



# Positive View

The Newsletter of CWA Local 9421, Sacramento

# VOTE 2010



## SUPPORT LABOR'S CANDIDATES & ISSUES

*SEE INSIDE FOR FULL DETAILS*

Fall 2010 Issue

# POSITIVE VIEW



## COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA

LOCAL 9421, SACRAMENTO, CA

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Lupe Mercado

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# THE FIGHT NEVER ENDS



Dear Members,

I hope this newsletter finds you all doing well. I would like to start by addressing the importance of the mid-term general election. I am very pleased that the majority of our members recognize the importance of elections. However, there are still a few that just don't even think voting is important today. Every single vote is even more critical than ever before. Elections matter for so many reasons; we are voting for people that make decisions that affect our daily lives. We are voting for people that are the backbone of our country. What an opportunity we have to be able to elect the right people. We can't do our jobs by not voting; we need the right people behind the right issues. CWA has been in an ongoing struggle with Congress on issues like the Employee Free Act, Health Insurance Reform, and Social Security that directly affect our Union and our families. We need to stand and fight for the politicians who have stood with us and who will stand with us, and defeat the ones who have turned their back on the working people of this country.

This election is going to be crucial for the Union's ability to accomplish the work that needs to be done in Washington D.C. in the coming years. We cannot afford to lose our majority in the Congress or in the states, and I hope I can count on you and your family to be involved in the election this year. The President will not be able to turn around the economy alone--he needs members of Congress who understand the needs of working people fighting alongside him.

With that said I'll move on with the fact that our fight never ends. The year 2009 came and went, and we had

## THE FIGHT NEVER ENDS (CONTINUED)

successfully negotiated multiple contracts which were overall pretty good for our members. Our CWA/AT&T Mobility contract will expire on February 9, 2013 and our AT&T Core contract will expire April 7, 2012. We also renewed the contract with GSI (Gordon and Schwenk-meyer, Inc.), which expires December 1, 2010; this is the contract on behalf of our members in the telemarketing business. As we all know, time goes by fast and before you know it we will be in negotiations again so let's start preparing for the next round of negotiations.

*Our fight will never end*--it will just be a tougher fight--which we can all handle as long as we are prepared to stand United. We must stand United at GSI so that there is no more game playing by the employer. We must stand United at AT&T Mobility too. As we have visited the Mobility call center several times and the Mobility stores (we represent 10 stores in our Local), our members tell us they understand the importance of Unity and the fact that they are prepared for the next round of bargaining. While we have obtained a good contract, there is room for improvements and our members recognize the value in being Union-represented.

We must stand United at AT&T Core as well. While we felt good about the accomplishments in this last round of bargaining, there is even more to accomplish in 2012. We can do it as long as we prepare to stand United. We owe it to our Premise Technicians whose section of the contract is the newest and will need support from each and every one of us in order to improve it. We have done it in the past and we can do it again.

As we know, it didn't take long for our employers to start retaliating shortly after the ratification of our contracts. In AT&T Core for example, we ratified September of 2009 and in October we received communication that AT&T would be downsizing each quarter. The communication went out Nationwide and every region would be impacted.

For our Local, the impact began with the elimination of all of the entire consumer markets group in Sacramento. In November 2009 our Residence Service Representatives were informed that their work would be moving to other cities where they could follow the work. The company had no intention of making any separation offers but thanks to our contractual language, an Early Retirement Benefit (ERB) must be offered before surplus can be declared. ERB worked out for a handful of our 258 Service Reps;

the rest had to make a decision to follow their work on a 2-hour commute (or move) or be declared surplus. After listening to the majority who stated that they could not follow the work and who pleaded for an Enhanced Surplus Reduction (ESRO) offer, I am pleased to say I was able to negotiate that an ESRO offer be made (even though ESRO is not contractually required; i.e. the company doesn't have to offer it). The majority took the ESRO and separation benefits and moved on with their lives.

In January 2010 we were informed of the plans for the 1st quarter. These plans impacted our Network Provisioning Maintenance Center whose work was moving to San Ramon. This work had been slated to move in 2004, but we were instrumental in keeping it in Sacramento until now. To make matters worse, the movement of this center also impacted our members located at 3675 T Street due to the fact that the same titles were held at both locations and all are under the same Presidential entity. ESRO and ERB offers were made to the affected work groups, and some folks followed the work to San Ramon, but we still have some of our members sitting in Sacramento in surplus. The good news about our contract is that per Article 2 our surplus members are maintained on payroll until they receive a job offer.

There were other work groups that would be impacted during the 1st quarter. Some of our Network Operations Center (NOC) work was slated to move to other states; initially our members were informed they could follow the work to Conyers, Georgia (GA) but that was quickly rescinded due to the surplus taking place in that region. After many phone calls and aggressive negotiations with AT&T and CWA District 3, we were able to obtain a Memorandum of Agreement to allow our Communications Technicians to follow their work. Needless to say, some of our members relocated to GA; we will miss them but wish them the best. Between force balancing of Comm Techs from the NOC to the LFO, the follow-the-work to GA and ERB and ESRO offers (the latter of which AT&T did not want to offer, but again I am pleased to say I was able to negotiate that they offer ESRO), the surplus in the NOC was resolved. The other title that was impacted during the 1st quarter in our Local was Service Technicians in Installation & Maintenance (I&M). Between ERB, ESRO (again, the company did not want to offer ESRO) and matching Service Techs to other jobs, the surplus in that title is almost resolved. **(See "FIGHT" on page 6 for more ... )**

## GREED & SAFETY

Once again Corporate Greed has raised its ugly head—or has AT&T revealed its true self? They've removed their mask to show that they are truly anti-Union in their efforts to consolidate work locations, destroy people's way of life and destroy communities by moving work to right-to-work states, meaning you don't have to belong to a Union to work as in Georgia and Texas. That is really what they are saying when they say "move the work to locations where it is cheaper and easier to do business."



It seems to me that if AT&T really valued their work force they would do more to protect them or at least do the same as they do to protect their equipment and vehicles. They have whole departments to maintain their fleet that do scheduled preventative maintenance. The drivers are required to perform safety and fluid level checks before they operate the vehicle for the first time each day and if it breaks down the company will dispatch a mechanic to the location to get that vehicle back in shape and ready to work. Now let one of our members—their employee—get sick or even injured on the job; they are counseled, suspended...even terminated. It's better to be a truck than an employee in this company. But that's just my opinion, so I'll just get off my soap box for now, but it's something to think about.

This brings me to what I really want to talk about: what is happening as it relates to safety in our Local. If you have a safety committee in your department or would like to start one please contact me at the Union Hall or contact your Steward or Chief Steward and have them contact me and we will try and establish one. I am also including some information on breaks and rest periods during your work day.

Working with the Company, especially with Corporate Real Estate, we were able to fix a major ADA accommodation issue at the 2700 Watt Avenue building. It was brought to our attention that there were accommodation issues surrounding the use of the restrooms in that building regarding limited or no access to the facilities by individuals in wheelchairs; the company retrofitted the bathrooms to allow for wheelchair access. We also attend the monthly safety meetings in the I&M environment. Some of the things that we've worked on include establishing a process that will sim-

plify what to do when a Technician turns back a ticket or situation because he/she feels that it is unsafe. We received quite a few calls from techs saying that they returned a ticket because they found it to be unsafe, only to discover that the same ticket was dispatched to a fellow tech, without the unsafe aspects of the job ever being evaluated or corrected. We are pushing for the issue/ticket being tagged as 'unsafe' and to not be dispatched until the discrepancy has been corrected.

The company has informed us that too many of our techs—especially in the I&M environment—are exceeding the maximum speed limit allowed by law. The maximum allowable speed limit for most of Sacramento is 65 miles per hour. The company has installed a GPS system in each vehicle that has the ability to track how fast you are traveling at any given time. When I was first contacted, the number of people that were identified as exceeding the maximum speed limit of 65 miles per hour was around 30 or 35 techs; the last report that I received showed that the list had gone down quite a bit: less than 10. The company has every intention of aggressively going after and disciplining those techs that repeatedly appear on this list. This is not a list that you want to be on. There is no reason to speed from one job or location to another by anyone that is being paid an hourly wage; it is also a very unsafe thing to do! Slow down, take your time...the life you save could be yours or mine.

The company had scheduled a protect your back class at the Construction yard at Mercantile Drive, but it was canceled; I will let you know when it will be rescheduled.

Over the last couple of months I've reported that we were having safety issues at our mobile call center located on Greenhaven Drive. Some of the problems that we encountered were not enough light for our members that work the later shifts to safely exit the building at night. The second issue was that in the case of a fire or the need to evacuate the building, you could not hear the fire alarm. It took intervention from OSHA to correct the problem. Someone called OSHA and filed a complaint, OSHA investigated, found the company to be in violation, issued a fine and a time by which the violation was to be corrected. We are now waiting to have a fire drill to test the new system to see in the violation has been corrected, more to come as it develops.

We have also had to remove graffiti from our Union Hall that was done by some local 'artists' ... shame on

## GREED AND SAFETY (CONTINUED)

them. We have also have had to replace the light bulb located at the rear of the building, so that you can safely attend your Union meetings held the second Tuesday of every month starting at 6 pm.

You must take the lead and do these things for yourself or they won't get done. Overall fitness and flexibility, adequate sleep, task rotation, and rest breaks can help reduce ergonomic risk factors and prevent injuries.

### ERGONOMIC BREAKS

Ergonomic injury risk factors include forceful movement, repetitive motions, awkward posture, and lack of rest. Rest periods give the body time to recover from work; break time exercises and stretches strengthen the body. Workers should think of themselves as Industrial Athletes; athletes wouldn't participate in a sport without proper rest and warm-up; use same preparation on the job.

Maintaining overall health reduces your risk of injury. Get a good night's sleep to rest your body and maintain alertness. Eat healthy foods and drink fluids to boost energy and stay hydrated. Aerobic exercise and weight training increase strength and vitality. Stretching, yoga, and pilates improve flexibility and build core body strength.

Pay attention to signs of discomfort and fatigue on the job; these are warning signs from your body. As muscles tire during a work task, slouching can lead to poor posture, sloppy, uncontrolled movements, and injuries. Rest breaks mean recovery for the body. During a job task, take micro-breaks lasting 2-5 seconds every twenty minutes. Take mini-breaks lasting 3-5 minutes every thirty to sixty minutes. These short breaks give the body a rest, reduce discomfort, and improve your performance.

Alternate your work activities and postures throughout the day. Rotating tasks may appear to be inefficient, but the rest and use of different muscle groups increase energy and maintains productivity. For example, if you work a single workstation and job task all day, move into different postures while you work: first standing, then standing with one foot resting on a stool, etc.

Stretches help you to warm-up before work and relax during breaks; they increase flexibility and boost blood flow and oxygen to muscles. Perform stretches slowly and gently; avoid extreme postures and stop stretching

if you feel pain or discomfort. This information was taken from "Safety News" from the State Compensation Insurance Fund.

In Unity,

**Mike Bell**  
Executive Vice President

## CRAZY ATTENDANCE

Wow, it's hard to believe that it's been a year since AT&T rolled out the "West Region Attendance Policy" for Core employees. What's even more crazy is that it seems we have as many questions about the policy now as we did 11-1-09. "Regular & Reliable" is just as undefined now as it was last November. Tardies, partials and occurrences have all been replaced with the term: chargeable absence. The bottom line being—Total Lost Work Time (TLWT). The policy when it was rolled out was supposed to help bring the West in alignment with the other regions so AT&T could operate under a uniform attendance policy. The Local filed grievances to make sure that the Union was on record to object the new policy. In addition, many grievances have been filed throughout the year as people were given chargeable absences and progressed through the steps of discipline. Here we are a year later with round 2 starting. Management in various departments have been taking the position that progressive steps of discipline never age off. Well, the time has come to really challenge this position. The Document Retention MOA in the contract spells out the removal of documents once the member has shown to have corrected the documented behavior. Please take time to review your current attendance status. If you are on a step of discipline, talk to your Steward and review filing a grievance. Also, it's a good time to review your pocket file over the next few months. Look for updates at the local membership meetings as well.



In Unity,

**Cherri Heinze**  
Vice President

## FIGHT (CONTINUED)

Around the third quarter, we were notified of some of the work in our Service Representative-Business moving to Southern CA. Our members were given the option to follow-the-work and ERB was offered. Again, the company had no intention of offering ESRO but after much discussion with upper level management we were able to obtain the ESRO offer for those that wanted it, and thank goodness this all helped resolve the surplus.

We have spent many, many hours lobbying for jobs at the State Capitol. The goal: to keep jobs in Sacramento and California. We had a letter writing campaign that produced almost 4,000 letters (thank you to all our members who took the time to write letters); we attended Sacramento City Council meetings and reached out to elected officials. Despite all of this, AT&T continues to cry that the economy is bad and they need to downsize, which we know is not true.

Moving on to good news, I am pleased to say that we have obtained the billing work for AT&T Mobility, which is being done out of our bill print center in West Sacramento. I would like to commend our members at that work site for all their hard work and making this transition successful. There have been long days to meet deadlines and quite a bit of shuffling around with new tours/shifts but all have worked very hard to make this a success in order for us to keep the work in CA versus sending it to GA. I will continue to partner with management wherever possible to bring in more work.

The Officers and I have been visiting the many work-sites to stay in touch with the members and to try and keep you informed. While we cannot always tell you what you would like to hear, we can answer contractual questions with honesty and help guide you to all other resources available to Union members. This brings me to another point that our members tend to forget: AUTS. AUTS is the Automated Upgrade and Transfer System, and while there aren't many openings currently in AUTS, I strongly recommend that you initiate an AUTS résumé. If you need help or have questions, feel free to contact me. Horizons - I would like to remind everyone of the \$1,200.00 per year for Regular and Term employees negotiated for the life of the 2009 contract. Keep in mind the courses do not have to be company-related, they just have to be related to a career objective. You may use your Horizons money at a

community college, University, or even online courses.

As the labor representative on the Economic Development Program Advisory Committee (EDPAC) for the California Community College system, I would like to share with you part of our mission is: (a) To advance California's economic growth and global competitiveness through high quality education and service focusing on continuous workforce improvement, technology deployment, and business development, consistent with the current needs of the state's regional economies; (b) To maximize and leverage the resources of the California Community Colleges to fulfill its role as the primary provider in fulfilling the vocational education and training needs of California business and industry; (c) To work with representatives of business, labor, and professional trade associations to explore and develop new alternatives for assisting incumbent workers. A key objective is to enable incumbent workers to become more competitive in their region's labor market, increase competency, and identify career paths to economic self-sufficiency and lifelong access to good-paying jobs. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, retain, and expand businesses.

I would also like to share with you that as a Labor representative, I have accepted the opportunity to serve on the United Way California Capitol Region Board of Directors. As many of you know, the CWA triangle consists of Organizing, Representation and Community/Political Action. Our community needs us now more than ever, especially with so many charitable agencies having to close down due to financial hardships. I am very proud of all the work CWA continues to do in the community and I am especially proud of our members who continue to contribute and our Stewards' hard work during the United Way / Employee Giving Campaign. My request to AT&T has always been that no member be forced to attend the United Way meetings, but to ensure that all are given the opportunity to donate to agencies of their choice.

In closing, I want to thank you all for your perseverance. It's not been easy putting up with AT&T's corporate greed and downsizing whims, but sticking together we will prevail.

In Unity,

*Lupe Mercado*

**Your President**

## THE NEW AND IMPROVED CWA CONSTITUTION

First of all we should all say thanks to President Lupe Mercado for her service on The CWA National Constitution Committee. This year in particular, there were extremely long hours and some very contentious issues to be dealt with.



Back in 2005, the Convention delegates began to chart a course of change for the Locals and the National Union. This ambitious endeavor was appropriately named “Ready for the Future.” Since then, at each of the successive Conventions, the plan has been developed and implemented in stages. In 2006 we adopted the Strategic Industry Fund and Stewards Army resolutions. In 2007 we added International Executive Board seats with the sole purpose of enhancing the diversity of the board. In 2008 we elected the “diversity board” members and established the Canadian sector. In 2009 we flexed our muscle through the use of Strategic Industry Funds to influence the debate as Congress passed the most comprehensive healthcare legislation since Medicare was enacted.

In 2010 the delegates used all of the experience from the previous debates to take on some truly monumental changes to the Constitution. Believe me, these were not easy to accomplish. Most of the changes that were adopted were structural, combining offices and sectors to streamline them for efficiency and adapt to the changing environments that we all live and work in. One was quite a bit more challenging than the rest though.

Beginning in 2011, CWA will move to a biennial Convention schedule. I know that most folks are not very familiar with our Constitution, so I should point out that there are numerous implications with this move to every-other-year meetings. There are various critical reports from the Finance Committee, Defense Fund Oversight Committee, Committee on Equity and Women’s Committee. The most critical of all though is the Appeals Committee. The reason I say this is because the Appeals Committee report directly impacts our members. Our members who have been harmed or disciplined by any of the company’s that we represent have the opportunity to appeal their issue(s) to the delegates at Convention for redress. Two years between Appeals Committee meetings is simply too long.

Many local leaders, myself included, submitted suggestions to the National Executive Board to remedy this. My thought was that there should continue to be appeals committee meetings in the even numbered years when there would not be a Convention. Many delegates agreed on this issue and so I was asked to speak on it during the debate. Many amendments were submitted and debated (when I say many I mean many; I was standing at that microphone for well over an hour while the process played out). In the end, after all was said and done, the amendment passed by a roll call vote of all delegates.

There are some key accomplishments that I want to note. First and foremost, we proved that we have the ability to change. This is easier said than done. These are changing times though and we must be able to adapt. Technology and globalization have decimated many of the sectors and industries that we work in. Good Union jobs have been shipped overseas. We need to use our resources in the most effective means possible. The most important role of any Union or its representatives is to represent the members. The estimated savings from this one transition will add up to about \$6 million per year for the Locals and the National. This money is better spent at the local level representing YOU.

This is not the first time that this issue has been addressed at the Convention; in fact it has been debated on numerous occasions. I’m proud to say that the sensible and deliberate voice of the minority eventually became the voice of the majority and that the democratic process still works for The Communications Workers of America.

In Unity,

**Darrin Simmons**  
Secretary-Treasurer



# VOTE

## November 2, 2010 General Election

### ENDORSED CANDIDATES & INITIATIVES

The candidates listed below have been thoroughly interviewed and vetted by CWA at all levels. All candidates were personally interviewed by the CWA Local 9421 Legislative Committee, with the exception of candidates for statewide office and the U.S. Senate, which were interviewed by CWA District 9. Candidates were endorsed based on their specific support of CWA's issues, their past labor history with regard to CWA and the labor movement in general, their voting record (if applicable), and multiple other questions in a formal interview and questionnaire process. Please rest assured that we have endorsed only those candidates who will actually stand up and fight for CWA members and labor. This list reflects a mix of new candidates and incumbents; however, all candidates were screened to ensure that they will be strong labor candidates...we will not support candidates who have not or will not support us!

CA Governor	Jerry Brown	ENDORSE
CA Lt Governor	Gavin Newsom	ENDORSE
CA Secretary of State	Debra Bowen	ENDORSE
CA Treasurer	Bill Lockyer	ENDORSE
CA Controller	John Chiang	ENDORSE
CA Attorney General	Kamala Harris	ENDORSE
CA Superintendent Schools	Tom Torlakson	ENDORSE
CA Insurance Commissioner	Dave Jones	ENDORSE
CA Board of Equalization, Dist 2	Chris Parker	ENDORSE
U.S. Senate	Barbara Boxer	ENDORSE
U.S. Congressional District 3	Ami Bera	ENDORSE
U.S. Congressional District 4	Clint Curtis	ENDORSE
U.S. Congressional District 5	Doris Matsui	ENDORSE
CA State Senate District 6	Darrell Steinberg	ENDORSE
CA State Assembly District 3	Mickey Harrington	ENDORSE
CA State Assembly District 4	Dennis Campanale	ENDORSE
CA State Assembly District 5	Richard Pan	ENDORSE
CA State Assembly District 9	Roger Dickinson	ENDORSE
CA State Assembly District 10	Alyson Huber	ENDORSE
CA State Assembly District 15	Joan Buchanan	ENDORSE

# 2010

## November 2, 2010 General Election - ENDORSED CANDIDATES & INITIATIVES (continued)

### SACRAMENTO COUNTY

Sacramento City Council, Dist 5	Patrick Kennedy	ENDORSE
Sacramento City Council, Dist 7	Ryan Chin	ENDORSE
Sacramento County Sheriff	Jim Cooper	ENDORSE
SMUD Board, Ward 4	Genevieve Shiroma	ENDORSE
Elk Grove City Council, District 2	Davies Ononiwu	ENDORSE
Elk Grove City Council, District 4	Gary Davis	ENDORSE
Galt City Council	Gene Davenport	ENDORSE
Folsom City Council	Kerri Howell	ENDORSE
Folsom City Council	Jaya Badiga	ENDORSE
Folsom City Council	Steve Miklos	No Recommendation
Citrus Heights City Council	Jim Monteton	No Endorsement
Arden/Arcade Cityhood Initiative		NEUTRAL
Arden/Arcade City Council	Pat Cole	ENDORSE
	Matt Powers	ENDORSE
	Warren Harding	ENDORSE
	Bob Stevens	ENDORSE
	Ryan Arba	ENDORSE
	Liz Rice	ENDORSE
	Mary Ose	No Recommendation
American River Flood Control Dist	Brian Holloway	ENDORSE
Cosumnes Community Service Dist	Rod Brewer	ENDORSE
Sacramento Suburban Water Dist	Steve Hansen	ENDORSE
Rio Linda/Elverta Water Board	Frank Caron	ENDORSE

# VOTE

## November 2, 2010 General Election - ENDORSED CANDIDATES & INITIATIVES (continued)

### *SACRAMENTO COUNTY (continued)*

Sac Metro Fire Board, Division 9	Greg Valley	ENDORSE
Los Rios Community College, Area 1	Dustin Johnson	ENDORSE
Los Rios Community College, Area 2	Robert Jones	ENDORSE
Sacramento City USD, Area 1	Elynn Bell David Ross	ENDORSE No Recommendation
Sacramento City USD, Area 2	Mary Hernandez Jeff Cuneo	ENDORSE No Recommendation
Sacramento City USD, Area 6	Darrel Woo Shane Singh	ENDORSE No Recommendation
Natomas School Board	Lisa Kaplan Teri Burns	ENDORSE ENDORSE
Folsom/Cordova Unified School District	Zak Ford	ENDORSE
San Juan USD	Greg Paulo	ENDORSE
Center JUSD	Kelly Kelley Donald Wilson	ENDORSE No Recommendation

### *PLACER COUNTY*

Roseville City Council	David Larson Susan Rohan	ENDORSE ENDORSE
Sierra Joint Comm College Dist	Kelli Gnile	No Endorsement
Roseville City School District	Rene Aguilera Brian Vlahos Stella Premo	ENDORSE ENDORSE No Recommendation

# 2010

## November 2, 2010 General Election - ENDORSED CANDIDATES & INITIATIVES (continued)

### *PLACER COUNTY (continued)*

Eureka Unified School District	Andrew Sheehy	ENDORSE
Roseville JUHSD	Kathleen Rojas	No Recommendation

### *YOLO COUNTY*

West Sacramento Mayor	Greg Potnick	ENDORSE
West Sacramento City Council	Mark Johannessen Chris Ledesma	ENDORSE ENDORSE
Yuba Community College Dist. #3	Kandice Fowler	ENDORSE
Woodland USD, Area 3	Angel Barajas	ENDORSE
Washington Unified School District	Adam Menke Sandra Vargas	ENDORSE ENDORSE

### **BALLOT MEASURES**

Proposition 19	Legalize Marijuana	Recommend: Neutral
Proposition 20	Redistrict Congressional Districts	Recommend: NO
Proposition 21	VLF Surcharge to Fund State Parks	Recommend: YES
Proposition 22	Prohibit the State Raiding of Local Funds	Recommend: YES
Proposition 23	Suspend Air Pollution Control Laws	Recommend: NO
Proposition 24	Repeal Corporate Tax Loopholes	Recommend: YES
Proposition 25	Majority Vote Budget	Recommend: YES
Proposition 26	Two-Thirds Vote Requirement for Fees	Recommend: NO
Proposition 27	Eliminate Commission Redistricting	Recommend: YES

# THE DAYS WON'T GET ANY SHORTER ANYTIME SOON

In addition to the already long days of working hard for the members, it of course is soccer season for my girls. Of course right before soccer started, I decided to take a Residential Locksmith Horizons Funded Class in the evenings, and before that, I performed some phone-banking in the evenings for Richard Pan. As we are now approaching the General Election, I'm sure the days won't get any shorter anytime soon.



In my office at 3600 Marconi, we only have around a dozen folks left of the closing NPMC. I have worked diligently in conjunction with our Local President Lupe Mercado to find homes (jobs) for our remaining surplus members. We have successfully placed 3 of our surplus MA's into 2 EA jobs at 3675 T Street and 1 Computer Operator job at 3900 Channel Drive. We will continue to work to have the company open up positions wherever and whenever possible, especially while there are folks in surplus within our Local.

Over at the 3675 T Street, which is where I will eventually end up once the surplus for the FA's is resolved, we have recruited a brand new Steward--Sharon Thompson--who has volunteered to co-coordinate this year's United Way / Employee Giving Campaign with fellow Steward John Paul Turner from the ENOC. From the reports I have received, she is doing a remarkable job and I believe she will continue to do a tremendous job as a Steward when she returns. With Alice Hodges as the Chief Steward over all of C&E, Alice and I will work together to ensure that she is given assistance.

In West Sacramento at the 3900 Channel Drive Bill Print & Enclosing Facility, there have been many changes since the beginning of this year. It began with the extremely good news that the AT&T Mobility bills that were previously being printed and enclosed by a contracted company in El Dorado Hills were being brought into the West Sacramento facility. This large amount of new and different work necessitated everyone to work harder to ensure that we keep this work in our facility. I am extremely proud of our members at 3900 Channel Drive who've all risen to the occasion and done whatever it takes to get'r done. It hasn't been easy, and with several shift changes, training (or sometimes lack thereof), looonnnng days of volunteering to work over-

time and working on the scheduled O-Days, there is the occasional personality conflict or loss of temper by both managers and craft alike. Working together through it all, we have transformed the position of our center from what initially appeared to be certain failure to a tremendously successful operation with what appears to be a brighter future. My most sincere thanks to Chief Steward Maurice DiGardi and his team of stewards...and to all of the members who have helped make these transitions as smooth as possible... you're all #1 in my book.

In the outside part of C&E I have been working with Executive Vice President Michael Bell and management to form a Joint Safety Committee. The committee is comprised of Union Representatives from the Local (myself, Michael, Alice Hodges & Lupe Mercado); from management (Bob Pifer and his team, Jules Caldeira and his team, Dennis DeLuca and his team, Kevin Quinn and his team, and Deeanne Jacobs and her team); and of employee representatives from each of the locations (Steve Bertolino – DEG, Jon Rowland & Larry Anderson – Lightspeed, Richard Garcia – OPTs, Veejay Arokiasamy – BAU Splicers, Kevin Welsh – 1st Mile, Sharon Thompson and Roberta Purves – T Street). The Committee's creation was necessitated by the high number of accidents which have occurred in C&E over the past few months. We hope that our joint efforts will help prevent further accidents as we move forward, and find improved ways to create a safer work environment for our C&E workers. Our first meeting took place September 14, 2010, and we are off to a very good start.

Last but definitely not least, in our AT&T Mobility retail stores we have continued to lose people for attendance and various Code violations. Chief Steward Patti Satterlee and I have continued to make our rounds to the stores, and President Lupe Mercado has joined us for weekend meetings at the stores to see what we can do to help our reps in the stores. Our most recent weekend meeting took place on Sunday, Sept. 19, 2010 at the downtown plaza store, with more visits likely to follow at each of the other stores. We were able to address several concerns immediately with management to help improve the work environment. In Unity,

**John Adams Jr.**  
**Vice President**

# AT&T BENEFITS: WHAT YOU MAY NOT KNOW

Part of my duties as an Officer for CWA Local 9421 is to work with members with their benefit questions and problems. This includes FMLA, Worker's Comp, Company Leaves of Absence, Pregnancy Disability Leave (PDL), Disabilities and Disability Appeals, Work Accommodation, and Priority Job Searches. No one thinks about these benefits until they find themselves having to use one or more of them. I'm sure you have heard the horror stories regarding the disability process, having to get FMLA paperwork filled out, dealing with a worker's comp injury, etc. We all thank our lucky star that it is not us. The company is not going to proactively tell you about all these benefits. I know I've been told by numerous members "I didn't know anything about them." It's good to know there are benefits you can possibly use to avoid having to taking time off that will ultimately affect your attendance. This article would take up too many pages to explain them all and how they all work so I'll attempt to give you a BRIEF overview of some of the different benefits options available.



*The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)* - This is a benefit governed by Federal Law. It allows for eligible employees to take job protected, unpaid leave for the birth of the employees son or daughter and to care for the newborn child, for the placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care; in order to care for a son, daughter, spouse, or parent with a serious health condition; because of the employees own serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of his or her job; or Active Duty/Qualifying Exigency Leave arising out of the fact that a covered employee's spouse, child parent, or covered service member is on or has been called or ordered to covered active duty in the Armed Forces. Upon meeting eligibility requirements, the employee will be entitled to 12 work weeks (60 days) within a 12-month period. As of 01/01/01, the 12-month period will be measured in a calendar year (January – December). To be eligible you need to be employed by the employer at least 12 months and have at least 1250 hours of service during the 12-month period immediately preceding the com-

mencement of the leave. For Chronic conditions, once you qualify in a particular year you will be continued to be qualified for THAT year. Any NEW chronic or absence plus treatment illness you will need to re-qualify for that illness absence within that year.

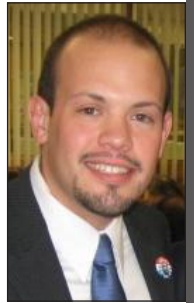
**WORKER'S COMPENSATION (WC)** - In California if you get hurt on the job, your employer is required by law to pay for worker's compensation benefits. This could be from one event at work (Ex. hurting your back in a fall) or repeated exposure at work. (Ex. Hurting your wrist through repetitive motions). The benefits can include medical care, temporary disability benefits, permanent disability benefits, vocation rehabilitation, and death benefits. If you are hurt on the job or believe your injury or illness is due to your work notify your manager and fill out a worker's comp report. In order to see the doctor of your choice you will need to fill out a pre-designation from PRIOR to any worker's comp illness or injury. If you don't pre-designate the doctor, the company will have the right to choose the doctor who will treat you. If you disagree or not satisfied with the treatment being provided by the company chosen doctor you have the right to request to see a different doctor for a 2d, 3rd and finally request a Independent Medical Review.

**COMPANY LEAVES OF ABSENCE (LOA)** - There are several leaves of absence that may be available to you in order for you to take unpaid time off for various reasons. Typically a leave of absence is granted before the absence begins. The different types of leave include Family Care Leave, Departmental Leave Preceding a Scheduled Disability, Military Leave, Educational Leave, a Company Initiated Leave, and a Following Maximum Disability Leave. If you need to take a leave contact your manager so that they can process the request. They will let you know if the leave is approved or denied based on the needs of the business.

**PREGNANCY DISABILITY LEAVE (PDL)** - Under the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, employers with 5 or more employees must give up to 4 months (88 days) of unpaid disability leave to women facing time off work because of pregnancy, childbirth, or a related illness. California PDL also requires that employers transfer you to a less hazardous or strenuous position within the company during your pregnancy, if necessary. **(See "BENEFITS" on page 15 for more ... )**

# ONE VOTE DOES COUNT!

The midterm General Election on November 2nd is arguably the most important election of our lifetimes. The candidates we elect will help to shape our government for many years to come, and we all have a part in that process. To that end, it is not only our civic duty to vote, it is also a fulfillment of the expectation that society has placed on all citizens for the greater good. As we well know, what we often take for granted in our great country, many others still do not have. One of the most fundamental of our rights is the right to vote. Some may say that their one vote does not count, but I beg to differ. Please take a look at the snippet below to see how much your vote, indeed, matters. Then, please VOTE on November 2nd and consider supporting our CWA-endorsed candidates and initiatives (see full listing on pages 8-11). **YOU can make the difference!**



In Unity,

**Robert Longer**  
Vice President

**Please take a look at this important information and VOTE on November 2nd!**  
**- Alice Hodges, CWA Local 9421 Legislative-Political Committee Chair**

*Edmund Burke warned, 'All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.' Each of us have the "power of one." How would you use it? Power of one vote.*

- 1. 1 vote additional in each of California's precincts would have defeated President Woodrow Wilson's re-election bid in favor of presidential hopeful Charles E. Hughes*
- 2. 1 vote gave women the right to vote, in Tennessee the last state to ratify the 19th Amendment to the Constitution.*
- 3. 1 vote defeated Obama's universal Healthcare Bill in the Senate.*

*Considering that the number of votes cast runs in the Billions, or more, the frequency of close votes comes often. Out of 89,000 votes cast in U.S. Congressional elections, one vote was cast in an election where the candidate won by a single vote or was tied. The frequency rate is greater in state legislator elections where one in 15,000 votes had been cast for a candidate winning by one vote or was tied.*

*Only 36.4 percent of voters cast their ballots in 1998, the lowest since 1942. Nearly two out of three of the 115 million eligible American voters did not bother to vote.*

*Between 1972 and 2000 the national voting turn-out for the 18-24 year age group declined by 10 percent.*

*In 1998 less than 20 percent of 18-24 year-olds chose to vote. That is one in five.*

*In 2000 only 42 percent of 18-24 year-olds bothered to vote. That same year only 75 percent of those older than 25 voted.*

*Looking at the statistics of just one demographic, with voter turn-out being low in all demographics and with so many races running close, one can see how powerful a coalition of votes can be. Even your One Vote has an influence to increase the power of those who do vote as you would.*

*When you do not vote, by default you cast your vote against the person or proposal you would prefer. When you do not vote, that vote is one less the opposition has to overcome, thus your "no vote" is a vote for them. The inconveniences of voting is just one small price to pay for the liberty we enjoy. Get up, Get out and vote!*

*- (c) Roger W Hancock 2004-2007 www.PoetPatriot.com*

## BENEFITS (CONTINUED)

In other words, your employer must make reasonable accommodations when you are having a baby. The only excuse a company has to deny reasonable accommodations is if it can prove such accommodations would put an undue burden or strain on the organization. Your doctor can fill out a form to cover you for pregnancy related illness absence when used on an intermittent base. (Similar to FMLA paperwork) The form is usually good per trimester and will help to avoid having to get paperwork every time you are out for your pregnancy related illness. Once your child is born, you will receive additional time off to bond with your child. (Male employees can request time off under the company Family Care Leave or Baby Bonding Time once their child is born.)

**DISABILITY** - Eligible employees who are absent from work, as a result of an illness or injury, may receive short-term disability (STD) and long-term disability (LTD) benefits as a continuing source of income. Contact the IDSC at 866-276-2278 to initiate a claim for disability benefits as soon as you become aware of the need to take an absence of eight or more consecutive calendar days. The IDSC will send you a packet with information on filing for disability. It's important to read the whole packet so you will know what is needed to get your disability approved. You can receive STD for up to 52 weeks. If approved and you are disabled after the 52 weeks you may qualify for Long Term Disability benefits and/or the Following Maximum Disability Leave. If your disability is denied, the company will put you on a Family Care Leave if you qualify and have FMLA time remaining or a Company Initiated Leave if you do not qualify or run out of FMLA time.

**DISABILITY APPEAL** - If your disability is denied you will have 180 days from the date of the initial denial letter to file an appeal. You will receive an Appeal packet with your denial letter. The packet will explain the process and what is needed to file to get your disability denial overturned. You should include all medical information to substantiate the severity of your condition and why you are unable to work. Other items you can include in your appeal are letters from family, friends, co-workers who can attest to the severity of your condition and the fact that due to your disability you are unable to function at home and unable to work. Once you have supplied all your information the IDSC has 45 days to respond with an approval or denial.

For more information on these and other benefits visit the ATT HROneStop website.

You can find information on all your benefits and other ATT policies and plans. I would suggest reviewing these benefits in advance so you will know what is available to you. You can also access the website from home at [access.att.com](http://access.att.com). You will need to know your global login to use this site from home. You can also contact me at the Union Hall 916-484-9421 for additional help and information.

In Unity,

**Denise Mack**  
Vice President

### FROM THE AT&T MOBILITY RETAIL STORE WORLD

We are still losing people that are not using good common sense and/or being outsmarted by the customers. Five I- phones left one of my stores and were rang up but never paid for because the customer did some fast talking. The manager had even spoken with the customer at one point during the sale. For the most part I have great managers that actually help my members but I have a few that the company has put in place that I'm not sure how they find their way home every night. They have even gone so far as to tell my people they cannot take a last break because it's not the right time or too close to closing, if my member was not able to take it on time.

We have actually recently lost a manager for what we think may have been fraud and tried to put our members in harm's way in doing so. Luckily the company did not take action against our members. On a brighter note I got my first return from suspension since I became a Steward. The rep was being accused of customer abuse and physically striking a manager. It was at Christmas time and I had to tell her in my experience very few come back from suspension in the Wireless world, but we won the grievance and the rep is doing great!

Lupe, John and I have visited my stores for their mandatory Saturday meetings. It's giving us a chance to listen to what's new and going on and answer any questions they may have. I want to thank John and Lupe for the great support they have given me. Sometimes I am at a loss in how stupid the company can actually be and they have guided me in the right direction. Like taking down one of my Union boards and throwing it away and replacing it with a little tiny board and mounting it over a refrigerator. Sorry that still is one that I need time to get over!

In Unity,

Patti Satterlee, Chief Steward Mobility Retail Stores

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# Stay Involved in Your Union!

## Membership Meetings:

When: 2nd Tuesday of every month

Times: 9:00am and 6:00pm

Where: 2725 El Camino Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95821

Phone: **916-484-9421**

Web: [www.cwalocal9421.org](http://www.cwalocal9421.org)

Facebook: **CWA Local 9421**

Twitter: **CWA\_Local\_9421**

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