

THE GUILD Reporter

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Providence Guild owed \$210,000

Arbitrator rules Journal encouraged no-pays, orders paper reimburse unpaid dues

An arbitrator has ruled that the Providence Journal Co. misled workers two years ago when it told them they didn't have to pay Guild dues—and because it misled employees, the company must now pay the Guild all of the money it had not collected.

A provision of the Guild's contract requires all bargaining unit members to pay dues or a nearly equivalent fee, even though the company terminated the contract Feb. 1, 2000, ruled Roberta Golick. Moreover, the company also must write to each bargaining unit member—and post on its website—the fact that employees still are required to pay Guild dues.

(Under federal law, individuals who don't actually join the Guild must still pay the union for its representational services when there is a full union security clause).

The ruling is a major loss for the company because it undermines one of its major strategies for weakening the union, by starving its treasury. As it is, the majority of the union's members have continued paying their dues, with the Guild collecting about 73% of the money it should have received.

The company's back bill totals \$210,346.59, covering the 30-month period since the company launched its financial attack on the Guild.

Golick, however, did rule against the

union on one key point, concluding that the company does not have to collect dues through payroll deduction, or so-called "dues checkoff." But she emphasized that the company must tell all workers to pay dues directly to the Guild.

The checkoff provision lapsed with the termination of the contract in February, 2000, Golick said, unlike the unique membership clause, which outlives both the old contract and the one that still is being negotiated.

Just how soon the decision would be enforced was unclear. The company has dragged its heels throughout the case, and may return to court to file an appeal, further delaying a final resolution.

When the Guild first sought to arbitrate this case, the company asked a federal judge to block it. Instead, the court in Providence ruled that the matter should be arbitrated and that hearing went forward.

In the meantime, the company appealed the District Court ruling, and the First Circuit Court of Appeals heard that case in Boston Aug. 2.

The Guild believes that the company's legal tactics are an attempt to waste time and money in an effort to wear down the union's resolve. But both the Communications Workers of America and The Newspaper Guild have been picking up the local's legal fees.



Carrying the fight to Taiwan

Supporters of employees of the Chinese Daily News, who have been fighting for a first contract against a union-busting management, took their grievances to the newspaper's home turf in late July. Taiwanese Congressional representatives Taun Yi-kang and Lin Tai-Hua held a press conference for the U.S. delegation, including (left to right) Ben Hensler of the AFL-CIO; Kent Wong, director of the UCLA Labor

Research Center; and Lynne Wang, a Chinese Daily News reporter. Support for the delegation also came from Taiwan's unionized employees of the United Daily News, parent company of the Chinese Daily News. Wang presented UDN management with 2,000 cards of support, collected at the CWA convention, that warned: "It is time to recognize the union. We are watching how you treat our sisters and brothers."

'Something for everyone' in tentative pact at CBC

Breaking a deadlock that had threatened to end in possible job actions, the Canadian Media Guild and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation have negotiated new collective bargaining agreements for employees in the union's two units. "This is a deal that provides something for everyone," said lead Guild negotiator Dan Oldfield.

The tentative agreements call for a 7% increase in salary scales by June 2003. In addition, most permanent and temporary employees will receive a signing bonus, in lieu of retroactive raises, of \$750.

The agreements were reached July 18 with the assistance of a federal conciliation officer and are the first in recent memory to be concluded without running out the conciliation clock. Moreover, they were reached without Guild concessions, as the CBC abandoned numerous demands—including a reduction in seniority rights of Unit 3 members facing layoff.

Ratification votes were planned for Sept. 4-5 to assure the greatest possible turnout, following summer vacations, and to allow time for meetings across

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Reuters guts its retirees' health plan

Reuters retirees have become the latest targets of company cost-cutters, who have unilaterally jacked up health care costs for current retirees—and eliminated company-paid health care for most future retirees altogether.

In a teleconference with employees, Reuters' officials justified the move by claiming their only alternative would be to lay off an additional 150 to 200 workers. That would be in addition to 650 layoffs worldwide in June, affecting mostly middle managers; no Guild-represented employees were axed at that time, although 19 Guild members accepted voluntary buy-outs late last year.

Company officials further defended the health care cuts by claiming they would result in retiree benefits no worse than those of other companies.

The New York Guild has demanded copies of the comparative company data used by Reuters in deciding to cut retiree benefits. Guild lawyers also are researching the issue to determine if Reuters violated either the law or its collective bargaining agreement in making the changes without bargaining with the union.

"Whether there were violations

or not," added Reuters unit chair Peter Szekely, "the Guild intends to make reasonably priced health care coverage for current and future retirees one of our bargaining goals when contract negotiations begin this fall." The current contract expires Feb. 28.

The changes imposed by Reuters hit current workers the hardest: any employee who doesn't meet the "Rule of 80" (age plus years of service equal 80 or more) by the end of this year will be on the hook for the whole premium for medical and dental insurance after retirement. At current rates, that amounts to more than \$460 a month per person.

For current Guild and non-Guild retirees and their spouses who are under 65, health care costs are scheduled to more than double in January, to \$112 from \$54 per person per month. Retirees over 65, who pay nothing now for coverage that supplements Medicare, will pay \$45 per person each month, according to management—which sent letters to all retirees telling them it reserves the right to increase the rates further, or to eliminate coverage altogether.

Meanwhile, even before it hacked away at retirees' health care

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James Woods, former IEB president, dies at age 89

James B. Woods, who was elected president of the American Newspaper Guild in 1967, died August 1 after a fall at his home in University City, Missouri. He was 89.

A retired editor of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and the husband of former Missouri Lt. Gov. Harriett Woods, James Woods had a reputation as a die-hard newspaperman who spent much of his retirement critiquing the daily newspaper from his living room chair.

"He would read a copy of the newspaper, and I mean every word of every page," his son, Andy Woods, told a Post-Dispatch obituary writer. "He was the kind of guy who knew that Boyle is an avenue, not a street, without having to look it up."

But for older Guilders, Woods will be remembered most as an active union member who took on numerous leadership roles. Starting as a shop steward at the St. Louis Globe-Democrat in 1950, where he worked as a reporter following graduation from the University of Missouri School of Journalism, Woods moved on to serve the Guild at virtually every level.

Following two years as unit chair, in 1952 and 1953, he was elected local president for two more years, then was elected vice president of the Guild's Midwestern Region 3 in 1955. Once on the International Executive Board he was promptly chosen to



chair the key collective bargaining committee, a role he filled for the next 12 years. "There are few in the history of the Guild who have had greater impact on the Guild's collective bargaining program," announced Rollin Everett when he nominated Woods to become the Guild's eighth president.

Woods retained the presidential title only two years, becoming the Guild's first international chairman by acclamation in 1969, when the title of executive vice president was changed to president. He remained as international chair until he stepped down in 1973, when he was presented with a plaque that included his often cited motto as the Guild's top leader: "Often outvoted but never wrong."

Born in Sturgeon, Missouri, Woods worked his way through school in the middle of the Great Depression, becoming the first person in his family to graduate from college. His first reporting job was at the Journal Gazette in Mattoon, Ill., from which he graduated in 1943 to the St. Louis Globe-Democrat—as a gossip columnist, among other assignments. He joined the Post-Dispatch in 1953, where he edited an out-of-state edition for 17 years. He later served as copy editor until his retirement in 1978.

Survivors include his wife of 49 years, a former reporter and subsequent state senator, lieutenant governor and president of the National Women's Political Caucus. His ashes were to be spread on the eighth hole of a golf course where he twice scored a hole-in-one.

AP yields on birth control

By Jay Jorden
Wire Service Guild

Under threat of a Guild arbitration hearing, The Associated Press has agreed to provide prescription contraceptive coverage in its health benefits package. Word of the settlement was welcomed by AP staffers, who have been forced to pay hundreds of dollars in out-of-pocket expenses each year for contraception.

The Wire Service Guild had earlier charged the company with illegally discriminating against women by not providing prescription contraceptives under its health plan, which pays for the male anti-impotence drug, Viagra.

The AP, to settle the Guild's grievance, will add contraceptives coverage to the union-covered health plan starting Jan. 1, 2003. Such coverage also will be part of the new contract that the Guild will start negotiating in September. The WSG/AP contract expires on Nov. 30.

Although Guild officials had asked the company to adopt the benefit last year, AP officials refused.

Last year, the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission issued guidelines stating that employers' health plans that cover various preventive treatments and medications should cover contraceptives. The agency had ruled that the refusal to provide such coverage violated the 1978 Pregnancy Discrimination Act, which requires equal treatment of women "affected by pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions" in various aspects of employment, including benefits. The EEOC finding was upheld by a U.S. District Court.

Meanwhile, the publisher of The Wall Street Journal, Dow Jones & Co., faces legal action over its failure to provide heightened insurance coverage for female contraception. Three female Dow Jones employees filed a discrimination complaint with the EEOC over the issue.

According to Planned Parenthood and a law firm acting as its co-counsel, Dow Jones' current insurance coverage violates the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Pregnancy Discrimination Act. A Dow Jones spokesman said earlier that the company was investigating the complaint. An EEOC official said the agency was prohibited from confirming or denying any potential investigation or filing of a charge.

The Dow Jones employees decided to act about a year after their TNG-CWA local, the Independent Association of Publishers' Employees, had first urged the company to augment its insurance coverage.



Amplification

Last month's Guild Reporter gave ample recognition to Guilda—the Buffalo Guild's masked crusader—but none at all to her creator. So let it be acknowledged that it was from Mike Konopacki's brow that Guilda sprang, as Minerva was propelled from Jupiter's, fully armed and with a terrible war cry. Mike Konopacki is half of the cartooning team of Huck Konopacki, whose work often graces our pages.

In brief...

Vote goes almost down to the wire

The Wire Service Guild becomes part of history—or at least its name does. By a vote of 179 to 164, the Guild's members agreed that the old name was too restrictive and that the local would be better known as the News Media Guild. Local members also voted by an overwhelming margin, 311-29, to approve several bylaw changes.

Feeney sings out for Eugene Guild

The Eugene Newspaper Guild got a big hand from noted troubador Anne Feeney, who often sings out on behalf of labor, environmental, feminist, peace and civil rights issues. Not only did the Pittsburgh-based Feeney travel out to the West Coast for an evening of labor protest songs in mid-July, but her letter to the Register-Guard's publisher predicted that "your protracted stalling and indifference to your Guild members' very legitimate claims will spell destruction for your newspaper."

Where Guilders work, people read

The Newspaper Association of America recently published a list of the top U.S. markets for adult readership of daily newspapers—and 9 of the top 13 were in Guild-represented circulation areas. Coming in at number one was Providence, RI (tied with Hartford, Conn.), where 65.3% of the adults read the paper, followed in third place by Boston, 64.2%; fourth, a three-way tie between Cleveland, New York and Pittsburgh, 63%; then Buffalo, 62.3%; Washington, DC, 61.6%; Harrisburg-Lancaster-York PA, 61.1%; and Philadelphia, 60.7%.

DSMs join Guild at Eastside J'nal

The Pacific Northwest Guild gained eight new members July 24, when district sales managers at the Eastside Journal, Seattle, voted for union representation. "I do enjoy my job, although I sometimes have long hours," explained Barbara Pfeifle before the election. "But I'd like to have a liveable wage." The Guild already represents district sales managers at The Seattle Times and the Yakima Herald-Republic.

Flayed and filleted by Toledo Blade

In the middle of a series of layoffs and unilateral restructuring moves that the Toledo Newspaper Guild is challenging through grievances and charges of unfair labor practices, the Toledo Blade is asking its employees to suggest other efficiency improvements. Local President Lillian Covarrubias asks, "why?" As she points out, the company last year hired the Alliant Group for exactly that

purpose, spent more than twice the \$500,000 originally budgeted for the job—then eliminated two of the positions Alliant had recommended be beefed up. The Blade, meanwhile, has tentatively agreed to a request by the Toledo Council of Newspaper Unions for an independent audit to verify its claim of continuing financial losses.

Maine grievance results in \$10,000

The Portland Guild has won a total of \$10,000, to be shared by 96 members, in settlement of two grievances involving health care premium sharing. One grievance charged the Press Herald with overcharging premiums for 66 full-time Guild members in the HMO family plan; the second involved the double-charging of 30 part-time employees who pay a pro-rated share of their health insurance premiums.

Hour workers are up to the minute

Guild-represented employees of The Hour in Norwalk, Conn., unanimously ratified a four-year contract, retroactive to Jan. 1, that includes annual wage increases of 3.5% in the first year and 3% each year thereafter. The new contract also requires all Guild-represented employees to become union members within 30 days; allows sick days to be used as vacation days, and vice versa; and authorizes voluntary use of comp time in lieu of overtime pay. Comp time, like overtime pay, is to be paid at the rate of one-and-a-half times the hours worked in excess of 7.5 hours a day.

Camens takes the girls out on town

TNG-CWA attorney Barbara Camens has more than the law on her mind: she and friend Tamara Kreinin just published "Girls' Night Out," a book that celebrates women's groups across America, from a mah-jongg club to one that burns rubber on its motorcycles. Available from Crown.

September is COPE month

Delegates to the CWA convention designated September as COPE month, when the union will redouble its efforts to have members sign up for the program, which funds CWA's political activities. The COPE program is seen as increasingly critical to the union's future because of impending changes in campaign finance law, set to go into effect Jan. 1, banning the use of "soft" money. For more information about COPE, go to the CWA web site at www.cwa-union.org and look under the "What's Hot" menu on the right side; click on the September COPE month link.

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The Newspaper Guild International



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Knight Ridder: hardball in St. Paul . . .

Back in February, before contract talks with the St. Paul Pioneer Press had started, the Minnesota Newspaper Guild/Typographical Union's executive officer was warning of tough days ahead. Negotiations this year, wrote Mike Sweeney, could be "the most difficult the unit has ever faced."

Fast-forward six months, to the days following the July 31 expiration of the previous contract, and it appears Sweeney wasn't far off the mark. To date, the Knight Ridder-owned paper has tried to remove approximately 20 editing jobs from the unit, is pushing a new health care plan that would end the union's right to negotiate its provisions—and oh, yes: has said there might not be enough money available for raises.

"We do not believe a pay increase is a given," Jill Taylor, the newspaper's vice president of employee relations, told Guild negotiators.

All this is coming on top of 70 Guild-represented job cuts in the past year, driven by Knight Ridder's publicly announced commitment to achieve—recession be damned—a 25% profit margin by 2004.

Knight Ridder's profit margin already has risen from 10.5% in 1995 to 20.8% in 2000, but as Taylor has made clear, the Pioneer Press expects significant contractual concessions from the union to further increase the corporation's profitability. Among its money-saving proposals—with most undercutting union jurisdiction—are the following:

- Expanding the company's ability to exclude new hires from the union.
- Allowing the company to remove employees from the union when they transfer.
- Eliminating seniority as the determining factor in layoffs.
- Expanding the use of stringers and freelancers.
- Eliminating severance pay except for layoffs.
- Adding management rights language to the contract.
- Eliminating the no pay-cut clause in the contract.
- Reducing the amount of sick and disability leave available to members.

The last item on that list is particularly ironic in light of the company's proposal to

implement a new health care plan. Although the company argued that the switch would mean lower costs for coverage and better care for the chronically ill, the Guild's negotiating team learned it also entailed a loss of bargaining rights over future changes in coverage.

Under the proposed Blue-Green plan, Knight Ridder would have the exclusive right to "modify, amend or terminate the plan and any benefits at any time"; the company currently is contractually obligated to negotiate health plan changes. Moreover, the switch would sidestep state-mandated levels of coverage, removing all constraints on management to change the plan in any way it wants.

A series of four, one-hour meetings for members to discuss the health care proposal were scheduled for the first week in August.

Separately, the Guild's negotiating team told the company it would not discuss a company proposal to remove about 20 members from the union because the proposal is not a mandatory subject of bargaining. The union told the company it could take its request to the National Labor Relations Board for a decision.

And in yet another sign of its eagerness to hogtie the union, the Pioneer Press is pushing a proposal to remove a contractual provision that allows Guild members to honor picket lines of the company's other unions. Taylor insisted that the change is "critical" because management needs to know that Guild members will work and honor their contract in case another union strikes. Putting out the paper without the Guild would be difficult, she explained, and might do drastic long-term harm to the paper.

Executive Officer Sweeney, on the other hand, pointed out that the section in question has been in the contract for at least 50 years and has never been used. Indeed, he recalled, there has been only one strike at the Pioneer Press, in 1959, but Guild members understood the seriousness of a strike and its potential impact and have always acted "responsibly" in situations involving other unions.

Moreover, Sweeney and the committee told the company, an insistence on removing the section would be a serious impediment to reaching an agreement on a new contract.

. . . while laying off 10 in Philly suburbs

Walker Lundy was editor of the Pioneer Press from 1990 until last November. Then he became editor of the Philadelphia Inquirer, also owned by Knight Ridder.

Now heads are rolling.

Early this month, Lundy unveiled a new "suburban strategy" that includes laying off 10 editorial assistants and reassigning numerous senior staffers. Adding insult to injury, Lundy first disclosed his plans at a Virginia meeting of other editors. "Our first hint of the ugliness in the plan came from someone in that audience who called an Inquirer staffer with a vague warning that we should be careful around this guy—that he seems to enjoy rolling heads," Philadelphia Guild President Henry Holcomb wrote to his members.

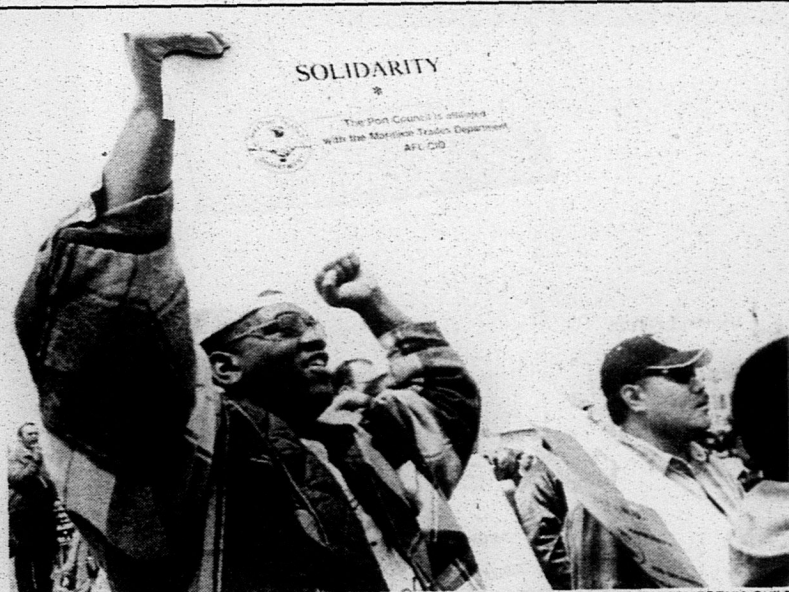
The comment didn't surprise Inquirer staffers—"We've done our best to help Lundy see that this is Philadelphia, where people speak directly and don't appreciate his Southern-style humor that includes jokes about firing people," Holcomb noted—but it did anger them. Scores of e-mails have

flooded the Guild office in response to the changes and the way they were disclosed, with one observing, "Everybody's mad about something in the plan."

Although Guild members have pitched in to build the Inquirer's suburban coverage and circulation in the past, their success has proved self-defeating: every significant gain has been followed by a management decision to "cut back to squeeze more profits from an already profitable newspaper," Holcomb observed. One result is that virtually all of the photographers and many of the writers in the suburbs are paid far less than writers in the main unit. Now history is being repeated, even as Lundy proclaims that the newspaper's future lies in the suburbs.

The Guild's only choice, Holcomb said, is to prepare for battle. "Until the company comes to its senses, we must keep gearing up for a big fight," he maintained. "We have no other choice."

A full membership meeting was being scheduled for next week to discuss specific job actions to challenge the layoffs.



DAVID BACON/NORTHERN CALIFORNIA GUILD

Longshore long-shot

James Tolan, a member of the Seafarers International Union, shows his solidarity during a rally supporting longshore workers during difficult negotiations with the Pacific Maritime Association. The International Longshore and Warehouse Union empowered its contract negotiating committee July 25 to seek strike authorization from the union's membership; meanwhile, the ILWU proposed extending its expired contract until August 13, when bargaining was scheduled to resume. To keep abreast of developments, see the union's web site, at www.ilwu.org.

Washington Post subscriber campaign launched

Guild-represented employees of The Washington Post have stepped up their campaign for a new contract by launching a subscription pledge boycott drive.

Members of the Washington-Baltimore Guild are soliciting pledges from the Post's readers that they will cancel their subscriptions if asked to do so by Guild representatives. Signed pledge cards are being collected through the end of August and will be presented in September "to get management's attention," said Guild representative Calvin Zon. "In the event that Post management still refuses to move toward a fair settlement, we will notify the subscribers who gave us their pledge cards and ask them to cancel their subscriptions."

A letter to subscribers explaining the boycott drive observes that the union has been in contract negotiations since March, but that the Post "has made clear it will not

sign a contract with us until we agree to its anti-union membership demands." Although the Post is a great newspaper, the letter acknowledges, "the Post is not as great a newspaper when it comes to treatment of its own employees."

Plans for the boycott were discussed at a standing-room-only Guild membership meeting last month, at which Post employees vociferously rejected attempts to strip union protection out of their contract and applauded bargaining committee members who issued a call to resist the union-busting initiative.

"As members who exercised your individual freedom to join the Guild," said unit co-chair Darlene Meyer, "all of you recognize the benefits of group action and the importance of cohesion. What the Post seeks to do is destroy what a majority of us have chosen. Let us all send a clear message to the Washington Post: 'Hands off the Guild.'"

Lack of agreement on pay and vacations continues to block an agreement, but company insistence on creating a virtual "right-to-work" shop has proved even more of a hot-button issue for Guild members. The Post is demanding that employees be allowed to quit the union at any time, an option that Guild negotiators described as an aggressive effort to cripple the union and disrupt its dues flow. The current system provides a one-month annual window during which members may resign.

"Post management talks about 'freedom to choose,' but members already have freedom to choose," said Post unit co-chair Rick Weiss. "They can choose to join or not, which is not the case at most of the nation's best newspapers. And members have an annual opportunity to resign."

Acknowledging the members' strong opposition to the management proposal,

Weiss added: "It's gratifying that Guild-covered employees, including many who are not members themselves, recognize what The Post is trying to get away with here and appreciate the importance of having a union at The Post."

Discussing various tactics to respond to management, unit members strongly backed a reprise—albeit a longer one—of the byline strike that drew national and international attention in June. "June's action gave management a loud and clear message that virtually every writer in the newsroom was insulted by The Post's bargaining position," explained one Guild official. "The next would demonstrate that those sentiments remain as strong as ever."

Guild members also cited a need to continue the internal organizing drive, which has signed up 268 new members since the beginning of 2001.

Labor round-up

One more reason to vote for unions

Anyone still questioning the relevance of unions in today's "new" economy should take a second look at WorldCom, whose 17,000 laid-off employees were promised a severance package, to be paid in biweekly segments. Then WorldCom filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, erasing its commitment—something that wouldn't have happened under a collective bargaining agreement. Meanwhile, the collapsing stock market has eviscerated the defined-contribution pension plans that were first adopted by non-unionized employers, with nearly half of the respondents to a Gallup poll saying they will have to postpone retirement as a result. Defined benefit plans—in which the employer rather than the employee shoulders market risk—are predominantly part of union-negotiated contracts.

Social Security at issue despite Dow

Although more than a third of adults say they have no money saved in any kind of retirement account, the White House and most Republicans still nurture hopes of privatizing at least some of the Social Security system—not now, but after the mid-term elections in November, when they hope to pick up voting strength in the House and Senate. The Democrats, on the other hand, mindful of the electorate's dim view of Wall Street at the moment, have launched a petition drive to try to force the issue next month. And the AFL-CIO and a coalition of public-interest groups are pressing GOP legislators to sign a pledge that they will not support any privatization.

Advertisers fret about media oligopoly

Not every business interest thinks that media consolidation is a swell idea. As reported by AdAge, members of the American Association of Advertising Agencies told staff officials of the Federal Communications Commission that consolidation "is driving up marketer costs, eliminating needed program diversity and, in some cases, preventing the purchase of ads in geographies small enough for some marketers, such as smaller retailers, to compete." Media buyers told the FCC that marketers can't easily substitute TV for radio or print for TV, as those who want the FCC to loosen media consolidation rules claim.

Teamsters, UPS reach contract deal

After a final weekend of virtually around-the-clock talks, Teamsters negotiators agreed to a 6-year contract with United Parcel Service that is being voted on this month. The pact features a \$5-an-hour raise over its life for full-timers, extends health benefits to retired part-timers and adds 20,000 new union jobs to the 210,000 UPS workers the Teamsters represent. Most of those jobs will come in the pact's last four years. And, for the first time, Teamsters UPS workers will get long-term disability coverage. —Press Associates, Inc.

New web site for laid-off workers

Saying victims of corporate fraud and greed need more help, the AFL-CIO has launched a website with information on jobless benefits, legal rights and other concerns of the victimized families. The website, www.laidoffworkers.org, will also provide financial action plans for families, help them learn what went wrong, compare their plight with executives' pay, and give them tools to demand corporate accountability.

Vancouver newspaper strike over

Vancouver's two daily newspapers went back on newsstands July 22, following resolution of a contract dispute that had shut down the printing presses for nearly three weeks. Members of Communications, Energy and Paperworkers' Union Local 2000 voted 71.2% in favor of a three-year contract with Pacific Newspaper Group, owner of the broadsheet Vancouver Sun and the tabloid Province; Pacific Newspaper Group is owned by CanWest Global Communications Inc. The deal gives the more than 900 employees wage increases of 2.5%, 2.75% and 2.5%.

Ten years later, a contract in San Diego

Pressroom employees at the San Diego Union-Tribune represented by Graphic Communication International Union Local 432 have agreed to a three-year contract that gives them their first raises in nearly a decade. The three-year pact, brokered by a bargaining team that included a local auto dealer and three members of the Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice, includes a merit pay plan—a major obstacle to earlier agreement—paid out from a pool averaging 3% a year. The pressroom workers also are being guaranteed a 35-hour workweek and a drop in health care premiums, from \$66 per week to \$27.

Four Democrats give fast track its okay

George Bush finally got the fast-track trade authority he wanted—thanks to four House Democrats who changed their votes July 26 from last December, when they opposed the measure. The four—Jane Harman of Redondo Beach, Cal.; Harold Ford Jr. of Memphis; Richard Larsen of Everett, Wash.; and Adam Smith of Tacoma, Wash.—gave Bush the 215-212 margin he needed.



ANDY ZIPSER/THE GUILD REPORTER

Passing ships

Delegates attending the Labor Party's national convention July 26 march past the AFL-CIO headquarters building in Washington, D.C., en route to a demonstration at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce over its support of fast-track trade legislation. Despite the seeming affinity of the two groups, the AFL-CIO has had nothing to do with

the Labor Party and only a handful of its member unions have thrown any support to the party, which after six years has yet to mount a serious political campaign. The national federation, on the other hand, has tried to leverage its long association with the Democratic Party with mixed results: fast-track authority, against which it lobbied vigorously, was signed into law August 5 after gaining the margin it needed from defecting Democrats.

Tentative pact at CBC

Continued from page 1

the country to explain the agreement. Approximately 3,000 employees in the two units are represented by the Canadian Media Guild.

Highlights of the pact include the following:

- A 3% increase in salary scales, beginning with the pay period that started July 29, with subsequent increases of 1.5% effective January 1 and of 2.5% effective June 1, 2003.
- A 10% increase in freelance contributor rates, prior to the across-the-board increases. Freelancers who have worked a certain minimum also will receive a lump-sum payment of \$250.
- Temporary employees hired for less than 13 weeks in Unit 3 will receive an additional payment of 12.5% in lieu of benefits and vacation.
- A reduction in probation to 12 months for all Unit 1 members.

Among other major changes, the agreement requires the CBC to consult with the Guild prior to implementing any new work methods or practices. This includes notification of the reason for the change, as well as its potential impact on Guild members. In cases where Guild members' jobs will be affected, there must be discussion of training and reassignment as necessary. The CBC also will be required to consult with the Guild before implementing any changes to employees' work space.

Both sides also agreed to monitor workload issues more closely.

Other improvements include a provision for

deferred salary leave, under which employees may set aside a portion of their salary—over a two- to five-year period—in order to take a self-funded leave of up to one year without loss of benefits or seniority. An employee returning from deferred salary leave will have the right to return to the exact position he or she held previously.

The new collective agreements are also the first at the CBC to include a statement of employee rights, based on mutual respect, dignity, fairness and well-being. They also require Unit 1 and 3 employees to be treated equally in issues of discipline, the review process, and the granting of military leave; and establish new joint committees to deal with freelancers, videojournalists, safety in hostile environments, employment equity, pay equity and musculoskeletal conditions and injury.

The tentative contracts also improve provisions dealing with job postings; training and professional development; the grievance procedure; and working conditions and safety, and include new provisions for employees who work at home.

If ratified, the new collective agreements will expire March 31, 2004. The Guild's previous contract expired last November, but bargaining was derailed by a dispute between the CBC and its other large union, the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers. Although the talks got back on track this past spring, several intractable differences finally compelled Guild negotiators to declare an impasse June 21. That declaration had started a 60-day conciliation period.

Reuters guts health plan

Continued from page 1

protection, Reuters had already taken liberties with the way its retirement plan is administered. Although there are two Guild members on the Pension Advisory Group, which advises company executives on critical decisions about the Reuters-Guild Retirement Plan, the company has frozen them out of meetings at which it is choosing a new plan administrator.

Although Reuters is not allowed to make plan changes without the Guild's approval, Guild members Cal Mankowski and Jessica Hall have been excluded from presentations by firms seeking to replace Putnam as the retirement plan's administrator. Worse yet, at the group's last meeting, on July 16, Mankowski and Hall weren't even offered the chance to ask questions about the presentations and were told that they would be notified when the list of candidates

was narrowed.

"Trying to keep our appointees out of the process is either the height of arrogance or it shows that our managers have something to hide," Szekely fumed. "Why else would they behave like Enron managers by monopolizing control over our pension money and refusing to hear good advice?"

The Guild has filed a grievance, charging that the company's action abrogates the union's contractual right to "provide meaningful input into the design and administrative matters in relation to the plan." The Guild is demanding that Reuters stop the search for a new pension fund administrator until Guild representatives are included in the process.

On a historical note: two Guild representatives were active participants as advisers in the selection of Putnam in 1994.

TNG-CWA member jumps into political fray

By Mike Blain
WashTech

Beacon Hill resident Ruben Ostrea is just heading out the front door when Zack Hudgins stops by to talk politics. A portable fire extinguisher for his motorboat in hand, Ostrea is looking to take advantage of what is left of a warm July afternoon and take his boat out for a spin. A September primary is probably the last thing on his mind.

But there's Hudgins, a WashTech/TNG-CWA member running for an open state House seat in Seattle's 11th District, handing him a campaign flier headlined, "Real World Experience, Democratic Values." And rather than making a beeline for the street, Ostrea stops to listen. In fact, he provides Hudgins with a downright enthusiastic reception.

"This is the right guy," Ostrea says, after about a minute of conversation. A self-employed contractor who helps small businesses do electrical lighting studies and retrofits in order to conserve energy, he notes that in all the years he has lived on Beacon Hill and in the Seattle area, Hudgins is the first candidate ever to stop by his house.

Not that all area residents provide Hudgins such glowing reviews. A couple of houses away, he is met politely by a woman who opens her screen door just a crack and takes a flier, but is not

interested in hearing much more. Many residents are not home. At one house, Hudgins braves a "Beware of Dog" sign, noting that he takes such warnings with a grain of salt and always checks to see if there's actual evidence of a dog.

And so it goes, day after day, as the September primary inches closer. After work on weekdays, during the day on weekends, at parades, street fairs and community events. Sometimes, as on this afternoon, Hudgins is accompanied by volunteers and sometimes he is by himself. He estimates his campaign has now rung more than 1,900 doorbells in the district. Earlier in the day, he was at a labor roundtable. After yesterday's house-to-house stint, he was off to meet area Sierra Club members.

"I'm running to help people keep good jobs," says the 33-year-old Hudgins between houses. "And that means fixing our transportation system and helping our education system as well." He cites job security, transportation, health care and education as key issues facing the district.

Currently a program manager for Excel Data Corporation, on contract with Microsoft's Latin American Operations Center in Issaquah, Hudgins has had firsthand experience with the up-and-down nature of the local tech industry. In 1997, he was working as a temporary customer service worker at Amazon, making \$10 an hour. Four years later he was



MIKE BLAIN/WASHTECH

Self-proclaimed "recycler of bowling balls" Diane Dambacher speaks with Hudgins in her yard.

still at Amazon, albeit as a full-time employee, when he and hundreds of his co-workers were laid off after the company outsourced much of the work to India.

Hudgins says his experience in the tech industry, his problems commuting to jobs in Seattle and the Eastside, and his own struggles to retain health coverage during times of job instability make him well qualified to understand issues facing the district.

"I am living the issues facing this district," he says. "I sit in traffic on I-405 every day, going to a job that may not be there next week. I worry about how to pay for health care. I think these are the issues a lot

of people are facing every day in the 11th District."

Hudgins has sought, and received, a number of key labor endorsements. Both the Washington State and King County Labor Councils have endorsed his campaign. Local union endorsements have come from the Machinists, Teamsters, the Service Employees International Union and WashTech/CWA, among others. WashTech President Marcus Courtney, who has helped Hudgins in his door-to-door trekking, says he thinks the candidate understands the "everyday concerns" of union members—and other workers—who live in the district.

Although Hudgins has been a WashTech/CWA member for several years, he says his involvement with the labor movement goes back much farther. He says he has walked the picket lines with striking Boeing machinists, attended farm worker rallies and marches in western and eastern Washington and, as a Democratic Party activist, has been involved generally with organizing on issues affecting working families.

If elected, Hudgins says he will work to ensure that the concerns of union members, and unorganized workers seeking union representation, are heard in Olympia. "I am going to be a champion for organized labor," he promises.

Labor organizers, journalists to put their heads together

A three-day conference exploring the intersection of labor and the media—and the importance of both to a democracy—will be held Sept. 26-28 in New York City.

Organized by an eclectic mix of mainstream and labor journalists, academics, historians, indymedia pioneers, union organizers and community activists, the event builds on the success of the first Labor's Voices conference, held two years ago, and of the bi-annual conferences sponsored by LaborTECH. This year's theme is "Democratic Media and Organizing in Uncertain Times."

The first of three plenary sessions, "Using media to reach out to the unorganized: youth, immigrant workers, ethnic groups, women," will be held the morning of Sept. 27, to be followed that afternoon by a session titled, "Democratic media: where is labor's voice?" The final plenary, on Saturday afternoon, will explore the challenges confronting labor and the media amid a time of domestic and international tensions and uncertainties.

Interspersed among the plenaries will be a score of diverse workshops and other panels. Among the topics to be covered: "Labor meets the youth press"; "In solidarity: Covering labor from the left"; "Women and the media"; "Covering the immigrant labor crisis"; "Labor corruption: How it gets covered"; "Covering controversy and dissent in the labor press"; and "Why can't unions be green, Granola-eating civil 'libertarians'?"—The role of labor in broader social change.

Panelists and speakers will include numerous Guild

members, from Linda Foley, president of TNG-CWA, to John Mulligan of The Providence Journal to freelancer (and Guild Reporter contributor) David Bacon. But the roster also includes David Moberg, of In These Times, and Jim West, of Labor Notes; former New York Times labor reporter William Serrin and current NYT labor scribe Steven Greenhouse; author and media critic Robert McChesney and historian Daniel Leab, author of the definitive book about the founding of The Newspaper Guild, "A Union of Individuals."

Not everything at the conference will be talk-talk. An opening reception Sept. 26 will feature Elizabeth Faue signing her new book, "Writing the Wrongs: Eva Velesh and the Rise of Labor Journalism," and also will pay tribute to Moe Foner, founder of the Bread and Roses Cultural Project, and to WBAI/Pacifica Radio. The following evening, New York City's Working Theatre, a group dedicated to exploring the lives of working people, will perform the musical revue "Labor on Broadway."

And on display throughout the event will be labor photography, films, cartoons and art, as well as computers with access to labor websites.

All events will be held at the CUNY Graduate Center in mid-town Manhattan, at 365 Fifth Avenue. The self-sustaining conference, which has only minimal underwriting support, has a registration fee of \$140, although retirees, students and unemployed workers can get in for \$35 and some scholarships are available.

A CONFERENCE BY

Labor's Voices
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Democratic Media and Organizing in Uncertain Times

Sept 26-28, 2002 New York City

PLENARY SESSIONS

on Organizing, Media Democracy/
Labor, and Civil Liberties

SPEAKERS AND PANELISTS

Barbara Bowen, President PSC/AFT
Ellen Frank, Dollars and Sense, Center
for Popular Economics

Juan Gonzalez, Journalist Activist
Raj Jayadev, Silicon Valley Organizer

Denise Mitchell, Director of Public
Affairs, National AFI-CIO

Robert McChesney, Professor,
University of Illinois

David Montgomery, Labor Historian,
Yale University

Politicians (a few) begin to speak out on corporate media

While most journalists watch the relentless corporatization of the media from the sidelines, politically neutered by a misplaced sense of professional "objectivity," a few vote-getters are bucking the trend to throw them a lifeline.

Among the most prominent is Congressman Bernie Sanders of Vermont, who in late April held two town-hall meetings in Montpelier and Burlington that drew overflow crowds totaling more than 600. The theme of the meetings was corporate control of the media; the response was one of overwhelming concern.

"What we found were crowds of citizens who were not merely interested but energized by the prospect of making media an issue," reported John Nichols and Robert McChesney, who joined Sanders on the podium, in an article in *Extra!* "When we explained that the current corporate media system is not the 'natural' result of the market, but is the result of explicit government policies, folks were pulling out notepads and taking notes."

More folks got to do more note-taking July 11 in Washington, D.C., when Sanders, McChesney and Nichols were joined by Ohio Congressman Sherrod Brown and TNG-CWA President Linda Foley for another overflow meeting, this time at the U.S. Capitol. And, as in Vermont, the speakers addressed one central point and its anti-democratic ramifications: that the emerging media oligopoly is the result of deliberate policy decisions made under the misleading banner of "deregulation."

Despite a widely shared perception that the government has a hands-off attitude

toward the press, virtually all forms of mass media have been shaped by decades of public policy decisions, from copyright laws to postal subsidies for publications to government funding for the internet to broadcast spectrum allocation. In other words, Nichols said, "because the media exist as a result of government policy, they have to be thought of as an issue. They're not something that just 'happens' to you, like the weather."

But corporate interests, McChesney said, have lobbied with growing success for "deregulation" by claiming something that never existed. "Every time you hear the word 'deregulation,' substitute 'regulation purely on behalf of private interests,'" he urged.

Corporate control of the media, all speakers stressed, is not value-free. For example, Sanders offered, the anti-regulatory impulse is reflected in news that trivializes the government. Political coverage increasingly is presented as entertainment "and makes a joke of the political process," Sanders said, resulting in even more erosion of the democratic interplay of ideas than is caused by right-wing domination of radio airwaves. One consequence: 80% of young people and two-thirds of the electorate overall will not vote in the November elections.

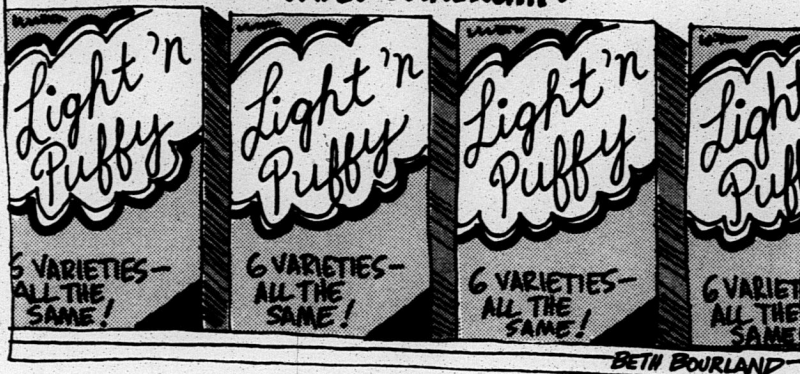
Sherrod Brown observed also a relentless "dumbing down" of the news, especially when it reflects badly on the corporate agenda. For example, despite the AFL-CIO's attempts to highlight the ever-widening gap between CEO salaries and those of production workers—a ratio that zoomed from 45-to-1 in 1980 to 458-to-1 in 2000—"that story is rarely if ever reported in the national media." Another example: the nearly com-

COMPARE NEWSPAPERS TO CEREAL...

HERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT VOICES:



HERE IS CONSOLIDATED OWNERSHIP:



BETH BOURLAND

plete blackout on television news coverage of the ratio of spending on advertising vs. spending on research and development by pharmaceutical companies.

The overall effect of corporate consolidation of the media, Foley said, is manifold. One result is that "our craft, our profession, is being destroyed." Another is that press coverage increasingly follows a corporate agenda, neglecting labor issues, civil rights and other groups' agendas. Yet another is the

public's increasing disenchantment with the mass media, as seen in a steady erosion of newspaper circulation and television ratings.

"We have a collapse of democratic participation in this country" as a direct result of the corporatization of the media, Nichols concluded. "There is a desperate need for Congress to get involved in this issue."

And who better to involve Congress than the people most familiar with the issue, journalists themselves?

Corporate-owned media = news with a corporate agenda

[The following statement was made by Vermont Congressman Bernie Sanders in late April, at the second of two "town meetings" discussing corporate control of the media.]

Tonight we are going to talk about one of the most important and least discussed issues facing our country, the rapidly increasing corporate control of the media. I believe that this event tonight, and the meeting we had in Montpelier last night, are the very first Congressional Town Meetings that have ever been held on this issue, and I thank you very much for being part of it.

The simple truth is that more and more of what we read, see and hear is owned by fewer and fewer large, multi-national corporations and, in my view, this is a very dangerous trend in terms of the future of American democracy.

Many Americans do not realize that, despite the large number of TV channels or newspapers or magazines that are available, most of them are owned by a few very large companies—and that number is dwindling. AOL-TimeWarner, Disney, Viacom, News Corporation, Bertelsmann, Vivendi Universal, Sony, AT&T or General Electric—a dwindling number of multi-national corporations control the flow of information to most of the people in our country.

Further, many Americans do not fully appreciate the conflicts of interest that are inherent when a multi-national owns media. Let me say a few words about one

of the "smaller" media conglomerates: General Electric. GE owns NBC and other media companies. The exact same points that are made about GE can be made about other media conglomerates:

- GE has been one of the leaders in moving American jobs to China and other third world countries—which gives them a certain perspective on our trade policies and the global economy.

- GE is a major polluter—which gives them a certain perspective on the role of the government in protecting the environment.

- GE has a strong anti-union record—which gives them a certain perspective on labor relations and the rights of workers.

- GE is heavily into military production—which gives them a position on the military budget and government priorities.

- GE has a long record of trying to pay as little as they can in taxes, and gain as much as they can in corporate welfare—which gives them a perspective on tax policy.

- GE is heavily into financial services—which gives them a position on banking deregulation and other financial issues.

- GE contributes substantial amounts of money into the political process—which gives them a stake in the future of campaign finance reform.

Rupert Murdoch, who owns the News Corporation and Fox television, is a right-wing billionaire. For all intents and purposes, Fox TV is a front group for the right wing of the Republican Party. Among their regular consultants are former Republican

Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich and John Kaisich, the former Republican Chairman of the Budget Committee.

In terms of radio, the networks and stations are dominated by right-wing talk-show hosts—Rush Limbaugh, G. Gordon Liddy, Bob Grant, Sean Hannity, Howie Carr, Oliver North, Michael Reagan and Laura Schlesinger, to name a few. Remember that this is a country where Al Gore and Ralph Nader got a few million more votes than George Bush and Pat Buchanan. Do Limbaugh and his friends have a right to get their views out? Absolutely. But so do opposing points of view. Unfortunately, those viewpoints scarcely exist on national radio.

While I am extremely concerned about the right-wing bent of television, radio and the newspapers, that is not my major concern in terms of how the media deals with government and politics.

Mostly, in a country which is expecting a 37% turnout in the next national election, and where fewer and fewer Americans are participating in the political process, I am extremely distressed at the degree to which gossip, sensationalism and scandal dominate media presentations. We learned more than we ever wanted to know about the sex lives of Bill Clinton and Gary Condit, and more than we needed to know about O.J. Simpson, Princess Di and Robert Blake.

On the other hand, we hear almost nothing about some of the most important issues facing millions of middle-class and working families in this country.

Day after day in the 'Nineties, we were hearing from the media about the great economic "boom" taking place in this country. Meanwhile, the average American was working longer hours for lower wages. In fact, Americans now work the longest hours in any industrialized country. Where was the media discussion about the declining standard of living for millions of American workers?

The United States is the only major nation that does not have a national health care program guaranteeing health care to all its people. Yet, with 41 million uninsured, and millions more under-insured, we spend twice per capita on health care than any other country. Heard any media discussions on that issue?

We have many programs telling you how to get rich in the stock market. On the other hand, despite the fact that union workers earn 30% more than non-union workers for the same kind of job, there is no programming which speaks to how one can form a union, or the advantages of trade unionism.

Our country has a \$360-billion dollar trade deficit, and has lost millions of good manufacturing jobs. Seen any good editorials or TV programming lately that speak to the enormous problems with our trade policy?

And I could go on and on and on. The bottom line, though, is that working people all over this country are struggling to keep their heads above water economically, and the media very rarely talk to the issues that affect their lives.



LOOKING AHEAD

Malfeasance? Or plain ol' scam?

By Linda Foley, President

Ask yourself if you would fall for this: Your nattily dressed, cologne-reeking boss approaches you at work and makes an offer he says you won't be able to refuse.

You can accumulate untold wealth for your retirement by joining him in a get-rich-quick scheme. First, divert a portion of your paycheck into a special fund to purchase stock in his and several of his well-heeled pals' Wall Street firms. Next, allow him to abandon his obligation to regularly pay into a traditional pension fund on your behalf. Instead, he'll match a portion of what you divert into the special fund—not in cash, but in his company's stock. Which, by the way, happens to be the company you work for. Stock prices and profits will go up; your nest egg will grow; and he'll get a bonus.

That's a great deal, so long as you keep earning money and the company keeps generating profits. Or until the bottom drops out of the stock market, and you find that the seemingly magnanimous boss with the nicely coiffed hair and all the answers has been lying to you. The company goes out of business and the stock that was supposed to generate a comfortable retirement income for your golden years is worthless. You lose present income and future retirement security. Meanwhile, he banks the bonus and loses nothing.

Unfortunately, millions of American workers fell for this pyramid scheme. Since 401(k) plans were introduced in the 1980s, thousands of employers either convinced or dictated to their employees that traditional pension plans were not a good way to invest for retirement. They convinced employees that the prospect of eventually receiving a guaranteed monthly pension check determined by a formula was downright boring and unimaginative. Yeah, boring and unimaginative all right. Just like buying groceries and paying the rent are boring and unimaginative.

Today's busted stock market and sluggish economy are reason enough to pause and rethink how we can secure our retirement. But the horror stories about former employees of Enron and WorldCom losing virtually all the money they and their employers set aside for pensions make it imperative that lawmakers enact protections for workers whose retirement savings are invested in 401(k)s and other such defined contribution plans.

Since 1974, traditional defined benefit pension plans have been subject to laws that protect workers' interests. ERISA, the law that regulates pension plans, ensures that

companies don't leverage plan assets for the benefit of their corporate officers. Under ERISA, defined benefit plans are not dependent on the profitability of the sponsoring or contributing employer, but instead on investment decisions by the plan's independent trustees. In fact, investments by pension plans in the companies that sponsor them are "prohibited transactions" by law. They are not allowed, even if the company's stock is soaring.

To be sure, not all defined benefit pension plans provide secure retirement income for their participants. Too many plans are inadequately funded and produce embarrassingly paltry benefits. And defined benefit plans, like all equity investors, were hit hard by the stock market's recent freefall.

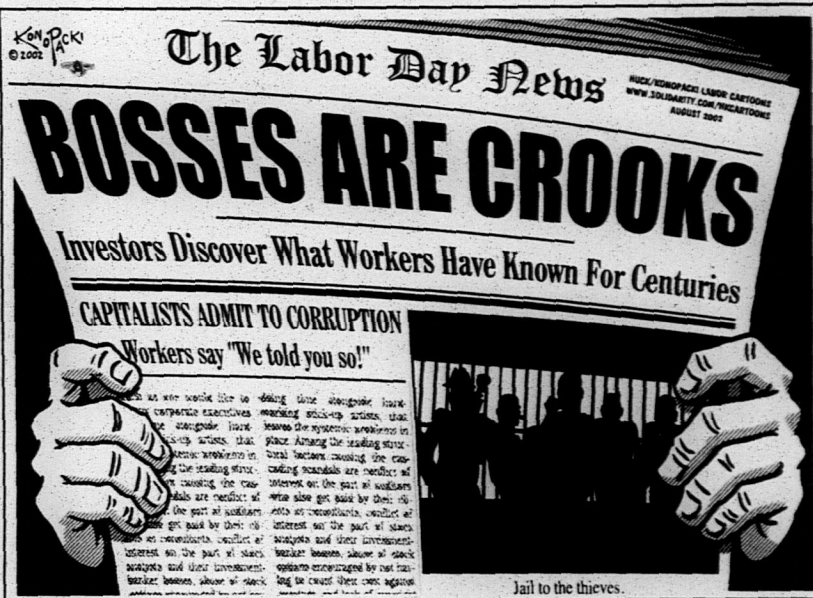
But the law says defined pension benefits cannot be reduced or completely wiped out, and that if a company goes bankrupt and its plan has to be liquidated, the assets are distributed equitably among all participants. Needless to say, that's not what happened to employees at Enron, WorldCom, Global Crossing and other recently failed mega-corporations when their pension investments disappeared.

While those hapless workers scrambled to figure out how to recoup their retirement savings, the Financial Times recently reported, top management at 25 of the biggest recently collapsed U.S. corporations amassed \$3.3 billion in stock sales and other rewards even as these firms were preparing for bankruptcy. According to the paper's web site, www.FT.com, executives who reaped the biggest rewards included Gary Winnick of Global Crossing, who got \$512 million; Kenneth Lay of Enron, with \$247 million; and Scott Sullivan of WorldCom, who took home \$49 million.

Meanwhile, former Enron workers had to sue (with the help of the AFL-CIO) to collect an unprecedented \$34 million in promised severance payments. (Do the math: Ken Lay walked away with more than seven times the "record" amount Enron was ordered to pay its former employees.)

President Bush recently defended his own questionable actions when he was a corporate director of Harken Energy Corp. by saying, "There was no malfeasance [sic] involved."

Whether or not there was "malfeasance" on the part of the corporate officers of these 25 companies remains to be seen. But even our self-described, plain-speaking President might well label this scheme a scam.



LOOKING ASKANCE

Here's a news flash: go-go years are over

By Andy Zipser
Editor, The Guild Reporter

News flash to the captains of the newspaper industry: the go-go years that convinced you it was reasonable to expect 20% or 25% or even 30% profit margins are over. Gone.

It's questionable whether they even existed, of course. But we know how envious you must have been when you saw the high-tech avatars of the information age pulling down margins of 50% or 60%. And if mucking around in paper and ink wasn't as glamorous as silicon chips and flat panel screens, hey—newspapers are still an information age medium, aren't they? Gotta make more money. And if you can't get what you want through product innovation—high tech's edge—then cut costs. Dump employees.

Historically speaking, newspaper profit margins of more than 10%-15% suggested that the guts of the business were being squeezed dry—that a publisher was foregoing reinvestment in people and plant in a chase after short-term profits. Now that the larger economy has been soundly thumped—more than 400 companies have declared bankruptcy in the past two years, while two million Americans have lost their jobs—it might be worth rethinking the assumptions that have caused newsroom ranks to shrivel by 10% over that same period.

Knight Ridder is the poster child for this kind of Pollyanna margin-chasing, but it's hardly alone. The Washington Post is stonewalling Guild negotiators by refusing to put a reasonable wage increase on the table, despite the fact that the Washington

D.C. consumer price index has climbed twice as fast as pay increases over the past five years. That translates into a declining standard of living for Post employees.

The Post itself, on the other hand, is feeling no pain. Asked in April what kind of profit margins the Post was booking, Executive Editor Leonard Downie Jr. replied: "It's in the neighborhood of 20% each year."

But newspaper publishers have a long history of twisting facts to their advantage. Consider, for example, the recent visit by Media General's Dean Singleton to the birthplace of communism, where he participated in a U.S. delegation advising the Russians on how to create free and independent news media. The Russians, he acknowledged in an editorial in *Pravda*, a trade publication, have a lot to learn—but the U.S. can learn a thing or two from the Russians. For example, Russian broadcaster Vladimir Posner told the Americans that their visit had underscored the importance of having "local television, radio and newspapers be on the same platform in the same market"—that is, of media "convergence."

"We have that in Russia, he said," wrote Singleton, without even a hint of irony. "You don't in America. That, of course, drew chuckles from the American delegation present at the Kremlin meeting—most notably from President Bush. It's encouraging to hear our industry's logic on the repeal of the cross-ownership rule validated by entrepreneurs in an emerging democratic economy."

No word on whether Posner was encouraged to file a brief with the Federal Communications Commission to further explain the virtues of media monopolies.

LETTERS

To the Editor,

RE: Martin Golan letter of July 12, 2002 responding to alleged shooting of journalists by Israeli soldiers.

Journalists are often asked to cover stories where their lives are placed in jeopardy; this includes the Middle East. Mr. Golan is taking the position that this is not taking place in Israel and felt that the story about Israel was unbalanced.

There have been many articles in the mainstream press that allege the occur-

rence of these events, so I'm not sure why Mr. Golan is unaware of them.

In Mr. Golan's favor, I have to question why you ran a story about these events that was unsigned. Were you and the author afraid of retaliations from other journalists? I'm also curious why you, and not the author, responded to Mr. Golan.

—Linda Wachtel, New York Guild

Editor replies: I responded to Brother Golan because I wrote the article. Virtually all

unsigned stories in *The Guild Reporter* were written by the editor, but I usually claim a byline only for enterprise stories or reviews.

To the Editor,

Recently, The Newspaper Guild lost one of its greatest servants. The death of Eugene B. Jones has left a void that was filled with such simple and devoted dedication that I believe it will never be filled again.

Eugene served with this local faithfully and unselfishly for many, many years in

many, many offices. He served as vice president of the international with equal integrity and devotion. He followed not only the contracts, bylaws and constitution of his union, but also his private conscience whenever he dealt with grievances or in negotiations. No one could ever accuse Eugene of not being fair or concerned. His fairness and diplomacy will never be matched.

Goodbye, good and faithful servant.

—Vince Iezzi, Philadelphia Guild

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 subjected 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: September 13.) Letters may be e-mailed to the editor at azipser@cwa-union.org.

Guild old-timers look back—with pride

The front page of the June Guild Reporter announced that we were looking for the oldest living active Guild member, and offered David Perlman of the San Francisco Chronicle as a possible contender—but apparently we fudged his numbers, as Brother Perlman makes clear below.

Meanwhile, we received several other responses suggesting that Guilds—men and -women are a hardy lot. So rather than try to anoint one or another as the longest-lived or tenured, we'll just share their words with you:

Hi, Brother Andy: It's always good to see the Guild Reporter act like all other newspapers and goof a bit—as in the reference to my antiquity.

Although it's true I'm still grinding out daily copy, I'm 83, not 84, and joined the Guild in 1938, not 1940. I was a sophomore at Columbia then, lucky to get a summer job as a *real* reporter in Schenectady, N.Y. and in a unique bit of history, I was recruited to the Guild by the paper's managing editor!

Predictably, the m.e. was fired as soon as the publisher found out he had organized the paper's entire tiny staff. It was a shabby thing called the Schenectady Sun, and has long since deservedly died.

Cheers!

—David Perlman, Science Editor, San Francisco Chronicle

Even at 72 years old I'm certainly not the oldest active Guild member. I'm not even in the Guild anymore, but you might be interested in what I did and am still doing.

I helped put together the Baltimore and Washington Guild locals in 1964 and was the publisher of the strike paper in Baltimore in 1965, "The Baltimore Banner." It was the first strike at the Baltimore Sun, and together we won it big.

I'm now the president of

Joe Guess, a Memphis Guildsman for 65 years, figures that Guild negotiators in the early years took as much flak at the bargaining table as he got in 25 combat missions over occupied Europe as an Army Air Corps navigator in World War II.

Guess served on the Guild bargaining team three different times and on a joint Guild-company pension committee for nine years.

"In those early years, there was a lot of thunder over this, that or the other," he says. "The company negotiators thundered that they would never give us three weeks of vacation. They backed off on that quickly, as I recall, and in time of course we got a month's vacation. They also thundered that they would never give us a pension. Wrong again."

"Praise be to God for the Guild."

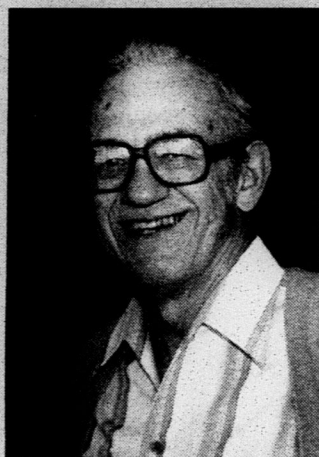
Guess, now 87, retired in 1977 as wire editor of the Memphis Press-Scimitar. He continues to pay \$36 monthly in dues.

Soon after going to work at the Press-Scimitar in 1937, he joined the Guild and reaped almost immediate benefits.

"In the spring of 1938, thanks to the Guild, my salary went from \$15 a week to \$25," he recalls. "I've been actively and enthusiastically involved ever since. I'm very grateful for what those early members accomplished. Few today realize what difficult circumstances they had to overcome to achieve what they achieved. I hope today's Guild members are mindful of the legacy of the pioneers: to win the justice you desire and deserve, you've got to fight for it."

"As I said, praise be to God for the Guild."

[Submitted by Fred Chisenhall, former member of the Memphis Guild.]



Joe Guess, in the mid '80s.

AFSCME Local 2830 in the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, where we've had a union since 1975.

Still raising hell.

—Regards, Stu Smith

Dear Sir: In reply to your article for Guild veterans, I started with the AP photo department in 1936 and became an ANG member until January, 1941, when I was drafted into the Army. I returned in October, 1945, and retained my membership until my retirement in December 2001 at age 84, after 66 years with the company. I am the longest work-

ing AP employee since 1847, when the company was founded.

—Marty Lederhandler

[Editor's note: Even World War II couldn't interrupt Brother Lederhandler's work as a photographer. When he slogged ashore at Utah Beach on June 6, 1944, he was burdened not just with cameras but with two caged homing pigeons to fly his film back to London. . . .

We hope to bring you more news of his exploits as soon as he slows down long enough to sit still for an interview. He has promised to do so.]

Oscar B Teller, better known to his friends as Oz or Ozzie, was among the very first Guild members ever to collect severance pay.

A "brash 17-year-old" when he was hired by the Philadelphia Record as a copy boy during the summer of 1933, he decided to hang onto his job when school resumed despite being a half-year short of earning his diploma. Four years later, he was fired on Ash Wednesday in a general down-sizing but collected six weeks' severance—then got hired Easter Monday by the Philadelphia Inquirer for more money.

"I gave up work for Lent," he jokes.

Now 86, Teller says there's even more to his good fortune: after retiring from the Inquirer in 1977, "I think I've collected more in Guild pension benefits than I did in salary," he chortles.

The Philadelphia Record, Teller says, was owned by J. David Stern, a liberal and confidante of Franklin Roosevelt's who had decided he would be the first U.S. publisher to

sign a contract with the American Newspaper Guild—indeed, Stern was so eager to achieve this distinction that he directed one of his ace reporters to organize a Guild local. When the reporter told him to sign a union card, Teller recalls, it was with the words: "Don't get the wrong idea—it's not a union, it's a guild. And don't worry: Mr. Stern likes this."

So did Teller, four years later, and in the decades that followed. Active in the Guild for most of his career, Teller served on numerous negotiating teams, chaired the representative assembly and was twice president of the Philadelphia Guild. His advice, after all this time? "I think young people should take an active role in the Guild, even if it costs them something."

I would like you to include my mom, Margaret Davies, who turned 88 in January.

She was an active Guild member with the SF Chronicle from March 1963 through Jan 1978 and still retains a retiree's card.

—Bill Davies, Morro Bay, CA

FROM THE MORGUE

Fifty years ago this month:

Guild members walk picket lines in Tacoma, where a strike enters its third week; in Nashua, where the local is striking for a first contract; and in New York, where Guild members are locked out over Consumers Union's refusal to honor wage clauses in the contract . . . Knight Ridder acquires both San Jose newspapers. . . . The firing of two Guild members in Los Angeles because of their alleged membership in the Communist Party is upheld as "just and sufficient cause" by an arbitrator.

Twenty-five years ago this month:

An NLRB panel rules that management at the Baltimore Sun papers must tell Guild officials about its cross-training of Guild-represented employees to run the presses. . . . The Wire Service Guild requests the EEOC make public its determination that the Associated Press has discriminated against women and minorities. . . . The Rochester Guild and that city's ITU local jointly hire an executive secretary and chief bargainer.

Ten years ago this month:

Settling a years-long dispute with the Northern California Guild, the Fresno Bee agrees to one of the industry's most far-reaching affirmative-action hiring and promotion programs. . . . More than 5,000 union members jam the streets outside the Pittsburgh Press to demonstrate support for striking Teamsters and nine other unions with lapsed contracts, halting production. . . . An article in the Washington Journalism Review questions whether ASNE will meet its newsroom diversity goals.

Fifty years ago last month:

The annual Guild convention authorizes an outright gift of \$25,000 from its defense fund to the United Steelworkers of America, which is on strike for better wages and union security. . . . A 19-page convention report on "The Industry" includes a Fortune magazine article, which observes that it has "seldom generated any distinguished economic thinking." . . . The convention's "high point" is an address delivered by the president of the AFL Screen Actor's Guild, screen celebrity Ronald Reagan.

Twenty-five years ago last month:

The annual Guild convention, "with barely audible dissent," agrees to negotiate terms of a merger with the International Typographical Union. . . . The convention calls for an "exceptional effort" by all U.S. locals to reform labor law, a subject of Congressional hearings over complaints of procedural delays that frustrate organizing and winning contracts. . . . A last-minute settlement averts a strike against the San Francisco dailies.

Ten years ago last month:

Passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act is hailed as aiding the Guild's campaign for workplace standards that will prevent repetitive strain injuries. . . . In its most heavily debated action, the Guild convention directs TNG to conduct a "strategic planning study" to help the union develop "long-term policies and priorities" for its future. . . . Convention delegates accept an IEB recommendation that The Guild Reporter temporarily be cut back to a minimum of 12 issues a year, from 18.

THE GUILD Reporter

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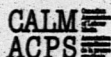
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