



THE SHIELD

CWA LOCAL 4050/4090

VOL 2. NO.2 SUMMER 2009

Dave Skotarczyk: Prez Sez:

Contract Update

Bargaining has been going on for more than 3 1/2 months. We have been working without a contract for more than two months and we are tired of the lack of progress. The members want to know "why is it taking so long, what is being done, and where do we go for here?"

Many of our members work alone or their work groups are small and isolated. Even in our large centers we are isolated from our coworkers. It is hard to feel like we are part of something larger than our work group. Rest assured we are part of something much larger than ourselves.

We are our part of an organization that is over 100,000 strong, Hundreds of locals all fighting for the same thing, a fair contract. With the other sectors in our Union we are hundreds more strong.

Why is it taking so long?

The answer is simple. The company! Instead of saying what changes they want in the benefit plans, they throw 2,000 pages of prospectus at the bargaining team. There's an old saying: "the devil is in the details." Well our bargaining team found devils and lots of them. Of course, this would go much quicker if AT&T would simply show us where the "devils" are so that we could discuss them instead of making us hunt for them. Perhaps they are hoping that we will miss a few. If that's what they are

hoping, they evidently don't know our Midwest benefit subcommittee very well! The 'hunt' will not stop until all of them are found and corrected. If that isn't bad enough the company will agree to something in informal talks and then when the issue is put on the main table they change their mind.

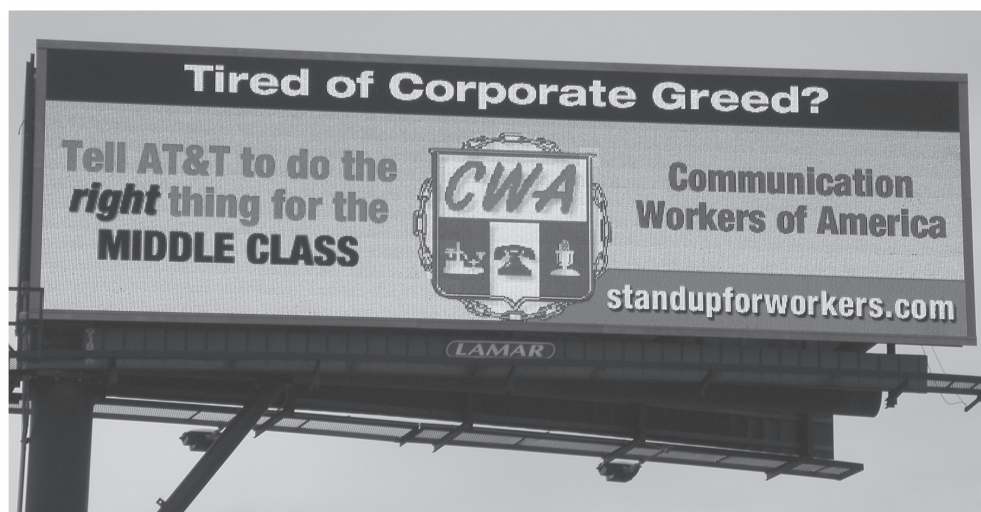
What is being done?

While not all of us has been asked yet to do something to help our bargaining team, much has been and is being done. Mobilization is taking place somewhere every day. The company does not know where or when we will strike. For example, a few weeks ago our members in downtown Detroit went to work late in mass for an example. Billboard

ads are going up around the country and we are getting help from our friends in Congress. Please be prepared when and if you are asked to participate in an event.

Where do we go from here?

We all must be ready to strike or mobilize and at a moment's notice. The pressure is starting to show on the company. Our National President has been communicating directly with the CEO. Members in every CWA Sector and other Unions have been asked to help and support us. I will be attending the CWA Convention the week ending June 27th. We will be meeting with Locals in all AT&T Units. We will find a way to move this company.



Local 4004, 4008, 4009, 4050, 4100 and 4123 asks the question to Michigan commuters. "Tired Of Corporate Greed?" This billboard in Michigan on a section of I-75 yields one of the highest traffic counts in Metro Detroit. This highway is the direct route between downtown and the communities north of the city, including; Southfield, Troy, Royal Oak, Pontiac and Mt. Clemens. As hockey fans commute to Joe Louis Arena for the Stanley Cup finals, this question must be answered by Americans.

Mike Klein, Vice President
NATIONAL BARGAINING UNITS, LEGISLATIVE CHAIRMAN

“We Called It Solidarity”

As CWA members stood together to bring the wages and benefits that telephone workers enjoy today it was called solidarity. It meant that every individual was ready to do what it took to get a fair contract from our employers. It meant sticking together because that gave us the strength to succeed with employers who's only concern was profits. We understood that our work was the only thing that the company valued from us and therefore the only weapon that could make them bargain fairly with our union.

But solidarity means more than just a strike vote. Except for Verizon, we have not had a strike of any significance in over 20 years and still CWA has been progressively successful in bringing home contracts that preserved benefits and working conditions while providing a constant increase in wages.

How did we do it without strikes? **MOBILIZATION**

As I recall the term “mobilization” became popular about 20 years ago and seemed to replace what we called

solidarity. But as I see it, we can't have mobilization without **SOLIDARITY**. Mobilization means that members do some things together at work to let the company know that we are part of the CWA's efforts to gain a fair contract. Mobilization means appealing to the public and to legislators and to the company's customers when the company is unfair to us at the bargaining table.

Some may say “one small action won't make a difference”. Consider this: Wars are won by individual battles. If each battlefield does its job, we can win. Our battlefield is the turf of CWA Local 4050/4090. We can stick together and do whatever mobilization that we are asked to do and win our battle or sit back and hope that someone else carries the ball. Good union members won't be content to sit back. Only **solidarity** will make our **mobilization** work.

Proud to be a CWA Member for 52 Years
Mike Klein, Vice President National Bargaining Units
Legislative Chairman

EVP THOUGHTS

I would like to thank everyone who has supported the union in your own way during this unprecedented round of bargaining. Many of you have participated, standing up at the work place, wearing red, stopping by various rallies, etc., while staying prepared to strike in the event one is called.

The last year has been difficult and very stressful as we watched the company impose surplus after surplus, and in some cases layoffs. The company's latest tactic is engaging union members in the contract fight of a lifetime even though they continue to reap enormous profits with the help of our work. We all must continue to educate our friends and turn up the heat on politicians who seek our votes to aid us in this battle against corporate greed.

At least Verizon did the honorable thing with CWA members, but AT&T must stand for “Advocate for Taking and Taking!

In Solidarity!
Troy Smith
EVP Local 4050-4090

Tentative Agreement Reach in Avaya Bargaining

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Faced with the worst financial realities since the Great Depression, your CWA bargaining team started negotiations on May 5, 2009 with a determination not to allow Avaya to place unprecedented concessionary demands on our members and retirees.

It was clear to our team on the first day of bargaining that Avaya (bargaining on behalf of AT&T) came with a goal of shifting healthcare cost to our members and retirees. Avaya's first proposal would have placed a monthly cost to a retiree at \$190 for an individual and \$549 for a family. For our active employees with a family plan, the monthly premium would have been \$120 in 2012 with a 15% co-insurance. This along with huge increases in the drug plan, your bargaining team knew they were in for a long and contentious battle with Avaya.

The contract expired on May 23, 2009 and your bargaining team pressed on. With the mobilization efforts of our members, the company knew that our resolve for a fair contract was strong. Our commitment never wavered and our focus remained clear.

With our members support, we were able to announce on June 3, 2009 that a tentative agreement with Avaya had been reached – an agreement that achieved the goals set by CWA's rank-and-file Bargaining Council and the CWA Executive Board. Some of the highlights of the agreement include wage and pension improvements, no premiums, deductibles or co-insurance for active or retiree healthcare, no layoffs for all titles for nine months, reducing the "save" language in Article 16 to once for the life of the agreement. Please take the time to review the entire final bargaining report before casting your vote.

Your bargaining team unanimously recommends ratification of this agreement.

In Unity,

The Avaya Bargaining Team

Bill Bates
Chair

Art Frindt
CWA Local 4340

Kevin Kimber
CWA Local 6016

Richie Meringolo
CWA Local 1101

Phil Pennington
CWA Local 4320

Membership Change of Address Form

Please change my name and address as follows:

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone#: _____ Work #: _____

Mail your change of address information to: Local 4050/4090,
220 Bagley Street, Suite 832, Detroit, MI 48226

Lillie Brown's



Money Matters



Frequently Asked Pension Questions

Many of you have family and friends whose pensions have been amended, reduced or terminated. And, you have questions about your own pension. Following are a few Q&A to answer some of the questions you may have.

What Pension Plan are CWA workers covered by?

CWA employees are covered by AT&T's Traditional Defined Benefit plan.

Can my accumulated pension be reduced or terminated?

Defined benefit plans may change the rate at which you earn future benefits but cannot reduce the amount of benefits you have already accumulated (note

that "accumulated benefits" refers to accumulated monthly annuity entitlement as oppose to lump sum accumulations).

Finally, an employer may terminate a defined benefit or a defined contribution plan, but may not reduce the benefit you have already accrued in the plan.

What happens when a plan is terminated?

Federal law provides some measures to protect employees who participated in plans that are terminated. When a plan is terminated, the current employees must become 100 percent **vested** in their accrued benefits. This means you have a right to all the benefits that you have earned at the time of the plan termination, even benefits in which you were not vested and would have lost if you had left the employer.

United We Stand, Divided We Fall

Aesop was a Greek slave and author to many fables. He wrote "United we stand, divided we fall" in a fable entitled "*The Four Oxen And The Lion*" around 600BC.

The phrase has been used in mottos for states, nations, and in countless songs and speeches since that time. Patrick Henry used the phrase in his last public speech in 1799, where he spoke of the possibility of our union being destroyed.

The power of the phrase screams at you when you read the quotation from Pastor Niemoeller, a victim of the Nazis.

**First they came for the Jews,
and I did not speak out-because I was not a Jew.
Then they came for the communists,
and I did not speak out-because I was not a communist.
Then they came for the trade unionists,
and I did not speak out-because I was not a trade unionist.
Then they came for me.
And there was no one left to speak out for me.**

There is a reason Aesop's phrase stands the test of time and is still used today. It's because it's so true. Aesop's phrase held true for the USA in the 1700's, when the States united to gain our independence, and it holds true for the CWA today.

As they come for health care, new hires, and retirees, let's remember...

An injury to one is an injury to all, United we stand and divided we fall!

Jerry Sokoloski Secretary/Treasurer

Late Day - May 27th



Joe Dunbar & Theresa Gordan late for work



May 27 late day



CWA Local 4050 members going to work late

CWA at AT&T 1 Union Fight Future

Do Whatever it takes!



CWA-Shield 4050/4090
220 Bagley, Suite 832
Detroit, MI 48226

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Benefits, Beneficiary Forms

All members should review their beneficiaries at least once a year. To get the forms to update your beneficiaries Leg S members can go to: www.netbenefits.com

Enter your **SSN or Customer ID**

On the **Welcome to NetBenefits® for AT&T** page
Click on the **AT&T Beneficiary Designation Form**
[right hand side]

Here you can select one of two choices to install
adobe or print the form if you have adobe:

- **Beneficiary Designation Form**
- **Download Adobe Acrobat**

Forms must be completely and properly filled out.

CWA Local 4050/4090

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