

## **JULY 2009 PRESIDENT REPORT**

### **Submitted By Michael Lynch**

It's already July and June was a very busy month. CWA reached a tentative agreement for Avaya and the members will be voting on it and we will know the results on 7-21-2009. The ballots have been mailed to the members of Avaya and need to be returned by 7-17-09. They have sixteen highlights to the contract that are great. The highlights of the agreement are in the July Newsletter that just went out.

Our AT&T members are still working without a contract, but they are still at the bargaining table and making some progress. CWA is asking members to write to President Obama and to solicit your legislators to send a letter to CEO Stephenson. CWA is asking the members to wear red on Thursday, working the rule, decline E-time or overtime, an Apple or Authorized Agent store action, or even picketing a public event, it does not matter. There's going to be a national day of action in support of the Southeast (Bell South) negotiations kick off - more to follow. A member from Columbus, OH spoke at the privilege microphone and announced that there was AT&T managers in the guest area and that they identify themselves. They were asked to leave now. The convention floor second the motion and they had to leave. AT&T made 12.3 billion dollars last year, and the earning was 3.1 billion dollars for the first quarter of this year but yet they still reduced their work force by 8,000 employees this year so far. They want our members to give back in wages, healthcare and benefits including job security. In 2005 C.E.O Stephenson made more in one day than most of the workers made in a year.

MV Transportation voted on a Wage Freeze or Layoffs proposal June 15, 2009. Management accepted the positive changes we proposed and as a result agreed to put (2) options on the ballot for MV members to vote on. (1) Option is for the wage increase and to loose 94 drivers to layoff. The (2) Option is for the wage freeze, work rule improvements and positive CBA changes. All the final details were not complete until mid week of 6-10-09. We got the proposals printed as soon as possible and handed them out on 6-12-09. We then came back on 6-15-09 for a vote. There were six (6) meetings starting at 8:00 am till about 6:00 pm with the meeting starting every other hour. The company had the first 30-minutes and the union had the remaining time. Some members raised concern about the short notice; we explained we started working on this as soon as the company brought it to us. The company was looking at layoffs but got a second option for the members. There was a total of 279 votes cast. Yes, means a wage freeze and no means the raise and 94 layoffs (179-Yes), (98-No), (2-Spoiled). We were able to keep 94 members on the job. The members want to have a membership meeting out there in Redmond. We are looking at it toward the end of July or first part of August.

June 17, 2009 was the kick off of a week and half of real business for CWA. The CWA Minority Caucus 22nd Conference. This conference ran from Wednesday 6-18-09 thru Sunday 6-21-09, closing with a worship service on Sunday morning. The keynote speaker was Congress Member Al Green, 9th Congressional District from Houston, Texas. He

was an excellent speaker. One of the most important statements he made was when a bill comes to the floor concerning labor he called around and got feedback from the Local on what benefits labor. There were Plenary Sessions on Employee Free Choice Act, Immigration, Health Care and Affordable Housing. Rochelle Long from Des Moines, IA is our new District 7 Rep for the Minority Caucus.

Monday June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2009 thru Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> 2009 was the 71st CWA Convention and Legislative-Political Conference. Monday was more of a CWA day with where the union is and where we want to go reporting out from the different committees. Attendance was down this year by over 2,000 members. The CWA Staff got a 2% raise across the board. Tuesday was a very busy day starting with guest speaker Majority Whip United States House of Representatives, James Clyburn. He spoke of where he's from and what inspired him to run for office and what some of his accomplishments were. Starting out as a school teacher and how important it is for better education for our youth coming up. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis spoke as well. Her main statement is how we need to restore our unions and being able to form a union and how important the Employee Free Choice Act is to Labor. She stated how different the Labor Department will be run now compared to the last Labor Secretary.

Vice President Joe Biden opened and addressed the conference on Wednesday June 24<sup>th</sup>, he's a very powerful speaker. He spoke on how he was brought up and raised in a union family. What it means to be in union and what unions stand for. He made the statement if it were not for unions he would not be where he is today. His life and family and the struggles he went through and how important the Employee Free Choice Act is to us and Health Care Reform. What he and the president are doing to help ensure it passed and what we need to do as well. He's an original sponsor of the Employee Free Choice Act. He has 37-years in congress and perfect voting record for labor. In 1972 CWA endorsed Vice president Joe Biden for congress when he was 29-years old. He stated how important CWA endorsement was to him. He also stated his heart is with labor for the last 37-years. How the middle class is falling so far behind the last 8-years and what we need to do to get the middle class back on board and it starts with us. By writing and calling your senators and congressmen and women. If you want a union you should be in a position to have one. Later up on the hill called Lobby Day on Capitol Hill, Key Speaker was Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, unfortunately my flight left before I could hear her speech.