

THE GUILD Reporter

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SECTOR CONFERENCE

Under fire, Guild urged to fight back

The TNG-CWA sector conference, held Aug. 22-23 in Chicago, provided a compelling study in contrasts. While the proceedings, with one exception (see page 5), were collegial and even-tempered, the message delegates heard most passionately was a call to arms.

Labor in general and journalists in particular are under attack on all sides, charged TNG President Linda Foley. Among the foes: the "wrong-headedness and, really, the anti-democratic move" by the Federal Communications Commission to lift media ownership controls (see story below); a "war declared on journalists in Iraq," with 18 killed to date; a series of White House initiatives suggesting "that to a large extent, the Bush administration has declared war on us at home"; and industry owners and publishers, who month by month are "getting more and more severe" in attacking job security, union rights and individual rights to private lives.

The refrain was picked up by Secretary-Treasurer Bernie Lunzer. "It's been a very difficult year," he



Former Toledo Guild member John Nichols addresses conference delegates, stressing that the public "is picking up on the Guild agenda."

observed, noting that "even the good employers are acting like bad employers" after apparently having concluded that the timing is right to eradicate newspaper unions. "I think at this point, where we are,

the industry believes anything and everything goes on the table."

Also breathing populist fire-and-brimstone was John Nichols, a correspondent for The Nation and prominent opponent of the FCC rule changes. "I believe our industry is more threatened at this time than at any point in our history," he declared—a threat so severe it requires journalists to rethink their traditional roles. "This is one case where we can't be just observers," he continued. "We have to be activists. It's okay to struggle to defend what we do. . . . I'm here to tell you that it's okay to fight to ensure that corporations do not define every aspect of the news business."

Media corporations are very blunt about their motives, Nichols added. "They want to change your lives fundamentally: it's their busi-

ness strategy, it's a smart strategy—and it's all about money." It also has nothing to do with journalism's basic mission "as the nurturing agent of democracy."

The militant theme was echoed in several resolutions (see page 4) and their floor introductions. "This is a real war, and we're going to take to the streets on this issue," Foley said on introducing the first, titled "Bargaining to Organize." The resolution, passed with enthusiastic unanimity, cites three "egregious examples" of newspapers abusing federal labor law—including the Chinese Daily News, the Providence Journal and Journal newspapers in northern Virginia—in urging Guild support for a nationwide day of protests Dec. 10.

Recognition of the growing assault also led to a decision by the TNG executive council, meeting a

day prior to the conference, to schedule a two-day off-the-record forum in January for Guild activists to brainstorm new strategies. "People said we need to come up with something to change the dynamics next time we're in bargaining," said TNG Vice President Connie Knox, a copy editor at the Baltimore Sun, whose management imported strike-breakers from other newspapers in the middle of contract negotiations. "This 'level playing field' has certainly gotten out of whack."

In other conference business:

- In response to a question, delegates were assured by Foley that TNG has assigned staff to work on human rights issues but will hire a human rights coordinator once a CWA-wide hiring freeze is lifted. "We are not going to let that posi-

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Spanish-speaking interpreters keep Puerto Rican delegates in loop.

Momentum on FCC rules has shifted

Michael Powell won his battle—but lately seems to be losing the war.

Although the obdurate chairman of the Federal Communications Commission steam-rollered all opposition earlier this year in his drive to loosen media ownership restrictions, a federal appeals court threw a monkey-wrench into his plans on the eve of their implementation. A three-

judge panel in Philadelphia granted a stay Sept. 3 that even its advocates thought had little chance of success, reasoning that suspending the new rules now would prevent the "irreparable harm" that would result from trying to undo the changes later, should the court decide they're unreasonable.

The new rules were to have taken effect Sept. 4, following Powell's rebuff of several requests

for a 30-day delay to allow full review of their possible effects. Adopted June 2 by a bitterly divided FCC, the changes are so sweeping—and, critics charge, so threatening to democratic discourse—that they generated hundreds of thousands of letters, postcards and e-mails of public protest. The sheer magnitude of public opposition caught the critical attention of U.S. legislators on both sides of the aisle, forestalling the landrush of new media acquisitions that many observers had forecast would ensue this month.

The FCC's 3-2 partisan vote would allow television networks to buy more stations, increasing their share of national audience to 45% from the previous 35% limit. It

also would allow single ownership of several television stations in each market, and for the first-time in several decades would allow new cross-ownership of television stations and newspapers in a single market. The net effect of the rule changes would be to open the door for a single corporation to own most or all of a community's newspapers, radio stations, television stations and cable network—a prospect that has united such politically disparate organizations as labor unions, the National Organization for Women and the National Rifle Association in opposition.

Their outcry already has prompted one Congressional backlash, with the House of Representatives voting July 23, by a lop-

sided margin of 400-21, to restore the maximum network reach to the old 35% cap. And a bipartisan group of 35 Senators signed onto a little-used "resolution of disapproval" before the August recess that would torpedo all the other changes as well. How the resolution plays out remains to be seen, but the fact that it was introduced at all attests to the still-gathering momentum behind an issue that remained below most politicians' radar screens as recently as this past spring.

Numerous other court challenges to the FCC rules also have been filed—some, ironically, by media companies that claim the FCC didn't go far enough. The National Association of Broad-

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More conference coverage



Text of approved resolutions page 4

Rothman's welcoming remarks page 7

The fight to save overtime page 8

Canadian Guild kicks off 'one big union' campaign

The campaign for "one big union" at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, where employees will begin voting Nov. 3 on representation either by the Canadian Media Guild—part of TNG Canada-CWA—or by the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers union, was kicked off by the Guild earlier this month.

"The time has come to bring everyone at one workplace together in one union," said CMG President Lise Lareau. "We're confident that when voters weigh what the two unions have to offer, a solid majority will believe CMG is the best choice."

The November vote culminates a process that began nearly four years ago, when the Guild applied to the Canada Industrial Relations Board to merge the two CBC units it already represents, unit 1 (program production) and unit 3 (administrative). CBC countered with an application seeking a merger of all three units, including unit 2 (trades and technical), represented by CEP.

The Guild concurred with the CBC petition, taking the position that a single union would have greater bargaining leverage because of its increased strength. CEP, on the other hand, opposed the CBC initiative. The Canadian Media Guild currently represents approximately 3,400 permanent and more than 700 temporary CBC employees, or a bit more than twice the number represented by CEP.

Because of its opposition, the CEP filed several procedural motions to block the vote, receiving its most recent rebuff in late August. But it simultaneously mounted an anti-Guild campaign that has as one of its main themes the nationalistic charge that CMG is an American union. The CEP also complained to CBC that the Guild should be prevented from using the corporate e-mail system to communicate with its members, claiming the CBC "has a responsibility to ensure

these (networks) are not used for improper purposes."

Ironically, CEP's attempt to block another union from communicating with its members follows its hiring of a marketing firm to call Guild members at home. The pollsters, who ask respondents about their voting plans, apparently obtained the home telephone numbers from the CBC, prompting a complaint from Guild officials. Such tactics also raised the ire of Guild leaders like Arnold Amber, Director, TNG Canada, who told sector conference delegates: "We will win this campaign because we are the better union. We will win because we have a connection with our members that will have them turn out and vote."

CMG says its campaign will highlight a record of tough bargaining, its greater ability to adapt to significant changes at CBC in ways that benefit employees and its history of inclusiveness following mergers with other unions. "Our anticipation is that the challenges ahead will require even more thoughtful, energetic and innovative leadership," Amber added. "We have consistently led the way in dealing with the challenges in our industry."

In recent meetings the Guild, CEP, CBC and the industrial board agreed on several procedural issues:

- All CBC employees in units 1, 2 and 3 on permanent staff or temporary contracts as of May 2, 2003 will be eligible to vote.
- In addition, all those who are per-occasion temporary (or "casual") employees or freelancers will be eligible to vote if they've worked at least one occasion per week on 13 different weeks in the year prior to May 2.
- Because CEP has taken the position that "supervisory producers" should be excluded from the new single union, the ballots of 81 people will be segregated and will be counted only if the count is so close they would determine the outcome.

In brief...

Donna Marks gets Guild Service nod

This year's winner of the Guild Service Award was Donna Marks, of the Quincy Newspaper Guild, who was lauded for her "compassion, knowledge, strength and determination." A graphic designer at the Patriot Ledger who is credited with bringing her independent association into TNG-CWA, Marks is her local's secretary-treasurer and human rights coordinator, has been a member of two negotiating teams and has served on grievance committees and as the local's health and safety "train the trainer" volunteer. She also was accepted into the Organizing Institute for Women this past summer and was elected secretary of the New England District Council.

the unit's strength, to more than 40. The unit now represents nearly half of all of APTN's staff across Canada.

Double pay for braving blackout

When a widespread blackout hit New York on Aug. 14, managers at Hudson News assured employees unable to get to work the next day they would not be docked. But as the New York Guild pointed out, that raised the question of what should be done for employees who made it into work despite the mass transit paralysis. The answer? To its credit, the company decided to pay those hardy few at double time as a reward for their dedication.

Montreal Gazette unit OKs contract

Despite their unhappiness over the continued transfer of jobs to corporate headquarters in Winnipeg, business office and switchboard employees of the CanWest Global-owned Montreal Gazette voted nearly three-to-one to ratify a new contract. The three-year agreement includes a buy-out package in place of layoffs, a 1% wage increase in the first year and 2% increases in each subsequent period.

Standing ovation for Hannah Jo Rayl

Hannah Jo Rayl, administrative officer for the Northeast Ohio Guild, received a sustained standing ovation from Guild convention delegates after local president Dick Peery announced that she's planning her retirement. A Guild activist for the past 40 years, Rayl started the union's human rights program and was its first coordinator, relinquishing her post to become an international rep. She returned to her home local 10 years ago.

Past Hudson local president dies, 60

Peter Weiss, an active member and former president of the Hudson County Newspaper Guild, died of complications from heart surgery at New York University Medical Center at the age of 60. An editor and columnist for The Jersey Journal of Jersey City, Weiss covered Hudson County politics for more than 30 years after previous stints at the New York Post and the Long Island Press.

Personal notes:

Beth McManis, daughter of Northern California Media Guild member Samuel McManis and a student at the University of California, San Francisco, has been awarded a \$3,000 scholarship by the CWA Joe Beime Foundation. . . . Bob Jordan, former president of the Boston Newspaper Guild, has been elected to the board of the CWA Retiree's Council.

Blethens' hopes date back to '85

The gloves are coming off in Seattle: according to documents filed by the Seattle Times in response to a Hearst lawsuit, the Times' majority owners were planning as far back as 1985 to get rid of the Post-Intelligencer. Two of the Blethen family's four major long-range goals that year were to "move to a one-newspaper agency" and "no JOA," a reference to the joint operating agreement under which the two newspapers currently operate. On a related note, the Times refused to run an ad submitted by the Committee for a Two-Newspaper Town, which is seeking contributions for its intervention in Hearst's lawsuit.

ANG door revolves for publishers, too

For the second time in five months, ANG Newspapers—where Guild-represented employees have been working without a contract for two years—is looking for a new publisher. The Oakland-based chain of six dailies, owned by MediaNews, has had trouble keeping other staff as well: 49 employees, or 7% of the staff, were laid off in May by the recently departed Beverly Jackson, who became publisher just this past March.

Scripps-Howard council promised

The Southern District Council will hold a joint meeting Nov. 7-9 in Cincinnati with the Great Lakes District Council. Among the top agenda items: plans to launch a Scripps-Howard Council, similar to the Knight Ridder Council that was created some years back.

Aboriginal unit strength doubled

Technical staff employees of the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) have voted to join their newsroom colleagues as members of the Canadian Media Guild, nearly doubling

Guild urged to fight back

Continued from page 1

tion go dark," she promised.

• TNG Canada Director Arnold Amber eulogized former Providence Guild President Bob Jagolinzer, who died unexpectedly earlier this year. His eloquence prompted a collection to cover Jagolinzer's widow's medical expenses until she qualifies for Medicare, raising pledges of \$500 each from the Detroit and Philadelphia locals and an additional \$1,467 in cash from the delegates.

• Heard from the Finance and Administration Committee that TNG finished the last fiscal year, June 30, 0.4% under budget; the amount spent was \$2,564,674, or \$11,253 less than was budgeted by

CWA. The TNG budget for the current fiscal year is \$2,466,934, reflecting ongoing belt-tightening by CWA.

Specialized fund balances as of June 30 included: Segregated

Fund, \$147,446; Irving Leuchter Fund, \$13,300; Anti-Discrimination Fund, \$42,831; Guild severance fund, \$223,321; Mobilization and Defense Fund, \$3,009,384.

• Guild membership is 31,286.

Momentum shifts

Continued from page 1

casters, for example, filed a challenge Aug. 6 in the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C. because the new rules don't allow television mergers in small markets—but in that same filing, the Network Alliance of Station Affiliates is challenging the increase in the national television cap, which many of its 600 members fear will leave them vulnerable to being taken over. Joining the fray is the newspaper chain Media General, which is unhappy that the cross-ownership rule is being retained in the very smallest markets.

Other challenges have been lodged by the the National Council of Churches, the Media Alliance, three of the networks, Consumers Union, the Parents Television Council and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The suit that won the Sept. 3 stay was filed by the Prometheus Radio Project, which was supported in its efforts by CWA, as well as several other groups.

While forces on both sides of the issue jockey for position in Congress and the courts, public anger and involvement keeps growing: the 2 million-plus comments received by the FCC to date, for example, more than dou-

bles the total received before it voted. By all accounts, the overwhelming majority are opposed to any rule changes that encourage further media monopoly.

The grassroots campaign also is turning into a rallying cry for a more fundamental restructuring of the mass media. A three-day conference on the subject, for example, has been scheduled for Nov. 7-9 in Madison, Wisconsin by Free Press, an organization founded by media critics Robert McChesney and John Nichols. TNG-CWA President Linda Foley will be among the featured speakers, who also will include several U.S. senators and representatives and AFL-CIO president John Sweeney.

Correction

Guild-represented employees at the Copley-owned Repository in Canton, Ohio, approved the employer's final contract offer but did not reject a bargaining committee recommendation in doing so, as reported in the July Guild Reporter. The bargaining committee issued no recommendation, on the principle that while the offer was a decent one overall, it did contain some wage inequities.

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Play ball!

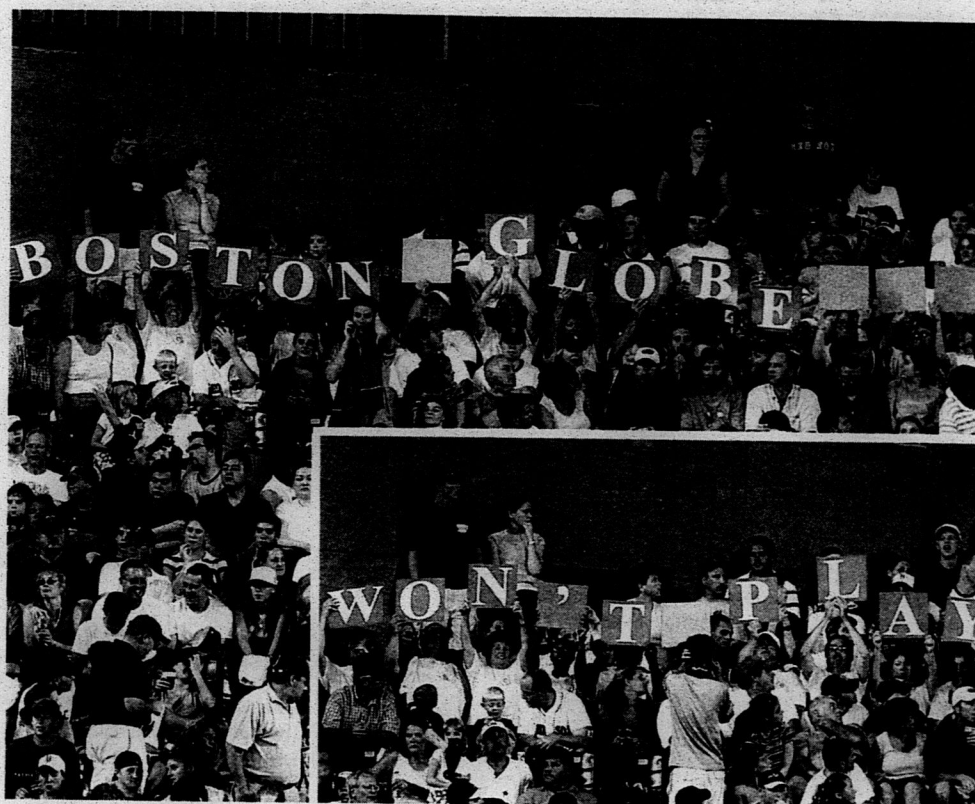
The crowd at Boston's Fenway Park got an eyeful recently, thanks to disgruntled Boston Globe employees who have been in contract negotiations for 33 long months.

But employee morale got a big boost earlier this month, when Globe management suspended business reporter Jeffrey Krasner for a week without pay after a sign he had

made showed up in the background of a broadcast by New England Cable News, the newspaper's "content partner." Playing off a Globe ad slogan, "Your world, unfolding daily," the sign read: "My standard of living, eroding daily."

The suspension, effective Sept. 4, galvanized the newsroom, said Steve Richards, president of the Boston Newspaper Guild. A hat was passed, collecting enough in donations to match Krasner's lost pay, and a spontaneous decision to boycott further cable appearances, which had been voluntary, drew 100% support. And, of course, the Guild filed a grievance.

But the biggest plus, Richards observed, is that the whole incident has been a tremendous mobilizing tool. "The support from the newsroom is like nothing I've ever seen," he said.



WANTED:

Administrative Officer

The St. Louis Newspaper Guild is seeking a Chief Administrative Officer, known formally as the Executive Secretary. Must have experience in contract bargaining and enforcement, grievance resolution, arbitration and organizing and have a basic knowledge of labor law. The Guild is negotiating a new contract on behalf of its 600 members at the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. The current officer must retire for reasons of health. Working knowledge of The Newspaper Guild is preferred but not required. Full benefits; salary negotiable. Send applications and resumes to:

St. Louis Newspaper Guild,
1015 Locust St., Suite 740,
St. Louis, Mo., 63101

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St. Paul contract ratified

Convinced that the St. Paul Pioneer Press would never yield on its demand that the union relinquish strike-sympathy language, the newspaper's Guild-represented members have voted 246-93 to ratify a five-year contract. The previous contract expired June 2002.

Although the contested language, which permitted Guild members to respect other unions' picket lines, technically will be reinstated when the contract expires, its suspension comes as management is bargaining with several much smaller unions at the Knight Ridder-owned publication. The company has been unabashed in its drive for higher profit margins, and analysts reportedly are predicting it will attempt to crush weaker unions throughout the 31-newspaper chain.

The new Guild contract, hammered out over a 19-

hour session after months of scant movement, includes a raise of 2.5% retroactive to March 3, a 2.5% increase next year and 3% increases in 2005 and 2007. It also meets the company's demand for health care cost-sharing, with employees slated to pick up 30% of family coverage premiums next year, up from the current 20%.

The combination of higher health costs and wage increases averaging 2.2% a year means most employees will be treading water financially, but Mike Sweeney, administrative officer of the Minnesota Newspaper Guild, said management appeared ready to declare impasse if the unit didn't accept the package. "It's not something the bargaining committee is proud of," he said of the decision to submit the contract proposal for a vote, "but it was a pragmatic decision made in the best interests of our members."

AP wages war of attrition

Although editorial employees of the Associated Press settled their contract several months ago, not all Guild-represented AP employees are through talking. Still at the table are approximately 235 technicians and operators, members of CWA Local 1314—or roughly three-fourths the number employed just seven years ago.

The issues blocking an agreement reflect an ongoing company strategy of whittling away at the union, including forced transfers, jurisdiction and a workforce reduction plan. Meanwhile, AP has increased its managerial ranks, taking advantage of decades-old contract language that enables it to assign union work to supervisors who pay a \$15-a-month "associate fee." The "associates" aren't covered by union rules

and generally aren't paid overtime.

The offending associate language was adopted in a different age, says Karl Jendretzky, president of the local. When the union and the company had a more trusting relationship. But these days, he adds, AP seems interested primarily in its bottom line and spends more time on legal maneuvers than on serious bargaining.

"The only way the company is getting away with what it's doing so far is that they've got more money to spend on lawyers than we do," Jendretzky said. "We're losing union jobs not because there's no work, and not because the company's doing poorly, but because they feel legally they can beat us up and wait us out."

Milwaukee firmament shifts

The ground is shifting beneath the feet of 275 or so Guild-represented employees of the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel.

Unit holders of Journal Communications Inc., a trust that owns the newspaper and a slew of broadcast properties, voted earlier this month to assign their voting rights to a board of directors that plans to take the company public. An initial public offering is expected as soon as late September, depending on the condition of the IPO market, with underwriters set to offer 17.25 million shares at a price of \$13.50 to \$15.50 a share.

While the reorganization and public offering have been presented as a means of generating expansion capital, they also end employee control of the company and potentially put it in play for a larger, acquisition-minded media conglomerate. "Are we concerned about

as chain like Gannett coming in? You bet," said Lauria Lynch-German, president of the Milwaukee Guild.

Either way, the outlook for Guild-represented employees—who hold a small minority of the trust units that are being converted into shares—is foreboding. The Journal-Sentinel has operating margins of approximately 10%, less than half the level now demanded of newspapers by Wall Street, prompting the prospectus to refer to plans to "streamline the newsroom," Lynch-German said. The Guild contract, meanwhile, does not include a provision for its continuation as a condition of sale.

Although the Guild hired a lawyer to represent its interests, Lynch-German said the company refused to recognize him as a Guild representative and has frozen the union out of reorganization discussions.

Local Representative

at

The Newspaper Guild of New York

Position available for Local Representative. Applicant must have significant experience in bargaining, grievance-handling and organizing and have good communication skills.

Position is covered by a collective bargaining agreement and offers excellent salary and benefits.

Send resume within one week to New York Guild President Barry Lipton at: barryguild@aol.com.

No phone calls please.

Most resolutions sail by unopposed

'Bold action' urged in defense of collective bargaining rights

Labor laws in the United States were designed to ensure the rights of workers to organize and collectively bargain. However, too many employers ignore the law. In addition, the slow National Labor Relations Board process works to the recalcitrant employers' advantage.

Three particularly egregious examples at Guild locals stand out.

At the Providence Journal in Rhode Island, a judge of the NLRB has found 27 violations of law and 7 more charges are pending against the Belo Corp., the paper's owner. Texas-based Belo has appealed all 27 adverse rulings to the full board in Washington, allowing the company to further delay the process and enable it to continue to ignore the law to "bargain in good faith."

At the Chinese Daily News in Monterey Park, Calif., workers voted in March, 2001, to be represented by the Northern California Media Workers. The Taiwan-based owners refused to recognize the vote and announced they would spend \$1 million to keep the Guild out. NLRB Region 32 dismissed the company's appeal in August 2001, but the company then appealed to the full board in September, 2001, which still hasn't ruled. While the workers wait for that decision, the company commits more ULPS. The regional office is unconscionably refusing to hear the new charges while the election appeal is pending.

At the suburban Journal newspapers around Washington D.C., the employer closed offices and laid off staff in two locations to prevent a vote for the Guild to be the employees' collective bargaining representative. The NLRB took more than five months to issue a complaint that the company illegally closed the offices because of the pending union vote.

To help combat such abuses, the May Sector Executive Council passed a motion urging district councils and locals to adopt a resolution supporting the Collective Bargaining and Organizing Rights Campaign, a nationwide movement led by the AFL-CIO to strengthen the right of employees to form, join and participate in unions.

On Dec. 10, 2003, union members and other people of conscience will gather across America to hear from workers victimized by employers' actions and the government's inaction. The goal is to demand legislative change to restore workers' freedom to organize and bargain collectively.

Therefore, be it resolved that this Sector Conference calls upon all Guild locals and their members to take bold public actions of their choice to demonstrate solidarity with that campaign.



Stephanie Warsmith of Northeast Ohio, left, makes a point during a conference workshop as Lynda Hanner of Minnesota looks on.

In memoriam: Jagolinzer, Prince

Bob Jagolinzer, president of the Providence Newspaper Guild, left a lasting impression on all who met him.

It was not his height, his eloquent turn of phrase or his dapper appearance. Jag was short, could turn the air blue in a single sentence, and never tamed the wild shock of hair on his head.

Jag died unexpectedly May 15, while engaged in his favorite activity, fishing.

Every step of the way, we're missing Jag - his get-to-the point, plain-spoken style, his tough but jocular persona, and especially his leadership through the Providence Guild's most difficult years fighting Belo.

Jag cared about Guild members. He agonized over the decisions he had to make as secretary, vice president and president of the Providence Guild. But even more than the Guild, Jag cared for his wife, Helen.

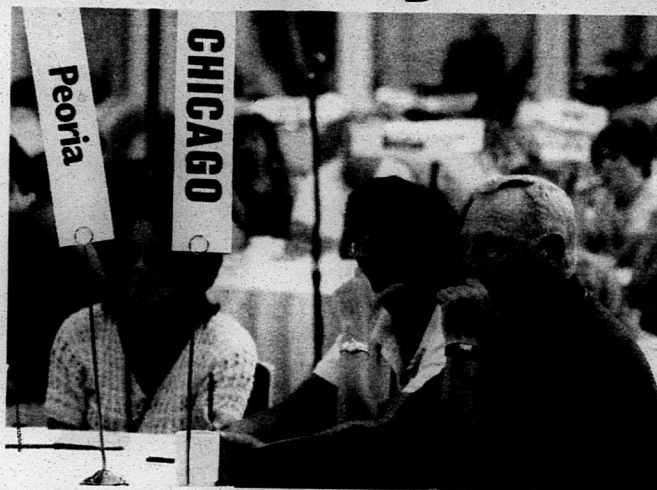
Helen Jagolinzer received a heart transplant several years ago. To honor Jag's memory, the Providence Newspaper Guild Executive Committee voted to establish a memorial fund to assist his widow with her on-going medical expenses.

Donations made to the Guild in Jag's memory will go into the PNG/Helen's Fund. Please make checks payable to PNG/Helen's Fund and send them to the Providence Newspaper Guild, 270 Westminster St., Providence, R.I., 02903.

Sylvia G. Prince, who worked in the accounting department at The Union Leader as senior credit investigator, died May 20, 2003 at her Manchester home after a courageous battle with cancer.

Sylvia became a member of the Manchester Newspaper Guild, Local 31167, in 1993 when the entire accounting department became part of our unit.

She worked for the Union Leader Employee Credit Unit for many years before becoming a newspaper employee working in the accounting department starting in 1979. Sylvia retired in July 1996.



Jerry Minkinen, executive director of host local Chicago, listens to conference debate at right; at left is Dayna Brown of Peoria.



Bill Salganik of the Washington-Baltimore local is flanked by Liu Hong (left) and Karma Zurkhang, both of Radio Free Asia



Betsy Regan of Brockton reads first Credentials Committee report.

Roll back the FCC rule change

Workers in our industry are facing one of history's most serious threats to our jobs. The Federal Communications Commission's rule change of June 2, 2003, loosens the limits on newspaper and television ownership. This change will concentrate corporate power in the hands of fewer and fewer multimedia giants, thus reducing the number and diversity of voices delivering news and information needed by Americans to make educated decisions in a democracy.

Clear Channel's owning more than 1,300 radio stations nationwide gives us an all-too-frightening look at a future with fewer opportunities for employment. We can see how the FCC's ruling on cross-ownership could spread across our industry with more men and women losing their jobs. This alone would make it worthy of challenge.

But we in The Newspaper Guild also have the responsibility to speak out for the public that we inform. We know that the FCC rule change would mean less information and fewer diverse voices getting to that public.

The urgent need for Congress to overturn the FCC's rule change cannot be overstated.

To that end, The Newspaper Guild urges its members to contact their Senators and Congressional representatives to support several measures now pending before Congress to reverse the FCC actions.

In addition, TNG urges participation in a Nov. 7-9 National Conference on Media Reform in Madison, Wis., called by Free Press, a national organization working to increase informed public participation in crucial media policy debates. As its website says, the conference is a ground-breaking forum that will bring together members of the news and arts industries, community groups, political and labor leaders.

Investigation demanded of journo deaths

Journalists, including members of The Newspaper Guild, put their lives at risk to cover wars and other violent conflicts for their news organizations. Without their work, people around the world would be stripped of an impartial perspective of these events. Eighteen journalists have died in the ongoing war in Iraq, most recently Reuters cameraman Mazen Dana, on Aug. 17. At least five are believed to have been killed by U.S. troops. The Newspaper Guild is not confident in or satisfied with the U.S. government investigation into the deaths of all of these journalists.

Be it resolved that The Newspaper Guild urges that an independent body be appointed to investigate the circumstances under which journalist deaths did occur in Iraq and to recommend any measures it can identify to minimize the number of deaths in the future.

Too many conventions?

The Newspaper Guild sector supports a move away from an annual CWA Convention as well as exploring other options for the best use of available resources; and, we recommend that the CWA Executive Board analyze the options available and report back to the 2004 CWA Convention.

In defense of e-mail rights

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is attempting to shut down workplace email communication between the Canadian Media Guild and its members. The Canadian Media Guild has traditionally had access to its members through workplace email. Communication between the union and its members is vital to the union's ability to represent those members and to keep them informed of their rights.

Therefore, be it resolved, that the TNG-CWA supports the Canadian Media Guild and any other locals in their fight to maintain access to their members through workplace electronic communication.

Chicago, Chicago...

Chicago, Chicago. It's a catchy city, a catchy tune and a great place to call home for a few days. The Chicago Newspaper Guild, despite being wrapped up in intense negotiations, still found the time to play host to brothers and sisters from all over the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico and provided a wonderful location for us to meet, share ideas and get the kinks worked out to keep the Guild strong and vibrant. From Lakeshore Drive to the Miracle Mile, Sox to Cubs, the Adler Planetarium to Rush Street, Chicago has a little something for everyone. And as the sponsoring local, the Chicago Newspaper Guild made us feel at home once again. Thank you, Chicago.

Move to admit freelancers tabled on grounds of inadequate notice

An otherwise uneventful TNG-CWA sector conference featured only one floor fight, resulting in a 234-131 vote to table a proposed constitutional amendment. The proposal would have allowed freelancers to become TNG-CWA members for the first time in Guild history.

Brought to the sector conference on the unanimous recommendation of the Guild's executive council, the resolution was approved by a deeply divided Structure and Policy Committee. But once introduced on the conference floor, the measure triggered a sharp battle led by New York Guild delegates, whose first gambit was to challenge the legitimacy of the Credentials Committee—in essence, questioning the validity

of every vote taken at the conference. When that argument was rebuffed, the local instead contended that the resolution has several fatal flaws, including a vague definition of freelancers.

Such criticisms apparently hit home with many delegates, with several stating they needed more time to review a measure that marks a fundamental shift in the Guild's organizing philosophy. "You haven't given me enough time to think about this," complained Tom Thibeault of Manchester, summarizing the prevailing sentiment.

Members of the executive council took heed: not one spoke from the floor in defense of the measure, although President Linda Foley and Secretary-Treasurer

Bernie Lunzer both made impassioned statements on its behalf from the podium. But immediately following the conference, council members voted unanimously to

reintroduce the measure for discussion at the next round of district council meetings. Given sufficient debate and sharpening of the language, Lunzer and Foley

said, the amendment should fare better at next year's sector conference—when the argument will have to be more about substance than procedure.

Proposal to admit freelancers meant to encourage solidarity, advance Guild

It is the policy of this union to encourage union solidarity and to advance the economic interests and working conditions amongst all media and communication workers, regardless of whether those workers are in a traditional employment relationship or whether they enjoy the statutory rights of collective bargaining. To further this important goal, the Guild Constitution should be amended to offer full Guild membership to those who actively perform work within the Guild's work jurisdiction, but outside a traditional employment relationship, or who do not have collective bargaining rights. Under this new language, a Guild local may create a unit within that local for such freelance members. Alternatively, the local or the TNG Executive Council, on its own initiative, may seek approval from the CWA Executive Board for the chartering of a new local (which may include a nationwide local) for the purpose of organizing freelance members.

Such members may become full Guild members upon payment of Guild dues per the CWA formula for members who do not enjoy collective bargaining rights (currently two times the U.S. minimum wage of which a minimum of \$2.00 shall be remitted as per capita each month). They shall enjoy all of the rights of full Guild membership, except that they shall not be permitted to vote on local union matters of collective bargaining, including contract ratification, grievance settlements, and strike votes. Such members may retain their membership indefinitely, without regard to whether they are actively performing work during any particular period, as long as they otherwise satisfy the financial and constitutional requirements of membership.

Accordingly, the Guild Constitution shall be amended as follows:

Amend Article II, Section 3 as follows to add a new subparagraph (c):

SECTION 3. The following shall be admitted to Guild membership:

(c) Persons who perform work within the jurisdiction of the Guild but who do not have collective bargaining rights, or who work on an independent contractor basis, or who are otherwise outside of a traditional employment relationship. However, both the Local and the TNG Executive Council shall have the right to decline membership to any such individual in the best interests of the local membership or of TNG-CWA. Membership is further dependent upon the Local's creation of an appropriate unit for such individuals or of the creation of a new local union by the TNG Executive Council, as approved by the CWA Executive Board.

Amend Article XIII to read as follows [Sections not quoted shall remain unchanged]:

SECTION 7. (a) A member shall belong to the Local which negotiates his or her contract. A member not under contract shall belong to the Local in the area of his or her principal employment. Individuals who gain membership pursuant to Article II, Section 3(c) shall belong to the unit or the local designated by the TNG Executive Council in accordance with Section 13(b) below.

SECTION 9. Application shall be submitted to the designated agent of the Unit in the Shop where the applicant is employed, or where he or she was last employed, or through the Local Secretary but in any event (and except with regard to individuals admitted to membership pursuant to Article II, Section 3(c)) at least one of the Unit officers shall be consulted before the Local acts upon the application. An applicant shall not become a member until he or she shall have paid the required initiation fee or reinstatement fee, and one month's dues, and until the Local of its Executive Committee shall have approved his or her application in respect to eligibility and compliance with constitutional requirements. Membership shall commence with the first day of the month for which dues are paid. When an application is rejected or action upon it is withheld, the applicant shall be given a written statement of the reason.

SECTION 10. (a) When an applicant who has not been a member previously has worked for less than one year in the territory of the Local to which he or she makes application, the Local shall not act upon it until the Local in the city of his or her last prior employment or work has been consulted.

SECTION 13. (a) Except as provided in Section 13(b), a member of the Guild shall belong automatically to the Unit of the Shop where he or she is employed. When a member ceases his or her employment and remains unemployed, he or she may continue in active membership for a period not to exceed three months in his or her Unit and for a period not to exceed nine additional months in his or her Local, upon expiration of which time he or she shall take an honorable withdrawal card if otherwise entitled to it, with all preferential rehiring rights unimpaired, provided, however, that a member whose dismissal is being contested by himself, the Unit or the Local, and who obtains temporary employment elsewhere shall remain a member of the Local until such time as the Local or its governing body declares the case adjusted.

(b) A local may create a unit for individuals who qualify for membership pursuant to Article II, Section 3(c), except the local or the TNG Executive Council, on its own initiative, may alternatively seek approval from the CWA Executive Board for the creation of a local union for such individuals, pursuant to CWA procedure. Upon establishment of the unit or local, such individuals shall be eligible for membership in such unit or local, in accordance with Article II, Section 3(c).

(c) An individual who gains membership pursuant to Article II, Section 3(c) shall have all of the rights of membership except that he or she shall have voice but not vote on local union matters affecting collective bargaining, including contract ratification, grievance settlements, and strike votes.

Article XVIII Finances, Section 2 (d) shall be amended as follows:

(d) Exceptions and particular cases. In the following cases, Locals and the E.C. may fix and maintain dues set forth below in lieu of the aforesaid monthly dues:

(1) For individuals who gain membership pursuant to Article II, Section 3(c) — an amount equal to the CWA dues for members without collective bargaining rights, as set by CWA constitutional procedures.

Renumber all subsequent paragraphs accordingly.

Article XVIII, Finances, Section 7(a), shall be amended to add a new Section (3)

(3) For each dues payment under Section 2(d)(1) — the per capita amount required of CWA members without collective bargaining rights, as set by CWA constitutional procedures.

Renumber all subsequent paragraphs accordingly.

Roll-call vote to table freelancers

LOCAL NAME	LOCAL #	TOTAL VOTES	# YES	# NO
Albany	31034	4		4
Alberta	30400	4	4	
AP Systems Techs	1314	4	4	
Bakersfield	39202	2		2
Boston	31245	13	13	
Brockton	31027	3		3
Buffalo	31026	5	5	
Canadian Media Guild	30213	40	40	
Chicago	34071	6		6
Cincinnati	34009	2		2
Denver	37074	7	7	
Detroit	34022	6	6	
Erie	38187	4	4	
Eugene	37194	3		3
Greater Boston	31032	5		5
Hawaii	39117	8		8
IAPE	1096	21	21	
Kenosha	34159	2		2
Kingston	31180	2	2	
Knoxville	33076	2		2
Manchester	31167	4	4	
Memphis	33091	4		4
Milwaukee	34051	3		3
Minnesota	37002	11	11	
Montreal	30111	5	5	
New York	31003	39	39	
News Media Guild	31222	11	11	
Northeast Ohio	34001	9	8	1
Northern California	39521	16		16
Ottawa	30205	5	5	
Pacific Northwest	37082	10		10
Patriot Ledger	31247	2		2
Peoria	34086	3	3	
Philadelphia	39010	14		14
Pittsburgh	38061	5	5	
Portland	31128	5	5	
Providence	31041	4		4
Puerto Rico	33225	11	11	
Quincy	31246	2	2	
San Jose	39098	8		8
Schneider Office Emp.	30009	4	4	
Southern California	9400	1		not present
St. Louis	36047	8	4	4
Terre Haute	34046	2	2	
Toledo	34043	6	6	
Victoria-Vancouver	30223	3	3	
Washington-Baltimore	32035	24		24
WashTech	37083	4		4
TOTAL VOTES		366	234	131
TOTAL LOCALS ATTENDING			48	

Labor round-up

Settlement preserves Verizon jobs

After a month-long post-contract mobilization campaign that frustrated Verizon East strike preparation plans, CWA members won tentative settlement of a five-year agreement that preserves contract protection against layoffs and work transfer and preserves fully paid health care premiums. The settlement also provides an immediate 3% cash bonus, averaging \$1,600, and guaranteed base wage increases for years 2004 through 2007 that total at least 10.6%, depending on inflation.

Card-check legislation introduced

Responding to the escalating corporate attack against union organizing drives—academic researchers say 20,000 workers are fired each year for trying to unionize their workplaces—Sen. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) has introduced a bill that would require employers to recognize cardcheck organizing. The Employee Right to Choose Act (S.1513) also would bar captive audience meetings and other anti-union activities and would set a 180-day deadline for negotiating a first contract, followed by mandatory arbitration.

GOP Inc. follows corporate trend

As the story at right observes, outsourcing of white-collar jobs is becoming a growing U.S. problem. Now the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, citing an Indian newspaper report, observes that the disease is afflicting not just corporations but... the Republican Party. "The US Republican Party now has a band of young and enthusiastic fund-raisers in Noida and Gurgaon," reports The Business Standard, which writes that 75 call-center workers employed by HCL Technologies are trolling for cash for the GOP and for George W. Bush.

Reaching out to non-union workers

Hoping to increase its political clout, the AFL-CIO has created a new lobbying organization, Working America, that it hopes will mobilize nonunion workers who agree with organized labor on issues such as raising the minimum wage and blocking privatization of Social Security. Pilot projects for the new group have been started in Seattle and Cleveland, with union canvassers walking door-to-door to enlist new members. Union leaders say the idea has great potential because there are 16 million union members nationwide, representing 13% of the work force, but surveys indicated that more than 40 million other Americans would like to join unions.

Two-thirds of public supports unions

Fully 65% of the American public supports unions, according to a poll released Aug. 29 by the Gallup Organization. Young adults 18-29 are the most supportive, with 77% expressing approval of unions. Solid majorities of those polled say unions help union members (76%), unionized companies (58%) and the U.S. economy (54%). The Gallup survey results were issued the same week a report by the Economic Policy Institute supplied some of the reasons for such support. "How Unions Help All Workers" concludes that unions also raise nonunion wages, because nonunion employers often follow union wage scales to prevent workers from joining a union. Unions also play a powerful role in reducing income inequality by increasing wages for low-income workers. To read more, see www.aflcio.org/aboutunions/ns08262003.cfm.

Freedom riders start rolling Sept. 20

At least 60 busloads of immigrants and their supporters will start from nine U.S. cities Sept. 20 on the "Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride," heading for mass rallies in Washington on Oct. 1-2 and New York on Oct. 4. The freedom riders will be leaving from Seattle, San Francisco, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Chicago, Houston, Boston and Miami to demonstrate strong nationwide support for proposals to legalize immigrants who have lived, worked and paid taxes in the U.S. for years. For further information, contact the National Immigration Forum at 202-661-4204 or see the website at www.iwfr.org.

Resource for economic analysis

Readers looking for fresh economic perspectives may want to check out Economic Reporting Review, which bills itself as the nation's only regular source of commentary and analysis on economic reporting. Written by Dean Baker, an economist and co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research, ERR calls attention to errors, deficiencies, and biases in the economic reporting of the New York Times and Washington Post, as well as instances of particularly insightful reporting. A new edition of ERR is posted every Monday at the CEPR website (www.cepr.net) and is also available by free e-mail subscription.

What, no aircraft carrier in the area?

In making a Labor Day appearance in Ohio at the Operating Engineers' center, George W. Bush donned a union hat and a labor jacket. Bush is the first U.S. president since the AFL-CIO's 1955 founding to have never met with the federation's president.

This may be the dawn of post-industrial age

By Andy Zipser
Editor, The Guild Reporter

It's hard to discern an epochal social change—a so-called "paradigmatic shift"—at the time that it's actually happening. But the economic evidence that this is precisely what we're seeing has been dribbling in for more than a decade, and recently has assumed Noah-and-the-flood proportions.

One of the most unshakeable indicators that Things Really Are Different is the much remarked-upon "jobless recovery." The macroeconomic news is that the recession is over—indeed, that it ended nearly two years ago, when gross national product resumed growing in November of 2001. But on a microeconomic scale, the one defined by pay checks and mortgages and car payments, the recession continues unabated.

As chronicled by the Economic Policy Institute, 3.3 million jobs in the private sector have simply vanished since March, 2001—a 2.9% contraction that represents the largest sustained job loss since the Great Depression. And despite a series of tax cut-packages, collectively touted by the Bush administration as its "Jobs and Growth Plan," the hemorrhaging continues. Although the president's economics staff, the Council of Economic Advisers, projected the plan would create 344,000 new jobs each month starting in July—when 556,000 unemployed people got so discouraged that they dropped out of the workforce—August saw the loss of yet another 93,000 jobs.

High unemployment, not surprisingly, creates downward pressure on wages, further heightening the disconnect between an economy that grows richer even as individual workers keep tightening their belts. Compared to the first six months of 2002, wage growth in the first half of this year fell behind inflation—already at record lows—across the board, down 0.7%, 0.1%, and 1.0%, respectively, for low-, middle- and high-wage workers.

What all those numbers mean in human terms is simply this: fewer people are producing the country's growing wealth but are getting less for their work. Instead, the "extra" wealth keeps trickling upward, as it has for several decades. The Congressional Budget Office, for example, in recent weeks released economic data showing that pre-tax, inflation-adjusted income for the top 1% of all U.S. households grew by 184% between 1979 and 2000. By contrast, pre-tax income for middle-income households grew 12.5%; for the lowest fifth of all households, it grew 6.6%.

So that's where the wealth has been going. But what happened to the jobs?

Many have been automated out of existence, accounting for a significant chunk of the much vaunted increase in American "productivity." But a large and growing number have been shipped overseas—and the bad news, according to a study published by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York just ahead of Labor Day, is that in all probability those jobs won't be coming back.

Moreover, a growing number of the exports are white-collar jobs once thought immune to such displacement. Although blue-collar manufacturing remains hardest-hit, overseas outsourcing is afflicting virtually the entire upper echelon of the service sector, from architects and accountants to engineers and securities analysts. Forrester Research has received a lot of ink in recent weeks with its prediction that 3.3 million U.S. white-collar jobs will be shipped overseas by 2015—representing an annual loss of \$136 billion in wages.

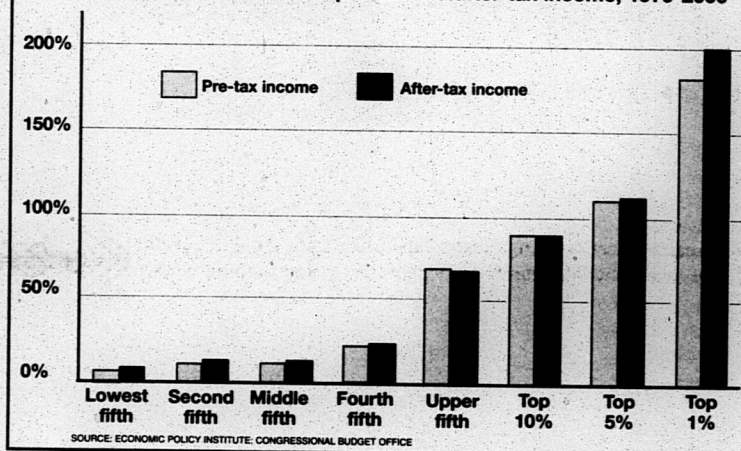
Among the most devastated have been the software engineers and other techies who just a few years ago dominated the occupational stratosphere. Now these sil-

icon cowboys' jobs are undergoing a second bump down the foodchain, as work once farmed out to low-wage workers in India is being out-sourced again, to even cheaper Russia and China. The phenomenon is pronounced enough that a recent cover story for CIO Magazine fretted that a political storm against offshore outsourcing is brewing: indeed, of a dozen chief information officers it contacted for the story, only two would agree to talk on the record.

In areas like Seattle, where the high tech boom was especially prominent, the unemployment rate among information technology workers is nearly twice that of Washington state overall. The upshot is that techies who once looked at unions with disdain are beginning to realize that in certain fundamental respects they're no different than factory workers—a shocking reappraisal for a group marked more by swagger than humility. The confusion is evident in the postings on a listserv recently created by WashTech, a TNG-CWA local, for East Coast members.

"Do I sound bitter?" wrote one participant with a masters in business administration, specializing in research management. "Actually, I'm not as bitter as I sound. The frustration you hear is from trying to get other colleagues to see the same pattern in this data as

Growth in real household pre-tax and after-tax income, 1979-2000



I've seen—evidence that deskilling and deprofessionalization are the order of the day."

Offshoring has given a boost to WashTech organizers trying to spread the union gospel among techies, who are every bit as individualistic as journalists were in Guild founder Heywood Brown's time. But when contrasted with the "Thirties, an era when jobs were scarce because of an economic downturn but the industrial revolution was still picking up steam, the new millennium is marked by an apparent reversal: the economy is healthy but the jobs aren't there. The industrial revolution was supposed to be supplanted by the information age, with well-trained mental workers replacing skilled machinists and other industrial workers. That's not happening.

Instead, such jobs as are being created tend to be in low-paying, labor-intensive industries: the two lowest-paid work categories, retail and service, increased their share of the job market to 48% in 1998 from 30% in 1965. Thanks to that trend, one in four U.S. workers now earns \$18,100 a year or less, the poverty level for a family of four—and usually has to go without a health plan, child care, pensions or vacation benefits.

The White House response to these developments has been a profoundly superficial prescription of retraining programs and "re-employment accounts," as if accountants and software engineers were to find economic relief through \$3,000 worth of community college classes. But the problem these bandages are meant to address is not one of inadequately trained workers, but of a fundamentally changed workplace. Systemic problems require systemic solutions, which in this case will occur only when white collar professionals acknowledge that they've become commodities. The time-tested response? Organize, unionize and begin pushing for change. Starting points include a shorter work week, fair trade laws and restoration of a progressive tax system.



LOOKING AHEAD

We get paid to work, not think

By Carol D. Rothman, TNG-CWA Chairperson

[The following remarks greeted delegates to this year's TNG-CWA Sector Conference.]

Some time during the past year there was a radio commercial airing in my market that caught my attention. It was a 60-second spot featuring a likable character, "Anton, The Worker Ant." Thankfully, they didn't call him "Anton, The Union Ant."

The commercial began with Anton introducing himself to the announcer. Then Anton explained his job as a worker ant—his mission statement for the ant colony, if you will—to search far and wide for food and bring it back to the hill to nourish the queen.

Next, there was a rustling as a wrapper opened. The announcer asked if Anton had ever tried the Brand-X ant bait. Anton assured him he had brought home take-out from that one, but the fussy queen would have none of it.

Another package rustled, and the announcer described for Anton the double delicacies of the new ant food he was peddling. Two taste treats for the price of one? More like a one-two punch for Anton and his gang. Anton seemed impressed, however, and felt sure that the queen would be won over with his new selection.

Cautiously, the announcer asked Anton if he realized that bringing these treats back to the queen would surely result in the demise of her majesty and the entire ant colony, himself included. Undeterred, Anton answered: "They pay me to work, they don't pay me to think!"

Now just imagine me driving into the morning rush-hour sun glare on I-76. Each time I heard Anton's ridiculous response, I practically lost control of my car. But then I realized something. More and more each day, Guild members are being affected by an amazingly similar phenomenon. It is being perpetrated by owners, publishers and corporate types at the media companies where we work.

Up and down the wage scale in editorial, advertising, circulation and business departments, managers are mistakenly applying poor Anton's axiom. They are paying us to *work*, not paying us to *think*. Sometimes, they are not even paying us very well to work.

But we are not Anton. We don't share Anton's superficial outlook on life, and we can't share his mindless image of his work. Guild members must *think* because we bear the responsibility of providing quality journalism to the public. We can't just *work* at it. But it is all too apparent that management believes that Anton's approach is sufficient to preserve this sacred trust.

We continue to *think* about providing diverse opinions in the community we serve, while they merely *work* at improving the bottom line. Guild members must *think* because we bear the responsibility of capturing and cultivating the revenue that enables our companies to exist. In this economy especially, we can't just *work* at it and expect them to flourish.

Guild members must *think* because we bear the responsibility of marketing and

delivering our product. We can't just *work*, like Anton, oblivious of the potential destruction of our customer and reader base. We are *thinking* of how we will continually recreate our products to maintain current customers and attract new subscribers. But management is simply *working* at consolidating and eliminating services, with no thought of the future.

This management notion of *working* only to increase profits without *thinking* about the repercussions is foolhardy. And, will our workplaces be left in any condition for us to recapture the moment when they come to their senses? That's another responsibility we must bear. It will be the Guild workers' thoughtful, consistent effort at maintaining the media infrastructure that will see us through their short-sighted run to profit.

There is some irony here. I do see one area where acting without thinking should prevail. That's when it comes to our other work—Guild work. I'm certainly not advocating Anton's blasé attitude, but you shouldn't even stop to think when it comes to:

- mobilizing your members
- protecting co-workers' rights
- organizing the unorganized
- defending a member from discrimination or harassment.

That work should just happen without thinking.

Even though this is our 68th meeting as a convention or sector conference, 2003 actually marks the 70th anniversary of the Guild. It was in August, 1933 that Heywood Broun wrote the column for the New York World-Telegram that changed the lives of newspaper workers. I thought a 70th anniversary was auspicious enough to merit a little reflection.

Twenty years ago the Guild Reporter described the scene this way: "In the midst of the Great Depression, the unorganized white- and pink-collar employees of the newspaper industry were having their wages slashed and their hours increased and were being fired in great numbers—all in the name of economy." If I didn't know better, I could say that scenario appeared in last month's Guild Reporter.

Now, Guild members are having their wages frozen, having their right to paid overtime attacked, and are being laid off, not in the name of economy but in the name of obscene profit. It certainly doesn't seem like much has changed from the management perspective. But, I wanted to take a little time to remind you of a few of the milestones we have achieved along the way and

how much the Guild has changed in seventy years.

The 'Thirties were obviously an era of firsts. After the founding convention in 1933, the Guild signed its first contract in 1934, with the Philadelphia Record. The first strike at a major daily came quickly, against the Newark Ledger in 1935. Before the end of the decade, the American Newspaper Guild, as it was then known, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO), and extended jurisdiction to Canada, holding its first convention there in Toronto, in 1938.

In the 'Forties, the Guild continued to accomplish goals both inside and outside the union. In a 1941 referendum, the membership asserted it would not tolerate "any attempt" from Communism, Nazism or Facism "to make or control the policies" of the union. The War Labor Board ruled in 1944 that freedom of the press is not harmed if Guild membership is a condition of employment.

Wage goals for experienced key employees were first established at \$65 per week in 1945. With the end of the war came

The 'Seventies showcased human rights activities by the Guild. Employee "voice in product" was endorsed; proposals to end sex discrimination in the news industry were adopted by the Women's Rights Conference; and a program for equal employment in the industry was advanced by the Minorities' Rights Conference.

In recognition of our multi-national membership, "American" was removed from the Guild's name. The Canadian Region office was opened and its first director named in 1972. The Guild tested the merger waters by appointing a committee in 1977 to discuss terms for a new partnership with the International Typographical Union (ITU).

Those merger hopes were dashed in the 'Eighties, and the Guild embarked on a health and safety campaign to help members combat the hazards uncovered with the use of video display terminals. New benchmarks continued to be reached, as the first key minimum over \$700 was negotiated, the Defense Fund topped \$5 million and active membership surpassed the 34,000 mark.

The 'Nineties saw a renewed emphasis on health and safety. The Guild's efforts in the bargaining and legislative arenas were



TNG-CWA President Linda Foley high-fives this year's "Guild heroes" at August sector conference.

BOB BLACK/CHICAGO NEWSPAPER GUILD

the end of wage and price controls. The very next year the wage goal was increased to a \$100 minimum, and it was achieved in New York and St. Louis. As the decade closed, the Guild documented the Canadian newsprint monopoly and won its first contract in Canada, at the Toronto Star.

President Harry S. Truman addressed the 1950 Guild Convention and told delegates that this union played "so vital a part in upholding the American tradition of a free and responsible press." During the 'Fifties the Guild helped to organize the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), increased the wage goal to \$200 per week, and reaffirmed newsmen's rights to protect confidential sources.

President John F. Kennedy acknowledged in 1961 that the Guild was "in the forefront of the fight to improve the standards of the newspaper profession"—and the Guild responded by drafting action programs to end discrimination in the news industry and to meet the challenge of automation in 1963. The second half of the decade brought the Guild Defense Fund to a million dollars and circulation district managers and advertising salespeople under the key minimum umbrella. Key minimum salaries of \$200, \$250 and \$300 per week were negotiated in '66, '67 and '69.

critical in protecting workers from keyboard-related repetitive strain injury. In 1993, the Guild adopted a strategic plan that included recommendations for merger with a larger union, greater Canadian autonomy and a method for mobilizing the membership. As a result, the merger with the Communications Workers of America (CWA) was endorsed and the Guild became a CWA sector in 1997.

In the last few years, the Guild circle has widened to embrace new members in fields beyond the traditional—technology workers, interpreters and translators, social workers, performers. We also have broadened our award and education palette: just last month an organizing institute for women was inaugurated, honoring the memory of Edna Berger, a pioneer organizer and Guild international representative. We continue to engage students in the David S. Barr Award competition for labor journalism at the high school and college level.

Sometimes it seems we are continually fighting the same battles. They don't get any easier the next time around—so, just *think* where TNG came from. *Think* how TNG got this far. And, keep *thinking* so TNG will endure. TNG is not only The Newspaper Guild. It has to be The Next Generation.

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: Oct. 10.) Letters and articles proposed for publication may be e-

mailed to the editor at azipsr@cwa-union.org.

For address changes, see the box on page 2 or e-mail to duesinfo@cwa-union.org; sending such changes to the editor will merely delay processing.

CWA delegates react to overtime attack

[Although Guild delegates to the TNG sector conference expressed an interest in passing a resolution defending the 40-hour work week, but held off on being assured that CWA delegates were about to do likewise. Excerpts follow of Resolution 65A-03-10, "Protecting Overtime Rights: Preserving the 40-Hour Workweek."]

The 40-hour workweek mandated by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of 1938 is one of the American labor movement's greatest accomplishments, benefiting workers, families and society at large.

After 40 hours a week, workers' time is their own unless their employer is willing to pay time-and-a-half to keep them on the job. Employers have a financial motive to avoid unrestrained overtime. This creates a balance in the workplace that ensures employees have leisure time.

The 40-hour workweek is under assault by the Bush administration, and the business lobby and their allies in Congress. Under the Department of Labor's proposed changes to FLSA, more than 8 million workers could lose eligibility for overtime pay. Employers would be free to order employees to work far more than 40 hours without paying anything additional for their labor. . . .

Union members may be temporarily protected by collective bargaining agreements, but employers can be expected to demand the right to deny overtime pay once the law permits it. Language in some union contracts would already allow employers to deny overtime pay if the DOL rules are passed.

The FLSA was designed to protect workers, ensuring that the vast majority would have overtime pay rights. Now the 65-year-old Act is being turned on its head to reduce what the Bush administration's DOL and corporate America claim is a burden to employers. The proposed new rules are deliberately vague, giving employers broad rights to reclassify workers so that virtually any worker earning more than \$65,000 a year could be excluded from overtime protections.

Allowing employers to exempt more workers from overtime protections will have a devastating effect on the FLSA's other vital mission: creating jobs. Our country's unemployment rate is the highest in a decade, with more than 9 million workers jobless. Once employers can force existing employees to work unlimited hours at no extra cost, they will have no incentive to hire new workers or provide part-time jobs. . . .

'I may be a journalist, but I'm not a chump'

[Peter Szekely, a delegate from the New York Newspaper Guild and a TNG-CWA vice president, was the first speaker at the mike in support of the resolution. From the convention transcript:]

DELEGATE PETER SZEKELY (TNG-CWA Local 31003) Thank you, President Bahr. Until now, the only time I've ever spoken up at a CWA Convention has been to declare that, as a journalist who was sent here to represent other journalists, I would abstain when we voted to endorse a presidential candidate. And I've got to tell you, Morty, I'm very excited to be up here actually advocating something rather than just remaining neutral.

PRESIDENT BAHR: So am I, Peter.

DELEGATE SZEKELY: Because the assault on the 40-hour work week is an attack on the rights of all workers, including journalists. And we are not going to sit on our hands and be neutral when we're under attack. I may be a journalist, but I'm not a chump.

(Applause)

You know, my colleagues who cover the president and the candidates that we have heard here today and will hear tomorrow, the reporters who need to be neutral in politics, they spend a lot of time at their jobs. And when they work overtime, they get paid for it. They are not going to sit still while their overtime rights are under

attack. This is a battle that affects every American worker, and every American worker had better stand up and fight for what we've got.

(Applause)

Now, the business lobby, the folks on the other side of this battle, they like to tell us that the current Fair Labor Standards Act is a confusing, outdated, Depression-era law that has no place in the high-tech global economy. Now, what do they really mean by those hollow-sounding sound bites? They know, as one study found, that 8 million workers will lose their overtime eligibility under the Bush administration proposals. Hit hardest would be higher-skilled workers with decent-paying jobs, including many that we represent—engineering techs, computer support staff, graphic artists, nurses, police, fire fighters, journalists, and the list goes on and on and on.

They know, as this resolution says, that the Labor Department estimates its proposals will save employers nearly \$5 billion a year in overtime pay. Whose \$5 billion? Our \$5 billion.

(Applause)

And I'll bet you it's even higher than that.

Well, brothers and sisters, the Bush administration proposal is nothing short of a reverse Robin Hood transfer of wealth. We work the longer hours and our bosses get to keep our money.

(Applause)

The proponents of these changes have tried to assure us in the labor movement that we have nothing to worry about. Their proposed regulatory changes, they say, won't override our overtime rights that we have in our contracts. What do they think we are? Stupid? Without the federal guarantees of the 40-hour work week, what do you think our employers will do the next time we go to the bargaining table? You and I know, brothers and sisters, that if this goes through we are going to have a round of battles with our employers to save our overtime that will make the current fights we're having over healthcare look like nothing.

PRESIDENT BAHR: One minute.

DELEGATE SZEKELY: Now, employers will be employers, and you almost can't blame them because that's the way they are. We know what they are like. We deal with them all the time. They will try to squeeze profits out of anything. I blame the politicians and the bureaucrats. This is a time where the lines are clear. We in the labor movement have to stand up and lead all the workers in this country to fight this back. We can do it. We should do it. I urge you to pass this resolution. Look in your pockets and you will see a way that you can get active on this issue. We have to tell all of our friends, all of our relatives, all of our neighbors, union or non-union alike, to— (Mike shut off)

The U.S. Senate voted Sept. 10, as the Guild Reporter was going to press, to bar the Bush administration from issuing new overtime pay rules. But stay tuned: the 54-45 vote has to be reconciled with a July vote in the House, which on a slender 213-210 margin upheld the rules.

The DOL publicly claims that only 644,000 workers will lose overtime protection, a gross underestimation of the potential damage. However, within the regulations, the DOL estimates that 2.7 million workers will no longer be eligible; still a very low number but more than four times what they repeatedly claim in media reports. The DOL says employers will "benefit" by collectively saving nearly \$5 billion in overtime wages a year, but doesn't address the fact that the burden is placed squarely on the backs of the American worker. . . .

The CWA fully supports efforts that would legitimately increase overtime protection for low-wage workers. However, the DOL is playing a deceptive public relations game, with no genuine intent to help these workers. The proposed regulations instruct employers how to avoid paying the newly eligible workers anything extra. Complete with a mathematical formula, the DOL explains that by converting the managers' low salaries to even lower hourly rates, their total pay won't actually increase even after the overtime is figured into the equation. Coaching employers how to cheat workers in this way is immoral at best and illegal at worst.

The Bush administration claims the proposed regulations are necessary to "clarify" the overtime rules. There is no reason why clarifying the rules requires disqualifying more workers from overtime protections. Consistent with the purpose and long standing interpretation of the FLSA, clarifications of the overtime rules should expand cover-

age, not diminish it.

RESOLVED: CWA opposes any effort by the federal government to take away any workers' overtime protection. We support a genuine effort to extend overtime coverage to more workers. We will not stand by silently while the Department of Labor distorts the intent of its plan to enlarge business profits at the expense of American workers.

RESOLVED: CWA members will contact the Department of Labor, the White House and members of Congress to put a stop to this and any future effort to erode the Fair Labor Standards Act or to take away workers' longstanding right to overtime pay.

RESOLVED: CWA local leaders will make efforts to speak with local reporters about the overtime issues, and will work with local labor councils to organize rallies or other media events to bring public pressure to bear on the DOL and elected officials.

THE GUILD Reporter

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DAYBOOK

Pride at Work convention,
Sept. 18-21, Tyson Corner, VA

CWA Customer Svc./Mgtk. Conf.,
Sept. 24-27, Fort Worth

CLUW 12th biennial convention,
Oct. 9-12, Seattle

Western District Council,
Oct. 24-26, Eugene, Ore.

New England District Council,
Nov. 1-2, site TBA

Convergence 2 Strategic Forum,
Jan. 23-24, Baltimore

Southern, Great Lakes Councils,
Nov. 8-9, Cincinnati

CWA Legislative Conference,
March 28-31, Washington DC

CWA Civil Rights Conference,
April 22-25, Jacksonville, FL

Freedom Award banquet,
May 19, Washington DC

FROM THE MORGUE

Fifty years ago this month:

Advertising Age discloses that The Seattle Times—closed by a strike since mid-July—and "a large number of daily newspapers" have jointly underwritten a secret "suspension insurance" plan to keep them solvent during job actions. . . . The Cleveland Newspaper Guild drafts a code of ethics for editorial workers—and newspaper managers. . . . Joseph Collis squeaks by incumbent Harry Martin in the Guild's closest balloting contest to date, taking the presidency by a vote of 7,498 to 7,284.

Twenty-five years ago this month:

As New York City's three major dailies remain closed by strikers for a sixth week, talks resume after a 10-day hiatus—but in Washington, D.C. under federal supervision. Guild locals lend more than \$460,000 to TNG's strained Defense Fund. . . . Press critic Ben Bagdikian, accepting an award from the Assoc. for Education in Journalism, warns of a growing conflict between "greater professional freedom for the journalist" and "increasing control of the news by conventional corporate management." . . . The Los Angeles Herald-Examiner coughs up \$748,000 in settlement of benefits due Guild members who struck 11 years earlier.

Ten years ago this month:

The Clinton White House officially kicks off its public campaign to promote the North American Free Trade Agreement. . . . The Guild's Human Rights Committee reports that the 12-member panel "was remarkably diverse and at the same time surprisingly devoid of one major constituency of Guild membership." Seems it had no white males.

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