



CWA District 6 Retiree Informer

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Retiree Outreach

CWA Retirees Rally for Affordable Health Care



April 16, 2014, Dallas , TX - Over 700 CWA Retirees showed up at AT&T Headquarters in Dallas Texas to show their displeasure at the Company's practice of making changes to Retiree Health Care plans without negotiating with the Union. The rally was led

by District 6 Retired Members Council President Ray Kramer. Bus loads of Retirees from District 6 locations in St Louis, MO; Kansas City, MO; Wichita, KS; Tulsa, OK; Oklahoma City, OK; Beaumont, TX; Houston, TX; Ft. Worth, TX; Austin, TX and San Antonio, TX

dressed in CWA red, carried signs, chanted and voiced their displeasure at the actions of AT&T, the Company they built, to turn their back on the promises they made to keep Retiree Health Care affordable. District 6 Vice

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Claude Cummings
Jr., Vice President,

*We are all
stakeholders in the
future of CWA.*

This Movement Needs You!

By Claude Cummings, Jr. - District 6 Vice President

Throughout my long career at AT&T the one thing I have always known was I needed to belong to the Union. That virtue was instilled in me by my father who also worked for the phone company and was a proud Union Member. At an early age I could see the benefits of Union membership, where you received an equal days pay for an equal days work. I learned at an early age you could always count on the Union and no matter what you always had someone to stand with you to face whatever issues and challenges you faced. It was with great pride and respect that I was able to participate in the recent rally held by CWA Retirees of AT&T as we continue to battle and protest the ongoing changes made to our health care plans. The Retiree Health Care for anyone who has spent a considerable amount of time working at this company or any of its predecessors we know was not a gift from the Company but was earned

through collective bargaining with CWA. When I say it was with great pride and respect that I got to participate in this rally those are just not words I use in this article. Without question the pride I feel standing with over 700 Retirees as we yet again do battle with their former employer cannot be overstated. Earlier I said it was these Retirees who built AT&T which certainly was the case, but let us not forget, they are same Retirees who built CWA, in my opinion, into the greatest and most progressive Union in the Labor Movement. I can assure as your District Vice President, you have my respect and commitment to see this battle over Retiree Health Care through to the end. I would like to thank our District 6 Retired Members Council President Ray Kramer for the excellent job he did in putting this rally together as well as Nancy Lee and all of those from the Dallas Local for making sure this rally went off without a hitch. I would also like to thank all of

those who boarded busses and traveled from the far corners of District 6 to once again make their voices heard. I believe for CWA to remain a strong and viable Union we must be able to rely on our Retiree base for support. I am proud of the work done by the Retired Members Council and our Local Chapters but we can certainly use more. I would strongly encourage those who are reading this who do not belong to the RMC or a Local Chapter to join one. If there is not one in your area I know President Kramer will be happy to assist you in forming a Local Chapter. We are all stakeholders in the future of CWA whether we are active or not, none of us can afford to sit on the sideline. After all this is a movement that needs You to be the U in Union.

"Life is like a coin, you can spend it any way you choose but you can only spend it once."

Lillian Dickson

Attention AT&T Medicare Eligible Retirees

If you are a retired AT&T employee and are Medicare eligible you should have received a mailing from AT&T recently concerning the Company sponsored Health Care exchange that they will be establishing for 2015. The document should be titled My Retiree Health Exchange. Inside this packet there will be a list of meetings hosted by AT&T and AON Retiree Health Exchange to discuss and explain this program. There is also an option to get this explanation via a webinar using a computer and a phone line. Also in this mailing you should have received what they are calling an education kit. When you

received this kit you should have also received a prescheduled "education appointment". The information sent out reminds you that it is important to confirm or reschedule your appointment. These appointments will begin in July. To be eligible for benefits they state you must enroll between October 1, 2014 and December 31, 2014. In September they will be having prescheduled enrollment appointments, again they remind you that it is important to confirm or reschedule this appointment as well. As this new process starts we cannot stress the importance for Retirees who will be moved to this ex-

change to not ignore or disregard these notices. As of this writing most of the information we are receiving is coming from the mailings you are receiving. It is believed each Retiree will have a counselor assigned to them to answer specific questions. If you did not receive this package or misplaced your package please contact the Aon Retiree Health Exchange at 800-928-8027 or you can go to the website at www.myretireehealthexchange.com

Follow us on Facebook!

For the latest breaking news that all CWA Retirees need to know follow us on Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/CWAD6RetireeOutreach/>

CWA Retirees Rally for Affordable Health Care

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President Claude Cummings addressed the Retirees telling them it's time to raise some hell and fight back! Vice President Cummings also demanded AT&T meet with the Union to discuss these changes. Also speaking at the rally was CWA National Retiree Director Melinda Gibson committing her support to the effort of the Retirees to have their voices

heard. AT&T Retiree and Texas AFL-CIO President Becky Moeller added her support to the rally as well.. Companion protest were held in Corpus Christi, Texas, Virginia and California as Retirees ban together and tell AT&T enough is enough. At the conclusion of the rally Vice President Cummings and CWA Local 4250 Retired President Steve Tisza

presented AT&T Head of Labor relations Mark Royse copies of online petitions created by Tisza and Local 6360 Retired member Mary Jo Kaifer calling for fair treatment of AT&T Retirees. These petitions contained over 12,600 signatures from AT&T Retirees and supporters nationwide.



District 6 RMC President Ray Kramer addresses the Rally.



Petitions to be presented to AT&T with over 12,600 signatures. Pictured from left to right CWA National Retiree Director Melinda Gibson, Assistant to the District 6 Vice-President Sylvia J Ramos, Local 4250 Retired President Steve Tisza, D6 Retiree Outreach Coordinator Kevin Kujawa and District 6 Vice President Claude Cummings Jr.

If you know a fellow CWA Retiree who is not receiving this newsletter please have them go to the District 6 Website at <http://district6.cwa-union.org/> and hit the For Retirees Tab to subscribe.

CWA Retirees Rally for Affordable Healthcare



District 6 Vice President Cummings tells Retirees “its time to raise some hell and fight back”.



CWA Member and Texas AFL-CIO President Becky Moeller lends her support to the Rally.



12 Busses carrying rally participants from the far corners of District 6 were greeted at the Rally staging area by members of Local 6215. Thanks to Nancy Lee and her crew for a great job!



Bus riders were treated to box lunches and refreshments at the Rally staging area courtesy of the District 6 Retired Members Council

Photos used in this article were provided by CWA Activist Jim Rivers and Ron Munford. Thanks for your help gentlemen.

Problems or questions with your benefit plan?

You can contact the CWA District 6 Retiree Outreach Benefit Representative at 314.965.9024 or e-mail at D6Retirees@gmail.com

Share the news and build the cause. If you know a CWA Retiree who does not have internet access please print them a copy of this newsletter.

CWA Retirees Show up at AT&T Shareholders Meeting

On April 25, 2014 CWA Retirees and activist led by Local 3204 President Walter Andrews as reported in a copyrighted article by WTVM staged a protest at the AT&T Shareholders meeting in Columbus Georgia. The story also

reports the Reverend Jesse Jackson was present and spoke with AT&T CEO Randal Stephenson about rising Healthcare cost as well as other issues. To read more on this story and see video shot at the protest you can go to

the following link. <http://www.wfla.com/story/25341642/protestors-gather-outside-att-shareholder-meeting-in-columbus>

AT&T Set to Increase Wireless Concession to Retirees

Through a published report to AT&T Employees we have learned that AT&T plans to offer eligible retirees a 30% concession on their wireless plans, an increase from the 19% now offered. CEO and Chairman Randall Stephen-

son announced the new plan at the AT&T Shareholders meeting on April 25, 2014 in Columbus Georgia. Complete details of the plan as well as information needed for Retirees to take advantage of this discount will be out in the

coming weeks according to the AT&T Insider. Until then Retirees are instructed to take no action. As we learn more on this offer we will post it on the CWA D6 Retiree Outreach page on Facebook as well as include it in the next issue of this publication.

News from around the web

Social Security to resume benefits statement mailings

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/04/19/us-social-security-idUSBREA3I0GL20140419>

The American Middle Class Is No Longer the World's Richest

http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/23/upshot/the-american-middle-class-is-no-longer-the-worlds-richest.html?smid=fb-share&_r=0

Why employers are shifting retiree health into insurance exchanges

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/03/11/us-column-miller-retirement-idUSBREA2A1D620140311>

One Retirees Opinion

I read an interesting article in the New York Times this month stating the American Middle Class is no longer the richest in the world. According to the article it states that in the year 2000 Canada's middle class was substantially behind but now appears to have surpassed the middle class of the United States. As a lifelong member of the middle class I can honestly say this isn't breaking news. The report goes further to state that Median Per capita income when adjusted for inflation in this Country is virtually unchanged since 2000. The working poor in the U.S are affected even harder. If your family's income is in the 20th percentile in this Country, you are far worse off than those in the same percentile in Canada, Sweden, Norway and Finland. 35 years ago the reverse was true. All these facts are mind boggling when you consider the per capita gross domestic product shows the United States as the world's richest large country. The article goes on to give three major reasons why the U.S is so disproportionate with the rest of the world and they believe it is education, a lower minimum wage and lower density of unionized workforce. Any

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of us who have worked a union job can clearly attest to a unionized workforce with collective bargaining rights providing a better living and working conditions than those who do not enjoy the same. A livable wage should not be a "pipe" dream for a worker, but a right. Isn't it part of the American Dream that if you work hard you should prosper in the land of the free and home of the brave? I think history will show us those who came before us came here for religious freedom and to make a better life for themselves. Is today's America still capable of producing those results. For the American worker prosperity tied directly to organized labor saw us leave the status of indentured servitude to what we now call the middle class. It was not an easy struggle and came harder for some classes of Americans than others but arrived to a point where the dream of the middle class was available to most if not all of the citizenry of this Country. So what happened? Opinions on this subject vary as to whom you may be talking to, but since this is an opinion column I will give you mine. I may

have many but my prejudiced view will tell me and now you that I believe it is the decline of union density that has led to the erosion of the middle class. I believe this to be true because of the passion I see in those who want to eliminate unions and have more control over workers' rights and wages. When you have people like the Koch brothers and groups like ALEC to name just a few who work tirelessly to derail any progress workers have toward building the American Dream and Supreme Court decisions like Citizens United without question, our democracy is threatened. As Retirees we have had a long history of fighting the battles to keep our way of life. We cannot quit fighting the war now. We cannot be the generation of unionist who lose the battle for an American middle class. While we may be retired we are not dead and we must never let our voices be silenced by the powerful and rich. We must keep the dream alive. My name is Kevin Kujawa and that is one retiree's opinion.



Benefit Plan Contact Numbers

Verizon 855-489-2367

AT&T 877-722-0020

Avaya 800-526-8056

Lucent Aetna POS 800-872-7136

Blue Cross/Blue Shield (Oklahoma) 800-6610083

HMO Medicare Option 888-232-4111

Editors Note

This newsletter is published for the purpose of keeping CWA District 6 Retirees informed and educated on issues you may face in retirement as well as to keep you current with CWA. If you have an article or story you would like to see published please do not hesitate to contact us and we will do our best to meet your request. You can send your request or comments to D6retirees@gmail.com or you can leave a message on our phone line at 314-965-9024.