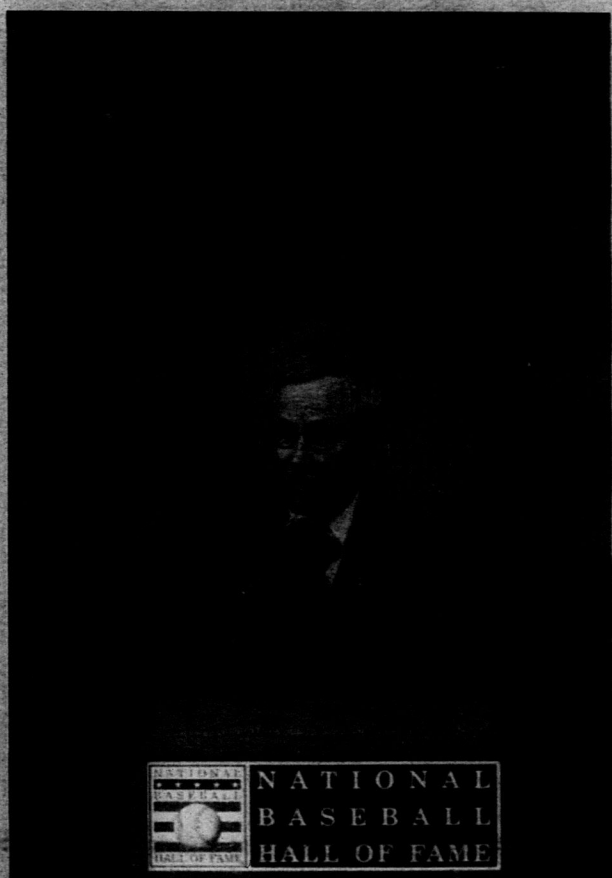




Rick Hummel, giving acceptance speech in Cooperstown, NY.

'Commish' tapped for baseball fame

The National Baseball Hall of Fame now boasts a 36-year Newspaper Guild member as one of its honorees.

The Baseball Writers Association of America selected St. Louis Post-Dispatch sportswriter Rick Hummel as the 2007 recipient of the J.G. Taylor Spink Award, earning him a permanent place in the "Scribes and Mikemen" exhibit in the Hall of Fame library.

He was feted at the Hall of Fame induction ceremony, along with former ballplayers Cal Ripken and Tony Gwynn and Kansas City Royals broadcaster Denny Matthews, the winner of the Ford C. Frick Award.

Known as "Commish" to his colleagues, Hummel garnered universal respect while covering the U.S. national pastime for more than three decades. His passion also made him a local institution in St. Louis, a vibrant baseball city.

During his speech at the ceremony, Hummel reflected on his career as a Cardinals beat writer and national baseball columnist for the Post-Dispatch and spoke about many of the Hall of Fame players in attendance.

"It's almost every kid's dream to be sitting on this stage

one day as a Hall of Fame player," Hummel said. "But my dream, like those of many others, was cut short. Call it death by curveball. Couldn't hit it. Couldn't throw it. Couldn't even catch it. Couldn't run very fast or hit with any power. But I bet I can type faster than any of you guys up here."

Hummel, a 1968 graduate of the University of Missouri School of Journalism, worked for the Colorado Springs Free Press/Sun while in the Army. He joined the Post-Dispatch in 1971 and began covering baseball in 1973.

"Many of the people you see behind me are here because they had 3,000 hits or won 300 games or hit 500 home runs," Hummel said. "I'm here because I watched 4,000 games. I enjoyed almost every one of them—even the one, the playoff game in Philadelphia in 1980 when my computer was kidnapped and held for ransom. The ransom was only \$300 in those days."

But the life of a sports journalist does have its rewards, too.

"This is more than just a dream come true," Hummel said at the induction ceremony, "because I never could have dreamt this."

As Murdoch prevails, news turmoil grows

To virtually no one's surprise, a majority of the family that owns the controlling shares in Dow Jones Co. has agreed to sell them to News Corp., ensuring that The Wall Street Journal and Barron's will become part of a media empire that includes the New York Post and the Fox television network. But while News Corp. founder Rupert Murdoch may be feeling elated, the buying and selling of newspapers in recent years has been a decidedly treacherous business.

The Dow Jones deal, consummated within a relatively quick four months after the initial offer was first publicized, has been valued at \$5.6 billion, including assumed debt. Stockholders are being offered the same \$60 a share that News Corp. founder Rupert Murdoch tendered at the outset, but the controlling Bancroft family did eke out one extra concession: an agreement that the company would pay upwards of \$30 million for the services of their legal and financial advisers, computed by Fortune senior editor Allan Sloan as worth an extra \$1.50 a share.

By comparison, Dow Jones stock had been trading around \$36 a share when Murdoch made his move. Moreover, the purchase price is more than 44 times per-share earnings, a premium so steep it discouraged any competing bids. (As yet another comparison: the entire Knight Ridder chain fetched just \$4.6 billion when McClatchy bought it 18 months ago.)

Murdoch's successful siege of the supposedly impregnable Dow Jones, following the recent, rapid-fire change in ownership of Reuters, Tribune Co. and McClatchy, opened the floodgates of speculation about which newspaper giant would be next. Gannett, as one of the few remaining large newspaper companies with a single class of stock, quickly surfaced as a possible candidate despite a hefty \$11.2 billion market

cap—speculation that was enhanced by its filing of a report with the Securities and Exchange Commission amending several employee compensation plans. Although Gannett spokesmen quickly contended that the changes were routine, the wording was loose enough to raise questions about a possible management buyout.

Mentioned even more prominently—usually in the context of a supposed interest by, yes, Rupert Murdoch—was the New York Times, which like Dow Jones has two classes of stock but which has been having its own financial problems. Indeed, an Aug. 13 Los Angeles Times story quoted a "longtime senior executive" in the News Corp. camp as saying that Murdoch "thinks the Times is vulnerable," adding: "He's going to go after them."

Well, maybe. But even if Murdoch doesn't do anything about the Times, there's no question that the entire newspaper industry is in upheaval. Properties are changing hands at an unprecedented rate—the 22 local newspapers owned by Dow Jones are destined for the auction block once News Corp. gets control—even as the deals that have already occurred look increasingly questionable.

Billionaire investor Sam Zell's proposed acquisition of Tribune Co., for example, reportedly is being threatened by a double-digit drop in revenue at the Los Angeles Times and significant erosion at the chain's other newspapers. The highly leveraged deal—Zell has put up only \$50 million of his own money to date, with the repurchase of shares to be financed largely by borrowing more than \$11 billion—clearly is attracting ever more skepticism on Wall Street, which in recent weeks has knocked the company's share price down to around \$26, off 24% from

Continued on page 3

More candidates step up

Taking a cue from the national scene, the TNG-CWA election season continues to heat up at an unprecedented early pace.

At press time, three new candidates had stepped forward for national office—and one had stepped back. Carol Rothman and Connie Knox announced they are running for secretary-treasurer and international chairperson, respectively, on a ticket with presidential candidate Bernie Lunzer. Lunzer currently is the Guild's secretary-treasurer and is challenging incumbent Linda Foley; Rothman currently is international chair, while Knox is a regional vice president.

Lunzer, Rothman and Knox are running as the "Stronger Guild" team.

Providence Guild administrator Tim Schick, who had announced in May that he was a candidate for secretary-treasurer, simultaneously withdrew his bid and said he would instead co-chair the Stronger Guild campaign. Also chairing the effort is Jerry Minkinen, administrative

officer of the Chicago Guild.

Separately, Lillian Covarrubias, president of the Toledo Guild,

announced her candidacy for TNG-CWA vice president for region 3. The incumbent vice president, Scott Stephens, said at the sector conference last month that he had agreed to run as

ago: to be part of an inclusive administration," Lunzer said in presenting his running mates. "The people on the ticket that I'm advancing will help us achieve all those goals."

Rothman, who has served as international chair for the past 12 years, first joined the Guild's executive board as an at-large vice president in 1983.

A member of the Philadelphia Guild, she currently is local treasurer and a trustee for the pension and health/welfare plans.

Knox, a member of the Washington-Baltimore Guild, has been on the executive board since 1991. She was a Baltimore unit chair in the mid-1980s and again in 2003, and was the local's vice president for five years and president for 12.



Connie Knox



Carol Rothman

Foley's running mate in a bid for the secretary-treasurer post.

"When I announced my candidacy for president of The Newspaper Guild-CWA back in May, I promised to help revitalize locals, to build a strong Guild sector within CWA, to maintain our fine tradition of democracy and rededicate myself to the pledge made 12 years

Inside this issue



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Exit Meachum, the introvert

By Mike Burrell
TNG Staff Representative

One weekday afternoon in the early '90s, Bruce Meachum dragged himself into the office of the Denver Newspaper Guild. He was sunburnt, weather-beaten, scruffy looking and walking with a limp. I asked, "What the hell happened to you?" He began to tell me how the state of Iowa got the best of him during his return trip from the Guild convention in Chicago. He and the then-president of the Denver local, Dave Krieger, rode their motorcycles round-trip to the convention, from Denver to Chicago.

The weather in Iowa on the return trip was miserable, causing Bruce to topple his bike, slightly injuring his leg. From that point on, Bruce referred to Iowa as the evil empire.

Ironically, I was born and raised in Iowa. Needless to say, Iowa as well as numerous other subjects served as topics of disagreements from the day I started working with Bruce in the Denver office, where Bruce was the administrative officer. I was on leave from my job at the Denver Post, working as an organizer subsidized by The Newspaper Guild.

In many ways, we could be characterized as the odd couple. I'm black, he's white. I'm skinny, he's not. I'm diplomatic, he isn't. But although we argued about everything, we worked very well together. He is definitely my mentor.

We worked together in Denver for a total of almost



Bruce Meachum, kissed by the Orlando sun in 2002.

five years—yet, in another example of irony, I was hired on TNG's staff before he was. Yet now Bruce is retired and I'm—I'm still working for the international.

As many of you know, Bruce bleeds the labor movement. He was a union activist long before his days with the Guild, dating back to his years with PATCO, the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization. Unfortunately (but fortunately for the Guild) he and his wife, Debbie, were both fired in 1981 by Ronald Reagan during the PATCO strike.

After a failed attempt at owning a liquor store (Bruce owning a liquor store! no wonder it failed) he eventually landed a job as a district manager at Denver's Rocky Mountain News. Ultimately, his tenacity and leadership skills lead him to being hired as Denver's administrative officer.

Bruce has a hard-charging, no nonsense persona. If he is your enemy, he can be your worst. If he is your friend, he can be your most loyal.

But now, I'm going to let you in on a little secret about Bruce. During a staff training session at the George Meany Center in Silver Springs, Maryland, the staff was given a personality test—and Bruce's results indicated he is an introvert. Either that test was the world's worst or Bruce has a closely guarded secret.

For those of us who've worked with Bruce, we know that he was one helluva rep. The void he leaves will be difficult to fill. On the other hand, he has earned his retirement. I wish him well.

Thomas out on a high note

By Kathy Mulvey Brennan
TNG Director, Contract Admin.

Young enough to enjoy retirement, smart enough to actually retire, old enough to have been part of the Guild's evolution and of the revolution of women (and in particular, African-American women), bridging the gap between clerical and professional in the Guild workforce—that's how I would describe Debbie Thomas, who retired on July 31 after 28 years of service to the Guild.

To highlight Debbie's career

advancement and accomplishments, I need to take you back to January 2, 1979, when Deborah B. White was hired as a key punch operator. Not long after, Debbie got her "union legs" and became assistant shop steward for her OPEIU bargaining unit, marking the start of her union advocacy.

A promotion in 1984 to key punch operator II and two letters of commendation for her "invaluable input in the revising and restructuring of TNG's membership program" started her "upward mobility," as we called it in those days. Debbie took another step upward when she married Charles "the dancin' fool" Thomas and gave birth to a handsome son, Chris.

In 1993, she broke the barrier between clerical and professional staffs by getting promoted to Collective Bargaining and Research Associate, and in 2001 she became Executive Secretary of the Contracts Committee. Finally, in May 2004, Debbie was transferred into the position of Director of Human Rights, which she held until her retirement.

But what Debbie's colleagues at TNG-CWA headquarters cherish most about her is the Thomas' "hot Maryland crab dip"—that, and the homemade ice cream that was



Debbie Thomas, at the TNG Sector Conference in 2002.

churned right in our kitchen every summer. (You should know that at CWA headquarters, the Guild is most renowned for the quantity—and quality—of food that passes through our office.)

Finally, I will remember her most for her beautiful, silver-toned voice, a blessed talent that Debbie shared many times, but none more movingly than when she led us in the Ray Charles rendition of "God Bless America" at the CWA Convention shortly after the September 11 tragedy. Thanks, Deb—and enjoy!



A familiar sight: Debbie belting out the national anthem at a CWA convention.

Guild briefs . . .

Court interpreters gear up for strike

Los Angeles-area members of the California Federation of Interpreters, a unit of the Northern California Media Guild, have voted more than 90% in favor of a strike if court officials impose a new contract, as threatened at press time. Although court management said it would give a 4% wage increase, it has refused to accept a key Guild proposal to create salary steps. The interpreters are the only court employees without a salary structure that rewards greater experience.

14 take buyouts at Pioneer Press . . .

The final count at the St. Paul Pioneer Press, which on July 27 gave employees a scant week in which to accept buyouts before it would resort to layoffs: 14 Guild members, including 10 newsroom staffers. The paper also reported laying off two part-time librarians and cutting "an unspecified number of open jobs," but has refused to say whether layoffs will still be needed and at press time did not know what health insurance benefits will be offered to buyout recipients eligible to retire.

. . . as 60 buyouts sought in St. Louis

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch announced Aug. 2 it will offer a buyout package to the first 60 people who apply for it, with most applicants expected to be drawn from management and Guild ranks. The offer includes two weeks' pay for every year of service, with a minimum of 26 and maximum of 52; full pension rights; and lifetime medical coverage.

Detroit TA agrees to concessions

The Detroit Guild has reached a tentative albeit concessionary agreement on a new three-year contract with Independent Newspapers, the Journal Register-owned publisher of the Macomb Daily and the Royal Oak Daily Tribune. Acknowledging the two papers are mired in serious economic problems, the agreement includes 2% wage increases next July and in July, 2009, as well as a \$750 signing bonus; the last contract expired Jan. 31. The agreement also continues the existing health plan but with higher co-payments and deductibles. A ratification meeting was scheduled for Aug. 26.

Thomson slights experienced staff

Even before its proposed acquisition of Reuters has gotten regulatory approval—still months away—Thomson Corp. is hiring more journalists worldwide. But while Reuters

remains intent on shedding workers, Thomson is looking elsewhere, encouraging applications from "recent graduates with requisite interest." Translation: why hire unionized veterans with boatloads of experience if you can sweep up "energetic, smart candidates" on the cheap?

Can you spell 'small minded'?

Last month we reported on Al Arno's arbitration victory at the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, a triumph made all the sweeter when the St. Louis Board of Aldermen declared July 19—the day he was scheduled to return to work—to be "Al Arno Day." This month we have to report that the St. Louis Post-Dispatch responded to these developments by informing Arno he'll be working from home and that any business he may have to transact on behalf of the Post-Dispatch will be conducted in the newspaper's lobby. Classy outfit!

Staff votes 110-2 for Ridder to quit

Par Ridder, erstwhile publisher of the St. Paul Pioneer Press, broke an unwritten rule when he took the same position at the rival Minneapolis Star Tribune. But he may have broken far more tangible rules by taking corporate records with him, as alleged in an ongoing trial, and he clearly sent an ethical shudder through the Star Tribune newsroom: on July 17, the Guild-represented employees voted 110-2 to urge Ridder to resign, claiming he has "damaged the Star Tribune's credibility and integrity and undermined our ability to hold public figures accountable for their actions."

New alliance forged in Canada

CWA/SCA Canada and the United Steelworkers signed a strategic alliance at the CWA convention in Toronto, where Steelworkers President Leo Gerard—also a Canadian—was a guest speaker. The alliance pledges the two unions to work together on issues of common interest in Canada and globally.

Affirmed: faculty are not managers

A regional director for the National Labor Relations Board has concluded for a second time that full-time faculty members at Point Park University in Pittsburgh are not managers as defined by labor law, and therefore qualify for representation by the Pittsburgh Guild. The 63-page ruling is the latest in a series of rulings against the university, which has been battling its employees ever since they voted overwhelmingly for Guild representation—in 2003.

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

Canada: Publications mail agreement No. 40032108

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to: P.O. Box 503, RPO West Beaver Creek, Richmond Hill, ON L4B 4R6

Subscribers: Address changes and delivery stops may be e-mailed to: duesinfo@cwa-union.org

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

Single copies: \$1.50

Buffalo finds route to early contract

It's a cliché to preach about turning lemons into lemonade, but the Buffalo Newspaper Guild has done just that by negotiating a new contract fully a year before the current pact expires. It did so by getting ahead of the curve on rising health care costs, convincing management at the Buffalo News that it could save a significant amount of money by moving quickly.

Key to the unusually early agreement was a realization by local leaders that the company could achieve major savings if it switched from a community-rated health insurance plan—which calculates premium and other costs based on a region's overall health care costs—to an experience-rated one, which looks at the actually claims history of plan participants. With Buffalo News employees filing lower health care claims per plan participant than the overall western New York population, the experience-rated approach looked like a sure-fire winner.

Additional savings could be achieved if the company switched to a single plan provider, as opposed to an existing menu of 14 health plan choices provided by three different carriers.

If management made both changes before the existing contract expired, Guild leaders calculated, the savings would be enough to continue the same level of health care coverage for three additional years without additional costs—a clear benefit to both the News and its employees. On the other hand, the local did not want to renegotiate the entire contract more than a year before its expiration. Would management be willing to engage in extremely circumscribed negotiations, limited to just a handful of issues, in exchange for potentially saving some money?

Management was, and so the two sides

agreed to bargaining in which just four issues would be negotiated: wages, health care, district manager wages and editorial interns. The tentative agreement, reached Aug. 1, extends the contract three additional years, to July 31, 2011, with the following changes:

- Wage increases of 2% on Aug. 1 of 2008 and 2009, but no increase in the last year. Full-time employees will receive an \$1,100 bonus (\$550 for part-timers) this January, plus a previously negotiated wage increase of 2%.

- The News will continue to offer at least three health insurance plans, with the company fully paying for the least expensive one. The base plan will continue the current coverage and co-pays, but adds domestic partner coverage and coverage of dependent students to age 25. On the down side, the base plan includes a \$500 in-patient deductible, but \$400 of that can be reimbursed by the local from a pool of money provided by the News under the last agreement.

- A change in the maximum employment of editorial interns from four months to six, in line with the limit set on other kinds of temporary employees.

- Loss of the top two steps in wage progression for district managers, reducing the top minimum (before annual increases) to \$884 from \$1,100. The local also agreed to a new part-time district manager job, for delivering down routes and missed papers, that pays \$17-\$18 an hour. In return, the local won an early incentive retirement for district managers and won permanent employment for four long-time temporary district managers. An additional provision guarantees that no current district managers will be transferred out of their jobs without their consent.

Newspaper industry in turmoil

Continued from page 1
the transaction price of \$34.

Meanwhile, the deal could still be torpedoed by the Federal Communications Commission, which has been asked to waive restrictions on cross-ownership of newspapers and television stations in the same market. And Tribune's shareholders haven't yet weighed in on the sale: they're scheduled to vote late this month.

While every additional week of delay seems to be working to the disadvantage of pending deals, as ad revenues and circulation numbers keep sliding, those deals that have gone through are just as vulnerable to economic constriction. Bloomberg columnist Jonathan Weil observed last month that McClatchy's stock had lost almost a third in value a year after it acquired Knight Ridder—and that's after selling off the parts it didn't want, ostensibly because they didn't fit the rapid-growth profile of its portfolio.

The most telling sign of McClatchy's problems—and that of virtually any newspaper buyer—is the \$3.59 billion entry on its books for "goodwill," a magical accounting device to make assets balance liabilities. "Goodwill" is employed when someone pays more for a company than its tangible assets are worth—as Murdoch did in buying Dow Jones, for example. The fact that an asset is intangible doesn't mean it isn't worth anything: Murdoch, for example, is banking that the prestige of the Dow Jones name and the Wall Street Journal's reputation for excellent business journalism is worth the premium he's paying. But too much goodwill on the books can overwhelm a company, as it did during the savings and loan scandals in the

High payouts don't extend to IAPE

While negotiations over the \$5.6 billion sale of Dow Jones were wrapped up within a mere four months, the company apparently finds negotiating a contract with its employees much more complicated. Although IAPE (TNG-CWA Local 1096) has been at the table since last fall, management continues to insist on low-balling any proposed raises while sharply increasing employees' health care costs, resulting in a stand-off that didn't thaw even in a recent round of off-the-record talks.

The IAPE bargaining team has calculated that a decent wage increase would cost Dow Jones less than \$4 million a year; the package on the table, on the other hand, would cost the average IAPE member \$7,300—after inflation—over four years. Such penny-pinching stands in sharp contrast to the millions of dollars that have been tossed around in the course of Rupert Murdoch's pursuit, including \$30 million to the Bancroft family for advisors and tens of millions more in special severance benefits for senior executives.

"As it stands now, the company proposal would mean real—and significant—declines in your income each year," IAPE President Steven Yount wrote to local members earlier this month. Indeed, newsroom employees are now contending that if they are going to have to work for News Corp. "they deserve more pay, not less," Yount added in another update.

Although IAPE reported "progress" in its three off-the-record meetings with Dow Jones in July, "suddenly, to our surprise, progress stopped." Company negotiators subsequently walked out of an Aug. 7 on-the-record bargaining session, "telling us they weren't interested in hearing what we had to say," Yount said. In response, editorial employees across the nation walked off the job—temporarily—Aug. 14 to drive home the point that without them, Murdoch hasn't bought much.

early 1980s; McClatchy's goodwill is bigger than shareholder equity and 63% higher than its market capitalization, indicating that Wall Street doesn't place the same value on it that management has.

In a similar pickle, albeit on a smaller scale, is Lee Enterprises, which paid \$1.46 billion in 2005 to acquire the Pulitzer chain. Earlier this year it was still carrying \$1.5 billion in goodwill, or nearly twice its recent market capitalization of \$796 million.



Five employees of the San Mateo County Times show off their red solidarity t-shirts.

MediaNews shuffle an attempt to oust union

Newspaper "clustering," developed largely by MediaNews, saves money by combining the operations of several newspapers under one roof. Now it's being wielded to bust unions, too.

The company that last year scooped up virtually all of the daily and weekly newspapers ringing San Francisco announced Aug. 13 that it no longer recognizes the Northern California Newspaper Guild as the collective bargaining representative for employees of the Oakland Tribune and four other newspapers. The five publications, part of the Alameda Newspaper Group, have been "consolidated" with the nonunionized Contra Costa Newspapers and Hills Newspapers into a new entity, the Bay Area News

Group-East Bay.

Thus far the change is largely a paper exercise, with only a small number of employees being relocated. But in a letter to Guild leaders, Marshall Anstandig, the company's attorney, contends that as a result of its corporate restructuring the ANG bargaining unit "constitutes significantly less than 50% of the newly consolidated editorial group of BANG-East Bay" and therefore "we can no longer recognize the Guild" as a bargaining representative of its employees.

Anstandig's letter came three days after the local, apprised of what was coming, filed an unfair labor practices charge with the National Labor Relations Board and sought an injunction to block the withdrawal of recognition. Will Baudler, regional attorney with the NLRB's Oakland office, said an investigation has been started.

Anstandig's letter also drew a sharp rebuke from local representative Carl Hall, whose responding letter charged MediaNews with making "a grave error." "Your citing of numbers and percentages don't mask what I consider to be a blatant attempt to destroy a 20-year tradition of progressive labor relations in the East Bay news industry," Hall wrote. "Given the challenges our business faces, it's unfortunate the company is pursuing this losing strategy rather than the pattern of good faith bargaining we have tried so hard to build."

Guild members and their supporters throughout the region wore red shirts on Aug. 13 to express their support of the union. "This is good old-fashioned union busting," declared an ANG unit memo promoting the protest.

Hall's reference to progressive labor relations notwithstanding, MediaNews has never embraced good faith bargaining in the Bay Area. Although ANG workers voted for Guild representation in 1987, it took them until 1998 to get MediaNews to agree to a first contract. The most recent contract expired in July, but despite ongoing contract negotiations "there was no indication during the course of the meetings we had that they were going to jerk the rug out from under us," Doug Cuthbertson, the local's executive officer, told trade journal Editor & Publisher.

Guild officials also are looking at the possibility of launching an organizing campaign within the newly "consolidated" organization. Of approximately 130 ANG employees, 80 or so are Guild members; the non-unionized newspapers add another 170. Reaching majority status therefore would require recruiting at least another 70 to 80 members.

News round-up

Justice delayed is justice denied

A July 18 report from the National Labor Relations Board's Inspector General concludes that board delays in deciding cases are adversely affecting workers' rights. The IG found it is taking the NLRB an average of 914 days to decide unfair labor practice charges filed by an individual and a union, 653 days to decide cases filed just by a union, 490 days for cases filed just by an individual—but only 381 days to decide cases filed by employers.

College grads better stay healthy

Over the recent recession and recovery, employed college graduates between 23 and 27 years old have become increasingly less likely to receive employer-provided health insurance, according to an analysis by the Economic Policy Institute. Indeed, employment-based health coverage for recent college grads has been falling since 1983-84, when it was at a high of 80%, to today's incidence of 60.5%—a 25% decline over two decades.

Retirement becomes less affordable

A new study says nearly half of Americans won't be able to maintain their standards of living when they retire. The Center for Retirement Research at Boston College reports that 20% of American households ages 51 to 61 were deemed at risk for retirement—defined as those unable to maintain their pre-retirement standard of living—when they were studied 15 years ago, rising to 32% in 2004. Meanwhile, the percentage of workers of all ages who won't have enough saved for retirement soared to 45%.

Minimum wage to get another boost?

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, who spent a decade trying to raise the nation's minimum wage before Congress finally did so this year, has introduced a new bill that would raise the minimum wage to \$9.50 an hour by 2011 and index it to inflation after that. If adopted, the new minimum wage would be approximately 50% of the average hourly wage, a ratio it hasn't seen in more than 30 years.

Pay discrimination bill passes House

Disregarding a Bush regime veto threat, the Democratic-run House has approved the so-called "Lilly Ledbetter Act," designed to circumvent a 5-4 Supreme Court decision that workers could sue for pay discrimination only within a narrow six-to-nine month window. The 225-199 vote—opposed by only six Democrats and supported by only two Republicans—was prompted by the case of a Goodyear Tire Co. supervisor who didn't discover until 20 years after the fact that she had been paid considerably less than male co-workers with the same duties. Goodyear, meanwhile, has dunned Ledbetter—who is retired and lives on a small pension and Social Security—for \$3,165.20 in legal expenses.—PAI

AFL-CIO decides not to endorse

The AFL-CIO Executive Council has turned its member unions loose to make presidential primary endorsements, saying the federation "decided not to proceed with a decision process that would lead to support for a single candidate at this time." In a statement approved by the council Aug. 8, the day after it hosted a debate between seven Democratic hopefuls at the city's football stadium, the federation praised all the contenders and said "trade unionists met with the next president of the United States and six other candidates." No Republicans were invited to the debate because, the federation said, none would answer its questionnaire.

Deadline extended for 9-11 disability

The deadline for anyone involved in rescue, recovery or cleanup efforts at the World Trade Center to reserve their rights to possible workers' compensation has been extended by a year, to Aug. 13, 2008. Although it remains unclear whether reporters and other news staffers who covered the rescue effort will qualify for workers' comp if they develop respiratory or other ailments linked to the site, those who were in the area should file to preserve their rights. For detailed information, visit www.nycosh.org or call a toll-free, 24-hour hotline at 866-WTC-2556.

Circulation growing—just not in U.S.

Newspaper circulation is swooning in the U.S., but worldwide it continues to creep upward. The World Association of Newspapers reports that paid circulation increased 2.3% globally in 2006, compared with a 1.9% drop in the U.S., and is up 9.5% over the past five years. Similarly, newspaper ad revenue grew 3.8% worldwide in 2006, compared with a 1.7% decline in the U.S.

Federal shield law takes first step

A first step toward a national shield law was taken Aug. 1, when the House Judiciary Committee approved the Free Flow Information Act (HR 2102); similar legislation (S 1267) is awaiting Senate action. More than 40 media companies and organizations, including The Newspaper Guild-CWA, have been lobbying on behalf of the proposal, which would extend limited rights to journalists to protect their confidential sources.

Forget sub-prime crisis: big worry is productivity

By Andy Zipser
Editor, The Guild Reporter

As the newspaper economy grows ever more dire—replete with layoffs and buyouts, wage stagnation and loss of pension benefits—the wider U.S. economy is itself shuddering on a cusp, prepared to tip into recession. Or not.

Judging by the rhetoric emanating out of the White House, business is peachy—good enough, in fact, to revisit the idea of more tax cuts. The Federal Reserve also seems unconcerned about any perturbations, expressing more concern about the specter of inflation than economic stagnation, even though we've seen much more of the latter over the past 15 years. But even without the meltdown in sub-prime loans and their contagion of fiscal markets worldwide, there is a growing body of evidence that all is not well.

For starters, unemployment remains stubbornly higher than when George Bush took office—1.17 million higher, as of July. Which means that years of "recovery" since the Bush recession earlier this decade still haven't restored employment to full health, and the job growth that has occurred hasn't kept pace with population growth. Moreover, those jobs that are being created continue to crop up disproportionately—almost 60% of all new jobs—in the low-paying health-care and restaurant end of the service sector.

The manufacturing sector, meanwhile, continues to shed jobs—another 2,000 in July—reflecting an overall loss of steam. Although manufacturing grew in July for the sixth consecutive month, the expansion was the slowest since March, according to the Institute for Supply Management. Indeed, the institute's manufacturing index, which reflects the opinions of purchasing managers, declined to 53.8 in July from 56.0 in June, confounding a Wall Street consensus forecast of no change. An index reading above 50 indicates growth, while one less than 50 indicates a contraction.

Slow job growth also puts downward pressure on wage growth, so it should come as no surprise that here, too, there is a measurable cooling: hourly earnings, before accounting for inflation, rose by 0.3% in July—slightly less than in previous months—while weekly earnings were flat. And, in fact, that's been pretty much the case for years: in June 2007, inflation-adjusted hourly earnings were just 2.3% higher than in March 2001, at the start of the Bush recession; inflation-adjusted weekly earnings were only 1.8% higher. No wonder consumption spending has finally started to peter out.

But the most disturbing statistic to emerge in recent weeks was a Commerce Dept. revision of economic growth data for the past three years. The revised data imply that productivity grew at only a

1.5% annual rate over the period—equal to the productivity stagnation that ran from 1973 to 1995, and a full percentage point below the 2.5% growth rate from 1995 to 2004.

Growth in productivity, which measures the value of the goods and services produced by an average worker in an hour of work, is key to increasing standards of living. If productivity doesn't increase, there's no additional wealth to spread around (whether it does, or ends up concentrated in just a few hands, is another question altogether). Indeed, from a macro viewpoint, layoffs that don't reduce the output of goods and services are a good thing because now those workers are freed to produce something else, increasing overall wealth that much more.

Conversely, a slowdown in productivity growth is not good—in fact, writes Dean Baker, an economist and co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research, it is "a very bad sign." And it's even worse in the context of declining job quality and economic polarization.

"The argument for conservative economic policy was always that by giving people more incentive to work and invest, productivity would grow more rapidly, and that this would benefit everyone in the long run," he explains. "It turns out, even with the massive upward redistribution of income over the last quarter century, productivity is now growing at its slowest pace in the post-war period. In short, we are not seeing much growth—and the growth we are seeing is going to those at the top."

The issue also has attracted concern from the Center for American Progress, which on Aug. 3 released a report titled, "Ignoring Productivity at Our Peril." Written by Dr. Christian Weller and Amanda Logan, the report observes that low productivity gains give business executives disincentives to invest in their businesses, thereby hampering further productivity growth, which means "a virtuous cycle is in danger of becoming a vicious cycle."

Baker, Weller and Logan all argue that government policy intervention is needed to avert an economic implosion, with Baker contending that "the policy of of redistributing income upwards has been a clear failure, insofar as its goal was to increase income growth." But as Weller and Logan observe, policymakers face a dual challenge: "Businesses will not invest unless incomes rise faster than they have recently, which means policymakers need to ensure that workers can see more gains from a growing economy in the form of faster job growth and higher wage growth."

"At the same time," they continue, "policymakers must create additional incentives for companies to invest in new technologies appropriate for a creative U.S. economy that remains on the cutting edge of global innovation."

Olbermann: Guild saved my broadcasting career

[Prior to moderating the AFL-CIO's presidential candidates' forum Aug. 7, MSNBC's Keith Olbermann was interviewed by one of the federation's bloggers, Mike Hall. Herewith a particularly relevant excerpt:]

In your various stops, you've carried a union card. Tell me what that's meant to you.

One anecdote from early in my career sums that up. I was 21 years old and in my first professional job in this business, with a radio network that used to be attached to United Press International, back when UPI was the rival to The Associated Press. . . . It was quite a break for me to be working in New York.

I had a boss who treated me very well and we used to have these animated discussions—I won't call them arguments, but we'll call them animated discussions—about what I should and shouldn't be doing. He was willing to listen to my point of view even if we started to raise our voices. One day our voices got raised and his boss came back from a liquid

lunch and walked in on the tail end of this. Then my boss went into this guy's office, which he often did to cool down and say "oh, that Olbermann. . . ." At this point the boss's boss. . . came in and fired me on the spot and said "you don't give the managers no lip. You get your stuff and get out of here."

I had the next days off anyway, this was Monday and I was back at work on Thursday. He had received a reprimand and had been sent home. I received a letter in my files that said, "Don't yell at the managers."

He basically fired me because he was drunk and didn't like me. And it's as simple as this; if that had not been a union operation, if there had been no Wire Service Guild (now the News Media Guild), if we had not set certain brakes on the unilateral nature of what employers can and cannot do, I don't know if I would have ever gotten another job. . . . I was up for a local job in New York. . . . I know they didn't seriously consider me for the position afterwards. . . . if that firing had held I might not have been able to continue in broadcasting.

CWA leaders stress diversity, coalitions

By Mark Gruenberg
Editor, Press Associates Inc.

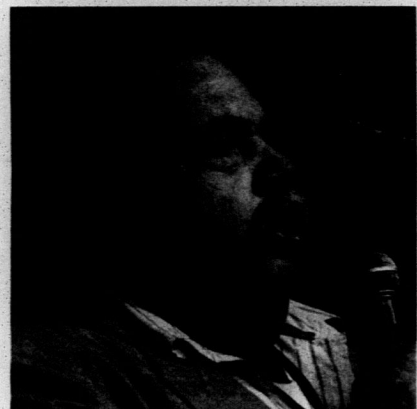
Leaders and delegates to CWA's mid-July convention in Toronto made it clear that they view greater diversity and coalition-building—with unions, community groups, in politics and elsewhere—as key to achieving labor's goals.

The most concrete expression of this outlook came with delegate approval for expanding the 19-member CWA Executive Board by four at-large seats, designated for women and minorities, starting Sept. 1. The board currently has only one African-American and four women serving, even though the union is more than 20% minority and 40% female.

"We haven't always practiced what we've preached" about diversity and equality, admitted Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling in bringing the proposal to delegates. "Simple equity demands we shatter glass ceilings wherever they exist and go the



Lise Lareau, president of the Canadian Media Guild, welcomes CWA delegates to Toronto.



UPAGRA delegate Luis Quintana sings the Puerto Rican anthem to help kick off the CWA convention.

extra mile to ensure our governing body reflects our membership.

"The issue before us today is really a matter of morality . . . of fairness . . . of justice . . . of democracy," she added. "Diversity is equally important for a practical reason, as well: It makes us stronger, more effective and more powerful. The broader the perspectives we bring to the executive board, the smarter the decisions we will make. The more our leaders reflect our members, the more responsive we will be to their needs."

CWA President Larry Cohen concentrated his time at the podium on coalition-building and organizing, announcing that the union's "Stewards Army"—a concept he has extended to the entire AFL-CIO—now numbers more than 20,000 and has already started showing on-the-ground successes. One was enlisting union members to lobby for congressional passage of the Employee Free Choice Act, which the new Democratic-run House approved, 241-185. A GOP filibuster killed it in the Senate, even though it got a 51-48 majority. The bill, which needed 60 votes to stop the talkathon, would help level the playing field between workers and bosses in organizing and bargaining.

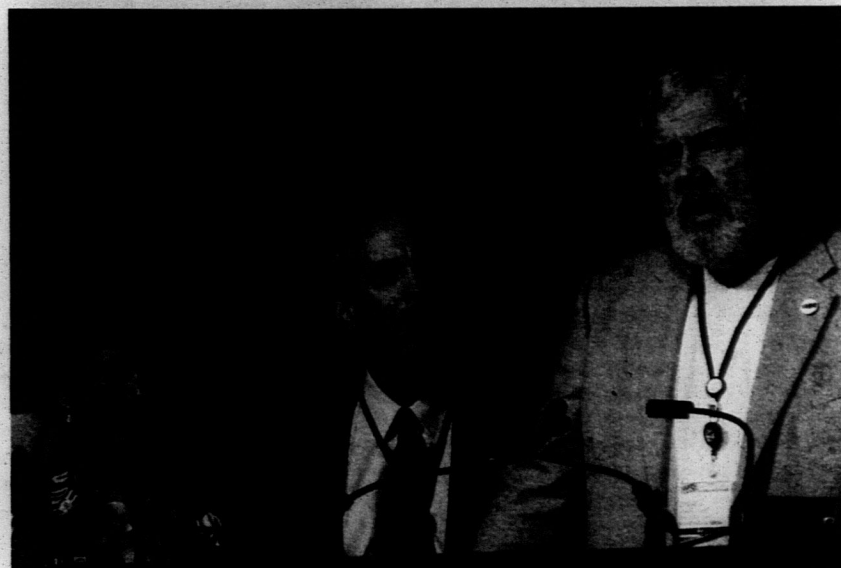
Another victory cited by Cohen, on a state level, was the Stewards Army's role in helping Virginia Governor Timothy Kaine "sustain his veto" of legislation, pushed through by the General Assembly's GOP majority, "aimed right at (aiding) Verizon's plan to dump customers in rural Virginia, just like it's trying to do in the Midwest and New England," Cohen said.

"Our Stewards Army joined forces with IBEW to wage our 'Stop the Sale' campaign, with members of Congress, governors and other elected leaders speaking out against dumping customers and workers in exchange for a \$700 million tax windfall for Verizon," he explained.

Cohen also cited the 11-union coalition that recently negotiated a new contract with



Larry Vellequette thanks delegates for their support during the Toledo Blade lockout.



ALL PHOTOS THIS PAGE BY BILL BURKE/WASHINGTON-BALTIMORE GUILD

IAPE President Steve Yount, with TNG-CWA President Linda Foley and CWA President Larry Cohen looking on, accepts the President's Award for the local's organizing efforts over the past year. This was the first time a TNG local received CWA's highest honor.

General Electric, increasing wages, benefits and—for the first time in years—pensions. "GE even agreed to consider joining other CWA employers in working with us for universal health care," Cohen noted.

He also cited the union's community activism and its success in gaining community allies for its causes. Notable, he said, were "health care members of Local 1168 in Buffalo (who) walked 300 miles across New York in the dead of winter to protest the scheduled closing of their hospitals. CWAers in every city along the way joined them and marched with them, and elected officials joined the protest, too." Also acknowledged were 500 Comcast workers in

Pittsburgh—newly represented by CWA—who joined other CWA members at Verizon, plus the Steelworkers, to form a new Jobs with Justice coalition in the Pittsburgh area the week before the convention.

But the coalition-building and the organizing must continue, Cohen said, because labor's goals can be achieved only with the help of a worker-friendly Congress and a president who will lobby for, and push through, the Employee Free Choice Act.

Cohen also discussed the Strategic Industries Fund, designed to undertake and pay for massive, industry-wide organizing drives on issues and in sectors the union represents. Nine such drives have already been identified. "These campaigns are daring to shape our industries, reform health care in America, challenge journalism's decline and develop a new trade agenda for North America," he told delegates. "Each campaign is based on strengthening our bargaining power by moving from defense to more offense, creatively working to solve the problems we face—not just mobilizing our anger."

One SIF campaign, Speed Matters, is lobbying for state and federal legislation to bring high-speed broadband telecom and Internet access and service nationwide. It features 25,000 stewards "talking to their neighbors about union versus non-union carriers and debating the policy direction of the telecom industry," Cohen explained.

A little face-to-face can head off arbitration

By Ray Pithyk
Chief Steward, Albany Guild

Sometimes, simple is smart. As evidence, consider the Albany Newspaper Guild's success in convincing Times Union management to change its use of Classifieds Plus, a private contractor that handles classified ad calls for papers all over the country.

Classifieds Plus had been handling Times Union classified calls for some time on weekends and after regular work hours, but the Guild didn't complain initially because we had no contract language to bar the practice—and besides, it wasn't affecting our members. But last year a classified staffer was moved to a different job and not replaced, effectively ceding the work he had been doing to Classifieds Plus. And that changed everything.

"Our contract does not allow the company to displace employees and hand their work to independent contractors," explained our local's president, Tim O'Brien. "Workers do not have to be let go for the contract language to be violated."

When we filed a grievance, company officials responding by questioning how many people could be considered classified

employees and whether classified employees had specific customers assigned to them. They also refused to detail how many calls were being handled by Classifieds Plus. Although the Guild cited a previous arbitration ruling to show some company arguments were irrelevant and presented a strong case overall, the company refused to change its position.

That forced us to file for arbitration, which finally got management's attention.

With the company anxious to avoid arbitration, O'Brien arranged to have classified members and Guild officers meet with company managers to explain why they were so upset about the use of Classifieds Plus. "Employees explained how they were spending their time correcting mistakes made by Classifieds Plus. As a result, they could not get on the phone to take calls themselves and were losing commissions," O'Brien said. "Imagine having the company hand your work and commissions to someone else and then asking you to fix that person's mistakes. That's what happened here."

One classified employee described how she spent her entire workday typing Classifieds Plus ad orders into the Times Union ad system because there was no computer interface between the two systems. All

the classified ad reps had stories about how the use of Classifieds Plus was hurting customer service: front-desk ad workers unable to handle walk-in business because they were dealing with Classifieds Plus mistakes; customers complaining they were getting lost in the Classifieds Plus phone system.

One frustrated customer called the Times Union city desk and asked to be connected to a human being in advertising after being bounced around the Classifieds Plus phone system.

All the ad reps stressed that customer service was getting worse with the use of Classifieds Plus.

During the discussion, General Manager George Hearst asked one of the advertising department managers if the use of Classifieds Plus had reduced the rate of lost ad calls because no one could get to the phone fast enough. The company's own numbers showed there had been virtually no change with the use of Classifieds Plus. In fact, there was a fractional increase in missed calls.

"The company appeared quite surprised to learn that it was getting no benefit from the use of this contractor. It took time and persistence, but our local and especially our classified sales staff made a convincing case that the best people to handle these calls are

our members," O'Brien said.

Initially, the company responded to the complaints by setting up a computer interface for the Classified Plus workers, freeing up Times union employees to resume answering phones and taking ads. Support staff also was assigned to handle some of the other clerical duties linked to Classifieds Plus.

More recently, our members have been told to do everything in their power to make sure they get to calls before they roll over to Classifieds Plus. As a result, the number of calls taken by the contractor has dropped, which means the number of ad corrections also has dropped. Some members now think it is only a matter of time before the contractor is dismissed entirely—perhaps when the Classified Plus contract expires.

With these changes, the Guild withdrew the grievance without prejudice and sent the company a letter stating that the union would continue to monitor the use of this independent contractor.

"The Guild reserved our right to re-file the grievance if the company's use again violated the contract," O'Brien said. "This grievance required a great deal of patience on the part of our employees, but in the end they saw how speaking up for themselves through their union made a difference."

'We must do that which we think we cannot'

By Linda Foley, President



Canadian communications theorist Marshall McLuhan said, "The real news is bad news." And the real news is especially bad for the news business these days.

On June 18, Morgan Stanley reported to investors that newspaper ad revenue is expected to be down 4.7% this year. Classified advertising is already off by—get this—11.8%; retail is down 2.2% and national is down 3.2%. Online advertising, meanwhile, which accounts for only a small fraction of the industry's revenue stream, is up 16%. "We are adjusting our newspaper company models accordingly," Morgan Stanley told its clients. More real bad news for us.

But not not exactly breaking news to anyone here. You and your members know we are facing a fundamental shift in our core industry. You see it and feel it every day. Newspaper owners, sated by monopoly profits for decades now, find themselves struggling to maintain positive cash flows. Classified advertising is flowing away from their printed pages to internet list serves and web sites like water running down a mountain.

Local retailers, who once relied almost exclusively on the local newspaper to get the word out about weekly specials, now invest in point-and-click internet ads to lure customers—that is, those local retailers who are left after WalMart, Target, Home Depot, Best Buy and Macy's took over nearly all community retail business. As our employers have lost advertising revenue, our members have lost their pensions, large swaths of their health care, compensation and, in too many cases, their jobs. It's a sobering, frightening time for us.

In times like these, I turn to one of my

favorite Guild members—that is, to one of my favorite *deceased* Guild members. (I have no favorite *living* Guild member; you're all equally terrific in my eyes. That's because you all vote.) My favorite deceased Guild member is Eleanor Roosevelt. She was a member of the Guild for more than 25 years, joining in 1937 when she wrote a syndicated column in New York City called "My Day."

Mrs. Roosevelt said this about other hard times during her day: "We gain strength, and courage, and confidence by each experience in which we really stop to look fear in the face . . . we must do that which we think we cannot."

We must do that which we think we cannot. In other words, we *must* stop big media owners from getting bigger by mounting national campaigns, in the U.S. and Canada, to curtail further consolidation. We *must* stand up to Rupert Murdoch's takeover of Dow Jones by actively seeking other buyers. We *must* make the union a player in every ownership transaction, from Peoria to the Osprey chain here in Canada. We *must* reach out to workers at the non-union LA Times and encourage them to join the Guild. We *must* unite all the employees of MediaNews to save them from the scorched-earth, chainsaw-cost-cutting that's ravaging their newspapers. We *must* make every federal office-holder vote to reform the anti-democratic labor laws in the U.S. We *must* make the Guild the force for positive change in an industry that for too long has been mired in monopoly profits that have required no innovation or investment to maintain.

We must do that which we think we cannot.

Text of speeches given by the Guild's three top officers at the annual sector conference Friday, July 13, in Toronto. (Arnold Amber did not have a prepared text; his remarks will be published when the conference transcript is completed.)

not. But first, we must do that which we think we *can*. We *can* access resources to fund campaigns like our project with the University of Maryland on the future of our news industry jobs. We *can* launch organizing drives in cities like Milwaukee to protect our work from outsourcing. We *can* get the CRTC to scrutinize the pending merger of CanWest and Alliance Atlantis. We *can* use Berger Marks Foundation money to organize Lee newspapers. We *can* provide an alternative for employers who want to shut down their defined benefit pension plans. We *can* have a more inclusive union. We *can* bring diversity to all levels of the Guild and the CWA.

I heard a speech by Bill Clinton recently. He made the point that what we have in common is more important than our differences. To me, that's what diversity means—reveling in our common strength, not shrinking away from one another because of our differences. It's what a union is all about. It's what we're all about in the Guild. That's why you will hear tomorrow from Michael D'Souza, chair of the Human Rights and Equity Committee, what we in the Guild are doing to bring more diversity to everything we do. It's why the Guild Executive Committee is recommending that delegates here strongly endorse and vote for a proposal to bring more diversity to the CWA's Executive Board when they get to the CWA Convention.

More voices—more diverse voices—are stronger voices. It's how our union continues to fight. It's how the Guild stays strong. So when the hearts of our members at the San Jose Mercury News broke as MediaNews ended the careers of 30 more co-workers last week, including one editor who took his own

life, we all cried.

When those same Guild members in San Jose, along with those in Monterey, St. Paul, Denver, Alameda County, Los Angeles, Detroit and York, Pa. decided to stand together to fight MediaNews and its union-baiting bullies, we all stood up.

When the Tribune Co. and the Guild reached a settlement at the Baltimore Sun that preserved nearly everything we fought for over years of contract bargaining, we all did a little victory dance.

When our members at the Toledo Blade and the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette took massive cuts in pay and benefits to save their newspapers and the jobs of fellow union members, we all gritted our teeth.

When the Boston Newspaper Guild protested outsourcing at the Globe, we all raised our voices in outrage. And when Marcus Courtney of WashTech testified before Congress about the effects of globalization, the workers at the Globe and the rest of us were sitting at that witness table with him.

When the Guild at the Dayton Daily News restarted contract talks after 20 years, we all chimed in.

When we discovered in Puerto Rico that El Vocero had not made tax-deferred contribution to our members' 401(k) accounts, *todos demandamos que ellos pagan*—we all demanded they pay up.

When new owners in Philadelphia demanded that the Guild give up its pension plan, we all said no.

When the St. Louis Guild fought and won two arbitrations overturning dismissals of two of their finest, hardest working members, we all won.

And when all the IAPE reporters at Dow Jones stayed home and showed up late for work en masse to demonstrate who really owns the newsrooms at the Wall Street Journal, we all slept in that day. (Not in the

Continued bottom of page 7

Our members hold the future of media

By Bernie Lunzer, Secretary-Treasurer



By now you've heard that the industry is in transition, the labor movement is in transition, CWA is in transition. At some point it's easy to tune out what's relevant.

Here's the most relevant thing you need to know: in the last membership reporting month from CWA, the Guild had fewer than 30,000 members. This is a first in over 30 years, and is a drop from 33,000 in February 2005. I really don't need to explain to locals what is happening as our employers shed workers. The implications are important, though, and will create serious financial pressures, as locals, too, are already feeling. In the month of May '06, we took in \$464,000. In May of this year, that number was \$370,000.

We've made substantial use of our resources: the Guild Mobilization and Defense Fund, the CWA Defense Fund and, now, the Strategic Industry Fund. Recently, our own fund, the Guild MDF, has been utilized more than ever in my 11-plus years in DC. However, a good investment strategy has allowed us, even against the high demand of the last two years, to maintain a fund balance of more than \$2.5 million. Where possible, we've used the CWA Defense Fund. Its use is more narrow, but it can provide substantial sums when needed for contract campaigns. And, lastly, we're learning how to use the news Strategic Industry Fund. We now have two projects in the works.

I like to tell members that not everyone

gets everything they ask for, but everyone gets the help they need. We've helped York, Pittsburgh, Toledo, Northeast Ohio, the Canadian Media Guild, Rochester, Baltimore, Hawaii, Knoxville, Boston.

The biggest problem we face, with the decline in membership, is the possibility of a more limited budget. We'll talk in some detail in the finance committee, but when decisions need to be made you'll know what they are, and you'll be involved in making the tough choices.

I see the necessity for action in three areas: build a broad media sector; develop an inclusive union; and build stronger, healthier locals.

It's time to get serious about building and defining a broad media sector. We've been given a gift in what the Guild is currently, but we need to consider it a base to rebuild from. If the original founders were here they'd tell us we need to reach out to all information workers. And we need to fortify the professionalism of the work we currently represent, and that which we hope to represent. We already have good relationships that will lead to this broader sector, and we need to start the dialogue in earnest. If we don't shape this future, someone else will—and we won't care for the results.

We need to be an inclusive union. We are democratic—but that doesn't necessarily make people feel welcome, or automatically involved. It's clear to me that locals understand they have to actively reach out to members and non-members. Likewise, TNG needs to reach out to information workers wherever they are. The founders made a

clear decision to reach out to everyone that was in the newspaper industry. They knew strength was in numbers. As the industry reshapes, we need to follow that example and reach out to all workers.

We need an initiative to reach out to Spanish-speaking media. That means becoming a bilingual union in the U.S. and having a strategy for organizing in broadcast—in places we haven't been before. And we need to develop real diversity strategies that work at the local level to bring all members and potential members to the union. Real progress at the local level will change the entire union and allow us to identify and develop tomorrow's leaders. As a part of this, we need to support the CWA diversity proposal and move it forward.

We can and will push large initiatives, and use the resources of the core union. But real strength comes from the locals, which may need added resources to grow. Flavor-of-the-day programs and press releases with strong words don't build a labor movement. We have to develop real strategies for locals. We need to strengthen our collective bargaining. Despite the pounding we're taking right now, we have to bounce back. We have to find ways to get back some of the things we're currently losing in these struggles.

And locals have to organize—getting stronger won't happen in any other way. Some believe we can't organize in the current climate. I think they're wrong. Workers need a voice now more than ever. We can find our message, and we can build our union.

I want us to work with willing employers. I've always believed in building relationships and finding common purpose. My mentor, John Carmichael in Minnesota, a

true visionary, believed that a good working relationship could achieve things that could not be gotten in collective bargaining. He didn't think there was anything that couldn't be discussed with management in some meaningful way. But he also said you can't cooperate with employers that are trying to destroy you. And right now, let's face it, we are being taken advantage of and turned into a commodity.

The lack of respect is palpable. How else would you see really outstanding journalists going into PR work, and finding for the first time in a long time that they can enjoy their work—and they actually get treated better. How sad is that? But we still need to reach out, and build bridges to employers who recognize and respect the union's role.

I have said before, and I'll say again, that our members hold the future of what will be media 50 years from now. They understand what is valued, and we should work with those that will work with us—and go ahead without the others. That means taking responsibility for how things get done, and accepting that management has abdicated its role. We've seen it in so many American industries.

We can weather this storm. We can leave something better and brighter to those that will come behind us. We cannot shirk this obligation. Cynicism must be rejected. Despair needs to be checked at the door. Let's roll up our sleeves and get on with this labor movement that we've dedicated our lives to. Things can be better.

I ask you to build hope among your members. Tell them that we have every reason to expect that we can all do better. Our future depends on it, and together we can face this challenge.

A noteworthy speech: no admonishment

By Carol Rothman, TNG-CWA Chairperson

Welcome to Toronto, where you will participate this week in the 72nd convening of The

Newspaper Guild. For you history buffs, the first convention the Guild held in Canada happened right here in Toronto in 1938.

Earlier this year, I attended an awards ceremony at my daughter's college. The guest speaker was a prominent local doctor. I'm always on the lookout for helpful hints in planning my speech. So, when he said a friend provided him with the essential elements of the perfect speech, he got my attention.

Speaking to the worthy students and proud parents assembled, he began—and ended—his address with these three simple points:

- Say something memorable.
- Tell the audience something they don't know.
- Finish on time.

This concept worked well for him, so I thought I would try to incorporate it into my plan.

Let's talk about the reason we are here today. The purpose of the Sector Conference is defined for us in the constitution, which states, "The TNG-CWA Sector Conference shall set policy for the Sector." But only part of our mandate is to determine Guild policy. An equally important part of the process is to ensure that the mandates are fulfilled.

I thought it would be only fair to look back a few years to see how we are measuring up. I must admit that I expected the theme of this talk to be one of admonishment for falling short of our expectations. I was sure I would uncover an embarrassing list of broken promises. But I was pleasantly surprised to find that we have not let our members down or shirked our responsibility.

Reviewing the resolutions we passed and the actions we proposed at our sector conferences over the last few years, we can proudly stand on a record of positive accomplishments. And, considering everything else that has been on our plate recently, hardly an issue has been ignored.

If you've attended more than one sector conference, you would know that there are recurring themes in our calls to action. The topics we have addressed most often, and more than once, in recent years are diversity, collective bargaining and organizing. Rather than tackle a comprehensive list of resolutions, I attempted to summarize our work

within these categories.

Since 2001, we have taken on the task of reviewing our human rights program, originally established in 1975. Part of that process was to create a diversity task force the next year. The task force surveyed the membership for their priorities among human rights topics. The top five responses were family issues, equal opportunity and discrimination, benefits equity, diversity, and security against workplace violence and hate crimes.

Following the survey, an implementation plan was established. It included local representation, organizing around human rights issues and involvement in community outreach and legislative action.

We continued to drill down to the grassroots level by establishing a network of local human rights coordinators. They were to be the force behind local initiatives like membership education and achieving contract provisions fostering diversity. And last year we created a path for those local human rights activists to follow. It leads them directly to the sector conference and positions in Guild leadership.

Delegates representing equity-seeking groups were nominated by their district councils to form our current TNG-CWA Human Rights and Equity Committee. Their plan is to ensure participation of visible minority delegates in all levels of Guild governance, with the immediate aim of doubling their numbers at the sector conference.

As a result of our Convergence II meetings in 2004, another task force emerged to reevaluate our collective bargaining policies and programs. Their most popular achievement was the collective bargaining tool box. Combining best methods and an array of resources, it offers local leaders ways to improve their bargaining strategies.

Other training suggestions, like novice and advanced-level preparation for negotiations and creating and sustaining a mobilization system, were part of the findings. These additional background elements would better equip our bargaining teams for success.

Another recommendation of Convergence II was to increase our membership density in our industry by creating and sustaining effective chain caucuses. In a few short years we have seen dramatic changes in the chain ownership landscape. This Convergence II idea became the building block for our current "Strategic Industry Fund Proposal to Build power in Media Companies." Our six-month goals of establishing the MediaNews Council and offering

ranging and adversity turns into diversity, a much better word.

Eleanor Roosevelt (my favorite dead Guild member) had another quote that has become a favorite saying of mine: "A woman is like a teabag—you never know how strong she is until she gets in hot water."

I think that's an appropriate metaphor for the Guild, too. We're like thousands of teabags, and when we get in hot water we all get stronger. And when the water gets hotter, we get stronger still. We are committed, we are tough, we are strong. We are the Guild, and we are all together.

training in media-related technologies through a CWA/NETT Academy program are well underway.

Organizing is the lifeblood of the union, and we have measured that pulse with recent recommendations mirroring those in the human rights and collective bargaining areas. We recognized the need to organize new media workers and to rally them around diversity issues.

Locals continue to take advantage of the 75/25 CWA reimbursement program for hiring organizers. And candidates have participated in organizer training through the Berger-Marks Foundation.

It hasn't been easy. All of this work has been undertaken during a period of the most unfavorable relationships with management we have experienced in some time. We are discovering that whether dealing with old owners or new owners, corporate owners or private owners, moguls or minions, we are presented with ever escalating challenges.

Our recommendations here at the sector conference establish the foundation for all of our work in the field. Those recommenda-

tions are further refined by our actual experience, and the cycle is completed when we return to the sector conference to evaluate our successes and failures.

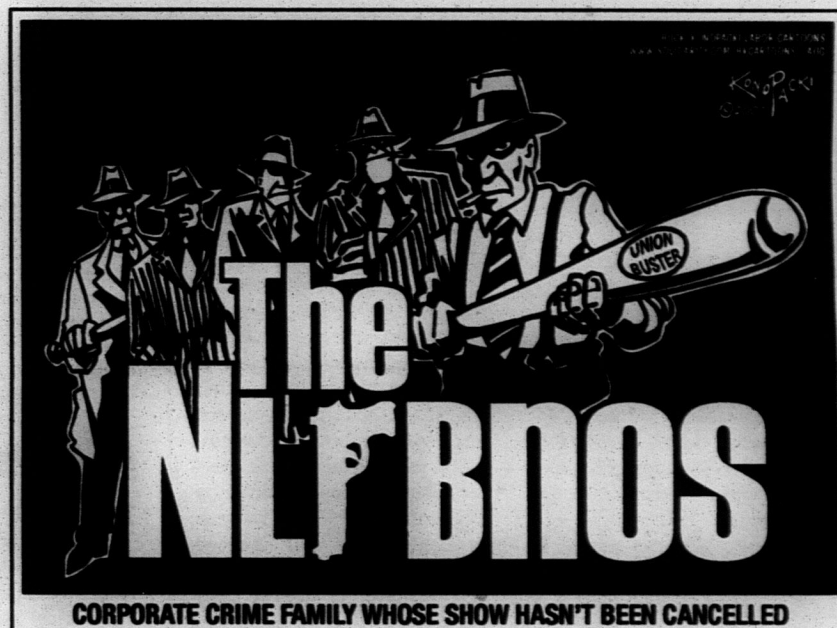
The good news is that we have proven that we are doing our job for our union, our locals and our members. That job constantly changes and continues into the future. And, we must continue to live up to the challenge.

So, back to the elements of the perfect speech.

• Say something memorable. Any self-respecting chairperson agonizes over this. Every one of these speeches means something to me, but I'll leave "memorable" up to you. "Memorable" should be in the mind of the beholder.

• Tell the audience something they don't know. No self-respecting Guild crowd would ever admit this happened. But, I feel safe there was something in there somewhere that qualified.

• Finish on time. When you're in charge, everything is timed perfectly. So, as an example for our other speakers, I'm finishing on time and I thank you for your attention.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor,

I was delighted when I heard that Secretary Treasurer Bernie Lunzer will run for the office of president of the Guild next year.

Guild members were right when they first elected Bernie secretary-treasurer in 1995 and they will be right to elect Bernie president in 2008.

Yours for a more member-tuned Guild,
—Larry D. Hatfield, retired

To the Editor,

As Americans mark the 33rd anniversary of Nixon's resignation from office following the Watergate scandal, first uncovered by an obscure African-American security guard named Frank Wills, we should be reminded of the many thankless contributions made by African-American employees in the Washington Post newsroom, where I worked as a copy aide from 1970 to 1976.

In 1972, then-executive editor Ben Bradley refused to address a list of complaints filed by seven black reporters. Known as the "Metro Seven," the group presented a petition also signed by other black newsroom employees that alleged a pattern

of racial bias at the Post. Only one of the complaining reporters, Richard Prince, who left and later returned, still works at the paper today.

Back then, we were expected to do our own jobs in the newsroom while carrying the extra burden of fighting the owner, top editor and company lawyers for promotions and better assignments. For example, after the Newspaper Guild filed a grievance on my behalf in late 1974, alleging no upward mobility, Bradley and his goon editors drummed me out of the newsroom on false charges in August, 1976. Although the American Arbitration Association eventually awarded me \$6,000 in differential back pay and ordered I be rehired as a reporter, I never was.

Now, top dailies like the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, L.A. Times and Chicago Tribune are in crisis, losing circulation and advertising while caught in the throes of new technologies. But their dirty little secret, long covered-up and under-reported, remains one of pernicious discrimination against minorities.

—Mario B. Showers

Doing the impossible

Continued from page 6

same bed—don't want to carry this too far!)

We are all different; we face different challenges and problems. But we share the same goals and aspirations. We are diverse but we are a united front against the adversity that faces our core industry today. What we have in common is more important than our differences, indeed. What unites us is stronger than what separates us.

Have you ever thought about the words "adversity" and "diversity"? One letter, one vowel is all that separates those two words. Remove the "a," add an "i," do a little rear-

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: Sept. 7.)

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

Toronto a perfect diversity example

By Sheila Lindsay
Washington-Baltimore Guild

The multicultural jewel known as Toronto was the perfect setting for this year's sector conference, at which the Guild's efforts to increase its diversity were so prominently on display.

Lise Lareau, president of the Canadian Media Guild, and TNG staff member Malinka Franklin worked hard to ensure that the conference was booked into a hotel with fully accessible facilities for disabled delegates.

TNG Human Rights Director Debbie Thomas hosted the Diversity and Workplace Issues workshop July 13. Workshop panelists spoke on diversity, seniority, layoffs, discrimination and workplace accommodations. Vernon Clark, a city desk reporter for the Philadelphia Inquirer, discussed the recent layoffs of primarily minority staff, even after the new owner gave his word that there would be no cuts. Lillian Covarrubias, president of the Toledo Guild, talked about seniority in the workplace. Michael D'Souza, who chairs the Human Rights and Equity Committee, spoke on workplace safety and ensuring that disabled workers have access to evacuation routes they can use during emergencies.

But the overwhelming participation of our equity-seeking brothers and sisters was on display elsewhere at the conference, too, as I witnessed at the TNG/The Next Generation meeting. And the sector conference put its stamp on the issue by passing a resolution—on a resounding “aye”—endorsing a CWA Executive Board proposal to add four diversity seats. (Delegates to the CWA convention days later assented as well.)

It's also notable that Carl Younger, of the Greater Boston Newspaper Guild, was chosen as the recipient of this year's Guild Service Award. Carl was nominated by his local for his development of the New England Human Rights and Equity Committee at the Guild's headquarters in Quincy, Mass. He was instrumental in obtaining the media and text resources for a program that aims to attract and welcome members of equity-seeking groups to the union movement.

The Human Rights and Equity committee, of which I am a member, has met monthly since its inception at last year's sector conference in Las Vegas. We are happy to say that six committee members have been re-elected to continue their work, while two are leaving: thank you to Datejia Green (Canadian Media Guild) and Matthew Harper (St. Louis) for their contribution. We also are pleased to welcome two new members, Vernon Clark of Philadelphia and Faheed Muhammad of the Canadian Media Guild.

Finally, I note with sadness that Debbie Thomas announced her retirement at the sector conference. Debbie has been an inspirational leader for this committee, pushed for its success and through her efforts gave union members a voice to speak out about issues of diversity. This could have been a program brushed aside and ignored. Debbie has indicated she will still be nurturing and encouraging a much younger generation of union activists, but will also venture into teaching. Everyone who has had an opportunity to work with and meet Debbie will join me in saying she will be missed and that we wish her nothing but the best in her new journey. Walk good.

Report of the TNG-CWA Human Rights and Equity Committee: Sector Conference, Toronto, July 2007

The Human Rights and Equity Committee was formed a year ago at the TNG Sector Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada to increase diversity within the leadership ranks of the TNG.

The committee hammered out a mission statement at its initial three meetings, all held during the Sector Conference and finally agreed to this one.

Mission Statement:

The TNG-CWA Human Rights and Equity Committee will increase the participation of equity seeking groups at all levels of the union and in all leadership positions at the Local, National and International levels and as delegates to the District Councils, Representative Councils and the Sector Conferences. It will strive to achieve a diversity of leadership to reflect our communities.

Since Vegas the committee has met in teleconferences every month, religiously on Saturday afternoons.

Guildequity.org is now up and running. This is the website Randy Gilliam has been looking after. On it you will find the minutes of this committee. You'll also find information to help you make your next meeting better accessible to people with disabilities courtesy of the Canadian Media Guild. There's also a celebration of this unions efforts to reach out to members of equity seeking groups such as the CMG celebration of Black History Month and participation in Gay Pride events. Please share your successes with us because these successes are learning experiences for the rest of us.

The committee launched the New England Human Rights and Equity Committee with the Boston Newspaper Guild at its headquarters in Quincy, Massachusetts. This is a visionary programme that Carl Younger has come up with. The program aims to attract and welcome members of equity seeking groups to the union movement by discussing issues that are important to the members of these groups. The project includes using DVDs to spark and encourage discussions. Please talk to Carl if you wish to find out more about the program. Of course details are

also posted at guildequity.org.

The committee offered stipends of four hundred dollars each to four members of the union who wished to attend conferences and meetings of equity seeking groups. Two stipends were offered in Canada and two in the United States. We received three applications from Canada but, unfortunately, none from the U.S. Sujata Berry, a producer for CBC TV will attend the South Asian Journalist Conference in New York this month and Eric Shih an associate producer at CBC Thunder Bay, will attend the Asian American Journalist Association meeting in Miami next month.

This committee has also prepared a leaflet on human rights and equity issues.

Members of the committee have also taken on human rights and equity issues in their locals helping their union colleagues resolve problems.

The committee has been working on building support for the proposal to add four diversity members to the CWA Board. Increasing representation of members of equity seeking groups at the highest levels of the union movement will only help make this vital movement more responsive to issues facing these groups and make members of the groups more welcome in union organizations.

At this time the committee thanks Debbie Thomas the TNG-CWA Director of Human Rights for her help and guidance in negotiating the union movement to get things done. She's been an active member of the committee. Her contributions are appreciated. And we wish her every success on her next career.

Committee members:

Sheila Lindsay, Washington/Baltimore
Datejia Green, Canadian Media Guild (vice chair)
Matthew Harper, St. Louis (secretary)
Carl Younger, Boston
Natalie Hill, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Randy Gilliam, New York
Michael D'Souza, Canadian Media Guild (chair)
Yoko Kuramoto-Eidsmoe, Pacific Northwest
Debbie Thomas, TNG-CWA Director of Human Rights

Newsrooms becoming whiter

For all the emphasis by TNG-CWA members on improving workplace diversity, the reality—as measured by the American Society of Newspaper Editors—is that newsrooms are becoming more monochromatic, not less.

According to ASNE's annual survey, the percentage of minority journalists working in daily newsrooms slipped this year for only the second time since 1978, to 13.62%. ASNE's goal has been to increase minority representation until it mirrors society at large—which is now 33% non-white.

Other indicators in the ASNE survey also are slipping into reverse. Minorities account for only 10.9% of all newsroom supervisors, reverting to a level reached two years ago. Meanwhile, the number of newspapers with no minorities at all on their newsroom staffs increased to 392, from 377 last year.

Guild-represented newspapers

by-and-large had better minority representation than the average, but none except those in Hawaii met or exceeded the 33% threshold. The San Jose Mercury News came closest, at 32.2%, although recent layoffs may have driven that percentage lower. Other newspapers with notable percentages include the Sacramento Bee, 30.3%; Fresno Bee, 26.2%; Washington Post, 23.7%; Seattle Times, 22.2%; and the Philadelphia Daily News and Inquirer, 21.6% and

20.1%, respectively.

On the other end of the spectrum are newspapers like the Eugene Register-Guard, at 1.5% minority; the Cincinnati and Kentucky Posts, 4%; and the Albany Times-Union and Toledo Blade, both at 5.6%. And several newspapers in areas with predominantly minority populations still maintain largely white newsrooms: the Memphis Commercial Appeal, for example, has a newsroom that is only 15% non-white.

FROM THE MORGUE

Seventy years ago this month:

The Guild Reporter carries a front-page story on the growing evidence of a “publishers’ conspiracy to wreck the Guild,” heralded by a spate of “news stories containing supposed bombshells to upset the Guild membership.” ... A bid to raid Guild membership for new AF of L locals flops, when not a single person shows up for a widely publicized “mass meeting” in Chicago ... Ten issues decided by convention delegates—including Guild affiliation with the CIO—are put before the membership in a referendum demanded by the Columbus and Washington locals.

Fifty years ago this month:

More than 800 Boston Guild members are among 5,000 workers idled by a lockout by seven newspapers struck by the ITU Mailers. ... A Dept. of Labor study finds that severance pay, pioneered by the Guild, is now a feature of 16% of all major U.S. labor contracts, up from 5% in 1944. ... The Guild establishes its first multi-employer pension plan, the Commingled Pension Trust, with Chase Manhattan Bank as trustee and the Pittsburgh Guild as the first participating local.

Twenty-five years ago this month:

The NLRB, buttressed by two Reagan appointees, reinstitutes a policy holding that false statements by employers and unions during organizing campaigns are not illegal. ... The Cleveland Guild files a class-action lawsuit against the Plain Dealer over charges filed 10 years earlier claiming illegal discrimination against women employees. ... Merger talks between the Guild and ITU reportedly are making progress.

THE GUILD Reporter

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

Volume 74, Number 8

August 17, 2007

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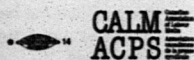
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Printed by Mount Vernon Printing Co.

DAYBOOK

CLUW Biennial Convention
Oct. 10-13, Las Vegas

Western District Council
Oct. 20-21, Eugene, OR

Forum on the Future of News
Industry Jobs
Oct. 26-27, U. of Maryland

Great Lakes, Midwest, and
Southern District Councils
Nov. 9-11, Chicago

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SEP 14

2007