

The News Register

January 4, 2010

“Intra-organization Communication is the Life-Blood of our organization.”

Qwest, formerly US West, has eliminated the death benefit for their retirees. Is this predictive of things to come our way???

AASBCR[®] secured the following report from a board member of The Association of U S West Retirees (AUSWR) who asked not to be quoted:

“...It's gone for all who were eligible for it - meaning on an annuity pension with a spouse or dependent children. We are weighing what legal options there may be - there aren't a lot. Our 10th Federal District court is not a favorable venue. Our attorney says if retirees file a class action suit to retain the pension death benefit as an earned benefit under the pension plan (not like health benefits) in the 3rd Circuit the outcome might be entirely different.”

The following was released by the Associated Press on 12-29-2009:

“THE ASSOCIATED PRESS DENVER -- Qwest says it will eliminate death benefits for retirees starting in March. Currently, when retirees die, their survivors receive an amount equivalent to their last year's salary. The families of as many as 27,000 retirees are eligible for the benefit and eliminating it could cut Qwest's liabilities by \$220 million.

Qwest says it wants to protect its pension fund's ability to pay out benefits now and in the future. It's in good shape now. Qwest hasn't made cash contribution for years and won't need to next year either. Company spokesman Nick Sweers acknowledges that ending the benefit will strengthen its standing on Wall Street.”

AASBCR[®] is working with AT&T to retain the benefits retirees earned while they were working.