

THE GUILD Reporter

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Providence duo does Dallas

Blocked from talking directly with Belo CEO at shareholders meeting

By Felice Freyer
Providence Newspaper Guild

Two members of the Providence Newspaper Guild, seeking to end to a three-year conflict with the Providence Journal, attended the annual Belo Corp. stockholders' meeting May 8 in Dallas, Texas. Marion Davis, an education

writer, and Kerry Kohring, a night copy editor, asked Robert Decherd, Belo's chairman and chief executive officer, to intervene in the dispute. Belo, owner of the Dallas Morning News, bought the Journal, formerly a family-owned paper, in 1997.

Decherd did not respond to the request, and Davis was physically barred from approaching him after the meeting.

"Employees are the greatest asset," Davis told Decherd during the stockholders' meeting. "We want to do the best job possible, but we are not treated as valuable assets. You treat us like the enemy."

"Are you willing to question the stance of the managers in Providence?" Davis pressed. She urged Decherd to "come talk to us at our desks and see how we feel."

In response, Decherd reaffirmed his support for publisher Howard Sutton and vice presidents Mark Ryan and Bob Shadrick, who have been engaged in what Guild leaders believe is a calculated, long-term effort to break the union.

The Journal has refused to bargain with the Guild; imposed inferior and more costly

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Calling for "Fair Pay—Not Peanuts," about 100 supporters from other unions, picketed and leafleted outside the annual shareholders meeting.

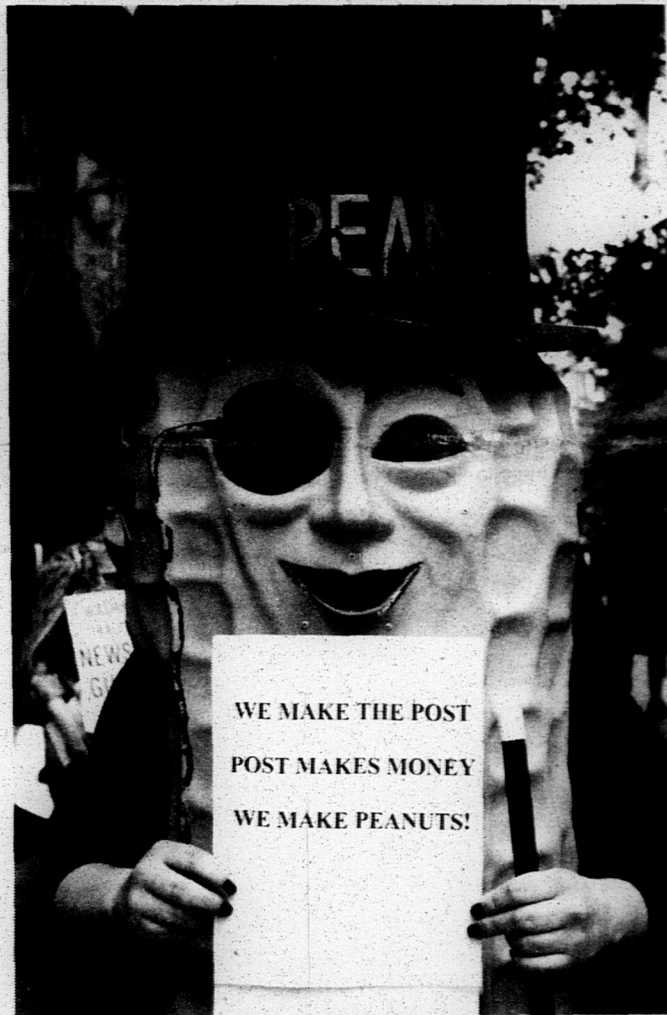
Post's shell game comes to peanuts

Washington Post Co. stockholders who showed up for the company's annual shareholders meeting May 9 were greeted by... well, by a big peanut. Not to mention a hundred or so of Mr. Peanut's best friends, who were less than enchanted with the company's bargaining position.

With the company's contract with the Washington-Baltimore Guild scheduled to expire just nine days later, the Post was still offering raises of less than 1%

a year, had rebuffed Guild proposals to improve retirement benefits despite a bloated pension fund and was pressing several onerous proposals—including a demand that the Guild waive its right to negotiate over the placement of hidden cameras in the workplace. Indeed, management's position was so hostile that a local newsweekly headlined its story "The Washington Post is bashing its unions again."

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PHOTOS BY BILL BURKE/WASHINGTON-BALTIMORE GUILD

The name game, Part II

You say 'Newspaper,' I say 'Media, Manufacturing, Professional and Service Workers'

What's in a name, you ask? The Newspaper Guild-CWA pondered that very question at its sector conference last year, as language purists observed that a significant proportion of the Guild's membership has little to do with newspapers—except, perhaps, to read them.

The bigger problem, it turned out, was to find a more all-encompassing name that would garner majority support. Columbus had an easier time finding the new world. Eventually the whole initiative fizzled.

But not in Canada. Meeting in Vancouver in late April, the Representative Council of TNG Canada revisited the question of how Guild members north of the border should be identified—and boiled the possibilities down to three. Now it's up to the locals, which have until May 31 to voice their preference, and until June 21 if a run-off vote is needed.

The three contenders and their natural constituencies:

- The Newspaper Guild of Canada/CWA—simply adds "of" to the current name. Appeals principally to grammarians.

- The Canadian Guild of Media, Manufacturing, Professional and Service Workers/CWA—puts the flag where it belongs, at the front of the parade.

- The National Guild of Canadian Media, Manufacturing, Professional and Service Workers/CWA—designed primarily for those who hate cutesy or belabored acronyms. The NGCMWP-SW/CWA is, in fact, so unwieldy that the Representative Council agreed its short form will be... TNG Canada/CWA.

The Representative Council left it up to each local to determine

how it will pick its choice. If there is no clear winner on May 31, the third-place name will be dropped and the locals will be asked to choose between the two surviving names by June 21.

Proponents of a change argue that a more inclusive name could

help in organizing non-newspaper workers. Opponents, observing that the Guild in fact represents many non-newspaper workers, point out that Canadian social workers, furniture makers and others seemed unperturbed about joining The Newspaper Guild.

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Wash.-Balt. Guild maintains Front Page honors tradition

Back in the not-so-distant past, Guild locals throughout the U.S. and Canada held annual awards competitions to recognize the best journalism within their ranks. Typically identified as "Front Page" awards, these competitions were distinguished by their judges: working journalists evaluating their peers.

These days virtually all such contests have disappeared, displaced by a plethora of special-interest competitions waving ever larger cash prizes to attract entries. But the Washington-Baltimore Guild persists in its old ways, each year assembling a panel of working stiffs to pore over the work generated by its members in search of the truly commendable. The local also presents its own Guild Service Awards, and this year created a new honor, the Herb Block Community Service Award.

Awards were given in 25 Front Page categories, with "The District's Lost Children" pacing the field. The series, by Sari Horwitz, Scott Higham and Sarah Cohen of the Washington Post, received the Morton Mintz Award for Investigative Reporting after winning a Pulitzer Prize and being honored as one of two entries "of substantial distinction" in this year's Heywood Broun awards.

In all, 32 people who work under Guild-bargained contracts won Front Page Awards or honorable mentions, including 10 multiple winners. Among the most notable was the Baltimore Sun duo of Michael Ollove and John Makely. Ollove won both the top feature story award and the Bill Pryor Memorial Grand Prize for Writing for "The Lessons of Lynchburg." Makely won the Bill Pryor Memorial Grand Prize for Photography, as well as the national news photography category, for "Souls Searching."

Other multiple winners included Anthony De Feo, of Catholic News Service; Karl M. Ferron, Doug Kapustin, Jed Kirschbaum, Alec MacGillis, Jon Morgan and Scott Shane, all of the Sun; Ray Lustig and Sally Squires of the Post; and Mary Watters, of

Fingerhut, Powers, Smith and Associates.

Separately, Bonita Spikes was named the recipient of the first Herb Block Community Service Award, named after the longtime Washington Post editorial cartoonist. Block left \$50,000 to the Washington-Baltimore Guild and another \$50,000 to The Newspaper Guild-CWA, which also created an award in his name (see page 6). Spikes, an activist in the Montgomery County Council of Supporting Service Employees bargaining unit, is the local's human rights coordinator and serves on the executive board of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, where she chairs its minority human rights board.

"Though she holds one of the more stressful and time-consuming jobs at the local, she still spends much of her free time helping the needy," said Spikes' former unit chair, Keith Willis, in his nomination letter. "Her enthusiasm for labor work seems to never run out and somehow she finds time for other community work."

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- Ann Tran and Ann Marie Ditchey of the Washington Post, who share the Organizer of the Year award.

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- Keith Willis, formerly of the Montgomery County Council of Supporting Service Employees unit, was named winner of the Nadine Grider Memorial Award for Shop Steward of the Year, named after a storied Washington Post shop steward.

Judging for the Guild Service Awards was conducted by a panel of Washington-Baltimore Guild activists appointed by local president Dawn Rodriguez-Lamar, who herself was one of the panelists. An august group of jurors in the news and information industry selected the Front Page winners; three of the five writing judges have Guild backgrounds.

Helmets, flak jackets required

As reporters covering the Mideast already know, it's not just the more barbaric corners of the globe that are hostile toward journalists. Even a putative democracy like Israel apparently has given its troops permission to shoot at journalists.

Responding to such developments, a coalition of journalistic organizations—including The Newspaper Guild-CWA—is sponsoring a workshop titled, "Helmets and Flak Jackets Required: The Challenge to Media When Journalists Work Under Fire." The June 7 event will run noon to 5 p.m. at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.; a \$25 registra-

tion fee includes lunch.

The agenda includes:

- 12-1:30—Lunch, with speakers Roy Gutman of Newsweek and Doug Allmond, cameraman ABC News. Introductions by Christopher Warren, president of the International Federation of Journalists.

- 1:45-3:15—Reducing the Risks: security experts, veteran journalists and psychologists will discuss risk-avoidance techniques and resources for journalists.

Panelists: Martin Turner, Washington Bureau Chief of the BBC; Andrew Kaine, Director of AKE security services; Paul Rees, of Centurion Risk Services; Bruce

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Calling it quits after 15 years as both president and administrator of the Wire Service Guild, Kevin

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UPI employees return to Guild

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May 1 in Eugene: 3 years and counting

About 250 community supporters and union members with picket signs and street puppets rallied May 1 at The Register-Guard in Eugene, Ore. to show support for the on-going labor struggle at the newspaper.

The date commemorates the third anniversary of the Guild local working without a contract, and the first anniversary of the Teamsters winning recognition at the newspaper through a court-ordered injunction.

The morning of the rally, publisher Tony Baker called a mandatory meeting of all employees to complain about the "personal" tone of the labor dispute. Although the Guild was "forcing" him to spend tens of thousands of dollars (in legal fees to Tennessee anti-labor lawyer L. Michael Zinser) to defend himself and his newspaper, Baker nevertheless insisted he will not budge in bargaining.

Under Zinser's watch, the R-G has either settled or been found guilty of 14 out of 16 complaints of unfair labor practices over the past three years. And despite numerous Guild concessions in bargaining talks, Baker continues to insist on "management rights" language that would strip away the Guild's right to bargain changes in the workplace during the life of the contract. The company also continues making illegal proposals at the bargaining table. (The Guild filed more ULPs as this issue of The Guild Reporter was going to press.)

Baker's words were echoed back at him by several of the speakers who addressed the rally.

"How can it not be a personal issue, when hundreds of working families are being directly affected by the decision of one person?" demanded Ron Teninty, a spokesman for Teamsters Local 206. "We hold Tony Baker personally accountable."

"Tony Baker says he doesn't want this to get personal. Forget it," local Guild President Adele Berlinski told the rally. "When



Hundreds gather in front of the Register-Guard building for a May Day rally in support of the Newspaper Guild, above; below, Guild

member Kimber Williams takes part in a skit lampooning some of the positions the company has taken at the bargaining table.

you don't give people raises for seven years, it's personal.

"Basically, what this company wants to do is get rid of its unions," Berlinski added. "I'm here to tell you we aren't going anywhere."

Several speakers also commented on the Register-Guard's growing willingness to shape the news to its own advantage. Former R-G reporter Kimber Williams lamented that one of her stories about an art show by a local activist had been deep-sixed after he criticized the newspaper's labor troubles in print. Former R-G columnist Don Bishoff noted that the newspaper has refused to print any of the hundreds of letters to the editor the newspaper has received on the labor dispute.

University of Oregon labor professor Gordon Lafer said people rely on newspapers as "a place of

truth." But "the Bakers have turned it into a place of lies, a place of deceit and a place of lawbreaking."

Other speakers included a county commissioner, a state senator, plus clergy and other community leaders. Amid chants of "How Dare You, Tony Baker," and "Settle it Now, Tony," the street theater troupe Urgent Carnival presented a mock-TV news program demonstrating community support. A written message from Congressman Peter DeFazio expressed "profound disappointment" in Baker's treatment of the unions.

The rally ended with labor songs, including a version of "Union Maid" with localized lyrics. Signs declaring "Settle it now, Tony Baker" were handed out for people to post in their car windows.



Post's miserly stance brings out the pickets

Continued from page 1

The good news? Apparently goaded by Mr. Peanut, as well as by at least one shareholder at the meeting, Post management subsequently agreed to the Guild's pension proposal.

The bad news? The two sides remain badly divided and no new talks had been scheduled as The Guild Reporter went to press, despite the invited intervention of a federal mediator.

"The pension proposal is fine—we won that—but the surveillance issue is still on the table and, worse, so is their union security proposal," said the Guild's administrative officer, Lori Calderone. The latter, she explained, amounts to a "right-to-work shop" that would enable employees to hop in and out of the Guild at will. It also would permit Guild members to opt in and out of dues check-off with similar ease.

Currently, The Washington Post is an open shop: members have a one-month period each year in which they can quit the

union. The Guild represents more than 1,400 employees in the Post's newsroom, advertising, circulation, accounting, IT and other departments, of whom approximately 55% are dues-paying members.

Also high on the Guild's list of objectionable management demands is a "use it or lose it" vacation policy and a continued refusal to increase top minimum wages. Calderone said the company also has refused to budge on wage increases, offering no increase in the first year and \$21-a-week increases in base pay in the second and third years.

The hard line has caught employees' attention. In advance of the shareholders meeting, a Guild delegation presented Post Publisher and CEO Boiesfeillet Jones with a petition, signed by 700 employees, that called the company's "stingy pay" and other contract proposals "both insulting and demoralizing to The Post's loyal workforce."

"We want Post stockholders to know that a demoralized workforce is bad business,"

No picket line is complete without a few rousing songs, so here are two compositions, courtesy of Julie McCall of the Labor Heritage Foundation, suitable for adaptation by other locals. The first is to the tune of "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean":

*The Post brings in plenty of profits,
Their money with us they won't share;
They want to keep filling their pockets,
And we want a deal that is fair.*

*Peanuts, peanuts
Is all that they're giving to me, to me;
Peanuts, peanuts
Is all that they're giving to me.*

And, just in time for baseball season, to the tune of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game":

*The Post is playing a shell game,
They're not fooling this crowd;
We don't want peanuts or crackerjacks,
What we want is a decent contract.*

*They say that our leaflets have cluttered,
The newsroom right here at the Post;
Their talk is just like peanut butter,
It always gets stuck in our throats.*

*Surveillance and workplace restrictions,
The insults just don't seem to end,
But we're sticking with our convictions,
And that's why we say "Nuts" to them!*

*So we'll fight, fight, fight for some justice,
Their offer's really a shame;
Because peanuts are all they've put out
In their old shell game.*

said one Guild petitioner.

And on May 22 a second information picket drew approximately 200 participants, or double the earlier turnout. One of those walking the line, said Calderone, was a Post

reporter who repeatedly and adamantly has refused to join the Guild. "But he was out there this time, he said, because he feels the Post is pushing the balance too far," Calderone related.

Labor round-up

More jobs, scab training go overseas

The hollowing out of U.S. manufacturing continues its bleak trend, thanks largely to the trade imbalance and the overvalued dollar. The overall unemployment rate jumped to 6% in April, up from 5.7% in March—the highest rate since August, 1994. The number of officially jobless rose by 483,000 in April, to 8.6 million overall, with the most devastating loss of jobs consistently in the manufacturing sector. Over the last four years, a total of 2 million factory jobs have been lost—10% of the manufacturing workforce. One sign of the times: during the recent contract negotiations between CWA and AT&T, the telephone company was training hundreds of workers from India as potential strike-breakers.

Censored columnist wins press award

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The local also believes that Holzmeister, who covered the city of Hayward for 18 years, also was removed from her job for writing investigative stories about a Hayward mayoral candidate who was fired in 1980 by the Oakland Police Department for brutality against youth. ANG Newspapers stripped Holzmeister from her beat covering Hayward—widely recognized as the top reporting job at the paper—on March 13 and assigned her to cover Castro Valley, a less prestigious assignment.

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similar treatment.

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Although the company apologized repeatedly for how Holzmeister was treated, ANG Newspapers has steadfastly refused to reinstate her assignment. And despite evidence to the contrary, the company has repeatedly denied that stripping Holzmeister of her longtime beat was disciplinary.



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4-year contract battle in Gary

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Labor round-up

More jobs, scab training go overseas

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Asian immigrants relate workplace abuses

The travails of employees at the Chinese Daily News, chronicled in the April issue of *The Guild Reporter*, are symptomatic of a more widespread problem afflicting many groups of immigrant workers. Isolated by language and cultural barriers, they become easy prey for employers willing to exploit their ignorance—and to go to great lengths to maintain that ignorance.

On May 17, the California State Assembly's Asian Pacific Islander Caucus and Labor Committee held hearings to investigate violations of such workers' labor rights. Lynne Wang, a reporter at the Chinese Daily News, was among those testifying; her statement, slightly edited for length, is reproduced below.

My name is Lynne Wang and I am a reporter at the Chinese Daily News. I have been working at the CDN for 14 years. I am an immigrant from Taiwan. All of us at the Chinese Daily News are immigrants from Taiwan, mainland China, Hong Kong and Vietnam. Most of us have worked at the company 10-15 years, some since the founding of the newspaper.

Over a year ago, the owner told us that she was going to freeze our pay and that we are at-will employees and she can fire us at any time. Many workers earned only minimum wage, so they need to work two jobs to take care of their families. Employees at the CDN then decided we needed a union and a contract to protect us.

On March 19 of last year, the majority of the employees at the CDN voted for the union, the CWA. The CDN management was not content to accept the loss. After they lost, they said they would appeal to the highest court and were happy to spend a million dollars, so employees should give up hope on ever getting a contract. Leading up to the election, the CDN management threatened and intimidated the employees.

My supervisor forced me to come into the office at midnight and screamed and yelled at me for supposedly writing an article in the union newsletter. The company also hired Larry Wong, a union buster, who spent all his time spreading misinforma-

tion and fear. In spite of the company's scare tactics, the employees were brave enough to vote "yes." After the election, the company appealed twice. They lost their appeal in Region 21 of the [National Labor Relations Board] and now have appealed to the NLRB in D.C. and are refusing to recognize the union or bargain a contract with their employees. We know the company is trying to avoid respecting our democratic vote and that is why they file these meritless appeals.

However, what we object to most is what the Chinese Daily News management is doing, in violation of the National Labor Relations Act, to intimidate and frighten employees so they do not exercise their rights to participate in the union. The company is insisting they are only exercising their privilege to appeal, however they continue to ignore the laws that protect the employees' rights to organize freely without fear and reprisal from the employer.

They have especially terrorized those of us who are publicly active in supporting the union, or those of us who have stepped forward to testify before the National Labor Relations Board about their illegal acts. The company's objective is to make an example out of the union leaders in the workplace so other employees will be too scared to speak out. We say in Chinese: Kill the chicken to scare the monkey.

The NLRB has issued a complaint in

"This is the first public hearing that the Assembly has ever called focusing on Asian-Pacific Islander workers," observed Assemblywoman Judy Chu, who singled out the Chinese Daily News as one of two "high profile cases" that call for attention to the problems faced by such workers. "I just want to say that Lynne Wang shows incredible bravery," Chu added. "Even after everything she's gone through, she continues to speak out."

Garfield Hospital also was singled out by many speakers. Similar acknowledgment of the significance of the Chinese Daily News contretemps was given by Kent Wong of the UCLA Labor Center, who addressed TNG-CWA members at the Guild sector conference in February. "The

two most important cases of violations of workers' rights are occurring here in Monterey Park, California," he said. "The first is the Chinese Daily News, the largest Chinese-language newspaper in North America." A delegation to Taiwan is being organized, he added, "in order to advocate for the just treatment of workers at the Chinese Daily News."

John Delloro, president of the Asian-Pacific American Labor Alliance of Los Angeles, called for legislative intervention in the dispute and withdrawal of public funding for any corporation that hires union-busting consultants. "These employers hire high-wage union busters at \$200 an hour and then claim they don't have the money to pay for health care for their employees," he complained.



Lynne Wang

two cases and is investigating the CDN for eight other violations of federal labor law. Here is a brief review:

The company has threatened employees with termination for even talking about the union in the workplace. They have told employees it's illegal to talk about the union!

They have publicly humiliated those who stand up their rights. After I testified at the NLRB about the company's illegal acts against me, the company produced two newsletters excoriating me for having done so and posted them directly above my workstation.

The company has threatened to eliminate jobs because the workers voted for the union.

They gave lower raises and bonuses to those at the Chinese Daily News who have publicly supported the union and testified against the company before the NLRB.

They have eliminated the job of a union supporter. They have piled work upon me for supporting the union, all in an effort to make me fail so they can fire me. I have been subjected to very long hours without overtime and articles covering union issues have been suppressed. My supervisor told me that being a reporter is a job of conscience, therefore we do not get paid overtime. The company has the policy of when an advertiser doesn't pay for advertisements, the sales agent must pay the company for the unpaid account.

The situation at the Chinese Daily News is a tragedy for Asian immigrant workers who have great faith in the freedoms and protections guaranteed by U.S. law. What my fellow workers and I see every day is the way the Chinese Daily News acts in blatant disregard for the law.

Belo declares it will 'stick with our values'

Continued from page 1

health and dental plans; withheld raises for three years; stopped collecting dues through payroll deduction; retaliated against workers for legal union activity; and filed frivolous lawsuits intended to impoverish the union. The National Labor Relations Board has charged the Journal with 56 unfair labor practices.

At the meeting, Belo bestowed its Seay award on Shadrick, who spearheaded the company's successful effort to quash a Guild organizing campaign in the Journal's circulation department. Shadrick was praised for his "loyalty" and his success in "building solid, fair and stable labor agreements with the Pressmen and the Teamsters."

In his responses to Davis and Kohring, Decherd repeatedly pointed to the company's ability to settle with two smaller unions at the Journal—the Pressmen and the Teamsters—as evidence that the company was not out to bust the union. He didn't mention that the terms of those contracts piggyback on the benefits given to nonunion employees, and that the company's latest offer to the Guild would tie the Guild's contract terms to those of the Pressmen and Teamsters—essentially giving the company complete discretion over benefits, pay and working conditions, just as

if there were no union.

Kohring and Davis were among five people who took advantage of the public comment period during the stockholders' meeting, held at the Dallas Museum of Art and attended by about 350 people.

Kohring, who owns shares of Belo stock, focused on the 56 National Labor Relations Board charges against the Journal, saying the legal costs and liability from those charges threatened the company's financial health.

"The Belo Corporation today is facing federal punitive actions as a result of current Journal management's illegal refusal to negotiate in good faith with its workers," Kohring said. "Yet the annual report says that litigation the Belo Corporation is engaged in 'would not have a material adverse effect' on its financial position."

"Mr. Chairman, how can this be?"

Kohring explained that thousands of union members in Rhode Island have

already pledged to cancel their subscriptions if called upon to do so by the Guild. "We do not wish to do so, but we will be forced to if the current management continues to refuse to bargain in good faith," Kohring said. "The

Definitely not a class act

Among Belo's accomplishments in the past year, company CEO Robert Decherd told shareholders May 8, was a "landmark series" on lead poisoning that was reported by Providence Guild members Peter Lord and John Freidah. "This series has changed government policy in Providence and throughout the state of Rhode Island," Decherd declared, adding that people all over the country had requested reprints of the lead series. What Decherd didn't tell shareholders is that Journal publisher Howard Sutton had refused to pay \$1,400 in reprinting costs, forcing Lord to seek foundation funding for the reprints.

subsequent plunge in circulation would be a serious blow to the income of the Providence Journal Company and to the Belo Corporation."

Kohring then invited Decherd to "join us in a businesslike discussion of the issues that threaten our company's well-being. Will you meet with us?"

Davis said that throughout Kohring's speech, "Decherd was clearly uncomfortable, shifting back and forth, grimacing and running his tongue across his lips. At no

other point did I see this discomfort in Decherd."

In response to Kohring's questions, Decherd reaffirmed his confidence in the Journal's management team, dismissed the NLRB charges as "unfounded" and said there are so many only because the Guild contract has expired and there is no recourse to arbitration. "We are going to stick with our values, our operating principles," he concluded.

After the meeting, Scott Baradell, a former reporter who is now Belo's vice president for corporate communications, approached Davis, said he had read the Guild's Web site and observed, "it looks like you guys are pretty upset." As Davis explained the situation in Providence, she saw Decherd and attempted to approach him, at which point "Scott literally stood in my way," Davis said. Baradell "said Decherd had said he didn't want to be approached by us at the meeting, that he had talked last year and it had been put on our web site and he didn't like it, and that he did not want to talk about our problems in this setting."

"I asked him what other setting I could talk to him in," Davis added, "and he couldn't come up with one."

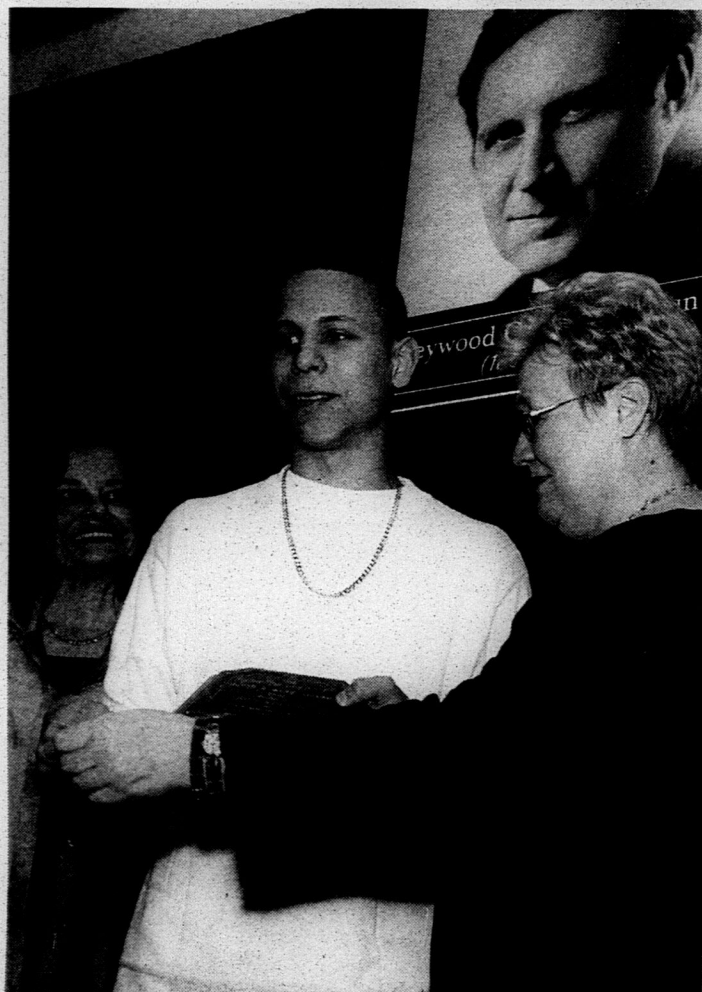
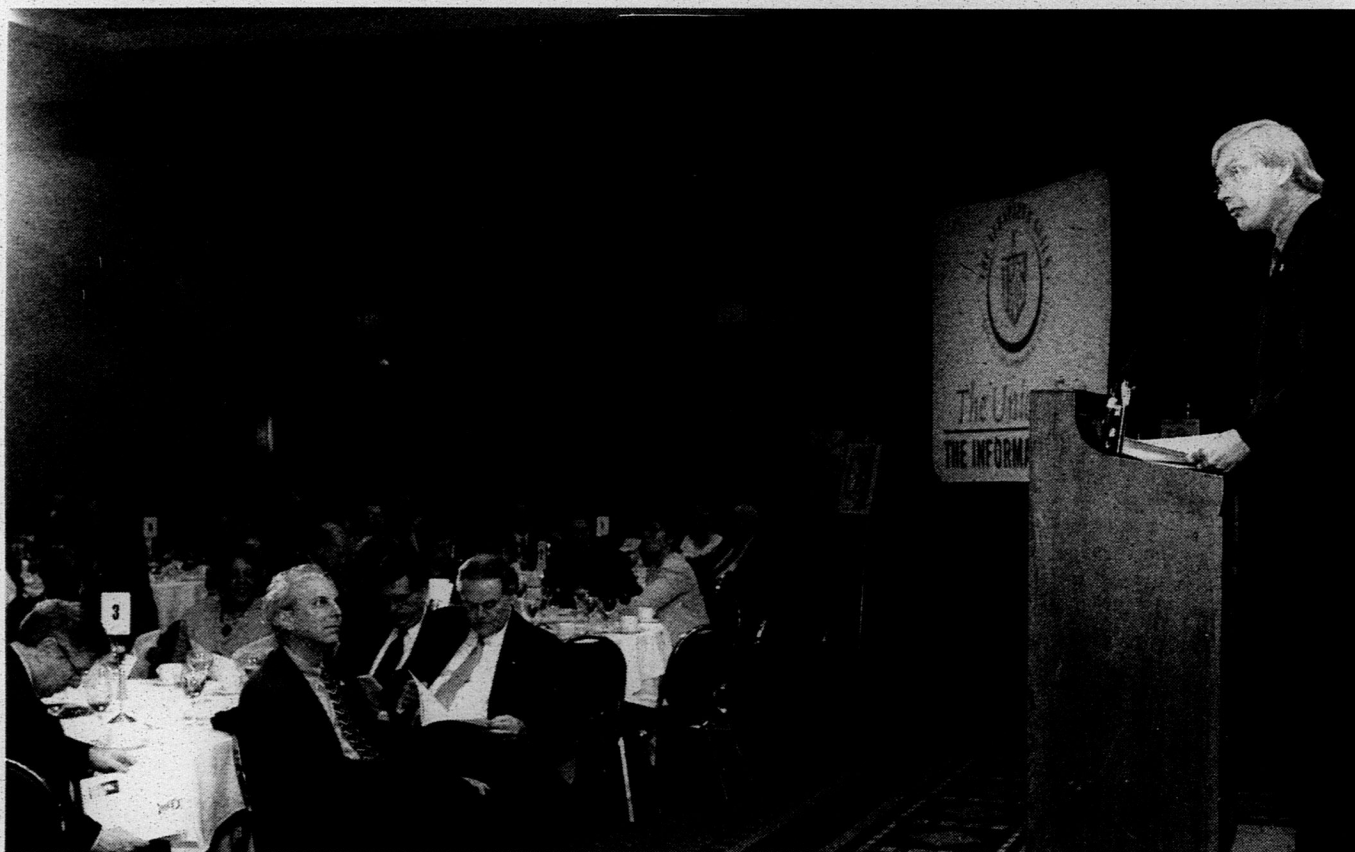
Barr, Broun, Block

Forget Bach, Beethoven and Brahms—The Newspaper Guild-CWA has its own “three Bs,” as in David Barr, Heywood Broun and Herbert Block. All three men contributed mightily to the Guild and were honored May 14 at the First Annual Freedom Award Banquet.

At right, CWA Executive Vice President Larry Cohen listens to master of ceremonies Bob Edwards, host of National Public Radio's Morning Edition. Below right, Broun Award winners Duff Wilson and David Heath describe the agonies of having their prize-winning work interrupted by a strike; standing behind them is former TNG President Chuck Perlik, who chaired this year's judging panel.

Far right, Megan Lynn Matteucci, winner of the David Barr college scholarship, is flanked by Debbie Barr, left; and TNG-CWA Chairperson Carol Rothman. Matteucci, 22, is a student at Suffolk University in Boston.

Directly below, Jesus Gonzalez, 17, receives the David Barr high school scholarship under Heywood Broun's watchful gaze. Gonzalez is a student at El Puente Academy for Peace and Justice in Brooklyn, NY.



Vanessa Leggett



Former Washington Post reporter Frank Swoboda presents the first Freedom Award check to Vanessa Leggett, who was honored for the 168 days she spent in jail for refusing to surrender notes that would have compromised confidential sources. This year's award was for \$5,000.

At left, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard Trumka presses a point with CWA President Morton Bahr at a cocktail reception immediately prior to the banquet.



All photos this page by Bill Burke/Washington-Baltimore Guild.

LOOKING AHEAD

Banquet a rare feel-good event

By Linda Foley, President



It was what we call a "feel-good event." The first Guild Freedom Award Fund Banquet on May 14 was, by any measure, a success. Not just because we raised enough money to guarantee its continuation as an annual event. And not just because we ended the program early enough so that our emcee, Bob Edwards, host of National Public Radio's "Morning Edition," could get some sleep before he had to go back on the air the next morning.

The speakers were great, and the men we memorialized by establishing an annual awards banquet—TNG former counsel David S. Barr, Guild founder Heywood C. Broun and Washington Post cartoonist and Guild member Herbert L. Block—were fondly remembered, their accomplishments impressively celebrated.

Twenty-two Guild locals contributed to the event, along with six CWA districts and sectors, 11 other international unions, the AFL-CIO and various employers, among them four publishers.

But the award-winners and their stories are what made the evening memorable. I'm not talking about the stories they wrote or produced to win the awards they received that night, although I agree with the judges that their journalism was exemplary. What made this awards banquet so special were the journalists themselves.

David S. Barr award-winners Jesus Gonzalez, 17, and Megan Lynn Matteucci, 22, talked about being inspired by the social justice values promoted by the award for student journalists. Gonzalez's work demonstrated his commitment to improving life in his Bushwick neighborhood of New York by taking on local gun dealers, and Matteucci felt the need to expose exploitative treat-

ment of adjunct professors at her school and other college campuses around the country.

David Heath and Duff Wilson of The Seattle Times, whose articles on a cancer center's questionable practices in clinical trials took top honors in this year's Heywood Broun Award judging, spoke from their hearts about how they put their investigation on hold for 49 days while they walked a picket line in support of their union and fellow workers. They spoke, too, about how their determination to finish the story and publish their work pulled a divided post-strike newsroom back together.

The Guild's first Herbert Block Freedom Award winner, Vanessa Leggett, didn't need to write a word. Her willingness to spend more than five months in jail rather than turn over her interview notes to a federal grand jury sent a message about defending First Amendment rights that volumes of words couldn't have accomplished.

All who listened to these journalists tell their stories couldn't help but be moved.

When we decided to use an endowment from Herb Block's estate to establish an award and banquet, we wanted to highlight his ideals: devotion to First Amendment freedoms, compassion for the weak and disadvantaged, distrust of unbridled power and defense of a vigorous free press. We established the David Barr award to encourage students to think about social justice issues. The Heywood Broun Award focuses on righting wrongs and standing up for those who can't.

In this age of media conglomerates, "infotainment" and pundits' spin, it was nice to pause and spend an evening with journalists whose work has made a real difference in the lives of real people.

No wonder it felt so good.

LOOKING ASKANCE

'Neutron Jack' ain't no hero of mine, either

By Andy Zipser
Editor, The Guild Reporter

One of the more provocative commentaries we've published in The Guild Reporter ran in the March issue, in which Ron Chen, president of the Independent Association of Publishers' Employees, ruminated on the lessons he'd learned as this year's winner of the Irving Leuchter scholarship.

Many union activists, he observed, see labor as "good" and management as "bad." But most union members, Chen added, want to work *with* management, not against it, "to produce the best product possible." Ignoring that hope, he wrote, leaves activists running the risk of being out of step with the mainstream.

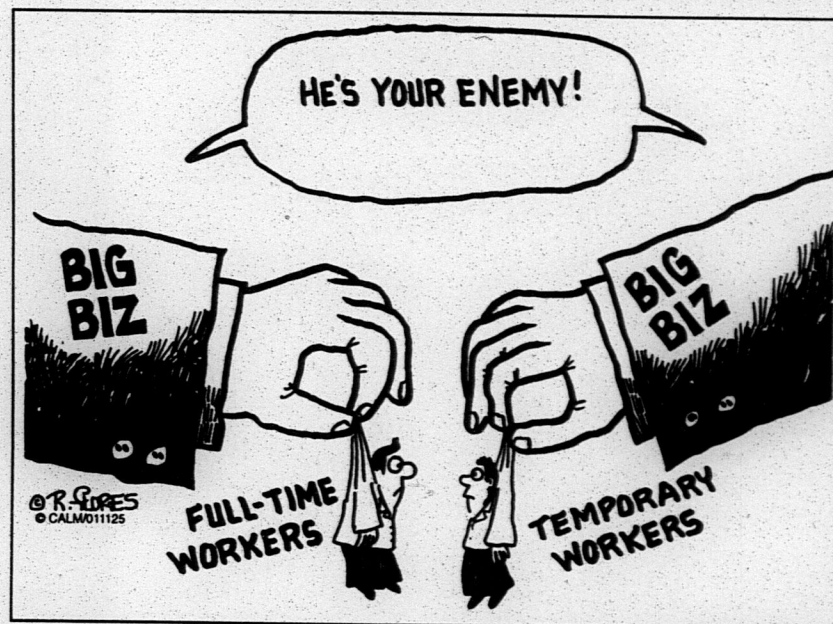
"If our message resonates only with those most oppressed ('those who have nothing to lose,' as my classmate put it), what do we offer to the millions who do have something to lose?" Chen asked.

And then, to drive the point home, he recalled his graduation ceremony. The guest speaker, Chen wrote, "called GE's former CEO Jack Welch a 'criminal'; he said he could not understand how Welch could be a hero to so many Americans. Listening to that speaker, I came to the conclusion that we're the ones who don't get it. . . ."

Well, maybe. Welch, after all, is revered as a management savant. From 1981, when he took over General Electric, until his retirement last year, Welch transformed a relatively nondescript electronics manufacturer into one of the world's largest corporations, adding nearly \$500 billion in shareholder value. From 1981 through 1999, the company's shareholders saw a total return of 7,000%. If this were a fairy tale, it would be the story of Jack and the Beanstalk.

But that corporatist view of GE, and its consequent sanctification of Jack Welch, plays better on Wall Street than on Main Street. One of Welch's many sobriquets is

Continued on page 8



LETTERS

To the Editor,

As a Guild member and a freelance photographer for The New York Times, I was distressed and embarrassed to see [Guild Reporter, March 22] the lack of support voiced by New York Guild leaders Barry Lipton and Lena Williams for the freelancers' fight to stop the recent pay cut at The Times.

I would have thought that a basic sense of solidarity, if nothing else, would have led Lipton and Williams to say to the freelancers, "Good luck. We support you."

Instead, we have a statement that says, in effect, "You should all be fired."

Freelancers are not the enemy. They are working people, too, struggling to earn a living and feed their families. They do not deserve a kick in the teeth from the Guild, especially not after having finally stood up and demanded better treatment.

The Guild's concern that full-time union jobs are being undermined by The Times' use of so many poorly-paid freelancers is, of course, valid. But looking just at this narrow issue, Lipton and Williams seem to have again flunked Unionism 101. If the Guild had been strong enough to force The Times to sharply limit the use of freelancers, presumably Lipton and Williams would have negotiated that in the last contract.

Do they have a Plan B? If they were to help freelancers win fairer pay, would that make using freelancers more expensive and narrow the enormous wage gap between freelancers and staff photographers? And would that tend to encourage management to use fewer freelancers and hire more staff? It doesn't seem like a hard choice to me.

—Jim West, Detroit Guild

To the Editor,

Brother West's attempt to distort the position of the New York Guild leadership relating to the New York Times's use of freelance photographers and the recent cut-backs in their daily rates, leaves us somewhat baffled. In the comments from us included in the March 22 article, "New York Times Turns to Gouging Photogs," we clearly stated that "while we can sympathize with some of the concerns that have been raised, our strong position for a considerable time has been that The Times should not employ freelance photographers in the first place." This position should not surprise Mr. West or anyone else, given that our primary responsibility is to protect the job security of the 1,600 Guild-represented employees at The Times, not to negotiate for freelancers.

It is universally understood that there is not a major newspaper in this country that can operate without the use of some freelancers. We recognize that and accept it. However, the Guild at The New York Times has worked hard to make sure that when

freelancers are consistently used in a specific area or are assigned work that could otherwise be done by Guild-represented employees, the work is assigned to a unit member.

Freelancers do not have to work for The Times. If Mr. West doesn't like the terms of the new transmission fee, he has the right to offer his services to other news organizations. If Mr. West wants a permanent position at The Times, let him apply for one. To suggest that the Guild has somehow failed to act responsibly because it cannot assure him, or other freelance photographers, permanent compensation for work that has changed over time, is absurd. As a journalist, he should know better.

In closing, we would like to point out that there was a significant lapse in judgment by the editor of The Guild Reporter when he published the article referenced above without any indication that, with the exception of the portion relating to our response, the article was written by Mr. West—one of the freelancers affected by The Times' cutback in the freelancers' pay schedule. We know this because the draft of the article that was sent to us for response clearly indicated who wrote it.

—Barry F. Lipton, President, New York Guild; Lena Williams, Guild Unit Chair, New York Times

[A good editor, like a good referee, should not insinuate himself into this sort of exchange. On the other hand, because the New York Guild's letter writers have questioned the editor's judgment, at least a few words of explanation are appropriate.

The article in question indeed was written by Jim West, and as Barry Lipton and Lena Williams acknowledge, no attempt was made to disguise such authorship. Unfortunately, once I had given the New York officers an opportunity to interject their comments, the writer was owed an opportunity to review the results.

On doing so, he requested that his by-line be removed because he believed the additional comments undercut what he had written. The Guild Reporter does not require the use of by-lines when writers request that they be withheld.

West then wrote the letter published here, and Lipton and Williams were given a chance to respond.

One final note, before a sharp-eyed reader with a calculator calls the editor to task for yet another lapse in judgment: yes, both letters in this issue exceed the 200-word limit. West's is 264 words; Lipton's and Williams' is 371. The editor hopes readers will agree that the issue they are debating is complex enough to deserve a little extra running room.]

Working Americans ever more vulnerable

As the stock market dithers, the federal budget falls back into deficit spending, the trade deficit balloons and unemployment inches steadily upward, wage earners may be excused for feeling a mite nervous. Indeed, as several recent studies indicate, there's much reason for discomfort: the social safety net that began fraying under Ronald Reagan is now in tatters.

The nation's state-by-state patchwork quilt of unemployment benefits programs, for example, is critically underfunded and in most states provides only marginal benefits, anyway. As reported in "Failing the Unemployed: A State-by-State Evaluation of Unemployment Insurance Systems," all but two states (Rhode Island and Vermont) have such badly structured eligibility requirements that those most in need of such benefits—low-wage and part-time workers—are least likely to get them.

"In most states, unemployment insurance isn't a true safety net but a series of gaping holes loosely strung together," protests Jeffrey Wenger of the Economic Policy Institute, one of the three groups that performed the analysis. Also contributing to the study were the Center on Budget & Policy Priorities and the National Employment Law Project. (To view the complete report, see www.epinet.org.)

Another sign of how the deck increasingly is stacked against wage earners was provided May 22 by the National Academy of Social Insurance, which reported that workers' compensation benefit payments and costs continued to decline relative to wages in 2000. That marks the eighth consecutive

year of declining benefits in a program designed to provide medical care—hardly a declining expense—and cash payments to workers injured on the job.

Workers' compensation benefits for every \$100 in wages have declined by 39% from their peak in 1992, to \$1.03 from \$1.68. The decline is attributed in part to "more active management of medical care," according to John F. Burton, who chaired the panel that produced the study. But as Burton further observed: "Some are concerned that more injured workers have been denied benefits as states have tightened eligibility rules for workers' compensation." (To view the complete report, see www.nasi.org.)

Finally, even those who traverse their working years into retirement are finding themselves hammered. As documented in yet another study from the Economic Policy Institute, typical Americans approaching retirement will have to tighten their belts more than previous retirees—even after the recent unprecedented stock market boom and rapid proliferation of 401(k) plans.

"Retirement Insecurity: The Income Shortfalls Awaiting the Soon-to-Retire" concludes that more than 40% of households headed by someone between the ages of 47 and 64 will not be able to replace even half of their pre-retirement income once they stop working. Nearly 20% will have income below the poverty line.

Hardest hit by such changing economic fortunes are black and Hispanic households, with the percentage forced to live on less than half their pre-retirement income shooting up to nearly 53%.

	Eligibility	Benefits	Revenue	Trust fund	Preparedness	Overall
Alabama	F	F	F	F	F	F
Alaska	F	F	-	-	-	F
Arizona	F	F	F	-	F	F
Arkansas	F	-	-	F	F	F
California	F	F	F	-	-	F
Colorado	F	-	F	-	F	F
Connecticut	F	-	-	F	-	-
Delaware	F	-	-	-	F	-
D.C.	F	-	F	-	-	-
Florida	F	-	F	-	F	F
Georgia	F	-	F	-	F	F
Hawaii	F	-	-	-	-	-
Idaho	F	-	-	-	F	-
Illinois	F	-	-	F	F	F
Indiana	F	-	F	-	F	F
Iowa	F	-	-	-	F	-
Kansas	F	-	-	-	-	-
Kentucky	F	-	-	-	F	-
Louisiana	F	F	-	-	F	F
Maine	F	-	-	-	-	-
Maryland	F	F	F	-	F	F
Massachusetts	F	-	-	-	-	-
Michigan	F	-	-	F	-	-
Minnesota	F	-	-	F	F	F
Mississippi	F	F	F	-	F	F
Missouri	F	F	F	F	F	F

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Nebraska	F	-	F	-	F	F
Nevada	F	-	-	-	F	-
New Hampshire	F	-	F	-	-	-
New Jersey	F	-	-	-	-	-
New Mexico	F	-	-	-	F	-
New York	F	-	-	F	-	-
North Carolina	F	-	-	F	F	F
North Dakota	F	-	-	F	F	F
Ohio	F	-	F	F	F	F
Oklahoma	F	-	-	-	F	-
Oregon	F	-	-	-	-	-
Pennsylvania	F	-	-	-	F	-
Rhode Island	-	-	-	-	-	-
South Carolina	F	-	F	-	F	F
South Dakota	F	F	F	-	F	F
Tennessee	F	-	F	-	F	F
Texas	F	-	F	F	F	F
Utah	F	-	-	-	F	-
Vermont	-	-	-	-	-	-
Virginia	F	-	F	-	F	F
Washington	F	-	-	-	-	-
West Virginia	F	-	-	-	F	-
Wisconsin	F	-	-	-	-	-
Wyoming	F	-	-	-	F	-
Total F's	49	9	19	12	34	23

SOURCE: ECONOMIC POLICY INSTITUTE

UI report card, state by state

In each category, a failing grade (F) means: "eligibility"—unemployed have limited access to benefits; "benefits"—levels are set too low to act as a true safety net; "revenue"—state unemployment insurance taxes are below average and fail to keep pace with earnings growth; "trust fund"—state

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Continued from page 7

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But GE's criminal behavior, and by extension Welch's culpability, is legendary and includes: repeated dumping of toxic waste and chemicals, stealing from the military, operating unsafe workplaces, deceptive advertising, selling defective nuclear reactor parts, creating asbestos-related health hazards in England, bribing the Puerto Rico Water Resources Authority, overcharging on mortgage insurance, money laundering and

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DAYBOOK

Helmets and Flak Jackets
Required (workshop),
June 7, Nat'l Press Club, DC

Int'l Fed. of Journ. exec comm.
June 7-9, Washington, DC

Nat'l Hispanic Journalists,
June 12-16, San Diego

Western District Council,
June 15, Las Vegas

CWA Convention,
June 17-19, Las Vegas

Native American Journalists,
June 19-20, San Diego

Nat'l Assoc. Black Journalists,
July 31-Aug. 4, Milwaukee

Asian-American Journalists,
Aug. 7-10, Dallas

Nat'l Lesbian, Gay Journalists,
Sept. 12-15, Philadelphia

TNG Exec. Council meeting,
Oct. 20-21, Washington DC

FROM THE MORGUE

Fifty years ago this month:

William Tugman, editor of the Eugene Register-Guard, tells other editors that newspapers that "stand for nothing . . . offend nobody . . . and squeeze the money bag until it squeaks" should be blamed for declining reader interest and confidence. . . . E. Kenneth Todd, general manager of two dailies in Rockford, Ill. that have been shut down by strikers, questions management's role by asking, "Is it that we spend less time developing understanding relations with employees than we do studying box scores?"

Twenty-five years ago this month:

The Guild's executive board says it will seek convention approval for negotiating terms of a merger with the International Typographical Union. . . . Declaring it is "fed up with misuse" of U.S. labor law by employers seeking to frustrate the Guild's organizing efforts, the TNG executive board authorizes hiring a lobbyist to work toward Congressional reforms.

Ten years ago this month:

Morgan Li Kung Jin, long an activist and leader of the New York Guild, is one of seven honorees at the founding convention of the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance. . . . TNG's executive board votes on two different motions to seek convention approval for reducing the number of board seats. . . . A Guild-wide tally of members reporting repetitive stress injuries climbs to nearly 3,500, an 18% increase over the previous year.

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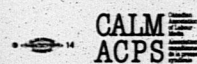
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Colorado	F	-	F	-	F	
Connecticut	F	-	-	F	-	
Delaware	F	-	-	-	F	
D.C.	F	-	F	-	-	
Florida	F	-	F	-	F	
Georgia	F	-	F	-	F	
Hawaii	F	-	-	-	-	
Idaho	F	-	-	-	F	
Illinois	F	-	-	F	F	
Indiana	F	-	F	-	F	
Iowa	F	-	-	-	F	
Kansas	F	-	-	-	-	
Kentucky	F	-	-	-	F	
Louisiana	F	F	-	-	F	
Maine	F	-	-	-	-	
Maryland	F	F	F	-	F	
Massachusetts	F	-	-	-	-	
Michigan	F	-	-	F	-	
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New Mexico	F	-	-	-	F	
New York	F	-	-	F	-	
North Carolina	F	-	-	F	F	
North Dakota	F	-	-	F	F	
Ohio	F	-	F	F	F	
Oklahoma	F	-	-	-	F	
Oregon	F	-	-	-	-	
Pennsylvania	F	-	-	-	F	
Rhode Island	-	-	-	-	-	
South Carolina	F	-	F	-	F	
South Dakota	F	F	F	-	F	
Tennessee	F	-	F	-	F	
Texas	F	-	F	F	F	
Utah	F	-	-	-	F	
Vermont	-	-	-	-	-	
Virginia	F	-	F	-	F	
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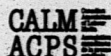
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Nat'l Lesbian, Gay Journalists,
Sept. 12-15, Philadelphia

TNG Exec. Council meeting,
Oct. 20-21, Washington DC

FROM THE MORGUE

Fifty years ago this month:

William Tugman, editor of the Eugene Register-Guard, tells other editors that newspapers that "stand for nothing . . . offend nobody . . . and squeeze the money bag until it squeaks" should be blamed for declining reader interest and confidence. . . . E. Kenneth Todd, general manager of two dailies in Rockford, Ill. that have been shut down by strikers, questions management's role by asking, "Is it that we spend less time developing understanding relations with employees than we do studying box scores?"

Twenty-five years ago this month:

The Guild's executive board says it will seek convention approval for negotiating terms of a merger with the International Typographical Union. . . . Declaring it is "fed up with misuse" of U.S. labor law by employers seeking to frustrate the Guild's organizing efforts, the TNG executive board authorizes hiring a lobbyist to work toward Congressional reforms.

Ten years ago this month:

Morgan Li Kung Jin, long an activist and leader of the New York Guild, is one of seven honorees at the founding convention of the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance. . . . TNG's executive board votes on two different motions to seek convention approval for reducing the number of board seats. . . . A Guild-wide tally of members reporting repetitive stress injuries climbs to nearly 3,500, an 18% increase over the previous year.