



Positive View

The Newsletter of CWA Local 9421, Sacramento



CHANGING TIMES...

IMPORTANT ELECTION INFORMATION INSIDE
Nominations for Local Officers and the Executive Board

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Summer 2014

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

ADAPTING TO CHANGE...

Dear Members,

2014 started off with many changes, including the benefit changes that we ended up with after the last long round of negotiations with **AT&T Core** (wireline). As you may recall, benefits was a major issue in bargaining this last time around and I am sure it will be again in 2016 when the contract expires. I would like to remind all that it will take each and every one of us to prepare to do what we need in order to keep what we have and not continue to lose any more of our benefits.



Overall, I feel confident that the majority of our members know and understand how serious it is to stand strong and stand United. I hope that you all had the opportunity to see and read our **Positive View** newsletter from Summer/Fall 2013 (if not, check it out on our website, www.cwalocal9421.org/PositiveView.html). If you did you saw the heading "We've Come a Long Way"...how true that is. Those pictures on the cover depict the many years of hard work, struggle and sacrifice to get where we are today. We must never forget that everything we have was not just handed to us by the employer and it's not just something they want to give us. Starting with wages, paid vacation, benefits, working conditions and more--as a matter of fact everything we have--is all because we have a Union. If anyone thinks for a second that your employer wants to give us anything, think again. It is definitely a problem when there is at least one individual who claims to have to resign their membership because they can't afford a strike, and they try to get others to follow their lead. To those I **advise that you ask yourself a few questions: Can I afford no health benefits at all? Can I afford going on vacation without pay? But most of all ask yourself: Can I afford to show up to work one morning and be told I have no job? Some people take a lot for granted;** you must NEVER resign your Union membership just like you must NEVER cross a picket line. Don't let anyone talk you into doing what they want you to do just because it benefits them.

The 74th CWA Convention was held in April 2013 and was a successful Convention in that there were

several positive changes to our CWA Constitution. One in particular to highlight is that which “Delegates established telecom bargaining councils with the authority to designate national issues that cross bargaining unit lines at the same company. Vice Presidents must agree on any changes to these national issues; if they can’t reach agreement, the CWA (International) President will resolve the issues. This change recognizes the frustration that members, locals and bargaining committees experience when employers refuse to bargain at a national table, and will coordinate issues across districts and sectors.” This was the change that we talked about throughout our many meetings as we discussed future bargaining and the way that we could keep the other CWA Districts moving at the same pace on the same issues. We met with delegates from other Districts and other sectors to explain the importance of these changes and solicit their support.

I have agreed to sit on the CWA District 9 Subcommittee that will make recommendations to our bargaining councils. The AT&T wireline bargaining council will begin meeting this fall, and I will ensure that I have as much input on behalf of our members as I can.

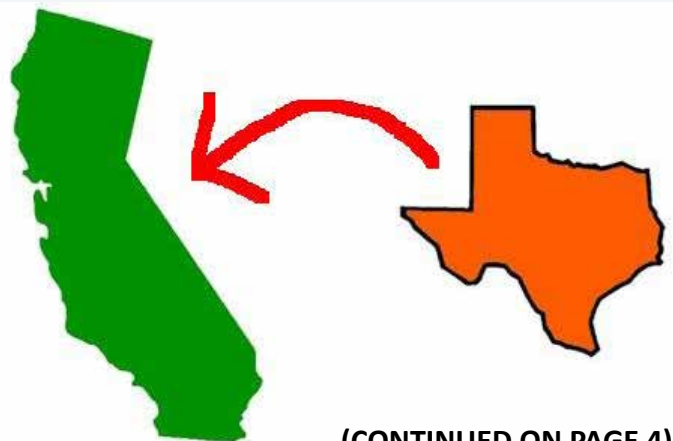
There were many more changes that have impacted several of our members in the various workgroups at AT&T Core, from various inside titles to outside technicians. As you may all have heard, there was massive retirement in December 2013 of bargained-for and management employees. This of course led to many more changes that impacted our members. There was changing of hours, splitting up departments and workgroups, and our members being asked to make choices/decisions without much detail. No one seemed to know much or have answers; it was worse than divestiture, but it seems all is falling into place and things seem to be smoothing out.

Due to all these changes, there is still confusion when it comes to overtime for the outside technicians. The company fails to follow its’ own process. I have volunteered and hosted meetings with the various 2nd level managers so that we can address these issues and ensure that our members get the overtime opportunities they are entitled to. I am hoping for the sake of our members to help get things into place and to be better prepared once a real winter gets here. This last “Emergency Declaration” by AT&T was ridiculous; as soon as it started to sprinkle they declared an emergency. We have filed grievances on this issue which have led to an executive level grievance at CWA District 9. Hopefully when winter gets here AT&T

will not overreact, and be better prepared so that our members don’t have to be the sacrificial lamb.

While **AT&T Core** continues to look at quarterly numbers and ways to downsize/consolidate, **I am very pleased to share that the Voluntary Separation Benefits offer (VSB) which is a new part of the 2012 contract has been a big help for most of our surplus. It has enabled some of our members who wanted to retire to be able to do so, while allowing our surplus members to come off of surplus and keep a job.** Of course, as I am feeling confident about getting my surplus resolved we enter a new quarter and the Companies come out with a new surplus declaration. In the beginning of June 2014, the company announced a surplus declaration which includes 9 of my Communications Technicians in the Network Translations Center (NTC) group in the Network Operations Center (NOC). The company started with a number of 12 techs that they needed to go down in the NTC; I was able to successfully force balance 1 into a vacancy in the Switch group in the NOC and 2 were able to benefit from the new ESB offer. This leaves me with 9 in the NTC that I am trying to find slots where I can get them force balanced into. I will be looking into any and all possible opportunities; meanwhile, they to have the opportunity to check in AUTS for anything they can bid on and get priority surplus placement.

On a very positive note **WHEN HAVE WE HEARD OF WORK MOVING TO CALIFORNIA FROM TEXAS?** That’s right, from Texas to California. It’s never easy on CWA members when AT&T decides to close down a department and relocate work to another state. My heart goes out to CWA members that are faced with the big decision of following the work or separating from the company. However, I do feel blessed that this time the decision was made in our favor and the Bill Print work from the Houston center will be brought to our West Sacramento Bill Print center.



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I am very proud of the fact that our members in Bill Print are hard workers, and that we have always maintained a great relationship with upper level management in this department. Vice President Maggie Weakland was in town visiting our West Sacramento center at the beginning of June. I joined her, Director Vicki Rose, and Associate Director Joseph Derden to do a walk through of the center and thank the members for their great work. At this time there was some dialogue in regards to the work moving but, out of consideration and respect to members in the Houston center nothing was announced in order to afford them the opportunity to be properly notified. Once the notification was rolled out to the Houston center, I joined management in West Sacramento for the announcement and to thank them again for their hard work. I fully intend to welcome anyone who chooses to follow the work from Houston to West Sacramento and make them feel as much at home as possible.

AT&T Mobility (wireless) has also gone through some changes, but there too things are settling down and overall going pretty smooth. We did lose the downtown retail store due to the new arena that is going to be built; however, we were able to ensure that all of our members from that store were given the opportunity to move to another store. **For more on Mobility, please see Vice President John Adam Jr.'s article (page 8).**

At **Gordon and Schwenkmeyer Inc. (GSI)** (a telemarketing firm that we represent) we were finally able to obtain a contract with increases that our members were able to ratify. I have to thank Secretary-Treasurer Darrin Simmons for his commitment in these negotiations on behalf of our GSI members (see his article on page 6 for more information). It wasn't easy, but we did it, and I want to acknowledge our GSI Steward Sandy Rodgers for keeping our members informed and **thank our GSI members for their unity and patience.** In the end they were very grateful for a good contract.

In closing, I would like to thank all members...YOU... for adapting to the many changes that your employer has made. Despite the challenges, you have stepped up and worked hard, and I could not be prouder. Our unity is our strength; our togetherness gives us power. All of us, working together, can overcome and adapt to any change that is thrown at us.

In Unity,
Lupe Mercado
Your President

MOVING FORWARD:

What happens when you don't participate in a group activity? Say for instance you're having friends over to your house for a BBQ. For fun, let's just say there's 10 people total, including you. You ask each person to bring one item, potluck style, so that everyone is contributing something small to the BBQ. In



return, the whole group benefits from a full meal with all kinds of good food. Now let's say 1 person decides not to participate (insert your favorite friend here, you know who!)—yet they show up anyway, empty-handed. They figure, 'no big deal, everyone else will contribute'; of course, they still expect to eat! As long as the other 9 do what they need to do, you can still have a decent meal, right? But what if 6 more don't bring anything either? Now you have 7 people not participating and only 3 people who have provided food. Can you feed all 10 people? Uh oh. Y'all better order take out, because there's not enough food to go around!

So what's the point of this exercise? You see, 7 out of 10 people didn't participate in California's June 2014 Primary. Uh huh. No big deal, right? I mean, elections don't mean anything anyway...they only decide who will dictate how much we pay in taxes, the laws that we live under, the rules that govern our workplaces and the laws that allow corporations to offshore and move work...you know, just little things like that. Obviously, I'm being facetious and trying to draw a parallel here. **Elections matter.** They matter more than most people know. The men and women we elect make decisions every day that directly affect us and our families.

Despite the fact that elections are so important, only 25% of registered voters in California—less than 3 out of 10—participated. That's the lowest turnout percentage of registered voters in a non-presidential primary...ever. I don't know about you, but I don't want 25% of the people making decisions for the other 75%. I have a problem with this. In fact, it's quite disgusting. Why? We learned in school (remember that government/civics class?) that people literally fought for and died for the right to vote. Heck, you don't have to go back in time...right now, in 2014, there are people in parts of the world who are literally fighting for and dying over the ability to have a democracy and vote. **After all, what is a vote but a voice? Your voice.** It is your chance to speak your

2014 & BEYOND...YOUR CONTRIBUTION COUNTS!

mind when you cast a ballot to elect people that you think will help you and your family out. This is not some abstract concept. This is real. We're talking about real world things that impact us all on a day to day basis.

Now let's get back to that BBQ. I'm sure you're thinking what I'm thinking about now—why are these free-loading friends taking advantage of you? Because that's what it is, after all. Those that decide not to participate are actually causing stress on you and everyone else who did their part. You participated. Others did too. But the rest figured it didn't matter. Just like those 7 out of 10 voters who were either too lazy or too apathetic to take the time to vote. Maybe they thought their vote didn't matter. Or maybe they were just lazy. Either way, their inaction has consequences. Like I said, elections matter.

Moving forward, let us all contribute to making our society a better place to live, work and play. Whether it's your community, your city, county, state or federal, it's all important. Don't be one of those 7 out of 10 people who decide not to participate. Please do your part: vote. Let your voice be heard. **Your contribution counts. Your vote matters.** Guess what? Often times, it counts more than you know.

PREM TECHS/AT&T CORE

Things have been busy with the Premises Technicians in the U-Verse group! **With constant change being the consistent theme with not only this department but all of AT&T, the ability to adapt and roll with the punches is very important for all employees.** There has been an influx of new Prem Techs that have been hired off the street, as well transfers in from other yards/area. I've stayed busy over the past year welcoming these folks to CWA and orienting them on their rights and the contract. Covering things like safety is a key facet of the Prem Tech job, and that's why I'm glad we've conducted our first set of rodeos for 2014, with the next set due for the end of this year (see VP Alice Hodges' article on page 7 for more on safety).

In other news, you may or may not have heard that **CWA won a landmark ruling in April 2014, when a judge with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) made a sweeping decision against AT&T and in favor of CWA** regarding the wearing of buttons/stickers (concerted activity) during our 2012-2013 bargaining. Here's the synopsis from CWA District 9: "CWA members won a big victory with their right to wear and display pro-union messages upheld by an NLRB admin-

istrative law judge. In April 2012, some CWA members were disciplined by Pacific & Nevada Bell Telephone (AT&T) for wearing and displaying pro-union messages on stickers and buttons, as well as on company trucks, laptops and lockers. About 18 months later, an NLRB regional director issued an amended complaint against the company for several labor law violations related to this unfair discipline. A hearing before an administrative law judge brought a clear victory for our members' rights to show support for our union. **Judge John McCarrick found that the company violated the fundamental tenets of federal labor law, and that language in the employer's Premises Guidelines also violates the National Labor Relations Act. His recommended order requires that the company 'cease and desist from maintaining and enforcing this rule in its Premises Technicians Guidelines employee handbook.'**"

Why is this important? Aside from the feeling of being right and rubbing it in the company's face, our Prem Techs may receive back pay for lost wages when they were locked out on several occasions back in 2012. While we are sure that AT&T will appeal the decision, we are on rock solid legal ground, and expect the verdict will stand and that we will prevail. Moreover, it sends a clear message to **AT&T: you can't break the law, and we will fight you and win each and every time you try to diminish our rights.** I could not be prouder of our Prem Tech heroes who made many sacrifices to secure a fair contract and who stood up for their rights. THANK YOU to all Prem Techs for everything you do!

In other news from AT&T Core, I also represent the techs in the Network Operations Center (NOC) and Ethernet Network Operations Center (ENOC) on Kings Way. The ENOC maintenance and provisioning groups are both super busy, and Lupe and I continue to advocate for increased headcount to keep up with all of the work and to keep the center viable. In the NOC, the Switch Surveillance group continues to remain busy, and they are maintaining headcount to keep up with the work. In the Network Translations Center (NTC) group in the NOC, President Lupe Mercado and I continue to look for opportunities to place the surplusd Communications Technicians (see Lupe's article on page 3 for more on this).

I really appreciate the contribution of all techs and all members, and I applaud your ability to adapt to change and do what you need to do in order to thrive. Moving forward, our ability to adapt will be very important.

In Unity, Robert Longer, Executive Vice President

WE ARE ALL THE UNION

I have been representing the Core I&M technicians at **AT&T Core** (wireline) for many years now. There have been ups and downs along the way. Quite often there seems to be no rhyme or reason why the company does what it does. About fifteen years ago we were all required as technicians to remove all “bridge tap” in the outside plant. Then a while after that we were required to put it all back together only to have another directive after that requiring dedicated pairs to each residence/business. This may sound like gibberish to our folks that are not technicians, but the point is that we go around and around like this quite frequently. About twelve years ago we created two separate organizations: “demand” and “non-demand.” After a couple years it was dismantled and now we are back to the same basic structure “NIBS” and “SD&A.” Personally, it all pays the same, but it doesn’t make any sense that we seem to swing like a pendulum from year to year depending upon the directive du jour.



I didn’t run through all that just to confuse everyone though. Initially, *when the company started the reorganization, they had little if any plan in place.* The technicians and I didn’t know what the responsibilities would be, the shifts/tours, weekend schedules, etc... I continued to press for answers.

There appears to be a difference now though. For the first time that I can recall, the company has actually tried to listen to the union and the employees to make this transition a positive wherever possible. **I repeatedly asked management to get out to the yards and listen to what folks had to say.** While not every manager has visited every location, they have certainly gotten out more than usual and listened to our folks. In SD&A the area managers, district manager and VP have all made yard visits this year. In NIBS the area manager and district manager have also visited some of our locations and I met with the VP. I always believe they can get out more and more importantly listen to our members. After all, we do the job and we are quite good at it. Nonetheless, I have to give a little credit where credit is due. Management did pay attention to some of our issues and agreed to make some changes that benefit us all.

Obviously, there are so many things that could be improved for our technicians. Working out in the elements with difficult customers and shoddy plant is a challenge in and of itself. I have long argued that management should and could be removing as many roadblocks as possible, basically making it possible for us all to succeed. Also, creating an environment where folks don’t mind coming to work and giving it their all. While the company doesn’t always accept good advice when it is offered, they have

taken a few steps in the right direction. Since the beginning of 2014, both departments have reduced the number of technicians scheduled on Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays. NIBS is currently starting a differential shift and reducing the number of folks working the later tour. I am in discussion with SD&A on this same issue of shifts and tours. **Both departments have also moved away from MSOC being used as a disciplinary system and more as a way to identify training deficiencies (across all four yards in our Local there have not been any disciplinary cases related to MSOC in 2014).** The company has also displayed a more serious attitude towards safety, albeit not perfect.

For nearly seventeen years now, my job has been to improve the working conditions of all our technicians, represent them in times of trouble, ensure that the contract is honored, and hold the companies feet to the fire with regards to providing a safe working environment. I must say though, as I have said many times before: ***we are all the union.*** I can tell management over and over how to get things done, but when they also hear it from you it helps move the ball in the right direction.

GSI TELEMARKETING

CWA and Gordon Schwenkmyer Inc. (GSI) concluded a tough year of bargaining on March 21, 2014 with the signing of a new collective bargaining agreement that will be in effect through December 1, 2015. For those of you who don’t know, GSI is a telemarketing firm that we represent. It was agreed by both parties that **the primary focus in this round of bargaining was to improve the standard of living for all GSI employees, with substantial wage increases.** The near future holds some level of uncertainty with regards to healthcare in light of the evolving landscape surrounding The Affordable Care Act. Thus the expiration date was set to coincide with the employer mandate that will presumably take effect in 2016. **In this current contract all employees received one time, up front wage increase between 5% and 7.15% of the base wage.** These wage increases keep GSI competitive with the industry as a whole. It was also agreed that a committee to address work place issues and the bonus structure would be continued through the life of the contract. The contract was unanimously ratified in both the Sacramento and San Diego locations. **It has been my honor to negotiate this contract on your behalf,** along with the Bargaining Committee. Many thanks to CWA International Staff Representative Cherie Brokaw who is the Chair of the Committee.

In Unity, Darrin Simmons, Secretary-Treasurer

2014 SAFETY RODEO RECAP

It is with great pleasure that I report out that the safety rodeos for **AT&T Core** actually took place this year. Starting with SD&A, we held the rodeos for Splicers and Premises Technicians at the work sites located at Cebrian, Juliesse, and Galena (Orangevale Prem Techs joined this rodeo). **I want to especially thank Executive Vice President Robert Longer, all of our Union Stewards, and the safety SPOCs from each location for all of the planning and time to put these rodeos together.** *By popular request, senior Steward Angel Lara prepared his signature Carne Asada, as well as Tri Tip for the Prem Techs. I can tell you that everyone enjoyed the food at the end of the rodeos!*

As the Vice President of our Local responsible for Safety, I can assure you that safety is the most important item on my agenda...and **I was determined to not allow AT&T to cancel the rodeos as they have done in the past.** It helps to have a Director over NIBS who has the same commitment to safety as I do. Denis Delja has ensured that all of his managers understand the seriousness of safety to a point that they are now working with me on safety issues and scheduling continued safety meetings. I want to thank our Stewards in NIBS for all their help as well.

The NIBS Safety Rodeos were held at the Rocklin yard, and it was obvious that several months of meetings took place to ensure the success of the rodeos. There were a series of safety events with opportunities to practice proper use of ladders, backing, parking and much more that in the end will prove to help with our members' safety. The rodeos ended with a hearty lunch of tri-tip, chili beans and salad.

I would also like to thank Vice President John Adams. He and I jointly oversee Construction and Engineering. I specifically appreciate the excellent newsletter he puts out to our C&E technicians; they thoroughly enjoy and look forward to each new edition.

Please keep in mind that safety should be your number one responsibility; but, since accidents do happen, make sure you report them to your manager and do not fear for retaliation. You should not be disciplined for getting injured on the job, and if your manager does take disciplinary action against you a grievance can and will be filed on your behalf. At the same time, you can file a complaint with the Department of Industrial Relations for discrimination by going to the following links: <http://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/FilingADiscriminationComplaint1.pdf> as well as <http://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/DLSEForm205.pdf>. Finally, **CHECK OUT THE PICTURES TO THE RIGHT, WHICH SHOW SOME OF THE SAFETY RODEOS. STAY SAFE!**

In Unity, Alice Hodges, 3rd Vice President



UNITY@MOBILITY - TURNING



I have been supporting our **AT&T Mobility** (wireless) Retail workers since we Organized them in late 2005, and even prior when they were Cingular. *I am blessed with a terrific Chief Steward – Patti Satterlee – who takes care of our Mobility members as if they were each one of her own children.* Now, I am further blessed because **we have**

more Retail Stewards than we have ever had before, totaling 6 in all for our 9 different store locations (we had 10 stores but our Downtown Store recently closed due to the new Kings Arena that will be placed where the store is currently located. Fortunately, all employees were relocated by seniority to alternate stores of their selection).

I was approached in the latter part of 2013 and asked if I would be interested in becoming a training instructor/coordinator for the Unity@Mobility campaign which would be funded by the Mobility Strategic Industry Fund via the international CWA (meaning the cost for me to train/coordinate and for the students to attend is not borne by our Local). This would be an effort to educate and engage our Mobility members from the Retail Stores, the Call Centers, and the Technicians across the country so that we will have further bargaining strength in future rounds of bargaining. Once I heard that, I was all in! Being that **our Local drafted and submitted over 20 bargaining proposals prior to the 2013 Orange Contract bargaining round**, and 11 of those were acted upon in some way, we recognize the need to build further strength with our Mobility group. Fortunately, my main focus would be on Northern California with some assistance elsewhere as needed.

We performed our first training here in Sacramento in December of 2013, and it went very well. We held another in January 2014, and it went even better. Then we held one in February, one in March and another in April and those all went extremely well and our members were excited about getting more involved with their union. I would be remiss if I didn't thank one of my existing Stewards, Christina Kempton from our Davis store, who became a co-trainer for 3 of our 5 classes and for all she does for our members in her shop. I would also like to thank my existing Steward Rob Coates from the Truxel store for attending one of the first classes and for all he does for our members in his shop. From the trainings alone, we were able to obtain 4 brand new Stewards who are excited and doing a remarkable job! Alex Dorado from Folsom,

Marco Rodriguez from Laguna, Joaquin Mora from Citrus Heights and Ann Adkins from Douglas Roseville have all stepped up to the challenge of becoming a shop Steward following their Unity@Mobility Training. I also made 2 trips down to Fresno to assist them in training their folks, and they too were able to obtain new Mobility Stewards as a direct result of the classes. The education provided via the Unity@Mobility Campaign has truly created a buzz, and our members who have attended have a far better understanding of what it means to be an active part of CWA.

“The best part of the workshop I attended was learning about how Unions affect our wages and how non-unionized employers drag our wages down.”

- Chester Saechao, Folsom Retail Store

Here locally, we achieved our goal of getting 10% of our Mobility members trained, with at least 1 per store/group. I also helped other Locals like Chico 9414, Auburn 9431, Stockton 9417, Napa 9404, Fresno 9408 and others to try and reach their goal as well. Our District (CWA District 9) was one of only 2 Districts in the nation who achieved the goal of training 10% of our Mobility members in California, Nevada and Hawaii, with District 1 being the only other to meet this target set by our CWA international leadership.

When asked what was the best part of the Unity@Mobility Campaign, Nelson Galicinao of Stockton Local 9417 stated:
“We are starting the movement toward 2017!”

After performing a new steward class for our 4 new Mobility Stewards and several from other surrounding Locals, we had a lot of new positive energy from these folks who wanted to dive in and do something. I talked with my fellow Officers to brainstorm what we could do immediately that would get them to turn the education we have provided each of them into action. President Lupe Mercado and Executive Vice President Robert Longer and I came up with a plan to work on a drive within Mobility to increase our voluntary participation and monies contributed by our Mobility members into the Committee On Political Education (COPE), also now known as the Political Action Fund (PAF). With the hot item of Fast Track and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), in addition to the June Primary and November General Election this year, we knew that we

EDUCATION INTO ACTION

would need to do what we can to raise the awareness and raise funds to battle on behalf of our members and working families. So we put our Mobility Steward Team to work on this drive.... and the results so far have been remarkable!

We have increased voluntary contributions to COPE/PAF just from Mobility Retail by over \$130 per month and have a 1/3 of our Mobility members participating in this program!!! These results could not have been achieved without all of their efforts. Chief Steward Patti Satterlee continues to get near perfect participation results in each and every new member orientation we perform together. In my visits to the stores I too have reached out to our members to get them involved, and have been fairing pretty well. Here is what we have accomplished together in the individual store locations (numbers are as of time of publication):

- *Truxel – now 65% of the members in this store voluntarily contribute to COPE/PAF!*
- *Folsom – now 48% of the members in this store voluntarily contribute to COPE/PAF!*
- *Davis – now 43% of the members in this store voluntarily contribute to COPE/PAF!*
- *Laguna – now 33% of the members in this store voluntarily contribute to COPE/PAF!*
- *Creekside – now 29% of the members in this store voluntarily contribute to COPE/PAF!*
- *Citrus Heights – now 27% of the members in this store voluntarily contribute to COPE/PAF!*
- *Douglas – now 25% of the members in this store voluntarily contribute to COPE/PAF!*
- *University – now 25% of the members in this store voluntarily contribute to COPE/PAF!*
- *Arden – now 20% of the members in this store voluntarily contribute to COPE/PAF!*

Truxel, in addition to having the highest level of participation, has the highest amount of money per employee within the store...great job Rob! Folsom has the highest total amount of voluntary contributions each month...great job Alex! Laguna has the highest amount of new voluntary contribution each month...great job Marco! Citrus Heights more than doubled their participation since we began...great job Joaquin! And to Christina & Ann who have also helped increase our contributions...great job! And **to all of the members who have attended our Unity@Mobility Training Classes or who have simply generously donated to our COPE/PAF drive, I want to say THANK YOU!** Together, anything is possible.

AT&T CORE (WIRELINE)

In other news from the Core side of my responsibilities, we worked to make sure the transition of the work groups from 3675 T Street to either **3600 Watt Ave. (Location Records, EWO, the ECA group, and DWO)** or **2700 Watt Ave on the 3rd Floor (CMC, CAG & various other support groups)** as smooth as possible. Folks have settled in nicely overall and my Steward team of Chief Steward Devona Edwards and Chief Steward Sharon Thompson have greatly assisted in keeping things going as smooth as possible within these workgroups. I would also like to thank former Steward Jocelyn Locke for her years of service.

At **3900 Channel Drive** my Chief Steward Maurice Digiardi, existing Steward Cedric Williams and I have fell into some great fortune when we received both Susan O'Keefe, Steward from Collections, and Ruth Davis, Steward from the ROC, via surplus placement into the Bill Print facility. Our Steward team literally doubled in size and with Ruth working day shift in the office, we finally have someone more readily accessible on that shift (as Maurice, Cedric and now Susan are all on the Swing Shift). We are very happy to have them as part of our team! We have continued to work on scheduling and rotation issues. We also recently were successful in getting 2 new SSA Requisitions filled and we were able to get 2 new Computer Operator Requisitions that are in process at the time of this article. Last but not least, this center is getting work from Texas... yes, you heard right...**WORK FROM TEXAS IS MOVING TO CALIFORNIA.** **Thanks to the strong relationship that President Lupe Mercado has with the department—and due to the members who continue to do a massive amount of difficult work each and every day—we are getting work from Texas and keeping the center viable. To the members in Bill Print, THANK YOU for your hard work!**



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KEEPING UP WITH CONSTANT CHANGE



As always, change is inevitable. There have been several changes that have occurred within [AT&T Mobility](#) (wireless) as well as [AT&T Core](#) (wireline); the same holds true for the tele-marketing firm that we represent, [Gordon Schwenkmeyer Inc. \(GSI\)](#).

Mobility employees in the Office of the President and Work Force Operations were relocated from Greenhaven

Ave to 3540 Kings Way. So far everything is going good in that location. The employees who were previously located in the building were happy with their arrival, as they helped to improve the building's main break room with an ice machine and cable TV. During my office visits and talking to the [AT&T Mobility](#) employees, I am glad to report there are no issues with the new office or management.

Per usual, [AT&T Core](#) has continued to make several changes this past year. In the Business Service Representative Office of Winback/Out of Franchise (OOF) they are no stranger to change. This time it was a departmental change as AT&T continues to reorganize work groups. They are no longer a part of AT&T Business Solutions Customer Care, but have been moved to Global Network Provisioning. They still handle West & Southwest Winback and West OOF and will be adding new Winback work from AT&T Southeast. While this will be a challenge, the Service Reps always work through it and adapt; after all, they're professionals. We're always happy to see work moving into Sacramento! The Business Service Reps in the GEM office are gearing up and getting training on the new Calnet3 work that is coming. This is work that AT&T secured with the State of California—with substantial help from President Lupe Mercado and EVP Robert Longer (thank you both!)—and is a contract with the state for various communications services. They will be working on orders, changing their services, and putting them under the new contract.

Another change made by [AT&T Core](#) in 2014 was the change in paid sick days for Core employees. Instead of being paid every time you are ill and can't come to work, in the new 2012 contract AT&T has limited the paid sick days to 12 days per year (5 days if you are a Premises Technician). With the changes in the Core contract, **as of January 1, 2014, employees are now able to also utilize the California Kin Care law.** In 1999 the California Legislature adopted Labor Code 233 (Kin Care law). Kin Care provides provisions which allow eligible employees to use up to half of their accrued paid sick leave benefits to care for a sick family member. I, along with the Officers, made office visits to several departments throughout Sacramento this year explaining and answering questions on the contractual changes and the use of Kin Care. We are now able to take advantage of the California Kin Care law to care for an eligible family member (parent,

child, spouse or domestic partner). You are able to use up to half of your annual allotment of 12 paid illness days (6 days total; exception: Prem Techs can use up to 2 ½ days total), as defined by the contract. Qualifying absences under Kin Care are protected from attendance discipline. Kin Care is simple to use and does not require any specific qualifications or written documentation be provided to management.

It's important to know there are many other state and federal laws that provide for additional paid and unpaid leaves. Along with Kin Care, there is the **Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**. This 1994 law was designed to protect workers' jobs, seniority, and benefits when they have to take time off work for their own illness or to take care of a family member. If you qualify, you can then take up to 480 hours (12 weeks) off a year (unpaid), as long as it is certified by a health care provider. There is also **Pregnancy Disability Leave (PDL)** for women. Pregnant women are entitled to take a specific amount of time off for medical reasons due to pregnancy, including the birth of their child. Pregnant women who become disabled due to their condition may receive up to four months of unpaid leave as long as they provide medical verification from their doctor to their employer. Leave can be taken before or after birth during any period of time the woman is physically unable to work because of pregnancy or a pregnancy-related condition. After the child is born, and the disability leave comes to an end, they may become eligible for an additional 12 weeks off to recover and bond with their new child. The additional 12 weeks off, like the initial time off, is unpaid.

For California workers covered by SDI (State Disability Insurance), **Paid Family Leave (PFL)** insurance provides up to six weeks of benefits (up to 55% of your weekly pay) for individuals who must take time off to care for a seriously ill child, spouse, parent, or registered domestic partner, or to bond with a new child. Paid family leave is administered through the California EDD (Employment Development Department).

On a final note, our members at GSI have a new contract with some great, positive changes for our members there (see Darrin Simmons' article for more on this). I would like to say thank you to our Union Steward at GSI, Sandy Rodgers, for keeping members informed. She has been busy talking to the many new hires, giving out copies of the contract, and making sure those who pass probation are given a membership card.

As you can see, as in life, change is constant throughout all of the employers that we represent. No matter what change inevitably occurs though, I know that our members are strong, resilient professionals who can adapt to change and thrive. Thank you all for doing a great job!

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." - Maya Angelou (1928-2014)

John Adams Jr.'s Article

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

In the **DEG Groups in both Rancho Cordova and West Sacramento**, I am pleased to report that *every technician has been outfitted with a vehicle that is equipped with Air Conditioning (AC)*. The relationship we have with the management in this organization helped make what used to be a wish, a reality! Our Stewards Larry Anderson (West Sac) and George Winston (Rancho) have continued to do a great job helping our members stay off the radar. Larry has also been an especially instrumental part of our C&E Joint Safety Committee each month.

In the **Line Crew Groups of OPT's in both Rancho Cordova and West Sacramento**, we have been working on getting a handle on the number of occupational incidents that have occurred within what is one of the most dangerous jobs within AT&T. Steward and C&E Safety Committee Representative Angelo Brusatory has done an exceptional job with making sure the issues that the Line Crew face day in and day out are brought to the table and discussed. I am pleased to report that through our efforts, *100% of the T40C's are now equipped with AC*, and only 8 specialized rigs remain and as they come up for replacement will be evaluated at that time to have AC put in...and we will continue to push for it.

In the **Splicing Crews at both Rancho Cordova and West Sacramento**, we have been fighting to deal with overtime opportunity issues surrounding the SD&A organization. Alice Hodges and I, with support and assistance from President Lupe Mercado, pushed to get a new canvass performed and to further clarify with management that some of the ways they were administering the opportunities were not in line with the contract. At the time of this article a new canvass has been performed of all C&E Splicers in both yards in Sacramento who wish to help out with SD&A both during the course of the 8 hour day, and any overtime opportunities they may wish to accept. Thank you to Scott Filiu who has been a tremendous asset to our C&E Joint Safety Committee. *I am pleased to report 100% of the 2006 and newer vehicles have been equipped with AC*. There are only 14 trucks earlier than 2006 between the 2 yards here in Sacramento that as they come up for replacement will be outfitted with AC. Again, having a strong working relationship with management has helped us make this remarkable difference for our C&E members.

In Unity, **John Adams Jr.**,
1st Vice President



ELECTION NEWS

CWA Local 9421

Nominations for Local Officers and the Executive Board

As mandated by our bylaws, the nominations for our Local Officers and the Executive Board will take place at our September 9th membership meeting.

To be a candidate for office in our Local, one must be a member in good standing of this Local and express his or her desire to accept nomination and run for office by turning in a signed Acceptance of Nomination form by the deadline. The deadline for returning the nomination form is September 10th 2014 by 5:00pm. **In order to be eligible to vote, you have to be a member or be accepted as a member by the September 9th Membership Meeting.**

One important change this year is that we will no longer use the union boards in the workplace for CAMPAIGNING or CAMPAIGN material. The union boards can be used to post announcements about the election or the election process as well as meeting information as usual, but no campaign materials. This decision was made by the Election Committee in consultation with the U.S. Department of Labor.

If you have any questions or concerns about the election or the nomination process please contact a member of the Election Committee at **916-484-9421** or e-mail elections2014@cwalocal9421.org.

Your Election Committee's purpose is to run an election that is fair and impartial within the framework of our constitution and bylaws, as well as federal law. We want to have the greatest number of qualified candidates presented to the greatest number of members. We will do our best to make this election a success for our Local.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian Weddle, Election Chairperson

Monique Garcia, Co-Chairperson

Berta Gonzales-Cable

Misty Greek





POSITIVE VIEW

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Lupe Mercado, President
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Phone: **916-484-9421**

Web: **www.cwalocal9421.org**

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We're Union, We're Family, We're Proud!