

THE GUILD Reporter

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A different
kind of Labor
Day festival

page 4



Seeing red

Thousands of red-shirted CWA workers on strike against Verizon jam the area in and around Bryant Park in Manhattan. The mass rally, addressed by AFL-CIO President John Sweeney and Senator Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.), came on the fifth day of the largest union walkout in recent memory, with 86,000 employees represented by CWA and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers taking to the streets in a dozen northeast states. Verizon—formerly Bell Atlantic and GTE—and the two unions have been unable to agree on a new contract, with CWA

negotiators pressing for organizing access to the company's wireless employees; also unresolved are union complaints about forced overtime and job stress. More coverage and strike updates can be found at verizonREALLYsucks.com, which was registered by 2600 Magazine—a journal devoted to internet freedom—after Verizon preemptively registered the obvious verizonsucks.com. (Verizon didn't appreciate the humor, dispatching its attorneys to threaten the magazine, which retaliated by registering the longest domain name—63 characters—you'll ever see: VerizonShouldSpendMoreTimeFixingItsNetworkAndLessMoneyOnLawyers.com.)

CWA LOCAL 13500

Doing the JOA shuffle

Judge green-lights Hearst plan, blasts DOJ's 'political favoritism'

A federal judge has cleared the way for Hearst Corp. to buy the San Francisco Chronicle and—essentially—to give the San Francisco Examiner away. But in doing so he blasted the Dept. of Justice for giving the impression of “political favoritism masquerading as law enforcement” and all but invited further lawsuits to block the transaction.

The pivotal point in Judge Vaughn Walker's decision was his finding that Clint Reilly, whose lawsuit challenged the Chronicle sale, simply didn't have the legal standing to intervene. But Walker didn't arrive at that conclusion without taking several detours, including his observation that the transaction “could constitute a violation of the antitrust laws.”

Reilly, after signaling he might appeal the decision, backed down and said he'd already spent too much money—estimated at more than \$1 million—to block the deal. (See page 6 for Reilly's comments on why he intervened.)

Walker's surprising jab at the Justice Dept. followed his conclusion that Hearst's plan to give the Examiner to the politically prominent Fang family “is grossly inefficient and probably anticompetitive” because it includes a three-year, \$66 million subsidy to the Fangs. The subsidy, he wrote, “would appear to create a barrier to entry by nonsubsidized competitors . . . by infusing that paper with cash untethered to performance.” Moreover, Hearst

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Star-Bulletin newsroom writhes as bidding deadline is extended

The tension at the Honolulu Star-Bulletin has been stretched to the breaking point by a judge's order extending an Aug. 14 deadline for submitting purchase bids to Sept. 1.

The extension was sought by potential buyers of the newspaper, including a group of newsroom employees, after complaints that JOA partners Gannett Pacific Corp. and Liberty Newspapers were withholding crucial financial information. The extension gives the potential bidders an additional three weeks to review the newspaper's books.

Federal Magistrate Barry Kurren said he would review the bids by Sept. 15 to determine if there is a viable buyer for the Star-Bulletin, which Gannett tried to

shut down by paying \$26.5 million to Liberty to walk away from a joint operating agreement. Gannett owns the Honolulu Advertiser, which would gain a monopoly with the Star-Bulletin's demise.

If no buyer emerges, an antitrust lawsuit against Gannett and Liberty is expected to go to trial this winter.

While the deadline extension keeps alive the newsroom's hopes of survival, it also draws out a nearly year-long sense of uncertainty. Staffer Ian Lind, who has maintained an online journal chronicling the staff's ups and downs, summarized the mood by quoting from a San Francisco Examiner columnist: the past year “has felt like a Band-Aid being pulled off very slowly, one hair at a time.”

Heads begin to roll at CBC

Guild, CBC head toward arbitration

Pink slips have started flowing at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, following announcement of a controversial plan to cut regionally produced news shows in half. More than 230 positions are being eliminated nationwide, including 110 that are represented by the Canadian Media Guild.

The programming change is to take effect Oct. 2. Most of the layoffs become effective Sept. 29, with smaller stations to be hit especially hard: Fredericton, for example, is to lose approximately 40% of its production staff.

Guild officials have filed numerous grievances at both the local and national levels, complaining that the CBC is ignoring seniority provisions of the collective bargaining agreement. Moreover, says CMG spokesman Keith Maskell, the cuts seem deeper than warranted, “so the work isn't actually redundant, just the person doing it”—with the survivors expected to absorb the additional workload.

Also drawing the Guild's ire is a change in past practice, with CBC refusing to make radio broadcasting vacancies available to dislocated television employees. The CBC also has ignored a Guild-proposed “soft landing” program to help laid-off employees make the transition to a new career. Many of these issues are to be resolved in an expedited arbitration, to which both sides have agreed, but as of Aug. 16 no arbitration dates had been scheduled.

The scale and distribution of the layoffs has caused Guild officials to question whether CBC truly remains committed to local broadcasting. “One has to wonder whether the local stations will have enough resources—and by that I mean human as well as technical resources—left to put their shows on the air every night,” said TNG Canada Director Arnold Amber. “I really don't think this is the kind of commitment Parliament or the CBC Board thought they had achieved.”

Guild officials have warned more layoffs may be in the offing.

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Newspaper pay is still the pits Page 8

Repository, Press-Telegram units ratify 'first' contracts

Despite its reputation as a union-busting employer, Copley Press has agreed to virtually all aspects of the contract negotiated between the Northeast Ohio Guild and The Repository in Canton, Ohio. Copley recently bought the newspaper from Thomson in an asset sale, under which buyers sometimes refuse to honor past contracts.

The contract with Thomson was negotiated earlier this year. The new contract with Copley was ratified by unit members July 27 and will run through Sept. 5, 2002. It includes 3% across-the-board raises this September and in September, 2001.

Key changes in the new pact are in the areas of health insurance, pension and 401(k), which have been switched from Thomson's to Copley's plans, with some slight modification in co-pays. More significantly, Copley agreed to a memorandum of understanding that seniority and length of service under Copley Ohio Newspapers will include all continuous service with the Repository for computing benefits—except for pensions—that depend in part or whole on length of service.

International rep Jim Schaufenbil said the membership's mobilization earlier this year "gets much of the credit for the deal," together with the hard work of administrative officer Hannah Jo Rayl.

Meanwhile, Guild members at the Long Beach (CA) Press-Telegram finally ended a years-long stand-off by ratifying their first contract since the newspaper was bought by Dean Singleton.

The three-year pact includes scales that still lag those of another Singleton newspaper in the region, the Los Angeles Daily News, by a year; moreover, employees will not receive experience credit until the second year of the contract. But the deal does call for across-the-board increases of 3% the first year and 2% each year thereafter, as well as a \$300 signing bonus. Other highlights:

- Maintenance of the Guild membership clause,

with no drop-out period, plus dues check-off.

- A 401(k) plan with a mandatory 1% company contribution and an additional 1% company match.

- Retroactive sick leave, plus reinstatement of vacation lost by circulation employees after Singleton's purchase of the paper.

As a further inducement for settlement, management agreed to pay \$75,000 to 21 transportation drivers who were terminated when their department was dissolved after the sale. Although the unit recently won an NLRB case over the Press-Telegram's refusal to negotiate the dissolution, the payment precluded a company appeal.

Skagit Valley Herald, The Call

Elsewhere, Guild units at the Skagit Valley (WA) Herald and The Call in Woonsocket, RI, have reached preliminary contract agreements.

The four-year pact in Skagit Valley, calling for annual wage increases of 3.75%, was described by TNG-CWA Vice President Larry Hatfield as "one of the better Guild contracts bargained recently, both in terms of economics and working conditions." Among its provisions:

- Premium pay of time-and-a-half for employees working on Thanksgiving or Christmas.
- An improved grievance procedure.
- Extension of parental leave to fathers and to adoptions.
- Expansion of bereavement leave to domestic partners and to any relative living with an employee.
- Leaves for TNG-CWA service.

An unratified tentative agreement has been reached in Woonsocket, including initial contracts for two newly organized departments. The three-year contract would increase scales by 2% a year and pay a \$200 signing bonus to employees with more than a year at the paper. A ratification vote is expected next month.

What's ahead in Anaheim

The TNG-CWA sector conference will kick off at noon Thursday, Aug. 24, at the Anaheim Hilton in Anaheim, California. The schedule is as follows:

Thursday, August 24

Noon—Council of Councils meeting

1-5 p.m.—Delegate and guest registration: 2nd floor, ballroom corridor registration desk

1:30 p.m.—Agency shop enforcement and Beck objections, presented by Helen Gibson, CWA special programs director. (All U.S. locals with union security provisions should attend.)

3 p.m.—New delegates' forum
7 p.m.—Reception

Friday, August 25

9 a.m.—noon—General session and committees

1:30-5 p.m.—General session (bargaining program changes) and committees

Saturday, August 26

9 a.m.—close—General session

The primary business before the conference will be the Executive Council's recommendations for changes in the Guild's bargaining program, which also require constitutional amendments. The conference also will receive a finance committee report that contains Executive Council recommendations for integrating the Guild's Defense Fund with the CWA Member Relief Fund.

Following the sector confer-

ence, the CWA annual convention will be held Monday and Tuesday, August 28 and 29, at the Anaheim Convention Center. It will be preceded by an orientation session for new delegates, scheduled to run from 11 a.m. to noon Sunday at the Anaheim Hilton. A workshop on agency fee (Beck) objectors and on agency shop enforcement will be held Wednesday, from 8:30 to 10 a.m.

In addition, the Secretary-Treasurer's office will present specialized workshops on financial record-keeping on Sunday and Wednesday.

Numerous other meetings before, during and after the convention may be of interest to Guild members. Among them:

- A meeting of Guild, NABET and other CWA media local members to discuss a new initiative to unionize public broadcasting employees; at 5 p.m. Monday, Aug. 28 in San Simeon A at the Anaheim Hilton.

- CWA Districts 1, 2, 3, 7 and 9 will meet separately at 3 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 27 at the convention center; Districts 4, 6 and 13 will meet at 4 p.m.

- CWA Power/Pride at Work will meet at 5 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 27 in the La Jolla room at the Anaheim Hilton.

Convention-goers should double-check all meeting times and places, which are subject to change.

In brief . . .

Boston Magazine is best of best

Like many city magazines around the country, Boston Magazine publishes an annual "best of" issue—but this year's version is the best yet. The reason? One of its categories was titled, "Best reporter who realizes the value of having a decent union standing behind him," awarded to Robin Washington of the Boston Herald. Washington's reporting teed off a major Boston financial institution, "but when his bosses tried to cool his passion . . . Washington publicly accused the paper . . . of caving in to pressure from a megabank and major advertiser. And he still has a job. Neat." Yeah.

Detroit papers show true colors

If anyone doubted whether The Detroit News and Detroit Free Press were bargaining in good faith all these years, those doubts should now be dispelled: less than a week after a federal appeals panel overturned an NLRB order that locked-out workers be rehired, the newspapers' lead negotiator yanked all proposals still on the table. The Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO has called for an Aug. 22 demonstration in front of the Detroit News building to convince the newspapers they should resume talks.

Despite protest, Giles gets nod

Despite numerous objections from union leaders and former Detroit News and Free Press employees, the Nieman Foundation has named former News editor and publisher Robert Giles as curator. He succeeds Bill Kovach, who had a lustrous tenure; Giles was quoted by Editor & Publisher as saying it's "premature" to say exactly what he'll do in the new slot.

Seattle Times rattles a saber

The Seattle Times is working extra-hard to spook its employees: after only a handful of contract negotiating sessions, it sent staffers a letter asking them not to be alarmed at management's strike preparations. The letter laments the "tone some union leaders are bringing to the process" and, in a throwback to another era, blames that tone on outside agitators—i.e.

on the Guild's national leadership. As the local bargaining committee noted in its response, any "tone" is set by the local's members.

Denver contract up for ratification

The new Denver contract was reduced to writing more quickly than Guild officials had forecast, with copies circulated to stewards starting Aug. 10 and the ratification vote scheduled for completion Aug. 19.

Providence Guild wins back pay

An arbitrator has ruled that the Providence (RI) Journal violated the contract in January, 1999, when it failed to give Guild members the same 3.02% base wage increase it gave other unionized employees at the paper. Instead, TNG-CWA members got a base wage increase of 2%, plus a 1% gain-sharing adjustment. The arbitrator's decision requires the Journal to increase its base rate for Guild members by another 1.02%, for a back-pay liability of approximately \$320,000.

Pacific Guild hires its first organizer

The Pacific Northwest Newspaper Guild has hired its first full-time organizer, Pira Shamshiri, a former organizer for the Service Employees International Union and for Washington Citizen Action. The local plans to hire a second full-time organizer next year, to organize non-union shops in the Puget Sound area.

Maitland marks 50 years in Guild

Award-winning reporter and editor Harry Maitland recently celebrated his 50th anniversary as a staffer for the Delaware County (PA) Daily Times—and, he informs us, is about to observe his 50th anniversary as a Guild member. A long-time police reporter, he owns the only honorary membership ever issued to a news reporter by the National Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police.

Milwaukee ex-prez to edit Advocate

Michael Kuchta, a founding member and past president of the Milwaukee Newspaper Guild, has been named editor of the Union Advocate, a Minnesota labor paper. He succeeds Barb Kucera.

The Newspaper Guild International



For information about your benefits, contact Helen L. Coleman, assistant to the trustees:

1-888-893-3650
hcoleman@cwa-union.org

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Computer top minimums

Contract	Minimum	After	Contract	Minimum	After
New York, NY, Times			Honolulu, HI, Advertiser, Star-Bulletin (2)		
Computer Operator	\$1202.82	4 yrs	Sr. Programmer	\$896.66	4 yrs
System Programmer	1025.84	3 yrs	Computer Operator/Jr. Programmer	762.05	3 yrs
Information Systems Specialist	854.80	3 yrs	Keypunch Operator	593.98	3 yrs
Information Systems Clerk	772.80	2 yrs	Memphis, TN, Commercial Appeal		
Boston, MA, Globe			Sr. Programmer	892.18	5 yrs
Sr. Systems Analyst	1175.99	2 yrs	Computer Programmer	742.75	5 yrs
Systems Analyst	1127.62	2 yrs	Computer Operator	598.48	5 yrs
Programmer/Analyst	1062.67	5 yrs	Keypunch Operator	572.58	5 yrs
Operation Supervisor	996.01	1 yr	Philadelphia, PA, Inquirer, Daily News (2)		
Programmer/Analyst	1062.67	5 yrs	Computer Operator	853.20	4 yrs
Operation Supervisor	996.01	1 yr	IBM Programmer	780.23	4 yrs
Data Entry Supervisor	972.50	4 yrs	Keypunch Operator	677.92	4 yrs
Sr. Computer Operator	741.09	2 yrs	San Francisco, CA, Chronicle, Examiner (2)		
Data Entry/Computer Operators	617.56	3 yrs	Sr. Computer Operator	810.58	2 yrs
Victoria, BC, Times-Colonist			Computer Operator	740.49	2 yrs
Computer Operator	1070.31	flat	Keypunch Op. Supervisor	701.88	2 yrs
St. Louis, MO, Post-Dispatch			Keypunch Operator	672.59	2 yrs
Sr. Programmer, Sr. Systems Analyst	1054.00	5 yrs	Baltimore, MD, Sun		
Jr. Programmer, Jr. Systems Analyst	804.00	5 yrs	Programmer	805.00	5 yrs
Machine Operator	747.00	4 yrs	Computer Op./Data Control Analyst	677.00	5 yrs
Keypunch Operator	528.00	3 yrs	Head Computer Operator	a-697.00	flat
St. Paul, MN, Pioneer Press			Programmer Librarian	b-570.00	5 yrs
Sr. Programmer-Analyst	1028.46	5 yrs	Data Entry Operators	548.00	4 yrs
Programmer-Analyst	862.80	4 yrs	Eugene, OR, Register Guard		
Programmer	820.34	4 yrs	Programmer/Operator	773.54	5 yrs
Jr. Programmer	628.60	2 yrs	Data Processing B	532.33	5 yrs
Computer Room Shift Supervisor	893.62	5 yrs	Data Processing A	486.27	4 yrs
Sr. Operator	782.37	4 yrs	Albany, NY, Times-Union		
Operator	746.61	4 yrs	Micro Systems Specialist	758.25	4 yrs
Jr. Operator	524.16	1 yr	Computer Operator	564.00	2 yrs
San Jose, CA, Mercury-News			Keypunch Operator	503.14	3 yrs
Data Processing	984.05	6 yrs	Lowell, MA, Sun		
Sr. Computer Operator	775.54	2 yrs	Computer OP/Programmer	757.86	5 yrs
Computer Operator	653.92	2 yrs	Monterey, CA, Herald		
Supervising Keypunch Operator	613.34	2 yrs	Computer Operator	742.00	4 yrs
Keypunch Operator	582.44	2 yrs	Denver, CO, Post		
Toledo, OH, Blade			Sr. Computer Operator	665.00	5 yrs
Systems Analyst Programmer	996.62	4 yrs	Computer Operator	591.00	3 yrs
Programmer	938.38	4 yrs	Data Entry Operator	454.00	3 yrs
Systems Coordinator	897.59	3 yrs	Portland, ME, Press Herald		
Computer Operator	813.13	3 yrs	Programmer/Analyst	657.07	3 yrs
Data Entry Operator	669.98	2 yrs	Computer Operator A	597.58	1 yr
Washington, DC, Post			Computer Operator B	481.30	1 yr
T-5 Data Processing Prog. Analyst	980.54	4 yrs	Clerk-Computer Input	463.03	1 yr
T-4 Data Processing Programmer	716.00	3 yrs	San Juan, PR, Star		
T-3 Sr. Processing Machine Operator	626.90	1 yr	Programmer	528.00	5 yrs
T-2 Data Processing Machine Operator	568.65	3 yrs	Computer Operator	384.00	4 yrs
T-1 Keypunch Operator	524.10	2 yrs	Data Entry Operator	327.00	4 yrs
Montreal, PQ, Gazette			Mt. Clemens, MI, Macomb Daily, Daily Tribune (2)		
Analyst/Programmer	965.00	3 yrs	Data Processing Operator	506.39	2 yrs
Computer Operator/Support Person	760.00	3 yrs	Brockton, MA, Enterprise		
Computer Operator	615.00	3 yrs	Computer Operator	494.73	4 yrs
Data Entry	597.00	3 yrs	Duluth, MN, News-Tribune		
Boston, MA, Herald			Computer Operator	484.03	4 yrs
Programmer	958.96	3 yrs	Data Entry Clerk	429.74	4 yrs
Computer Operator	727.89	3 yrs	Yakima, WA, Herald-Republic		
Keypunch Operator	587.20	3 yrs	Computer Operator	437.52	4 yrs
Providence, RI, Journal-Bulletin			Pueblo, CO, Chieftain		
Computer Specialist	949.87	4 yrs	Computer Operator	430.40	3 yrs
Computer Room Supervisor	805.91	3 yrs	Keypunch Operator	398.39	3 yrs
Computer Operator	758.18	2 yrs	El Diario-La Prensa, NY		
Lead Data Entry Clerk	582.50	2 yrs	Data Entry Clerk	415.80	3 yrs
Data Entry Clerk	516.39	2 yrs	Wilkes-Barre, PA, Citizens' Voice		
Manchester, NH, Union Leader			Keypunch Operator	387.98	2 yrs
Sr. Programmer	933.33	2 yrs	Terre Haute, IN, Tribune-Star		
Computer Operations	891.16	2 yrs	Keypunch Operator	348.52	flat
Operator/Technician	865.98	2 yrs			
Night Operations	812.55	2 yrs			
MIS Coordinator	752.16	2 yrs			
Advertising System Coordinator	708.32	2 yrs			
Computer System Operator	641.26	2 yrs			

Deferred Increases

Baltimore: All positions, \$19 on 6/23/00 and 6/23/01, \$20 on 6/23/02.

Brockton: \$12.36 on 5/1/00, \$7.60 on 5/1/01.

Denver Post: Computer Operator, \$19 on 1/1/01, \$18 on 1/1/02; Data Operator, \$14 on 1/1/01, \$15 on 1/1/02; Sr. Computer Operator, \$21 on 1/1/01, \$21 on 1/1/02. (NB: Denver rates may change with new agency contract.)

Duluth: Computer Operator, \$14.81 on 1/1/01, \$15.25 on 1/1/02; Data Operator, \$13.14 on 1/1/01, \$13.54 on 1/1/02.

El Diario: \$12.47 on 7/1/00, \$12.84 on 7/1/01.

Mt. Clemens: \$14.24 on 1/1/01, \$13.74 on 1/1/02 and \$13.23 on 1/1/03.

New York: Computer Operator, \$24.05 on 3/31/01; Programmer, \$20.51 on 3/31/01, \$20.92 on 3/31/02; Information Systems Specialist, \$19.09 on 3/31/01; Information Systems Clerk, \$15.45 on 3/31/01.

San Francisco: All positions, \$12 on 7/1/00, 1/1/01 and 7/1/01; \$15 on 1/1/02, 7/1/02, 1/1/03, 7/1/03, 1/1/04 and 7/1/04; and \$20 on 1/1/05.

Source: TNG-CWA Collective Bargaining Dept., 4/1/00; Canadian newspaper wages in Canadian dollars.

Understaffed, AP institutes bounty system

Labor relations at the Associated Press have been, let's say, a tad strained. Contract negotiations this past winter were difficult, resulting in a 10-day byline strike. Employees claimed they were being worked harder while seeing their wages slip relative to other journalists—complaints that management dismissed as mere bargaining table posturing.

But now that the contract negotiations are behind them, AP's managers are scrambling to deal with the problems they had a hard time accepting in contract talks. Their solution? A July 20 memo announcing "AP's Job Referral Program," under which "members of the staff will receive a cash incentive for successful hires they refer to AP."

The scheme, promptly dubbed an "AP bounty" by staffers still smarting from the way they were treated earlier this year, has unleashed a torrent of invective on a WireService Guild internet list-serv. "So let's get this straight," begins one more restrained posting. "The way current AP employees can make up for pay at the bot-

tom of the industry scale is by sucking in some poor dumb bastards to join us. Is there no one in AP management who can see the sickness in this letter?"

Added another, "Perhaps HR could set up a reality-TV series knockoff, 'AP Survivor,' where staffers vote each other out of the company. The last person with at least 6 months of wire experience who is able to stand working for the Associated Press, even when confronted with videotaped messages from those who have left and are enjoying careers elsewhere, wins the \$2,000 bounty."

Actually, the \$2,000 is at the high end of AP's schedule, with the bonuses starting at \$750 and ranging upward "depending on turnover levels" and recruiting difficulties. But high or low, there's an additional bounty feature that has AP employees seeing red: to get the money, not only must the referred candidate stay on the payroll for six months—so does the employee who referred him or her.

"One hell of a proviso," observed a current staffer. "What does that say about AP retention?"

Guild arbitrates firing of TNG Canada veep

The Halifax Typographical Union, CWA Local 30130, will be appearing before a three-person arbitration panel Sept. 22 to contest the termination of a Halifax Chronicle-Herald reporter. But not just any reporter: John Barker is also the TNG-CWA Canada East Vice President.

Barker, who moved from Ontario to Halifax late last year, was fired at the end of a six-month probationary period. Although it's unusual for a Guild local to grieve a probationary discharge, the local believes the company acted in bad faith by failing to give Barker regular and meaningful feedback on his work. The company cited his

"unsatisfactory completion" of his probationary period as cause for discharge, Barker says, "without ever spelling out what that meant."

Barker was employed as a staff reporter in the Chronicle-Herald's Truro bureau, where for four of his six months he worked out of his home. During that time, he says, he produced approximately 140 stories with virtually no guidance or feedback from his supervisors.

Additional arbitration dates are scheduled for Oct. 5 and 6.

Under Guild rules, Barker can retain his office for as long as his dismissal is being contested, or for up to one year while not being employed by a newspaper.

LABOR ORGANIZER

The Minnesota Newspaper Guild Typographical Union seeks applicants for a full-time labor organizer focusing on the newspaper, information and related sectors in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area and Minnesota.

Local 37002 seeks a self-starter with substantial organizing experience. Background in union organizing and the targeted sectors considered a plus. Salary commensurate with experience; good benefits package. For more information, contact Mike Sweeney at 612-789-0044 or newsbtc@mtng.org. Applications must be received by Sept. 30 at:

Organizing Committee
Minnesota Newspaper Guild Typographical Union
2855 Anthony Lane South, Suite 110
St. Anthony, MN 55418

Labor round-up

Freelancers break new ground . . .

The National Writers Union, a UAW local, has reached an agreement with Contentville.com to compensate writers for works purchased by visitors to the website. The contract is the first of its kind between the NWU, which represents freelancers, and a web-based content provider. Contentville.com is an offshoot of Steven Brill's monthly magazine, *Content*, which covers the media.

. . . and so do booksellers

Powell's Books, whose employees joined the International Longshore and Warehouse Union last year, has become the country's first major bookseller with a union contract. The agreement, negotiated after months of picketing, rallies and a series of one-day strikes, was approved 293-37 and will give most workers an 18% wage increase over three years.

Advertisers talk, but say nothing new

Two days of talks between television advertisers and actors represented by SAG and AFTRA, including the first face-to-face formal negotiations in more than three months, collapsed with no progress made and each side accusing the other of inflexibility. But it was the advertisers who apparently drew a line in the sand, insisting they couldn't modify the "best and final" offer—which eliminates residuals for network ads—they'd made in April. Meanwhile, as Hollywood reportedly gears up for major strikes next year by writers and actors on feature films and television shows, the NFL Players Association is urging moviegoers to boycott "The Replacements," which opened nationwide Aug. 11. The movie focuses on the scabs who replaced the Washington Redskins during the 1987 football strike, in which player solidarity was so strong that not a single Redskin crossed the line.

Lawsuit filed over April protests

While Washington, D.C. police generally were portrayed by the media as being restrained and disciplined in their response to April's protests against the World Bank and so-called "free" trade, the reality included blanket arrests and a raid on a protesters' meeting place that was led by the fire department—but which resulted in police confiscating pamphlets and protest puppets. Now civil rights attorneys, including the ACLU, the National Lawyers Guild and the Partnership for Civil Justice, have filed a class action lawsuit accusing District and U.S. authorities of violating the protesters' constitutional rights by intimidating and disrupting a "new progressive movement."

Why "flack" is a dirty word

Here's a shocker: public relations executives don't all tell the truth. In fact, according to the trade publication *PR Week*, which surveyed 1,700 industry leaders, 25% admitted lying in their work, 39% said they exaggerated facts and 44% conceded their work was ethically questionable.

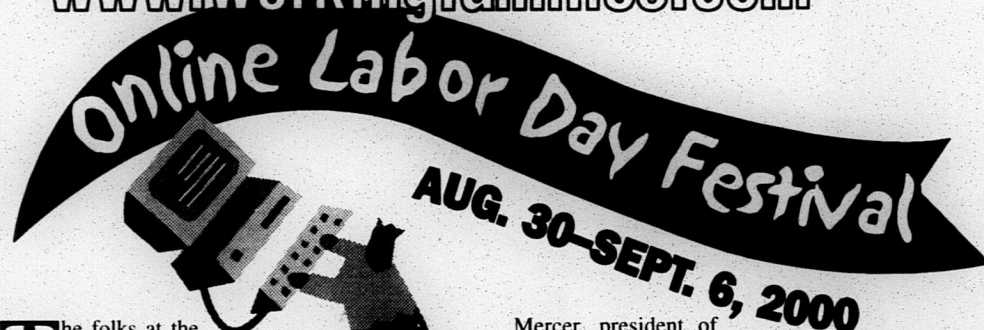
A newer, better million-person march

Having halted the erosion in union membership through renewed emphasis on organizing, the AFL-CIO executive council has raised the bar by approving a new goal of adding 1 million new members a year. The aggressive target was set at the council's meeting in Chicago Aug. 1-2, at which it also committed the federation to advance the workers' and human rights outlined in the International Labor Organization's Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

Last of the New Dealers gets medal

Among the 15 recent recipients of the Presidential Medal of Freedom—the nation's highest civilian honor—was Mildred "Millie" Jeffrey, a labor and Democratic Party activist who was the first woman to direct a department in the United Auto Workers. Jeffrey also was a leader in the National Organization of Women, the Coalition of Labor Union Women and the National Women's Political Caucus. "To me, she represents the last of the true New Dealers," said Anna Padia, TNG-CWA's human rights director. "She is one of a whole generation of wonderful Democratic women who drove around in jalopies registering people in her state of Michigan and offering help wherever she could."

SEE YOU AT THE WORLD'S FIRST NATIONWIDE
www.workingfamilies.com



The folks at the AFL-CIO are trying something new this year: the first-ever online Labor Day festival.

Will it work? Who knows? But the idea of a cyber-fest is just quirky enough that it should draw a fair number of curiosity seekers who might end up getting more of an exposure to labor issues than they would otherwise. And if the weather closes out the summer the way it started—hot and dry in the West, wet and muggy in the East—the site should be considerably more pleasant than a traditional Labor Day parade.

The week-long celebration is being planned to include an online parade (your guess is as good as ours), a voter registration booth, a mailbox to elected leaders, audio greetings from union leaders and union superstars, an online bazaar with union-made goods and a music tent. Arcade games also will be available, including the undoubtedly noisy "Smash Corporate Greed."

Labor Day also marks the kick-off for Union Label Week 2000, which will run through Sept. 10 and which encourages the public to look for the union label when shopping. The label, points out Charles

Mercer, president of the AFL-CIO's Union Label and Services Trade Department, guarantees that a product was "produced under decent conditions and for a fair level of wages and benefits."

Finally, Labor Day once again this year will feature the nationwide Labor in the Pulpits program, a joint project of the AFL-CIO and the National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice. More than 650 congregations in 110 cities—up from 450 congregations in 80 cities last year—will be addressed by union members speaking about common values, such as equality, social and economic justice and fair treatment in the workplace.

Expect to hear the following themes:

- Unions close the gap between the rich and poor. Although economic growth has brought a recent uptick in working people's wages, the gulf between rich and poor keeps widening. Unions enable working people to counterbalance corporate power.
- Immigrant workers deserve basic rights. When American corporations are allowed to break basic laws by exploiting undocumented workers, they lower the floor beneath all workers and further erode community living standards.

Labor begins final push for elections

As the Democrats leave Los Angeles and CWA and the Guild move in for their convention and sector conference, respectively, a union-led push to catapult Al Gore into the presidency is entering its final phase.

One of the last major holdouts, the United Auto Workers, finally ended its flirtation with Ralph Nader by endorsing Gore. That leaves only the Teamsters hanging back. Meanwhile, a "Texas Truth Squad" has been barn-storming the country to sound the alarm about Republican nominee George Bush, pointing to his track record as governor of Texas to drive home the point that he's no friend of labor, the environment or the underclass.

A sizeable number of union members—especially in the trades—hold reservations about Gore because of his support of NAFTA, the WTO and other "free trade" institutions, but the union movement's leadership is virtually unanimous in emphasizing that he is in every other respect enormously preferable to Bush. Among the differences that they cite:

- Gore believes that union organizing is a "fundamental right that should never be blocked, stopped and never, ever taken away," Bush touts his state's "right-to-work" status.
- Gore opposes so-called "paycheck protection" proposals that would undermine unions' political effectiveness; Bush supports them.
- Gore has consistently supported a higher minimum wage and is pushing for an increase to \$6.15 an hour; Bush opposes an increase. Moreover, the Texas minimum wage—which covers domestic and agricultural workers—is only \$3.35 an hour.
- Gore supports budget surplus set-asides to protect Social Security and Medicare and opposes privatization of Social Security; Bush supports partial privatization and wants to dispose of the budget surplus by enacting tax cuts that would disproportionately favor the well-to-do.

The two also have numerous differences on such social issues as abortion, government's role in dealing with discrimination and environmental protection.

Diaz, 41, felled by heart attack

Eduardo Diaz, CWA's international affairs director, rose through the ranks like a meteor. A large man with an easy grin and a calm, confident air, he first gained a taste for union organizing while still a student at Rutgers University, became a local organizer in Texas and then rocketed ever higher, getting named last year as CWA's international affairs director.

But on July 18, while attending an international conference in Edinburgh, Scotland, Diaz died of a heart attack. He was only 41.

The sudden loss devastated both his family and co-workers, hundreds of whom turned out for an emotional two-hour memorial service July 27. Among those offering eulogies were TNG-CWA

President Linda Foley and TNG Canada Director Arnold Amber.

Diaz is survived by his wife, Rosie Torres, who is a CWA lobbyist, and by their two-year-old daughter, Victoria; and by his parents and three sisters.

Among Diaz's most recent accomplishments was his leadership of CWA's European campaign to derail the Sprint-WorldCom merger, resulting in a European Commission decision to block the effort and its eventual demise.

A college scholarship to benefit Diaz's daughter has been established by CWA. Contributions to the Victoria Diaz Scholarship Fund should be sent to Yvette Herrera at CWA's national headquarters, 501 Third Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.

Hollinger sale creates Canadian behemoth

July ended on a "good-news, bad-news" note for Canadian journalists. The good news was the surprise announcement by Conrad Black that he was all but quitting the newspaper business.

The bad news was that he is selling virtually all of his Canadian newspaper holdings—held by the Hollinger chain—to broadcast giant CanWest Global Communications, creating a media giant of unparalleled dimensions. Although a similar deal would never fly in the U.S. because of bans on cross-ownership, Canada's Broadcast Act does not prohibit broadcasters from owning newspapers.

The \$3.5 billion (Canadian) transaction, to be phased in over a 17-month transition period, combines Canada's biggest newspaper chain with its second-largest private broadcaster. Black is to get a

15% share in CanWest stock and just under a 6% voting interest, plus two seats on CanWest's expanded, 11-member board of directors. He also is to retain operating control over the National Post for five years.

CanWest, controlled by the Asper family of Winnipeg, will get 13 large metropolitan English-language dailies, half of which include TNG Canada units: the Halifax Daily News, The Telegram in St. John's, The Guardian in Charlottetown, the Montreal Gazette, the Ottawa Citizen, the Windsor Star and The Times Colonist in Victoria. It also will acquire 136 smaller dailies, weeklies and shoppers, 85 trade publications and directories and a slew of internet ventures.

With an expected closing date in late September, the deal has prompted petitions for govern-

ment intervention from the New Democratic Party and the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union, which recently called off an eight-month-long strike at the Hollinger-owned Calgary Herald. Government officials reportedly are awaiting the results of a Competition Bureau review before deciding how to respond.

Although Black announced in April that he would sell many of his newspapers to reduce debt, he emphasized that Hollinger would retain ownership of the chain's largest dailies, including six of the ones sold to CanWest. The sweeping scope of the sale therefore surprised many analysts, leading to renewed comments about Black's "mercurial" behavior and prompting speculation that Black believes the newspaper industry has had its best days.

Hearst, Fangs close deal

Continued from page 1

"undoubtedly will attempt to recover the subsidy . . . through higher advertising rates in the Chronicle."

In short, Walker noted, "a persuasive case might be made that the . . . transaction violates the antitrust laws." That the Dept. of Justice, the nation's antitrust watchdog, failed to interpret the record the same way led Walker "to the uneasy inference that the cronyism that fueled the Fang transaction at the local level also exerted influence over the DOJ investigation."

Fighting words, to be sure—enough to prompt a five-page letter Aug. 10 from Assistant Attorney General Joel Klein asking Walker to vacate all portions of his opinion about the trust-busters' motives or how they might have been politically influenced. But an unyielding Walker fired back that Klein had been asked twice to provide the

court with "substantive input and legal analysis" and had twice declined—then added that he would entertain Klein's motion to reopen the case.

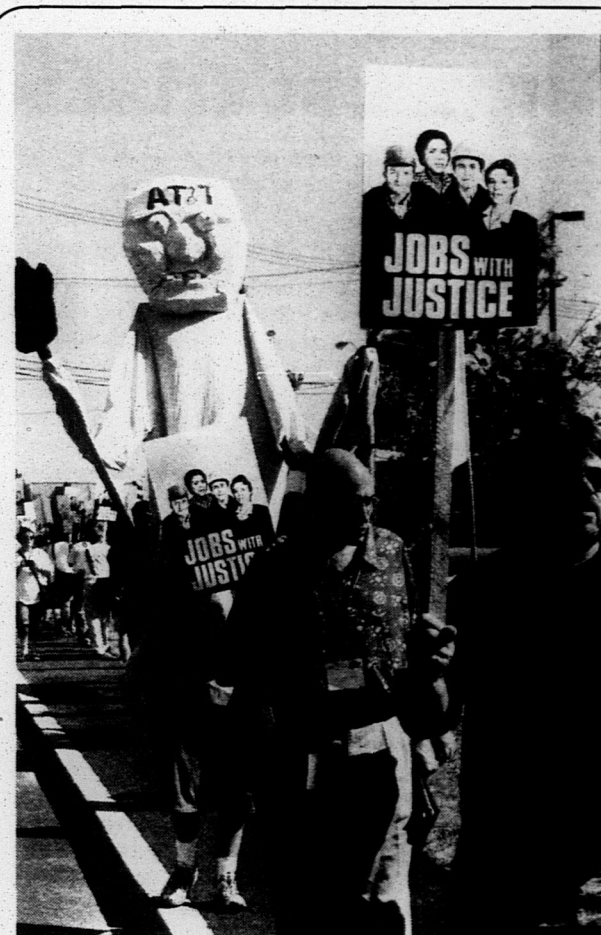
Whether Klein will take up the challenge was unknown as The Guild Reporter went to press, but it seems unlikely. And both Hearst and Ted Fang are acting as though the matter is closed, with Hearst completing its \$660 million purchase of the Chronicle July 28 and keeping its deal with the Fang family, despite some initial hesitation.

Fang, meanwhile, promptly started assembling his management team, naming Martha "Marty" Steffens as the Examiner's executive editor and vice president of content, and Robert McCray as general manager. The choice of Steffens, former editor of the Binghamton (NY) Press & Sun-Bulletin, is in keeping with Fang's stated intention of trans-

forming the Examiner into a newspaper focused almost entirely on San Francisco: she is a long-time booster of civic journalism, which believes that newspapers should be change-agents within their communities.

Reaction to Walker's decision in the Examiner newsroom was muted but relieved, chiefly because it marked an end to a year's worth of uncertainty. "We've been working in a state of ambiguity and anxiety for a long time," reporter Eric Brazil told the Chronicle. All Examiner staffers have been guaranteed jobs at the Chronicle, and by some accounts none are planning to stay with the Examiner after a four-month transition period is ended.

In addition to assembling a new staff, Fang's management team will have to move the Examiner to a different building and plan to use different printing presses.



ANDY ZIPSER/THE GUILD REPORTER

Picket-line workshop

True to form, Jobs with Justice couldn't hold a national convention—as it did in Dartmouth, MA, the weekend of July 22—without taking to the streets. Fortunately, an AT&T "customer care center" in nearby Fairhaven provided a perfect opportunity to put passion into practice, with more than 600 JofJ supporters turning out to protest Ma Bell's refusal to abide by its promise to remain neutral in organizing campaigns. The CWA-represented employees of the Fairhaven facility also are aggrieved because it has been out-sourcing work to a non-union telemarketer in Tennessee, reducing AT&T's workforce at the site from 800 to approximately 600.

Labor's voice to be heard

Labor's voice isn't always audible, but it's been around for a long time and lately it's been growing more assertive.

Now it's taking the stage in a big way. The weekend of Oct. 6-8, a consortium of labor, research and academic organizations will host a conference in New York City on the history of labor jour-

nalism, its current challenges and its future role. Conference panels will examine how labor covers itself, alternative structures for labor media, lessons from the history of labor media and the use of new technologies.

More details will be published in the Sept. 15 Guild Reporter, or call 212/340-2816 for specifics.

New York Guild seeking applicants for Local Representative

The Newspaper Guild of New York is seeking applicants for the position of Local Representative. Applicants must have extensive experience in organizing, contract negotiations, grievance handling, and processing unfair labor practice charges and arbitrations. Applicants must also have excellent writing and other editorial and communication skills.

This position is covered by a labor contract between the Newspaper Guild of New York and the Local Representatives Guild. Excellent salary and benefits.

If you wish to apply, please send your resume (no phone calls, please) no later than 5 p.m. Wednesday, August 30, 2000 to:

New York Guild President Barry Lipton
1501 Broadway, Suite 708
New York, N.Y. 10036

Labor Organizer

Full-time labor organizer needed to work primarily in the news and information industry. The primary job location is New York, with some out-of-town stays required.

The organizer will be responsible for developing and running campaigns in unorganized shops. Experience is required.

Salary range negotiable, depending on experience. Full benefit package provided. Equal opportunity employer.

Submit resumes to:

Wire Service Guild, Local 31222,
The Newspaper Guild-CWA
1501 Broadway #708
New York, N.Y. 10026

SAN FRANCISCO

Antitrust trial was about betrayal of trust

Although characterized by some as a political opportunist for tangling with Hearst's proposed acquisition of the San Francisco Chronicle, Clint Reilly took the high road in these comments, excerpted from a speech delivered at a June 1 press conference. (For the news behind his speech, see page 1)

When I filed this lawsuit, I had no thought of owning the paper—in fact, I brought my lawsuit before the Fangs were even given the Examiner. After I filed the suit, it was the Hearst Corporation itself which asked me if I would buy the paper as a means of keeping it alive. Almost immediately, we learned that Hearst had been dealing secretly with the Fangs and then signed an exclusive deal with them for their sham purchase.

This lawsuit is really about the evil of monopoly power. Antitrust law is rooted in the principle that competition is good for consumers. When consumers have more than one choice, prices are cheaper and products are better made. The same goes when the product is newspapers, especially here in our city. Let me tell you a bit about why I care so deeply about this issue. . . .

I first appeared in the pages of the Chronicle and the Examiner as a newsmaker in 1968, at the age of 21, when I led a group of Seminars in a controversial study exposing poverty and racism in San Francisco. The Examiner of the day praised our report. The Chronicle attacked it. Two newspapers made a difference.

For 25 years I worked in politics as a campaign manager in California and here in the city, and I interacted intimately with papers as both a newsmaker and as a repre-

sentative of newsmakers. I saw first-hand how the philosophies, agendas and biases of journalists, editorial boards and newspaper owners could dramatically affect news coverage and editorial opinion, particularly on political issues. Two newspapers very often made a difference.

I strongly believe that newspapers have a dramatic impact in shaping public opinion on critical public policy issues. Simply by choosing to cover or not to cover specific issues or candidates, the press has enormous power to frame civic debate, and to make or break elected officials, to elect or defeat political candidates. . . .

My relationship with our two dailies has been far from a 30-year love affair. But I have often been very thankful for one thing. When I disagreed with one paper, I had the other to turn to—and so did everybody else in San Francisco. Above all, their competition protected us from the tyranny of ideas that the monopoly power of only one newspaper would hold over our city.

This lawsuit began as an antitrust trial and became a trial about the betrayal of the public trust. Over the past month we saw stark evidence of journalistic ethics devoured by corporate greed. We saw newspaper executives admit to horse-trading for political support for their merger from a mayor. We saw corporate executives consciously plot-

ting to kill a daily newspaper. We saw a publisher put on indefinite leave by his boss, the Hearst Newspaper president whose own handwritten notes then confirmed that he, too, was intimately aware of the horse-trading that led to the publisher's demise.

We saw exposed a sham sale of the Examiner to a prospective owner who by his own account would reduce the historic Examiner newspaper's size by half and its circulation by two-thirds, who would print no real Sunday newspaper, who would take away the workers' union status and who most certainly would fail after his \$66 million subsidy from Hearst was exhausted. What an ignominious death for the flagship paper of the Hearst Corporation, handing it over to an owner whose journalistic credibility has sunk so low that not a single journalist out of 210 at the Examiner would make the choice to work there under that new ownership.

Why would two great newspaper companies stoop to such sordid tactics? The answer lies in the books and records of the San Francisco Newspaper Agency. By closing the Examiner and acquiring the Chronicle, the Hearst Corporation will make \$120 million per year and pay less than six times annual earnings for a paper that will in fact be worth over a billion dollars on the day the transaction closes.

In short, this newspaper trial has been a story of the abandonment of the public trust. Ironically, if Pulitzer gave awards for trials, this trial itself might qualify for an award for investigative journalism. . . .

If this story has a lesson, it is simply that human beings and human institutions need checks and balances. No one newspaper can be trusted to decide what is news—or what is right. That is why I believe the evidence of this trial proves we need two strong newspapers in San Francisco.

In 1970, Congress passed the Newspaper Preservation Act. The purpose of this federal law was to preserve newspapers and allow two newspaper voices in cities across America. In the 30 years since, there have been 28 Joint Operating Agreements, but 15 of those have resulted in the death of a newspaper. Instead of protecting newspapers, the Newspaper Preservation Act has become a tool for publishers to close down newspapers, not protect them.

In many cases, profitable newspapers have been shut and their owners have been paid huge sums not to publish at all. Monopoly newspapers are earning monopoly profits at the expense of readers, who are at the mercy of a single publisher's news judgements and political viewpoints.

That's why I've taken the steps I have, when no one else would. That's why I have spent nearly a million dollars of my own money on this public-interest lawsuit and refused to settle for many millions more.

If my lawsuit prevails, the original intent of the Newspaper Preservation Act can be revived: to protect two voices in a community and to provide checks and balances against editorial tyranny. Or as Thomas Jefferson said, to maintain competition in the marketplace of ideas.

AMERICAN NEWSPAPER GUILD

'Project X': an idea ahead of its time?

Concerns about newspaper monopolies have engrossed the Guild's officers throughout the union's history—starting with a proposal that became known as "Project X." Presented for membership approval at the American Newspaper Guild's 17th annual convention, Project X ordered that ANG "take the lead in tackling the evils of newspaper monopoly." Such a program, delegates unanimously declared, should be regarded as "one of importance equal to, and a part of, the matters of collective bargaining and organization." Guild members disagreed, voting more than 2-to-1 in a subsequent referendum not to spend union funds on the project. The following excerpts are from a column by ANG President Harry Martin, published in the Aug. 25, 1950 Guild Reporter:

A lot of eye-wash about "Project X" is afloat. Maybe the members would like to know more about what the officers had in mind making this bold proposal.

We had come to the sudden realization that the American press is actually in danger of becoming extinct. Not today, maybe; nor, perhaps, tomorrow. But the trend toward ultimate self-destruction is unmistakable, the Pollyanna boys to the contrary notwithstanding.

Newspapers have dropped by the wayside like flies in a freeze the past year. Mergers, suspensions and other hocus-pocus operations, within the single year, reduced the number of jobs available for Guild members by about 2,000. At that rate, the 25,000 of us could all become unemployed by 1965!

This shrinkage occurred in a period when newspaper revenue and profit is at an all-time record high. Incidentally, most of these defunct papers were not losing money and none have been able to prove that rising labor costs figured in their funerals.

When nearly a dozen dailies can die in a year of prosperity, Guild officers naturally

begin to worry about what would undoubtedly happen in an era of recession or depression.

Monopoly is on the rise. Single newspaper and single newspaper-ownership cities are increasing by leaps and bounds. Competition in the marketplace of ideas and of knowledge is disappearing. And Guild leaders have discovered no efforts in any quarter to halt this swelling tide of journalistic suicide. Nobody is starting any newspapers.

Something had to be done. But what?

The Guild is neither large enough nor rich enough to tackle this task alone. No one is proposing that it should.

But the Guild has other resources—the know-how, the initiative, the experience and, I hope, the courage—that are essential.

These, properly mobilized, could attract the necessary financing.

Most American unions are dissatisfied with the performance of the American press. Many have passed bitter resolutions on the subject. Some talk privately of trying to establish their own papers. One or two have even conducted a few experiments along this line.

Nearly every union is a potential partner with the Guild in any approach to a solution.

The Guild officers propose to invite a number of the more progressive unions, say 10 or 20 or 30, to join with us in developing new daily newspapers in cities where the need exists, along with indications pointing to the probability of success. We would say to these brother unions that we are willing

to invest \$50,000 in a corporation formed for this purpose and ask each of them to invest a like amount.

I feel confident that the response will surprise those who are shying away from this project because of financial fears.

I believe that an initial capital of at least \$1,000,000 can be raised in this fashion.

Research would then be conducted on a thorough basis to determine what smaller American city is most in need of a good liberal newspaper and is most likely to support

How is it possible that convention delegates were so out of step with their constituents? Perhaps they were swayed in their enthusiasm for Project X by a young Senator Hubert Humphrey, who in addressing the group noted:

"More and more newspapers are disappearing from the scene. More and more are being gobbled up into what we call a chain. More and more are being liquidated in terms of their independence by shareholding control, economic control and policy-making control, and this is not good for democracy."

one. . . .

By advance agreement, there would be drafted a "code of ethics" under which the paper would be required to operate. An experienced, able, liberal newspaperman, acceptable to the Guild, would be picked by the administrative committee and would be placed under contract. . . .

It is obvious that the people of the community who invest their money in the paper will be interested in its success. This should provide at least a good nucleus of readers and advertisers, insuring a substantial measure of the financial support essential to a profitable operation.

And, lest there be any misunderstanding, it should be definitely understood that we are talking about a daily newspaper of general circulation, not a labor paper, not a propaganda sheet, not a highbrow or class-conscious publication limited in scope or lacking in popular appeal.

We are talking about the genuine article—a daily paper with adequate wire service coverage, local news, comics, cartoons, sports, amusements, features, women's pages, etc., the works, plus a liberal editorial page policy. . . .

Unless the Guild does take a crack at this thing, there is a danger that the American press, as such, may merge and merchandise itself into oblivion in the increasing competition from new sources that is ahead. The most we have to lose, even if the effort ends in complete and utter failure, is the comparatively small original investment. And failure, to my notion, is not even a probability.

For all its novelty, this is a sound proposal. It ought to be given a try.

LOOKING AHEAD

Campaign 'values' devalue our votes



By Linda Foley
President, TNG-CWA

The U.S. presidential season has just kicked into high gear. We now are witnessing the quadrennial multi-media extravaganzas that accompany the campaigns. (We used to call them "nominating conventions.") Since these political variety shows no longer have any effect on who's nominated for president, they are used to conjure up romanticized, nostalgic images of candidates and issues, all in the name of "values."

Family values, moral values, patriotic values, society's values, religious values, constitutional values, educational values, shared values, environmental values—no wonder American politicians have dubbed their nation "the richest on earth." Apparently we value just about everything. (I guess that's why we love discount stores and outlet malls.)

Showy demonstrations of sleeve-worn values and manufactured diversity don't do much to bolster the cynical opinion I have of our political system. For all the talk and hoopla around values, today's political process itself has devalued what matters most—my vote.

Politics shouldn't be about images or perceived values. It should be about people. In fact, "politics" is derived from a Greek word that means citizenship. The citizenry should drive the politics, not the other way around.

Today's political process isn't driven by citizens; it's driven by money—big money, as in hundreds of millions of dollars. That's money the citizens don't have and can't get. It's money labor unions and advocacy groups don't have and can't get.

The kind of money needed to finance today's campaigns comes from essentially one source: corporate America. It's ludi-

crous to discuss campaign spending limits for unions and individuals so long as corporations can still control the game.

As for values? The values espoused by candidates during campaigns that are bought and paid for by corporations are, of course, corporate values. Those values start with profits, so the corporate campaign agenda is simple: Make sure this election doesn't screw up those profits.

Thus, image takes precedence over substance and political appeals are aimed at consumers, not voters. Conventions are more infomercials than they are confabs. The candidates conduct advertising—not political—campaigns, because today's political process is designed to sell candidates, not engage an electorate. After all, involving too many citizens in the election might blow it for the corporations. (Get enough people to vote and they actually may achieve something that's in their own best interests.)

That's why the political process seems so disconnected from the people. We're being pitched, not persuaded. We hear sound bites and slogans, not policies and solutions. It's marketing more than it's electioneering.

So we definitely need campaign finance reform. Not to get rid of so-called special interests, but instead to rid our politics of sales pitches disguised as values. Because in the end, if people are disengaged and disgusted, they don't vote. And there's no value in that.

That's precisely why every one of us must vote. To avoid the ballot box is to give in to the callow marketing ploys designed to undermine the public's interest. We don't have to buy into the corporate agenda. We don't have to subscribe to corporate values. Our vote costs us only if we don't cast it for the candidate who will represent our values.

We are electing a president, not buying a car.

LETTERS

To the Editor,

I'm always glad to find the list of Guild salaries in the Guild Reporter because I like to see where I stand as a special editor for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. Yet, inexplicably, in ten years of looking I have yet to see the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers included in these lists.

I don't understand why an organization as inclusionary as a union would put some Guild newspapers in this list and keep others out. We already feel like poor relations of the Guild members at the Detroit News and Free Press. And excluding us from this list doesn't help.

—Ralph Echinaw, TNG Local 22

[Editor's reply: The lists we run compare salaries at daily newspapers, which the Observer and Eccentric papers aren't. But all Guild-negotiated wages may be obtained from Debbie Thomas at TNG-CWA.]

To the Editor,

As a locked-out Detroit Free Press copy editor, I'm appreciative of the continuing coverage our struggle gets in The Guild

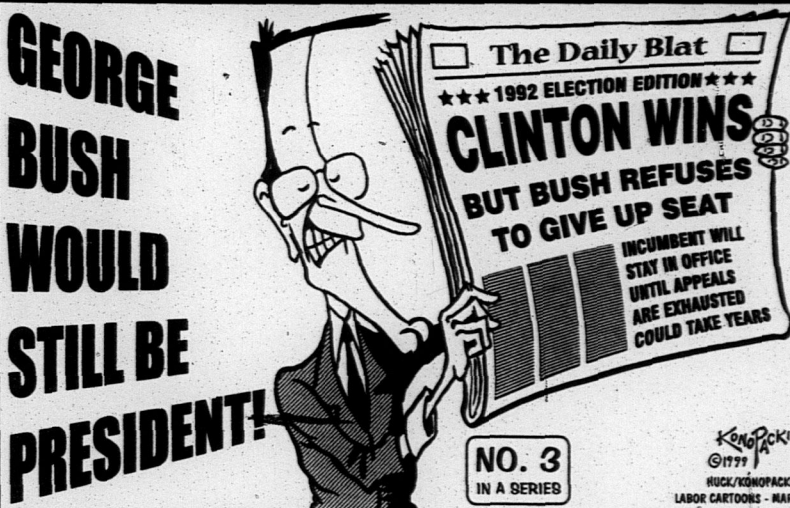
Reporter. But I'd like to suggest one change. In the lists of top minimum salaries—like the one for reporters/photographers in the June 9 issue—the News and Free Press are listed along with other papers, as if they have some credibility. Would you consider dropping them from the lists and noting that they aren't included because they're scab newspapers? That would be a great public service!

Even though three conservative Republican appeals court judges recently ruled for the newspapers, overturning years' worth of investigation and trials by labor law experts, the papers still refuse to bargain. They pulled all their previous offers off the table on the day of the court ruling and have ignored the unions' request to schedule talks. And this even though they admit to having lost 300,000 subscribers because of the strike.

The continuing boycott by hundreds of thousands of Detroiters and the refusal of many local and national leaders to talk to scab reporters illuminates the shameful way these papers treat their workers and readers.

—Emily Everett, TNG Local 22

WHAT IF: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS WERE RUN LIKE UNION ORGANIZING ELECTIONS?



LOOKING ASKANCE

Should property rights trump free speech?

By Andy Zipser
Editor, The Guild Reporter

It's a rare event when the angst of an age can be summarized in three brief sentences. But consider the front page of The Washington Post's Style section August 9, which sported these headlines:

- Don't Steal This Book: Publisher's Issue Call to Arms Against Online Bootleggers.
- For Blues Artists, A Sad Refrain: Forgotten Musicians Reap Nothing From Moby's Sampler of Their Songs.
- ABC Paid To Secure Lewinsky Interview: Lawyer Lobbied Starr's Office.

The common theme, of course, is our increasing difficulty in deciding who gets paid—and how and when—for thoughts or words or creative impulses. Part of the problem is the liberating nature of digital technology, which shatters production and distribution monopolies. Part, as exemplified by ABC's brush with checkbook journalism, is the relentless commodification not just of news but of human experience. But the unhappy result is increasing friction between two bedrock principles of American culture: the right to private property vs. the free flow of ideas.

At its most crass, this is a collision of the free market with democracy. On one side is the rapidly evolving economic notion of "intellectual property," now defended most zealously by music distributors, publishing companies, universities and other institutions; if the pipelines can't be monopolized, control the "product" that flows through them. So it is that concepts once applied to physical objects are now used to corral the ephemeral output of computers, synthesizers, word processors or other instruments that serve as an extension of the mind, rather than of the hand.

On the other side of this increasingly unstable equation is the long-established political and philosophical idea that mankind is best served by the free exchange of ideas. As even William Randolph Hearst—hardly an exemplary defender of opposing viewpoints—observed, "When free discussion is denied, hardening of the arteries of democracy has set in, free institu-

tions are but a lifeless form, and the death of the republic is at hand."

So okay, that's a bit histrionic. Nevertheless, I suspect most "knowledge workers"—including journalists, writers, musicians and so on—tend to reflexively support the intellectual property argument. They buy into the conventional wisdom, which holds that intellectual property laws—including copyright, trademark and patents—exist to protect creators from theft and piracy, and they see little if any conflict with free speech principles.

But as Mark Anderson points out in the May-June issue of Extra!, the U.S. Constitution has an entirely different take on the subject. While Article I gives Congress the power to secure for authors and inventors—for a limited time only—"the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries," it also explicitly describes why this power is being granted: "To promote the progress of science and the useful arts."

In other words, Congress circumscribed the right to free speech established in the First Amendment for the express purpose of advancing knowledge—not to line corporate pockets or to buttress media monopolies. This purpose was so deliberate, as Anderson further points out, that the copyright clause is the only instance in which the Constitution provides a rationale for assigning legislative rights or duties.

These days, however, that well-intentioned fencing-in of the First Amendment has been turned inside out: instead of being used to advance knowledge, intellectual property law is used to prevent its dissemination. Instead of helping new and revolutionary ideas and technologies flourish, it enshrines the status quo.

There's no surprise, then, that the most avid champions of copyright protection are the multinational corporations that increasingly monopolize the world's communications systems. Meanwhile, the content providers themselves have to fight for every scrap, as the folks on the SAG and AFTRA picket lines will be glad to tell you. And as this and other fights illuminate all too clearly, the big battle is not against Napster-wielding college kids: it's against Fortune 500 companies.

By TNG Convention action, letters to the editor shall be limited to 200 words and shall avoid libel and subjects detrimental to the Guild. Members subject-

ed to personal attack shall be given opportunity to reply in the same issue, but publication of either attack or reply shall not be delayed longer than one issue.

Deadline: Friday before publication. (Next deadline: Sept. 8.) Letters may be e-mailed to the editor at azipser@cwa-union.org.

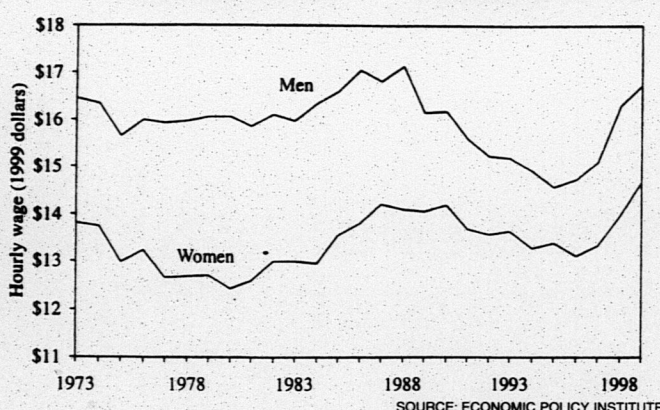
Most newspaper pay is still the pits

The newspaper trade press is chock-a-block with warnings from publishers and consultants about dismal pay for editorial staffs. Content is king, they warn: if you don't offer sufficient pay, editorial talent will go elsewhere.

Yet despite such jeremiads, the majority of American newspapers are becoming wage ghettos. As reported recently by the Inland Press Association, in its 13th annual Newspaper Compensation Survey, reporters' raises over the past year were the smallest of the 81 newspaper job titles surveyed: an increase of 2.2%, or less than half the increase posted the previous year.

That paltry raise comes on top of entry-level salaries that keep falling further behind the American

Entry-level wages of male and female college graduates, 1973-99



SOURCE: ECONOMIC POLICY INSTITUTE

median. As the chart above shows, entry-level wages for college graduates have taken off since 1995 after going into a slump in the late 'Eighties. But whereas the average entry-level wage for college grads

now exceeds \$30,000—or roughly the average base pay for experienced reporters—the past year's 2.8% increase in starting wages for new reporters brings their base pay to only \$24,700.

(New reporters at Guild-represented newspapers, by contrast, have an average starting minimum of \$26,856, or approximately 9% more than the Inland Press survey's population. The average reporter top minimum wage, although not directly comparable to the survey's base pay for "experienced" reporters, was \$41,400 as of April 1.)

While newspaper content providers eke out a living, those responsible for attracting such talent are faring considerably better. Inland Press also reported that newspaper online service directors had their base pay jump a hefty 13.1% over the past year. Editors gained 4.9%, publishers 4.7% and general managers 6.9%.

Ironically, the great majority of newspaper online ventures are still

not turning a profit.

Meanwhile, the business of buying and selling newspapers—as opposed to the work of filling them—is breaking every record. According to Dirks Van Essen & Murray, a leading newspaper broker, sales of U.S. newspapers this year could surpass \$15 billion, or more than double the record of \$6.2 billion set in 1997. (See page 5 for related story on the Hollinger newspaper chain.)

In a further instance of irony, the buying frenzy has pushed newspaper valuations significantly higher than their stock market prices. Why? One frequently advanced explanation is that newspapers are consistently profitable and a ready source of cash with which to make other investments.

Along with low pay, there's increased job insecurity

As if the ghettoization of newsroom employees weren't bad enough, the International Federation of Journalists reports that new information technologies and greater media concentration have made the newsroom an increasingly lousy place to work.

"The experience of the IFJ and its member unions is that currently few benefits are being felt, either through improvement in journalistic quality or through better working conditions," the federation told the International Labor Organization earlier this year. Indeed, IFJ's research found "that although journalism is expanding, work is insecure and standards of content and social conditions are shaped according to commercial objectives. The industrial relations landscape," it added, "is characterized by the hostility of employers to meaningful dialogue with trade unions."

Almost obscured by the turbu-

lence of corporate growth and conglomeration, the IFJ critique asserted, is the degree to which the new media are "fundamentally noncompetitive." Not only is the bulk of the global media pie divided among just nine corporations, but "each of the nine largest media firms have equity joint ventures—where they share ownership of a media venture—with six of the other eight media giants, and usually more than one."

Growth in media conglomeration has been matched by the increased fragmentation of media workforces. Full-time journalists, the IFJ reported, are being replaced by freelancers and by "information processors," who aren't defined as journalists even though they are performing traditional journalistic tasks. Journalists who retain full-time positions are forced to adopt additional duties to such an extent that "creativity is being marginalized in the drive to develop all-around capac-

ities that suit the converged media environment."

Adding insult to injury, the new media cartels have targeted journalists' intellectual property rights, coercing freelancers into signing away their economic rights.

But the IFJ's sharply worded critique was watered down significantly by the ILO, in its report on a symposium on information technologies that examined such issues. As summarized in the magazine *World of Work*, the ILO believes that the changing media landscape has increased career opportunities for women. And while acknowledging that overall employment in print media is declining and multitasking is becoming more prevalent, the article's most critical jab was to note that "traditional labor-management relations have problems coping with technology and other developments in media and entertainment."

Tapping into the web

The universe of useful web sites changes almost from day to day, but among those potentially useful to Guild members are the following:

- www.nwguild.org—A newcomer to the internet, this is the home page of the Pacific Northwest Guild, which is embroiled in contract negotiations with the Seattle Times and Post-Intelligencer.
- www.eugenenewsguild.org—This local is going toe-to-toe with L. Michael Zinser, the hired gun for a family-owned newspaper that has inexplicably flushed years of good labor relations down the toilet.
- www.poynter.org/medianews/ and www.inside.com—Two good sites for picking up the latest media news and gossip.
- www.home.hawaii.rr.com/chesneyind—Reporter Ian Lind's journal of Gannett's efforts to shut down the Honolulu Star-Bulletin is now in its tenth month and makes fascinating reading. Plus you get to meet Buster and the rest of the menagerie and see some boffo sunsets and sunrises.
- www.cpj.org—Whatever travails are being endured in Seattle, Eugene, Honolulu or elsewhere, the home page of the Committee to Protect Journalists can put them in perspective.
- www.epinet.org—One of the best sources for data that show the underbelly of the American economy, run by the Economic Policy Institute.
- www.cwa-union.org/about/local_web_manual.asp—Sure it's an onerous URL, and there's no telling why the folks who make up these things use underscores and hyphens, but once you get past all that this is a pretty decent guide to establishing and maintaining local web sites.

DAYBOOK

National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Assoc., Sept. 7-10, San Francisco

Knight Ridder Council, Sept. 8-10, Duluth, MN

CWA Occupational Safety and Health Conference, Sept. 17-20, Philadelphia

CWA Women's Conference, originally scheduled for Sept. 28, postponed to May 10-13, Las Vegas

Western District Council, Oct. 13-15, Eugene, Ore.

Midwest District Council, Oct. 20-22, Milwaukee

New England Dist. Council, Oct. 28-29, Worcester, MA

Southern, Mid-Atlantic councils, Oct. 28-29, Baltimore

FROM THE MORGUE

Fifty years ago this month:

Observing that newspapers are published by "the heads of large profit establishments," the UAW-CIO lists 21 ways readers can guard against the "built-in bias" of their dailies. . . . The Detroit Newspaper Guild protests a city ordinance banning the sale of undefined "subversive publications," which is used to shut down a newsstand selling the *Daily Worker*. . . . A Business Week survey finds that newspapers control about a quarter of all AM radio stations, a third of the FM stations and slightly more than a third of the country's 100-plus TV stations. . . . The New York World Telegram and Sun capitulates, ending a 10-week strike that had shuttered the country's third largest evening paper.

Twenty-five years ago this month:

The Guild and ITU file briefs with the NLRB opposing attempts by publishers to have reporters, editors and photographers reclassified as "professional employees." . . . TNG President Charles Perlik proposes a four-way "no raiding" agreement with three other unions.

Ten years ago this month:

The New York state labor commissioner appoints a fact-finding panel to determine why more than 100 negotiating sessions have failed to produce an agreement between the New York Daily News and its 10 unions. . . . Responding to complaints from dozens of San Diego Union-Tribune employees, California OSHA orders the Copley chain to correct "unsafe conditions" for VDT users.

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The Newspaper Guild-CWA (AFL-CIO, CLC)
501 Third St., NW, Suite 250
Washington, D.C. 20001-2797
Telephone: (202) 434-7177 FAX: (202) 434-1472
E-mail: azipser@cwa-union.org

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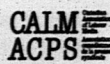
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