



Positive View

The Newsletter of CWA Local 9421, Sacramento



FIGHTING AT&T'S CORPORATE GREED!

**FIGHTING FOR THE
AMERICAN DREAM**
CWA at AT&T



AT&T BARGAINING
**FIGHTING FOR THE
AMERICAN DREAM**

Summer 2012 Issue

POSITIVE VIEW



COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA

LOCAL 9421, SACRAMENTO, CA

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Lupe Mercado

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Positive View Editor

Robert Longer

FIGHTING FOR THE AMERICAN DREAM



Dear Members,

I would like to start by thanking each and every one of you for your support during all of our mobilization efforts. As we continue negotiations for our AT&T Core contract, it will definitely get very intense at times. We have already had some mobilization activities where management went ballistic and did not know what to do; they took the wrong action. For example, our Premises Technicians wore healthcare stickers asking AT&T to get off the “healthcare low road”. This simple action infuriated management and they refused to let our Prem Techs work at our four garages. I am very proud of them; they stood united and did not remove the sticker. This is what it is going to take to obtain a contract: **UNITY!** Not selfishness and only looking out for oneself. **Our Prem Techs have been very brave throughout these negotiations; they have been threatened with discipline, and even termination, yet they continue strongly United.** I have assured them **we are all together in this together** and we are all behind them, because we are.

Things have been busy! From mobilization trainings at the Local—where we trained almost 200 members in January, February and April—to over 17 Informational Pickets and other events at various locations, various times...what you, the members, have requested, we have delivered. We also certainly appreciate the 90+ members who have accepted the role of Picket Captain and have already attended the trainings we held.

We stand strong with support from the community and other labor Unions. If you have participated in any of the events over the past five months, you have seen this first hand. I definitely feel the Unity and Support much stronger this time around than three years ago. While most of you have stated that you are ready to go out on strike, remember that a strike is our last resort; when we go out, we will most likely stay out.

I am very pleased at the readiness of our members!

For those of you who were not aware, we have had Informational Pickets and other events since the first day of bargaining, February 29th. On that day, we had a huge turnout for our picket in front of the AT&T complex at 2700 Watt Avenue, with over one hundred people participating! We kept the pickets up, and moved to the AT&T building at 3675 T St on March 15th, then back to Watt on March 29th (my birthday, which I enjoyed out on the picket line with you, my Union brothers and Sisters, singing happy birthday to me!) and then April 5th. Your Officers and Executive board members then spent the day of Saturday, April 7th, at the Union Hall past midnight working on picket signs and gearing up to walk out members if necessary; as you all know, that did not happen. We have continued to bargain in order for our members to continue to get paid. AT&T would love for us to walk out, as they would save millions of dollars and perhaps start to recoup some of what AT&T CEO Randall Stephenson wasted on the T-Mobile merger. **We will walk out when we decide we need to, not when they would like us to.**

On April 19th we were at Watt again, and this time we were even more energized that we decided to take the many picketers and march through the AT&T complex of buildings, ensuring that our voices were heard as we demanded a fair contract! On April 20th, members at the San Jose CWA Local were locked out for wearing **"Where's The Fairness"** stickers. This action prompted hunger for unity, and all Locals decided to join them in support. Again, your Officers spent Saturday and Sunday (4/21 & 4/22) preparing "Where's The Fairness" stickers for all of our members to wear in support and Unity. The majority of our members wore these on April 23rd and, of course, our Prem Techs were not allowed to go to work. Instead, they were ordered by management to leave the garage; they were even denied Union representation. Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) charges have been filed against AT&T. Many members in the various Locals have already provided their affidavits to the National Labor Relations Board.

We were back at 3675 T Street On April 26th, then on **May 3rd we had a great 'walk through' event in various offices where your Officers and Executive Board members walked through offices, leaving management wondering if we were there to walk members out or not.** They did not know what to do! Some even called AT&T's Asset Protection, but by the time Asset Protection came looking for us, we had already walked through all of 2700 Watt Avenue, including

Operator Services, the Business Rep office, the NOC/ENOC and 3600 Marconi where our Testing Techs and others are located. Oh yes, we also walked through the 4th floor at Watt, where several of our 4th level managers/VP's are located. It is my understanding that we are the reason those doors are now closed!

Also on May 3rd (as well as May 4th), our Prem Techs were ordered out of the yard again for wearing the **"Keep AT&T Off the Healthcare Low Road"** stickers. After providing our Prem Techs with lunch at the Union Hall, they all headed out to 2700 Watt for another Informational Picket--our first "Rush Hour Rally"--on the afternoon of May 4th. What an awesome turnout! We had well over one hundred picketers during the rush hour rally, with overwhelming support from the public!

Per the request of a technician, we held a picket at the 24th & S garage in a residential neighborhood in downtown Sacramento at 7am on May 10th. All technicians from that garage arrived early to participate and show their solidarity. The light rail passengers were very supportive, but being the community-minded Union, we must respect the residents around our garages and, in order to not disturb them, we invite all technicians to join us at the rush hour pickets that we will continue to have at the Watt Avenue location. Other energizing and fun events were our "Rush Hour Rallies" on May 17th at Watt and May 24th at T St. Also on May 24th was our "Popsicle Social" at the atrium at 2700 Watt Avenue, where bargaining information was shared along with a cool treat!

Feeling Wicked? Our "Wicked Picket & Capitol March" on May 31st was awesome! We went to downtown Sacramento and marched around the State Capitol, then did a mini protest in front of the theater showing the musical "Wicked" and handed out flyers to theater-goers that showed how AT&T is being wicked to its workers. We then held a 'Wicked Picket' in front of the AT&T central office at 1407 J St. We had fun!!

We returned to Watt for our "Rush Hour Rallies" on June 7th and 21st. On June 8th, our Unity stood out loud and proud when we had an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) action that most of our members participated in, where our members walked out of work due to threats made by AT&T VP Betsy Farrell. **I am so proud of our Local and our entire membership!** It was definitely a huge success in spite of the fact that it was spontaneous; we were all very quick to get the word out and help where help was needed. All of our phones were ringing off the hook; we were all answering more than one call at a time to give out the same information

AMERICAN DREAM (continued)

to as many people as possible at the same time. We were getting calls from members in other Locals and other Districts; we received overwhelming support from our Union brothers and sisters in CWA throughout various States/Districts. I have always believed in the value of building good working relationships with other Locals and Districts in order to obtain as much as possible for our members. I have received phone calls of support from Alabama, New Jersey, Chicago, Indiana etc. etc. It is reassuring to know we are all about being United and Supportive of each other. With all the attacks on Labor Unions lately, it was refreshing to receive the many phone calls to show that we are all there for each other and we will stay strong no matter what. **"WE ARE THE UNION THE MIGHTY, MIGHTY UNION."** "I" am not the Union, "the stewards" are not the Union, "the Officers" are not the Union; you alone are not the Union. WE took this action together, WE answered many calls, WE made many calls, and WE encouraged our peers to walk out with us. WE SENT A RESOUNDING MESSAGE TO AT&T! I personally extend a heartfelt **"THANK YOU" to each of you** for stepping up and participating in the ULP action.

On June 27th, we held our big "Fighting for the American Dream" rally at the State Capitol. What a great event it was! We had many speakers, including labor leaders (Art Pulaski, California Labor Federation; Bill Camp, Sacramento Central Labor Council; myself; Presidents from CWA Locals 9003, 9410, 9415, 9416, 9423 & 9510), elected officials (Assembly Members Dr. Richard Pan, Roger Dickinson and Rancho Cordova Mayor/City Councilmember and candidate for Assembly District 8, Ken Cooley) and retirees (Jim Gordon, Nan Brasmer). I would like to thank everyone who came out: workers, other Unions (SEIU - USWW, IW 118, UFCW 8, UNITEHERE 49) and retirees. Thank you all!

I invite all of you to stay informed and to know what mobilization activities have been planned. Please, no excuses! Make sure you check out our website often, www.cwalocal9421.org, and our Bargaining Hotline (916-557-0141). If you are into Social Media, "Like" us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter! Just look for [CWA Local 9421](#). All of these are updated frequently.

There is no excuse for not knowing what activities are scheduled and no excuse to not participate! Each and every one of you can participate in one way or another. You may ask, what good does this do? I tell you it all helps create movement at the bargaining ta-

ble. For example, we have delivered many AT&T logos from shirts and caps, to tell Randall to keep his branded apparel and put the money where the members need it. I thank the technicians that have participated in this mobilization activity; those of you that have not yet done so, please do. I am still mailing logos; **you do not need AT&T's clothes you need a contract!** It's up to you to make it known by doing what it takes, give up that BAP, and if you "don't want to ruin your clothes" then wear the same damn t-shirt to work every day, dirty and wrinkled, until you get a contract.

We cannot obtain a contract without your commitment. Your Bargaining Committee needs ALL of us to get serious and participate...that means YOU too!

Having been in bargaining for our AT&T Core contract the last three rounds (2001, 2004 and 2009), I know how much this means to the Committee. While I am not on the Bargaining Committee this time around, I committed to making myself available to the Committee and they have reached out to me on several occasions regarding AUTS and Article 2 (employment security). I am a resource for the Committee and yet I am able to be at the pickets and mobilization activities with you guys this time around. I am very concerned that AT&T wants to take away our employment security in Article 2, our ERB offers, benefits and our pensions. I know for a fact that the West Region has some of the strongest language in these areas and other regions have expressed interest in trying to obtain the same for their members. Our region is also one being looked at for improvements for our Prem Techs; most other regions are already as close as they can be to the most that they can get. **Our Bargaining Committee is very committed to improving wages and working conditions for the Prem Techs, and I am very proud that our Local submitted the upgrade proposal for this title. With the help of the Prem Techs, we were able to obtain critical information to put together the proposal.**

I am very proud of our hard working Officers and Executive board members who have stepped up to the plate with short notice and willingness to do whatever is needed. I look forward to obtaining another great AT&T Core contract, so that we can focus on our GSI contract negotiations (contract expires December 1, 2012), and our AT&T Mobility contract (contract expires February 9, 2013). Remember: **CWA is "STANDING UNITED FOR A FAIR CONTRACT" and "FIGHTING FOR THE AMERICAN DREAM"!** It is true that **"UNITED WE BARGAIN, DIVIDED WE BEG"**.

Recognizing that there are many members who have never experienced a strike or the possibility of one, I would like to share a little bit of our CWA bargaining history with you. Below are key bargaining highlights that were excerpted from our CWA International website (www.cwa-union.org). I encourage you to go there to read it in its entirety. At the end of the day, please remember that we really are **FIGHTING FOR THE AMERICAN DREAM!**

In Unity and Solidarity,

Lupe Mercado

Your President



CWA BARGAINING HISTORY

1944: The Ohio Strike & National Telephone Panel

The continuation of inadequate wages and the failure of the Boards to respond to union appeals led to increasing dissatisfaction on the part of telephone workers. These feelings came to a head in November, 1944, when the **Dayton telephone workers went out on strike**. Within 3 days the strike had spread to 25 cities in Ohio and within 6 days to Washington, D.C., Chicago and Detroit. At that point the government capitulated and agreed to establish a national board that would only handle the cases of telephone workers. On December 29, 1944, the National Telephone Panel (later to be renamed the National Telephone Commission) was established. The Telephone Panel was much more effective than the National War Labor Board. By the end of 1945, when it was terminated, it had heard 55 disputes involving 180,000 workers.

1955: Southern Bell Strike

1955 was a year in which CWA undertook its most difficult task: a regional **strike against Southern Bell that lasted 72 days, encompassing nine states and 50,000 workers** throughout the strike, CWA expressed its willingness to resolve the bargaining issues through arbitration, but Southern Bell refused. Throughout months of bargaining the company remained adamant that any new contract contain a ban on strikes "or other interruptions of service." Ultimately, **Southern Bell's attempt to break the union was unsuccessful**. A one-year contract was signed that gave across-the-board gains to CWA members; wage increases; the right to arbitration for suspensions, discharges and job vacancy fillings; reduction of work tour hours; and, most significantly, recognition of the right to strike. The 1955 strike was an early landmark for CWA because of its scope, duration and success.

1963: Workers Demand Equal Pay for Equal Work

In October 1963, **CWA members went on strike against General Telephone of California** for wages and benefits comparable to those enjoyed by Bell employees in the state. At the time, it was possible for a General Telephone worker and a Bell worker to be doing the same type of work across the street from each other, but the General Telephone employee would be receiving considerably less compensation for the job than a Bell counterpart.

1968: First National Strike since 1947, Full Health Care

1969 brought the first national strike against the Bell System since 1947. Some **200,000 CWA telephone workers walked out** because AT&T refused to agree to wage increases that would meet the rise in the cost of living. The **strike lasted 18 days** with AT&T ultimately agreeing to a raise in wages and benefits that totaled nearly 20 percent over a three-year period. It was in this round of negotiations that CWA was able to get AT&T to agree to pay the full premium for the health care plan. Prior to these negotiations, workers had to pay three-fourths of the total premium.

1971: CWA Negotiates Biggest Settlement in Its History

400,000 CWA members nationwide went on strike against the Bell System in 1971 for wage increases to offset the devastating inflation of the previous three years. After a one week strike, CWA achieved the biggest economic package ever negotiated with the Bell System and obtained, for the first time, a cost of living adjustment clause (COLA) and big city allowance. In addition, wage progressions schedules were shortened to 5 years and the vacation time was improved to 2 weeks after one year's service. The total wage benefit package amounted to more than 33.5% over the life of the agreement.

1973: General Telephone Workers in Three States Walk Out

In 1973, 6,000 CWA members in Indiana, Ohio and Kentucky went out on strike against the General Telephone companies of those states. The **strike lasted two months in Indiana and Ohio** before settlement was reached, but the **workers in Kentucky were on the picket line for five months** before their contract demands were met. The **Kentucky workers were forced out on strike again in 1976. This time the strikers were out for 200 days before a settlement was reached.**

1975-76: Strikes Hit Independents

Three of the bitterest CWA strikes of the 1970's took place at independent telephone locations: a **six month strike at Rochester, New York Telephone** over an attack on wage levels, at General of Kentucky in 1976 over medical benefits and work rules, and a **three month walkout at New Jersey Telephone** over the issue of supervisors performing bargaining unit work.

CWA BARGAINING HISTORY (continued)

1986: Post Divestiture Bargaining

1986 presented CWA with its first negotiations with the post-divestiture (1983) telephone industry. CWA had to bargain not only with AT&T, but with the independent RBOCs and their subsidiaries. National bargaining had been replaced by 48 different bargaining tables. In the AT&T negotiations, **CWA had no choice but to strike. The strike lasted 26 days**, and AT&T agreed to provide wage and employment security improvements and retain the health care benefits intact. Although the negotiations with the RBOCs were also difficult, they were less contentious than those with AT&T.

1989: Mobilization Key at AT&T Settlement, NYNEX Strike

Mobilization by CWA members around AT&T bargaining proved how successful we can be when we fight together. Faced with the solidarity of mobilized workers, and after a **3 week strike**, AT&T backed off on health care cost shifting demands. The settlement for 175,000 workers broke new ground with paid medical and dental for six months. Mobilization also was key for NYNEX workers who spent **17 weeks on the picket line** fighting management's attempts to shift health care costs. But the strike was not without a price. Local 1103 member Jerry Horgan lost his life on the picket line when he was struck and killed by a scab driving a car at a NYNEX facility. In the summer of '89, delegates to the convention voted to change the Defense Fund rules so strikers would receive a flat weekly payout beginning in '92 and continue needs-based funds to provide emergency relief.

1998: CWA Signs Alliance with Puerto Rican Workers

In the aftermath of the **41-day strike and a 2-day general strike** against the privatization of the Puerto Rico Telephone Company, CWA entered into an alliance with the PRTC workers. The agreement calls for joint bargaining and organizing strategies in response to the acquisition of the PRTC by GTE. In a representation election that culminated a 14-year effort, the workers of the Southern New England Telephone Company joined CWA.

2000: IUE merged with CWA; CWA strikes Verizon

On October 1st, 113,000 members of IUE voted to merge with CWA at their 27th National Constitutional Convention. The merger brings CWA's numbers to more than 700,000 members. On August 6th, **87,000 CWA telephone workers went on strike against Verizon communications**. Later in August a settlement was reached. The settlement included a breakthrough agreement for neutrality and card check recognition to help Verizon Wireless workers unionize.

2004: CWA strikes AT&T

CWA on strike for 4-days; secures a good, 5-year contract.

2012: Will We Strike? Are You Prepared? Stay Tuned...

PICTURES OF

We have been very busy with AT&T Core mobilization activities and events, starting with the opening day of bargaining in February until now. There have been Informational Pickets, Rallies, Marches and other events at multiple locations...there really is something for everyone! Take a look at the many pictures of CWA members in action over the next few pages. Make sure that you are participating too! To find out about upcoming events and to see more pictures —and videos—go to our website: www.cwalocal9421.org. Remember: this is YOUR contract!!!



President Lupe Mercado at our 2/29 Info Picket at 2700 Watt Ave, on the 1st day of AT&T bargaining.

CWA MEMBERS IN ACTION!



Clockwise from top left: CWA Members in the rain at our 2/29 Info Picket at Watt; Member at T St picket on 3/15; Candidates Jeff Kravitz & Terry Schanz join Watt picket on 3/29; CA State Assembly Member Dr. Richard Pan (in the suit), & other Unions, at our Watt picket on 3/29; a long line of picketers endure the rain on 2/29 at Watt.



WHAT DO WE WANT? A CONTRACT!



WHO ARE WE? CWA!

Clockwise from top left: It's a family affair on the picket line, as kids join us at our 4/5 Info Picket at Watt, 2 days before AT&T contract expiration; ladies having fun in the sun at Watt on 4/5; Secretary-Treasurer Darrin Simmons and family at Watt on 4/5; Big group shot at our 4/19 picket at Watt; CWA members got fired up and marched through the AT&T complex at Watt after our picket on 4/19.



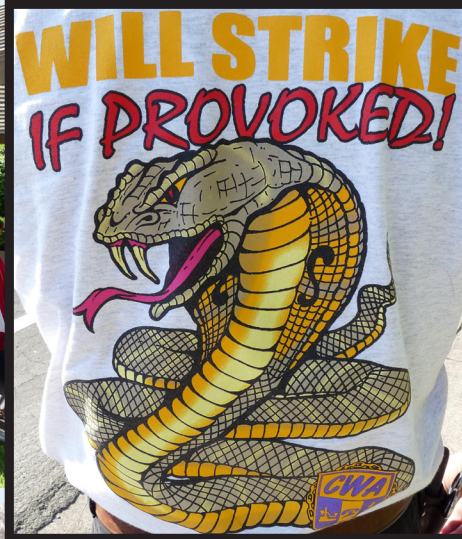
WHEN DO WE WANT IT? NOW!



Clockwise from top left: Prem Techs at the Galena yard that were forced out of work on 4/23 WTF sticker day of action; more Galena, 4/23; Prem Techs on the Watt picket line, 4/19; Cebrian Prem Techs, 4/23; Julesse Prem Techs on 5/4 health care sticker day of action; Orangevale Prem Techs, 4/23.



FIGHTING FOR THE AMERICAN DREAM



Clockwise from top left: CWA members in front of the AT&T building at T St on 4/26; CWA Retirees join our first "Rush Hour Rally" at Watt on 5/4; Members at Watt, 5/4; Ladies posing at T St, 5/24; 24th & S yard techs, 5/10; "Popsicle Social" at Watt atrium, 5/24; Watt complex "walk-through" on 5/3.



STANDING UNITED FOR A FAIR CONTRACT



Clockwise from top left: Even babies know good jobs matter, at the Watt picket on 5/17; Our big “Wicked Picket & Capitol March”, 5/31; Members walk out after threats by AT&T VP Betsy Farrell, 6/8; Executive Vice President Robert Longer hands out flyers at the State Fair, 7/12; Our big Capitol Rally, 6/27; “Wicked Picket & Capitol March”, 5/31.



FIGHTING FOR THE AMERICAN DREAM

CWA at AT&T

YOUR CONTRACT, YOUR FUTURE

We have been so busy this year with bargaining, mobilizing and associated activities—from training members, Stewards and Picket Captains, to making picket assignments and preparing for the possibility of a strike, to our many Informational Pickets and marches, to our fun “Rush Hour Rallies” and Popsicle socials—the



Officers, Executive Board Members, Stewards and members (especially our Prem Tech heroes!) have been fighting to secure a fair contract at AT&T Core.

While we often view things from our California perspective, it is important to remember that CWA is engaged in national bargaining. Four (4) contracts expired on April 7th: ours (AT&T West, 2 states), Connecticut (AT&T East, 1 state), the midwest (AT&T Midwest, 5 states) and legacy (AT&T Legacy-T, covering members in all 50 states). A fifth contract for the southern states (AT&T Southeast, 9 states) expires on August 4th; in fact, they have already started bargaining there. That means that as of the time of this publication, CWA is negotiating five (5) separate contracts for over 60,000 CWA members nationwide!

Our CWA national theme for bargaining in 2012 is “Fighting for the American Dream”—an appropriate mantra considering the assault on the middle class and working people in this country, and the fading vision of what the American Dream used to mean: a good job with decent benefits, the ability to own a home, access to a quality and affordable education for yourself and your children, and the security of retiring with dignity after working your whole life. That dream is vanishing right before our eyes. It is under attack.

Well guess what? **This is our chance to Stand Up and Fight Back against AT&T’s corporate greed!** We must not let AT&T use the economy as a scapegoat to

gut our contract and raise benefit costs, all under the guise of paying our ‘fair share’. Let me tell you this: we already pay our fair share AT&T, and now it’s time for you to pay yours! We are not willing to let our American Dream be squashed by AT&T or any other greedy, mindless, profit-driven, zombie-like corporation!

We have worked hard to make AT&T a hugely profitable and successful company. We have worked odd hours, nights, weekends and holidays, and have even been forced to work overtime by this company. **Our Prem Techs have been locked out multiple times by AT&T (you guys rock, seriously).** *Enough is enough!*

So what can you do to fight back and secure a fair agreement? **Take a stand for YOUR contract.** After all, it is not about the Bargaining Committee or the leadership of the Union. **This is about YOUR future.** If you are an active AT&T employee, this bargaining represents YOUR ability to lay a solid groundwork to hopefully one day retire with dignity and security. If you are a retiree of AT&T, this bargaining will affect your health care costs. Either way, in short, **we all have a stake in these negotiations.**

Being a part of the fight means that we all must do something, no matter how small. **No contract is ever won without sacrifice! It is imperative that we all are involved with mobilization activities.** Whether that means coming out to an Informational Picket, participating in a march, rally or leafleting event, or just simply **wear your red CWA shirt every Thursday...** it is crucial to participate and show your solidarity!

Another important thing that each and every member needs to be doing is to take it upon themselves to **stay up-to-date on the status of negotiations.** Do you read the Bargaining bulletins that are put out by your Bargaining Committee? Are you going to our website (www.cwalocal9421.org)? Have you been calling our Bargaining Hotline (916-557-0141)? Have you “Liked” us on **Facebook**? Do you ‘follow’ us on **Twitter**? Just look for **CWA Local 9421**. All of these sources of information are updated frequently. As you can see, there are many ways to stay connected; please do so.

In the end, we are all united around our common, shared goal: securing a fair contract. **This should be our singular focus. Fighting for the American Dream is more than just a saying...it is about YOUR contract and YOUR future. Your future is in your hands!**

In Solidarity Always,

Robert Longer
Executive Vice President

**TAKE
ACTION!**

UNITED WE BARGAIN, DIVIDED WE BEG

For those of us who work day in and day out representing the members of CWA, it can get overwhelming at times. There is just so much going on, now more than ever it seems. This year is a classic example of the struggles we all face as we continue to Fight for the American Dream. **It should always be remembered that we're all in this together.** Verizon has been working without a contract since last August, almost one year now. Our AT&T bargaining is ongoing. Our telemarketing members at Gordon Schwenkmeyer Inc. also have their contract expiring later this year, then our AT&T Mobility members at the beginning of next year. But there's more than just bargaining going on though.



AT&T and Verizon are also engaged in a nationwide legislative campaign to deregulate the local telephone providers. Along with powerful lobbying groups such as ALEC (The American Legislative Exchange Council), AT&T has introduced legislation in dozens of states, including California (SB 1161), to remove all regulatory oversight with regards to service quality, customer satisfaction, pricing, accessibility and safety standards. These efforts affect us all in one way or another. For our members at AT&T, the obvious fact is that the company will continue to move our jobs out of state and worse...out of the country. For everyone else, the effects will be slightly less noticeable at first. Gradually the impact will be felt though. Service quality, pricing, access to broadband and 4G networks are all going to feel the brunt of AT&T's immense political clout. Not if we do something about it though...together. There are a few good examples of note in recent days, such as legislation that was introduced by AT&T and Verizon in three northeast states, New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. As is almost always the case with nefarious groups like ALEC, this legislation flew under the radar and—voilà—found its way to the NJ assembly floor before anyone knew what was happening. It passed out of the Assembly 66-7. CWA and its allies now had their chance to flex some political muscle of their own. Along with The Sierra Club, AARP, The Working Families Party and others, CWA began contacting their members and key legislators. To make a long story short, Governor Chris Christie (who normally makes his residence inside ALEC's lower abdominal

cavity) received 20,000 phone calls in less than one week. Shortly thereafter, Governor Christie released a statement saying that he had "grave concerns" over the bill. Since then, the bill has disappeared into some unknown Senate Committee where it will die a slow death. The bills in New York and Connecticut have also met a similar fate. **United we truly do make a difference. Mobilize, mobilize, mobilize baby!**

With bargaining dragging on throughout the country, we need to stay focused. This round of bargaining with AT&T has been different from any that I have experienced. AT&T continues to make BILLIONS of dollars in net PROFIT each year (that's after you and I and all employees are paid). They continue to spend more on lobbying than any other company in the country. They continue to pay their executives outrageous compensation packages. They continue to pay their shareholders billions in dividends. There are some notable differences this time around though. Since the passage of The Affordable Care Act (ACA, a.k.a. Obamacare), AT&T now receives an additional 2 billion dollars per year in Federal subsidies (your tax dollars). This is mainly designed to help defray the cost of retiree benefits, but it's also an incentive to keep costs low for current employee benefits. Yet, AT&T somehow has the nerve to refuse to bargain retiree healthcare and they go even further by demanding that current employees pay twice as much for their existing benefits. Simply stated, that's outrageous. Another difference is their unbelievable willingness to lock-out our Premises Technicians simply for supporting the Union by wearing stickers and/or buttons. I am so proud of our Prem Techs for standing together, but I'm equally proud of our core technicians for coming to their defense. This is mobilizing-101: United We Bargain, Divided We Beg.

Bargaining reports have shown that this solidarity is helping. The company has removed many of their draconian take-back proposals from the table. The big issues of job security, surplus protections, benefits and wages still remain though. **Now is the time to step-it-up in mobilizing, not to rest on our accomplishments.** I can't count the times that I've said this, but here it goes again... This is your contract! If you have been involved, thank you; if you haven't, it's time to get off your butt and do something. **Mobilizing is the best way to avoid a strike while maintaining the benefits that we have gained over the past 75 years.**

Darrin Simmons
Secretary-Treasurer





MOBILIZING OUR MEMBERS TO FIGHT FOR THE AMERICAN DREAM



Our continued internal organizing effort to build the strength of our Union from within has been very successful. Three out of every four contacts made were successful in signing folks up to become part of our Union. This was the beginning. We then moved into the next phase: mobilization and potential strike preparation. I am pleased to

say that we are as ready as we've ever been in the event it becomes necessary to strike, and **our mobilization events (i.e. info pickets, rallies, marches, etc.) have been massive and bigger than years past on a consistent basis.** While we are focused on the Core part of AT&T currently, we know that we have two more rounds of bargaining in the not-so-distant future at GSI and AT&T Mobility. *We will be ready for both of these rounds as well!*

It is better to be prepared for what may turn out to be nothing than to have nothing prepared for what may be the worst case scenario.

Leading up to AT&T Core bargaining, our Local disseminated red mobilization t-shirts to our membership, along with red wrist bands, to display our unity in the workplace...especially every Thursday. We surveyed our membership and received feedback, especially from our Premises Technicians. **With tons of data, we were able to put together a comprehensive bargaining proposal that justifies moving our Premises Technicians from Appendix E into Appendix A, and to give them a wage scale increase that reflects the hard work they perform day in and day out (we were the only Local in District 9 to submit such a proposal for the Premises Techs).**

Our brothers and sisters back east at Verizon were forced out on strike for a little over 2 weeks just to get things moving again at the bargaining table. They are approaching the 1 year mark without a contract (as of the time of this publication), and still no tentative agreement is in sight. If we look at the similarities of how the greedy proposals of Verizon and the initial



CWA Local 9421 Officers with CWA District 9 Vice President Jim Weitkamp & members of his staff. Picketing the Howe Avenue Verizon Wireless Store in Sacramento.

proposals of AT&T, they were nearly a mirror image... and like our brothers and sisters at Verizon East, **we must be prepared to do whatever it takes to put our needs before AT&T's greed at the bargaining table.**

Strike assignments have been issued to each member in our Local...just in case it becomes necessary and a strike is called by our CWA International President Larry Cohen, we want to be fully prepared. To be prepared, we conducted Picket Captain Training along with the Mobilization Training Classes that we held here in our Local. We are doing everything to prepare for this fight...because it may be a lengthy battle.

It is better to be prepared for what may turn out to be nothing than to have nothing prepared for what may be the worst case scenario. **Very few can ever afford to be without a paycheck...but none of us can afford to suffer the company's outright regressive plans that will cost each of us even more dearly if we do not fight like hell in this round of bargaining!**

In addition to our informational picketing at 2700 Watt Ave, 3675 T St, 1407 J St, etc., we have continued to support our brothers and sisters back east at Verizon by demonstrating at the Howe Ave Verizon Wireless Store (as seen in the picture above). Their fight is our fight, and our fight is theirs! We must fight these attacks on our middle class standard of living together. ***For as long as it takes, and one day longer!***

In Unity,

John Adams Jr., 1st Vice President

WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH...



DENISE

We've all heard and probably used the phrase, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going." I did a little research to see where that phrase came from and what it really means. Wikipedia internet encyclopedia says "It is a popular English language proverb. The origin of the phrase has been attributed both to Joseph P. Kennedy (1888–1969), father of U.S. President John F. Kennedy, and sometimes to Norwegian-born American football player and coach Knute Rockne (1888–1931)." I was surprised to find that it actually can be taken in two different ways. Wikipedia says one meaning is "In context, 'the going' means 'the situation'; 'gets tough' means 'becomes difficult'; 'the tough' means 'people who are strong or enduring'; and 'get going' means 'become fully engaged.'" Taken together, the meaning of the phrase is **"When the situation becomes difficult, the strong will work harder to meet the challenge."** Taken another way the phrase could mean, "Those who act tough and proud will vacate a situation when it becomes difficult lest they be proven not as tough as they appear to be."

Since our contract ended at midnight on April 7th, we have had a high amount of participation in mobi-

lization in the different work locations and also our Local mobilization efforts. It's great to see how many are attending the Informational Pickets, and the high numbers of people that participated in the activities that were also done District-wide. Some of our efforts are paying off, as the company has withdrawn several of their "Are you serious?" (as I call them) proposals. Even though it's going slow, contract negotiations continue. That's a good thing!

As we move into our fourth month without a contract (as of the time of this publication), it is important for all of us to continue with the mobilization activities...just as strong as they were when we started. We still need everyone to continue to mobilize every day until we have a new contract.

My question for you is: are you going to work just as hard or even harder to continue to meet the challenge? Or are you going to vacate the situation and lose the enthusiasm you've had up to this point? We all need to remember what is on the line. YOUR wages, health benefits, job security, pension and other advances gained over the years are all at risk. We ALL have to keep going when the going gets tough!

"When you feel like giving up, remember why you held on for so long in the first place." ~ Unknown

In Unity,

Denise Mack
2nd Vice President

WHEN THE
GOING **JUST**
GETS **KEEP**
TOUGH **GOING**

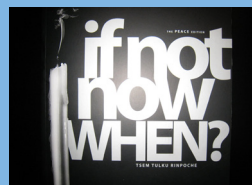
DON'T LET AT&T GUT OUR CONTRACT!



Alice Hodges
3rd Vice President

Can you believe it has been three years since the last contract? This time AT&T is determined to take away as much as they can. Several of the departments I represent have had retirements and offers; the people who have left know this contract could affect their benefits and retirement. They are joining us on the picket lines and letting the company know we will not stand for take backs!

AT&T is cutting more jobs every day. If we lose Article 2, the surplus process and job protections will not exist. Benefits and retirement could be a thing of the past. **Are YOU just going to sit back and let this happen?** Look at the pictures of your co-workers on the picket line. **Come out and join us! Let the company know we are all together,** Fighting for the American Dream: good, middle class jobs with good pay and good benefits.



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