

THE GUILD Reporter

April 20, 2007

A Publication of The Newspaper Guild and The Communications Workers of America • Volume 74, Number 4

#BXNBRNS
(C) 0507
PERIODICALS ACQUISITIONS
PROQUEST INFO AND LEARNING
300 N ZEEB RD # 1346
ANN ARBOR MI 48103-1553
|||||



Locked-out employees of the Toledo Blade, picketing in Pittsburgh, include (l to r) Richard Momsen, Tim Siwajek, Mike McQuade and Joe Kinsey.

Blade workers hit back Take their fight to Pittsburgh as help pours in

An open letter to the Block family, the Pittsburgh-based owners of the Toledo Blade, was hand-delivered March 29 by Lillian Covarrubias, president of the Toledo Newspaper Guild, and Ron Garcia, president of the Toledo Council of Newspaper Unions—as well as more than 50 other locked-out Blade employees and their supporters.

"We apparently couldn't make ourselves heard where we live, so we had to come to where they live," said Larry Vellequette, the council's spokesman, in explaining why the

group took a five-hour bus ride to deliver its message.

While pickets marched outside the company's headquarters, a delegation met with Dave Beihoff, Block Communications vice president for newspapers, to express its concerns. More than 200 employees represented by five unions—although not those in the Guild—have been locked-out for nearly nine months as management's representative, the Tennessee law firm of King & Ballow, follows a scorched-earth bargaining strategy.

Continued on page 5

Throw The Blade Out at Home!

Blade Workers: No Strikes

So WHY ARE WE OUT?

Unions have continued to demonstrate good faith and recognition of *The Blade's* financial situation. Blade workers have repeatedly offered millions of dollars in concession including:

- Dramatic wage cuts in existing base wages;
- Job reductions across all jurisdictions;
- To pay up to 20% more for the cost of health care (we already pay about 2/3 of the cost);
- Reductions in vacation for existing employees and future hires;
- Suspension of two additional paid days off for the life of the contract; and
- A meaningful Management Rights provision that allows the Company greater flexibility between jurisdictions to maximize efficiency.

The Blade refused all offers.

Seattle JOA gets decade reprieve

The terse, two-sentence e-mail from Yoko Kuramoto-Eidsøe, president of the Pacific Northwest Guild, said it all: "It's over! Both papers live to fight another day!"

"It" referred to a years-long effort by the Seattle Times to terminate a joint operating agreement with the Hearst-owned Seattle Post-Intelligencer—which, had it succeeded, almost certainly would have meant the demise of one of the newspapers and the loss of scores of Guild-represented jobs. But just moments before an already delayed arbitration to resolve the issue was about to begin, the two protagonists announced they'd struck a deal.

Press releases issued by both companies April 16 broke the news in somewhat detail-free fashion. The announcements made clear that some amount of money was changing hands, that Hearst was relinquishing its claim on 32% of the Times' profits if the P-I were shut down, and that the Times, owned by the Blethen family, would not try to end the arrangement before 2016.

But it took reporting by the Seattle press to fill in the blanks. Notably, the settlement includes a \$49 million payment by the Times to buy Hearst's 32% interest, and a \$25 million payment by Hearst to the Times to keep the JOA going for at least the next decade. Net gain: \$24 million to Hearst.

The settlement also includes provisions that a Times press release described as

"aimed at fostering a renewed constructive business relationship between the two parties," which turned out to be shorthand for the Times responding to Hearst's complaints that it gave less-than-equal attention when distributing and marketing the P-I. For example, among the exhibits Hearst was expected to introduce was a photograph, taken during the Guild strike in late 2000, showing Times and P-I newsracks side-by-side—both filled with the Times.

Under the terms of the JOA, the Times has been responsible for all business aspects of P-I ad sales, production and distribution. The new agreement maintains that division, but stipulates that the Times will name a senior circulation executive responsible solely for the Post-Intelligencer, will give the P-I more control over its own promotion and will repaint its delivery trucks to display both newspapers' logos.

The settlement also includes several concessions to Hearst, among them an option that allows conversion to tabloid format and a lower cover price, as well as veto power over news-hole size. It also settles all outstanding litigation between the two companies and requires any future disagreements to be settled through binding arbitration.

Guild officials were delighted with the outcome, with Kuramoto-Eidsøe contending, "This is the best outcome for everyone: The city keeps two fine newspapers and our members keep working."

Card check swells IAPE ranks by 219

More than 200 Dow Jones employees at the company's largest non-unionized location, in Harborside, New Jersey, are now represented by IAPE, TNG-CWA Local 1096. The employees' representation rights were certified Friday, April 13 by an arbitrator who examined signature cards collected during a months-long card-check campaign recognized by IAPE's contract with the Dow Jones.

That contract, ironically, expired several months ago but had been extended by mutual agreement while bargaining continued. More recently, Dow Jones announced it would not renew the latest extension after it expired April 9; IAPE submitted the signature cards it had collected April 6.

Harborside employees "realized they are impacted with all the rest of us by issues at the bargaining table, and that we need to stand together," a jubilant Steve Yount, IAPE's president, said in explaining the results. IAPE had tried to organize the

Harborside employees at least four times over the past decade, but had been defeated by company assurances that Harborside didn't need a union because its employees would receive the same benefits as IAPE members without having to pay dues.

The ongoing contract negotiations, which have dragged on since October, may have served as a wake-up call. Among the key bargaining issues are management proposals for "drastic cuts in our health care and prescription drug benefits that would substantially reduce our income," Yount said, as well as loss of job protections.

The 219 new IAPE members, representing more than a 10% increase in the local's ranks, are primarily staffers for Dow Jones' newswires, as well as some IT and sales staff. Working directly across the Hudson River from Dow Jones' editorial headquarters, they provided the company with a backup workforce in case of an IAPE strike. That safety blanket is now gone.

Inside this issue



Eugene e-mail case could set national precedent page 3

Reviews of new books on immigrants, pack reporting . . . page 6

Notice of annual per capita increase page 8

Guild, CWA issue convention calls

Vote set on diversifying board

Both the Guild and CWA have issued notice of their annual gatherings—the Guild's 72nd and CWA's 69th—to be held this year in Toronto. The TNG-CWA sector conference will run July 13-14 at the Fairmont Royal York hotel, followed July 16-17 by the CWA convention at the Metro Toronto Convention Center.

Registration for the TNG-CWA conference will be conducted July 12 from 4-6 p.m., with late and final registration between 7-8 a.m. July 13; no credentials will be accepted after 8 a.m. Copies of any resolutions to be submitted at the sector conference must be received by TNG-CWA Secretary-Treasurer Bernie Lunzer at national headquarters by June 28. June 28 also is the deadline for receipt of delegate credentials at national headquarters.

A council of councils meeting, for those interested in learning how district councils operate, will be held July 12 at 4 p.m., followed by a new delegates' forum at 6. An informal reception will be held 7-9 p.m., with official proceedings to begin promptly at 9 a.m. on Friday, July 13.

Registration for the CWA convention will be held from 8:30 a.m. until 3 p.m. July 15, and again 7:30-9 a.m. the following morning, at the convention center.

Among the convention's potentially most controversial agenda items will be a proposal, growing out of convention action last year, to add four board seats to increase representation of women and minorities. As recommended by a committee chaired by CWA Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling, the four new "diversity" members would be elected at large within four new regions of somewhat equal (ranging from 115,000 to 154,000) numbers of CWA members.

The new board members would not be CWA vice presidents and could not serve as convention delegates, but would have the same policy-making responsibilities

and voting rights as other CWA board members. Although their expenses and lost wages for attending board meetings would be paid by CWA, they would keep their existing jobs.

If the proposal is approved at convention, the first four diversity positions will be filled by the CWA Executive Board, to serve until the 2008 convention. Thereafter, nominations will be sought from each of the four regions. Although the proposal stipulates that of the four seats "at least three should be persons of color and at least two should be women," a Q-and-A issued by the committee acknowledges that federal law requires "that [all] members in good standing be eligible to run for union offices."

As Easterling recently told a Washington conference of CWA members, "These changes are long overdue." Of the 19 people on the current board, four are women and only one is non-white, contrasted with a rank-and-file membership that is at least 43% female and 25% racial minority. "Simple equity demands we shatter glass ceilings and that our governing body reflects our membership," Easterling declared.

Guild seeking award nominee

Among the traditions observed at each TNG-CWA sector conference is a presentation of the Guild Service Award, which is open to local members who serve in an unpaid capacity as officers or in other responsible positions. As summarized in a call for nominees, "Its purpose is to recognize and encourage the development of local Guild leadership, and it may be viewed as a counterpart to the Guild's Heywood Brown Award for journalistic achievement."

Nominations for the 2007 award may be submitted to Guild headquarters through May 11 and will be judged by members of the TNG-CWA Executive Council. Nominees must be sponsored by their locals with their names and supporting documentation submitted by the local executive board, representative assembly or by vote of a general membership meeting.

The winner will be announced at the sector conference and will receive a scholarship of up to \$2,000 for a course in trade union education "appropriate to the winner." In addition to covering course fees, the scholarship may be applied to the costs of room, meals and travel associated with the course, as well as lost time.

NEWSDOKU

The winner of the February Newsdoku, our last, was Andrew Duerling, a retired member of the Providence Newspaper Guild. We're still trying to figure out what to send him as a prize.

Guild briefs . . .

First switch, then negotiate

Sixteen employees of CJRC, a private radio station in Gatineau, Quebec, recently switched to the Canadian Media Guild after a period of representation by UFCW Canada and shortly thereafter ratified a new contract. The group was seeking a union with media expertise, according to interim unit president Jean-Marc Dufresne. The three-year contract, retroactive to 2005, includes 2.5% annual salary increases and a \$600 signing bonus.

Detroit Guild in the dark

The Detroit Newspaper Guild recently found itself operating in the dark—thanks to a landlord who had fallen behind on paying his utility bills. DTE Energy turned off the juice April 4 to the landmark Book Tower, the Guild's home for the past 30 years. Although a generator was brought in the next day to keep the elevators running, full power wasn't restored until April 6. Lou Mieczko, the local's president, said the Guild office is moving to another downtown location.

NLRB sets Hawaii trial date

Thirteen unfair labor practice charges against the Hawaii Tribune Herald have been scheduled by the National Labor Relations Board for a June 19 trial in Hilo. The charges, which the NLRB is prosecuting based on complaints filed by the Hawaii Newspaper Guild in 2006, include unlawfully firing reporters Hunter Bishop and Dave Smith and suspending reporter Peter Sur for concerted and protected union activity, as well as unlawfully banning union representatives from company facilities.

Gannett slapped with ULP

Guild-represented reporters at the Democrat and Chronicle in Rochester, N.Y., have filed an unfair labor practice complaint with the National Labor Relations Board against parent company Gannett over its decision to declare impasse, halt contract talks and unilaterally impose contract terms. The Rochester Guild, which represents some 100 reporters, photographers, designers and copy editors, has been in contract negotiations with Gannett for 14 years. A main bone of contention for the union is the company's refusal to let Guild members join its 401(k) retirement plan.

Looks like a deal in Victoria

The Victoria Joint Council of Newspaper Unions has reached tentative agreement on a new four-year contract with the Times Colonist that provides wage increases of 2.5% in each of the first two years, 2.75% in the third year and 3% in the fourth. Ratification votes were being scheduled at press time and included a separate provision that would divert a portion of the increases toward a pension upgrade for those in the pension plan.

Unions as sweatshops, too

Against a backdrop of a federal investigation into alleged wage and hour violations affecting as many as 180 workers, the Chicago Newspaper Guild has negotiated an initial two-year contract on behalf of the 27 employees of SEIU Local 880. A complaint filed with the Dept. of Labor alleges that the Service Employees International Union routinely required organizers and interns to work between 55 and 80 hours a week without paying overtime. Contract details were not available at press time.

CBC announces more layoffs

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation gave its employees more bad news April 4, as it told an additional 34 Canadian Media Guild members in eight different locations that their jobs are being eliminated. The cuts, primarily in English television, bring to more than 100 the total number of CBC jobs eliminated by June 1. Guild leaders were to appear before the Parliamentary Heritage Committee on April 20 to urge adoption of a strong public mandate for the CBC—and the funding to meet it.

Cautious nod for 'info center'

Three Indianapolis Newspaper Guild officers have given Star management a "conceptual buy-in" for its proposed transformation of the newsroom into an "information center." The conditional approval is based on management assurances that the company has "no immediate plans" to have editorial staffers do advertorial work—although local leaders added that management "said it could not close the door to that option permanently." Management, meanwhile, has dropped its insistence on changing a contract provision that bars discipline of employees for inadequately performing "secondary" or "tertiary" job responsibilities. Management also assured the union it does not foresee any layoffs, salary cuts or replacement of higher-paying jobs with lower-paying ones when implementing the transformation.

First responders tripped up

The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel has quietly eliminated its "First Responder" program, in which downtown employees were trained to use first aid kits, stationed throughout the building, in the crucial minutes before medical personnel could respond. Instead of summoning the trained employees via pagers, lobby guards will now respond directly—potentially resulting in longer response times, say Guild officials. As noted in a local publication, "The program has been twisting in the wind for the last couple of years, with no retraining for responders whose training had lapsed and no effort to replace those who left."

Amster-damn talks under way

Freshly opened contract talks at the Amsterdam News already have been characterized by the New York Guild as an attempt "to gut our contract with proposals that would leave us little more than our hats for handouts." Among management's demands are a freeze on minimum pay, the right to assign unit work to non-union employees and employee payment of the entire 20% hike in health insurance costs—even though management pays nothing. Management also wants to freeze severance pay, which already is prorated at 1995 rates, and wants to eliminate family health coverage for newly hired employees under the Guild contract.

Tentative deal at AFL-CIO

Tentative agreement on a new 30-month contract for Guild-covered employees of the AFL-CIO has been reported by the Washington-Baltimore Guild. The new pact, negotiated over a six-month period, includes a 2.75% wage increase retroactive to Oct. 1, followed by increases of 2.85% and 2.75% on subsequent anniversary dates. The agreement also establishes parity for PFTs (Part-time, "Fund," and "Temporary" employees), who would be eligible for the same healthcare insurance as full-time Guild-covered employees; moreover, a PFT's status would automatically be changed to "regular" after three years' employment.

San Jose co-workers pitch in

Responding generously to December's layoffs, 99 Guild members at the San Jose Mercury News and others contributed more than \$15,000 to an emergency fund for their laid-off colleagues. Only one person had tapped into the fund as of mid-March, although Luther Jackson, the Guild's executive officer, worried that demand would grow quickly as severance payments run out and those who lost their jobs became responsible for paying their own health care premiums after March 1.

Cincinnati local VP dies

Lawrence A. Humbert, a former vice president of the Cincinnati Newspaper Guild, died earlier this month at the age of 80. A retired advertising salesman with The Cincinnati Post and the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, he also was a member of the Social Jokers Club of Northern Kentucky and of the Catholic Diocesan Theatre Guild.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

The Guild Reporter (ISSN: 00175404) (CPC # 1469371) is issued monthly, generally at four-week intervals, at 501 Third St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20001.

Periodicals postage paid in Washington, D.C., and additional mailing offices. Printed in the U.S.

Postmaster: Send address changes or requests to stop delivery to: The Guild Reporter, c/o Melané Miller, Communications Workers of America, 501 Third St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20001

Address changes and requests to stop delivery also may be sent by e-mail to: duesinfo@cwa-union.org.

Subscription: \$20 a year in U.S. and Canada, \$30 a year overseas. Send subscription orders to: Tina Harrison, TNG-CWA, 501 Third Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001

Single copies: \$1.50

NLRB hears pivotal Eugene e-mail case

By Mark Gruenberg
Editor, Press Associates Inc.

In May and August, 2000, Suzi Prozanski, a copy editor with the Eugene (Ore.) Register-Guard and president of The Eugene Newspaper Guild, TNG/CWA Local 37194, sat down at her computers—the first time at the paper, the second time at the Guild office—and unwittingly stirred up a hornets' nest.

What Prozanski did was very simple: She typed two e-mail messages to her colleagues, about 150 of whom are represented by the Guild. In doing so, she triggered a labor-law case that may affect employees throughout the U.S.

The first e-mail was typed May 4 on a newsroom computer and reported on a rally that had occurred three days earlier. The second e-mail, sent three months later from a union computer but addressed to Prozanski's newsroom colleagues at their workplace e-mail addresses, asked her co-workers to wear green in solidarity during contract bargaining.

Register-Guard management responded by invoking a policy that bars any personal use of company computers—including e-mail—and threatened to discipline Prozanski. That would have been a first, since management had never disciplined anyone in the four years since it had imposed the policy, so the Guild fought back.

Unions, the Guild argued, have a right to send e-mail to members and non-members in the same way they have a right to distribute flyers and bulletins. Censoring such communications violates federal labor law. Not so, responded management, asserting its property rights in deciding how its resources may be used.

Now, nearly seven years later, those

arguments are being pondered by the National Labor Relations Board. In a Washington hearing March 27, attorneys for TNG-CWA and the AFL-CIO contended that e-mail should be treated like other common forms of communication that labor law allows workers to use in discussing labor issues. The NLRB's general counsel sided with the Guild, calling the paper's policy too broad.

The Register-Guard and its business allies, meanwhile, argued that e-mail is under company control and that businesses have the right to ban non-business use of their property, including union use. The board's administrative law judge who first heard the case had agreed, although he also had ruled that the newspaper broke labor law by selectively disciplining Prozanski for violating its policy while ignoring earlier non-business use of its e-mail system.

"The board has generally found that an employer may validly limit employee use of its communications equipment," the administrative law judge, John J. McCarrick, wrote in his initial ruling in late 2001. "The board has held employees have no statutory right to use an employer's equipment or media," and had found "no violation in non-discriminatory limits on the use of employer bulletin boards, telephones, public address systems, video equipment and e-mail."

But the board's general counsel, siding with the union, said the Register-Guard's ban is overly broad. E-mail, the general counsel's office said, is "a work space" for workers, and labor law protects workers' rights to free and uncensored communications in work spaces.

"While e-mail is relatively new in the workplace, communications policies are not," the general counsel argued. "E-mail clearly falls within the framework of work-

Court: e-mail rules must be even-handed

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit has ruled that a newspaper company that barred employees from using its e-mail system to discuss union matters while permitting other non-business uses violated the National Labor Relations Act. The 2-1 decision affirms a National Labor Relations Board order against the Media General-owned Richmond Times-Dispatch, which in July 2000 told local union officers to stop using its e-mail system to discuss union matters. Although Media General had a corporate policy forbidding employee use of its e-mail for non-business purposes, the NLRB found that employees routinely used the system for messages related to charities, social events, and personal matters without being disciplined.

In upholding the board's conclusion, the court emphasized that Media General made no attempt to enforce its e-mail policy—except against those sending union-related messages. "The e-mail system was frequently used by both hourly employees and managers to convey news about the employees' personal lives, to arrange social events and to inform employees about charities," the court observed. "Restriction of the union's access to this communication channel, while others were allowed unfettered access, is an unfair labor practice that is prohibited by the NLRA."

place communication and should be consistent with existing law on this point."

That law was established by two Supreme Court cases, one covering solicitation of workers and the other covering distribution of material. In the solicitation case, the court said workers could not be barred during non-working times from approaching other workers to ask about joining unions—even in the plant. To cut off all communications at all times would break labor law, the justices ruled.

When it comes to solicitation, "inconvenience, or even some dislocation of (employers') property rights may be necessary to safeguard the right to collective bargaining," the general counsel, quoting the justices, told the NLRB.

But distributing anything is another matter. Since a flyer is meant to be read, or re-read—as opposed to a momentary solicitation, such as asking someone to sign a card—employers may exert more control over its potentially disruptive distribution, the high court decided.

From a union perspective, e-mail is comparable to solicitation: a communication that can be presented and acted upon in an instant, not something permanent. The difference between e-mail and a flyer, the board's attorney contended, is that the recipient can respond electronically, which in his view makes it comparable to a telephone call.

Since e-mail is a work space for workers, the solicitation case means "there is a presumption that a policy that prohibits workplace communication during non-working times is illegal," and the Register-Guard did just that, the counsel concluded.

The Register-Guard and its business backers challenged the ruling on every ground, arguing that e-mail is not a work space, and thus is under employer control. And they argued that e-mail is "distribution" and the employer can control that, too. In his brief, the company's attorney even called the Guild's notices "spam."

No date was given for a board ruling on the case.

Lipton writes '30' after 25 years

Barry Lipton, the longest-tenured president in the history of the Newspaper Guild of New York, is calling it quits.

Lipton told his executive board April 12 that he will retire June 1 after 25 years in office, including two years as secretary-treasurer and 23 as president. "It has been a long ride—very difficult at times, of course—but I wouldn't have given up the opportunity for anything to have done this work and to have met such great people who are dedicated to making union members' working lives better," Lipton said. "I really loved what I've been doing."

Nominations of candidates to complete Lipton's unexpired term, which ends next Jan. 1, were to be made at a Representative Assembly meeting April 19. Nominations for a full three-year term will be made in the fall.

Bill O'Meara, the local's secretary-treasurer, announced his candidacy to succeed Lipton immediately following Lipton's announcement and nominations for his slot also were to be accepted April 19. Peter Szekely, a Reuters reporter who has been a TNG-CWA vice-



Lipton in 2002 with the District One Union Builder's Award.

president for the past 12 years, simultaneously announced he will seek O'Meara's seat. If no other candidates stepped forward, the duo would be declared the winners April 26.

Lipton was a financial advertising rep for the New York Times when he won election as secretary-treasurer in 1982. His subsequent tenure as president, he said, was marked "by bringing unity among warring factions in the local, unprecedented expansion in local membership and bolstering the Guild's ability to withstand strikes and countless threats to undermine the union movement at the local."

His administration also oversaw the sale of the Guild's building and move to its present quarters, at 1501 Broadway. Lipton also led more than 150 contract negotiations and directed countless job actions to help secure those agreements.

Tribune Co. goes to Zell

But there are a lot of 'buts' built into this deal

The roundelay known as the newspaper game added a new verse with the announcement by Tribune Co. that it finally has a buyer, Samuel Zell, a Chicago businessman who made his billions in real estate. The sale, which won't be completed for at least several months and which could still be called off if Tribune coughs up a \$25 million breakup fee, means the Guild-represented Baltimore Sun will have its third owner in seven years.

But "buyer" is a relative term. Although Tribune's share price suggests it's worth \$8.2 billion, Zell's initial investment will be only \$315 million, of which \$225 million will be an interest-paying loan. For the other \$90 million, Zell will be buying a promise that he can purchase 40% of Tribune at a later date at a price some may think is a steal: \$500 million in the first year after the deal closes, with the exercise price increasing by \$10 million a year to a cap of \$600 million.

But since \$315 million isn't enough to buy back Tribune's outstanding shares, the company is preparing to borrow the difference, which could be as much as \$8 billion. Add that to the \$5 billion in debt that Tribune already is carrying and what's left is a "highly leveraged" company, in Wall Street parlance. Or worse. Tribune's resulting debt-to-equity and debt-to-revenue ratios will be so skewed that Standard & Poor's already has lowered its credit rating two notches, warning that if the sale goes through it will lower it two more—to five steps below investment grade.

But it's not actually the company that will be borrowing all that money: it will be Tribune's 20,000 employees, who willy-nilly will be part "owners" of the company via an employee stock ownership plan. The ESOP will own 52% of Tribune and it is the ESOP's tax advantages that make this deal even remotely possible—but the employees don't have any say in whether such an ESOP will be created, and will have next to no say in how "their" company is operated. The sole excep-

tion is the company's unionized employees, with whom Tribune will have to negotiate ESOP participation.

What the employees will be wagering on this gambit is their retirements. While most now have 401(k) plans to which Tribune contributes 6% of pay—and as much as 9%, depending on company profitability—that is to be replaced with annual allocations of ESOP shares equal to 5% of pay. In addition, Tribune says it separately will fund a cash balance plan with annual contributions of 3% of pay. In most cases, employees will not be able to cash in their ESOP share for at least a decade, and then only if they are retired or over 55 and have worked at Tribune 10 or more years.

If Tribune works miracles, the ESOP shares could prove a bonanza—but the decisions that can make or break a corporation won't be made by employees, who will have their interests "represented" by a trustee appointed by... the existing board. Zell, on the other hand, will get to pick two of the six board members, and any Tribune transaction of more than \$250 million will have to be approved by at least one of them.

But what of the remaining 8% of the company that won't be owned by either Zell or the ESOP? That will go to the professional managerial class that got Tribune to this point in the first place—a group that unlike the captive ESOP members will see its rewards sooner rather than later. Among the goodies are \$6.8 million in bonuses for 38 executives, to be paid when the deal is consummated. But if that isn't enough, these "key employees" will be allowed to cash in most of their Tribune stake after only five years.

Tribune chief executive Dennis FitzSimons has made it well known that he has chosen not to accept any of the \$6.8 million in bonuses. Less trumpeted was his \$6.2 million in total compensation last year, as calculated by Associated Press—which also noted that he is eligible for a \$10.3 million severance payment when Tribune changes hands.

News round-up

A winter of newspaper ad discontent

Continuing—even accelerating—a downward trend, U.S. newspapers reported a continued erosion of advertising revenue in February. Although ad spending on newspaper web sites continued to rise, print losses were greater than analysts had forecast and more than offset the internet gains. Year-over-year declines for February included 14% at USA Today and 3.8% overall for its owner, Gannett; 7.5% at the New York Times, 4% at the New England Media Group—which includes the Boston Globe—and 6% overall for the parent company of both; 10% at the Wall Street Journal; and more than 5% at both Tribune Co. and McClatchy. While ad spending on newspaper online sites soared 31.5% in the period, that represented only 5.4% of all newspaper ad buys.

Strib ad jobs may be outsourced

A group of 25 Minneapolis Star Tribune advertising employees learned April 11 that their jobs may be outsourced overseas in a move company officials say could save as much as \$500,000 a year. The employees are represented by the Graphics Communications division of the Teamsters, which has been negotiating an inaugural contract for the past two years without success. Similar outsourcing of advertising production jobs has already occurred among newspapers in Boston, Los Angeles and Columbus, Ohio.

IFJ agitates for BBC reporter's release

The International Federation of Journalists, of which TNG-CWA is a member, on April 13 repeated its call for the immediate and unconditional release of BBC correspondent Alan Johnston. Johnston was kidnapped more than a month earlier in Gaza by a group that had yet to make any public statement about holding him. IFJ officials have been working with BBC journalists and their union, the National Union of Journalists, to spotlight Johnston's plight.

In 2005, the rich got—well, you know

Income inequality grew significantly in 2005, with the top 1% of Americans—those with incomes that year of more than \$348,000—receiving their largest share of national income since 1928, according to an analysis of newly released tax data. The top 10%, roughly those earning more than \$100,000, also reached a level of income share not seen since before the Depression. While total reported income in the United States increased almost 9% in 2005, the most recent year for which such data are available, average incomes for those in the bottom 90% dipped slightly compared with the year before. The new data also show that the top 300,000 Americans collectively had almost as much income as the bottom 150 million Americans. Per person, the top group received 440 times as much as the average person in the bottom half, nearly doubling the gap from 1980.

Wanna see how much the boss gets?

The AFL-CIO has unveiled its 2007 Executive PayWatch Website detailing how a manipulated executive compensation system allowed CEOs in 2006 to collect excessive severance packages. The site, www.paywatch.org, had more than 300,000 visitors in 2006. Visitors can enter a company name or ticker symbol to get a snapshot of the total compensation for any particular CEO, including the grant date value of stock and option grants.

Bill would define who's a supervisor

In a move to protect millions of workers from being arbitrarily deprived of their rights on the job, three lawmakers introduced a bill March 23 to overturn last year's "workers are supervisors" ruling by the National Labor Relations Board. The tersely worded bill would stipulate that a worker cannot be a supervisor unless "for a majority of the working time" he or she is "acting in the interest of the employer" in hiring, firing, disciplining or otherwise managing workers. It also says a worker cannot be named a supervisor just for "assigning" other people to tasks or for occasionally being responsible for directing them.—Press Associates, Inc.

Workers ignoring retirement cuts

Although 17% of workers said their employers had cut retirement benefits in the last two years, nearly two in five of those affected said they have done nothing in response, according to the Employee Benefit Research Institute. Only 60% of workers are currently saving for retirement, according to the institute's annual retirement confidence survey.

AFL-CIO looking for summer troops

Are you—or do you know—a college student or recent grad with an activist streak who's looking for something to do this summer that beats burger flipping? The AFL-CIO's Union Summer program is accepting applications through May 4 for a 10-week program that includes a week of intensive orientation and training and nine weeks in the field. Open to current college juniors and seniors, plus recent graduates, the program provides a \$300-a-week stipend plus housing and local transportation costs. For more information and application forms, visit www.aflcio.org.

Women still struggling for pay equity with men

By Mark Gruenberg
Editor, Press Associates Inc.

Just a fortnight ahead of Equal Pay Day, two long-marooned pay equity bills surfaced in the new Democratic-run Congress. Working women's groups made the most of their opportunity, telling the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee about the many and varied faces of pay discrimination that working women face.

Introduced in the Senate by Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) and in the House of Representatives by Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.), the legislation would expand the definition of comparable jobs, making it harder for employers to mask pay discrimination. But No GOP senators attended a Senate panel hearing on the measure, and the sole GOP witness—a female employment lawyer at a high-powered D.C. lobbying firm—resorted to arguing that existing laws, passed in 1962, are adequate and don't need strengthening.

Yet the evidence of the past 45 years suggests otherwise. The April 12 Senate hearing came less than two weeks ahead of Equal Pay Day, the day when the median pay earned by women since Jan. 1, 2006 equals the median pay earned by men in 2006 alone. Women's groups told the committee, chaired by Harkin, that they expect this year won't be any different, with working women paid approximately 77 cents for every dollar paid to working men.

That gap, which essentially hasn't budged since the early 1990s, understates the case, added Evelyn Murphy of the Wage Project in Boston and Jocelyn Samuels of the National Women's Law Center in Washington.

"As a former public official, I know what government can and cannot do," said Murphy, a former Massachusetts lieutenant governor and now an author of a book on pay equity, "Government cannot regulate this nation into pay equity." But drawing on her private sector experience and her interviews for the book, Murphy added that the nation's bosses—most of them men—"have the responsibility and authority, but not the accountability, to insure pay equity." The new laws attempt to ensure that.

Pay equity is tough to battle, committee witnesses said, because it is built on past pay discrimination. And, they added, it mounts up.

One witness gave an example in which a company

hired a woman and a man with identical qualifications for identical jobs right out of college—but it paid her \$30,000 and him \$33,000. Bonuses were similarly skewed higher for the man. The next year, lawmakers were told, the woman got a raise to \$33,000—and the man to \$38,000. The following year, the company CEO decided the young man was "executive material" and bumped his salary into the mid-40s, but because the young woman was going to have a baby, raised hers to just \$38,000 when she returned from her pregnancy.

That type of pay discrimination is tough to prove, witnesses told senators, as is the channeling of women into lower-paying "women's occupations." One notable example of the latter was offered by sociologist Philip Cohen of the University of North Carolina, who explained that there are 1.1 million nurses' aides and 2.5 million truck drivers, with 38% of the nurses' aides having at least some college, compared with 29% of the truck drivers. Both groups' average age is 43. Both do work that requires medium amounts of strength, and nurse aides require more on-the-job training.

"Yet those aides, 89% of whom are women, have median earnings of \$20,000 a year, [which is] 57% of the median of truck drivers—97% of whom are male," Cohen said.

Current federal law requires employers only to compare wages for working men and women in exactly equal circumstances. That's not good enough, Harkin said, which is why one of his bills would broaden such comparisons to comparable jobs, too. His measure also would make pay discrimination easier to prove in court and increase its penalties and includes safeguards against retaliation for women who speak out about pay discrimination.

Interestingly enough, when an organization is ordered to evaluate all comparable jobs, the pay gap disappears. That's what happened in Minnesota state government, said the Wage Project's Murphy.

"They took every job under the state's umbrella, so you could compare a woman as a nurse in a hospital with a man driving a plow for the DPW," she told the committee. "That lets them pay for the job, not for who does the job. And it solves all sorts of discrimination, not just by sex, but by race and disability."

The result? The wage gap in Minnesota government is now just 3%, Murphy said: 97 cents for a woman's median wage for every dollar a man earns.

Deep Throat is so 'Sixties

Post recants confidentiality pledge in NLRB plea

Journalism is full of secrets. And the Washington Post, more than most, rests its reputation on keeping secret the identities of those who help it navigate through the White House, the halls of Congress and layers of bureaucracy.

But recently the Post threw those ideals out the window. Facing a pending loss in a pivotal case before the National Labor Relations Board, the Post's management filed a last-minute addendum revealing the contents of off-the-record talks with the Washington-Baltimore Guild over a period of more than a year. The move not only violated core journalistic principles but breached the newspaper's legal obligation under federal labor law to bargain in good faith.

As a result, the local has filed an unfair labor practice charge against the company—its third in 12 months—in an escalating battle over the Post's refusal to negotiate fair work rules and compensation for employees whose jobs have changed significantly because of various new media platforms. "Unfortunately, the Post has sent a chilling signal that it will violate a confidentiality pledge when it suits the newspaper's business purposes," said TNG-CWA President Linda Foley.

Post officials acknowledged that the talks in question were held on a strictly "off-the-record" basis, a ground rule agreed to by the Guild at the Post's request. Yet the local learned that the company provided sworn testimony revealing details of the talks in an effort to sway the labor board's pending decision.

"The Post, which passionately goes to bat for the right of reporters to keep off-the-record conversations

confidential, has unilaterally repudiated that principle in an effort to avoid facing a charge by the federal government," said Robert Paul, a Washington attorney representing the Guild before the NLRB. "At The Washington Post, promises of confidentiality apparently stop at the door of labor relations."

Paul emphasized that the Guild was not concerned that the details of its talks would weaken the Guild's case. But by cavalierly breaking the newspaper's promise of confidentiality, Post management "has shown a remarkable failure to live by a rule of journalism that it has touted as sacrosanct, not to mention a failure to honor the agreement it had with the Guild," a local announcement explained.

In a July 7, 2005 editorial, for example, The Post wrote: "Commitments of confidentiality by journalists to their sources will have little value if they can be invalidated by waivers obtained by prosecutors or demanded by senior government officials from their subordinates." An Oct. 15 editorial argued that if off-the-record conversations are forced into the open, "journalism and the public will be the losers."

The local's ULP complaint claims that the Post "violated its fundamental, statutory obligation to bargain in good faith" by disclosing details of discussions it agreed "would remain confidential, private and off-the-record."

"Post executives, trying to protect an ill-conceived anti-Guild business interest, violated the principle of confidentiality of sources to avoid a federal government charge of refusing to bargain over radio work," lamented Guild representative Rick Ehrmann.

Despite chilly clime, Twin Cities are hot

Just as the foremost U.S. pissing contest between two newspapers draws to a close in Seattle (see story, page 1), a worthy successor is erupting in Minnesota's Twin Cities.

When Par Ridder jumped ship in early March, quitting as publisher of the St. Paul Pioneer Press to assume similar duties at the cross-river Minneapolis Star-Tribune, the move was greeted mostly with disdain. Not only do Twin Cities journalists think it's bad form to swap employers to work for the competition, but the Pioneer Press had been owned by the Ridder family since 1927. For Ridder to abandon the Pioneer Press was tantamount to denying his birthright.

Of course, the Ridder family no longer owns newspapers: that ended last year, with the dissolution of the Knight Ridder chain. Today the Pioneer Press is owned by MediaNews, which essentially belongs to Dean Singleton. Yet although Singleton initially expressed surprise at the defection, he downplayed its significance. Ridder did not have a non-compete clause in his contract, Singleton told a reporter, and in any case people should be allowed to "follow their dreams."

But on April 12 the tone changed considerably, as the Pioneer Press filed a 46-page lawsuit against Ridder and two other executives who followed his defection, as well as against the Star Tribune and its new owner, Avista Capital Partners. Among the Press's complaints: that contrary to Singleton's statement, all three executives had non-compete agreements that they were violating.

If Singleton didn't know about the agreements, that's because the agreements were on computer files that the lawsuit claims Ridder took with him—files that also included sensitive corporate data, from budgets and monthly profit and loss data to employee wages, lists of advertisers and confidential infor-

mation about ad revenue and rates. Moreover, the suit claims, Ridder planned his jump to the competitor almost six months earlier, perpetrating a scheme that amounts to fraud, civil theft and conspiracy.

Several days later the tone got even nastier, as the Pioneer Press filed a request for a temporary restraining order to retrieve a dozen or more computers and servers from the Star Tribune and its employees; MediaNews believes the equipment may contain the allegedly stolen information. The request also seeks a May 16 hearing for a motion to bar Ridder and the two other executives from working at the Star Tribune for a year.

Chris Harte, newly appointed chairman of the Star Tribune, said anything Ridder might have done has an innocent explanation, but that a more comprehensive response will have to wait until the company addresses "these matters point by point in our legal response to the complaint." Ridder, meanwhile, issued a statement saying he is "absolutely confident we will prevail."

All this comes in the middle of great upheaval at the two papers, both of which recently changed owners—the Star Tribune had been the McClatchy chain's flagship newspaper—and amid buyouts and layoffs. Among the most recent: the Friday the 13th firing of Pioneer Press sales executive Larry Olson, a respected 21-year veteran of the paper who had the bad fortune of having auto accounts.

The dismissal, which Olson said he had been expecting, nevertheless shook up Guild members. "For the last two years, Olson was on multiple 'performance improvement plans'—the mechanism used in the advertising department to impose unreasonable sales targets onto individual account executives," a Guild blog entry explained, lamenting that the sales targets bear no relation to economic reality.

N.H. Union Leader needs a new name

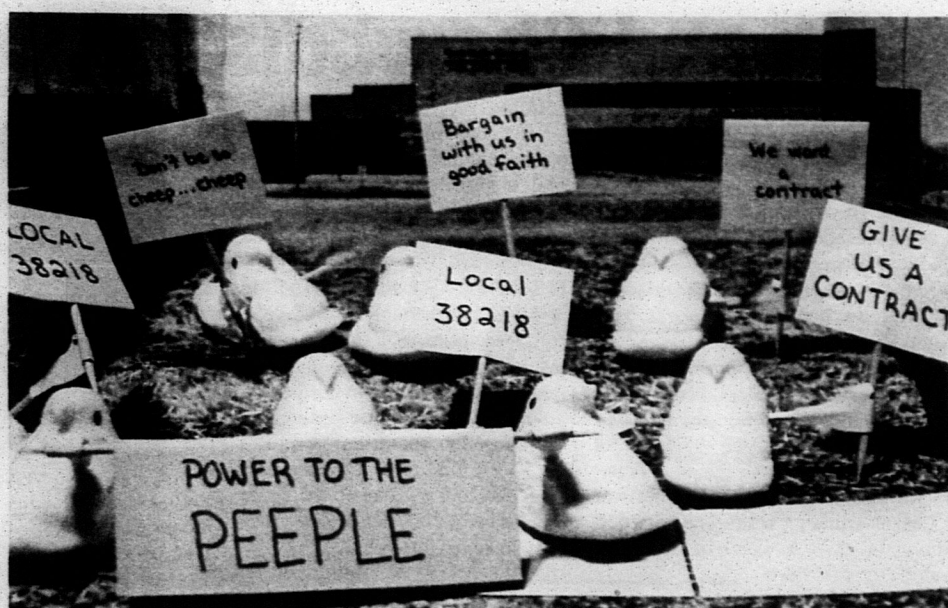
Fifteen months after its contract with the New Hampshire Guild expired, management at the Union Leader has announced it simply will terminate the contract—which has an ever-green clause as long as bargaining continues—on June 10. But because the company has not said it will declare impasse, union officials are questioning the legality of the promised move.

Negotiations have proceeded at the rather leisurely pace of approximately once a month, but the company's proposals are far less benign: no raises in the first two years of a proposed three-year pact, a 1.5% raise in the third year,

elimination of contract language that limits use of part-timers and a dramatic curtailment of sick leave.

The New Hampshire local represents approximately 150 employees of the Union Leader in news, advertising, circulation, accounting, information technology and janitorial. Although the paper has a notoriously conservative reputation and plays an outsized role in the presidential primaries, its relationship with its unions—including CWA and the Teamsters—historically has been amicable.

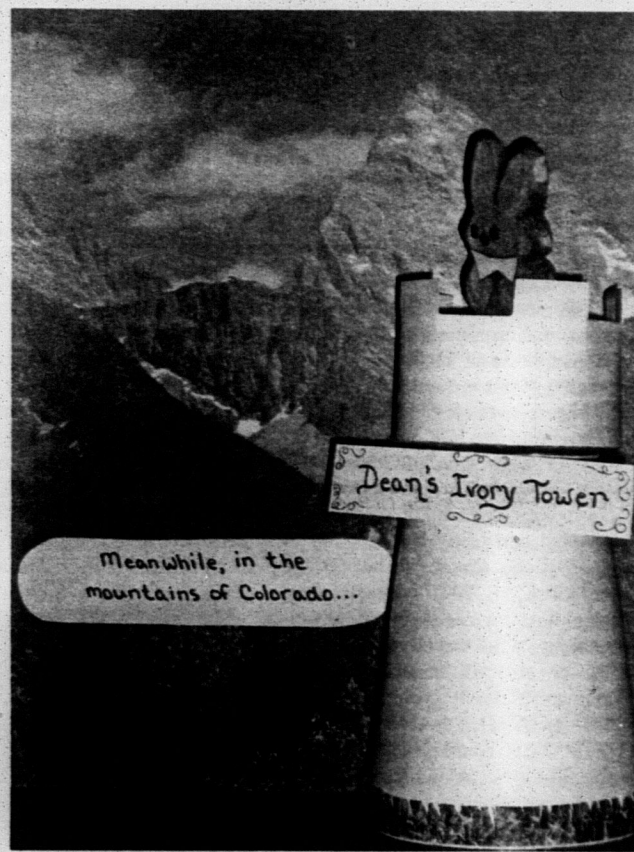
Now that's changed, said local president Norm Walsh, who said the paper's attitude in bargaining has been "onerous."



Cheep! Cheep!

Easter 'tis the season of rejoicing for the Just Born company, purveyor of those marshmallow treats known as "Peeps." In a marketing coup that other candy makers can only envy, Peeps have become a hip feature of diorama contests sponsored by newspapers seeking to give their readers a creative outlet: this year's invitation by the Washington Post drew more than 350 entries, with the winner claiming to have spent two weeks on his submission.

The only Guild entry we know of, a two-part creation from the York Guild making an implicit statement about the status of its contract negotiations, inexplicably failed to get a judges' nod. Maybe the judges don't like to see class warfare in candyland. Or maybe they just couldn't see MediaNews boss Dean Singleton as a marshmallow.



Guild steps up for co-workers

Continued from page 1

"Your illegal lockout came after The Blade's unionized workforce offered to do whatever was necessary to return the newspaper to profitability," the open letter declared. Yet, "for reasons that continue to elude us, you and your legal team have chosen to take The Blade down a destructive and dangerous path," resulting in "a rising sea of red ink."

With the National Labor Relations Board having twice issued complaints charging the Blade with illegal lockouts and bad-faith bargaining, the letter observed that the company's "potential back pay liability under the NLRB complaint is \$4 million and growing by \$20,000 per day." Meanwhile, "circulation and advertising revenue numbers are falling to horrific levels. Your employees—the ones that helped win the Pulitzer Prize in 2004—are fleeing the paper in droves. ... Meet with us. Bargain with us, in good faith and in a spirit of mutual respect."

Somewhat to its surprise, Vellequette said, the delegation was met with enough interest that it called off plans to picket each of the Block family members' homes. In a meeting with Beihoff that lasted for about an hour, "it appeared he didn't know about some of the concessions" the unions had said they were willing to make, "so perhaps Ballow isn't exactly sharing" what's said in negotiations. Still, Vellequette added, although certain "assurances" were given that buoyed union

members' hopes, the company has been "absolutely silent" since. The unions have scheduled an April 23 strategy session to map out their next moves.

(How the Block family could be ignorant of the unions' offer is a mystery, since a list of possible concessions is posted on their mobilization website, www.stoptheblade.com. Among the potential givebacks: wage cuts, job reductions, a 20% increase in health care payments and vacation reductions.)

Meanwhile, with unemployment insurance expiring after six months and health insurance running out April 1, the newspaper council issued a nationwide plea for union locals to "adopt a family" to help cover COBRA health insurance payments, which cost \$823 a month for family coverage, \$317 for singles. And although only 13 of the 215 locked-out employees are represented by CWA—the rest are all Teamsters—"we've gotten a tremendous response out of the Guild," Vellequette said.

The Toledo Guild led the way, adopting five families, but others have been adopted by the St. Louis, Chicago, Ontario, Pittsburgh, Peoria, Albany, Lexington, Philadelphia and San Jose locals and fresh offers of assistance keep coming in. "We're literally saving lives here," Vellequette said, explaining that some locked-out workers or family members have health problems such as cancer or renal failure "and the company just threw them into the street."

Scylla and Charybdis for modern sensibilities

By Andy Zipse
Editor, The Guild Reporter

As the Bush administration increasingly metamorphoses into Greek tragedy, imperial hubris foundering on the deepest character flaws imaginable, two of its most defining challenges have originated from outside U.S. borders.

One is the decades-old tension between national sovereignty and market economics, resolved—at the moment, anyway—by nation-states deferring to the free flow of capital on one hand while on the other drawing the line against an equally free flow of labor. The unsurprising result is capital jetting around the globe in search of the cheapest workers it can find, even as those workers are forced into a clandestine, illegal and sometimes suicidal chase after jobs that pay little more than a subsistence wage. Faced with the resulting infiltration of millions of “undocumented” workers into the United States, the Bush administration quickly forgot its early overtures to Mexican president Vicente Fox and, after six years, can claim as its sole achievement on immigration reform the dubious construction of bits and pieces of fence along the Mexican border.

Meanwhile, a more concentrated form of foreign intervention into U.S. affairs was provided by just 19 Arabs, who hijacked not just airplanes but foreign policy, hundreds of billions of tax dollars and a national reputation for even-handed generosity and restraint of power. Whether one chooses to believe the incidents of Sept. 11, 2001 were simply a convenient pretext for the Bush administration’s war-mongers to launch long-planned adventures; or, instead, that the Bushies responded in good faith to a perceived global threat but bungled the job to a fare-thee-well, there is little doubt that history will judge matters harshly. The result has been an unprecedented squandering of lives, wealth, good-will and morality, if only because the U.S.—the world’s “lone superpower,” we were reminded constantly—has never had as much to lose.

Helping illuminate these Sisyphean struggles are a couple of just-published books that come at their subject matter from fresh angles. *Communities Without Borders* by the peerless David Bacon, a photojournalist (and dues-paying member of the Northern California Media Workers Guild), remedies the oversight that weakened his earlier effort, “The Children of NAFTA,” by lavishly complementing the text with his richly detailed and expressive black and white photography. The result is an evocative personalization of a story most Americans comprehend only through ideologically-driven clichés, as one side or another struggles to place its own political or economic interpretation on a faceless, nameless phenomenon.

Bacon cuts through that cant in time-honored journalistic fashion: by finding the subjects and letting them speak for themselves. Subtitled “Images and voices from the world of migration,” *Communities Without Borders* provides only the most essential context—descriptions of populations flows, south to north; the historically evanescent nature of southwest borders; the economic forces driving “guest worker” programs—before stepping aside and letting the people themselves emerge from the shadows.

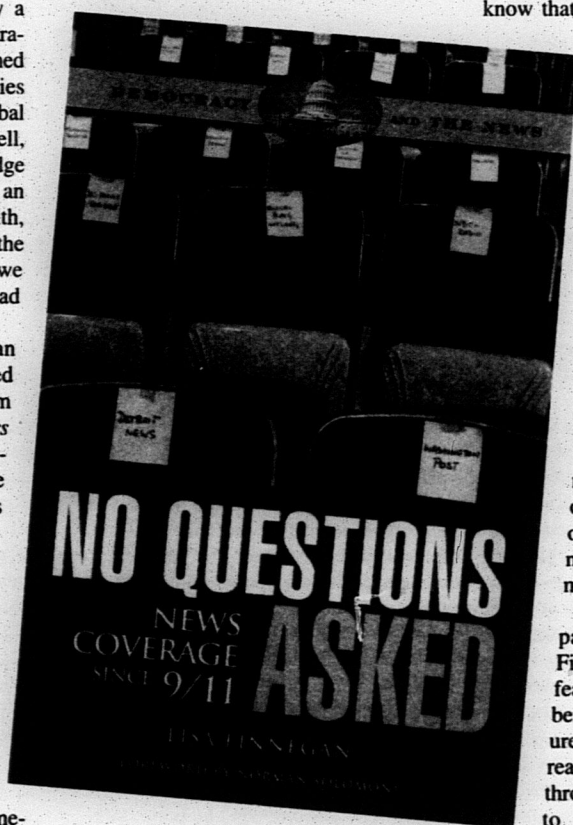
Recorded over a three-year period, from 2000 through 2003, the images and oral histories of *Communities Without Borders* explore different yet common experiences: of Oaxacans creating a cross-border community as they pick U.S. fields; of Guatemalan and Mexican workers transforming Nebraska’s rural communities as they slave at meat-packing jobs; and of indigenous Mayo communities springing up in northern Sonora around gold and copper mining towns. A fourth section about the bracero experience—“A hard past, a harder future”—propels the narrative into the contemporary debate over “illegal immigrants,” as it’s usually characterized.

Communities Without Borders: Images and Voices from the World of Migration, by David Bacon. Cornell University Press, 2006. 235 pp, \$29.95 (paper)

No Questions Asked: News Coverage Since 9/11, by Lisa Finnegan. Praeger Publishers, Westport, CT, 2007. 189 pp, \$49.95 (cloth)

But as Bacon makes clear, “illegal immigrant” is more a social label than a marker of statutory infractions. And U.S. immigration policy is not nearly as concerned with stanching the flow of migrants into the U.S.—which, were it successful, would create enormous economic upheaval—than with defining the migrants’ status once they reach the promised land. Moreover, immigration law is predicated on the one-dimensional belief that immigration is driven primarily—or even solely—by economics, ignoring the huge gravitational pull of social factors. An irrepressible sense of community, for example, pulls migrants into cross-border settlements of their neighbors and family members—and as urgently pulls them back to the villages, farms and cities they left years or even decades earlier.

mic upheaval—than with defining the migrants’ status once they reach the promised land. Moreover, immigration law is predicated on the one-dimensional belief that immigration is driven primarily—or even solely—by economics, ignoring the huge gravitational pull of social factors. An irrepressible sense of community, for example, pulls migrants into cross-border settlements of their neighbors and family members—and as urgently pulls them back to the villages, farms and cities they left years or even decades earlier.



Communities Without Borders is full of people explaining such dynamics, their faces sometimes staring directly into the camera and sometimes past it, describing where they’re from and why they’re here and what it is they want from life. “I am transnational,” explains Antonio Rivera Murrieta. “I have both roots. I have learned to care a lot about North Americans, to love this town [Phoenix] because it is a fighting and working town, with all of its vices. There are rules that don’t sit well with us, and racism is

COMMUNITIES WITHOUT BORDERS



deeply rooted here. But I want people here to understand that we did not come here to take. We came to contribute the little that we have, so that this country develops.”

As remarkable as the voices in this book is the man who reported, photographed and meticulously assembled it. Bacon works without a net, a freelancer who steadfastly ventures into unexplored territory with a camera and notebook but without a shred of corporate backing from any news organization. His is the kind of journalism that used to be far more common before multitasking, corporatization and risk-aversion permeated the news “industry,” and it’s heartening to know that the old school hasn’t been completely vanquished.

If Bacon’s book is a window, Lisa Finnegan’s is an indictment: *No Questions Asked: News Coverage Since 9/11* is a clear-headed, methodical exposition on the media’s failings since that fateful day. And because those failings amount to a dereliction of duty by the unofficial fourth pillar of democratic society, the Bush administration was enabled to run amok, trampling civil liberties and due process at home while destabilizing the world’s most volatile region—an outcome foreshadowed by the Voltaire quotation that opens the preface, “Those who can make you believe absurdities can make you commit atrocities.”

For news people who have been paying attention, much of what Finnegan details will be familiar: the fear by virtually all the media of being viewed as unpatriotic, the failure to question governmental overreaching, the sacrifice of objectivity through embedding, the indifference to uncomfortable truths—even the unquestioned willingness to serve as propaganda vehicles. But what distinguishes this account is its extraordinarily dispassionate yet relentless piling on of detail, eventually reaching a suffocating density.

Some of the preparation of the soil for rampant falsehood long predates Sept. 11, such as the years-long decline in foreign news coverage. International news accounted for a mere 2% of total news coverage in 1998, Finnegan notes, down from 10% in 1983; network coverage of international news plum-

meted from 45% of news broadcasts in 1970 to 13.5% in 1995. No wonder, then, that George Bush could address Congress on Sept. 20 in a virtual vacuum of public understanding of global tensions. “Americans are asking, why do they hate us?” he asked rhetorically. “They hate what we see right here in this chamber: a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms: our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other.”

With that thin reed of understanding, apparently unconscious of how it contradicted Bush’s companion threat that “you’re either with us or you’re against us,” the U.S. eventually plunged into war and the media faithfully tagged along. White House requests for self-censorship were honored, administration choices of terminology were adopted, hard questions were avoided. Relatively rare skeptical reporting was buried deep within the few newspapers that carried it, with some reporters simply fired for their failure to toe the “patriotic” line.

The rest of the world, meanwhile, was getting far more critical and comprehensive news coverage, creating an ever-wider disconnect between the world-view of Americans and that of their increasingly discomfited allies. Yet every sign of foreign restraint became just one more sign of how exceptional the U.S. had become, how singularly insightful and decisive this country was in a craven world of terrorist appeasers. And when the truth was too stark to be spun, the U.S. media developed a fine talent for simply ignoring it. Most notable in this respect was the mass murder of Taliban prisoners in Afghanistan, documented in a film and widely reported by the European press—yet as Finnegan reports, “an extensive Lexis/Nexus search found no mention of it anywhere in the U.S. media.”

Finnegan’s unique perspective is that she approaches her subject matter as a journalist who earned a master’s degree in educational psychology after the events of Sept. 11. But while the blending of these perspectives provides an academic frame for her understanding of the psychology of terrorism and how it affects the media, it’s Finnegan’s working knowledge of journalists and their group-think tendencies that enables her to connect the dots in so devastating a fashion. Reading *No Questions Asked* is a sobering task, and one that should be required of any aspiring journalist before he or she takes on the mantle.



LOOKING AHEAD

Broun's vision still awaits us

By Bernie Lunzer, Secretary-Treasurer

Seventy-four years ago, Heywood Broun wrote a column in the New York World-Telegram that basically gave birth to the Guild.

"The average newspaper man probably works on an eight-hour-a-day and six-day-week basis," Broun wrote. "Obviously the publishers, by patting their fathead employees on the head and calling them 'professionals,' hope to maintain this working week scale. And they'll succeed, for the men who make up the editorial staffs of the country are peculiarly susceptible to such soothing classifications as 'professionals,' 'journalists,' 'members of the fourth estate,' 'gentlemen of the press' and other terms which have completely entranced them by falsely dignifying and glorifying them and their work."

Broun ended that fateful column by writing, "But the fact that newspaper editors and owners are genial folk should hardly stand in the way of the organization of a newspaper writers' union. There should be one. Beginning at 9 o'clock on the morning of October 1, I am going to do the best I can to help in getting one up."

Nearly 70 years later, we need to complete Broun's vision. By now you may have figured out that the future of the industry is entirely up to us. We're the only ones that really care about it. Recent developments—the sales of newspaper chains like Monopoly properties, the slicing and dicing of jobs, along with off-shoring and outsourcing, the paring away of substantive content—have disgusted even the most cynical among us. We need to craft a plan and fast-forward it, starting with the understanding that our union is at the core of any solution.

Unfortunately, we've done a miserable job of publicly explaining how a union can make a difference, even though we see the difference every day. We've got to figure out how to market what we've got, and we've got to get past the anti-union bias that's been perpetrated on America. IAPE's recent, wonderful organizing success at Dow Jones is a perfect example of what can be done with an honest message and a determined group of organizers. More than 200 workers now have a union, improving their work lives as well as those of everyone else in IAPE because of its enhanced strength.

We need to use our union just as Broun did 70-some years ago, to demand respect, better wages and real involvement in the enterprise. Look at what's happened to ad sales, which are being destroyed through the cynical use of commission plans. Our employers no longer want professionals who develop relationships. Just this past Friday a 20-year salesperson was terminated at my home paper via a trumped-up, unattainable performance plan. This is not an isolated incident. It's not unusual for new salespeople to move on after four years—or less. This is tragic. We need to re-professionalize our sales staffs, because the future of the industry depends on a revenue stream that can come only from talented salespeople.

We need to stop management from returning our newsroom jobs to the abysmal wages that caused Broun to start the Guild in

the first place. How do we explain to j-school grads that this craft is worthwhile but that they'll never make a decent wage? Strengthening chain councils, and coordinating bargaining across properties where we have common employers, would improve our bargaining power.

We need to embrace new technologies, and our members are ready to do that. We need to offer union training programs to fill the void left by management, as we've started in the West and eventually will be rolling out across the country. As our members improve their skills and confidence, they'll become more valuable.

We need to reach out to the whole media industry, which includes embracing web practitioners. Our CWA sector should be the natural place for those who gather, prepare and distribute information. We should reach out to anyone who is willing to adhere to standards that we help develop. By working to raise standards for bloggers and those who "volunteer" information on the web, we can improve the quality of information and develop a legitimate community of interest. In exchange, we can provide "representation" even when it isn't guaranteed by a union contract. In addition, changing our name to "The News Guild" from its current iteration would be a good symbolic start.

Our message of a strong community working together, through our union, can be refined and communicated industry-wide. We should use professional focus groups to improve the way we talk about who we are and what we have to offer. Just as the Dow Jones workers chose IAPE, other media workers, given a good message and a real choice, will choose the Guild.

I'm also proposing that the Guild expand news councils (see www.news-council.org). Such councils, made up of employer and worker representatives, hear reader and public complaints and issue findings that, while not binding, carry great moral weight. Because this is another tool we can use to propagate standards and quality, we should start such councils even when we have to start them on our own.

We need to secure the role of sectors within CWA. The larger union is an amalgam and uses different "business" models. There isn't a solid affirmation yet that sectors, with workers grouped by industry, is the right approach. Some in geographic districts think the sectors should disappear. It's probably not an either/or proposition. But internal politics continue to play out on a budgetary and organizational level that get in the way of doing the real work of the union. Developing a larger vision and plan for a media sector will change that.

These are just a few ideas on how to go forward; they're not meant to be comprehensive. But we need to start a dialogue, craft a plan and start moving forward now. We should work with the employers where we can, but we should go ahead without them where we have to. Just like you, I care about the Guild and its members. Just like you, I worry and complain. Just like you, I want to start planning and building.



Musings of a journalist

By Dave Bakke
State Journal-Register, Springfield, Ill.

I am a journalist. It is my fault that the majority of Americans do not support the war in Iraq.

It was my fault when Americans turned against the war in Vietnam.

I am the reason your teenaged girl dresses like that.

I made "Lady In The Water" tank at the box office.

I am unfair to the president. Every president.

When you feel bad about the future, it is because of me.

I do not know what is important.

I am biased.

I misspell your name and get your address wrong every time.

I snoop around into your business and tell everyone about it.

I am a dinosaur on my way to the dust heap of history.

I am a pest.

Global warming was dreamed up by me.

I don't get it.

I only print the bad news.

I need you more than you need me.

I get sued, hung up on, shouted at, thrown out and punched.

I am too big for my britches.

I have no business being where I am most of the time.

I print your divorce in the paper.

I print your marriage in the paper.

I dwell on your failures.

I blow things out of proportion.

If your kid robs the liquor store, I print it.

If your kid makes Eagle Scout, I print it.

I tell people about your anniversary, your birthday, your wedding, your award, your promotion, your retirement, your death.

I tell you about unknown people doing wonderful things for other unknown people.

I end up in your scrapbook and on your refrigerator.

I print the quirky, the unusual, the heartwarming, the sad, the happy, the inspiring, the surprising, the awesome and the trivial—all of the goulash that makes up life.

At dawn, I am in a car somewhere on my way to talk to someone who just saved a life.

At midnight, I am on the way to a fire.

Sometimes I like to do the unexpected. Like this.

I do not expect to be liked, admired or trusted. So when you do, it means more.

You do not expect me to be likable, admirable or trustworthy. So when I am, it means more.

I tell what I have to tell about you, despite your importance, what position you hold or how much influence you have.

I tell what I have to tell about you even if you are nobody, do not hold any position or have any influence at all.

I could have done something else with my life and escaped your blame for things that go wrong.

But, no, I could have done nothing else with my life. This is what I've always wanted.

I am a journalist.

I tell stories.

You read them.

It's as simple as that.

And as complex.

Reprinted with permission from the April 4 issue of the State Journal-Register.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor,

That was a good analysis piece on the front page of the Jan. 26 issue of The Guild Reporter ("Looking away when the truth overwhelms us"). Credulous reporting has always been a problem in journalism, but more so, I think, in the past 20 years or so, as the 2002-03 events leading up to the U.S. attack on Iraq show.

At the beginning of the new century, credulity is even more of a problem with the American public, which, until recently, has accepted what comes out of the mouth of federal government officials on a variety of

issues—Iraq, tax cuts, budget forecasts—at face value.

Testimony from the "Scooter" Libby trial has demonstrated that a few in the Washington press corps were more interested in career advancement and parroting the party line than in honest reporting. Bravo to those reporters and editors who have not assumed what officials in the Bush administration say is always, or usually, truthful.

Skepticism is indeed a virtue, now more than ever.

—Stewart Applin, Guildnews editor,
San Jose Newspaper Guild

The mission of The Guild Reporter, approved May, 2004 by the TNG-CWA Executive Council, is as follows:

"As stated in the TNG-CWA Constitution, 'it shall be the duty of The Guild Reporter to promote in every legitimate way the policies of TNG-CWA.' The Guild Reporter belongs to the rank-and-file membership of TNG-CWA.

"Guild Reporter content will be of interest to the members,

and its first priority will be current news affecting the locals. The members of this union expect The Guild Reporter to inform, motivate and challenge its readers.

"To maintain its journalistic integrity and traditions, The Guild Reporter must never become a personal political platform or be misused for internal political purposes by the elected leadership of TNG-CWA."

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 for letters and articles: Friday before publication. (Next deadline: May 11.)

Notice given of annual per capita increase

Official notice has been delivered to all TNG-CWA locals that the TNG-CWA per capita on May dues, payable by locals to TNG-CWA on or before June 15, 2007, will be \$19.44. Combined with the 50-cent CWA Defense Fund payment, the total amount due from locals per member, per month will be \$19.94 for U.S. locals. Canadian locals will pay 57 cents (the exchange rate for 50 cents as of April, 2007) to the CWA Defense Fund monthly, for a total of \$20.01.

The CWA Defense Fund payment of 50 cents U.S. per member, per month, is payable on the following classifications: (1) regular full-time; (7) regular less-than-full-time; (5) at-large full-time; (H) at-large less-than-full-time; (8) paid leave full; (F) agency fee full-time; and, (G) agency fee less-than-full-time.

The increase in the annual per capita rate is 49 cents per month from the previous rate of \$18.95, which has been in effect since May 1, 2006. The per capita payable on behalf of employed members whose

dues are less than \$19.44 per month is \$7.78 (\$8.28 U.S. and \$8.35 CDN with the CWA Defense Fund payment). By operation of the per capita formula in the Constitution, the increase in the average top reporter minimum in Guild contracts with daily newspapers is translated into a percentage increase in the monthly per capita payable by locals to TNG-CWA.

The per capita rate was adjusted in April 2002 to add funding to the TNG-CWA Mobilization and Defense Fund (MDF) pursuant to Article 18, Section 7(a) of the TNG-CWA Constitution:

"Effective April 1 2002, the above per capita tax shall increase to 1.997% (.01997), the increase to be deposited into the Guild Mobilization and Defense Fund. A local may act to meet this per capita obligation to the Guild Mobilization and Defense Fund by increasing dues or by paying it out of existing local funds."

This rate increases one cent, to 56 cents per member per month being deposited into

the TNG-CWA MDF.

The average top reporter minimum in Guild contracts with daily newspapers on April 1, 2007, was \$973.40—an increase of \$24.62, or 2.59% over the \$948.78 average top minimum on the same date a year ago. The 49-cent per month increase in the per capita rate, from \$18.95 to \$19.44, is an increase of 2.59%. The formula for computing the monthly per capita requires averaging of top reporter minimums in all contracts with newspapers published at least five days per week. On April 1 of this year, there were 101 such contracts.

Guild statistics show that TNG-CWA locals have 101 daily newspaper contracts with top reporter minimums at or above \$500 a week. The number at or above \$600 is 99; of these, 92 are \$700 or over, 80 are over \$800, 60 are over \$900, 39 are \$1,000 or over, 26 are \$1,100 or more; 16 are \$1,200 or more; and 8 are \$1,300 or more.

The TNG-CWA Constitution provides that per capita payable on behalf of regular

members employed full time, and other employees covered by a TNG-CWA contract which requires them to pay an agency or similar fee equivalent to dues, shall be recalculated each year in April. The formula is described in Article XVIII, Section 7.

TNG has computed the average top reporter minimum by adding these minimums in 101 separate contracts with newspapers published at least five days a week, using only those amounts which are actually being paid on April 1, 2007.

The \$973.40 was multiplied by .01997, producing a figure of \$19.4388 which, rounded up to the next cent, produces \$19.44, 49 cents over the present per capita of \$18.95.

The per capita payable on behalf of regular members employed full time and persons paying agency fees becomes \$19.44 per month, plus 50 cents for the CWA Defense Fund for a total of \$19.94 for U.S. locals. Canadian locals will pay 57 cents (the April 2006 exchange rate for 50 cents) to the CWA Defense Fund monthly, for a total of \$20.01.

'One hell of a first contract'

Pressroom employees of the Halifax Herald, teetering on the edge of a strike or lockout, instead were offered an "exceptional" contract that boosts their wages a stunning 18.7% over four years. The members of the Halifax Typographical Union unanimously ratified the offer just hours later, the afternoon of March 21.

The agreement is the first negotiated by the employees since leaving the Communications Energy and Paperworkers union last June, when they affiliated with TNG Canada. Under its terms, the 13 press operators and an industrial mechanic will get a 7.6% pay raise retroactive to July 1, followed by increases of 5.6% this year and 2.75% in each of the last two years. The last time the workers got a wage increase was 13 years ago, leaving them primed for a walkout.

"This is one hell of a first contract!" exulted Arnold Amber, director of TNG Canada-CWA. "It is rare that unionized members make up so much in one contract, and rarer still that it's done in a first contract through a new union."

The pressroom workers were infuriated last year when the family-owned company unveiled its demands for huge concessions, including a six-year deal with no wage increases and give-backs on jurisdiction, holiday pay and retirement incentives. Just two years earlier management had lavished fulsome praise on its press workers for their "fantastic" job of installing a state-of-the-art offset press, upgrading their skills and modernizing the operation.

The company also threatened a lockout if the press workers would not relinquish a 10-year-old early

retirement clause, prompting 100% support for a strike vote in October. Management nonetheless hewed to its take-it-or-leave-it bargaining stance right up until the afternoon of March 20, when two things caused a significantly altered attitude.

One was an embarrassing news release issued earlier that day by the local's president, Darren Pittman, disclosing a management negotiator's threat to sell the new presses if the company couldn't achieve major contract concessions. "We find it hard to believe that the economic viability of a company such as the Herald, which employs more than 350 people, rests solely on the shoulders of 14 staff members," Pittman said in the release. "They've told us the company is making a profit so why the threats?"

But what "really kickstarted the talks," Pittman added, was a speech to the management negotiating team by David Esposti, a TNG Canada staff representative, drawing a very clear picture of what to expect in case of a lock-out. Workplace tensions in the newspaper's other unionized departments would increase, there would be a backlash from the community and the newspaper could lose advertisers and subscribers.

Pittman says it was obvious to everyone in the room that the management negotiators—none of whom had ever been through a strike or lockout—had given little thought to the ramifications of a lock-out.

As a result, the new contract also enshrines the threatened early retirement package; increases the bargaining unit by four members; establishes a severance package that exceeds the legislated standard; and for the first time creates a grievance procedure.

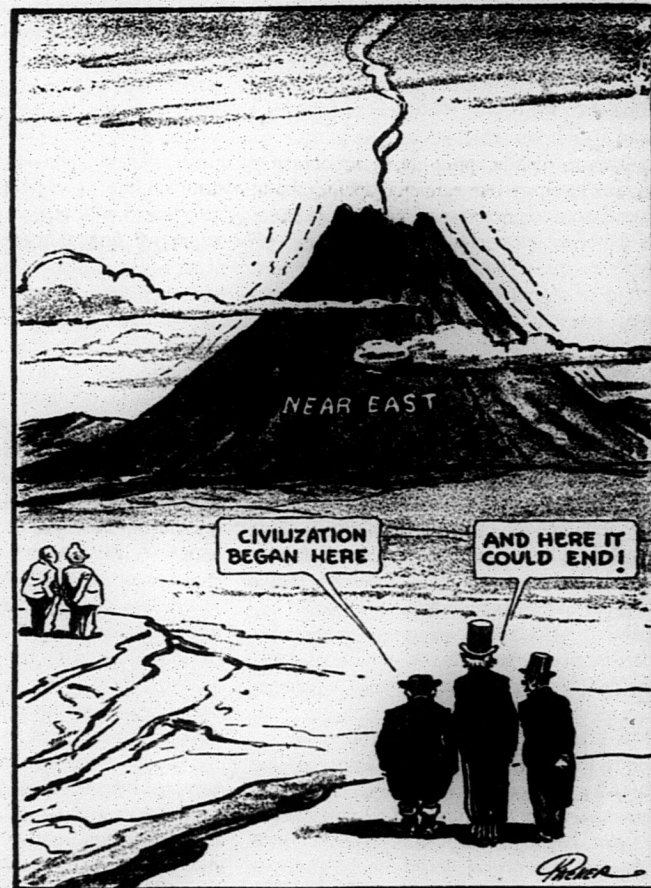
FROM THE MORGUE

Seventy years ago this month:

The Joint Council of Newspaper Workers, believed to be the first of its kind in the U.S., is formed in the Philadelphia area and affiliates with the Philadelphia CIO; members include the local Guild, as well as ad sales, carrier and handlers' unions. . . . San Francisco voters repeal a "wartime" anti-picketing ordinance—nearly two decades after the fact. . . . Twenty journalism students at the University of Kansas enroll as associate Guild members, forming the first unit of its kind. Among its other tasks, the unit intends to organize an employment service for graduating Guild members.

Fifty years ago this month:

Guild President Joseph Collis appears before a Senate judiciary Subcommittee to charge that denial of passports to newsmen seeking to visit Red China violates "the spirit, if not the letter," of the First Amendment. . . . Although 10-cent newspapers have been commonplace on the West Coast for years, East Coast publishers are sticking with a nickel. . . . A cartoon by the late Fred L. Packer of the New York Mirror, wins the N.Y. Guild Page One Award—and will prove as timely 50 years hence.



Twenty-five years ago this month:

Joe L. Allbritton gives the New York Guild a list of the "savings" he wants before he'll buy the Daily News—including the equivalent of 298 job cuts—then breaks off talks. . . . Press critic Ben Bagdikian calls on American journalists to take control of their work by electing their editors, push for representation on newspaper boards of directors. . . . Guild President Charles Perlik calls on Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega to lift a ban on publication of the opposition newspaper La Prensa.

THE GUILD Reporter

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

(See box on page 2 for address or other subscription changes or cancellations.)

Volume 74, Number 4 April 20, 2007

President: LINDA K. FOLEY
Secretary-Treasurer: BERNIE LUNZER
TNG-CWA Chairperson: CAROL D. ROTHMAN
Director, TNG Canada: ARNOLD AMBER

Regional Vice Presidents:
Region 1—Donna Marks
Region 2—Connie Knox
Region 3—Scott Stephens
Region 4—Lucille Witek
Region 5—Peter Szekely
Region 6—Karilynn DeLuca
Canada East—Lois Kirkup
Canada West—Scott Edmonds

Administrative Assistant:
Malinka Franklin

Administrative Staff:
Dominique Edmondson,
Tina Harrison

Editor: Andy Zipser

Director, Contract Admin:
Kathleen Mulvey Brennan

Executive Secretary,
Contract Committee:
Carrie Biggs-Adams

Membership Coordinator:
Bruce R. Nelson

Human Rights Director:
Deborah W. Thomas

Director of Field Operations,
Administrative Assistant:
Eric D. Geist

Staff Representatives:
Michael R. Burrell,
Darren Carroll,
Marian V. Needham,
Jim Schaufelbil,
Jay Schmitz

TNG Canada Reps:
David Esposti
David Wilson
Dan Zeidler

TNG Canada
Administrative Staff:
Marjolaine Botsford,
Joanne Scheel

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

Human Rights Watch, by Debbie Thomas, is on hiatus this month and will be back in May.

DAYBOOK

Labor's Voices III Conference
April 26-28, New York, NY

Workers Memorial Day, April 28

Freedom Award Fund Banquet
May 3, Washington

Midwest, Great Lakes, Southern
Councils, May 4-6, DC

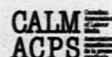
CETU International Convention,
May 23, Chicago

CWA Minority Caucus Meeting
July 12-15, Toronto

TNG-CWA Sector Conference
July 13-14, Toronto

CWA Annual Convention,
July 16-17, Toronto

(Articles may be reproduced freely in any non-profit publication, providing source is credited.)



Printed by Mount Vernon Printing Co.

Vol. 74

Iss. 5

MAY 18

2007