

THE GUILD Reporter

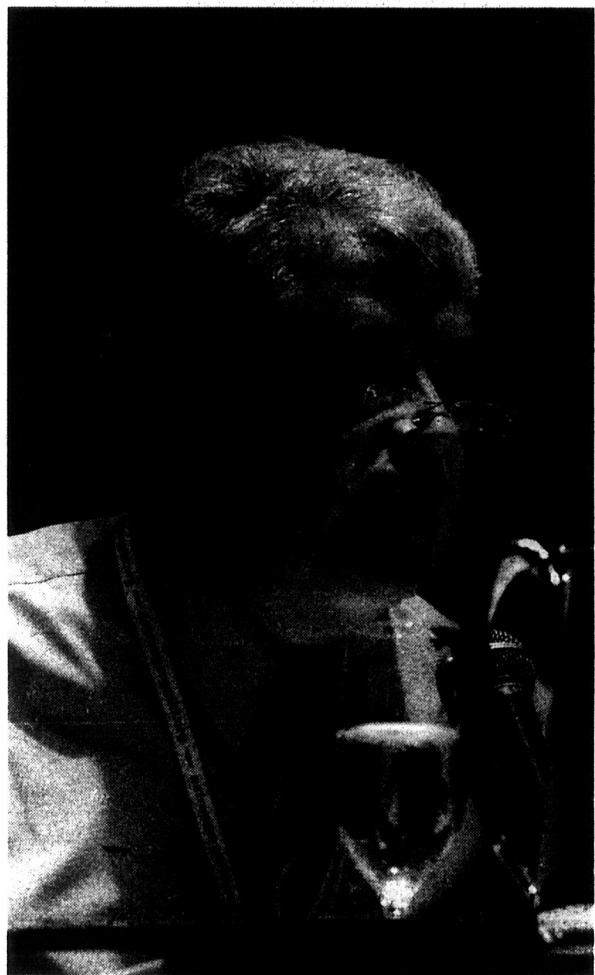
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Unofficial results favor Lunzer But Lindsay beats Winton for VP slot, Canada East results uncertain



Apparent president-elect Bernie Lunzer . . .

By Andy Zipser
Editor, The Guild Reporter

Unofficial results from the TNG-CWA election at press time showed the slate led by Bernie Lunzer defeating incumbent TNG-CWA President Linda Foley and her top two running mates by at least a 10-point margin. The sole exception was the race for Region 2 vice president, in which Foley ally Sheila Lindsay defeated Tony Winton by an unofficial count of 659 to 353.

A fifth race, in which non-aligned candidates Barbara Saxberg and Darren Pittman were vying for Canada East vice president, was leaning strongly toward Saxberg. Because many Canadian locals would not provide preliminary results, however, the outcome in this race was less certain.

Official results were being certified by the Sector and Election Referendum Committee as the Guild Reporter went to press and weren't available for publication. But unofficial tallies, provided by locals home to 27,491 eligible voters, showed 3,630 votes for Lunzer vs. 2,737 votes for Foley, for

an overall Guild-wide turnout of 23%.

Lunzer's top two running mates on the Stronger Guild ticket performed even more strongly, with Carol Rothman beating Scott Stephens for the secretary-treasurer post, 3,824 to 2,357; and Connie Knox beating Lois Kirkup for international chair, 3,870 to 2,227. The Foley-led slate ran under the Team Guild banner.

All these tallies will increase once the SERC certifies the full count. But with fewer than 900 eligible voters unaccounted for, a significant change in the outcome was unlikely. Moreover, two of the largest locals that didn't provide unofficial tallies—Southern California, with 114 members, and Peterborough, with 121—confirmed turnouts of around 10%, and most other non-reporting locals were expected to record similarly low interest.

Somewhat complicating the picture, although without known material effect on the outcome, was the failure of at least four small locals to conduct balloting. The SERC directly supervised the election in the York Guild after a member complained of not

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. . . and defeated incumbent Linda Foley

Organizing takes off with one big BANG

By Carl Hall
Northern California Media Guild

Organizers at the Bay Area News Group-East Bay petitioned for a new Guild unit on May 2 after gathering signed union cards from a solid super-majority of newsroom workers. The petition was filed with the Oakland region of the National Labor Relations Board and moves the "One Big BANG: One Guild Universe" campaign light years closer to an historic representation vote.

BANG-EB owner MediaNews Group, which wiped away the former ANG Newspapers unit of the Guild last year through an organizational restructuring, now faces the prospect of negotiating with one of the most potent clusters of organized journalists anywhere in the country. About 240 union-eligible employees work for BANG-EB in a collection of newspapers and websites led by the Contra Costa Times and Oakland Tribune.

The organizing drive began in earnest last fall and picked up

momentum in spring. In recent weeks, as cards circulated, employees gathered for lunchtime card-signings that had a feeling of celebration—even though everyone realized the organizing still faced many hurdles before a new Guild unit could be recognized.

Besides filing the petition, organizers sent a letter to BANG-EB management, emphasizing the Guild's interest in forming a cordial and productive relationship for the sake of all parties. "We all know that the industry is shifting quickly and dramatically, and at the moment it's not a particularly hospitable place for journalists," the organizers wrote. "We strongly believe that journalists facing such conditions must become more active participants in shaping their publications, and above all they must stand together."

Memos from senior company managers underscored the Guild's insistence that no one confuse signing a union card with mere interest in having an election to decide whether to unionize. Instead, the management and



Gathered before the NLRB regional offices in Oakland, members of the BANG-EB organizing committee prepare to file a petition for a representation

election. Shown, left to right, are Carl Hall, Karl Fischer, Paul Rosynsky and Sara Steffens; a fifth committee member, D. Ross Cameron, took the picture.

Guild showed remarkable agreement in e-mails and website postings, telling employees that signing a card meant a desire to have a union.

Many employees were proud to state that in no uncertain terms—particularly former employees of the ANG newspapers, who have been members of the Guild for decades. In Oakland, Tribune vet-

erans joined recent hires in a virtually unanimous show of support for the surging Guild movement in a banquet room at Francesco's restaurant. Similar scenes played out in Fremont, Hayward and San Mateo.

"I have to admit, signing a union card wasn't half as thrilling as seeing friends and colleagues in my shop, every single one of

them, put their own convictions to paper with a signature," said Michael Manekin, a San Mateo County Times reporter who serves as co-chair of the BANG-EB organizing committee.

"Not a year has passed since management took away our union with ANG, but we're bouncing back to form an even larger union

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Inside this issue



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Remembering Carmichael and the teachable moment

By Bruce Nelson
Membership Coordinator

Everything I know about collective bargaining I learned from John Carmichael. I was a Pioneer Press reporter when I met him, a career I left just so I could follow in his footsteps. Yet, this teacher and mentor extraordinaire never looked much like central casting's version of a Zen Master. His socks didn't always match and sometimes neither did his shoes. He was famous for walking into a meeting with the wrong file and he only occasionally remembered where he parked his car.

Many a foolish adversary mistook this persona as a sign of weakness. It was not. It was John's way of ignoring the irrelevant and focusing singularly on the goal at hand. Still, if Marlon Brando's character, Terry Malloy in "On the Waterfront," had been your only exposure to organized labor, John's appearance might have disappointed you.

John Carmichael rarely conducted a formal training session for Guild leaders, yet I've never known a better teacher. That's because his classroom was always with him. John taught every step of the way, through every bargaining session, every grievance meeting, every phone call. He could see a teachable moment a mile away, ready to stop the action when it came. He delighted at the chance to turn an ordinary meeting into a collective bargaining laboratory, helping us dissect every move and thereby understand a little more about the process. For example:

We were three days from a strike deadline at the Pioneer Press. A dozen Guild members sat on one side of a long conference table, all of us in various advanced stages of deep agitation. Management's committee faced us down from the other side of that table, indulging in neither a smile nor a compound sentence. In no time at all, the company negotiators let us know that their position had not changed on any of the issues. John calmly nodded his head while the rest of us stared straight ahead at the

John Edward Carmichael, executive secretary of the Twin Cities Newspaper Guild for 31 years, died April 19 at the age of 85. He is survived by his wife, Mary Lou; sons, David and Patrick Sean; and by three grandchildren and two sisters.

Prior to coming to Minnesota, Carmichael was an international representative for the Guild and president of the New Orleans Guild local. At his first Twin Cities executive board meeting, in July, 1955, he spoke of building a "second echelon" of local leadership—and then spent three decades doing exactly that. He also pioneered in the area of worker participation, a system he helped bargain into the Minneapolis and St. Paul contracts that gave the Guild a voice in such matters as interviewing finalist candidates for managing editor and deciding the newspapers' focus.

He also introduced medical, life insurance and pension plans in the two cities, was a founder of the Twin City Area Labor Management Council and team-taught labor relations with Star and Tribune managers at two universities. But he also shepherded local units through three successful strikes, in 1957-58, in 1962 and in 1980.



managers' neckties, contemplating the length of the strangulation process.

"We understand and respect your position," John told the company's team. "We don't like it, but we understand it and respect it."

We took a break then and the Guild committee filed into a separate room for a private strategy session, known in the parlance of negotiations as a "caucus." Some of us kicked chairs while others paced in anger. The angriest among us turned to John and asked, "Why do you have to be so civil with them? Why can't we just tell them to fuck off right now?"

The rest of us applauded and waited for John to answer our question. Instead of answering, however, John just smiled and nodded his head. Then he walked slowly to the suggestion's author, placed a gentle hand on his shoulder. "Okay," he said. "Let's go do that right now."

John and his student left the caucus, walked back into the conference room and took their seats across from the company's negotiators.

"There is something we need to communicate to you immediately," John told a somewhat startled management committee. Then he leaned over and whispered into his student's ear.

"Do you want to tell them, or should I?" asked John.

Amazing what fear does to a man. Only minutes ago, this guy was conceptually ready to lob a Molotov cocktail. Now he was slinking so far down in his chair that he had become almost perpendicular to the bargaining table.

"Nooooooooo," he whimpered in a barely audible whisper. "I don't want to tell them."

"Very well," John said, "then I will."

He cleared his throat, the verbal equivalent of a pitcher winding up on the mound. The managers exchanged nervous glances but didn't say a word. Then the pitch:

"Fuck off," John told them, his face resting in a gentle smile that shared not a single congruity with his speech.

Those poor managers sat there in a state of frozen animation, their eyes bulging out of their sockets while a redness slowly filled their cheeks. They didn't know whether to laugh or walk out in anger. So they did nothing.

"Well, that's all for now," John said. "We'll get back to you later."

The teacher and his pupil returned to the full committee and gave a slightly exaggerated report of the expletives just hurled at a stunned and dumbstruck management team. The room filled immediately with applause, high-fives and arm pumping. When we quieted down, John was ready to continue his Socratic lesson.

"So," he asked, "what do you want to do now?"

There was no answer to his question and so he continued. "We just told them to 'fuck off' and we aren't any closer to a settlement. In fact, we may well be further away than we were before we gave them that message. So what do we now?"

We spent the rest of the day trying to answer that question. The next day we made some moves and the company made some moves and the same thing happened the day after that and, well, there we were, minutes before our strike deadline, shaking hands on a new contract. Those of us on the committee, however, got a lot more out of those negotiations than a contract. Thanks to John, we left that experience much wiser about collective bargaining.

We learned that it is—first and foremost—a process, one propelled by power and that the success of its practitioners depends directly on how well they build and use power to create and resolve conflict and also on how well they tune into and respect the process.

Oh, and we all learned one more important lesson, just by watching John: never take yourself too seriously. The process isn't there to massage your ego—it's there to serve our members.

Guild briefs . . .

Judges name Barr winners

This year's winners of the Barr Award, named after former Guild attorney David Barr, are Sophie Cox of Henry W. Grady High School in Georgia and Titania Kumeu of San Francisco State University. Cox's entry, "Briarcliff Summit faces funding setbacks, complaints," delved into the difficulties faced by the residents of a low-income housing community in Atlanta. Kumeu won the college division for her article, "Pass it on: Toxic waste moved from area to area," which investigated illegal dumping by a power plant of toxic waste that sickened area residents. The judges also awarded an honorable mention to Erin Rosa of Metro State College of Denver.

Boston Herald reporter honored

Guild member Laurel J. Sweet, a crime reporter for the Boston Herald, received the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance's Journalism Award for her "unwavering commitment" to ensuring the voices of victims are heard. Sweet dedicated the award to the late Jerry Dewan, a New York firefighter from Boston she'd hoped to interview about his efforts at Ground Zero following the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. She never got the chance, and Dewan's remains weren't unearthed until three months later.

Dow Jones joins offshoring trend

Dow Jones announced it will eliminate approximately 110 IT positions—including up to 90 Guild members—starting next month as it offshores the work to HCL Technologies. Based in India, HCL advertises itself as a company that "works behind the scenes." Most staff reductions won't occur until September, with some jobs lingering until August, 2009. In the interim, Dow Jones said, it intends "to treat all those affected by this change with proper dignity and respect."

Canadians vote in four new leaders

Four new members have been elected to three-year terms on the executive of CWAISCA Canada. They include Mona Leroux, president of the Montreal Newspaper Guild, as secretary, and new at-large members Michael d'Souza, director of human rights for the CBC branch of the Canadian Media Guild; Debbie Newton, president of the Kingston Typographical Union; and Darren Pittman, president of the Halifax Typographical Union.

Continuing officers include Arnold Amber, Martin O'Hanlon, Gord Holder, Art Lacroix, Lise Lareau and Luis Rufo.

Poster children for Twin Cities local

The four employees of the Northland Poster Collective early this month became the newest unit of the Minnesota Guild/Typographical Union, signing an initial two-year contract retroactive to April 1. Northland produces a vast range of multilingual progressive, labor and environmental materials, including posters about the Iraq occupation, global warming and fair trade. Its work can be seen at www.northlandposter.com.

Former local president dies

John "Jack" Lemmon, 80, a president of the Washington Newspaper Guild in the early 1960s, died of a heart attack April 11. He was 80. A veteran journalist at the Washington Star and The Washington Post, Lemmon became only the third editor to succeed H.L. Mencken at the Baltimore Evening Sun, retiring in 1991, four years before Times-Mirror closed the paper. He also served as columnist Mary McGrory's assistant during the famed Army-McCarthy hearings, and was night managing editor at the Washington Post during a turbulent decade that included the Pentagon Papers controversy, Watergate and a pressman's strike. In the late 1970s, he led the team that organized The Post's changeover to a computerized system.

Black journalist pioneer dies

Luther P. Jackson Jr., the first African American professor at the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism and one of the first black journalists at the old Newark Evening News and at the Washington Post, died in the Bronx, N.Y., on Tuesday at age 83. He was the father of Luther P. Jackson III, executive officer of the San Jose Newspaper Guild.

Please excuse our oversight!

Because of a glitch in CWA membership record-keeping, the April issue of the Guild Reporter failed to acknowledge the Guild membership of a sixth Pulitzer Prize winner. Steve Fainaru of The Washington Post was awarded the Pulitzer for international reporting, for his coverage of Iraq-related security and Blackwater. The Guild Reporter regrets the oversight.

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Varying turnout was the deciding factor

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receiving a ballot, resulting in delayed certification of the full election results, originally scheduled for May 12. But no one in the other three non-voting locals protested, leaving both TNG-CWA and the SERC in the dark until the nationwide election had been completed.

Heidi Ruckno, president of the small (31 members) Wilkes-Barre local, said the election had "skipped my mind" at a time when she and her co-workers were fixated on the Pennsylvania primary. Also a no-show was the 11-member Hudson County local, whose president, Ron Leir, wrote simply: "We failed to get out the mandated election notices in time to our members." And North Bay's new president, Dave Dale—representing 88 members—reportedly told Guild rep David Wilson that he had received election materials in the mail but "just chucked the thing."

Lunzer's political campaign also reported that Scranton, with 27 members, apparently did not hold an election, and there was a slim possibility that other locals might also have been delinquent. Seventeen locals—including those listed above—were notified that their ballots had not been received by the May 7 deadline, but at least four were known to have voted and their results were believed to be in the mail. Virtually all of the locals whose ballots were still being awaited

have fewer than 60 members.

If any one factor determined the election outcome, it was turnout, with locals supporting Lunzer turning out in large numbers while those supporting Foley showing less interest. So although Foley captured most of the Guild's very largest locals, their consistently low turnout gave her disproportionately few votes. Meanwhile, greater election interest among medium-sized locals—which apparently responded to Stronger Guild criticisms that Foley hadn't paid enough attention to their needs—significantly favored Lunzer.

More specifically, Foley won four of the five largest Guild locals, often by significant margins, while Lunzer won four of the next five largest locals. The four biggest locals that went for Foley gave her a total of 894 votes—but have a combined membership of 9,595 and had an overall voter turnout of only 12.6%. The next five-local cohort, on the other hand, had a 28.6% turnout among the four that went for Lunzer, giving him 706 votes despite having a combined membership of only 3,504.

In all, the Guild Reporter compiled unofficial tallies for 59 locals, with 35 throwing the majority of their votes to Lunzer and 23 to Foley, while one was tied. When ranked by turnout, six of the top 10—led by Sheboygan, where 11 of 12 members voted, for a 91.7% turnout—went for Lunzer, giv-

ing him a total of 583 votes to Foley's 159. The four top-voting locals that sided with Foley gave her 76 votes to Lunzer's 19.

At the other end of the spectrum, the 10 locals with the lowest turnout—led by the Canadian Media Guild, in which only 7.6% of 4,641 members voted—went for Foley 7-3 and chipped in 644 votes, compared with 219 for Lunzer. But Lunzer picked up an additional 301 votes from the three low-turnout locals he carried, compared with Foley's 146.

Turnout also was a factor in the race for Region 2 vice president, who is elected by the members of six locals, just three of any great size. But Winton's home local, the News Media Guild had a turnout of only 17.7% of its 1,074 members—compared with the 27.2% turnout in Lindsay's home local, Washington-Baltimore, which has 1,824 members. Meanwhile the region's third large local, Puerto Rico, had a 66.6% turnout of its 604 members and went for Lindsay more than 2-1, clinching her win by a final (unofficial) tally of 659-353.

Low voter turnout vexed several local leaders. Turnout in San Jose was "dismal," said the local's administrative director, Suzanne Arnaud. But, she explained, "Everyone is so absorbed in their jobs and worrying about the next layoff at the Mercury News that it's hard to get anyone to do anything

Guild-related."

Nigel Sones, business agent for the 121 members of the Peterborough local, declined to provide an unofficial tally to the Guild Reporter, marking a cultural difference between traditional Guild locals and the former Typographical Union locals that now make up much of the TNG-CWA landscape in Canada. But he also noted that turnout in his local was extraordinarily low by historical standards—in the 10% range—"to the point I'd call it an embarrassment."

"A lot of the old guard is gone," Sones said, and those members "never would dream of missing a vote—they'd see it as a responsibility." On the other hand, he added, he'd heard from a lot of his members "who had no idea who these people are" running for office.

Low voter turnout also galled Darren Pittman, president of the Halifax local and one of two candidates for Canada East vice president, who said he was disappointed that his own local couldn't muster more than a 40% turnout—but then got "really bummed out" when he saw the low Canadian Media Guild response. "Some people just couldn't be bothered," he complained, despite strenuous efforts to get out the vote.

"One of our main objectives, whichever team wins, has got to be to turn that around" and get more members involved in the union, he added.

Moving light years closer toward joining Guild

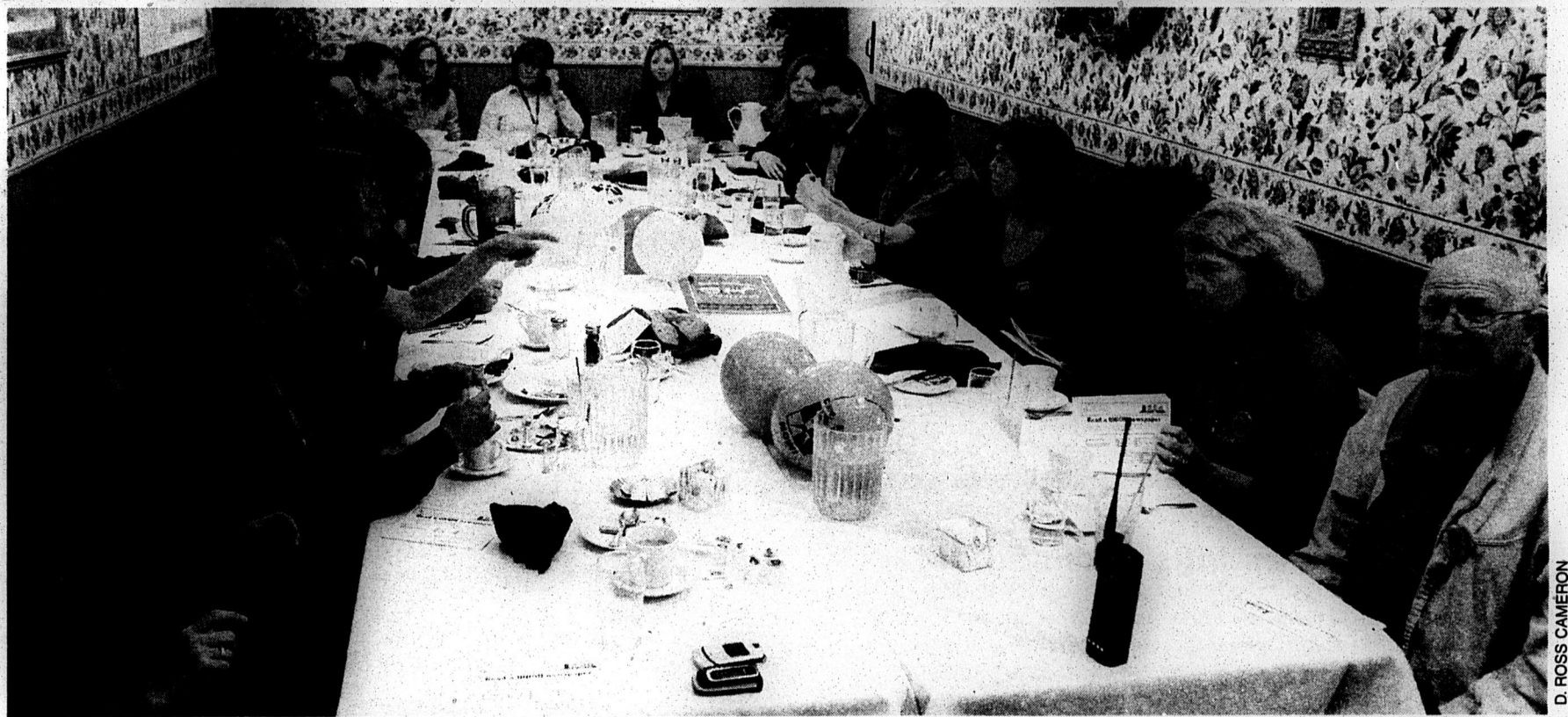
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with our colleagues at the Contra Costa Times," he said. "I've been inspired to see my colleagues rebound from the disappointment with even more support for the Guild."

In one of the most significant displays of union solidarity, Contra Costa Times employees staked out a pizzeria in Walnut Creek to sign cards. The Walnut Creek newsroom is the largest in the BANG-EB chain and one of the worksites that had not been part of the Guild unit prior to the August 2007 restructuring by MediaNews, a Denver-based news chain headed by Dean Singleton.

(That restructuring combined the editorial operations of the ANG Newspapers with those of the Contra Costa Times and affiliates, creating a 13-newspaper, two-website entity known as BANG-EB. Notably, MediaNews left the San Jose Mercury News out of the shuffle, since adding those Guild members to the overall pool would have tipped the balance the other way.)

Every sector of the workforce has joined in the organizing drive, led by Karl Fischer, a crime reporter in Richmond; Sara Steffens, who covers poverty and social services in Walnut Creek; and Manekin, the San Mateo County Times reporter, representing the only West Bay operating site in the BANG-EB cluster. The campaign itself is a collaborative of the Northern California Media Workers and the San Jose Guild, backed by TNG-CWA.



Oakland Tribune staff writers and photographers gather at a card-signing luncheon April 2 at Francesco's restaurant in Oakland, Calif.

Meanwhile, members of the Bay Area labor movement have begun assisting with the effort, in particular Sharon Cornu, head of the Alameda Central Labor Council. She and her staff met in March with leaders of the Guild campaign, laying the groundwork for a community-outreach effort. And when Guild members created subscription-pledge cards, nearly 1,000 of the cards were distributed at the annual dinner meeting of the Alameda County Central Labor Council.

Organizers described the outreach this way, in a promotional flyer: "We want our company to prosper. We also want our man-

agement to know that its best customers—like its best employees—are UNION SUPPORTERS!"

Visible activism by the Guild was met by a series of "Straight Talk" e-mail bulletins from senior company managers. Organizing committee members have used both online tools—discussion groups, e-mail lists and web sites—and personal meetings to collaboratively develop and disseminate their responses to the company's disinformation campaign.

Much of the organizing committee's focus has been on the need to maintain editorial quality in the midst of rampant corporate cost-cutting throughout the news

industry. That this goal has resonated for BANG-EB employees is evident in a series of public testimonials on the campaign's website, onebigbang.org.

Christine Morente, a reporter in San Mateo, wrote one of the site's more personal—and powerful—statements, recalling her years of preparation for a career in journalism, then adding: "Our professors warned us that landing jobs after graduation would be difficult as more and more newspapers were 'freezing' positions. But I'm stubborn and didn't want four years of honing my craft to be a waste of time and money. . . .

"I love what I do," she added.

"I support and trust the Guild because it is fighting to save our industry. Because of the union, I can't help but be optimistic."

Or as organizing committee co-chair Sara Steffens put it: "I believe our union will become a platform to promote the values we share as journalists, the ones that don't always come to the forefront for profit-seeking owners. We need to be the voice for quality, for putting journalism first. We need to be the ones to point out that in the long run, good journalism is good business, be it online or in print.

"Here's the thing: without the union, we have nothing. Together, we have a voice."

Chicago Local 34071 is seeking candidates for the position of executive director. Applicants should have experience in contract negotiations and enforcement and management of a small office staff. Newspaper experience is preferable. Send applications c/o Mike Ulreich, Chicago Newspaper Guild, 36 S. Wabash, Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60603; or e-mail Mike at michaelulreich@hotmail.com

News round-up

16 workers killed on job each day

The nation's workplace safety laws and penalties are too weak to effectively protect workers, according to a new AFL-CIO report, "Death on the Job: The Toll of Neglect." The report notes there were 5,840 fatal workplace injuries in 2006; on average, 16 workers were fatally injured and another 11,200 were injured or made ill each day. Meanwhile, federal and state OSHA departments have only one inspector for every 63,913 workers, compared with an international standard of one inspector for every 10,000 workers.

Premium growth outstrips wages

Premiums for families obtaining their health insurance coverage from employers increased 11 times faster than workers' incomes over the past several years, according to a study by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The amount employees pay for family premiums, on average, increased 35% over five years, from \$1,921 in 2001 to \$2,585 in 2005, according to the study, while the median income of those employees increased just 3% during the same period, from \$40,818 in 2001 to \$42,068 in 2005.

Need insurance? Get married

In a poll recently released by the Kaiser Family Foundation, 7% of Americans said they or someone in their household decided to marry in the last year so they could get healthcare benefits via their spouse. The survey also found that healthcare costs outranked housing costs, rising food prices and credit card bills as a source of concern. Twenty-eight percent of those surveyed said they had experienced serious problems because of the cost of healthcare, compared with 29% who had problems getting a good job or a raise.

More joblessness = less insurance

The Urban Institute is projecting that each percentage-point rise in unemployment during the economic downturn will swell the ranks of the uninsured by 1.1 million, stoking demand for government health coverage just as states face pressure to cut benefits. The number of uninsured Americans has grown throughout the past decade, and now stands at 47 million, or 16% of the population.

Grad students are workers, too

Congress' top two Democrats on labor issues want to bring 51,000 college teaching assistants and research assistants at 1,561 private universities and colleges back under the protection of labor law. Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.) have introduced legislation that would amend the National Labor Relations Act to define such TAs and RAs as "employees," enabling them to organize and bargain collectively. If the bill passes—unlikely this year—the legislation would overturn a 3-2 decision by the National Labor Relations Board that graduate students—many of whom earn less than \$15,000 yearly—can't unionize, leaving them without tenure, health benefits or job protection.—PAI

On-line job postings declined 16%

The Conference Board reports that there were 3,649,900 online advertised job vacancies in April, a 16.4% decline from the same month a year earlier and the second consecutive month of declines for the U.S. States with a large number of advertised vacancies include Alaska, Nevada and Massachusetts. States where the number of unemployed persons looking for work significantly exceeded the number of online advertised vacancies included Tennessee, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan and Mississippi.

Dock workers say 'no' to Iraq war

Thousands of West Coast dockers shut down some 29 ports on May 1 throughout an entire eight-hour shift in protest against the war in Iraq. The work stoppage kept some 10,000 containers from being loaded or unloaded from about 30 cargo ships from Seattle to San Diego. A statement by Bob McEllrath, president of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), explained, "We're loyal to America, and we won't stand by while our country, our troops and our economy are being destroyed by a war that's bankrupting us to the tune of \$3 trillion."

AFL-CIO looking for working women

Once upon a time, not very long ago, our mothers (sisters, aunts, cousins and ourselves) brought forth on this continent a new notion, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that when it comes to earning a paycheck, all women were created equal to men. So how's that going for you? Working America, the community affiliate of the AFL-CIO, wants to know—and to find out has launched its sixth "Ask a Working Woman" survey. The last time it asked, 22,000 women responded. If you want to be part of this year's cohort, log on at www.askaworkingwoman.com. The survey is open to all and will be available on line until June 20.

More bad numbers define newspapers' bleak outlook

By Andy Zipser
Editor, The Guild Reporter

The drip-drip of baleful news for the newspaper industry continues unabated, led by the latest figures from the Audit Bureau of Circulations showing that yes, fewer people are picking up a copy. For the six-month period ending March 31, the largest U.S. dailies lost an average of 3.5% daily circulation and 4.5% on Sundays.

Some of the biggest fell the hardest. The New York Times, for example, lost more than 150,000 copy sales on Sundays, a 9.2% slump, while daily circulation dropped 3.8%. The Indianapolis Star lost 8% on Sundays and slipped 2.3% daily; the Boston Globe was off 6.4% on Sundays and 8.3% daily; the St. Louis Post-Dispatch eked out a 1.6% gain on Sundays—but plunged 8.5% daily.

The inexorable slide in circulation was matched by a raft of Wall Street downgrades, sliding stock prices and balance sheet write-downs, although the financial markets didn't consistently track circulation results, suggesting deep disenchantment with the entire sector. The Seattle Times, for example, reported an upward blip in weekday circulation of 0.5%, but that failed to cheer the McClatchy Co., which owns 49.5% of the paper. Instead, McClatchy reduced the value of its stake in the Times to \$12.6 million—down more than a third in just four months, and an 88% drop from the \$102.2 million value it assigned the holding in December, 2006.

An equally dramatic write-down was reported by Avista Capital Partners for its investment in the Minneapolis Star Tribune (daily circulation down 6.7%), which it acquired from McClatchy in early 2007 for \$530 million. Avista said it had reduced the value of its \$100 million investment by 75%; the balance of the purchase was financed by two loans, one of which is now trading at 56 cents on the dollar, the other—a subordinated position—at 10 cents on the dollar.

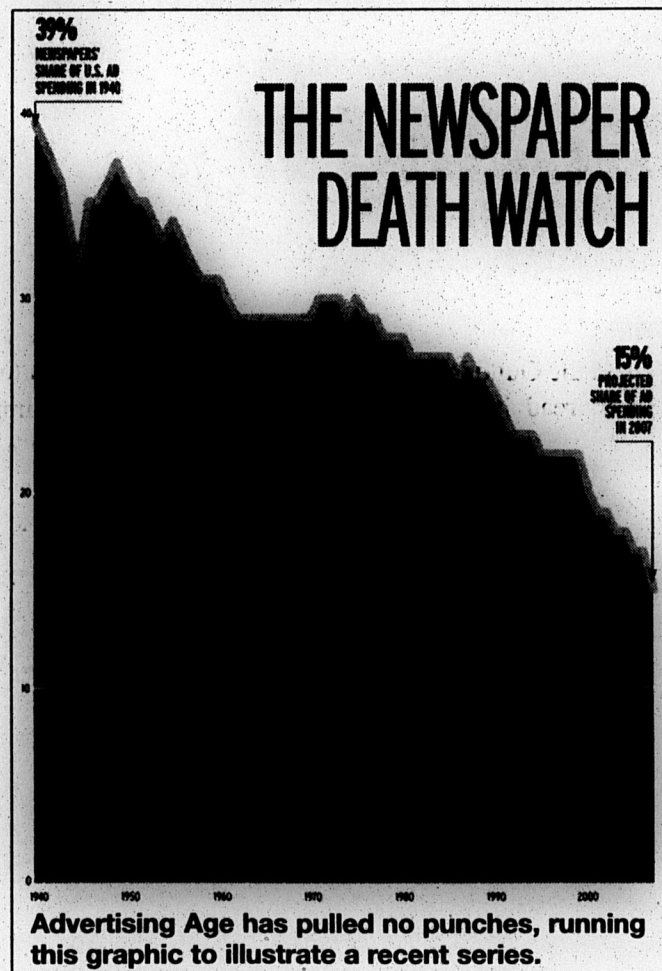
Slumping circulation—and advertising—contributed to further downgrades of newspaper debt by the various rating services. The New York Times had its unsecured debt ratings cut by both Standard & Poor's and Moody's to each firm's lowest investment-grade level, which is to say, one more cut will push it into junk bond territory. Moody's also lowered some Gatehouse Media ratings even more deeply into the junk bond pool and put all of the publishers' ratings under review for possible further downgrades. Gatehouse responded two weeks later by reporting a first-quarter net loss of \$28.8 million, compared with a \$6.1 million loss in the same quarter a year earlier, and said it would reverse its acquisitive ways by seeking to sell some of its assets.

Earnings at other newspaper groups also raised red flags. A.H. Belo Corp., the recently spun-off newspaper

group once owned by Belo Corp., reported an \$8.7 million loss for its first stand-alone quarter. The loss in earnings was explained largely by an 8.8% plunge in revenues, and the company warned of continuing revenue declines for the rest of the year. Sun Times Media Group, meanwhile, widened its first-quarter loss to \$35.8 million, compared with a \$4.8 million loss a year earlier, and days later was de-listed from the New York Stock Exchange.

The Sun Times de-listing made it the second newspaper company to be booted off the Big Board in recent weeks. The first, Journal Register, now warns it may default on its loan covenant before the end of July "unless there is significant improvement in the company's operating results." That doesn't appear likely, given the industry's ongoing erosion: the company reported a first-quarter loss of \$72.2 million, compared with a \$29.1 million profit in the same quarter a year earlier.

The one sterling exception to all the doom and gloom was Tribune Co., which reported a huge \$1.82 billion profit in the first quarter—well, almost. Turns out those were accounting gains that exist only on paper, thanks to the tax code that applies to the company's leveraged buyout. In the real world the company saw a 7.8% slide in revenues and a pretax loss from continuing operations of \$30.2 million, compared with a pretax operating profit of \$30.8 million a year earlier.



Battista finds fitting home

The former chairman of the National Labor Relations Board has asked President Bush to withdraw his nomination to the board and has joined the Washington, D.C. office of Littler Mendelson, a leading union-busting law firm.

The Senate had not acted on Robert J. Battista's nomination for a new term since the beginning of the year; he had chaired the board, which is charged with enforcing the National Labor Relations Act, from 2002-2007. "It's unbelievable that President Bush would renominate Mr. Battista to the board after he led the most anti-worker, anti-labor, anti-union board in its history," Sen. Edward Kennedy said in January, after Battista was renominated.

Although the NLRA was written to promote workers' rights to organize themselves into unions, the NLRB under Battista repeatedly interpreted labor law to limit those rights and excluded millions of workers from its protection. His new employer, characterized by Battista as having "a longstanding tradition of excellence, particularly in the labor relations arena," will give him the opportunity to continue his work.

Littler Mendelson calls itself the nation's largest employment and labor law firm representing management. Although its web site concedes that "the percent-

age of America's unionized workers is at an all-time low," it also contends that "the labor movement is still very much a powerful international force that wields enormous influence over the nation and its employers." The site adds that Littler's more than 150 labor lawyers, "many of whom began their legal careers at the National Labor Relations Board," have been a "counterpoint to the world's most powerful labor organizations" for more than six decades.

Among the services it offers are counseling "on union avoidance strategies," managing labor representation elections, negotiating union contracts and preparing strike responses. But among its most notable activities, as indicated by a separate web page, are union decertification drives—which, despite legal requirements that they be initiated and managed by employees, apparently (who knew?) may benefit from a strong push from legally savvy employers.

The utter cynicism with which such legal advice is offered may be seen on Little's web page on the subject, which opens with the statement: "Due to falling wages, reduced benefits, and unrealized expectations, many of today's organized workers do not feel that their unions are adequately representing their interests. Such employees may be receptive to decertification."

GR survey leaves lots of questions

Sixty-three Guild members responded on-line to a brief Guild Reporter survey asking that burning contemporary question: paper or pdf? Another 10 replied via e-mail and four by letter, a quaint technology that relies on hand-carried pieces of paper as a means of communication—kind of like this newspaper.

In response to the basic question of whether they'd prefer to get the Guild Reporter in the mail or on-line, the letter writers—no surprise—were unanimous in declaring their allegiance to paper. Paul Jayes, of Fort Myers, went so far as to concede he's "an ink-stained dinosaur" but added: "There's something about the lovely crackle of newsprint that makes the coffee taste sweeter in the morning." If your computer crackles with your morning coffee, there's probably a problem.

Daniel Coffey of Beverly, Mass., on the other hand, was more outraged than nostalgic. If it's money we're concerned about saving, he suggested, "why not have your higher paid people take a pay cut of 50 cents a week."

The electronic respondents, meanwhile, were all over the map, as illustrated by the selection of comments at right. If there's any general agreement, it's in the 82% of respondents who "regularly" read the Guild Reporter and the 7% who read it "occasionally." Only 10% read it "seldom" or "never." And a surprising (to the editor) two-thirds of respondents said they receive the paper in a timely fashion, which means either that mail

service is better outside the Washington D.C. metro area or that Guild Reporter stories are timeless.

Yet even though they responded electronically, the on-line respondents were split almost evenly on their preferred mode of delivery, with 52% preferring paper and 48% picking one of the electronic options. The greatest variation was in the responses to the survey's second question, which asked how often respondents currently look at the Guild Reporter on-line: 42% replied "never," 22% said "regularly" and 37% replied either "occasionally" or "seldom." Quite a few added that they hadn't been aware that the newspaper was available on-line, so presumably those ratios will shift in the future.

What's it all mean? Seventy-seven responses aren't representative of all Guild members, of course, so the survey results won't determine anything. But they are useful for telling us what is more or less acceptable to Guild members, and the comments we received will be particularly helpful in guiding future decisions.

Once the dust has settled from the recent election and the TNG-CWA executive board constitutes its committees, the survey results will be presented to the Guild Reporter Committee for its review. Also in the hopper is a sector conference resolution authorizing up to \$30,000 for improving the Guild website. Meanwhile, some contemplated Guild Reporter changes, such as modifying publication frequency, require amending the constitution at a sector conference.

Guild locals achieve three new contracts

Recently negotiated Guild contracts by several smaller locals or units include the following:

On the heels of plant-wide buy-outs and lay-offs, the Lake Superior Guild reached a tentative agreement on a new three-year contract with the Duluth News Tribune. The agreement includes 1.5% wage increases each year, retroactive to Jan. 1, and moves Guild members to a new health insurance plan with the same terms and premiums as management. The agreement also replaces commission-only compensation with a base-plus-bonus plan for outside sales reps.

This was the first contract negotiated by the local with Forum Communications since it bought the paper from McClatchy in 2006, and was marked by a Forum push to institute a two-tier pay system and two-tiered vacation and sick leave systems consistent with its other newspapers. In addition to successfully defending against that initiative, the local succeeded in recruiting Forum as a partner to apply for a state retraining grant of up to \$400,000, a key Guild priority.

Elsewhere, Guild members of the Windsor local who work in the

Windsor Star mailroom hammered out a three-year agreement just three hours after a strike-lockout deadline, following two days of mediation. Although pay increases in the contract total only 3.5%, the agreement builds on the 21% increase won three years ago by improving vision care, boot and meal allowances, bereavement leave, severance packages and pension contributions. Guild rep David Esposti, noting that Windsor is reeling from auto industry layoffs and plant closures, added that "there are no concessions whatever in this agreement."

And in Detroit—another city hammered by auto manufacturing woes—the Guild local reached agreement on a four-year contract with the United Auto Workers on behalf of eight public relations staffers who work at the union's headquarters. The contract includes no wage raises but pays a \$3,000 bonus at signing, a 3% lump sum next March, a 4% lump sum in March, 2010 and a 3% lump sum a year later.

The unit's one concession was an agreement that new hires will come in at 70% of the staff rate—\$103,496—but will receive 5% annual raises until achieving parity.

Ink or electrons? Readers respond

In addition to filling out our short questionnaire, many respondents submitted additional comments, some of which are excerpted below. The Guild Reporter welcomes additional thoughts on the issues raised, particularly regarding the appropriateness of a newspaper union replacing its own printed publication with an electronic version. Responses may be sent to: azipser@cwa-union.org.

Actually, I'd be OK with electronic form, but since it asked for preference, my preference is print. How many jobs will be lost if the print version is eliminated?

I like the e-mail reminder with clickable links, but I find that you can follow links endlessly to delve further into the topic and lose the flavor of the GR by going off on a tangent. I do like this exploratory objective, but I also like to see the way the actual page was laid out with photos and captions. Also, in an electronic form, all items are of equal weight as far as presentation goes. The pdf version would show what stories are featured with photos and big headlines versus news briefs. . . . —Donna Marks

I did not even know that it was available in electronic form. I think you need to publicize that first and then you would be on solid ground to do away with the print edition.

If I received an e-mail reminder, I would give the Guild Reporter a try in its electronic form. But if the GR goes paperless, what does that say about the newspaper industry's future?

The Reporter needs work to become more a spokesman for news business workers. —Gil Bailey

I love the Guild Reporter but the print version arrives so late that it feels like old news. I prefer print, but my second choice would be pdf if it came in a timely manner, because I could print it out for myself!

Snail-mail delivery for periodicals is very slow out here in Hawaii, but I recall it was slow years ago in San Francisco and San Jose, too. It's doubtful more than a handful of members lack home internet access. If that's the case, costs could be cut substantially by snail-mailing paper copies to the few who really want them. . . . The paper copy has become an expensive anachronism. —Ernest Murphy, Local 39117, Honolulu

If the decision is made to go electronic, please change the format to 8.5x11 and make a PDF version available

Love the print Guild Reporter—hope it never goes away!

Yes, yes, a thousand times yes—stop the waste of money of sending out the paper copy of the Reporter. A while back, someone wrote in and suggested this, they were nearly stoned. This is a major waste of money and resources.

I'm retired, and on my pension, ahem, I cannot afford a computer at home. I try to get to a public library regularly to use their computers, but I have only a limited amount of time online at the library. I DO faithfully read the print version mailed to me. . . .

I prefer the Guild Reporter in its current print form, but would not be upset if we just distributed it online. I read it that way and I bet that there are more important things the Guild can spend money on besides printing and mailing the Guild Reporter.

I look at a screen long enough each day. Looking at a print publication is about more than getting information into my head—there is a connection made with an object in the hand that isn't made via a screen.

I really like GR, and am amazed that CWA tolerates such an open pub. I was totally opposed to the merger. I'm a former union writer/editor, so I'm very biased towards print. That said, I think there's a far greater chance members will pick up something mailed to them at home—and that they can read at their leisure. It really gives them a sense of membership in something. I hear from some folks that newer, younger members "don't have time" to read. Maybe, maybe not. I really think it depends on the quality of the design and editing, and that a print product lends itself better to both. I like to tell web advocates that even web pieces (if people want to chew over them) become printouts, just like a magazine or newspaper. And, quite simply, you've got more room to play with—and make eyes move through the whole pub—with a printed product that is larger than a piece of copy paper. Finally, as a union guy, I like the fact that a local can have extras of a pub to hand out at the worksite—it's more eye-catching than stapled copies of a letter-size printout. . . . —Dave Winans (associate member, Philadelphia Guild)

I think it's important to continue to publish the Guild Reporter as a newspaper. I know there is a cost, but it would send the wrong message about our industry. Also, the benefit of a newspaper is that people read it because they get it. People decide where they want to go online. By printing a newspaper and sending it to members they will read it, whereas they might not think to go looking for it online. Even if we develop an e-mail list to send it to, I think we will lessen readership. —Tim O'Brien, Albany

Having spent 37 years—starting in the hot-metal days—as a print journalist at the Tribune and Star Tribune in Minneapolis, until retirement a year ago, I have a sentimental wish for our union's journal to remain a newspaper. But as volunteer co-editor of an online-only (PDF) newsletter for the local Jazz Society, and a contributor to an international jazz monthly that recently became an online-only (web) publication, I guess I'd vote for electronic publication of the Guild Reporter, too. . . . I think electronic publication works especially well for a niche journal like the Guild Reporter. For one thing, as long as I can remember, the Guild Reporter has arrived well past the freshness dates of its breaking news stories. . . . —Dick Parker, Roseville, Minn.

This question is totally out of line, the Guild representing newspaper workers asking if we want to stop receiving our own union newspaper and replace it with the web. This is just what we are trying not to do to save our own jobs. Each day we work hard to bring our product into our customers' homes, and work to promote our newspaper in a time when newspapers are having the hardest time possible, competing with the blogs, television and other online media. We should at least be supporting the product in our own union. —Mike Harvey, Local 30130, Halifax Chronicle Herald employee

You should continue the print version of the Guild Reporter but add an electronic version that is sent to us via e-mail. Some members don't have or use computers. This electronic version should eventually replace the print version. —Roy Malone, St. Louis

I think the Guild website is too hard to maneuver.

Labor is stronger with a song in its heart

[May is "Labor History Month," a time for union members to get in touch with their roots—and, perhaps, to broaden their horizons by hearing and reading what members of other unions have to offer. The stories on this page are from the May 2008 issue of *Allegro*, the newspaper of the New York City musicians' union (AFM Local 802), and are reprinted here with its permission.]

By Charlie King
American Federation of Musicians

Pete Seeger reminds us that people have been making up songs to get the work done since time immemorial: sea shanties; field hollers; lullabies. And when people want to rock the boat and dump the bosses, they sing songs—new songs; new lyrics to old tunes; new life breathed into old lyrics; new rhythms to old parlor cadences. You can tell the history of labor organizing in the U.S. without speaking a word. The songs tell it all. More importantly, the songs made it happen. Labor songs have energized and informed union organizing and have told our story because the media and the American history books won't.

It didn't start here. European immigrants and African slaves carried the flame of songs and visions as they struggled to make a life in new and unfamiliar soil. Big visions: "God gave Noah the rainbow sign, no more water—fire next time." Or: "We can bring to birth a new world from the ashes of the old." They dreamed of the world turned upside down, and their songs reflected it.

For over a century, labor ran on these songs. In 1863 the American Mineworkers Association included in its constitution a lyric to remind its members "... by union what we will can be accomplished still. Drops of water turn a mill, singly none. ..."

When in 1884 the Federation of Organized Trades & Labor Unions (soon to be the American Federation of Labor) adopted the eight-hour-day movement as its earliest organizing project, it inherited the vision penned by a preacher in 1866 and set to music in 1878. Not just the demand for "eight hours for work, eight hours for rest, eight hours for what we will. ..." but also the declaration "hurrah for labor. ... It has filled the world with plenty, it will fill the world with light."

When the march "L'Internationale" was sung here, American translators asserted: "The Earth shall rise on new foundations. We have been naught, we shall be all!"

But it was the concrete and confrontational demands like "eight hours" that came to define labor song as it entered the 20th century. The Industrial Workers of the World produced a flood of union songs written to popular songs and hymns: easily learned, easily sung, easily re-written for specific struggles. Songs like "What We Want" and "Dump the Bosses Off Your Back" left no doubt where this union was headed. The Lawrence textile strike of 1912, a textbook example of how to organize a multi-lingual, multi-ethnic immigrant work force into a unified labor movement, will be remembered for the cry "Bread and Roses" because it was memorialized in that eponymous song.

Songwriters like Joe Hill, Ralph Chaplin, Haywire Mac McClintock and T-Bone Slim churned out songs for the IWW's "Little Red Songbook" in the pre-World War I era that are still sung today. And they gave us the song that is known all around the world as the anthem of international labor unity: "Solidarity Forever."

The red scare did its best to destroy union organizing and union singing, but the stock market crash of 1929 and the Great Depression that followed proved fertile ground for working class movements and song.

In 1931, while Yip Harburg and Jay Gorney composed the 1930's anthem "Brother Can You Spare A Dime?" in New York, the coalfields of Kentucky rang to Florence Reese's "Which Side Are You On?" and the textile strikers of North Carolina beat back racial divide-and-conquer by adapting an African-American hymn: "Black and white together, we shall not be moved."

Back in New York, classical musicians formed the Composers Collective to contribute their skills to working-class struggles. Elie Siegmeister, Charles Seeger, Earl Robinson, Marc Blitzstein, Hans Eisler and Aaron Copeland wrote for labor choruses and theatre.

With the rise of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (the CIO) in 1935, a wave of industrial organizing and militant strikes rode on an undercurrent of song: "Oh write me out my union card, we'll organize and we'll fight hard, 'cuz all my rights been



Charlie King

taken away," or "Sit down just take a seat, sit down and rest your feet, sit down ya got 'em beat. Sit down! Sit down!"

The Almanac Singers (including Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Lee Hayes and Sis Cunningham) greeted the 1940's with a new batch of labor songs in their LP, "Talkin' Union." Organizing slogans like "You can't scare me, I'm sticking to the union" or "Take it easy, but take it" derive from Almanac's lyrics. And it was then that Woody penned a grassroots response to Irving Berlin's "God Bless America" (20 years old but enjoying a surge of popularity with Kate Smith's 1938 recording) with a song that starts out, "This land is your land, this land is my land."

Members of the Almanacs founded the Weavers, the soundtrack of the post-WW II era, until yet another red scare hounded that ensemble into early retirement.

The 1950's marked a transition from industrial unionism to a less adversarial business unionism and some of the best visions and visionaries were driven out of

the AFL-CIO. With a top-down organizing model, the bottom-up energy of songs was less called for and peoples' songs flowed in other directions, notably the civil rights and anti-war movements.

But labor music is alive and well in spite of it all. Clear examples? I'd single out the Great Labor Arts Exchange, held each June at the National Labor College in Silver Springs, Maryland (www.LaborHeritage.org). The list of contemporary artists who sing in the cause of labor is longer than space allows, but if you'd like list or a bunch of sources for labor history or music, you can write to me at www.CharlieKing.org.

King, a member of AFM Local 1000, has been at the heart of American folk music for more than 40 years. His honors include an "Indie" award for one of the top three American folk recordings of 1984, the 1998 Peacemaker Award from the War Resisters League and the Sacco-Vanzetti Social Justice Award in 1999.

People without songs are people without history

By Anne Feeney
American Federation of Musicians

As another May Day comes and goes, we cultural workers in the labor movement know that it will pass without comment in most U.S. unions.

But around the world, millions of workers will gather to remember and honor the sacrifice of Chicago's Haymarket Martyrs in the 1886 battle for the eight-hour day. They will link arms and sing "The Internationale." They will sing this 120-year old song in Korean, Spanish, Italian, Swedish, Urdu, Hindi, Swahili and Chinese.

Here in the U.S., most people—even union members—couldn't begin to hum the tune, and we know little of the Haymarket Massacre and less about May Day.

I'll suggest to you that one of the reasons that we don't know our history is because we don't know our songs.

Since the dawn of humanity, we have been writing and singing songs as a way to remember our history and traditions. So many lessons that we have learned—both bitter and glorious—are remembered in labor songs.

Music that inspires us to collective action,



Anne Feeney

music that inspires us to make individual sacrifices for the common good, or music that reminds us of the bloody and exploitative history of American industry will never sell at WalMart. And so this music has all but disappeared from our cultural landscape.

I spent 12 years as a trial lawyer believing that "professionals" would be able to make the system fairer to working people. I came to understand that was not, and would never be, true.

Studying our history convinced me that any powerful and important changes have come from the bottom up. Professionals, politicians and philanthropists are helpless to effect social change—without mass movements behind them.

We hear labor leaders decry U.S. labor law and declining union density. While these are problems, to be sure, our failure to advance labor's agenda has little to do with labor law. It has little to do with union density.

France has a fantastic labor movement, even though its union density is lower than ours. But French workers have something that we do not have—class consciousness. This is something that has been drilled out of us by corporate America.

No matter who we are, we say we are "middle class." People on food stamps think they are middle class. People with six-figure paychecks and millions in assets consider themselves middle class. Can we really all be middle class? Who benefits from that perception?

It wasn't until I immersed myself in American labor music (and began writing some of my own labor tunes) that I began to see where our class consciousness resides—in our culture!

For instance, www.LaborHeritage.org will give you a glimpse into a huge variety of cultural expression of working class value: books, music, films, art, puppets, poetry and more.

As I continue to learn and produce working-class oriented material, I become energized, optimistic and savvy.

I can hear some of you now: "I'm not working class! I'm a professional!" But unless you are primarily an employer, you are a worker—and a member of the working class. See if the values articulated in the cultural works of the labor movement speak to your true heart. I may just find you whistling "The Internationale" next May Day!

Feeney (www.AnneFeeney.com) is a freelance troublemaker whose award-winning songs have been featured in several films. She was the only woman ever elected president of AFM Local 60-471 (Pittsburgh) and is an active member of the traveling musicians' local, AFM Local 1000.

Labor once viewed as democracy's guardian

[Given the unabashedly pro-corporate inclination of the National Labor Relations Board during the Bush years, it can be hard to remember that the board was created to enforce the principle that employees have the "right to self-organization, to join, form or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, and to engage in concerted action for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid and protection." The recent news (see page 4) that the NLRB's last chairman, Robert Battista, is going to work for one of the most anti-union law firms in the U.S. only emphasizes how thoroughly corporate interests have suborned this federal agency, too.]

The speech excerpted here, published in a much longer but still incomplete form in the April 18, 1938 *Guild Reporter*, was delivered by NLRB member Edwin S. Smith before the Carolina Political Bureau. Titled "Labor, Guardian of America's Democracy," it underscores how much we've lost as a labor movement—and as the ongoing war in Iraq should remind us, as a democratic society.]

By Edwin S. Smith
National Labor Relations Board

The title of my address describes the National Labor Relations Act as a "guardian of democracy." This, I trust, is not rhetoric, but a simple statement of sober truth. That democracy everywhere is menaced becomes daily more clear. That this danger to ourselves can be averted only by the alert and whole-hearted resistance of those social groups whose stake in democracy is greatest seems self-evident.

No group since the modern industrial

system began has more faithfully and fearlessly advocated the widening and deepening of the democratic process than the industrial workers. No class has so experienced the tragic helplessness of the individual who, unsupported by the collective economic strength of his fellows, faces alone the entrenched autocratic economic power of the employing class.

In the United States we have indulged in much sentimentalizing over individualism and freedom of opportunity for economic self-improvement. The sentimentalizing lies not in respect to the ideals for which these expressions stand, but in terms of their application to the realities of life for most of our population. The tens of millions of our people who now, as in the past, produce the goods by which we exist are expending their physical and mental energies not in a struggle for the abstractions of individual freedom and unfettered economic opportunity, but for attainment of the bread of life itself. . . .

The American businessman, as a type, advocates that kind of democracy which leaves him freest to pursue his own courses. Individualism is his stand-by and his shibboleth because he can afford to travel alone. He is highly suspicious of all collective action by the workers and even by the government. Call his reasons philosophical or merely selfish, the average employer's practical actions have always tended in the direction of thwarting those collective efforts of his employees, by which alone the individual worker may hope to improve his lot in life.

Persistence by employers in this course can lead, as it has led abroad, to a final discarding by them of the whole democratic formula. If trade unions and political programs inspired by working class needs and philosophies are essential aspects of democ-



racy, then, disillusioned employers abroad have said, let us strip off the democratic mask and take our chances with the new phenomenon, that outwardly mystical but inwardly intensely practical state of things known as fascism. What relief this idea of a totalitarian state affords!

The first thing naturally to be done is to abolish utterly and for all time those anti-totalitarian menaces, the labor unions. The employer, being the now quite undisputed boss, becomes simultaneously that much more dignified personage, the leader. His solemn duty to the state is to lead his subservient followers where they should go.

Then follows the intensely pleasant discovery of such leadership that by keeping wages low, not only can profits be kept high, but the totality (that vague and comforting word) is thereby potentially served. While democracy hopes, fears and hesitates, the spirit of autocracy waxes, giving free play to

aggressive ambitions against weaker nations which have not yet experienced the fascist enlightenment. So at the end of the fascist road the leaders of the totality find themselves engulfed in a strange war-worship which can encompass without apparent shock the death by bombing and machine gun fire of women and little children. . . .

If the spread of fascism externally, as well as the growth of fascist ways of thought within our own country, constitute a peril to American democracy, one must begin by warding off the danger at the point at which it is most vital for the fascist spirit to succeed before it can progress to its full flowering. That point is the attack on organized labor.

Those who would support democracy must support the workers' right freely to organize economically and politically. To follow any other course is to betray the objectives for which the American people have been struggling since the start of their history.

Jack be nimble — or Jack be quite obsolete

[Tim McGuire, who had the prescience to retire in 2002 after a decade as editor of the *Star Tribune* in Minneapolis, delivered a speech May 6 that got a fair amount of notice. McGuire's remarks may be read at cronkite.asu.edu/mcguireblog/?p=75; here is a much more concise reaction from a Guild leader still in the trenches.]

By C.J. Betit
Administrative Officer, Portland Guild

Interesting speech. McGuire hits the problem on the head and at the same time misses it.

The biggest problem we face is structural. Each newspaper is a Titanic that has seen the iceberg, with plenty of time to alter course but with a captain that is frozen and

unable to re-direct. This incredible lack of mobility is rooted in a top-down structure that is standard practice in the industry—indeed, there's research showing that the newspaper industry is more top-down than even the military. And for a long time it could afford to be.

Now that this structure has to change, the industry's incumbents are unwilling to cede any power. Yet unless ideas are allowed to start bubbling up from the depths of our organizations, our fate is sealed. If the answers were going to come from the top they would have already come. More ideas and more decision-makers need to be brought into the process, with leadership acting as—well, as leaders, by empowering employees.

Research by Harvard's Clayton M. Christensen, who has written extensively

about industries facing technological disruption, has pointed to this key element as a defining point in who survives, innovates and prospers and who dies. Management firmly believes it can pay lip service to this problem, writing a check for its indiscretions while continuing on with a failing structure. But in order to run this type of new structure the current structure must be dismantled. It takes a heavy infrastructure to micro-manage every piece of a business.

There's a great analogy from Edward De Bono, a creative-thinking pioneer, who says that one big problem with American business is that when it gets into trouble, it redoubles its efforts. As De Bono writes: "It's like digging for gold. If you dig down 20 feet and haven't found it, one of the strategies you could use is to dig twice as deep. But if the gold is 20 feet to the side, you could dig a long time and not find it." In the newspaper industry, management is convinced its strategy is right and so it has redoubled its efforts, exacerbating our problems because of the initial flaw in its strategy.

The part that McGuire misses is the product itself. He refers to noble concepts, such as "ethics, values and principles." That is an old-school sentiment that keeps the business stuck in the mud. Without defining those ethics, values and principles, the

industry is again just paying lip service. The industry as a whole has spent far too much time on ethics, values and principles that Joe, the average reader, either doesn't care about or doesn't believe.

Our industry needs to look at its core purpose. What do newspapers do? If the answer is "provide information," as so many believe, we are in a whole lot of trouble because there are others who now provide information cheaper and faster than us. To find the core we have to turn back a ways. When you were a kid, why did you look at the newspaper? Because it connected you to something bigger. It connected you to a community of interest, to something bigger than the house you lived in.

This focus has shifted as we've viewed ourselves as aggregators of information. We've lost the community focus, lost touch with what's "news" to our readers, lost touch with how our readers connect with the world. This again goes back to the problem of structure and having so very few decision-makers in our organizations, so that the views that emerge are based solely on the limited perceptions of a few.

It's time we recognized that people have choices in the market. If we're going to survive, we'd better start listening to why they aren't choosing us.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor:

The delegates to the Guild NEDC unanimously endorse Chris Shelton for re-election as the CWA District 1 vice president.

Chris has worked hard to build positive relationships among Guild locals and the CWA. When locals have been in difficult situations with employers, he has been there for us.

Chris has earned our trust. He has

earned our respect. We will be voting form him at the CWA convention.

—Tim Schick, Kerry Kohring, William McMurray, Norman Welsh, John Tucker, Dennis Tatz, Brian Whelan, Laura D. Gagnon, Tom Hiltz, Frederick W. Hanson Jr., Carl Younger, Thom Cahir, Thor Jourgensen, Tom Mahoney, Cynthia Taylor, Scott Steeves, Katherine Munroe, Donna Marks, Daniel B. Totten

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: June 13.)

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

Conference will surf the demographic wave

By Michael D'Souza, Chair
Human Rights and Equity Committee

The standing committee on Human Rights and Equity has been hard at work for months in preparation for the TNG-CWA Equity Conference, to be held June 22 in Las Vegas. We've searched far and wide for answers—and for experts who can provide those answers—to questions raised by Guild members about human rights and equity, and we believe the payoff is at hand.

Numerous statistical reports have documented the enormous demographic changes in the United States and Canada. Unions must welcome this changing population to their ranks, and this conference will show us how. You'll find out about reaching out to visible minorities and people with disabilities, and ways of inviting members of equity-seeking groups to become active participants in your local and the union movement. The issues we'll talk about

range from surfing the web to a socioeconomic analysis of race, the economy and the union movement.

For example, most people who surf the web see it as a space where barriers have vanished, whether these are physical limitations imposed on people with disabilities or restrictions on members of equity-seeking groups, such as aboriginal people. The web is seen as a fully accessible space. Unfortunately, that is not so: the technology has its own problems, as does much of the content. Many of the problems have simple solutions; others need more substantial remedies. Unions should be paying more attention to ensure their web sites are fully accessible, as well as making sure that their employers' web presence is fully accessible. This is as important as making sure the physical plant is accessible and free of barriers.

Web accessibility is one of the key issues we'll be addressing. One of the world's leading experts on the subject,

Jutta Treviranus, director of the Adaptive Technology Resource Centre at the University of Toronto, will be joining us. She was at a conference in South Korea when I finally contacted her about speaking at our conference, and she'll be flying to the Las Vegas meeting from a conference in Brazil, so that may give you some indication of the far-ranging demand for her expertise.

Also joining us, to add to the conversation we've had at TNG about student outreach, will be Saron Ghebressellassie. A student and activist at Ryerson University in Toronto, Ghebressellassie has an ardent and thoughtful interest in the union movement.

Professor C. Jeffrey Waddoups, of the Department of Economics at the University of Nevada, will speak on the impact of the economy on equity issues. And Liza Gross, managing editor for presentation and operations at the Miami Herald, will speak about the future of jobs in the communication industry—a subject

of pressing interest to our colleagues in the print sector.

The conference will wrap up with participants discussing the information they've received and considering ways of making things better in the union movement.

Guild delegates to the CWA Convention can readily attend this one-day session, but locals also should consider sending non-delegates, especially visible minorities, aboriginal people, people with disabilities, women and other members of equity-seeking groups. Anyone attending the conference, regardless of convention status, can take advantage of the CWA's special convention hotel rate. The hotel's web site is on www.cwa-secy-treas.org: click on CWA 2008 Annual Convention, which will take you to a page of convention information, including a link to on-line housing reservations.

More information about the conference also is posted at www.guildequity.org. I look forward to seeing you in Las Vegas.

THE NEXT GENERATION

Giving democracy a (young) helping hand

By Brendan Elliott
Next Generation Committee

The Canadian Media Guild is pushing forward with its continued commitment to succession planning.

A few years ago, the national executive created an elected position on its board dedicated to the needs of newer/younger members. I have held that job since its inception, and have worked at the national level to ensure the needs and desires of our newer members are recognized and addressed at the top level.

Just last month, that national commitment by CMG was reflected once again, when the executive voted in favour of a motion that will send at least one person with fewer than five years experience within the Guild to our national and international conventions.

This person will have to be elected by the entire membership at large, the same as our other delegates. But the difference here is that the person will be given a bit of a helping hand when it comes to ensuring his or her presence at these important gatherings.

Prior to this motion, basically the top vote-getters from across the country were rewarded with a ticket to the convention. We did make allowances to ensure at least three of the delegates were from different branches represented by CMG. Now, an additional person will be added to the CMG roster of delegates—and that person will be new to the union movement.

When I put forward the new-member motion at our last executive meeting, I honestly didn't think it would pass. Money is tight. And to add another body to our already shrinking list of delegates to conventions would seem impossible.

But much to my surprise, the majority of my colleagues agreed we should have one spot set aside for our newer/younger members. My argument was simple: It is critical for our newer members to be exposed to our bigger union movement. It's at these events that our newer members gain confidence in their understanding of the union, and it would stand to reason that they would then become more active at the local or national level.

Also, it's truly inspiring to see the work

done by our union leaders, and there's no better place to see the fruits of their labour (pun intended) than at a convention.

Some of the pushback I heard during the debate of my motion focused on whether this is really the right way to encourage participation by our newer members. It was suggested that a more positive route might be to work behind the scenes to encourage their participation.

Rather than designate a 'new member' seat, it might be better in the long run to work with some of our potential union activists at the local level, build them up, and then let them run against everyone else for a seat at the conventions.

I agree this should be done as well. But it's not an either/or situation.

Whenever we have elections, most people who are elected are people already well-known within the union movement. I won't go so far as to say it's a popularity contest, but certainly name-recognition plays a factor.

And the newer member doesn't stand any hope at all of being elected when faced with those odds. Newer members have a

harder time being elected to these conventions simply because they are new. And their names are not recognized by voters across the country.

Back in 2004, the TNG and CWA conventions were held in Anaheim. It was there that a CMG colleague of mine, Joe Hill, stood at the microphone and 'double-dog-dared' the locals across North America to send at least one 'new-to-the-union' colleague to the next convention.

Four years later, Hill's own union has now passed a motion enshrining that Anaheim convention challenge as part of its way of doing things when electing candidates.

And as chair of the international NextGen committee, I couldn't be more proud.

Every month in this space a different member of the TNG Next Generation group will explore an issue particularly relevant to union activists from this or her generation. If you want more information on the NextGen movement, e-mail committee chair Brendan Elliott at: jrn1st@gmail.com

THE GUILD
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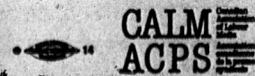
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DAYBOOK

- 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
- Democratic Nat'l Convention,
Aug. 25-28, Denver
- CWA Customer Service Conf.,
Sept. 11-13, New Orleans

Send Daybook items to:
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Next deadline is June 13

FROM THE MORGUE

Seventy years ago this month:

Hearst fires more than 150 at its three Boston newspapers, ostensibly for "economy" reasons, although it simultaneously reduces the American's cover price to 2 cents from 3 cents. . . . Warning that if the Guild wins its strike in Duluth "the next move would be to gobble up St. Paul," the president of the American Newspaper Publishers Association sets up a \$50,000 war chest. . . . Minnesota's governor calls out state troopers to protect Guild pickets following a Duluth city police assault with nightsticks and tear gas bombs, resulting in a contract settlement.

Fifty years ago this month:

New York Times Publisher Arthur Hays Sulzberger, in a preface to the first public financial report in the history of that paper, announces that the Times has been profitable for 60 consecutive years. . . . Members of the newly chartered Wire Service Guild, Local 222, elect their first officers and convention delegates. . . . The National Labor Relations Board rejects AFL-CIO arguments against unionization of its own employees and orders that a representation election be held.

Twenty-five years ago this month:

Guild President Charles Perlik addresses the annual ANPA convention and declares that newspaper unions are here to stay. . . . The Guild's executive board decides not to broaden Broun Award guidelines to permit entries from freelancers. . . . 200 Post-Intelligencer employees lose their jobs as their paper enters into a joint operating agreement with the Seattle Times.