

THE GUILD Reporter

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Our man in Delhi—Memphis Guild president Reggie Sudduth—gives an Eyewitness News camera crew the inside scoop on why Punjabi comprehension is an essential newspapering skill.

Currying favor in Memphis

By Barbara Bradley
Memphis Newspaper Guild

Outsourcing isn't funny. But it's better to laugh than cry, and the Memphis Guild made lots of people smile when we hit the sidewalk March 12 posing as sleazy company travel agents. As employees arrived for work at The Commercial Appeal, we handed them "career travels" brochures and asked if they had ever considered working in India.

We had a table and a map set up on an easel, played Indian music, passed out sesame-coated candy and chick peas, burned incense and talked up Punjabi, one of the 20 different languages our co-workers could look forward to learning when they relocated.

We told them to act now and they could be in New Delhi when their jobs arrived.

Behind the fun was a serious message. The work of 21 advertising graphic artists was outsourced to India last year, and those artists are now teaching people in India to do their jobs. Although the Guild was able to keep those employees working in different positions, we were not able to keep part-time transportation workers from being fired when their jobs were sent to an Indiana company. Additionally, more cus-

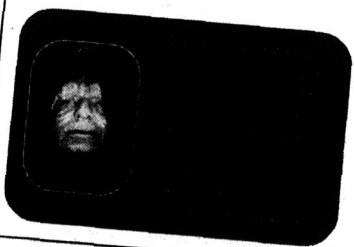
How can I get involved?

Very simple.

Do nothing!



We here at Career Travels™ do all the work for you. First, we determine the necessity of your position. We look at your track record, giving preference to long-term employees who are at the top of the pay scale. We evaluate how economically beneficial to the company it would be to keep you or send you on a new adventure in life.



A page from the brochure distributed by Guild members.

tomers service calls to the newspaper are being routed to Buffalo.

Theater critic Chris Blank, education reporter Dakaria Aarons and I, the fashion editor, video-taped bits of our spoof. Health reporter Mary Powers and customer service representative Reggie Sudduth also worked the sidewalk.

We were surprised how many employees got the joke. They know what outsourcing is and they hate it.

Search "Memphis Newspaper Guild" on Youtube to see our pitches. Look for Chris's slimey green jacket.



Members of the Memphis Guild—even the name is borrowed from overseas—spread the word.

Newspaper biz, like icebergs, is cracking up

By Andy Zipser
Editor, The Guild Reporter

How bad is it in the world of newspaper publishing? Bad enough that Business Week's media writer, Jon Fine, recently led off a story with the line, "This could go down as the year the newspaper broke—the year that the melting icebergs finally fragmented."

Comparing newspapers to a cataclysmic meltdown of polar icecaps may strike some as hyperbolic. On the other hand, there's little doubt that a fundamental restructuring of the business, now well underway, soon could result in something

only vaguely recognizable as a "newspaper" industry.

Each month seems to reveal yet another fault line zig-zagging across an increasingly frozen landscape. This time it's a report from the American Society of Newspaper Editors that the nation's newsrooms lost more jobs in 2007 than in any year since it started counting, three decades ago—and even that understates the real loss, according to industry observers like Alan Mutter, who claims ASNE has been fudging the numbers so they don't look as bad as they are. But even the allegedly massaged numbers show newsroom headcount declining by

Continued on page 5

Guild election schedule

Monday, April 21: Deadline for receipt of protests to voter eligibility lists with supporting documentation.

Thursday, April 24—Tuesday, April 29: Six-day local voting period.

Wednesday, April 30 and Thursday, May 1: Two-day local vote count period.

Saturday, May 3: Deadline for locals to postmark official returns to the Sector Election and Referendum Committee.

Wednesday, May 7: TNG-CWA secretary-treasurer to notify any locals that have not returned ballots.

Monday, May 12: SERC meets at TNG-CWA headquarters to certify election results.

Cut loose in India, reporter sues, wins

A labor court in New Delhi, India, has set a precedent by ruling that foreign reporters working for companies with a base in India are governed by Indian labor laws. In reaching that conclusion, the court awarded approximately \$125,000 in compensatory damages to an Associated Press reporter fired in 2004.

Although she'd worked for AP for 28 years in 30 countries, Laurinda Keys was one of more than a dozen overseas senior employees forced out when the wire service restructured its global operations. Virtually all the terminated journalists signed confidentiality agreements in exchange for

severance packages, but Keys and Anwar Faruqi, AP's bureau chief in Dubai, refused.

Keys, 53, instead filed a lawsuit charging age discrimination. "The AP refused to send me back home when they dismissed me—five months after I had received a merit pay increase—even though they had always promised I would be sent home when my foreign service ended," she recalls. "They demanded I sign an agreement to take early retirement or \$1,000 a month for 17 months, damaging my pension, or they would not send me home."

Unable to afford the move on

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Inside this issue



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'Phantom Jack' in final 'appearance'

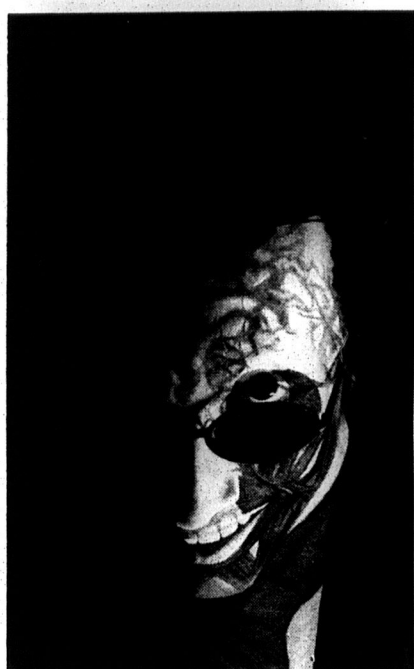
What do reporters do when they're tired of the usual newspaper grind?

In Michael San Giacomo's case they fantasize about the perfect reporter super power. Now the reporter for the Plain Dealer has written the final chapter in the adventures of an invisible journalist whose escapades he first started chronicling several years ago and which, he confesses, are not exactly based on his own 35-year newspaper career. "Phantom Jack: The Nowhere Man Agenda" was to be released this month by Atomic Pop Art Entertainment, a "small but feisty" national comic company, in San Giacomo's words.

The 110-page graphic novel—how grown-ups refer to comic books with occasionally adult themes—includes a 66-page story in which Jack confronts his former best friend, who has powers a hundred times more powerful than Jack's. Vinnie, the Nowhere Man, can turn a city block invisible. Can Jack defeat him? Can Jack survive the encounter? San Giacomo wouldn't say, but hinted that there won't be a dry eye in the house at the end of the book.

The graphic novel also includes three new stories in which Jack uses his powers to expose a corrupt judge, bust a crime boss and break into Guantanamo.

The Nowhere Man Agenda follows publication of "Phantom Jack: Director's Edition," a compilation of all earlier stories in the series.



The cover of "The Nowhere Man Agenda," by colorist Nathan Fairbairn, who now works for Marvel Comics: one of the rare instances in which a cover features the villain, not the hero.

Next up, says San Giacomo, is "Tales of the Starlight Drive-In," out June 4 in time to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the opening of the world's first drive-in theater. The 240-page graphic novel consists of 33 separate stories illustrated by 23 artists from around the world. Each story can stand on its own, but when read together they coalesce into the chapters of a novel.

The stories touch on all genres—comedy, romance, crime, horror, disaster, even a western—and somehow relate to the film being shown at the drive-in at the time.

AP loses in India

Continued from page 1

her own, Keys stayed—and the following year filed suit under the Working Journalists and Other Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service) and Miscellaneous Provisions Act of 1955.

Informing the court that it could not produce any record explaining why Keys had been terminated, AP

instead claimed the court had no jurisdiction in the matter because the wire service is incorporated in the U.S. and Keys was receiving U.S. benefits. Moreover, AP argued, the lawsuit was "an abuse of process of law" and had been filed "with ulterior motive to harass the management of AP."

The judge in the case, however, determined that the only substantive question before the court was whether Keys was covered by the 1955 act, "a purely legal issue." And because AP did not cite any judicial precedent "pronouncing that the provisions of the Act are not applicable to foreign nationals," the wire service was obligated by the act to pay a "dismissal gratuity"—plus 12% interest from the day it was due.

"Please spread this good news so that overseas journalists stop being terrorized into signing away all their rights just to get home," Keys wrote in an e-mail. "The AP is still doing this. . . . It's happening to people who have worked for AP for many years and were earning higher salaries (eligible for higher pensions) as they kept being promoted and given raises because of their high standard of work."

Tony Winton, president of the News Media Guild, said the union is "gratified" by the decision and hopes the ruling "will encourage AP to treat its overseas employees fairly."

Guild briefs . . .

5 Guilders win Pulitzers

To virtually no one's surprise, Washington Post reporters Dana Priest and Anne Hull have been awarded the Pulitzer Prize for public service for their Walter Reed Army Hospital exposé, winner of the Heywood Broun Award a month earlier. Other Guild members to win Pulitzers are Gene Weingarten, also of the Washington Post, for feature reporting; David Umhoefer of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel for local reporting; and Mark Feeney of the Boston Globe for criticism. Guild members among the finalists included Miles Moffett and Susan Greene of the Denver Post for investigative reporting; Kevin Vaughan of the Rocky Mountain News for feature writing; Regina Brett of the Plain Dealer for commentary; and Ann Hornaday of the Washington Post and Inga Saffron of the Philadelphia Inquirer for criticism.

Johnston to get Block Award

The TNG-CWA executive board has voted to present the 2008 Herbert Block Freedom Award to Alan Johnston, the BBC correspondent who was kidnapped last year by Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip—where he was the only Western reporter based in the city—and held for nearly four months. The Herbert Block Award, honoring a person or organization that best exemplifies the political cartoonist's devotion to free speech and a free press, will be presented at a banquet May 21 that also will feature David Simon, creator of HBO's "The Wire," as keynote speaker.

It helps to read the fine print

Reuters had such good 2007 that it offered a bonus to all staff "to make sure that we all had the chance to participate in the success of the company's signature year." Well, maybe not all. Because as somewhat obtusely laid out in CEO Tom Glocer's all-points e-mail, the "one-off discretionary payment of 2.5 percent of base salary" would be made to "all staff who did not participate in a bonus or commission scheme in 2007." And although many Guild members never get a bonus or commission, the Guild contract specifies that the company "shall continue to offer bonus plans to Guild-represented employees." Translation: regardless of whether they actually get a bonus, Guild members are part of a bonus "scheme."

Bargaining sweetens buyouts

Thanks to spirited bargaining within a contractually-guaranteed 10-day window, the Washington-Baltimore Guild was able to broaden and improve the terms of the latest round of buyouts at the Washington Post. Among the improvements: adding employees in the advertising preprint department to the eligibility list, adding retiree health insurance eligibility for some part-timers and increasing some supplemental payments. The local also won free financial and health insurance counseling for those who want it. Eligible employees have until mid-May to reach a decision.

Protesting AP's French sale

The News Media Guild, representing Associated Press employees in the U.S., threw its support behind French unions that struck the wire service for 24 hours last month to protest AP's proposed sale of its French language service to Bertrand Eveno and the Bolloré group. The four striking unions, also backed by the International Federation of Journalists, claim Bolloré's conflicts of interest will damage the quality and independence of the French service.

Pension raid sued in Philly

The Philadelphia Newspaper Guild is suing the Philadelphia Inquirer and Daily News for unilaterally merging a severely underfunded pension plan into a much healthier plan covering Guild-represented employees. A temporary restraining order has been granted while the court hears Guild claims that the publisher has violated federal law and its fiduciary duty by folding a plan that was only 39% funded into one that has assets of \$193 million and liabilities of \$180 million.

CBC coughs up \$100,000

The Canadian Broadcasting Corp. has settled a grievance with the Canadian Media Guild by agreeing to distribute \$100,000 among employees affected by its decision to outsource much of its publicity work in 2005. In addition, three existing communications jobs will return to the Guild's bargaining unit later this year, and the Guild and management were to discuss this month other publicity work now being done independently in Toronto. A second part of the grievance, relating to communications positions the CBC created in 2005, is scheduled for arbitration later this year. In all, 33 jobs were eliminated as a result of the outsourcing, mainly in Toronto, Halifax and Vancouver.

Interpreters brace for a fight

Court interpreters across California are preparing for only their second round of contract negotiations since a law was passed in 2002 that converted them from independent contractors into employees. But because they're divided into four regions the interpreters have a mixed outlook, with Region 1—representing interpreters in Los Angeles, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo—having an especially strained bargaining history that included a six-week strike. While the strike ended when state Sen. Gloria Romero promised to provide legislative help to address interpreters' concerns, the Los Angeles Superior Court subsequently retaliated against several high-profile stewards, pulling two off longtime assignments, threatening a third with a 30-day suspension and terminating the local president's union leave.

Schneider local ratifies

Members of the Schneider Office Employees' Association voted 91% in favor of ratifying a collective agreement that contains salary increases of 10% over five years. While the local lost double overtime in the new deal, it gained increased and simplified severance and settled a 2006 salary increase grievance with a \$750 payment to each member effective upon ratification.

Jobs shuffled in Canada

The Canadian Broadcasting Corp. said it would move production of Newsworld Calgary to Toronto, eliminating 32 positions in the prairie city—but at the same time will expand its news-gathering ranks in Alberta, adding 25 TV jobs in Calgary and Edmonton. CBC Calgary will lose about one-fifth of its workforce in the move to Toronto, mostly producers, associate producers, editors or technicians who are members of the Canadian Media Guild.

'Casual' labor grieved, won

The Indianapolis Guild has won a grievance challenging "a dangerous new trend" at the Gannett-owned Indianapolis Star: the use of "casual" or "on-call" employees. Noting that there is no provision for such an employee category in the contract, which describes work under Guild jurisdiction, the local argued that allowing the use of casual labor threatened everyone's job—and that the contract already provides a liberal policy of part-time and temporary employees to help the company through tough staffing times.

Still looking for answers

The Guild Reporter is soliciting responses for one more month to its four-question survey regarding members' acceptance of an electronic version of the publication. Results of the survey will be published in the May issue. To respond, click on the link on the Guild's home page, www.newsguild.org; send an e-mail to azipser@cwa-union.org; or mail a note to: Andrew Zipser, The Newspaper Guild-CWA, 501 Third Street NW, Washington DC 20001. The four questions are:

- Do you read the print version of the GR?
- Do you currently read an electronic version of the GR?
- Does the Guild Reporter reach you a timely manner?
- Would you prefer to receive the GR in its current print form, its current electronic form, or in some other electronic form, such as a PDF?

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Future of 'old media': stuck to the web?

By Stewart Applin
San Jose Newspaper Guild

As the first decade of the 21st century draws to a close, there are many print journalists who are wondering if the newspaper newsroom has any future—or a future they want to be a part of.

A newspaper reporter, a former editorial writer, an editor of a media web site and a union leader attempted to look into that future and admitted that it was too murky at this point to make definite forecasts during a panel discussion Feb. 20 on the campus of the University of California-Berkeley.

"The Future of the Newsroom: New opportunities, collateral damage, and effects on journalists in the digital era" featured Chris O'Brien, business reporter at the San Jose Mercury News; Luther Jackson, executive officer of the San Jose Newspaper Guild; Jeanne Carstensen, managing editor of Salon.com; and Louis Freedberg, director of the California Media Project and former editorial writer for the San Francisco Chronicle.

O'Brien said that he had seen at the Mercury News a contraction that has been dramatic, the newsroom population shrink-

ing from more than 400 people eight years ago to fewer than 200 this year. He noted other larger Bay Area newspapers, notably the Chronicle, also had seen significant staff reductions.

Newspaper owners don't know what they're doing, Freedberg said, with owners complaining about newspaper subscribers turning to the internet for news, then making decisions—such as cutting news holes and laying off reporters and editors—that drive their subscribers to online news sources. He said that despite protestations by newspaper owners that their subscribers mainly want local news, in his experience, people in the Bay Area seek more than just coverage of local events.

"We have a powerful role in the new media," Jackson said. Providing context to the news is just as important now as it has been in the past, and newspapers and magazines can provide this context, usually unavailable anywhere else.

O'Brien predicted that U.S. newspapers haven't hit bottom yet, but added that we have to put the situation in perspective. Newspapers in Latin America and in Europe are doing much better financially and aren't

seeing the dramatic job cuts seen in areas of the United States.

During a question-and-answer session, Carl Hall, who has taken a six-month leave from being a science reporter at the Chronicle to help unionize the Contra Costa Times, asked about the future of quality. He said that the huge cutbacks at Bay Area newspapers have given residents less news of often poorer quality.

John McManus, former newspaper reporter and director of Grade The News, complained that media consolidation in the San Francisco Bay Area has hurt community news. Where in the past several reporters from different media outlets would cover an event or write about an issue, now often only one or two reporters will. "There are not new voices at the local level," he fretted.

MediaNews—which owns almost all Bay Area newspapers except for the Chronicle, the San Francisco Examiner, the alternative weeklies and a few others—has accumulated so much debt in buying former Knight Ridder newspapers, O'Brien pointed out, that it can't invest in quality journalism in the long-term.

Thinking about the move of some news-

room resources to the web is a must for journalists, Jackson said after the meeting.

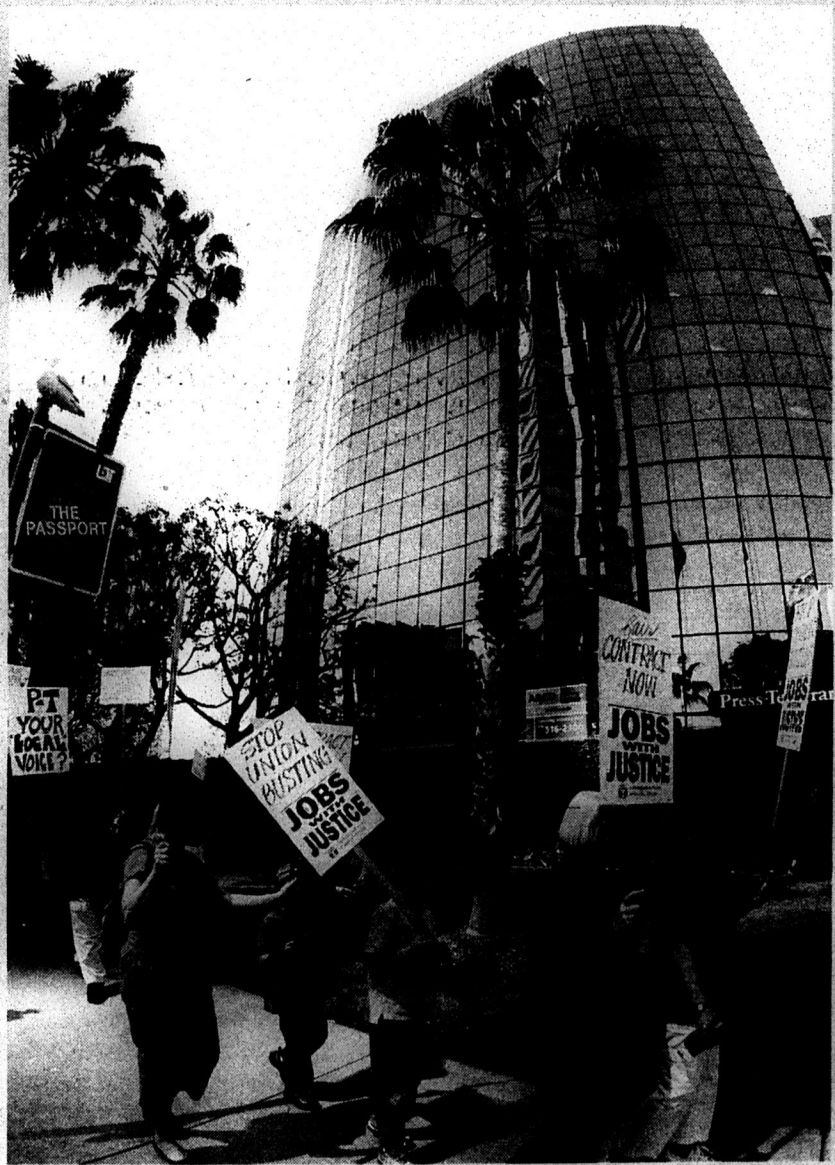
"Through labor, government and community resources, the Guild is well-positioned to work with the newspaper industry to help our workers be innovators on the web," Jackson added.

The Guild is working with the University of California-Davis Professor Chris Benner on a project to address two questions:

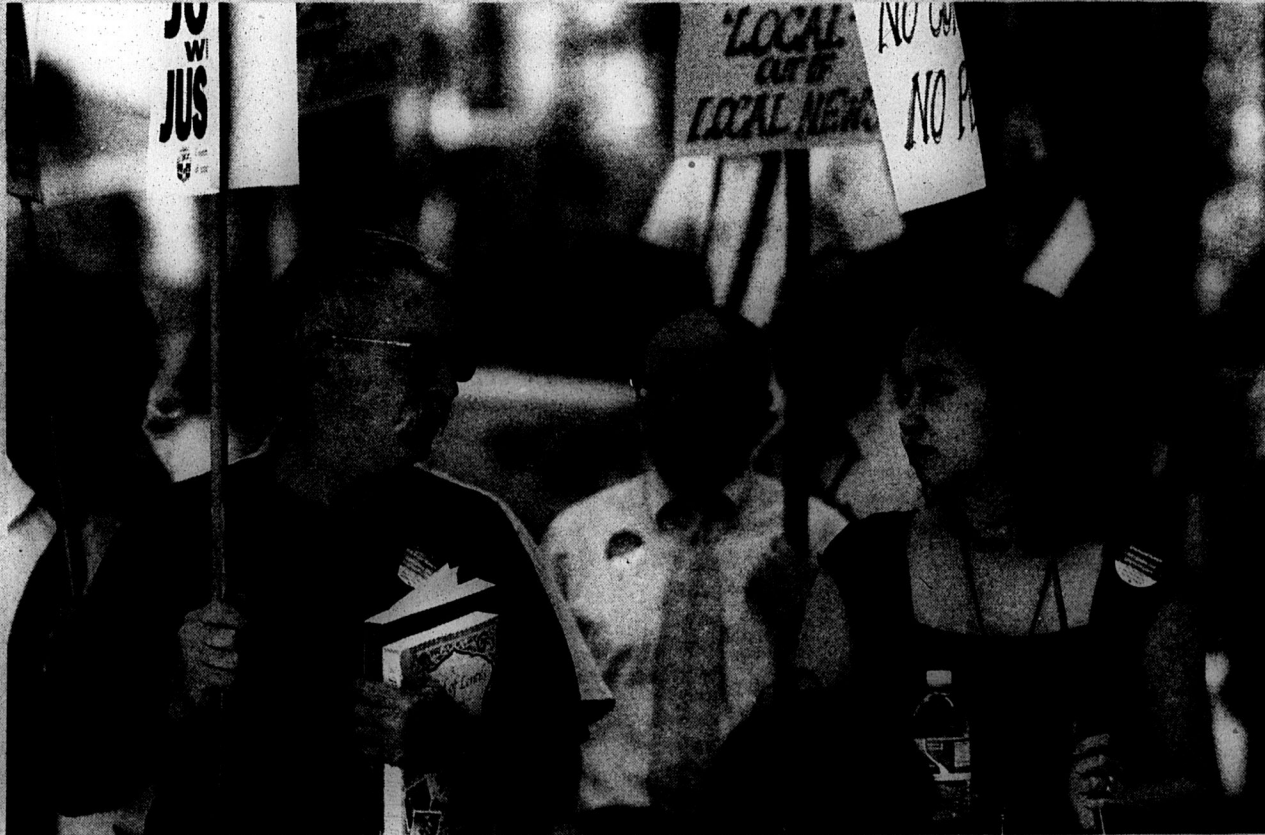
- to what extent can increased workforce investments like training create a business model that meets the needs of all stakeholders, including workers, advertisers, readers and corporate shareholders?

- as the newspaper industry continues to cut jobs and puts more resources into the web, what are the future career paths for workers and what is the union's role in helping workers thrive in these career paths?

The panel discussion was sponsored by the UC-Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism and UC-Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education, together with the East Bay Press Club, Northern California Media Workers Guild, San Jose Newspaper Guild and the Society of Professional Journalists NorCal chapter.



PHOTOS BY STEVEN GEORGES



Long Beach pickets

Unidentified Press-Telegram employees march on an informational picket line in front of the Arco towers in Long Beach, home of the Press-Telegram, to protest the voodoo economics of publisher MediaNews. The March 24 demonstration marked a one-year anniversary of contract bargaining that has stalled over company efforts to gain outsourcing rights for all job classifica-

tions and a wage freeze. Meanwhile, newsroom staffing at the newspaper has been reduced to 12 reporters and five photographers—along with a handful of sports and features writers and columnists—to cover California's fifth largest city and 19 other communities. Short-staffing has become so noticeable that Long Beach Mayor Bob Foster, Vice Mayor Bonnie Lowenthal and Councilwoman Tonia Reyes Uranga joined the picket parade, as did other community and labor union supporters.

NLRB lawyers green-light union-busting shuffle

The National Labor Relations Board has taken another giant step back from enforcing employees' rights to workplace representation, accepting a legal interpretation that strips recognition of Guild bargaining rights from 130 members in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The 14-page memorandum from the NLRB general counsel's office, issued in late March, advised the board's regional office in Oakland to reject charges of unfair labor practices filed last fall by the Northern

California Media Workers Guild. The complaints followed a consolidation by MediaNews of its unionized Bay Area newspapers with the non-unionized newspapers it had acquired from the now-defunct Knight Ridder chain, resulting in a combined workforce of approximately 300, of which only 130 were Guild members. Reasoning that the Guild could no longer claim majority representation, MediaNews withdrew its recognition of the 20-year-old unit.

"The employer did not violate the

[National Labor Relations] Act because the historical bargaining unit ceased to be an appropriate unit after the employer consolidated unit employees into a larger group of other employees," wrote Barry Kearney, an associate NLRB general counsel, providing employers with both unionized and non-unionized employees a roadmap for union busting.

But Guild representatives, already hip-deep in an organizing drive at the consolidated organization, known as the Bay Area

News Group-East Bay, or BANG-EB, brushed aside the opinion's import. "Our goal all along was to organize a larger unit, the BANG-East Bay unit," Guild representative Carl Hall told a local reporter. "I don't know what the practical effect of this ruling will be."

BANG-EB organizers say they have "a strong majority" of employees in most newsrooms signing Guild authorization cards, and started circulating cards April 7 at the Contra Costa Times, the biggest paper in the cluster.



Vote Foley for President, Stephens for
Secretary-Treasurer, Kirkup for International Chair
and Lindsay for Region 2 Vice President

www.teamguild.org

News round-up

U.S. posts 3rd month of job losses

A recession was all but officially acknowledged with the release of March figures by the Dept. of Labor, which showed a loss of 80,000 jobs for the month. The department also reported that job losses in January and February were steeper than originally estimated, adding an additional 67,000 job losses to the 85,000 that had been announced. The three-month decline was the longest since early 2003, but the situation is even more dire than the job-loss figures indicate because the U.S. needs to add 100,000 new jobs each month just to keep pace with workforce growth. The unemployment rate, meanwhile, jumped to 5.1% from 4.8% in February, while the number of part-time workers seeking full-time work has increased by 591,000 over the past 12 months.

For first time, more debt than equity

As home foreclosures in the United States run at an all-time record high, homeowners ended 2007 with more debt than equity in their homes—the first time that has happened since the Federal Reserve started tracking debt and equity data in 1945. Meanwhile, the IRS reported that the average annual income of the 400 richest American taxpayers has catapulted from \$46.8 million in 1992 to \$213.9 million in 2005.

To see inflation, visit a supermarket

While pundits and economists gradually acknowledge that the U.S. is in a recession, anyone who shops in a supermarket has felt the pinch for quite a while. Prices for staples such as bread, milk, eggs, and flour have surged at double-digit rates over the past year, according to the Labor Department. Increases in wholesale food prices are accelerating even faster, rising at the fastest rate since 2003. No surprise, then, that the number of Americans receiving food stamps is projected to reach 28 million in the coming year—the highest level since the aid program began in the 1960s—according to the Congressional Budget Office.

Labor, lawmakers agree on stimulus

Saying the nation is in recession, top union and Congressional leaders said April 10 they have agreed on the contours—if not all the details—of a second economic stimulus package. The centerpiece of the package will be extending jobless benefits from their present 26 weeks to 39 weeks, with an extra 13 weeks for jobless workers in high-unemployment states. Senator Ted Kennedy said the package will be brought to the Senate floor “within the next month.” —PAI

Women still a 2nd-class workforce

Despite decades of anti-discrimination legislation and changes in corporate rhetoric, women worldwide are still earning on average 16% less than male workers. Although that means the gap has diminished, the International Trade Union Confederation attributes the change to an increasingly competitive global labor market that has driven down men's wages—while leaving women's wages unaffected. Meanwhile, women account for at least 60% of the poor and working poor, face higher unemployment rates than they did 10 years ago, are concentrated in low-paid, temporary or casual labor, lack maternity rights and face violence and sexual harassment on and off the job.

CWA delegates must be elected

Noting that there has been at least one irregularity at a past convention, in which a delegate was appointed by a local's executive committee, CWA Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling has reminded all CWA and Guild locals that delegates must be elected by secret ballot by the local's members. “The direct election requirement cannot be circumvented regardless of the reason, including timing needs, past practice,” Easterling advised local presidents. The CWA convention will be held June 23-25 in Las Vegas.

Elaine Chao gets her close-up

The anti-worker, pro-business actions of Labor Secretary Elaine Chao are being highlighted by American Rights at Work on a new website, www.ShameOnElaine.org. The site gives the public “a glimpse of the egregious policies Chao inflicted on workers” and her “hostility toward workers and their unions, and collaboration with corporate interests,” according to the group. “Chao's family connections and corporate ties transformed the Department of Labor into the ‘Department of Business,’” said executive director Mary Beth Maxwell. “Chao has undermined the role of the very agency she's supposed to manage.”

AFL-CIO wants your videos

Looking to broaden its multimedia efforts, the AFL-CIO has launched the “Turn Around America” online video competition, its first. The competition is soliciting videos that answer—through speech, song, comedy, poetry or any other creative format—the questions “What's wrong with America, what should America become, and how do we turn it around?” Deadline for entries is May 20; first prize is \$2,000. For more information, see www.turnaroundvideocontest.com.

Million-member mobilization in full-court press for EFCA

Amid hopes that a corporate chokehold on U.S. economic policy is about to be broken, organized labor has launched an ambitious campaign to ensure passage of the Employee Free Choice Act. The AFL-CIO is looking to mobilize a million union members to demand that Congress pass the legislation. Four major unions, including CWA, have announced they will share resources in a new strategic alliance to advance their legislative goals, with the EFCA as their top priority. And in a keynote speech at the Take Back America conference, CWA President Larry Cohen implored the crowd to rally to labor's side.

“We can't do this ourselves,” Cohen, who also chairs the AFL-CIO's organizing committee, told the annual gathering of approximately 2,000 progressives. “We need you to help us to be in the fight.” Passing the EFCA, he added, “is not a test between the corporate lobby and the labor lobby. Whether you're union or not, when workers have unions and have a real voice on the job, we change our own lives and we can really change America.”

Passed last year by the Democratic-controlled House by a 241-185 margin, the EFCA would have formalized card-check recognition of union representation, outlawed “captive audience” harangues by anti-union employers and mandated arbitration when unions and employers couldn't reach agreement on a first contract. But a Republican filibuster in the Senate killed the bill, and President Bush had in any case vowed a veto.

Now, with a Democrat poised to occupy the White House and hopes of Democratic gains in the Senate, union leaders are looking to revive the act's prospects. And the two Democratic presidential candidates have

pledged their support, with Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama telling the CWA Legislative-Political Conference earlier this month that America's economic success is attributable to organized labor.

“The reason we have been such a rich and successful country is because of the American labor movement,” Clinton said. Added Obama, “We need to strengthen our unions by letting them do what they do best—organize. If a majority of workers want a union, they should get a union. It's that simple.”

At least 32 AFL-CIO affiliates have signed a pledge to enlist 10% of their members in the million-member mobilization, with additional support promised by non-federation affiliates like the Service Employees and United Food and Commercial Workers. But the CWA, in announcing an alliance with the Steelworkers, the United Auto Workers and the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers, kicked that up a notch by saying that each of the four partners had agreed to mobilize 15% of their members—or a total of approximately 300,000.

A press release issued by the alliance said its members share four key economic and political priorities, including health care, jobs and fair trade, and retirement security. But the EFCA heads the list because its passage is seen as key to revitalizing union organizing, which provides the base “which will force workers' rights and protections to the top of our national agenda.”

“Only by restoring bargaining rights for U.S. workers will we be able to transform our political landscape, achieve such critical goals as universal health care and begin to rebuild the middle class,” Cohen said.

Challenging EFCA orthodoxy

By Andy Zipser
Editor, The Guild Reporter

With virtually all of organized labor in the U.S. pinning its revival hopes on passage of the Employee Free Choice Act, it's worth remembering that hoary aphorism about being careful what you wish for. Although the common wisdom is that the act would reverse labor's fortunes in the private sector, where unions represent only 7.4% of the workforce, the outcome is not at all certain.

One argument advanced on behalf of the EFCA, for example, is that its employer-neutrality and card-check provisions would sidestep the punitive anti-union campaigns now used by many employers in the run-up to an election. To support this contention, EFCA supporters often cite Canada, where several provinces have card-check provisions and where 17% of the private sector is unionized. Yet as Richard Hurd recently pointed out in the New Labor Forum, Canadian card-check provisions have done nothing to stem that country's decline in union density, which has dropped almost as precipitously as in the U.S.

“This is really no surprise,” Hurd wrote. “Recall that in the 1990s there were many union strategists and analysts (including this author) who believed that the grassroots, union-building model of organizing would overcome the disadvantages of the NLRB representation process. Just as intensifying employer opposition undermined the effectiveness of grassroots organizing, it seems likely that continuing employer antagonism will limit the ability of unions to take full advantage of legislated neutrality.”

Other skeptics worry that the labor movement is uncritically embracing yet another legislative fad, one in a series of losing campaigns that are quickly forgotten in a search for the next silver bullet. Massive amounts of union resources were poured into the Labor Law Reform bill of 1978, for example, which not only failed to pass but was then followed by Ronald Reagan's precedent-setting firing of striking air traffic controllers. Yet instead of resurrecting its reform proposals when a more labor-friendly Democratic majority regained control of Congress and the White House, labor instead pushed striker replacement legislation in 1992—which also failed.

Now the Employee Free Choice Act is the legislative initiative *du jour*, a proposal that James Gray Pope, Peter Kellman and Ed Bruno, writing in the March issue of *WorkingUSA*, observe “kowtows to our soci-

ety's dominant ethos of individualism” by implicitly “conceding equal legitimacy to the choice of no organization.”

Although the EFCA likely would make staff-driven organizing campaigns easier to conduct, it “will do little or nothing to strengthen the labor movement in the long run,” the trio contends. “When the first contract expires, the newly recruited members will discover that they have little or no bargaining power, that their ‘right to strike’ consists of the right to be permanently

replaced, and that stronger unions are banned from assisting them with sympathy strikes of secondary boycotts.”

Indeed, the writers conclude, “If EFCA passes, it will dissipate the energy for labor law reform without coming close to resolving labor's legal crisis.”

Others are bothered that the energy on behalf of the EFCA appears to be confined to organized labor itself. “Lawmakers must regard it as bizarre that the only people who are pushing for passage of EFCA are among the 16 million who are already in unions,” writes longtime union activist—and perennial AFL-CIO gadfly—Harry Kelber. “Why are there no groups of unorganized workers pressuring Congress for the right to join a union, since they would be the ones to benefit if the legislation were passed?”

Although it may be oxymoronic to suggest that unorganized workers can act as pressure groups, Kelber's larger point—that discussion of the EFCA has been limited, by and large, to workers who are already unionized—needs to be taken seriously. CWA President Larry Cohen deserves credit for spotlighting the act at the Take Back America conference (see story above), but until the EFCA has more prominence in national policy discussions—and across breakfast tables—it is vulnerable to being marginalized as just more special interest pleading by a dying institution.

There's no question that labor law is broken and that unions have been crippled by a relentless employer offensive, now in its third decade. As much was conceded by Wilma Liebman, a National Labor Relations Board member, in Senate subcommittee testimony early this month, when she said the board has not protected workers from employers “intent on killing an organizing drive.”

What is in question is how best to blunt such murderous impulses. And while organized labor has decided that the answer is the Employee Free Choice Act, it's worth remembering that it has found other answers at other times and thus far none have delivered.

The year a melting industry finally cracks?

Continued from page 1

2,400 last year, a 4.4% decrease that reduced the overall workforce to its lowest level since 1984.

Averages in any case don't reveal the even deeper cuts that have been rocking many Guild-represented newspapers. The latest was a double-barreled piece of nastiness from the Blethen family, which announced it will eliminate some 200 jobs at the Seattle Times while also seeking a buyer for its Maine newspapers. The Times cuts also may be expected to have a ripple effect at the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, whose advertising sales, production and distribution are handled by the Times under their joint operating agreement.

Keeping in step with his peers, Times Publisher Frank Blethen said he must reduce the workforce because of "the continued and increased loss of traditional newspaper revenue." Others, however, have suggested that the Times would have considerably more breathing room if it hadn't mixed it up with the Guild in a 49-day strike in 2000, followed shortly thereafter by a three-year legal battle with Hearst over the JOA. Both battles bled many tens of millions of dollars from corporate coffers.

The newly announced cuts, to include approximately 130 layoffs, are to contribute toward \$15 million or so in budget reductions. In addition to eliminating 49 newsroom positions, the Times will close its suburban news bureaus and stop publishing its zoned editions in Eastside—where it drove a competing daily out of business just last year—and Snohomish County. The \$15 million in savings is in addition to \$21 million in budget cuts the Times announced earlier this year, when it laid off a comparatively modest 17 employees.

In Maine, meanwhile, where the Times is looking for a buyer for the three dailies and one weekly it bought in 1998, the Portland Newspaper Guild has retained Ownership Associates Inc. and is looking at making a bid for local employee ownership. "We want you to know that while the Blethen family is leaving Maine, we are not," the local has announced on www.yourhometownpaper.org, a new website announcing its intentions.

Both TNG-CWA and individual Guild

locals have retained Ownerships Associates in the past, but to date none of the union's efforts to buy a newspaper through an employee stock ownership plan have panned out.

Other newspaper owners are in even more dire circumstances. Journal Register was delisted at press time from the New York Stock Exchange, without the usual six-month grace period, because of its "abnormally low" stock price: at one point recently it hit just 16 cents a share, and generally had a market capitalization of less than \$11 million. News of the delisting came just days after Moody's downgraded the company's corporate debt two notches deeper into junk territory, opining that Journal Register is at "substantial risk of default."

Lee Enterprises, which had stoutly resisted any write-downs following its 2005 purchase of Pulitzer, finally—albeit defiantly—made a concession by saying it would take a non-cash charge of \$500 million to \$700 million. The write-down, a tacit admission that the Pulitzer acquisition was over-priced, will more closely align Lee's stated value with what the stock market says it's worth, but chief executive Mary Junck essentially said the market is an ass. "We believe the current stock price understates the value of our company, as well as the future of our industry," she declared in announcing the write-down.

Such a chin-up attitude notwithstanding, Lee was merely following the write-down examples already set in recent weeks by McClatchy, which more recently announced it was offering buyouts to nearly a quarter of its employees at the Modesto Bee; The New York Times Co., which at press time was indicating that lay-offs were in the works because there weren't enough takers for its buyout offer; as well as Gannett, Gatehouse Media and Belo, among others. And while all the commonly cited economic woes of

Dean Singleton, eat your heart out

Bleak though matters may seem industry-wide, there always are the exceptions. Consider the Buffalo News, which in the late 1990s routinely notched an operating profit margin of 35%—but now has to be content with something closer to 26%, a level few U.S. papers ever achieved and about 60% higher than the industry average today.

Indeed, as reported in the Buffalo Guild's newsletter, operating profits at the News jumped 14% last year as profits at most U.S. newspapers continued their downward slide. The improvement came even though the News is facing the same trends as the rest of the industry, including diminished advertising revenues—retail sales were off 10% at the News—and declining circulation.

On the plus side, a steep drop in newsprint costs last year helped bolster the bottom line. And despite the loss of some advertisers, due to closings or mergers, the News has had growing success in signing big advertisers to long-term contracts, locking in their business for years at a time. Meanwhile, the News' web site is attracting more visitors and therefore more ad revenue, and the paper expects to more than double its web workforce over the next year, to 27.5 positions.

All of which suggests there must be more to the Lake Erie effect than record-setting snowfalls.

the industry certainly contribute to the pinch these chains are feeling, the single biggest—if usually unstated—component of their financial distress is the huge amount of debt virtually all have incurred, usually by buying other newspapers.

The poster child for this kind of excess has been Sam Zell, the so-called "grave dancer," who shelled out a mere \$315 million of his own cash to acquire Tribune Co., courtesy of an additional \$7.7 billion in loans—saddling the company with nearly \$13 billion in total indebtedness. Now Zell has to come up with almost \$1 billion a year just for interest payments, a figure so daunting in the existing economic climate that several of the newspapers he vowed not to sell—most notably Newsday—may be on the auction block.

Leverage likewise is bringing down Journal Register, which had a nicely healthy 19.3% operating profit last year, thanks almost entirely to so-called "rigorous expense management" techniques—read "sweatshop working environment"—that turned the chain into a cash machine. But the cost of JRC's acquisitions outpaced even its legendary stinginess, piling up debt that is now seven times greater than its annual

earnings, a crushing burden.

But the long-standing champion of creative asset- and debt-juggling has been MediaNews, which enroute to becoming one of the largest newspaper chains in the U.S. has erected a truly byzantine ownership structure. Much of this has occurred out of public view because MediaNews is not publicly traded—but there has been one small window on the company's internal workings. Because MediaNews, like its peers, underwrites many of its acquisitions with debt, it was filing reports with the Securities and Exchange Commission so bond-rating agencies could evaluate its credit-worthiness.

No more. In an SEC filing April 9, MediaNews disclosed that it has agreed to share its financial information directly with its bondholders, who in turn have agreed it no longer has to file SEC reports.

Coming after months of debt rating downgrades, the MediaNews decision to drop off the public radar screen suggests growing weakness, not strength. And, indeed, it comes after company-wide revenue declines and profits that were kept in the black only through one-time asset sales.

The bottom line? The recently most acquisitive newspaper companies are now hugely overleveraged, and therefore the most likely to seek cost savings through continued layoffs, regressive contract bargaining and asset sales. Close behind them are newspapers that already were operating on a shoestring, with little maneuvering room to cut expenses once revenues began their inexorable decline.

Yet for all that, it's worth noting that the newspaper industry overall is fundamentally healthy. Newspaper analyst John Morton said that last year the newspaper operations of publicly traded media companies had an average operating margin—the profit that is calculated before subtracting interest on debt—of nearly 17%, a figure to cause almost any businessman to salivate. But then, most businesses aren't perched atop such financially shaky foundations.

2 more contracts OK'd

Two new TNG-CWA contracts have been ratified in recent weeks.

Philadelphia Guild members in the Norristown unit approved a two-year agreement with the Times Herald that provides a \$365 signing bonus in lieu of a salary increase this year, a 1% increase in October and a 0.5% increase next April. The increases will be in wages only and will not change the wage scales.

The contract also includes a series of 1-cent increases in mileage reimbursement that will top out at 33 cents a mile next January.

Elsewhere, Minnesota Guild-represented interpreters at the Hennepin County Medical Center voted 95% in favor of a two-year contract that increases interpreter wages by 4.5% retroactive to Jan. 1 and by 3.5% next January. The retro increase for senior interpreters was 4%.

The agreement also replaces a two-tier health plan with a three-tier, two-plan system with a broader price range. It also will increase the unit size from approximately 60, initially by about nine members, and may add three to five premium scale positions.

Amber, O'Hanlon re-up

Arnold Amber and Martin O'Hanlon have been acclaimed to the two highest offices in CWA/SCA Canada, with no one else submitting nominations prior to the March 28 deadline. Amber, who has been the national union's director ever since it was formed, in 1995, went from part-time to paid full-time status last year after stepping down as an execu-

tive producer at the Canadian Broadcasting Corp.

O'Hanlon has served for several years as CWA/SCA's unpaid deputy director and is parliamentary news editor for the Canadian Press.

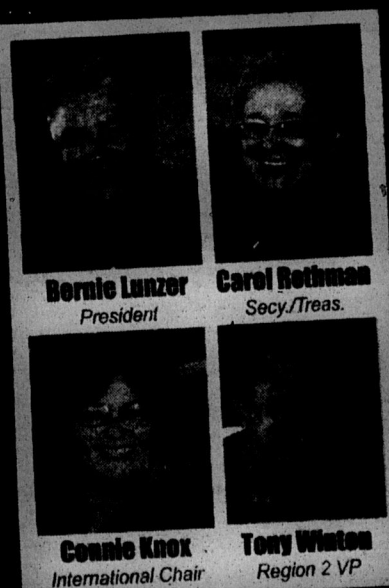
Both men said their top priority is the launching of The Way Ahead Project, an ambitious initiative to expand, promote and revitalize CWA Canada.

not afraid to **HOPE**
not afraid of **CHANGE**
not afraid to **FIGHT**

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THANKS TO THESE LOCALS THAT HAVE ENDORSED A STRONGER GUILD!

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Milwaukee • New York • News Media Guild • Pacific Northwest • Peoria
Philadelphia • Pittsburgh • Providence • Toledo • Victoria
Vancouver • and many individual members!

Collective bargaining committee reports, Feb. 28 - March 1

Every day, it seems, media companies throw something new against the wall. Some of it sticks. Some of it doesn't. Walk into any newspaper today and you will hear a vocabulary of shoptalk that would have been foreign just a few years ago. People who once bantered about "news hole," "jump page" and "agate," are now spewing such terms as "streaming video," "citizen journalist," "multi platforms" and "web link."

Through it all, jobs are being cut or dramatically changed, leaving workers stressed out, apprehensive and longing for at least a modicum of certainty about the future of their work. Responding to this turbulence, TNG-CWA, in partnership with the University of Maryland, did a national survey of media workers to determine how their jobs are changing and where the jobs might be in the future. The study was released in concert with a forum held in October 2007.

The conference began with a panel discussion about the survey results. A significant number of respondents indicated measurable levels of anxiety and frustration over their ability to keep up with the pace of the changes and the amount of competence required to do their job in the arena of "new media". The tone of the responses also suggested a lack of faith in the employer's capacity to provide the necessary tools and training to keep up with the technological changes impacting media jobs.

The overriding conclusion of the conference was that the Guild's collective bargaining approaches to this constant industry change need to be pliant and proactive, open and accepting of "new media," while still preserving our values that go to protecting the dignity and security of our members.

Many Guild locals have been doing just that. For example:

- The St. Paul Pioneer Press contract settlement incorporates an agreement for a labor-management partnership to apply for a \$400,000 state Job Skills Training Program grant for a multimedia skills training program.

- In Chicago, Waukegan, Joliet and Gary, the Guild entered into short-term new media agreements with the Sun-Times News Group that expanded the Guild's jurisdiction over web work but also drew current employees into performing new tasks with proper training. The short-term nature of the agreement allows both sides to monitor the progress and make changes, if needed, as the work evolves.

- In Baltimore, the Guild agreed that reporters would take photographs in certain situations and with training, all to be monitored by a joint Guild-Management committee.

- In Peoria the parties have a contractual agreement to establish a Joint Technology Committee whose main function will be to meet on a regular basis to discuss matters relating to current and future technology.

- Portland, ME and Pottstown, PA have expanded their contractual jurisdiction language so that it reflects the changes in the content of Guild jobs; modified and beefed up training and equipment language and incorporated protections against unreasonable discipline for a potential lack of proficiency in the new tasks and job duties.

- The Albany Guild's agreement provides safeguards and compensation for blogging. Employees contributing to a blog receive the same legal protections that they do when writing a story for the print or online product. If an employee is authorized to blog outside their regular work hours, they get over-time pay for actual time worked.

- The Brockton, MA local just finished bargaining an agreement in settlement of a grievance that will permit copy editors and others doing copy editing work at the Brockton Enterprise newspaper to attend CWA/NETT Academy courses on Adobe Acrobat and Fundamental Production and Design with tuition paid by the employer. On site training will be done on work time and on the employer's equipment. An online training component will be done on the employee's

time but the employer will provide the equipment if needed.

In light of evolving technology and its impact on the jobs of Guild members, the Sector Conference recommends the following advisories for Locals and proposals for the Newspaper Guild's collective bargaining program.

[Editor's note: omitted from the rest of this lengthy resolution are changes in TNG-CWA Model Contract language to which the advisories refer; for complete language, contact Melissa Nelson, executive secretary of the contract committee, at Guild headquarters.]

1. JURISDICTION OVER "NEW MEDIA"

ADVISORY: Remind Guild Locals that "Online" and "new media" work falls within the jurisdictional scope of the Guild. Contract proposals should reflect that approach.

Some Guild Locals have negotiated more specific language related to online work. Some Locals may decide to broaden their contract language based on their experience with the employer.

2. APPLICATION OF DISCIPLINARY STANDARDS

ADVISORY: Remind Guild Locals that just and sufficient cause standards and the right to grieve and arbitrate apply to any disciplinary action. Just cause requires that no employee shall be disciplined for work performance issues involving new or modified processes or equipment, including "new media," unless the employees have been given adequate time and sufficient training.

3. JOINT LABOR-MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES

ADVISORY: The parties to the contract will develop a joint labor-management committee of equal representation that will meet regularly or at the call of either the Guild or the employer to provide a forum for continuing communication on current and future changes to processes and equipment used by bargaining unit members including "new media" work. The committee will be consultative in nature.

The committee will address issues and concerns related to training, access to adequate equipment, quality and work assignments. Joint recommendations will be forwarded to Management and the Guild for consideration, and negotiation, upon mutual agreement of the parties. Any action or recommendation of the Committee that modifies the collective bargaining agreement will be subject to appropriate review and approval by the bargaining unit.

Nothing in this section shall serve to waive the statutory rights of the Local and the Employer to demand bargaining on any matter in accordance with law, including any matter which might otherwise be addressed by mutual agreement of the Joint Committee.

PROPOSE: The parties to the contract shall establish a joint labor-management committee of equal representation that will meet on a regular basis or at the call of either the Guild or the employer to provide a forum for continuing discussion on current and future changes to work processes and equipment used by bargaining unit members including for "new media" work.

The committee will address issues and concerns including but not limited to training, access to necessary equipment, work quality and work assignments. Joint recommendations shall be submitted to the employer for implementation; those that modify the collective bargaining agreement shall be subject to appropriate review and approval by the bargaining unit. Upon unit approval, the employer shall implement the recommendations.

Failure to implement the recommendations shall be subject to grievance and arbitration.

4. EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT

ADVISORY: Remind Guild locals that most Guild contracts have training and equipment language and therefore negotiators don't want to find themselves with an unachieved

demand.

PROPOSE: Require that employees affected by the introduction of new or modified processes or equipment be given reasonable and adequate equipment and employer-paid retraining during work time, or are retained in suitable, comparable jobs. Such training may also include training workers for employment in other fields.

Utilize some or all of the following components:

- In-house training related to the introduction of new equipment such as web based software programs done on Company time and paid for by the Employer.

- CWA/NETT Academy (www.cwanett.org), the CWA's National Education and Training Trust which provides member training on emerging technologies. Done during work time and paid for by the Employer. (Brockton agreement)

- Individualized training at local colleges and training institutions to increase job skill-set with tuition reimbursed by the Employer.

- Partner with state and local job training programs with funding through grants. (St. Paul)

- That the union seek a meaningful role in determining with management the scope and particulars of training for evolving work assignments.

Employees are not expected to be immediately proficient in all of these duties. They are expected to give a fair effort and endeavor to improve over time, and an employee who meets the obligation to give a fair effort and endeavor to improve over time shall not be subject to discipline.

5. WORK TIME AND COMPENSATION

ADVISORY: Bargain new job classifications and/or pay differentials for some job duties involving new or modified equipment and processes, such as but not limited to, the recording and editing of audio and video content.

PROPOSE: "When Bargaining unit employees are assigned to perform work requiring proficiency in the use of new or modified processes or equipment, they will be paid a premium above their regular compensation."

PROPOSE: "Where employees are engaged in hybrid jobs or, where their job classifications or scope of work have expanded, the union will negotiate a workload agreement with the employer."

Workload agreements will include discussion around such things as sustaining quality, volume of output, number of formats, extra compensation or time in lieu of and a recognition that no discipline shall be exacted during transition to new duties."

Guild contracts are under attack. Employers, citing their own uncertainty on the future of newspapers of the print medium are attempting to tear apart our contracts. Turnover in local leadership has left some locals seeking guidance and experienced bargainers to assist them.

The Guild has long had a bargaining program that has been a model for the labor movement. But too few locals are utilizing it to its full potential.

Therefore, the Sector Conference calls on the Sector Executive Council to call a meeting of TNG staff and lead local negotiators before the end of the year to identify bargaining trends and make suggestions on ways to renew our collective bargaining program.

Training of local leaders on an ongoing basis is the key to effective bargaining and contract administration. The Guild must utilize every opportunity to develop the skills and abilities of Guild activists.

The Sector Conference directs the Sector Executive Council to prepare a series of education programs, to be presented at district council meetings.

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, 2008, will be \$19.78. Combined with the 50-cent CWA Defense Fund payment, the total amount due from locals per member, per month will be \$20.28 for U.S. locals. Canadian locals will pay 51 cents (the exchange rate for 50 cents as of April, 2008) to the CWA Defense Fund monthly, for a total of \$20.29.

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 34 cents per month from the previous rate of \$19.44, which has been in effect since May 1, 2007. The per capita payable on behalf of employed members whose

dues are less than \$19.78 per month is \$7.91 (\$8.41 U.S. and \$8.42 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 57 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, 2008, was \$990.10—an increase of \$16.70, or 1.72% over the \$973.40 average top minimum on the same date a year ago. The 34-cent per month increase in the per capita rate, from \$19.44 to \$19.78, is an increase of 1.75%. The formula for computing the monthly per capita requires averaging top reporter minimums in all contracts with newspapers published at least five days per week. On April 1 of this year, there were 95 such contracts.

Guild statistics show that TNG-CWA locals have 95 daily newspaper contracts with top reporter minimums at or above \$500 a week. The number at or above \$600 is 93; of these, 86 are \$700 or over, 77 are over \$800, 58 are over \$900, 41 are \$1,000 or over, 27 are \$1,100 or more; 19 are \$1,200 or more; and 9 are \$1,300 or more.

The TNG-CWA Constitution provides that per capitas 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 95 separate contracts with newspapers published at least five days a week, using only those amounts which are actually being paid on April 1, 2008.

The \$990.10 was multiplied by .01997, producing a figure of \$19.7723 which, rounded up to the next cent, produces \$19.78, 34 cents over the present per capita of \$19.44.

The per capita payable on behalf of regular members employed full time and persons paying agency fees becomes \$19.78 per month, plus 50 cents for the CWA Defense Fund for a total of \$20.28 for U.S. locals. Canadian locals will pay 51 cents (the April 2008 exchange rate for 50 cents) to the CWA Defense Fund monthly, for a total of \$20.29.

To the Editor:

Every one of us has a history with the current leadership of the Guild. Mine dates back to 1996, when I was the VP and grievance chair of IAPE—the union that represents the workers at Dow Jones, publishers of The Wall Street Journal—when the company “laid me off” as a bargaining tactic.

Frankly, Linda and Bernie were there for us, so this is a difficult decision. It is a decision we do not want to make. We've had nothing but cooperation from the Guild as IAPE/TNG-CWA Local 1096 since I recently returned as grievance chair and secretary.

I think it comes down to a vision thing. There's no reason to turn Linda out of office. Most importantly, she's been an effective spokesperson for all of us. Her leadership qualities and advice are hard-nosed. I will never forget her demonstration of solidarity with us in '96 and when I asked her to help us in 2001. Contrary to what I've read elsewhere, she's never failed to respond.

The opposition is ill-timed.

—Ken Martin, secretary
IAPE/TNG-CWA Local 1096

To the Editor:

I would like to urge all of my union brothers and sisters to vote for Carol Rothman and her “a stronger Guild” running mates.

I am a retiree from the Philadelphia Newspaper Guild. I have been privileged to know Carol for over 35 years. During that time, I served as shop steward, unit chairperson and vice president of the local. I can not begin to list all the things I learned from Carol during that time. What I think all of you should know is that she is “always there” for anyone who needs help.

During this time of crisis for the newspaper industry, when advertising is at its lowest point in 50 years, when companies such as McClatchy are talking possible bankruptcy, it is critical to the future of the Guild that you have people who are dedicated, strong, knowledgeable and trustworthy. People who will support you when the going gets tough, as it most certainly will. I can tell you from my own observations over many years of working through difficult negotiations with Knight Ridder that Carol Rothman is the kind of person you would want. Vote for Carol Rothman because you need her.

—Regina Malik

Philadelphia Newspaper Guild retiree

To the Editor:

We met Linda Foley in October and were immediately impressed by her energy, drive and commitment to continue building a stronger Guild. But there was also something more: She listens. Linda knows the realities of the newspaper industry—not pretty—and she's listening to those of us in the trenches. She's already thinking of ways we can confront the inevitable changes.

During this time of tremendous challenges in our business, Linda is courageously seeking to keep her leadership role. Yet she is grounded and realistic, and knows very well the issues that we will inevitably face.

Linda is also a proven advocate of diversity and has continuously encouraged more participation by women, minorities and younger members.

We believe Linda Foley is looking to the future, ready for whatever changes and challenges arise. She's gutsy, she's smart and she's strong-willed. She's a true leader.

—Sherri Hildebrandt and Jean Shea
Minnesota Newspaper Guild

To the Editor:

I've had the opportunity to work with both Linda Foley and Bernie Lunzer throughout each of their Guild careers, and I've been able to observe each of them develop their style of leadership virtually from day one.

Bernie has maintained his commitment to

To the Editor:

Over the past few months most of our e-mail inboxes have been flooded with information about two slates of candidates running for high-ranking positions within our great union. The NextGeneration Committee of TNG-CWA is urging you to make your vote count.

We are not asking you to vote for this person or that person. That's not our role. But it's no exaggeration to say this election is the most important one of this generation for our union. That's why the NextGen committee sees the value in promoting a ‘Get the Vote Out’ campaign. It will be the leaders we elect today who will act as role models for us, the younger union members now looking for guidance and direction in these uncertain times of lay-offs, cutbacks and consolidation.

As a committee, NextGen is helping you get the vote out. We have created small posters reminding TNG members to vote. And we have stickers for wearing around the office by those who have voted, urging others to do the same.

Don't Forget To
VOTE
When You Get Home!
A Message From TNG's NextGen

Whether you endorse ‘Team Guild’ or ‘A Stronger Guild’ makes no difference to us. What is important is that you exercise your right to vote.

—Brendan Elliott,
chair,
Next Generation
Committee

democratic process in decision making throughout his career in the Guild, even when inefficient or messy. I've observed and participated with him at countless conventions over countless issues, and the will of the members has always been his first priority.

In contrast, I believe Linda has become impatient, selecting the “right decision,” often without membership input, then attempting to persuade members and leaders to accept. When this campaign began, it was sobering to me to hear Guild leaders express fear of retribution from Linda if they expressed support for Bernie and the Stronger Guild slate. Scary!

Carol Rothman will be every bit as stellar in her role as Secretary-Treasurer as she has been as our International Chair.

Connie Knox will have large shoes to fill as our new International Chair, but with her background on the Board and her experience in the Guild, she will do us proud!!

Please join me in support of the Stronger Guild candidates.

—Jerry Minkinen
Chicago Newspaper Guild

To the Editor:

As a reporter who's covered labor for more than 20 years, and who recently wrote a book about the labor movement, I know the value of accessibility on the part of union leaders. Not only does it help get labor's message out, it reflects competence, engagement and caring on the part of the union officer.

I don't know of any labor leader more consistently accessible than Linda Foley. I've reached out to her on a variety of occasions, whether as a Guild member, a labor reporter, or about journalists' rights issues. She always responds quickly, whatever else she may be doing, and invariably with a constructive thought, insightful advice, good ideas for action or an offer of help.

Not only is the The Newspaper Guild well served by Linda Foley, the American labor movement needs more like her. We journalists have our problems, but in this respect we are fortunate

—Philip Dine
St. Louis Newspaper Guild

To the Editor:

When the initial question about the Mobilization Fund discrepancy was asked, I

I Used My Voice To
VOTE
DID YOU?
A Message From TNG's NextGen

for secretary-treasurer and international chair respectively. They share his commitment to an empowered membership.

—Tim Schick, administrator
Providence Newspaper Guild

To the Editor:

The Executive of the Victoria-Vancouver Island Newspaper Guild unanimously endorsed Bernie Lunzer, Carol Rothman and Connie Knox at their April 2 meeting.

Our local firmly believes in bottom-up leadership and we realize our local's strength is with our conscientious group of shop stewards. What we believe is the strength of our local, we also see in Bernie Lunzer. He is very inclusive and has always given our small Canadian local as much attention as he'd give to many of the largest locals in the United States.

We may have occasionally disagreed with Bernie, but we realize that his decisions are based on what is best for the Guild as a whole. We understand that when you are in a position of power, it is not important to be liked, but it is imperative that you be respected. We have the utmost respect for Bernie Lunzer, Carol Rothman and Connie Knox.

By stating our reasons for supporting Bernie, Carol and Connie, we are not insinuating that Linda, Scott and Lois are not worthy opponents or that they don't share similar beliefs. They do, but we've made a decision that we feel is best for the Guild at this critical time, and that is A Stronger Guild.

—Chris Carolan, president
Victoria-Vancouver Island Guild

To the Editor:

Our executive unanimously voted to back the Lunzer, Rothman and Knox ticket for several reasons. I suppose it all goes back several years, when our local—along with several other Canadian locals—left the print sector to join TNG Canada.

During our first TNG sector meeting, one of the first persons to welcome us aboard was Bernie Lunzer. He didn't know us from Adam, but he was right there asking what he could do for us. That, my friends, is dedication and unionism without question.

Since that time, Bernie has made himself available to discuss and listen to problems of finance and running the day-to-day operation. He has a sympathetic ear, which is most necessary in this day of fighting union-hating corporations.

Both Carol and Connie are also longtime supporters of Canadian locals and have demonstrated that many times at conferences. They both see the individual local and its members, not the size of the membership or its importance in the scheme of things.

We need down-to-earth people heading our sector. People who put the members first. That's why we need A Stronger Guild around to guide us into the new media world.

—Jack Wilson, president
Media and Communications
Workers of Alberta

To the Editor:

The Milwaukee Newspaper Guild's Executive Board has voted to endorse Bernie Lunzer, Carol Rothman and Connie Knox in this month's critically important TNG/CWA election. In doing so, we are proud to join the long list of Guild locals across our international union that have endorsed the Stronger Guild slate.

Over the years, we have had the opportunity to work with all the candidates running for the top TNG/CWA offices in this election and have found Lunzer, Rothman and Knox to be the most responsive and most interested in helping us solve the issues we face. Lunzer was the only person at the international union who answered our calls for help during our prolonged and contentious health care nego-

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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 9.)

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

Under neo-liberals, wage-slavery is color blind

By Carl Younger
Boston Newspaper Guild

Economic development in minority communities has been an ongoing problem since 1863, when President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation and thereby outlawed slavery—at least as far as the law was concerned.

But in the real world, economic restrictions were soon instituted to keep former slaves from becoming equal citizens, thereby prohibiting accumulation of real wealth. Terrorist groups, who worked with the blessing of political leaders, sprang up to frighten and kill minorities.

President Grant in 1872 told the House of Representatives of the true aims of the terrorists: "By force and terror, to prevent all political action not in accord with the views of the members to deprive colored citizens of the right to bear arms and the right of a free ballot, to suppress the schools in which colored children were taught, and to reduce the colored people to a condition closely allied to that of slavery."

Adolph Hitler reportedly borrowed from this group's tactics in his attacks on Jewish people. And while the terrorists' aims were achieved largely through terror and murder, Jim Crow laws and racial seg-

regation institutionalized the trend.

Race issues are still a problem in America, but it seems the assaults of years gone by are now aimed at people by class instead of just by race.

Recent economic trends and legislation keep some from having a chance at the golden ring and reduce the chances that middle-income children will attain living standards anywhere near that of their parents. The good of the few (top 5%) outweighs the good of the many (to paraphrase from a Star Trek movie).

Current political administrations, pushing a neo-liberal economic policy of limited or no restrictions on market forces, have

gone a long way to make the poor poorer and have added middle income people to their ranks.

They have given multi-national corporations free rein and enhanced their ability to destroy worker representation through outsourcing, downsizing and reducing union density. Meanwhile, access to education has declined because of the lack of federal funding.

If this is allowed to go on, we will continue to lose all the gains our forefathers made in civil, labor and human rights and we could all become wage-slaves—reminiscent of an earlier era—regardless of race, color or creed.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Continued from page 7
tations in 2001.

We believe, Lunzer, Rothman and Knox have a vision for the future to strengthen Guild locals like ours. They have a vision to help locals work within today's ever-changing newspaper industry, and instead of being afraid of change they embrace it and give us confidence as we face the future together.

We also believe that Lunzer is best suited to represent our interests in working within the Communication Workers of America organization.

—Amy Rinard, president
Milwaukee Newspaper Guild

To the Editor:

As president of the oldest local in Western Canada, and with the support of my executive members I fully support the complete "Lunzer Team."

While I respect all those who run for union office I feel that TNG/CWA will be better served by Bernie Lunzer as president. He has shown great leadership and has always been there for the membership, who are the foundation of any organization.

—Reinhard Rudersdorfer, president
Vancouver Guild

To the Editor:

Chicago Local 34071 has endorsed Bernie Lunzer for the position of Guild president mainly because of the long ties we as a local have had with Bernie over the last decade. Bernie was the guy in Washington who always returned your e-mail and phone call, Bernie was the guy who came to you in the cavernous CWA convention hall and let you know what was going on, Bernie was the guy who

acted like he worked for you, and so with you, rather than the other way around.

This is not to slight Linda Foley, who should be commended for her stewardship of the Guild for the past 12 years. Linda is a well-respected labor leader, but maybe it's time to move on.

It's also time for a new direction for the one labor union in the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico that stands for human freedom and First Amendment rights. The newspaper industry is in trouble, the labor movement has been in a recession for a long time. We need a new vision to take the next step to position newspapers and labor unions as representative of their age.

So in our opinion, Bernie should be given the chance to lead the Newspaper Guild. We've also known Carol Rothman and Connie Knox for a long time and could think of no better candidates for the positions they are seeking, of Guild secretary-treasurer and Guild chairperson, respectively.

—Mike Ulreich, president
Chicago Newspaper Guild

To the Editor:

I have to say there has been a change of seasons brewing for some time and I wish it hadn't been so stormy.

The natural progression is for a new leadership in the Guild that can build consensus among the membership and fight the battles on the front lines in our workplaces. No one is better equipped to handle the task than Bernie Lunzer, Carol Rothman and Connie Knox. Together, they have the experience at the international and local levels. They understand what it takes to build bargaining power in your newsroom, your advertising depart-

ment, your circulation or business office. As part of The Stronger Guild committee, it has been awe-inspiring to see how freely our talents mesh together, and that should be expanded throughout our union.

But Linda Foley has her share of special talents as well. Linda is a fantastic lobbyist, a champion of journalists and an effective mobilizer for big picture issues. I have heard people say that we shouldn't "fire" Linda and I agree. We need Linda to move beyond our union fighting for free speech and union rights for all. Using our strengths to the best advantage of the Guild/CWA, we will heal this union.

—Donna Marks, Region One VP
Greater Boston Newspaper Guild

To the Editor:

I'm writing to clear up any confusion that may have been caused by CWA District 7 Vice President Annie Hill's inclusion of my name in her letter of support for Linda Foley.

I am a supporter of the Stronger Guild slate of candidates: Bernie Lunzer, Carol Rothman, Connie Knox and Tony Winton.

(Just in case you hadn't heard.)
—Yoko Kuramoto-Eidsmoe, president
Pacific Northwest Newspaper Guild

To the Editor:

I proudly support Bernie Lunzer for Guild president, as well as Carol Rothman for secretary-treasurer and Connie Knox as sector chairperson. As a former member of the Toledo Newspaper Guild and a current member of the Detroit Newspaper Guild, I have witnessed Bernie's professionalism, care and concern for the membership and his excellence on the job. He will make a fine president. Let's face it: Our union is in trouble and

we've been treading water for quite some time now. We need a strong leader. We desperately need to grow the numbers. We've lost more than 4,000 during the current administration.

It's time to change course.

—Vince Piscopo
Detroit Newspaper Guild

To the Editor:

Everyone's on the bandwagon for change in this country's presidential election. It's also time for change for this union. You can be a catalyst for that change by casting your vote in the upcoming election for the Stronger Guild candidates.

We have brought together a diverse, knowledgeable skilled group of candidates. We are a coalition of all departments of the media we represent. Our views represent your views. We have extensive at-the-table bargaining experience, serving on and leading bargaining committees, and we have been involved in strike situations.

We have solid plans for stronger organizing, stronger mobilizing, stronger training and stronger collective bargaining.

We believe The Newspaper Guild should lead the way to build a stronger media sector for the future in CWA. Most importantly, we have earned the support of a wide range of locals, officers, leaders and members. Read more about our ideas and why Guild members are working to elect us at astrongerguild.org.

Then vote for the Stronger Guild candidates: Bernie Lunzer for president, Carol Rothman for secretary-treasurer, Connie Knox for sector chairperson and Tony Winton for Region 2 vice president.

—Carol Rothman, sector chairperson
Philadelphia Newspaper Guild

THE GUILD Reporter

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DAYBOOK

TNG-CWA Election of Officers,
April 24-29, all locals

CWA/SCA Nat'l Rep. Meeting,
April 26-27, Vancouver, BC

TNG-CWA Election Results
Certified, May 12, Washington

AFL-CIO Union Industries Show,
May 16-18, Detroit

Freedom Award Banquet,
May 21, Washington, DC

International CBTU Convention,
May 21-26, St. Louis, MO

Nat'l Conference Media Reform,
June 6-8, Minneapolis

CWA Nat'l Minority Caucus,
June 19-22, Las Vegas

TNG-CWA Equity Conference,
June 22, Las Vegas

CWA Annual Convention,
June 23-25, Las Vegas

FROM THE MORGUE

Seventy years ago this month:

Circulation department workers at three Chicago newspapers defy "gunmen and sluggers" recruited by management and the Teamsters in voting to join the Guild. . . . The Duluth Evening Herald is shut down by a strike when contract negotiations bog down over the issue of establishing a Guild shop Threats of a region-wide strike—potentially the biggest in the Guild's short history—result in a contract covering approximately 700 editorial and commercial workers at San Francisco's four dailies and one in Oakland.

Fifty years ago this month:

The National Labor Relations Board closely questions an AFL-CIO lawyer over his contention that its organizers should not be allowed to unionize because their jobs are "managerial" in nature. . . . Analysis of union representation elections over the past eight years—the last five under a Republican-selected NLRB—shows a decline in union wins from 74% in 1951 to 61% in 1957. . . . The Guild Reporter switches to photo-offset printing, which "by-passes" engravers and stereotypers.

Twenty-five years ago this month:

Bills to establish minimum standards for operating video display terminals are introduced in at least five state legislatures. . . . The Guild's executive board unanimously approves an amended agreement for merger with the International Typographical Union. . . . A near end to newspaper staff reductions signals that the Reagan recession is winding down.