Retiree Association Proudly Stands United with Striking Union Workers & Families

For nearly a year, unionized Verizon workers have been holding regular rallies and informational pickets about the ongoing contract dispute with the company.

When nearly 40,000 CWA and IBEW members from throughout the northeast went on strike the morning of April 13, 2016, members of the Association of BellTel Retirees stood united with them. The BellTel Retirees have a long history of standing united with union workers and their families, and will continue to do so.

Jack Brennan, Association President said, “The Association of BellTel Retirees asks that any and all of our retiree members decline to replace striking workers should the company ask. These union workers are fighting for their livelihood, for the future of their healthcare and pension protections for themselves and their families. United, we are all stronger.”

The contract that Verizon had with the two unions expired way back on August 1, 2015 and covered employees from Massachusetts to Virginia.

On April 19, the retiree association marked its 20th anniversary with its annual member meeting, which was held this year in Tarrytown, New York. Among the more than 200 present and another 60 retirees joining via video conference, many expressed concern over the company’s failure to respect the workforce, even while executives bring home outsized pay packages, Rolls Royce health care plans and diamond crusted golden parachutes.

“Having the support of the Association of BellTel Retirees during this difficult time sends a clear message to Verizon that we stand united in demanding the respect we deserve from the company we all helped build,” said Robert W. Speer, President/Business Manager of IBEW Local 827.

Two University Research Teams Collaborate with BellTel

When some of the top academic minds in our nation recognize the Association of BellTel Retirees as a leading resource to understand the modern American retirement struggle, we must be doing something right!

Whether you are an active Verizon employee who hopes to retire some day and live off of your earned benefits or if you are already retired, it’s time to consider joining the Association of BellTel Retirees. Contact us to learn more today. All active and retired members of the Verizon community are eligible. Our strength lies in unity.

What’s at Stake?

The unions say the stakes include:

- Outsourcing jobs overseas – Verizon has already outsourced more than 5,000 jobs to the Philippines, Mexico, the Dominican Republic and other overseas locations. These offshore workers handle customer service calls originating in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeastern states.
- Outsourcing to low-wage non-union contractors – Verizon wants to expand the amount of non-union contracting.

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**BELLTEL’S IMPACT**

The Association of BellTel Retirees Inc. was founded by seven NYNEX retirees in 1996 as a response to the company ignoring the needs and contractual commitments made to its retirees. Today the aggressive non-profit group advocates for its more than 134,000 union and management retirees. Association membership includes retirees from the old Bell System, now under the Verizon umbrella and retirees who were transferred to Idearc/SuperMedia, now DexMedia. The organization works doggedly to protect the pensions and earned healthcare benefits retirees earned in our working years.

The Association’s efforts have borne fruit for our members through negotiation, pension fund assurance, shareholder proxy proposals, litigation, and legislation.

Corporations cutting pensions, healthcare and seeking to get out from under their obligations, often leave former workers financially devastated. This makes our advocacy more important than ever. The Association focuses on five major initiatives to accomplish its mission:

- Negotiation – The Association tries to meet regularly with top executives representing Verizon and Prudential, to advocate on behalf of current and future retirees. Verizon transferred 41,000 retirees’ pensions to Prudential, converting the pensions to annuities.

- Call-Center closings and consolidations – Despite the high-demand for customer service, union workers are at risk of either losing their jobs or being forced to commute as much as 3-hours daily by a company plan to close or consolidate call centers.

- Out of State Assignments – Verizon wants wireline technicians to work away from their home states for as long as 2-months at a time, anywhere from Massachusetts to Virginia.

- Shareholder Proxy Proposals – The Association has introduced corporate governance proposals gaining widespread support of Verizon shareholders leading to 11 significant shareholder changes.

- Pension Fund Assurance – The Association annually examines the health of retiree pension plans and challenges Verizon to fully fund pension plans.

- Litigation – The Association retains legal counsel who continually scrutinizes pensions, benefits and related matters at Verizon to ensure the legal integrity of the company’s retirement-related business decisions. Our organization has led several federal lawsuits to protect retirees’ economic rights, one which is currently pending review at the highest federal court in America.

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**What’s at Stake?**

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Let’s all work together to keep the lines of communication open for everyone in the Verizon community and the media to see and know what’s happening on the picket lines and at the bargaining table.

Connect today with BellTel via social media to share, see and learn. Let’s work together to add more power to our messaging in support of the working families of Verizon.

Twitter.com/belltelretirees
Facebook.com/associationofbelltelretirees
YouTube.youtube.com/user/BellTelRetirees

On the Web: www.BellTelRetirees.org

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**ASSOCIATION OF BELLTEL RETIREES INC.**

Yes, I want to support the Association of BellTel Retirees Inc. in our fight to protect the pensions and benefits of all retirees and active employees. Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation:

- Other $________
- $100 ______
- $75 ______
- $50 ______
- $36.50 ______
- $30 ______
- We appreciate any amount you can donate $________

Or use your credit card.

- Visa: ______
- Discover: ______
- Amex: ______
- MasterCard: ______
- Credit Card: ______

Acct.#: __________/________/________/________
Expiration Date: ______
Security code on card: ______

Name: ____________________________
Address: ____________________________
City/State/Zip Code: ____________________________

E-mail: ____________________________
Telephone #: ____________________________

I am a: Management retiree ______  Union retiree ______  Other ______ Company Retired from: ____________________________

You can also donate online by going to our web-site www.belltelretirees.org and click on the DONATE NOW button.

Consider a recurring donation—which is an easy and safe way to budget your contribution.

The Association of BellTel Retirees Inc. is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization representing retirees and active employees of Verizon, its subsidiaries and retirees who were transferred to Idearc/SuperMedia/DexMedia.