of preparing for the future; not just for blacks, Hispanics, women and gays, but for everyone. For the Labor Movement to thrive, we must diversify and prepare ourselves for the future.

The conference proved to be very informative and motivational. A wealth of information was brought back to share with our Local. Ms. Virginia Anderson-Dunbar and I would like to thank the membership, the Executive Board, fellow stewards and chief stewards for allowing us to attend. We hope that the Committee on Equity will be able to attend future conferences.



## Workers' Compensation System: Fair for Some

*By Michael C. Goldberg, Attorney at Law*

I am often asked why individuals hurt on the job cannot sue their employers. The answer to that is really simple. The law provides only one remedy for an injured employee and that is the filing of a workers' compensation claim. You cannot bring a civil lawsuit against your employer no matter how much you feel that the employer was at fault for your injury. You are limited to whatever benefits you can try and get through the workers' compensation system. Is this a good or bad way to treat injured people? It all depends on the specifics of your case. I will try to explain this to you as best I can.

If you sustain an injury or develop an occupational disease ( i.e. Carpal tunnel, etc.), the good news is that fault does not matter . It does not matter whether you were at fault, the company was at fault or no one was at fault. You are still entitled to the benefits under workers' compensation. Now this is where most people get upset. They want to go after the company if they caused the injury. However, I would estimate that in at least half of the cases I see, the employee was at fault. If you had a system where you could sue the employer, those individuals who were at fault would be out of luck and get no benefits. The downside is of course

the situation where the company is at fault. This happens in about a third of the cases and the rest of the time no one is really to blame. So for the majority of people, the fact that fault does not matter is a good thing. Now, the downside for the system. The benefits are limited. That means that if you are injured and it was the employer's fault, you get the same amount of benefits as those people who were at fault themselves. If you were in a car accident and got injured and it was not your fault, you could get payments for all of your lost wages, medical bills and pain and suffering. This could be substantially more than under the workers' compensation system. However, if you were at fault in the accident you could get nothing. The people that came up with the workers' compensation system did not want too many people to lose all their benefits and came up with a compromised system. Is it fair? It depends on the circumstances of your case. It is fair if you were at fault and not so fair if the company is at fault.

The biggest drawback to the workers' compensation system is the way they value the injuries. If you have an accident in your car and sustain significant injuries, you may be able to collect a large jury award or big settlement. Not so in the workers'

compensation system. The benefits are severely restricted and one rarely gets as much as one would under the general jury system. For example, if you lose the use of your hand in a car accident and can not return to your job, you may have a claim worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. However, in a workers' compensation claim, the maximum value of the loss of a hand is around \$70,000. That is the amount if you are a high wage earner. Others will get even less. Sounds crazy right? That is what we have and must deal with until a better system is designed.

When you hear that the employer is again claiming that people get too much when they are hurt, just remind them what could be at stake if they were sued and lost a couple hundred thousand on one claim. This will not stop them from trying to reduce your benefits more but it should make them think twice about gutting the system as much as they are trying to do. In the end, we are stuck with a system that is fair to some and grossly unfair to others. I hope that something better will eventually be found.

Michael C. Goldberg  
Attorney at Law



## May's Steward Training Class

you are  
**WANTED**  
— become a  
steward

Standing from left to right:

*Robert Murray, Gail DiSilvester, Andre May, Timothy Austin,  
Charles Landry, James Kolve*

Seated:

*Virginia Anderson-Dunbar, Kenyetta Miller, Patricia Sturgis,  
Darrian Williams*

## Your Next General Membership Meeting:

**Wednesday July 19,  
7:00 PM**

Meeting Location:  
Glazier's Hall  
5916 Wilson Ave.

All members are encouraged to attend. Contact your local for directions **314-781-6320**

### Motions

M/S/C to accept the April General Membership minutes.  
Tony Franks - Leola Beard

M/S/C to accept the May General Membership minutes.  
Deb Murray - Tony Franks

M/S/C to accept the May Treasurer's Report.  
Rick Siebum - Mike Adams

### New Members

David Aitken	Nick Niebuhr
Rich Baker	Tim Oehlert
Nathan Bjornson	Travione Ridge
Logan Chartrand	Joe Rowles
Michael Henderson	Sumish Suntha
Nicholas LoPiccolo	Christopher
Craig Mackin	Walleman
Daniel Mba	Shane Wussow

### Retiring

Ellie Breese	Beverly Madison
Julius Graham	Bruce Miller
Pena Hagen	Michael Pyle
Sharon Hoock	Gregory Stark

### Members Lost

Gail Payeur - Local 6320 MEMBER

### Members' Losses

Mildred (Miller) Boschert - Aunt  
 Mildred (Miller) Boschert - Brother  
 Daniel Breeding - Aunt  
 Deneen Cavitt - Father  
 Mother 11/08/05  
 Delores Dupree - Uncle  
 Scott Geoghegan - Brother  
 Timothy Johnston - Father and  
 Mother  
 Jim Kolve - Mother-In-Law  
 Cheri Loehr - Grandmother  
 Andre' May - Grandfather  
 Latesa Moore - Daughter  
 Jeffrey Spraul - Father  
 Lucille Udina - Father-In-Law  
 Pamela Williams - Brother  
 Valerie Williams - Brother  
 Beth Wireman - Grandmother

### Disability

Bruce Turnbough  
Linette Aden

### Congratulations!

Morrell Cabrera - Baby Boy  
Ann Van Doren - Baby Boy  
Sue Mayers - Grandson



*Congratulations to Clarice Kelly on her retirement.*

### Letters

CWA was my first experience with a union. I never expected to have a relationship develop to this point. The union is truly made up of friends and family who care. When I received \$35 when my sister passed away we applied it to her headstone. I will think of you when I revisit her grave. Thank you sincerely for your care and concern.

*Carol Stephen*

Thank you fo much for the retirement check.

*Karen Garrett*

CWA Local 6320

Thank you so much for my \$200 retirement check. It is greatly appreciated. Retirement is great! Thank you again!

*Sue Griffin*

Dear Kevin and my Local 6320 Family,

It is with great appreciation that my family and I thank you for your gift during this tragedy of our house fire. It was very needed. Appears as thogh we will be homeless until Christmas or later - that is okay, my family is safe. Thank you, God Bless

*Donna Howers*

Dear Local 6320,

Thank you very much for the check, the visor and the pin for my retirement. The check paid fro my gas and lodging on my way to my new home in Arizona and was very much appreciated as was the visor and pin.

Sincerely,  
*Susan Vines*

To CWA Local 6320,

Our family would like to send our warmest thanks for the financial help you sent us. It was very much appreciated. God Bless you all.

*Fred & Tena Holtkamp and Family*



Please see your Union Steward to submit notices of deaths, retirements, disabilities, or other announcements within your office.

## Retiree's Club Officers

Bud Brinkmann - President  
314-843-7344

Pamela Mulhall - Vice Pres.  
314-842-0135

Ralph Grumke - Secretary  
314-428-2490

LeRoy Eagan - Treasurer

The July 10th meeting will be the Chapter's Annual Indoor Picnic designed for retirees who like to attend a picnic in comfort.

This picnic offers air conditioning, no flies, no bugs, clean rest rooms and excellent food fully prepared by a top-notch caterer. It includes: brats, hamburgers, potato salad, slaw, pork & beans along with refreshments - all for \$10 per person. What A Bargain! Don't Pass It Up! Reservations are requested. Call any officer to make a reservation. Don't forget the picnic will have attendance prizes for the lucky ones. Please make plans to attend.

### New Members

No new members to report for the month of May and part of June.

### Condolences

Mr. James Timper - Club member - Sympathy is extended to family and friends

### A Speedy Recovery

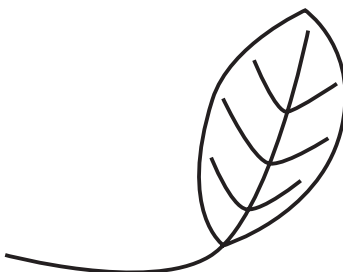
Clyde Feegle - on his recent bypass surgery and all other members who are recovering from recent surgery or hospitalization.

### Annual Raffle

The Annual Chapter Raffle will be held at the picnic. Tickets are 6 for \$5 or \$1 each. If you didn't receive tickets in the mail please call Ralph Grumke at 314-428-2490 to get tickets. You need not be present to win - prizes are \$125, \$75 & \$50. The money raised goes to fulfill an obligation to CWA National Headquarters without drawing currency from the Chapter's treasury. The other, or remaining obligation, is to forward a donation to the Lambert Field U.S.O. on behalf of the Chapter. If you received tickets, please take time to return them prior to the meeting.

### Did You Know

Medicare beneficiaries will be asked to pay 11% more in the Part B premiums next year. The current Medicare B monthly premium of \$88.50 will be **raised** to \$98.20 in 2007. Premium costs have more than **doubled** since 2000.



### CWA:

### Ready For The Future

One course of action to strengthen our union is to double the Retiree membership. The goal is to double the membership in the next three years and to create a "Retiree Activist" database. The purpose being to capture retirees immediately upon retirement in order to send communications on issues via email and solicit their involvement in mobilization actions. Remember: there is strength in numbers.

### Important Message

The membership was informed through the chair that the Retiree Chapter will be recommending an increase in the annual dues to offset the increased expensed incurred by the Chapter. The issue will be addressed at the August meeting and appropriate action will take place.

## Your Next Retiree's Club Meeting

July 10, 2006

10am - Noon Luncheon  
Bingo will follow lunch

Meeting Location:  
Graphic Communications Hall  
105 Progress Parkway

**For reservations call Ralph Grumke, Bud Brinkmann or Pamela Potter**



## General Announcements

### Coming Soon To A Cingular Store Near You!

CWA logo decals will be placed in a prominent location in each of the union represented stores in the St. Louis metro area. The stores without the decals are agent owned and are not union shops.

We're asking all CWA members, their families and friends to support our Cingular brothers and sisters by patronizing Cingular,

the only union wireless company in the St. Louis area. And please, make sure you visit a Cingular store that is represented and staffed by CWA. This is a complete list of the CWA union represented stores at this time. You will soon be able to more readily identify these stores by their CWA logo decals.

### UNION REPRESENTED Cingular Wireless Stores

These are the **ONLY** Cingular Wireless Stores in the St. Louis Metro Area that are staffed by CWA members. All other stores are just agents for Cingular and are not Union shops.

#### Missouri

BALLWIN	15287 Manchester	O'FALLON	2210 Hwy K 63366
BRENTWOOD	5 Brentwood Promenade Ct	ST. CHARLES	1615 Jungermann Rd
CHESTERFIELD	Chesterfield Mall		1065 Regency Parkway
DES PERES	West County Mall	ST. LOUIS	222 THF Blvd 63005
	13030 Manchester		8235 Clayton Road
EUREKA	257 East 5th Street		South County Mall
FARMINGTON	18 W. Karsch		6312 S. Lindbergh
FENTON	400 Old Smizer Mill Rd	WASHINGTON	2090 Washington Crossing
HAZELWOOD	8016 N. Lindbergh	WENTZVILLE	1954 Wentzville Parkway

#### Illinois

CARBONDALE	Carbondale Mall	MARION	1120 North Carbon Rd
FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS	St. Clair Square	WATERLOO	947 N. Illinois St, Rte 3
	10890 Lincoln Trail		

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR UNION MEMBERS AT CINGULAR WIRELESS



CWA City Council Picnic

**Saturday July 29**

**Noon - 6pm**

**Schroeder Park**

*formerly Manchester Park*

**We will furnish**

**BBQ Chicken, Hamburgers,  
Brats, Hot Dogs, Soda & Beer**

**Reservations  
Required by  
July 12**

**We just ask you to bring  
your choice of a  
side dish or dessert**

**For more information  
call Jim Kolve at  
781-6320**



Communications Workers of America  
Local 6320

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