

# THE GUILD Reporter

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## When employees hold shares . . .

### Gannett shareholders get an earful from UK journo

By Lou Mleczo  
President, Detroit Newspaper Guild

Leaders of the British National Union of Journalists (NUJ) joined forces May 4 with TNG-CWA representatives, hopping across the Atlantic to challenge the excessive salaries and bonuses—especially when compared with its stingy wage scales—that Gannett awards its executives.

Buttonholing Gannett shareholders at the corporation's headquarters in McLean, Va., the NUJ and TNG representatives distributed flyers and chastised Gannett management for its top-heavy pay structure. The British labor leaders represent several thousand journalists at the Gannett-owned Newsquest chain, the largest in Great Britain.

Inside, addressing the annual shareholders' meeting, the NUJ delegation spoke in favor of a stockholder proposal to limit Gannett executive pay to \$1 million annually. NUJ officer David Toomer noted that Newsquest executives recently received raises averaging 32%, while newsroom staffers averaged just 2.5%.

Barry Fitzpatrick, an NUJ national organizer, said more than 75 Members of Parliament have protested the low pay at Newsquest by signing a legislative proposal condemning the Gannett subsidiary for its low pay. "This doesn't help the image of business

you represent in the UK," said Fitzpatrick, urging stockholders to support the management pay cap.

But Gannett CEO Douglas H. McCorkindale responded that executive salaries in Great Britain, as in the U.S., are based on an internal formula tied to corporate profits. And the pay cap, originally proposed by the United Brotherhood of Carpenters, was shot down by Gannett's stockholders.

Meanwhile, TNG President Linda K. Foley, noting that USA Today had done a "thorough investigation" of the Jack Kelley reporting scandal, nonetheless expressed concern over reports that a "culture of fear" might exist at Gannett's flagship paper. Moreover, while acknowledging Gannett's efforts to increase diversity at its U.S. operations, Foley said she had received reports from NUJ that no such efforts have been evident at Newsquest.

"Is there a similar policy at Newsquest?" Foley asked.

McCorkindale responded that there was not, but should be, and acknowledged that the recent British acquisition needs to do much more in hiring minorities. "We can do better and we should," McCorkindale promised.

Joining Foley in addressing the Gannett stockholders were Wayne Cahill, administrative officer of the Hawaii Newspaper Guild, and Amy Bahr, president of the Sheboygan Newspaper Guild.

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IAPE members Paul Hart (left) and Ron Farrington walk the line outside Dow Jones' shareholder meeting in Manhattan—as does "Rich the Rat," courtesy of Transport Workers Union local 100.

### Pulitzer Prize winners lend their weight to Dow Jones shareholders' protest

By Tim Martell  
IAPE Organizer

Shadowed by a giant, inflatable rat, more than 100 members and supporters of the Independent Association of Publishers' Employees, TNG-CWA Local 1096, crowded onto a Manhattan sidewalk April 21 to protest Dow Jones' contract proposals and to support a union proposal for separating the company's CEO and chairman of the board positions.

The peaceful but boisterous demonstration coincided with the company's annual shareholders' meeting, held at the World Financial Center. It also marked the culmination of a week's worth of events calling the attention of the Dow Jones board—and of the Bancroft family, the company's controlling shareholders—to the prolonged contract battle between the company and IAPE, the largest union representing employees at Dow Jones & Co, publisher of The Wall Street Journal.

A day earlier, IAPE and TNG-CWA ran an advertisement on the op-ed page of the New York Times. Headlined "An open letter to the members of the Bancroft family," the ad was endorsed by more than 400 IAPE members asking for the family's "help in securing a reasonable contract."

IAPE members have been working without a contract at Dow Jones since May 1, 2003.

"Management is now demanding that Journal staffers and our colleagues throughout Dow Jones accept a drastic cut in healthcare benefits along with uncompetitive salary increases," the ad text explained. "This isn't just another labor dispute. It's an effort by Dow Jones employees to protect the public trust that took your family more than a century to build."

But inside the shareholders' meeting, Dow Jones Chairman and CEO Peter Kann glossed over the company's problems with IAPE.

"We are confident that even through a difficult

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TNG-CWA President Linda Foley is challenged by a Gannett security guard, who tried—unsuccessfully—to stop a photographer from taking pictures of the group. Lou Mleczo is in the foreground at left.

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## CWA rep joins TNG staff

Carrie Biggs-Adams, a staff member for CWA Executive Vice President Larry Cohen, has joined TNG as executive secretary of the contract committee. The transfer enables the reassignment of Debbie Thomas as human rights director, a position that had been left unfilled since Anna Padia's retirement at the end of 2002.

Biggs-Adams, a member of the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians since 1976 and a CWA rep for more than

three years, may be familiar to some Guild members for her mobilizing efforts on behalf of the St. Louis Guild while it searched for a new administrative officer. She also has worked with CWA locals in Puerto Rico,



Carrie Biggs-Adams

building on her experience as a NABET negotiator at Spanish-language television stations in San Francisco and Fresno.

During her NABET years, Biggs-Adams also served as a shop steward, executive board member, local vice president and local president. Married 19 years, her husband, Dayne, is a television news engineer at KNBC in Los Angeles. The couple has two children, Amelia, 17, and Belinda, 14, both of whom live in southern California.

## Kann denies problem exists

*Continued from page 1*

period we have maintained highly competitive compensation and benefits for our employees," Kann said, "and this despite a company-wide wage freeze in 2003 affecting most employees and modest changes in medical benefit plans that currently are the source of friction with IAPE, our largest union."

Kann's presentation didn't sit well with IAPE activists in the audience. President Virgil Hollender rose to address the union's proposal to split the two positions held by Kann. "This proposal, despite all that is going on, is not an attempt to punish this CEO," said Hollender, "but is made in the name of good governance. It simply makes better sense to have a completely independent board to oversee the CEO, now and in the future."

Other IAPE members called the board's attention to the ongoing struggle at the bargaining table. In a joint statement, IAPE members and 2004 Pulitzer Prize-winning Journal reporters Tom Burton and Dan Golden called for

a fair wage and benefit contract proposal, noting that such an offer would be "a renewed investment in the greatness of this newspaper."

Jim Browning, an IAPE bargaining committee member and Journal reporter, rose to deliver a stern warning. "You can't keep cutting staff, cutting benefits, holding down pay," he insisted. "It affects quality and it affects morale. People begin to feel that the only plan for the future is more cost-cutting. Some of the best people start looking around for other options."

Perhaps the most passionate presentation to the company's decision makers was made by Greg Jaffe, representing Journal reporters who have served in war zones since September 11, 2001.

"Over the last two-and-a-half years, we have been shot at. We have slept in the dirt in below-freezing weather and baked in heavy flak vests when the temperature has topped 125 degrees," he told shareholders. "We have survived on military rations, and gone weeks without showers. We have spent months away from our wives

and children. We have done all this in order to bring The Wall Street Journal and its readers smart, intimate coverage of the wars the United States is waging."

Jaffe then became critical of the company's rewards for such service: "Here's what Dow Jones management wants us to accept: A wage freeze for 2003, followed by a 2.5% raise in 2004 and a 3% raise in 2005. We write for a financial newspaper; we understand that these raises are below the inflation rate and constitute real pay cuts." Meanwhile, Jaffe noted, Kann's total compensation jumped 58% between 2002 and 2003.

In the end, IAPE's shareholder proposal failed, garnering approximately 13% of company shares voted, about the same amount the identical proposal received in 2003. But that didn't dampen the spirit of those who continued to rally outside the WFC during the proceedings, chanting, "Peter, Peter, Benefits Eater!" and "Zero percent won't pay the rent!"

Further negotiations were scheduled throughout May.

## Lack of diversity at Gannett

*Continued from page 1*

Both their locals, as well as the Detroit Newspaper Guild—which also was represented at the meeting—have contracts with Gannett.

Cahill, echoing Foley's concerns about staff diversity, said most Gannett executives in Hawaii "are not home-grown but come from elsewhere."

"What's being done to grow top management in Hawaii?" Cahill demanded. Gary L. Watson, president of Gannett's newspaper division, replied that most Hawaiians choose to leave the state for other job opportunities, but added, "We need to do better."

Following the stockholders' meeting, the NUJ officials spent the rest of the day at TNG headquarters discussing ways the two

unions could work together in formulating bargaining strategies directed at Gannett.

Dick Bellringer, deputy news editor at the Andover Advertiser and an NUJ activist, said Newsquest pay rates are "decided nationally" even though bargaining is done locally at its newspapers.

NUJ's Fitzpatrick observed that minority representation at Newsquest "is nil," while Toomer estimated that only 2% of the journalists he worked with five years ago are still with the company.

The NUJ newsletter reports that while Gannett made profits of more than \$1 billion last year, British journalists are being paid as little as £12,000 annually (about \$19,000).

"The plain fact is that it is possible to commence working at McDonald's as a graduate trainee on over £17,000 per annum, considerably more than many of Newsquest's own fully trained staff," the NUJ newsletter observed. "Companies who reward at the top only are reducing their potential profits by losing disgruntled underpaid staff who take their skills to rival concerns and leave new, inexperienced staff to take their places."

## Guild briefs . . .

### Pawtucket ratifies 3-year agreement

The Pawtucket Newspaper Guild has ratified, 24-2, a three-year contract with the JRC-owned Pawtucket Times. The agreement includes a 1.5% raise upon ratification, 1.75% one year later and 2% one year after that, plus a \$200 signing bonus for full-timers and \$100 for part-timers. Other improvements include an increase in mileage from 20 cents to 23 cents after the first 100 miles per week; better scheduling notice; and improvements in jurisdiction language for photographers and reporters.

### WashPost moving work to Wisconsin

The Washington Post plans to move a substantial portion of its call-center work to La Crosse, Wisconsin on June 14, outsourcing work currently performed by 43 employees represented by the Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild. Although management has promised no layoffs, the move will cut most call center employees' hours. The Post's current call center employees are approximately 95% minority, while the workforce in La Crosse is nearly 92% white.

### CBC 'lied' about job security

The Canadian Broadcasting Corp. has started issuing "redundancy" notices to more than 30 Canadian Media Guild members in Toronto. The mid-April action came only two weeks after the CBC assured union reps it would seek to reassign rather than lay-off employees affected by a program reorganization. "It's now more than obvious that Corporation officials lied," complained Dan Oldfield, CMG senior staff representative. The union is exploring its legal options.

### Merc News drags its feet on pension

Almost two months after the Guild won its pension arbitration, the Mercury News has not said when it will pay the pension benefit improvements. Instead, the paper has contacted the arbitrator asking if his ruling is retroactive—and, if it is, whether the Guild has to pay the costs of recalculating the pension benefits. Guild attorney Gene Miller pointed out that the decision is very clear: yes, the News has to pay retroactively to January 2002; and no, the Guild does not have to pay any of the pension administration costs.

### NYT Digital agrees to 5-year contract

A tentative agreement on a new five-year contract between the New York Guild and New York Times Digital contains no retrogressions, provides for five

annual 3% wage increases and is fully retroactive to March 31, 2003. In addition, the union achieved one of its primary bargaining goals when management agreed to make all Guild-represented employees eligible for its Bonus Program, which until now has been available only to non-Guild employees; under this program, staffers are eligible to receive up to an additional 10% of their salary in any year in which they meet all of the program's goals.

### Fired sportswriter sues Bee, Guild

Former Sacramento Bee sports writer Jim Van Vliet has sued both the newspaper's parent company and the Northern California Media Guild, alleging he was wrongfully fired last August for submitting a story about a baseball game he did not attend. Van Vliet, a 34-year veteran of the paper, contends his firing was "without just cause."



Tsukada and his lawyer

### AP steward wins back pay, not job

A Japanese court has ordered the Associated Press to pay back wages to union shop steward Atsushi Tsukada, who was fired in December 2002 as Tokyo staffers were planning a strike. Members of the News Media Guild and TNG-CWA Local 1314 had supported Tsukada in his efforts by leafletting outside AP headquarters and by publicizing his case in the U.S. The ruling came after months of litigation and protest by the Japan Federation of Newspaper Workers Unions, but the issue isn't completely resolved: while the ruling awards back pay, it does not provide for reinstatement.

### Faculty members get green light

The National Labor Relations Board has ruled that Point Park University faculty can organize and the NLRB regional director has ordered that a Guild representation election be held. A successful election would create a third unit of the Pittsburgh Newspaper Guild, comprising 73 full-time faculty members, but an expected appeal by the university administration would delay the outcome. The favorable NLRB decision follows a 20-day hearing last fall.

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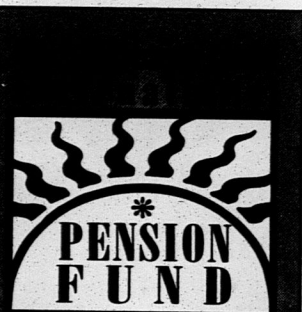
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# Contempt meter ticking, at \$200 a day

By Steve Brandt  
Minneapolis Newspaper Guild

**W**ally Wakefield is a 73-year-old retired grade-school teacher who works as a part-time high school sports columnist for a suburban Twin Cities weekly. But he's taking a stand for journalistic principles by refusing to obey a judicial order that he reveal his confidential sources.

As a \$200-a-day contempt-of-court fine was about to begin accruing against the pensioner, members of Minnesota Newspaper Guild Typographical Union took on Wakefield's cause as their own in a fundraising effort that has drawn national attention. By late April, they'd raised more than half of the \$19,000 contempt fine originally projected to accrue against Wakefield.

TNG-CWA stepped in with a \$1,000 contribution at the national level, and another \$1,000 was added by the Minnesota Newspaper Guild Typographical Union. Organizers

of the Wally Wakefield Defense Fund turned to the Guild because of its history of improving the working conditions of journalists and its past legal support for Wakefield.

The issue arose following a 1997 story in the Maplewood Review, to which Wakefield contributed, detailing why the Tartan high school football coach's contract was not renewed. Ex-coach Richard Weinberger then sued the North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale school district and several of its officials, claiming he'd been defamed by false statements made in the article.

Neither Wakefield nor his paper was sued, but a Ramsey County judge ordered him to disclose his sources. Wakefield refused, the judge held him in contempt and Wakefield appealed. The Guild and Minnesota and national news organizations signed onto briefs in his behalf.

Wakefield prevailed in an intermediate court, but in a 5-2 ruling the Minnesota Supreme Court concluded that a loophole in

Minnesota's reporter shield law prevented him from claiming the privilege.

The crewcut Wakefield, hailed as an "American journalistic hero" by Star Tribune columnist Doug Grow, stood firm. And so, as the trial judge in Weinberger's case told Wakefield he would start levying the contempt fine April 12, his supporters swung into action. Activists within the Minneapolis unit of the Guild roused their colleagues and, working with the Society of Professional Journalists and the Guild, appealed nationally for contributions to pay Wakefield's fine.

"One of our own is standing up to the judicial system and we need to step in to make sure he's not crushed," said their internet-circulated appeal to newsrooms and journalists.

A torrent of contributions soon bulged the Wally Wakefield Defense Fund's postal box. Checks came from newsroom grunts and publishers, and from people outside the profession motivated by Wakefield's

courage. Wakefield appeared on Twin Cities Public Television's "Almanac" show to explain his stand. The Washington Post editorialized in sympathy with him.

There are signs that every penny raised may be crucial. The \$200 daily fine was expected to accrue only through the mid-July trial of the underlying lawsuit, but Weinberger's lawyer, citing the fundraising campaign, has asked the judge to increase Wakefield's penalty to give it more sting. A higher contempt fine or even jail time are possibilities. The lawyer also has asked for a delay in the trial date, increasing Wakefield's financial exposure.

Contributions to the Wally Wakefield Defense Fund may be mailed to the fund at P.O. Box 8115, Minneapolis, MN 55408. Wakefield worked as a union teacher in the St. Paul schools for 29 years. His wife, Donna, worked for the Sheet Metal Workers union as a member of the Office Professional Employees International Union.

## Guild challenges AP's imposition of byline quotas

**T**he sometimes strained relationship between the Associated Press and its employees took another hit in late April, when the News Media Guild filed an unfair labor practice charge against the wire service over its imposition of new "byline quotas" in Ohio.

The union complaint alleges the new policy is a violation of the National Labor Relations Act because the company implemented it unilaterally during the life of the contract. Some staffers in Ohio already have been disciplined for allegedly failing to meet the quotas.

While the Guild maintains it is not obliged to negotiate over performance standards during the life of the contract, it told the company it was willing to listen to AP's rationale for the performance standard, how it was developed and why it is viewed as reasonable—conditioned on its rescinding of the rules and disciplinary actions. AP, however, refused to accept the invitation, prompting the ULP complaint.

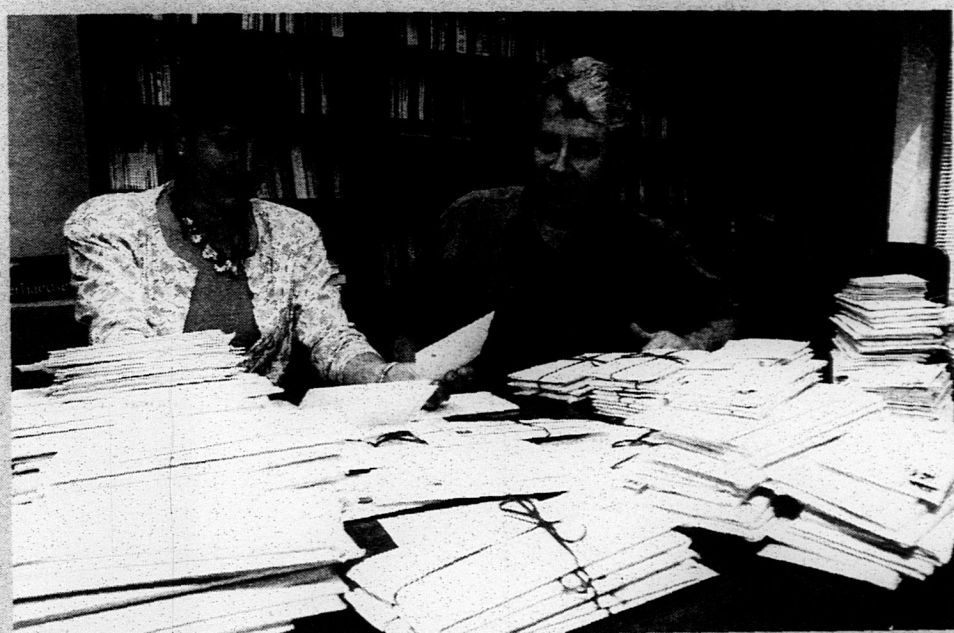
In addition, a statement was

issued by the Guild's Professional Activities Committee, observing that "pressuring staff to produce bylines—rather than top-flight stories, no matter how long that task will take—has been clearly identified as a factor in story fabrications at the New York Times and elsewhere that have sullied our profession."

The committee went on to note that it supports the AP's goal of becoming "essential," but that "the decision to put quantity ahead of quality jeopardizes that mission. And that is exactly what a byline quota does."

Under NLRB procedure, complaints are investigated by board staff, which make a determination on whether a case should go forward. The Guild is asking that AP be ordered to cease and desist from violating the law, and that all disciplinary actions already taken be rescinded.

The charge was filed by Guild attorney Derek Baxter at the Cincinnati office of the agency, with support from The Newspaper Guild-CWA.



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### 'Return to sender'

TNG-CWA President Linda Foley and Secretary-Treasurer Bernie Lunzer review some of the hundreds of letters and postcards of encouragement that were mailed to employees of the Chinese Daily News—only to be intercepted by management, which boxed the mail and shipped it off to TNG-CWA headquarters. The cards, printed in English on one side and Chinese on the other, were sent by union supporters throughout the U.S. and several countries abroad to assure the employees they "do

not stand alone." Workers at the Chinese Daily News overcame a vicious anti-union campaign more than three years ago to vote for TNG-CWA representation, but management nevertheless has refused to recognize the union or to negotiate a first contract, triggering a volley of complaints to the National Labor Relations Board. A hearing on some of the charges has been scheduled for two weeks in July. Meanwhile, words of encouragement are being delivered via alternative means, and CWA convention delegates will see a three-minute video about the protracted labor dispute and will meet some of the affected workers in August.

## New York Guild contests Reuters layoffs

**T**he New York Guild has filed for arbitration in what is expected to be the first round of litigation over management's proposed June 30 elimination of approximately 20 Guild-represented jobs in New York, Boston and Chicago. The affected positions are classified as Technical Client Site Group and Client Administration.

According to a Reuters spokesman, the proposed job cuts are the result of several factors, including "new or modified processes," "the discontinuance of certain functions" and because of "the transfer of work" to a Reuters facility in St. Louis that the company says is not subject to Guild contract requirements.

While a company letter to the local states that Reuters will comply with the job security provisions in its Guild contract, that means it would have to find or create jobs

only for the eight client administrators who were hired on or before January 1, 1991 and who therefore have full contractual employment protection. More recently hired employees have a lesser degree of employment protection and are not assured of getting replacement jobs—and, indeed, Reuters initially said no such jobs are available.

All employees who leave their jobs, whether voluntarily or otherwise, will be entitled to the severance package mandated by a contract provision covering job losses that result from subcontracting, new equipment or new processes. The package includes three weeks of severance pay for each year or partial year of service; up to 19 weeks of additional severance pay depending on date of hire; and extended medical coverage for up to six months.

In an effort to encourage its longer-

tenured employees to take the layoff rather than to opt for a replacement job, the company offered to sweeten the package by tacking on a few extra weeks of severance pay—on the condition that employees who accepted the enhanced package waive their rehiring rights and not sue the company. Management also demanded that the Guild give up its right to arbitrate all claims, including claims on behalf of those without the job guarantee.

But New York Guild President Barry Lipton pointed out that the extra incentive was "ridiculously inadequate," given Reuters' recent elimination of retiree medical benefits for most employees. Under the circumstances, he noted, it clearly remains in an employee's best interests to stay employed and keep his or her medical benefits. The upshot: no enhanced package.

Guild negotiators had proposed two years' pay on top of the contractual severance package, plus health care coverage for the entire period represented by the severance.

After prodding from the Guild at a May 4 meeting, company management said it will set up interviews in New York for the more recently hired client administrators with the St. Louis-based Reuters company. But it said it could not assure that any displaced client administrators would be hired for what it insists are non-Guild jobs.

The Guild is challenging the notion that the St. Louis entity is truly independent from RAM. It also is disputing the economic necessity of the job eliminations and plans to challenge the transfer of work from RAM to the St. Louis-based operation unless the jobs remain covered by the existing contract.



## News round-up

### Health coverage continues to decline

It's not just the unemployed who have to contend with lack of health coverage: approximately 20 million working people have no health insurance, according to a study released May 5 by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The study, "Characteristics of the Uninsured: A View from the States," also found that in six states, one in five working adults is not insured; in another 38 other states, one in 10 is uninsured. The Economic Policy Institute ([www.epinet.org](http://www.epinet.org)), meanwhile, released a study showing—in all but five states—that the percentage of workers with health insurance is significantly less in industries that gained jobs over the past three years than in industries that lost jobs.

### GCIU board opts for IBT over CWA

Following a vote by its executive board, the Graphic Communications International Union has spurned CWA in favor of opening merger talks with the Teamsters; any final agreement must be approved by the GCIU's 65,484 members. In a column explaining the board's vote, GCIU President George Tedeschi said it was swayed by several Teamsters pledges, including promises the union would be allowed to preserve its identity, its self-governance as a conference and its officers. GCIU will also keep jurisdiction in the printing/paper products industry and its locals will stay autonomous, rather than merging with IBT locals. The Teamsters also pledged not to hike per capita dues and to maintain the autonomy of GCIU health and pension plans.

### AFL-CIO accepts Chinese invitation

The AFL-CIO said it will send a labor delegation to China this summer, in response to an invitation from Vice Premier Wu Yi to take a first-hand look at working conditions in a country it has prominently accused of labor rights violations. Wu, deriding the allegations as "completely groundless," extended the invitation during a news conference held shortly after the Bush administration rejected the federation's petition for an unfair trade practices investigation of his country. The AFL-CIO contends that China's abuse of workers gives it an unfair wage advantage of between 47% and 86% and has cost an estimated 727,000 U.S. factory jobs.

### 'Offshore Tracker' monitors job loss

The "Offshore Tracker," a joint effort by WashTech and CWA to monitor how many U.S. jobs are outsourced to offshore locations, is up and running at [www.techsunite.org](http://www.techsunite.org). But it's an uphill slog. "We know we're seriously undercounting—but it is a count," said CWA research economist Tony Daley. "Nobody else is counting. And there is a conspiracy on the other side to not count at all." Indeed, Daley said companies are forcing employees and vendors to sign non-disclosure agreements that prohibit the disclosure of offshoring activities. Such obstacles notwithstanding, in its first two weeks the Offshore Tracker received more than 150 reports of offshoring activities and is looking for more. (See related item, p. 8.)

### Employee Choice Act picks up steam

The Employee Free Choice Act, introduced last fall, keeps picking up support—slowly but surely. Eight more Congressional representatives signed on as co-sponsors in recent weeks, expanding the list to 187. The EFCA would promote card-check recognition of union representation, would provide for mandatory mediation and arbitration of first-contract disputes, and would establish stronger penalties for employers violating employees' rights. You can see if your representative and senators have signed on by going to [privatenet.afficio.org](http://privatenet.afficio.org). Support for the bill can be provided at [www.unionvoice.org/campaign/sponsors/efca](http://www.unionvoice.org/campaign/sponsors/efca).

### Fired union organizer gets back pay

Brattleboro Reformer reporter Eesha Williams, who was fired by the newspaper last year as he led a union organizing drive, has agreed to a settlement in which the Media News-owned paper awards him full backpay and rescinds his discharge in exchange for his agreement to walk away. Management also has to post a notice stating, among other things, that it will not prohibit employees from seeking help from their elected officials regarding terms and conditions of employment. The ironically named Reformer also must rescind its "ethics rule," issued last May in response to Williams' actions.

### NY Times blacklist ripples outward

Former New York Times freelance reporter Jay Blotcher, who was blacklisted by The New York Times after it learned he had been a spokesperson for the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power more than a decade ago, has been dumped a second time—by the National Lesbian & Gay Journalism Association. The group has dropped him from a plenary panel at its annual convention this summer, saying only that it had found "better suited" participants. Blotcher, a former NLGJA member, was supposed to speak on ethical guidelines for gay reporters covering gay issues. Following the NLGJA's failure to back him in his dispute with the Times, Blotcher said, getting the boot from the convention program felt like a second betrayal.

# Revised regs weaken journalists' OT rights

The latest effort to force an election-year referendum on new overtime rules was blocked May 12 by House Republicans, who refused to allow a vote on a provision retaining eligibility for all workers who currently qualify for overtime pay. The GOP-controlled Senate had approved a similar measure the previous week.

Barring any fresh attempts to revisit the issue, that means the Labor Department's new rules will take effect August 23. But although the department's rationale for the rule change was to remove ambiguities, precisely how the revised regulations will affect journalists is, if anything, more murky.

The first set of proposed revisions created two changes of special interest to Guild members: one that would have denied overtime pay to those paid more than \$65,000 a year, and a second creating a "creative professional exemption" from overtime that apparently would have applied to all journalists. Following widespread criticism, the department revised both of these—and other—proposals, and it is the second set of rules that is now in the wings.

One change is readily understood: the \$65,000 salary cap on overtime-protected jobs will be lifted to \$100,000, which is widely perceived as only a limited improvement because it creates a cap where none now exists. And because the cap is not indexed for inflation, more workers will bump into it over time.

The second, more murky change is a revision in the "creative professional" test, explicitly restoring the presumption that rank-and-file journalists qualify for overtime protection—sort of. As the Labor Dept. writes, "The Department did not intend to create an across the board exemption [from overtime] for journalists." As it also notes, "Employees of newspapers, magazines, television and other media are not exempt creative professionals if they only collect, organize

and record information that is routine or already public or if they do not contribute a unique interpretation or analysis to a news product."

The hair in the ointment, however, is that an exemption for "creative" journalists remains, and the problem is going to be in determining who does or does not fit the bill—and who gets to decide. The department's guidance on the subject is open to interpretation. While it writes that journalists may qualify for the exemption "if their primary duty is work requiring invention, imagination, originality or talent, as opposed to work which depends primarily on intelligence, diligence and accuracy," it further notes:

"However, journalists may qualify as exempt creative professionals if their primary duty is performing on the air in radio, television or other electronic media; conducting investigative interviews; analyzing or interpreting public events; writing editorials, opinion columns or other commentary; or acting as a narrator or commentator."

On the whole, concludes TNG-CWA attorney Barbara Camens, the latest revisions are an improvement over the earlier changes but nevertheless "represent a weakening" of the overtime rules that have been in place for decades. Moreover, she adds, the broad categories of "exempt" work—conducting investigative interviews, analyzing public events, etc.—"may be used by employers to swallow the rule."

Although the department endorses current case law in making its latest changes, which Camens says should protect journalists against any major legal shift in overtime protection, the very fuzziness of the rules undoubtedly will prompt some employers—cynically, or simply out of confusion—to test the new limits. The best defense in such circumstances will be Guild contracts that explicitly reserve overtime pay for all covered employees.

## Service nominees wanted

As always at this time of year, TNG-CWA is seeking nominations for its highest honor, the Guild Service Award. Given annually for outstanding service to the Guild at the local level, the Guild Service Award is open to local members who serve in an unpaid capacity as local officers or in other responsible local positions.

Nominations must be received at TNG headquarters by Friday, June 4, and will be judged by members of the Executive Council.

Award candidates must be nominated by their local executive board, representative assembly or a general membership meeting. This authority may not be delegated—to units, for example—as some locals have sought to do in the past. Nor may one local nominate a member of another local.

The importance attached to the award by the Guild is second to none. TNG-CWA's Sector Executive Council has urged "every local to give serious consideration to the possibility of nominating someone from its ranks who has demonstrated that quality for which the award is given—outstanding Guild service on the local level—in order to make the contest a meaningful competition among deserving local leaders."

Winners of the award receive a scholarship of up to \$2,000 for a course in trade union education "appropriate to the winner." Although recent winners have attended week-long residential courses at the George Meany Labor Studies Center in Silver Spring, Md., winners may arrange to attend appropriate labor-education courses elsewhere. Most such course have low or no fees, allowing the scholarship to be applied toward room, meals and travel, plus lost time.

In some cases, locals have supplemented the scholarship with funds of their own to cover expenses, particularly for a longer course.

Candidates will be judged on their past achievements and on their ability to profit from such a course of study. There are no academic requirements. Past achievements to be considered shall be those accomplished within the framework of the Guild's fundamental purposes, such as organizing, bargaining, development of a strong local, human rights and the like.

Nominations must be in writing and include a detailed description of the achievements and qualification of the candidate. Nominations should be sent to TNG-CWA headquarters in Washington, marked to the attention of President Linda Foley.

## York owners swap papers

The owners of the two daily newspapers in York, Pennsylvania, have swapped properties—leaving Guild-represented employees at both papers uncertain about their futures but cautiously optimistic that at least both newspapers will continue publishing for the foreseeable future. MediaNews reportedly also paid \$32 million in the deal.

The swap involved the York Daily Record, which was sold by Buckner News Alliance to Denver-based MediaNews Group, which is controlled by Dean Singleton. But because MediaNews already owned the York Dispatch, which has a joint operating agreement with the Daily Record, Singleton first had to find a buyer for the Dispatch to avoid antitrust problems. That "buyer" turned out to be Phil Buckner, principal owner of the eponymous company.

The Daily Record is an award-winning morning paper whose newsroom employees are represented by TNG-CWA; it still has a year-and-a-half on its contract, which Singleton said he will honor. Newsroom employees of the afternoon Dispatch also are represented by the Guild; their contract doesn't expire until October, 2006 and also is being honored.

Among the complications: the Dispatch already was short-handed before the transfer, and after the swap was to lose another two-dozen employees who were being transferred by MediaNews to the Daily Record. Buckner, meanwhile, said he would not be hiring any new employees to fill the depleted ranks.

The swap also involves moving production of the York Sunday News, which had been published by the Dispatch, to the Record.



## Dispute settlement nets half-a-million

**G**uild-represented employees of Agence France-Press will share in a settlement totaling approximately half-a-million dollars, following resolution of a subcontracting grievance.

Signed May 4, as the case was about to go to arbitration, the agreement awarded all Guild-covered employees of the news service a two-week bonus immediately, with a second two-week bonus to be paid in January, for a total of more than \$400,000. It also includes increased sales commissions, payments of \$2,000 to each photo department employee, and job guarantees.

The dispute stemmed from AFP's decision last year to have Getty Images take over much of its domestic photo operation, leading to a net loss of six photo department positions that were eliminat-

ed through attrition and voluntary transfers. The Getty-AFP deal also barred AFP Guild-covered sales employees from selling AFP photos to North American media.

As part of the settlement of the Getty arbitration and the earlier settlement of a related grievance, at least two jobs have been or will be restored and a third could be placed in the unit. In addition, all photo and marketing department jobs and positions are guaranteed through 2006. AFP also agreed to a list of photo assignments that must be staffed by AFP photographers.

Finally, AFP agreed that the Getty arrangement could not be cited as past practice or precedent in subcontracting.

AFP unit chair Rob Lever, local representative Paul Reilly and TNG-CWA attorney Barbara Camens handled settlement talks for the Guild.

## CWA proposing fewer conventions

**G**uild delegates to the CWA convention this August will be asked to take up a proposal that was rejected some 20 years ago—but which the TNG-CWA sector conference endorsed last summer: doing away with the annual shindig.

CWA is alone among the 26 largest AFL-CIO affiliated unions—each with at least 100,000 members—in holding an annual convention. Only four of the other 25 hold biennial conventions; seven meet only once every five years. CWA delegates will be asked to approve triennial conventions, starting in 2008.

Having an annual convention is a pricey affair—not just for the international, which spends more than \$2 million a pop, but for locals paying lost-times wages, transportation, lodging and per diems for convention delegates. According to an analysis prepared for CWA by the Frequency of Conventions Committee, local costs in 2003 came to \$2.9 million, for a total price tag of approximately \$5 million.

High costs have taken their toll on attendance, too: the 2003 convention had 1,406 delegates representing 1,215 locals, compared with 1,913 delegates from

886 locals in 1982. At the same time, the analysis observes, a single convention that once satisfied the leadership development needs of a highly homogenous union is less suited for CWA's growing diversity: whereas 87% of the union's members worked in telecommunications in 1984, fewer than half do today.

Instead, the committee is recommending that the union hold leadership conferences in the off-years, in conjunction with the annual legislative-political conference in Washington, D.C. In addition, sectors like the Guild would continue to hold their own national and regional meetings.

If convention delegates approve the committee's recommendation this summer, delegates to the 2005 convention will be asked to vote on appropriate constitutional amendments. The 2005 and 2006 conventions would be held, as already scheduled, in Chicago and Las Vegas, respectively, followed by the first leadership conference in 2007. The 2008 convention would be held in Toronto, with subsequent conventions held every third year.

Arnold Amber, Director of TNG-CWA Canada, was one of 10 committee members.

## 'Take a hike,' Sun says

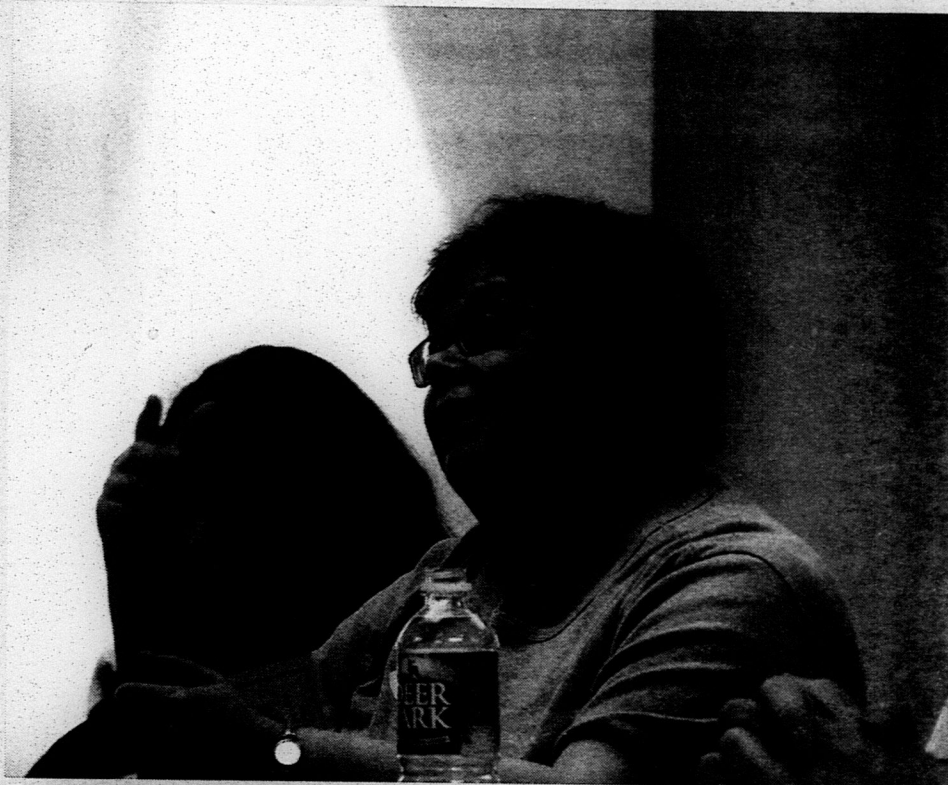
**T**he relationship between the Washington-Baltimore Guild and the Baltimore Sun, so severely tested last year during contract negotiations, appears to be getting more strained. Although the contract that eventually emerged from those talks had few supporters, at least it retained many workplace protections—too many, apparently, for management's liking.

After the Tribune-owned company laid off seven employees in December and an eighth in January, the Guild filed grievances claiming the newspaper had failed to observe

seniority and other contractual provisions. And when that failed to elicit a proper response, the union took the next step in dispute resolution outlined in its contract: it requested arbitration.

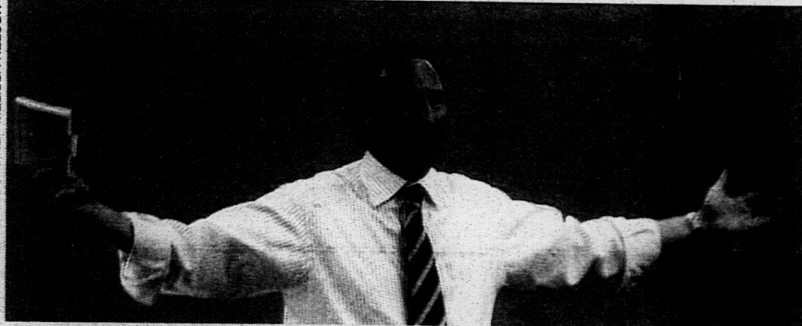
But the Sun wouldn't have any of it. The arbitrator, it announced, had "no authority" to hear the cases and so it wouldn't play.

That left the union with only one remedy. Now it's in U.S. District Court, seeking an order compelling the Sun to observe the contract it jammed down its employees' throats. Irony, huh?



Finance department employee Patricia Gonnella (foreground) asks a question about steward rights; behind her is Patricia Mazurek, editorial assistant supervisor.

ALL PHOTOS BY LOCAL REP MELISSA NELSON



Labor lawyer Neal Goldstein, from Freedman & Lorry, urges the new stewards to be true advocates for the union and its members.

## Taking the long view on bargaining

What's the best way to prepare for contract bargaining? One school of thought is that the best negotiators are those who've been enforcing the contract that's already in place—so with that in mind, the Philadelphia Guild recently set out to recruit and train as many new stewards as it could fit into its union hall.

Thirty-one volunteers responded to the call, veterans and newcomers alike. Their all-day training was aimed at raising

awareness of upcoming negotiations with two Knight Ridder newspapers, the Philadelphia Inquirer and the Daily News, where the collective bargaining agreement expires August, 2006.

The session got down to business quickly, with Gail Lopez-Henriquez, one of the local's lawyers, discussing the union's obligation to represent its members fairly and effectively. Neal Goldstein, her colleague, concentrated on Weingarten rights,

bringing the discussion down to the shop-floor level with several humorous hypothetical situations.

Discussions of overtime particularly hit home with newsroom representatives, who acknowledged their reluctance to claim the extra pay.

The training session was opened by local President Henry Holcomb. Other local officers attending were Carol Rothman, treasurer; Doug Keating, secretary; and Diane Mastrull, unit chair.



Stewards in training listen attentively at the Philadelphia local's hall, on Buttonwood Street. TNG-CWA chair Carol Rothman is in the center background.



# The wolf in reporter's clothing: the rise of pseudo-journalism in America

[Excerpted from the Ruhl Lecture on Ethics, delivered earlier this month at The University of Oregon.]

By John S. Carroll  
Editor, The Los Angeles Times

One reason I was drawn to my chosen career is its informality, in contrast to the real professions. Unlike doctors, lawyers or even jockeys, journalists have no entrance exams, no licenses, no governing board to pass solemn judgment when they transgress. Indeed, it is the constitutional right of every citizen, no matter how ignorant or how depraved, to be a journalist. This wild liberty, this official laxity, is one of journalism's appeals.

I was always taken, too, by the kinds of people who practiced journalism. Like Robert Ruhl, my father, Wallace Carroll, was editor and publisher of a regional newspaper, in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The people he worked with seemed more vital and engaged than your normal run of adults. They talked animatedly about things they were learning—things that were important, things that were absurd. They told hilarious jokes. I understood little about the work they did, except that it entailed typing, but I felt I'd like to hang around with such people when I grew up. Much later, after I'd been a journalist for years, I became aware of an utterance by Walter Lippmann that captured something I especially liked about life in the newsroom. "Journalism," he declared, "is the last refuge of the vaguely talented."

Here is something else I've come to realize: The looseness of the journalistic life, the seeming laxity of the newsroom, is an illusion. Yes, there's informality and humor, but beneath the surface lies something deadly serious. It is a code. Sometimes the code is not even written down, but it is deeply believed in. And, when violated, it is enforced with tribal ferocity.

Consider, for example, the recent events at the New York Times.

Before it was discovered that the young reporter Jayson Blair had fabricated several dozen stories, the news staff of the Times was already unhappy. Many members felt aggrieved at what they considered a high-handed style of editing. I know this because some were applying to me for jobs at the Los Angeles Times. But until Jayson Blair came along, the rumble of discontent remained just that, a low rumble.

When the staff learned that the paper had repeatedly misled its readers, the rumble became something more formidable: an insurrection. The aggrieved party was no longer merely the staff. It was the reader, and that meant the difference between a misdemeanor and a felony. Because the reader had been betrayed, the discontent acquired a moral force so great that it could only be answered by the dismissal of the ranking editors. The Blair scandal was a terrible event, but it also said something very positive about the Times, for it demonstrated beyond question the staff's commitment to the reader.

Several years ago, at the Los Angeles Times, we too had an insurrection. To outsiders the issue seemed arcane, but to the staff it was starkly obvious. The paper had published a fat edition of its Sunday magazine devoted to the opening of the city's new sports and entertainment arena, called the Staples Center. Unknown to its readers—and to the newsroom staff—the paper had

formed a secret partnership with Staples. The agreement was as follows: The newspaper would publish a special edition of the Sunday magazine; the developer would help the newspaper sell ads in it; and the two would split the proceeds. Thus was the independence of the newspaper compromised—and the reader betrayed.

I was not working at the newspaper at the time, but I've heard many accounts of a confrontation in the cafeteria between the staff and the publisher. It was not a civil discussion among respectful colleagues. Several people who told me about it invoked the image of a lynch mob. The Staples episode, too, led to the departure of the newspaper's top brass.

What does all this say about newspaper ethics? It says that certain beliefs are very deeply held. It says that a newspaper's duty to the reader is at the core of those beliefs. And it says that those who transgress against the reader will pay dearly. . . .

Across America, there are offices that resemble newsrooms, and in those offices there are people who resemble journalists, but they are not engaged in journalism. It is not journalism because it does not regard the reader—or, in the case of broadcasting, the listener or the viewer—as a master to be served.

To the contrary, it regards its audience with a cold cynicism. In this realm of pseudo-journalism, the audience is something to be manipulated. And when the audience is misled, no one in the pseudo-newsroom ever offers a peep of protest. . . .

Yes, we will be talking about Fox News. But not solely Fox News. Rather, I'd like to discuss a broader array of talk shows and web sites that have taken on the trappings of journalism but, when studied closely, are not journalism at all.

Superficial examination might place the modern talk show host within a great tradition of opinion journalists—that of Lippmann, Reston, Murrow, Seavreid and others whose are still held in high regard. They were, foremost, journalists, not entertainers or marketers. Their opinions were rigorously grounded in fact. It was the truthfulness of these commentators—their sheer intellectual honesty—that causes their names to endure.

Today, the credibility painstakingly earned by past journalists lends an unearned legitimacy to the new generation of talk show hosts. Cloaked deceptively in the mantle of journalism, today's opinion-brokers are playing a nasty Halloween prank on the public, and indeed on journalism itself.

Let's depart from the generalizations now to hear some eyewitness testimony—my own.

Last fall, my newspaper did something rash. Alone among the news media that covered the California recall election, the Los Angeles Times decided to investigate the character of a candidate for governor named Arnold Schwarzenegger. That caused consternation among the talk shows.

The recall campaign lasted only two months, so we had to hurry in determining whether, as rumored, Schwarzenegger had a habit of mistreating women. It turned out that he did. By the time we nailed the story down, the campaign was almost over, and we had a very tough decision to make: whether to publish the findings a mere five days before the election.

We decided to do it, figuring that choice was better than having to explain lamely to

our readers after Election Day why we had withheld the story. We braced for an avalanche of criticism, and we got it.

What we didn't expect was criticism for things that had never occurred.

Long before we published the story, rumors circulated that we were working on it, and the effort to discredit the newspaper began. On Fox News, the Bill O'Reilly program embarked on a campaign to convince its audience that the Los Angeles Times was an unethical outfit that attacked only Republicans and gave Democrats a free ride. As evidence, O'Reilly said that the paper had overlooked Bill Clinton's misbehavior in Arkansas. Where, he asked, was the L.A. Times on the so-called Troopergate story? Why hadn't it sent reporters to Arkansas? How could it justify an investigation of Schwarzenegger's misbehavior with women and not Clinton's?

I wasn't employed in Los Angeles at the time of Troopergate, but I do have a computer, so, unlike Fox News, I was able to learn that the Los Angeles Times actually was in Arkansas. It sent its best reporters there, and it sent them in force. At one point, it had nine reporters in Little Rock. And when two of them wrote the first Troopergate story to appear in any newspaper, they made the L.A. Times the leader on that subject. Not "a" leader, but the leader. Their story would be cited frequently as other newspapers tried to catch up.

The bogus Troopergate accusation on Fox was only the beginning.

The worst of it originated with a free-lance columnist in Los Angeles, who claimed to have the inside story on unethical behavior at the Times. Specifically, she wrote, the paper had completed its Schwarzenegger story long before election day but maliciously held it for two weeks in order to wreak maximum damage.

Now if this were true, I wouldn't be here at the University of Oregon delivering a lecture on ethics. The reporters and editors involved in the story would have given me the same treatment Jayson Blair's editors got in New York. In all likelihood I would no longer be employed.

But it wasn't true. The idea that the newspaper held the story for two weeks was a fabrication. Nothing resembling it ever occurred.

It is instructive to trace the path of this falsehood. Newspapers have always been magnets for crackpots. Hardly a day goes by that we don't get a report of a UFO visit, or a complaint from someone whose head has been rewired by the CIA, or a tortured theory as to why the newspaper did or didn't publish something. I tend to shrug such things off, figuring that nobody would believe them anyway and that it's unseemly for a large newspaper to quarrel with a reader.

But we live in changed times. Never has falsehood in America had such a large megaphone. Instead of being ignored, the author of the column was booked for repeated appearances on O'Reilly, on CNBC, and even on the generally trustworthy CNN. The accusation was echoed throughout the talk-show world. This is how the tale of the two-

week delay—as false as any words ever penned by Jayson Blair—earned the columnist not infamy but fame. Millions of Americans heard it and no doubt believed it. And why not? It sounded just like journalism.

Let us turn now to a mundane subject: corrections. At the outset, I should state that there are corrections, and then there are corrections.

Recently, my newspaper, in an article about a rapper named Lil' Kim, characterized the MAC-11 as a machine gun. It is actually a submachine gun. This might not mean much here in Eugene, but it's meaningful to music lovers in Los Angeles, so we published a correction. It was an easy correction to make—factual, straightforward and not particularly humiliating to the paper.

Here's an example of a more difficult kind of correction:

In 1979, I became editor of the Lexington Herald in Kentucky, and I soon became aware of skeletons in the newspaper's closet. As I got to know the staff, we used to joke that someday, along with the routine corrections on page two, we should run the following item:

A CLARIFICATION: It has come to the editor's attention that the Herald neglected to cover the Civil Rights movement. We regret the omission.

We never published that one, though we probably should have made amends in some fashion, for corrections large and small are essential to our credibility.

Like a factory on a river, daily journalism is an industry that produces pollution.

Our pollution comes in the form of errors. America's river of public discourse—if I may extend this figure of speech—is polluted by our mistakes. A good newspaper cleans up after itself.

Every fact a newspaper publishes goes into a database. So do the errors. A

good newspaper corrects those errors and appends the corrections to the original stories, so that the errors are not repeated. Thus we keep the river clean.

Last year at the Los Angeles Times, we published 2,759 corrections. Some of you may be shocked that a newspaper could make so many mistakes. Others may be impressed that the paper is so assiduous in correcting itself.

It has now been six months since Fox and the other talk shows told their audiences that the Los Angeles Times did not cover the Troopergate scandal. It has been six months since they accused the newspaper of a journalistic felony by timing its story about Arnold Schwarzenegger. These are simple factual matters, easily provable. Nevertheless, I'm getting the feeling that the corrections are not forthcoming.

As editor of the Los Angeles Times, I'm not happy about it, but at least I know the truth. The deeper offense is against those who don't—the listeners who credit the "facts" they hear on Fox and the talk shows.

In the larger scheme, these two falsehoods represent two relatively minor discharges of pollution into America's river of public discourse. I suspect there are many

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**'We live in changed times. Never has falsehood in America had such a large megaphone.'**





## LOOKING AHEAD

# Amid the angst, reason for hope

By Linda Foley, President

One of my favorite movies is a neat little film about a boy and his dog called "My Dog Skip." The part that always gets me is when Skip, badly beaten as he heroically defended his master, Willie, from a gang of neighborhood bullies, lies near death on the veterinarian's table. The vet intones, "All we can do now is wait."

Skip's young master stays with him all night, crying himself to sleep. Just as dawn breaks, Skip stirs and then lifts his head just enough to lick the kid's tear-stained face. "He's alive! He's alive!" Willie shouts. No matter how many times I see that movie, I clap and cheer for Skip's miraculous recovery.

Lately, I've kind of felt that way about the press corps. Amid all the 24-hour talking heads, corporate abuses by media giants and charges of plagiarism and unethical journalists, we recently saw how independent reporting still can illuminate injustice and hold public officials accountable.

I'm referring, of course, to the horrible revelations of abuse of Iraqi prisoners at the hands of U.S. soldiers. Like most Americans—like most human beings—I too was ashamed and disgusted by the mental and physical torture displayed in those photographs.

But I have to say I also felt proud, not of my country or its military, but of the journalists who broke ranks (so to speak) and revealed these injustices. Seymour Hersh, who decades earlier had uncovered another military atrocity by reporting on the slayings at My Lai during the Vietnam War, did a thoroughly credible, straightforward job of reporting these latest military excesses in the New Yorker magazine.

"Sixty Minutes II" finally went ahead and aired those awful photographs despite pleas from the highest-ranking officers of the Pentagon to hold off. True, CBS did agree to a somewhat troubling two-week delay at the request of Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Richard Myers, but there was never any question that the news show even-

tually would air the story.

Likewise, the press's follow-up has been pretty good. Major news outlets have stayed with the story, pressing for further official investigations and answers. President Bush and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld have been pressured to assume responsibility for the chain of command. Further evidence of systemic abuse, in reports by the Red Cross and Amnesty International, has been brought to light. Official explanations and attempts to scapegoat underlings have been questioned and probed by many reporters across the country.

The Bush Administration and the Pentagon clearly were on the defensive. Even the Republican-controlled Congress assumed (at least somewhat) its constitutional role as the legislative counterbalance to potential misdeeds in the Executive branch. That's the first time that's happened since Sept. 11, 2001.

So Rumsfeld was right when he told the Senate Armed Services Committee, "The system worked. The system worked"—although Rumsfeld, of course, was talking about a different "system," one that actually didn't work in this case. In fact, that system failed miserably.

But the system that envisions journalists as watchdogs of power did work, at least enough to raise some questions about the conduct of government officials and their policies. As Bill Moyers recently wrote, the First Amendment "was to be a kind of firewall between the politicians who hold power and the press that should hold power accountable."

There remain plenty of problems with how today's media conglomerates try to control information. Just ask Michael Moore or Ted Koppel. And journalism continues to be mired in a crisis of confidence and credibility.

But at least the profession has shown it's capable of lifting its head and barking at government bullies. That's reason enough to clap and cheer.



"Well, what do you think?"

## Rise of pseudo-journalism

Continued from page 6

others, and on much more consequential subjects—the war in Iraq, for example.

You may be familiar with a study published last October on public misconceptions about the war in Iraq. One of those misconceptions was that Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction had been found.

Another was that links had been proven between Iraq and Al Qaeda.

A third was that world opinion favored the idea of the U.S. invading Iraq.

Among people who primarily watched Fox News, 80% believed one or more of those myths. That's 25 percentage points higher than the figure for viewers of CNN—and 57 percentage points higher than that for people who got their news from public broadcasting.

How could Fox have left its audience so deeply in the dark? I'm inspired to squeeze one last bit of mileage out of our river metaphor: If Fox News were a factory situated, say, in Minneapolis, it would be trailing a plume of rotting fish all the way to New Orleans.

If pseudo-journalism is not journalism, what is it? Where did it come from? Will it last?

Some view the difference between the talk shows and traditional journalism in

political terms, as a simple quarrel between left and right, between liberal and conservative. Those differences exist, but they're not of great consequence.

What we're seeing is a difference between journalism and pseudo-journalism, between journalism and propaganda. The former seeks earnestly to serve the public. The latter seeks to manipulate it.

The propaganda technique that has invaded journalism is of a particular breed. It springs not from journalistic roots but from modern politics—specifically, that woeful subset known as attack politics.

In attack politics, the idea is to "define" one's rival in the eyes of the public. This means repeating derogatory information so often that the rival's reputation is ruined. Sometimes the information is true; sometimes it is misleading; sometimes it is simply false. A citizen who enters politics these days must face the prospect of being "defined" by smear artists equipped with computers, polls and attack ads.

It is the netherworld of attack politics that gave us Roger Ailes, the architect of Fox News. Having spent much of his career smearing politicians, he now refers to himself as a journalist, but his bag of tricks remains the same.

It is consoling to note that demagogues on the airwaves have come and gone ever since commercial broadcasting began. Such figures as Father Coughlin and Senator McCarthy have made their sordid appeals to the angry and the gullible and have been duly swept into the dustbin. Over time, I believe, the public will become increasingly aware of the discrepancy between what they're told by pseudo-journalists and what turns out to be the truth. They may even grow weary of the talk show persona—the schoolyard bully we all know so well.

Recently, our newspaper had the good fortune of winning five Pulitzer Prizes. Between us, I'm not sure we're worthy of all that, but we won't turn them down. I wonder how the news of the awards struck the talk-show fans who know the Los Angeles Times only for its ethical outrages.

Surely they must have been scratching their heads over that one.

But they probably didn't worry about it long. My guess is that they sat back on their sofas and consoled themselves with more soothing thoughts, such as the way President Bush saved America from catastrophe by seizing those weapons of mass destruction in Iraq while the whole world cheered.

## How politically active should we be?

By Kory Murakami  
President, Pacific Northwest Guild

In a huge political year, where does the Guild stand on politics? On one hand, we're a union. And as such, we have a stake in the laws and policies that affect workers. We have certain values about social justice, anti-racism, women's rights and other issues.

But we're a union that represents many journalists. And journalists are supposed to remain objective. That objectivity is the linchpin of our credibility.

The second that we lose our credibility, newspapers are doomed. Fewer people will read the papers and we will lose jobs. That's bad for the values we uphold, for democracy, for the people's right to know. Losing jobs is not good for our union, either.

So what do we do? It troubles me that we, as a Guild, have no formal policy on politics. In practice, we've tried to maintain a balance, leaning heavily towards staying

out of politics. We've been asked at various times to endorse candidates, to distribute political materials to our members with our recommendation to vote for a certain candidate or an initiative. We have refused, but the lack of a policy leads to certain questions. We do not endorse candidates, but our executive director, as a delegate to the King County Labor Council, is involved in deciding who the labor council endorses. Is that appropriate?

We do not send political mailings to our members, but our parent organization, the Communications Workers of America, does. We do not contribute to candidates or parties, but we do contribute to quasi-political groups like Jobs for Justice, which holds rallies and is definitely involved in political issues. Of course there is no quid pro quo, but is there an appearance of a conflict?

In 2003, we were involved in hearings held by the Federal Communications Commission on proposed changes to media ownership regulations. The papers covered

it. It is an issue in which we have a vested interest. Union leaders, including Guild President Linda Foley, testified at hearings and union officials provided comments to media outlets.

Is the public dialogue best served by us sitting it out to avoid any appearance of conflict? Is it best served by us lending our knowledge to the debate? Is the question most appropriately handled by the newspapers themselves in deciding coverage?

Let me make the issue more complicated. We don't represent only journalists. We represent the people who deliver the paper. We represent the people who sell ads. So by staying out of politics, are we unwittingly depriving our non-journalist members of having a union that represents their interests in every way possible? Or by working for a newspaper—whose survival is based on credibility—are we best representing them by staying neutral? Are there situations in which we should get involved? What are they?

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: June 11.) Letters and articles proposed for publication may be e-

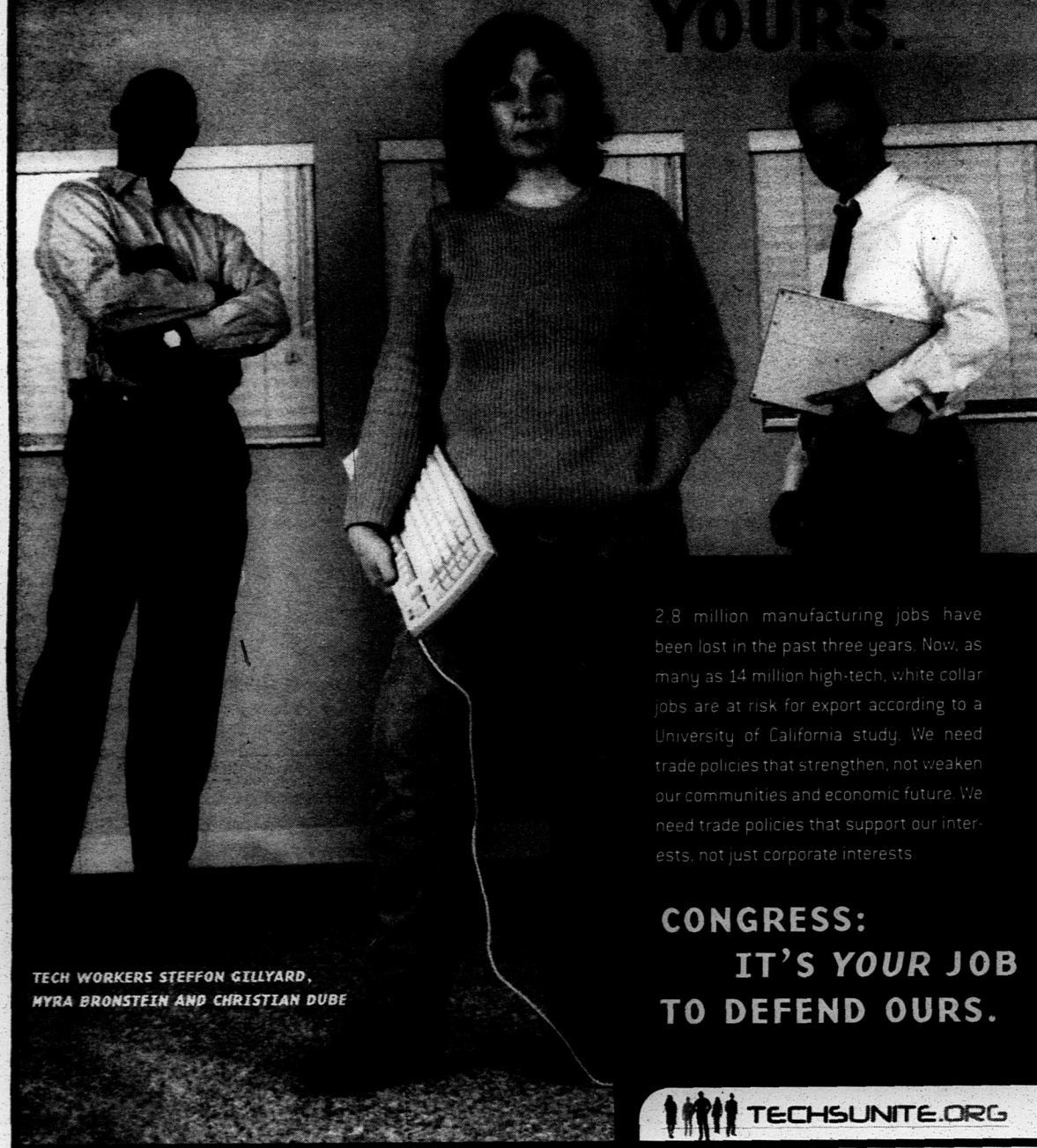
mailed to the editor at [azipser@cwa-union.org](mailto:azipser@cwa-union.org).

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



CONGRESS—  
IF OUR JOBS  
ARE AT RISK

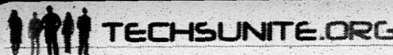
...SO ARE  
YOURS.



TECH WORKERS STEFFON GILLYARD,  
MYRA BRONSTEIN AND CHRISTIAN DUBE

2.8 million manufacturing jobs have been lost in the past three years. Now, as many as 14 million high-tech, white collar jobs are at risk for export according to a University of California study. We need trade policies that strengthen, not weaken our communities and economic future. We need trade policies that support our interests, not just corporate interests.

**CONGRESS:  
IT'S YOUR JOB  
TO DEFEND OURS.**



## Passing the hat to send a message

With 560,000 high-tech jobs already exported overseas, and at least 3.3 million expected to follow by 2020, off-shoring has become a big-ticket item for CWA and for TNG's high-tech affiliate, WashTech. CWA President Morton Bahr did a commercial for West Wing that aired one-week after that show had a fictional CWA president deploring the phenomenon. Now the union is trying to drum up donations to run an ad, shown at left, in major daily newspapers.

Where the ad will be placed depends on how much dough rolls in: a 3/4-page ad in The New York Times costs \$90,000, \$70,000 in Business Week. WashTech is asking for contributions of \$25 or more, and will be accepting them until July 15; the ad is to be placed the week of July 21. As of May 17, the local had raised \$9,300.

Checks may be made out to WashTech and sent to: Washington Alliance of Technology Workers, 2900 Eastlake Avenue East #200, Seattle, WA 98102. To monitor fund-raising progress, visit [www.washtech.org/wt/outsourcing\\_ad.php](http://www.washtech.org/wt/outsourcing_ad.php).

## Tentative deal set at CP/BN

A tentative agreement has been reached between the Canadian Media Guild and Canadian Press/Broadcast News for a two-year contract that includes a 2% wage increase retroactive to Jan. 1.

A ratification vote is expected the first week of June.

The proposed contract includes a wage re-opener that will bring both parties to the table next February, a first at the news service. "We agreed to the concept," explained a message from the bargaining committee, "because management told us it considers the business landscape fraught with uncertainty, making it difficult to predict the company's state of finances for the coming year."

On the plus side, the new agreement includes a new weekend premium that would kick in July 1 and improved dental benefits. Among non-monetary gains is adoption of two separate policies on misconduct and performance problems, each with clearly delineated procedures. "Having separate policies makes clear that performance problems need to be addressed and resolved in a very different way from misconduct issues that could result in discipline," the committee explained.

## THE GUILD Reporter

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## DAYBOOK

New England District Council,  
June 5-6, Manchester, NH

2004 UNITY Convention,  
Aug. 4-8, Washington, DC

TNG Sector Conference,  
Aug. 26-28, Anaheim, CA

CWA Annual Minority Caucus,  
Aug. 26-29, Anaheim, CA

CWA Annual Convention,  
Aug. 30-31, Anaheim, CA

CWA Bargaining Institute,  
Sept. 26-30, Silver Spring, MD

Safety and Health Conference,  
Oct. 24-27, Baltimore, MD

Great Lakes District Council,  
Nov. 6-7, Detroit, MI

Can't find a particular event?  
Send Daybook items to:  
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## FROM THE MORGUE

### Seventy years ago this month:

The Philadelphia and Camden Guild negotiates the first contract of any Guild local, reaching accord with J. David Stern, publisher of the Philadelphia Record. . . . Guild leaders Heywood Brown and Jonathan Eddy charge the American Newspaper Publishers Association with obscuring compensation statistics in an effort to conceal "shocking wage levels." . . . Marlen Pew, editor of the trade magazine Editor & Publisher, warns 700 members of the Newspaper Guild of New York to stay out of the union movement or see the end of journalism as an independent profession.

### Fifty years ago this month:

Following a failed effort 15 years earlier, the Guild again attempts to unionize editorial employees of the Courier-Journal and Louisville Times in Louisville, Kentucky. . . . A Guild strike against the two dailies in Wilkes-Barre, Penn. enters its eighth week, as its strike paper nears a financial break-even point. . . . The Guild Reporter reprints an article by historian and Pulitzer Prize winner Bruce Catton, written 15 years earlier, defending labor unions as essential to workers' self-preservation.

### Twenty-five years ago this month:

An administrative law judge recommends that the U.S. Attorney General permit a joint operating agreement between the Cincinnati Post and the Cincinnati Enquirer. . . . Following a Guild complaint that it has been paying a woman less than it pays a male co-worker doing the same work, Copley's San Diego Union and Tribune evens things out—by cutting the man's pay. The Guild files for arbitration.



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