



The Community Minded Union

Locally Speaking

The People Minded Local

Representing: Verizon-NJ Commercial & Marketing, Occupational Center of Union County, North Haledon Police Dispatchers, Data-Tele, NUI/Elizabethtown Gas, Cingular Wireless and American Labor Museum Botto House.

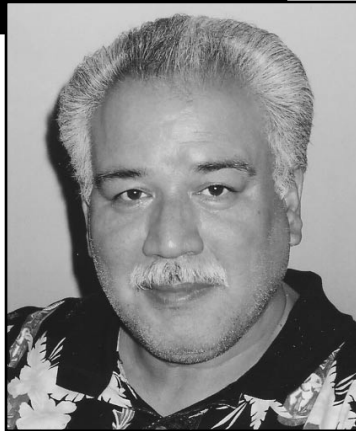
VOLUME 37, NUMBER 2

COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA

LOCAL 1023, CRANFORD, NJ

JULY 2006

IN SOLIDARITY



The Problem

Since January, 2001 we have suffered under an Administration and a Congress that have consistently put the needs of corporations and our wealthiest citizens ahead of those of working families. And who has paid the bill for all of this favoritism? You have.

A recent tax reform earned the average American a \$20 refund on Federal Income Tax, while that same reform earned those reporting one-million dollars or more in income an additional refund of \$46,000. That additional refund is twice what the average American worker earns in a year!

While Bush claims to have created over four million jobs, those jobs pay an average of \$9,000 less than the ones they replaced.

Meantime, Exxon, the oil company that just declared the biggest quarterly profit in US history, has announced that it isn't going to make the required contributions to its employees' pensions this year, saying it has other things it wants to spend the money on. Later, if times get hard, Exxon will have the option to jettison the workers' pensions altogether, claiming that it's underfunded.

New Orleans remains a ruin, while the Bush-connected, no bid, non-union contractors hired to rebuild the city cheat their immigrant laborers out of their wages.

The Republican-dominated Congress wallows in

corruption and hypocrisy.

On the job deaths are on the rise. Almost 6,000 workers died last year due to the health and safety failures of the Federal Government. For example, after the Sago Mining disaster in West Virginia, the Federal Mine Safety budget for 2006-2007 has actually been cut when adjusted for inflation rather than increased.

The war in Iraq rages on with no end in sight. Immigration Reform is stalled. Civil Rights and the Right to Privacy have been trashed, and a career military man is now in charge of the CIA.

Clearly, more of the same is not the answer. It's time to throw the rascals out!

(continued on Page 2)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE . . .

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

JO ANN DIANA SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

COMMITTEE APPLICATION

. . . AND MORE



IN SOLIDARITY

(continued from Front Page)

The Solution

There's an important national election coming up this November. A handful of key Senate seats are up for grabs, and one of those races is right here in New Jersey. Bob Menendez, the popular Cuban-American who was designated by Jon Corzine to replace him when he was elected Governor, is running against Republican challenger Tom Kean Jr.

Bob Menendez spent ten years in the House of Representatives, working for legislation that would help create jobs in New Jersey, supporting bills to improve education, fund stem cell research, and reform current immigration policies. While still in Congress he used the power of his position as Democratic Caucus Chair to push President Bush to fund the No Child Left Behind Act.

Tom Kean is a relative newcomer who was born into a wealthy family that has been involved in New Jersey politics for some time. He believes that he must appeal to the conservatives in the state if he is to be elected. If he wins, he will stand solidly with the Bush Administration's policies. And why not? He just got a check in the mail for \$46,000 thanks to those same policies!

Tom Kean is just more of the same old same old.

In his opening campaign address Bob Menendez said of his opponent, "Tom Kean Jr. and George Bush are perfect together — perfectly wrong for New Jersey." And he's right!

Vote. That's how you can help to make the changes that will bring much needed relief to New Jersey's working families, keep unions strong, curtail the influence of greedy corporations, and protect the right to privacy.

Only 58% of the population voted in the 2004 presidential election. Most years the turnout is even less than that. In the Menendez-Kean race, Menendez is leading by a few points with about 17% undecided according to a recent Quinnipiac College poll. Think how many elections are decided by a few percentage points and you'll realize how much power you have to change the course of political events simply by voting the right way and encouraging those around you to do the same thing

If you haven't yet registered to vote, we have registration forms right in the local office. Call in and we'll get a form out to you. After you complete it, we'll even get it to the Board of Elections for you.

With your help, this will be the year we turn the tide in favor of working families!



Rey Massa

President
CWA Local 1023



EYES ON WAL-MART

As the world's largest retailer, Wal-Mart is setting the standard for American's work-places — and it's a standard of low pay, poor benefits and abuse of workers that working families cannot accept. Please read these facts before you shop.

Low Wages – Wal-Mart's average full-time pay lands a four-person family in poverty.

No Wages – Thousands of documented cases charge that Wal-Mart has forced hundreds of thousands of workers to work "off the clock."

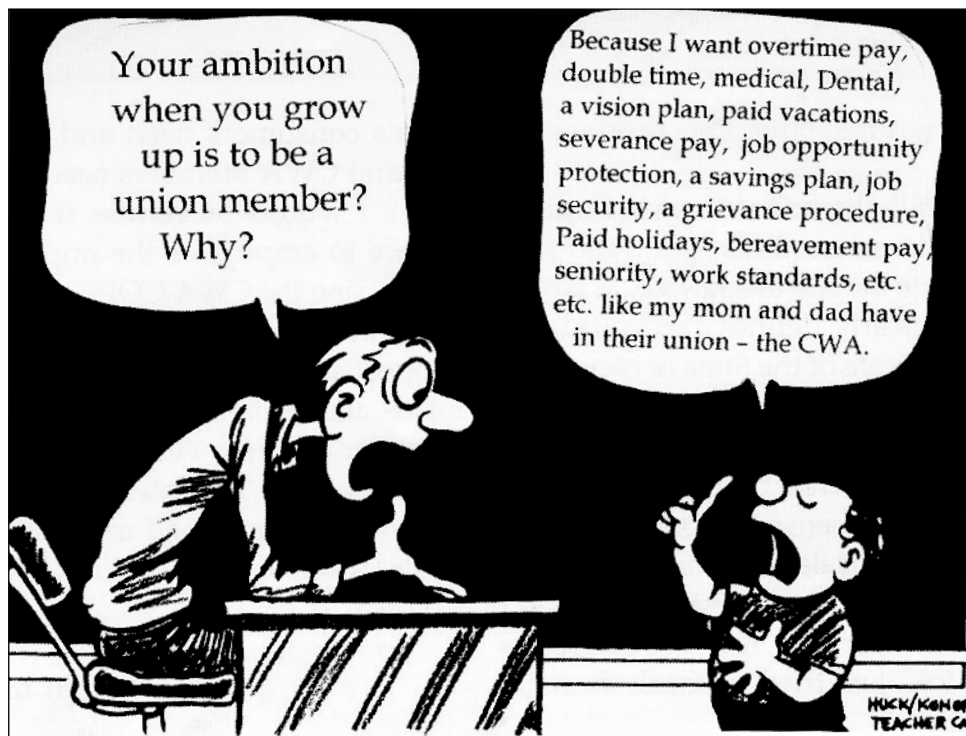
Poor Benefits – Because of long waiting periods for eligibility and high costs, less than 50-percent of Wal-Mart's workers are covered by the company's health plan. Wal-Mart deliberately works employees less than 32 hours a week so they won't be eligible for health coverage.

Discrimination – Women at Wal-Mart earn an average of \$5,000 less a year than men for doing the same jobs. Wal-Mart has also had to pay hundreds of

Welcome New Members

Marlene Acevedo – Madison CSSC, **Jacqueline Adams** – Madison CSSC, **Ana Agosto** – Teaneck BSC, **Damaris Almonte** – Newark MSSC, **Robert Barker** – Madison CSSC, **Jermaine Battle** – Teaneck BSC, **Aiesha Betty** – Teaneck BSC, **Patrick Bianchi** – Cingular Wireless, **Kory Brodnax** – Madison CSSC, **Casius Brown** – Madison CSSC, **Ayesha Calloway** – New Jersey Encore, **Daniel Carretta** – Data-Tele Contractors, **Natanael Cedano** – Newark MSSC, **Wilson Charlotin** – New Jersey Encore, **Robert Cook** – Madison CSSC, **Pilar Cortegoso** – Newark MSSC, **Nelson Cruz** – Data-Tele Contractors, **Onika Cudjoe** – Teaneck BSC, **Jeunelle Cunningham** – Madison CSSC, **Juliana DeLaCruz** – OCUC, **Laura Dietsch** – Newark MSSC, **Maria Echevarria** – Newark MSSC, **Jairo Espinal** – Newark MSSC, **Avegail Felix** – Fair Lawn RMCC, **Sherise Fields** – Madison CSSC, **Shernice Freeman** – Madison CSSC, **Dora Gomes** – Newark MSSC, **Michael Guido** – Madison CSSC, **Nicole Guillaume** – New Jersey Encore, **Julia Hamilton** – Madison CSSC, **Carla Harris** – Teaneck BSC, **Catherine Harris** – OCUC, **Kevin Heussler** – Madison CSSC, **Todd Hoffman** – Madison CSSC, **Charles Howard** – New Jersey Encore, **Jorge Huezo** – Newark MSSC, **Bruce Hulce** – New Jersey Encore, **Katrina Hunter** – New Jersey Encore, **Amit Ibrahim** – Cingular Wireless, **Andria Johnson** – Madison CSSC, **Donna King** – New Jersey Encore, **Lamonica Kitchings** – Madison CSSC, **Susan Lattimore** –

Jackson – Madison CSSC, **Charity Lee** – Madison CSSC, **Karen Lee** – Teaneck BSC, **Matthew Lee** – Cingular Wireless, **Tykeria Lockhard** – Madison CSSC, **Idrisah Marshall** – Madison CSSC, **Yajahira Martinez** – Newark MSSC, **Antoine Mathis** – New Jersey Encore, **Justin Mauro** – Data-Tele Contractors, **Monica Moore** – Teaneck BSC, **Filepe Moreno** – New Jersey Encore, **Tiffany Newby** – Madison CSSC, **Ikennaka Okobi** – OCUC, **Steven Paris** – New Jersey Encore, **Demetria Penn** – Madison CSSC, **Lena Ragin** – New Jersey Encore, **Marcelo Reggio** – Madison CSSC, **Danielle Rodgers** – Teaneck BSC, **Elias Rodriguez** – Newark MSSC, **Ramelle Russell** – New Jersey Encore, **Judith Samuel** – New Jersey Encore, **Charles Sarzosa** – Data-Tele Contractors, **Passion Sewell** – Madison CSSC, **David Tomasini** – Madison CSSC, **Carla Toppin** – Madison CSSC, **Todd Ulrich** – Madison CSSC, **Daniel Valvano** – New Jersey Encore, **Mikisha Vargas** – New Jersey Encore, **Vanessa Velez** – Newark MSSC, **Valerie Vickers** – New Jersey Encore, **Natalio Villegas** – Data-Tele Contractors, **Zackery Ward** – Madison CSSC, **Carlos Weld** – Madison CSSC, **Paryss Whitaker** – Madison CSSC, **Jennifer White** – Madison CSSC, **Sherry White** – Madison CSSC, **Daaiyah Williams** – New Jersey Encore, **Amoni Witcher** – Madison CSSC, **Dawn Wysmulek** – Cingular Wireless, **Jose Zamudio** – Cingular Wireless



EDITORIAL RISKY BUSINESS

There is no doubt that Mr. Seidenberg and whoever stands behind him are painting Verizon into a corner. There is no solution in sight. The problem is of direct concern to those of us who work for the company, whether management or bargaining unit member, because we are the ones who will pay for this mistake in the end.

By way of background, let us say that America's business leaders innovate only when they have no other choice because their survival depends on year to year returns. Retooling is expensive. It may take a very long time before new products begin to show their value, if ever. Investment expense has a dampening effect on dividends. Stockholders have no patience for lower returns on their shares, especially if the market price of the stock they hold declines as well. Those CEO's who are responsible for reduced returns and shrinking portfolios are quickly replaced with more value-conscious CEO's. And so it goes.

Knowing all to well how stockholders react to bad news, Mr. Seidenberg and those who stand behind him talk about their bold new product innovation while they grab as much cash off the table for themselves as they can — just in case the new strategic plan doesn't work out.

And what is this great innovation upon which our leadership has staked everything? Fiber-To-The-Premise or FTTP as it is usually called.

There is only one country in the world in which Fiber-To-The-Premise (FTTP) is the dominant protocol. That country is Japan. There are very specific reasons why FTTP is so popular in Japan and those reasons don't apply to other countries. In contrast to Japan, conventional cable enjoys a 70% market share in the US. Other technologies including DSL share the rest of the market for now.

To its credit, FTTP is incredibly fast. It's a quantum leap in the right direction because it can carry so much more data than other technologies.

And, despite the huge investment in infrastructure that's required to make it happen, its day will come. But that will be later. And it will be done because it has to be done. And it will be done by the cable operators who already hold the home entertainment market in the palm of their hand. Looking even further into the future, the wireless transmission of broadband via satellite may supercede everything else entirely because in the final analysis satellite doesn't require all that ground equipment and maintenance and is much less labor-

intensive.

Wall Street agrees with our assessment. Wall Street thinks that Verizon is starting from scratch and probably cannot reach its goal of becoming a major player in broadband in time. Recent federal legislation has helped (it's good to be in business during the Bush years, corporations can get almost anything they want from Washington these days, it seems). But the huge costs involved and long wait before profitability becomes a reality make the project look far too risky. Two major outside investors have already pulled their money out of FTTP, leaving Verizon with a huge shortfall of investment capital that will have to be made up somehow.

How will Verizon make up the shortfall?

The buyout of Verizon Wireless partner Vodaphone gets put on hold yet again. Wireline assets will be sold off. The company has already announced its intention to sell access lines wherever possible. A recent Corporate Employee Communications memo, issued immediately after the company's stated intention to sell access lines in the Midwest and New England reiterated the facts, "As we have said publicly many times, Verizon continually evaluates the assets and properties in our portfolio for strategic fit and financial performance."

Shortly after announcing the sale of access lines, Verizon announced the impending layoff of up to 15,000 non-union employees. Earlier, the company decided to terminate pension benefits for its many management people. Apparently, these employees no longer qualify as a "strategic fit." All of these workers are employees at will and are not protected by a contract.

Next, Verizon would love to separate itself from its unions and the burdensome pension and medical expense and "no layoff clause" that come with the collective bargaining agreements for CWA and IBEW. Plans for hiring video technicians in the FTTP division did not include unionizing the jobs. Verizon Wireless is non-union.

More extreme possibilities for raising cash present themselves. One is that Verizon would split itself up the way AT&T did. Divide the company into separate units and put the non-essential ones up for sale the way AT&T spun off Lucent and Avaya.

No matter how one looks at it, the future seems uncertain for most Verizon workers. Contract negotiations will be a challenge as August, 2008 draws nearer, because when the big shots make mistakes, everyone else suffers.

SNAPSHOTS FROM THE SWEATSHOP

By Nick Brakespeare



Folks used to ask me all the time what I thought the contract negotiations were going to be like in 2008? I'd tell them that if they wanted to know what the future held for them then they'd have to study the past. Pretty soon no one was asking me my opinion on anything.

We all know what the key issues are going to be in 2008: job security, pensions, and health care.

So, what I like to do is watch the negotiations between Verizon and other bargaining units. Negotiations that are going on around me right now. Let's see what's happened in the past couple of months to get a better idea of what we're going to be facing.

Take the Verizon Information Services negotiations, for example. These New York employees of Verizon from CWA Local 1122 produce the Verizon Yellow Pages.

The company's demands were very simple: take less money for doing the same work, remove the cap on how much employees pay for medical coverage, and agree to give backs on pensions. The company also intended to suspend or end sales commissions. A strike ensued, and it lasted for 14 weeks, at the end of which all parties agreed to a new contract.

VIS employees got a modest pay increase, but kept their commission structure. A cap on medical and dental contributions was established.

Avaya's CWA bargaining unit authorized a strike before settling their contract. At stake was the medical plan and who pays for it, as well as job security via a no-layoff clause. When the dust cleared, the members still had free medical and a one-year no layoff clause for those in technical titles, and a 3% wage increase. The pension bands went up 4%.

A smaller bargaining unit at Alltel in Kentucky (a so-called "Right to Work" state) didn't do quite as well. Workers there will pay 15% of their medical costs. In 2009 that figure goes to 20%. But the workers got a \$500 ratification bonus. Also, retirees will see some cost shifting on their medical coverage.

It's the same story everywhere: health benefits, pension, job security. What do we learn from this? The folks who are willing to take it to the streets get the best results. The bigger bargaining units do better. So, the way I see it we don't have a thing to worry about. See? It's true! History can teach us a lot!

Love ya'

Nicky



Eyes On Wal-Mart

(continued from Page 2)

thousands of dollars to workers across the company who were subject to race discrimination.

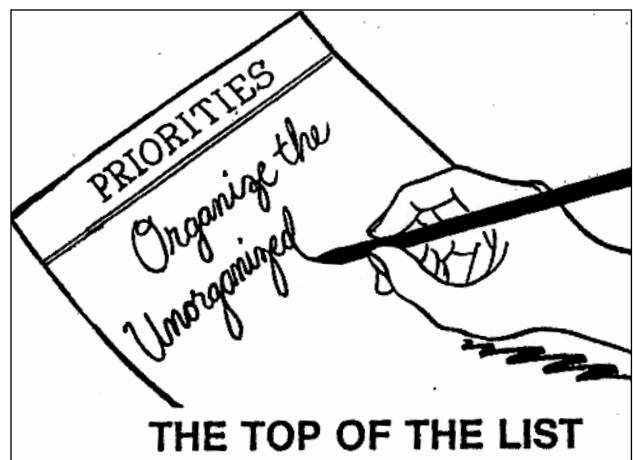
Union-Busting – Wal-Mart fights to keep wages and benefits low by battling workers' attempts to form unions. In 2005, the company closed a store when workers formed a union there.

Child labor – Wal-Mart recently agreed to pay \$135,540 to settle federal charges that it broke child labor laws by having teenage workers use hazardous equipment such as chain saws, paper bailers and fork lifts.

Destroying US jobs – Wal-Mart forces its suppliers to move operations and jobs to low-wage countries such as China. In 2004 alone, Wal-Mart purchased \$18 billion worth of Chinese goods.

PLEASE SHARE THESE FACTS WITH YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS!

(This information originally appeared in a release produced by the Westchester-Putnam Central Labor Body, White Plains, NY.)



LOCAL COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Members who are interested in serving on any Local Committee must submit an application for consideration by the Executive Board. This requirement includes anyone who is currently serving on a Committee.

Experience or education associated with Committee work is preferable, but not required. All applicants must be members in good standing. Committee members will

be expected to attend Committee meetings as necessary, and to attend all membership meetings for the purpose of giving reports and answering questions from the membership.

An application is provided here. Please return it completed to the Local Secretary by July 21, 2006. Appointed members will be notified by mail after the July Executive Board meeting.

**COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA – LOCAL 1023
118 SOUTH AVENUE EAST, CRANFORD, NJ 07016**

REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT TO A COMMITTEE

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN SERVING ON A COMMITTEE, PLEASE READ AND FILL OUT THE FOLLOWING APPLICATION.

A REORGANIZATION OF LOCAL COMMITTEES WILL BEGIN WITH THE NEW YEAR, FOR A THREE-YEAR TERM FROM JANUARY, 2006 TO DECEMBER, 2008. THE COMMITTEES TO CONSIDER ARE:

**EDUCATION
ELECTION
ORGANIZING
LEGISLATIVE
EQUITY
SAFETY
MOBILIZATION**

**GRIEVANCE
NEWSPAPER
TRIAL
MEMBERSHIP
COMMUNITY SERVICES
FINANCE**

NAME: _____ **HOME TEL NO:** _____

WORK LOCATION: _____ **WORK TEL NO:** _____

*** COMMITTEE PREFERENCES:**

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

**** QUALIFICATIONS:** _____

*** THE EXECUTIVE BOARD CANNOT GUARANTEE APPOINTMENT TO PREFERRED COMMITTEES OR ANY COMMITTEE.**

**** GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION, NO PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE NECESSARY.**

RETURN TO LOCAL SECRETARY

DATE SUBMITTED TO EXECUTIVE BOARD: _____ **DATE NOTIFIED:** _____

DATE APPOINTED: _____ **DATE REMOVED:** _____

MOVING?

Please remember to give your new address and phone number to the Local Office when you move.

- ✓ You can call: (908) 709-1023
- ✓ You can Fax: (908) 276-8921
- ✓ You can e-mail; cwa1023@verizon.net
- ✓ You can send by mail:

CWA Local 1023

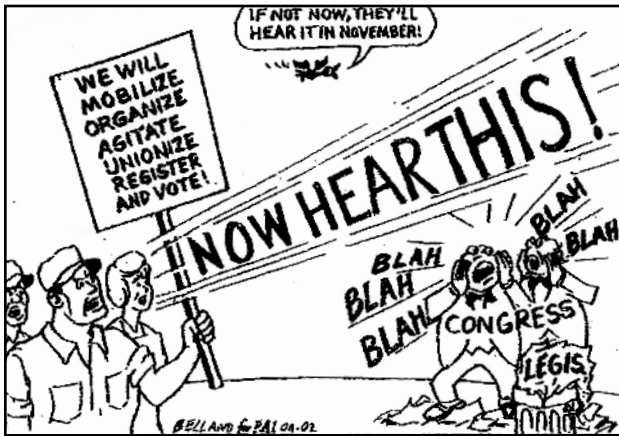
118 South Avenue East, Cranford, NJ 07016

**CWA PROUDLY SUPPORTS
AIR AMERICA RADIO
WLIB 1190 AM ON YOUR RADIO DIAL**

Attention Members!

Check out the Local's Website at:

www.cwalocal1023.net



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“The time has arrived when working people should decide on the necessity of united action as citizens at the ballot box.”

– Resolution of the American Federation of Labor

The Community Minded Union
Locally Speaking
The People Minded Local

The voice of local 1023 endeavors to provide factual, informative and relevant comment on matters of interest to the Membership. Reprint permission is granted to All Union Publications, with credit to the author. All inquiries concerning this publication should be referred to the Editor.

- EDITOR Ward Riley
 ASSISTANT EDITORS Paula Belmonte, Luis Rivera
 PRESIDENT Rey Massa
 VICE-PRESIDENT Trish Kessell
 SECRETARY Kathleen Forté
 TREASURER Sharon Davis

Union Office (908) 709-1023 Fax (908) 276-8921
Announcement – (908) 276-7771 • Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9-5

LOCALLY SPEAKING
 COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS
 OF AMERICA – LOCAL 1023
 118 SOUTH AVENUE, EAST
 CRANFORD, N.J. 07016

FIRST CLASS
 U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
 PERMIT NO. 514
 CRANFORD, NJ

DO NOT FORWARD
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

TIME VALUE