

A new Guild star is born

Bay Area shrugs off MediaNews anti-union campaign by vote of 104-92



One gesture says it all: BANG-East Bay staff writer Cecily Burt raises her glass at the news of victory in the Friday the 13th union election.

Proving that Friday the Thirteenth has been unfairly maligned, workers at the Bay Area News Group-East Bay voted 104 to 92 on June 13 for Guild representation. The vote culminated a months-long organizing campaign, known as "One Big BANG: One Guild Universe," and delivered the most significant new-unit organizing win for the Guild in at least 20 years. It also galvanized Guild activists across the country, sweeping away the notion that passive surrender is the union's only option in tough times.

"This is extraordinary—it's not often you get to see folks standing up and being counted this way. And I don't have to tell anybody on this e-mail list that it makes my job as unit chair easier when reluctant members ask what's the point of being in a union," wrote TNG-CWA Vice President Deborah Zabarenko when the results were announced. "What's the point? The point is, we're stronger together than we are alone."

Celebrations were tempered by the sobering prospect of tough bargaining with MediaNews Group, the Denver-based newspaper chain headed by Dean Singleton. But union leaders have already begun workplace bargaining surveys, and have formed a potent alliance that includes established Guild units at the San Jose Mercury News and San Francisco Chronicle. The new alliance also has reached out to

the powerful East Bay Teamsters union, Local 853, which already has contracts with MediaNews in the region and now gains fresh Guild help for its own ambitious organizing agenda.

Ironically, the new unit exists largely because the usually cagey Singleton picked an unnecessary fight. On acquiring a string of newspapers in the East Bay two years ago, including the relatively large but non-unionized Contra Costa Times, Singleton "merged" them with his Guild-represented newspapers in the region. The result, at least on paper, was a newspaper group in which the Guild could no longer claim majority support, providing MediaNews with a legal rationale for withdrawing recognition of the union—and its contract.

But instead of rolling over, the suddenly disenfranchised Guild members fought back. And as MediaNews continued its usual slash-and-burn approach to improving cash flow, the non-unionized employees in the newly acquired newspapers began feeling apprehensive. "I love my newsroom, and the people who work there," said Karl Fischer, a Contra Costa Times reporter who eventually co-chaired the organizing drive. "I care deeply about the communities my paper serves, and about the quality of the journalism within its pages. The cheapening and worsening became rapidly obvious

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Lunzer ticket prevails

Confirming the preliminary results reported last month, the TNG-CWA Sector Election and Referendum Committee has certified Bernie Lunzer and his top two running mates, Carol Rothman and Connie Knox, as winners in the union's first contested election in 13 years. Lunzer, currently the Guild's secretary-treasurer, ran for president against incumbent Linda Foley, who said after the election she will take early retirement.

Carol Rothman, currently international chair, will succeed Lunzer as secretary-treasurer; Knox, now vice president for Region 2, will succeed Rothman as international chair. Also certified by the SERC was Sheila Lindsay as new Region 2 vice president. All TNG-CWA officers will be sworn in at the CWA convention June 23-24 and take office July 1.

Still unresolved, however, is a contested election

for Canada East vice president, where a handful of locals with enough votes to tip the balance either way botched their elections. Four of the locals—Moncton, North Bay, Thunder Bay and St. Catharines—failed to hold an election altogether. The fifth, Northern Ontario, disregarded official election materials and created its own ballots and eligibility list, disenfranchising several dozen of its members along the way.

With 222 potential votes at stake, the SERC decided to directly oversee the election for all five locals. But because new ballots couldn't be mailed until June 4, official results won't be known until June 30, when the SERC returns to TNG-CWA headquarters to determine whether Barbara Saxberg or Darren Pittman will be seated on the TNG-CWA executive committee.

The five Canadian locals were not the only ones to

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Politics ban overturned

An arbitrator's decision voiding a Detroit Free Press ban on political contributions by editorial employees has implications for other publishers attempting to control what their employees can do off the job—provided those employees are protected by an appropriately worded collective bargaining agreement.

In his May 27 decision, arbitrator Paul E. Glendon ruled that the Free Press cannot ban any particular activity of its editorial employees without documenting that the activity is compromising the paper or the employees' work. Without such documentation, Glendon wrote, the company could not justify its "unilateral incursion" against contractual safeguards.

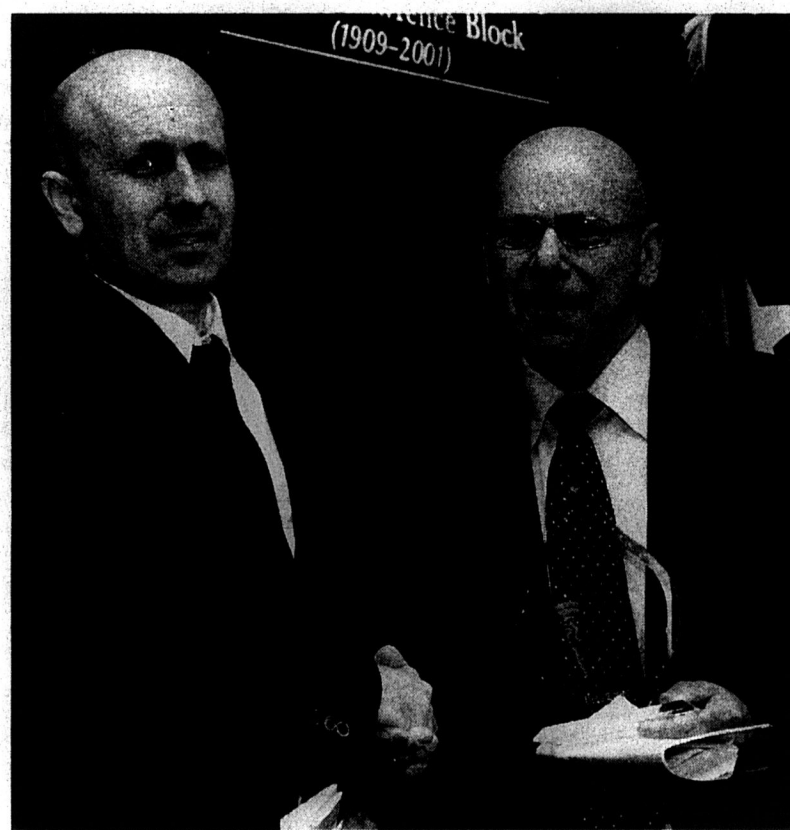
The contractual provision on which the Detroit Guild's grievance hinged reads: "There shall be no limitation upon the outside activities of any person employed by the Free Press, except that no such person shall engage in any activity that compromises the integrity of the newspaper."

At issue was a \$500 contribution made in 2004 by Free Press reporter Joel Thurtell to the Michigan

Democratic Party Central Committee. After an MSNBC story in 2007 named 143 journalists who had made political contributions—including Thurtell and a Free Press copy editor—management issued a "clarification of ethics policy" memo that read, in part: "In short, it is not acceptable for newsroom employees to make local, state or national political donations or engage in demonstrative support for political candidates."

But as the ruling notes, the "new rule" was not based on any showing of actual harm to the newspaper's credibility or integrity. Moreover, Executive Editor Caesar Andrews "candidly conceded" that he wasn't aware of the relevant contractual provision when he promulgated the ban on political contributions; Andrews also acknowledged that he made no effort to determine if Thurtell's or the newspaper's integrity had been compromised.

The Free Press "failed to make its case," Glendon wrote, "because it had no evidence that even one reader complained." Consequently, the ban on political activity "is set aside and declared null and void."



Johnston honored

Alan Johnston, left, receives the 2008 Herbert Block Freedom Award from CWA/SCA Director Arnold Amber at TNG-CWA's annual awards banquet May 21. Johnston, a BBC correspondent, was held hostage in Gaza for 114 days last year. Also honored were Dana Priest and Anne Hull of the Washington Post, winners of this year's Broun Award, and Titania Kumeh and Sophie Cox, who received the Barr Award for student journalists. David Simon, creator of the HBO show "The Wire," was keynote speaker.

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Four Guild locals ratify contracts

After working 30 months under an expired contract, Guild-represented employees of the Knoxville News Sentinel yielded to management's insistence on a 100% merit pay plan and accepted the company's "last, best and final contract offer." The bright note: the 100% merit pay scheme applies only to reporters, photographers and copy editors at or above the top pay scale.

The non-retroactive two-year contract includes pay increases of 2.4% and 2.3%, a \$600 bonus and improvements in night differential, mileage reimbursement and overtime payments for out-of-town assignments requiring overnight stays. The contract also changes the method by which vacation time is calculated, resulting in a one-time payment to employees for vacation accrued in 2007; local officials estimated the payout will average \$2,500 per person.

A memorandum of understanding appended to the contract states that reporters who shoot photos or videos will not be disciplined for poor image quality unless they're first given the requisite training and equipment to do the job. The memorandum's language also stipulates that a learning curve in shooting images shall be considered during evaluations.

Knoxville Guild officials said that one positive development arising from the prolonged struggle was an agreement by all three unions at the paper—including the mailers and pressmen—to develop a joint strategic approach for the next round of contract bargaining.

Elsewhere, the dozen Guild-represented employees of the St. Louis Review have ratified a one-year contract that includes a phased-in wage increase of 3%, with the possibility of an additional half percent at mid-year. The agreement also adds a new commission ad sales position and moves two employees into higher classifications.

The St. Louis Review is a

weekly Roman Catholic newspaper whose employees have been represented by the St. Louis Newspaper Guild for more than 40 years.

Guild-represented employees also ratified a four-year contract with El Diario, where representation is provided by the New York Guild. The new pact contains 3% increases retroactive to May of 2007 and effective July 1 of this year, as well as 4% increases in each of the next two years.

The agreement also provides increases in life insurance coverage, cell phone allowances, relocation fees, automobile expenses, tuition reimbursement and advance money for overnight assignments, as well as major improvements to the 80-member shop's 401(k) plan. In addition, the company agreed to replace its current HMO plans with a new, Guild-proposed medical plan that provides better benefits at a lower cost.

Also ratifying a new contract was the Waterville unit of the Portland (Maine) Guild, which has been struggling in contract bargaining for such a long time that the new three-year pact expires next January. The agreement includes a 5% increase at signing (half that retroactive to May 4 of this year), plus signing bonuses of \$1,600 for full-timers, \$600 for part-timers and \$300 for "casual part-timers."

A significant union concession was to give management outsourcing rights, provided that no current employees can lose their jobs because of outsourcing; the company can't create "shadow departments" to sidestep contractual restrictions; and management must engage in effects bargaining over any such action. The company—which is looking to sell its Maine newspapers—also gained the right to transfer employees with less than 10 years' experience to its other newspapers within 25 miles of Waterville for legitimate business needs; such transfers will include a \$1,000 transfer bonus.

Other contract changes include a move from a policy of "reasonable" sick leave to seven days a year plus short-term disability, with two days of carry-over from one year to the next; and a "soft freeze" on the pension plan, with an improved 401(k) match for new hires.

Notice to our readers

The Guild Reporter has changed printing plants, and as a result this and future issues will be mailed from New England rather than from Washington, D.C. We are interested in learning what difference this makes in mail delivery time and would appreciate your feedback. Please send an e-mail to azipser@cwa-union.org noting which date you received this issue and if it seems to have arrived more or less quickly than in the past. Thank you!

Guild briefs . . .



TERRY BIBO / PEORIA GUILD

Presidents — and Chiefs

The Peoria Newspaper Guild, Local 86, celebrated its 50th anniversary with an outing to a Peoria Chiefs game June 8, attended by dozens of current and former Guild members. Pictured, l-r, are former local presidents Bill Knight, Keith Butterfield, Hattie Beers, Paul Gordon, Steve Olin, current president Jennifer Towery, Dayna Brown, Jerry Klein and Theo Jean Kenyon. Seated is Dan Shea.

Portland sale stumbling

An attempt by the Portland Newspaper Guild to join in the bidding for the Portland Press Herald and other Maine publications being shopped by the Seattle Times Co., has been shelved—at least for now. Derailing the bid was the company's request, rejected by the local's leadership, that the Guild sign a non-disclosure agreement before being given access to essential financial information. Meanwhile, company officials also are insisting that a new buyer would not have to honor the Guild contract, despite a clause that apparently says otherwise. The existing contract, which runs through 2011, stipulates that the collective bargaining agreement "shall inure to the benefit of and be binding upon the successors and assigns of the Publisher." The Guild's administrative officer, C.J. Betit, says any attempt to ignore the provision will result in legal action.

Threat to cancel P-I contract

Apparently smarting over a court decision that requires the Hearst-owned Seattle Post-Intelligencer to arbitrate a grievance—as spelled out in its contract with the Pacific Northwest Guild—management has informed the union it will terminate the contract when it expires, July 25. Contract negotiations, which started May 28, have proceeded fitfully because of management scheduling conflicts, often caused by its insistence on having a corporate attorney from San Francisco sit at the table. Only two bargaining sessions had been held as of press time, with a third scheduled for June 24 and a fourth for July 8. The court-ordered arbitration, meanwhile, has been scheduled for Oct. 2 and will not be affected by the contract's expiration.

DJ editorial staffers to move

Now that they're part of the Murdoch media empire, Dow Jones news employees will be moving later this year to command central, in midtown Manhattan. The disruption will be minimal for those working in the downtown Financial Center, but others will be relocating from Harborside in New Jersey and as far south as Princeton—to which some editors commute from homes in Philadelphia. As a result, look for another wave of departures from the company.

CMG to rebuild war chest

The Canadian Media Guild has approved a temporary one-year dues levy of \$5 a month to replenish its defense fund, which is used in defense of collective bargaining agreements as well as non-pay expenses during a strike or lockout. The fund was down to \$1.9 million at the end of April, largely because of costs associated with the 2005 lockout at the CBC; the goal is to rebuild it to \$2.5 million by September 2009. Separately, the local also is planning a referendum for the fall that will seek to

eliminate a provision that caps dues on annual incomes of more than approximately \$100,000.

Montreal dispute settled

The Gazette and the Montreal Newspaper Guild have settled a grievance over the transfer of 45 positions to Canwest's call center in Winnipeg, with the union conceding it could not block the move but winning enhanced severance packages. The deal includes 4.5 weeks of pay for each year of service, to a maximum of 78 weeks.

Mediator to join Hawaii talks

A federal mediator is set to join contract talks between the Honolulu Advertiser and its unionized members belonging to the Hawaii Newspaper and Printing and Trades Council, which includes the Guild. The two sides remain far apart in contract talks, with the company's most recent proposal—which it described as "a fair benefit and wage package"—seeking a three-year wage freeze and a doubling of employee health care premiums.

Dayton local gets parade OK

Saying it was afraid the Dayton Guild "wants to hijack our parade for their message," the Oakwood Rotary club banned Guild members from marching in the city's centennial parade in mid-May—then abruptly reversed itself after Guild members scheduled a press conference to publicize the blacklisting. Although the local's application to march in the parade was approved initially, the Rotary Club got cold feet after complaints from the Dayton Daily News, which has been hit by the union with two charges of unfair labor practices.

Guild names of note . . .

Jenny Tunkielcz, president of the Milwaukee Newspaper Guild for the past three years and a past president of the Kenosha Guild, is leaving the Milwaukee Journal to work as an assistant to the Kenosha County Executive. . . . New York Times activist Nancy Bachrach has received the Tom Keenan Award, an annual award for the New York Guild member who "best exemplifies the ideals of a true labor leader." . . . Benjamin Moss of North Salem, N.Y., whose father is a member of the New York Guild, has been awarded a Union Plus Scholarship. . . . The Boston Guild has awarded five scholarships, of \$1,000 each, to John Davis, attending Worcester Polytechnical Institute; Emilie Coakley, Mount Holyoke College; Allison Carvalho, University of San Diego; Sean Sullivan, Saint Michael's College; and Sean Bogue, Bridgewater State College. . . . Nine-term Congresswoman Lionel Van Deerlin, a former president of the now defunct San Diego Guild, died May 17 at the age of 93. He was a city editor of the San Diego Journal before moving into broadcast, and was first elected to Congress in 1962.

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SERC-certified election results

Local #	Name	Kirkup	Knox	Foley	Lunzer	Rothman	Stephens	Winton	Lindsay
31034	Albany	111	28	101	40	34	106		
30400	Alberta	60	54	28	86	92	22		
39202	Bakersfield	5	12	8	9	12	5		
31245	Boston	50	202	67	208	181	80		
30378	Brantford	2	3	4	1	1	4		
31027	Brockton	8	40	10	39	35	13		
31026	Buffalo	98	16	113	8	33	84		
34071	Chicago	17	88	20	87	84	22		
30213	CMG-East	178	113	239	59	84	207		
30213	CMG-West	30	23	40	14	21	32		
37074	Denver	34	25	45	16	27	33		
34022	Detroit	12	80	20	78	77	16		
38187	Erie	13	82	10	86	86	10		
37194	Eugene	13	20	13	28	17	16		
30664	Fredericton	15	0	5	8	9	4		
34014	Gary	14	7	19	3	9	12		
31032	Greater Boston	8	110	8	111	109	9		
30391	Guelph	1	2	0	3	3	0		
30130	Halifax	41	10	46	5	20	31		
39117	Hawaii	20	57	32	52	56	21		
38216	Hazleton	1	2	3	1	3	0		
1096	IAPE, Local 1096	146	30	148	30	41	135		
34070	Indianapolis	3	8	3	11	8	6		
30139	IUE CWA 80400	24	0	24	0	0	24		
34159	Kenosha	6	12	4	14	14	4		
31180	Kingston, N.Y.	1	4	0	5	4	1		
30204	Kingston, Ontario	2	34	3	34	33	3		
33076	Knoxville	3	10	7	6	8	5	4	8
37008	Lake Superior	9	6	10	7	8	7		
33229	Lexington	17	4	20	1	4	17	4	17
31055	Lynn	5	5	5	5	9	1		
31167	Manchester	15	49	26	43	43	21		
33091	Memphis	3	14	11	7	11	6	7	10
34051	Milwaukee	5	60	4	62	60	5		
30111	Montreal	5	36	13	28	32	9		
31003	New York	117	274	133	268	276	114		
31222	News Media	34	65	46	57	56	44		
31222	News Media-District 2	27	52	40	47	53	27	78	16
34001	Northeast Ohio	133	52	204	20	15	219		
39521	Northern California	101	77	118	69	77	103		
30205	Ottawa	114	17	104	24	31	92		
37082	Pacific Northwest	11	130	7	136	134	6		
31247	Patriot Ledger	2	17	2	19	16	4		
34086	Peoria	5	77	3	79	73	9		
30248	Peterborough	4	8	2	10	9	3		
38010	Philadelphia	94	263	135	258	304	88		
38061	Pittsburgh	21	137	27	141	127	32		
31128	Portland	15	80	7	91	77	18		
31041	Providence	14	203	16	202	195	18		
37174	Pueblo	1	11	0	12	10	1		
31017	Rochester	10	7	11	7	10	6		
30085	Saint John	32	0	32	0	0	32		
39098	San Jose	10	23	26	15	22	15		
30663	Saskatchewan	5	2	4	3	4	3		
30746	Sault Ste. Marie	26	4	24	6	10	20		
30009	Schneider	23	24	33	14	30	16		
34179	Sheboygan	1	10	0	11	11	0		
37123	Sioux City	1	7	2	6	4	4		
9400	Southern California	1	9	5	5	8	2		
36047	St. Louis	29	120	44	112	109	41		
30846	Sudbury	2	0	0	2	2	0		
30460	Sydney	47	1	47	1	1	47		
34046	Terre Haute	2	50	1	51	51	1		
37002	Twin Cities	99	105	117	110	103	109		
33225	UPAGRA	90	303	115	286	310	82	115	275
30403	Vancouver	15	67	12	70	72	10		
30223	Victoria-Vancouver Isl.	10	90	12	88	86	14		
32035	Washington-Baltimore	208	285	349	148	223	246	146	332
37083	Wash-Tech	12	12	17	9	10	14		
30553	Windsor	44	8	44	8	15	37		
38218	York	8	17	10	16	19	6		
34011	Youngstown	4	15	6	15	13	6		
Totals:		2,347	3,868	2,864	3,611	3,834	2,460	354	658

Kirkup	Knox	Foley	Lunzer	Rothman	Stephens	Winton	Lindsay
37.76%	62.24%	44.23%	55.77%	60.92%	39.08%	34.98%	65.02%

34043	Toledo*	19	82	22	93	71	35
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*Toledo return invalidated because of irregularity

Winning the vote

Continued from page 1

even before the merger, and afterward it was painful to watch so many journalists leave because they didn't think the future held anything good here."

Against that backdrop, Media-News waged a typical anti-union campaign that included outside consultants, one-on-one meetings by managers with employees, and a sudden barrage of free pizzas and other small tokens. Singleton wrote to each employee—signing off with an amiable "Dean"—expressing his disappointment at seeing "attacks on my character and intentions," although in fact the organizing campaign was careful not to get into personal slights. And a petition was circulated among managers in at least one newsroom, seeking their signatures on a statement that they oppose and will always oppose a union.

Given all that, it may not be surprising that even after the election, John Armstrong, BANG-East Bay president and publisher, was quoted in numerous news stories as worrying that a union "will create divisiveness in our newsroom." The new unit's leaders, on the other hand, took a much more upbeat tack, asserting that "our most important co-workers are the 92 who voted 'no' on Friday."

"Nobody knows how you voted as an individual, and we honestly don't care," Fischer and co-chair Sara Steffens wrote to their co-workers. "But we care a lot about addressing the fears and questions raised during the campaign, especially by those of our coworkers who worked hard to defeat the Guild. We know you love the paper as much as we do, and simply disagreed about what's best for it."

Now, they added, it's time to pull together for contract bargaining.

Changing the guard

Continued from page 1

throw curveballs, although none of the others had sufficient numbers to affect the outcome. The Regina local missed the deadline for returning its ballots. And instead of segregating six contested ballots, the Toledo Guild mixed them in with its other returns, invalidating its entire vote.

Other problem locals included Hudson County, Scranton and Wilkes Barre, all of which failed to hold an election. Three other non-voting locals were Utica and Dayton, which have no dues-paying members in good standing; and Cincinnati, which disbanded at the end of last year following the closure of its Guild-represented paper.

Nonetheless, the SERC concluded that for the top three races, "the outstanding eligible voters not included in the certified results were 652," falling substantially short of the 747-vote margin between Foley and Lunzer, who ran the closest race.

Picking a tough time to be a union activist

By Eric Geist

TNG-CWA Administrative Director

When I met Linda Foley nearly 30 years ago, I had no idea she would end up leading the Guild.

That year, she was an alternate delegate to the convention—the more austere title of “delegate” being reserved for a man, her husband, Monty.

But Linda got her first glimpse into the inner workings of a labor union at that 1980 convention, and her enthusiasm for and ded-

ication to the cause propelled her to embark on a 28-year journey that would see her elected the first female secretary-treasurer and then the first female president of The Newspaper Guild.

When Linda and I were hired into the Guild's collective bargaining department, we were definitely “the new generation.” The leaders at the time, President Chuck Perlik and Secretary-Treasurer Chuck Dale, had started their Guild careers when we were still in diapers.

At that time the Guild was facing many

hurdles. Permanent replacement of strikers had become acceptable. The NLRB had become a tool for employers. And newspaper chains were gobbling up locally owned, independent papers. The Guild was in a new era of labor relations that required new approaches to structure and bargaining. We were searching for these approaches when Linda was promoted to executive secretary of the contracts committee—the first woman to hold that position. Here, she set out to reposition the Guild's unique and highly successful collective bargaining program to take into account all the changes occurring in the industry, labor law and labor relations. She worked tirelessly, leading changes in the program to better help locals in bargaining and contract enforcement. Her work was widely acclaimed by staff and local leaders.

When Linda decided to run for secretary-treasurer in 1993, everyone was sure the Guild needed to head in a new direction. Linda knew what direction that was.

The Guild's financial situation, always tenuous, had become very costly for members. There were times we had to borrow money from other unions to stay afloat; dues mostly remained at an elevated level to keep up with costs from strikes. This made organizing, both external and internal, much more difficult. After a failed merger in 1983, merger was not a popular idea when it was pitched again by some consultants in 1993, but by then it seemed an inevitable necessity.

As the newly elected secretary-treasurer, Linda was instrumental in finding a union that would allow us to keep our identity,

draw on the resources of a larger union and solidify our finances so we could stop assessing members extra dues to balance our books.

What started out as a single voice on the International Executive Board, crying out against a poorly constructed secret merger process, showed itself also to be the voice of reason, eventually leading the Guild to a merger with CWA that preserved many of our traditions. Linda also saw to it that the merger agreement gave Canadian locals their own governing structure, one that now has evolved into CWA/SCA Canada, an autonomous unit of the CWA. Fittingly, the merger was approved by the membership at the same convention in which Linda was sworn in as the Guild's president.

Linda didn't pick an easy time to become a union activist. The rise of corporate newspaper chains and their anti-worker attitudes, the lax and then hostile enforcement of labor laws, courts that overturn the all-too-few good decisions by the National Labor Relations Board, the newspaper industry's inability to understand the internet and the rapid erosion of the newspaper business model—all conspired to make her turn at the helm a stormy one.

But Linda has never shrunk from a challenge. Her drive and ambition served The Newspaper Guild well. She used them to show members how ideas and hopes and dreams can be turned into realities. The seeds she has sown are her legacy, and they will continue to grow for many years after she is no longer part of the Guild.



Foley, at left, at rally during the Detroit newspaper strike.

A reign marked by tenacity, toughness, passion

By Arnold Amber

Director, CWA/SCA Canada

For 13 years I sat with Linda Foley in literally hundreds of meetings and worked with her on the development of countless projects and her management of a large number of crises. So here are my reflections on the president whose contributions carried the Guild through the most profound change in its history: from an under-resourced, stand-alone, independent union to an integral and important part of the CWA.

No one disputes that Linda is passionate about any task or issue she takes on, particularly when it's about defending the rights of Guild members.

She is also quick on her feet in tackling problems and issues, difficult or mundane. I often watched her at work in meetings of the Guild sector executive board, the International Federation of Journalists and the CWA executive board, when Linda presented the idea or the process to get through a difficult problem.

For better or worse, Linda wears her heart on her sleeve and on her face—you always know whether she likes or dislikes what you are saying, sometimes even while you are saying it. Some Guild members who, although appreciative of her aggressive opposition to media owners and support of labor issues, believed her approach was too brusque when dealing with them.

Linda's tenacity and toughness, particularly when she took up the cause of a local against the owners—or sometimes even the CWA bureaucracy—was never in doubt. For example, during the 2005 lockout at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, she successfully convinced CWA that our local's temporary workers had a right to lockout benefits.

Along with all of that, Linda also brought a tremendous amount of brain power to every challenge. Even if disagreeing with her stand on a given issue, you could sense the complex mental process that brought her to that conclusion.

Linda became an important role model

when she was elected as the first woman president of the Guild. Her strong leadership was a beacon for a number of other women to take their rightful place in running the Guild. At the moment, roughly one-third of all Guild local presidents are women, as are two-thirds of the sector executive board members—a tremendous legacy that will get even better as the Guild progresses.

But Linda's encouragement of equality didn't stop with the gender issue. She has constantly pushed for racial equality and greater participation in our union and our workplaces. Through the Guild's current human rights/equity initiative, which was promoted and nurtured by Linda, a sustainable, energetic and progressive campaign to reach the goal of having all equity-seeking groups treated properly is well underway.

Linda's leadership for change in the Guild didn't come by accident. About 20 years ago she joined with other “reformers” to shake up and modernize the Guild. The reform movement eventually led to our joining the CWA in 1997. Linda's policy, once we did so, was that we had to live and participate within the CWA to protect and promote the Guild and help make the CWA stronger. Her CWA involvement was derided by some local leaders, who may have voted for the merger but who, in my opinion, neither understood nor liked many of the cultural and operational changes that resulted from joining a union more than 20 times the size of the Guild.

That was most evident when Linda, under the CWA's strike approval process, became the interlocutor between Guild locals and the CWA president, who has the constitutional right to formally set the day and time of any strike. Time and again, including when I was personally involved in relaying Canadian locals' requests for strike authority, I could see that the understandable stress on everybody in the “setting the date” process led to conflict and bad feelings which, in some cases, linger to this day.

One of the things that marked Linda's

presidency was her support for the importance of the editorial content in our newspapers and the defense of our members who created it. Through work at the Guild and the IFJ, she was at the forefront of numerous campaigns to halt media concentration and its accompanying loss of quality, employment opportunities, and journalistic and ethical considerations. More recently she had to grapple with two other major difficulties: the flipping of newspaper properties among media chains, and a general downsizing of newspaper staffs. Both problems are mainly caused by owners who haven't figured out how to continue making fat profits in the face of the growing internet.

Linda was also instrumental in forming a very successful bipartisan alliance to fight the Federal Communication Commission's efforts to eliminate rules preventing consolidation of media ownership. She has been a tireless and effective advocate of creating a U.S. “shield law” that would protect sources and reporters in the pursuit of investigative journalism. And she stood up for journalists covering wars and other conflicts. At considerable personal and professional expense, she criticized U.S. policies that turned a blind eye to military assaults on working journalists in Iraq and other hot spots.

So why did Linda lose the election? In



Foley and Bernie Lunzer in a happier time, when the two were running for Guild president and secretary-treasurer on a reform ticket.

my evaluation, it's not because of her record or her leadership. The figures show that. After nearly a year-long campaign, only 3,611 out of more than 28,000 eligible voters—about 13% of total Guild membership—opted for her opponent. That's not member repudiation. In this election the voting procedures did not encourage a great turnout. But more important, Linda was let down by her chief supporters, including me, who did not get her vote out.

Lastly, a prediction. In about 25 years, when someone writes the 100-year history of the Guild, I am sure that Linda Foley's 13-year presidency will be hailed as one of the most important and effective in our first century as a union.

'Whoever has the most fun, wins'

By Bruce Nelson
Staff Representative

I first met Linda Foley at some long forgotten Guild convention during the Carter Administration. She talked fast and seemed perpetually enthused, like those annoying school spirit types in high school who were always on their way to a pep rally.

"Hi there," she'd say from the microphone on the convention floor, "I'm Linda-Foley-Lexington and I rise in support of the motion..."

She rose a lot, this Linda-Foley-Lexington, never at a loss for words or opinions and never one to use silence as a rhetorical device, even to signal spaces between words.

We both joined TNG's staff in 1984, and that's when I discovered her name was not hyphenated, that it was simply Linda Foley, from Lexington. More importantly, I learned two lessons that served me well as I worked with and for her over the next 24 years: (a) listen carefully as Linda talks, so you can punctuate for her; and (b) always carry an endless supply of exclamation marks.

While awaiting the outcome of The Guild Election That Would Never End last month, all this came back to me like some saccharin flashback on the Lifetime Channel. When I heard she lost, all I could think about were those exclamation marks and what life in TNG will be like without them.

A few days later, someone asked me how she was doing, worried that leaving the Guild presidency might be a "rough road" for Linda. Maybe, I thought—but nowhere near as rough as the road she took coming in.

Every Guild president who traveled that road before her had been a man who had been led, groomed and prepared by one or more male mentors, typically from the generation of leadership about to retire. This "passing of the torch" was a male bonding ritual that permeated not only the Guild but most of American culture in 1984, the year Linda left a copy-editing job at the Lexington Herald Leader to become a TNG collective bargaining assistant. The only other women in TNG headquarters back then were the clerical staff and a human rights coordinator.

The men who ran this union in the 1980s were smart, savvy, powerful leaders. And not one of them ever entertained the slightest notion of passing the torch to Linda Foley. It wasn't just her gender. She drove them nuts with at least a dozen suggestions a day on how to make this a better union, how to build more power by involving more members. They would try to dismiss her with the old mantra about how "this is the

way we've always done it." It was like waving a red flag in front of a bull. She kept right on charging.

Linda once asked so many questions at a week-long staff meeting that she was ejected after two days for "talking too much." The guys in charge back then, the ones who thought they had the power to choose the next generation of leaders, liked her youthful spunk, her intelligence, her tenacity. That's why they hired her. But she was, to borrow an archaic term that should have been buried long ago, way too "uppity" for them. They were even more descriptive over cocktails, characterizing her with a vocabulary that would make Don Imus blush. When Linda ran for president in 1995, one of them sent a letter supporting her male opponent and urging members not to engage in a "social experiment" by electing a woman.

Amazingly, none of this ever deterred her or even slowed her down. Promoted to executive secretary of the contracts committee in 1988, Linda started changing this union in profound ways. She spent hours a day on the phone, connecting with local leaders throughout the continent. Their problems became her problems. It might have been a discharge in Memphis, a pay cut in Montreal, a unit clarification in Gary, a union-busting attorney almost anywhere. The dynamic was always the same. The people who called were scared and didn't know what to do. Linda always sent them away with power. Only part of that power came from technical and strategic advice. Much of it came from her enthusiasm and encouragement.

It was an incredible phenomenon. There wasn't a local I visited where I was not inundated with Linda Foley stories. Suddenly, inexperienced local activists—many of them women—who had been reluctant to play key roles were now charging ahead with the help of a Foley-designed game plan. She connected with them, and she somehow managed to infect them with her own unique brand of passion, her drive to make life bet-



Lexington delegate Monty Foley and alternate delegate Linda Foley celebrate their second wedding anniversary at the 1980 Guild convention.

ter for news industry workers.

I spent months trying to rev up a lethargic mobilization effort in one local, only to walk in one day and learn that all of our members had tied helium balloons to their chairs and, when the company complained, popped them at the same time. I couldn't imagine where the spark came from. The local president had a quick answer.

"Linda Foley told me you have to have fun doing this," she explained. "Those were her exact words: 'Whoever has the most fun wins.' Indeed, it was a command Linda used throughout her career: 'Whoever has the most fun wins.' She preached it—and lived it—constantly.

By 1990, there was a growing Foley Army of Fun Seekers out there. People who never thought they could make much of a difference were getting involved, having fun and, more times than not, winning. To them, Linda was anything but a "social experiment." She was real. Like them, she knew what it felt like to be diminished and dismissed by those at the head of the table. Like them, she knew it was time to change the way things had always been done.

They are the ones who passed her the torch in 1993, making Linda Foley the first female secretary-treasurer in TNG's history. And they are the ones who, two years later, led her to the road never before traveled by

a woman, to the presidency of The Newspaper Guild.

We used to kick off the annual new local officers seminar by regaling the class with the story of the Guild's creation. In hushed, reverential tones, the lecturer described how, in 1933, New York columnist Heywood Broun and his merry band of male lieutenants held court in Washington's Willard Hotel, conceiving, right then and there, this newspaper workers union. Well, God bless the departed brethren; their actions certainly enriched all of our lives. But I submit to you that the Foley Era of TNG's history is every bit as critical to this union's essence as that 75-year-old gathering at the Willard. It's an era where the meaning of leadership underwent profound change, from a few powerful white men running the show, to an increasingly diverse base of activists connecting with each other—in the Guild Sector and in the larger CWA—in order to build power on behalf of our members.

Now that the Foley Curtain is about to fall, it would be easy to cast doubt on the creed that gave rise to it: "Whoever has the most fun wins." It would also be wrong. Linda Foley is no loser. She merely experienced a momentary electoral deficit. She remains a winner in every sense of the word, and her contributions to the Guild these past 24 years have made winners out of all of us.

On the international stage, a world beater

By Aidan White
Secretary-General, IFJ

When Linda Foley attended her last meeting as a leader of the world's journalists' community in Brussels, at the end of May, she found herself on the receiving end of a number of moving tributes.

Friends and colleagues from around the globe were eager to celebrate her 13 years in the leadership of the International Federation of Journalists, most of them as vice-president.

Linda was part of the reforming leadership of The Newspaper Guild in its pre-CWA days that challenged the isolationist drift of the Guild during the early 1990s. She realized that in the face of globalizing media, the union movement had to organize itself across borders to defend jobs and standards.

She helped bring the Guild and the labor movement in American media into the heart of international work. During her time, the IFJ recruited new affiliates in North America, including broadcast workers and writers. She helped organize major media solidarity events on a continent which for years had been a bystander in global labor affairs.

Foley understands better than most that unions are stronger when they can reach out across borders. She was a prime mover in solidarity actions promoted by the Guild within international news agencies—EFE in Spain, the Associated Press, Thomson and Reuters. Union members on four continents have benefited from her fresh thinking on the need for cross-border union cooperation.

Her single-minded commitment to the notion that internationalism is about protect-

ing individual members is revealed most in her campaigning over the scourge of violence against news media staff. She has been in the forefront of efforts to build a global movement to make journalism safer. She has spoken out, vociferously and at great personal risk, when our people have been under attack.

She was appointed by the IFJ as the first vice president of the International News Safety Institute, an industry coalition of employers and unions launched five years ago, and she has been typically outspoken and fearless in her confrontation with authority when media lives are at stake.

She denounced the bombing by NATO of Serbian television in 1999, accusing western governments of a war crime (it was) for targeting a television station and killing 16 unarmed media staff. And she became the vic-

tim of a vitriolic hate campaign in the United States when, four years ago, she suggested the U.S. army was targeting journalists in an attack on the Palestine Hotel, in Baghdad, in which two journalists died. Recently, new evidence has emerged from an army veteran that proves she was right all along.

In all of this—news safety, union solidarity, fairness at work and gender rights—Linda Foley has won admiration and respect from global union leaders. She has used her experience and organizing skills to strengthen global union solidarity, and the International Federation of Journalists has been enriched by her contribution.

In the process she has done great credit to herself and the Newspaper Guild, and she passes the torch knowing that the United States is back where it belongs in the leadership of world journalism.

Industry news

'Day of Reckoning' may be at hand

More bad news buffeted the newspaper industry over the past month, as summarized by a cover story in the June issue of *Editor & Publisher* headlined, "Debt: Day of Reckoning Nears for Newspapers." Moody's Investors Service gave the industry yet another negative outlook over the next 12 to 18 months, positing that even the strongest newspaper companies won't escape damage. Former Bear Stearns newspaper analyst Alexia Quadrani, now with JP Morgan, launched coverage of the publishing industry with a "negative view" of both short- and long-term outlooks.

Maxing out on credit to pay debts

Mix high debt—incurred in the newspaper acquisition binge of recent years—with declining revenues and readership and it's not hard to foresee a disaster in the making. One of the first notable casualties seems to be Philadelphia Media Holdings, owner of the Philadelphia Inquirer and Daily News, which reportedly defaulted on a June interest payment and—in a move akin to homeowners using credit cards to meet their mortgage payments—is looking to take on even more debt to meet future payments. Tribune Co., another overly leveraged newspaper publisher, said it is going to cut news holes until it reaches a 50-50 split with advertising, eliminating as many as 500 pages of news each week across its 12 newspapers.

Buyouts and layoffs don't let up

Buyouts and layoffs continue apace, with McClatchy saying it will eliminate 1,400 jobs and Media General chipping in another 750 job cuts by October. The newly merged Thomson Reuters said it will dump 140 editorial jobs by the end of the year, although the majority of the cuts will be in Europe, while Standard & Poors is slashing up to 250, including at least 69 Guild-represented workers in New York. Up to 35 employees are being cut at the Portland Press Herald, which is owned by the Seattle Times Co., marking a second round of staff reductions this year. The Scripps-owned Commercial Appeal in Memphis said it will give 55 employees their walking papers by July 1, and the Hearst-owned Albany Times Union is looking to trim 30 despite posting a slight increase in Sunday circulation. Meanwhile, more than 100 staffers at the Washington Post accepted an unusually rich buyout package, depleting the ranks of the newspaper's most well-known bylines.

Warnings of more cuts ahead

Several publishers warned that more cuts are on the way, including the Newhouse-owned Cleveland Plain Dealer, which announced plans to trim 35 pages a week from its news pages—and 20% of its workforce. The Minneapolis Star Tribune, owned by Avista Capital Partners and currently in contract negotiations with the Guild, said it will slash newsroom budget by 10% as part of \$20 million in cuts overall and added that layoffs are possible. And management at the New York Times-owned Boston Globe told its 13 unions, including the Guild, that it wants to reopen contracts to negotiate operational "flexibilities" to reduce costs; tellingly, the company agreed to allow union review of its financial statements.

One way to save: freeze pensions

Gannett Co., the largest U.S. newspaper chain, joined the parade with a \$2.5 billion writedown of assets—then a week later froze its employees' pension plan, estimating it would save \$90 million next year. Although the freeze won't immediately affect Guild-represented employees at newspapers like the Detroit Free Press, whose retirement benefits are protected by their contract, Gannett estimated that non-represented workers can expect to take a 10% to 20% hit. And although the company said it would offset some of the loss by increasing its 401(k) matching contributions, it also reminded employees that it reserves the right to change or eliminate the match at any time.

Other notes of interest . . .

Monthly Review Press has just published **Bob McChesney's new book**, "The Political Economy of Media: Enduring Issues, Emerging Dilemmas." Nearly 600 pages long, the book contains 23 essays and costs \$19.95. . . . A sculpture paying tribute to journalists killed on the job was unveiled June 16 atop the BBC Broadcast House building in London. Titled "Breathing," the sculpture shoots a beam of light one kilometer high for half an hour each night at 10 p.m. . . . Web site graphicdesigner.net/papercuts has an interactive map pinpointing the latest newspaper job losses. . . . The Bush administration's priorities, as reflected in its 2009 budget request: For the Office of Labor Management Standards, which regulates 23,000 unions and union locals with 13 million members—\$58 million, or \$2,500 per union and union local. For the wage and hours division, which enforces labor standards such as child labor laws, overtime rules, and the Family and Medical Leave Act—\$193 million, or \$26.09 per employer. For federal job safety and health agencies—\$1.08 billion, or \$7.39 per worker. . . . **Utah Phillips**, a seminal figure in American folk music and a proud member of the Industrial Workers of the World, a/k/a "the Wobblies," died May 23.

3,500 turn out to decry corporate media values

By Eesha Williams

The consequences of growing corporate control of mass media were underscored as never before at the fourth National Conference for Media Reform, held June 6-8 in Minneapolis. Some 3,500 people heard Stanford law professor Lawrence Lessig and others hammer major news outlets for suggesting that scientists seriously disagree whether global warming is caused by human activity. Other speakers argued that more diversity in media ownership—and therefore of coverage—would hasten the end of war in Iraq and enhance organized labor's attempts to reduce economic inequality.

No surprise, then, that Amy Goodman, host of the national daily radio and TV news show "Democracy Now!" was one of the event's most popular speakers. Not only has "Democracy Now!" consistently produced programs critical of the war, but it is produced by the Pacifica Foundation, a non-profit organization that rejects advertising and NPR-style corporate "underwriting."

Also new to this year's conference was discussion of so-called "net neutrality," the principle that has prevented cable and phone companies from censoring or giving preferential treatment to some web sites over others. But that principle is now in danger, according to several speakers. Robert McChesney, a University of Illinois professor and co-founder of Free Press, the Massachusetts-based group that organized the conference, urged support for the Internet Freedom Preservation Act, a bill now before Congress that would protect net neutrality.

The gathering featured a mix of technical, hands-on advice on such topics as how to petition the FCC to revoke a TV or radio station's license for not broadcasting enough local news, as well as energizing and inspiring speeches on how stronger news media could advance democracy.

"We cannot have democracy with consolidated, corporate media ownership," said Congressman Keith Ellison during the opening session. Ellison is the first Muslim member of Congress and the first black Congressman from Minnesota. "The corporate media won't tell us that campaign contributions are legalized bribes," he said.

David Sirota, an author and syndicated weekly columnist, noted that many papers are replacing full-time staff reporters with freelancers. He also spoke about the importance of local politics. "The most destructive thing the corporate media do is tell us presidential politics in the only place we can make change," he said in a room packed with several hundred people.

And Mark Lloyd, a former NBC and CNN journalist who now works for the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, said pressure from ordinary people can change the media. "The opportunities that let me, as a black man, become a journalist were created by social movements—people who were protesting the media," he said. "FCC rules brought people of color into TV."

Echoing Lessig's comments on how the major media misinformed the public on the science of climate change, Amy Goodman cited a study by Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting that found that in the weeks

leading up to the invasion of Iraq, the country's biggest news outlets quoted just three people supporting peace—and 390 in favor of going to war. "That's not mainstream media. That's extremist media," Goodman said. "The press is supposed to be the check and balance on the government."

Michael Copps, one of two Democrats on the five-seat Federal Communications Commission, predicted that Barack Obama will be elected president and that Democrats will gain Congressional seats in November—resulting in an FCC that will deny license renewals to TV and radio stations that don't broadcast enough local news. "Now we rubber-stamp their requests without any public interest review," he grouched.

The FCC's other Democrat, Jonathan Adelstein, chimed in with the observation that big media companies are "having a conniption" over FCC efforts to require TV and radio stations to post lists on the internet of their programming that serves the public interest. Such lists could help the public evaluate whether broadcasting licenses should be renewed. "We need your help with that, and with our efforts to enforce anti-propaganda laws, and to require clear labeling of thinly disguised video news releases that are being aired as news," Adelstein said.

Congressman Michael Doyle of Pennsylvania, meanwhile, used his speech to urge support for a bill he's sponsoring that would dramatically increase the number of radio stations in the U.S. and ensure that the new stations stay in local hands and not get gobbled up by big companies. "Fewer and fewer people are controlling more and more of what Americans see and hear on TV and the radio," he said. "This issue goes to the core of our democracy."

Other speakers included Sen. Byron Dorgan of North Dakota, journalists Dan Rather and Bill Moyers, and outgoing Guild president Linda Foley. (Rather's and Moyers's speeches are at www.freepress.net.) Local Guild members organized a party at a local restaurant during the conference to thank Foley for her years of service to the union.

Some of the loudest applause of the weekend went to Van Jones, founder and president of Green for All, a non-profit group in California that last year helped pass the federal Green Jobs Act. The act provided funding to hire 35,000 people to weatherize homes and do other jobs to reduce environmental pollution. Jones, who is African American, spoke of the need to include people of color in the environmental movement—and of the role media can play in doing that. "We cannot drill and burn our way out of the energy problem any more," he added.

Aside from the education that events like the media reform conference provide, the biggest benefit is their networking opportunities. "My favorite thing about the conference is the inspiration from seeing how many like-minded people are here," explained Paul Davies, a Minneapolis video editor. "As a consumer of media, you can forget that there is a progressive movement and that it's gaining."

A new edition of Eesha Williams's book, *Grassroots Journalism: A Practical Manual* was recently published.

Canadians demand action, too

Like their counterparts in the United States, CWA in Canada and other Canadian unions say the growth of Big Media is costing jobs and curtailing information, and they're demanding that the government put on the brakes.

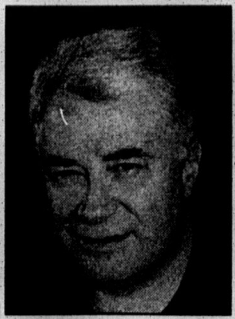
"It's a great day when labor puts culture first," said Arnold Amber, director of CWA-SCA Canada, whose members include thousands of media workers. "Canadian culture matters to all workers because it's our identity, who we are as a nation. Action is needed, and through the CLC (Canadian Labour Congress), we've got three million voices behind us."

Amber and other labor leaders discussed a wide range of media and cultural issues at the CLC convention in Toronto in late May and passed a resolution seeking government action. Topics included the provisions of a tax bill that would allow the country's Heritage Minister to deny tax credits to film and TV productions based on their content, which is fueling fears of censorship.

Media consolidation also was a hot topic. "Big Media is erasing local news, not only costing thousands of jobs, but clotting the flow of information—the very lifeblood of democracy," said Peter Murdoch, vice president of Canada's Communications, Energy and Paperworkers union.

The concerns parallel those of unions, media workers and activists of all political persuasions in the United States, who are concerned that too much media concentration is limiting access to a diverse marketplace of ideas. The U.S. Senate—propelled in part by CWA and its media sectors—recently voted unanimously to overturn a 2007 FCC decision allowing a single owner to control both a newspaper and TV stations in the same community.

Jonathan Adelstein, one of the two Democrats on the five-member FCC, said that in allowing cross-ownership the commission majority "veered dangerously off-course from the American mainstream, so our elected representatives are trying to steer us back."



LOOKING AHEAD

Politics always an issue for us

By Bernie Lunzer, Secretary-Treasurer

Politics is always an issue within the Guild. President Perlik stepped into it when he endorsed George McGovern in 1972. He found out that the Guild didn't really want its leaders to jump into political candidacies. We still hew to that ethic, but there are issues that demand our attention, that are not about political candidacies.

CWA is leading, big-time, on the issues of health care and the right of workers to form unions. CWA's president, Larry Cohen, has properly mobilized the union around these issues, and the Guild needs to play its part.

We can't avoid the health care issue. We've all watched it gobble up a significant part of what could have been our take-home pay over the last ten years. Working with our employers, we leveraged and balanced as much as we could—to the point where employers now want to shift the full burden to us. CWA has been part of a coalition of unions that is leading and seeking real change. We need to be a part of that effort.

The other central issue, in part because of legislation that has been introduced, is the question of how workers can form unions. The Employee Free Choice Act has strong support, and we need to step up and work on this issue. It is, at its core, a First Amendment issue—the right of association. For too many years, employers have been able to subvert and terrorize employees when they sought to form a union. This new law has three important changes: 1) penalties, when employers break the law; 2) binding arbitration for first contracts when the parties can't agree; and, 3) majority sign-up, so that workers can use a simple process of showing a majority of signatures to get recognized as a union.

I don't feel we can shirk our duty on issues that are so fundamentally rooted in our rights as citizens. We will always protect those journalists who have legitimate conflicts of interest in covering such issues, just as we'll protect those who simply don't want to participate. But we also want to empower the vast majority of our members who can and want to be active on these issues.

Several years ago, the Guild developed a mechanism for members with conflicts of interest to steer dues money away from politics. We call it our "political objector" pro-

gram, and we'll gladly provide a form to any member who wants to sign up. This program allows a member to redirect the dues equivalent of the annual amount that might be spent on partisan political activity toward other activities, such as Jobs with Justice, a workers' rights movement, or to freedom of information issues. (Historically, we've been donating that money to the Committee to Protect Journalists).

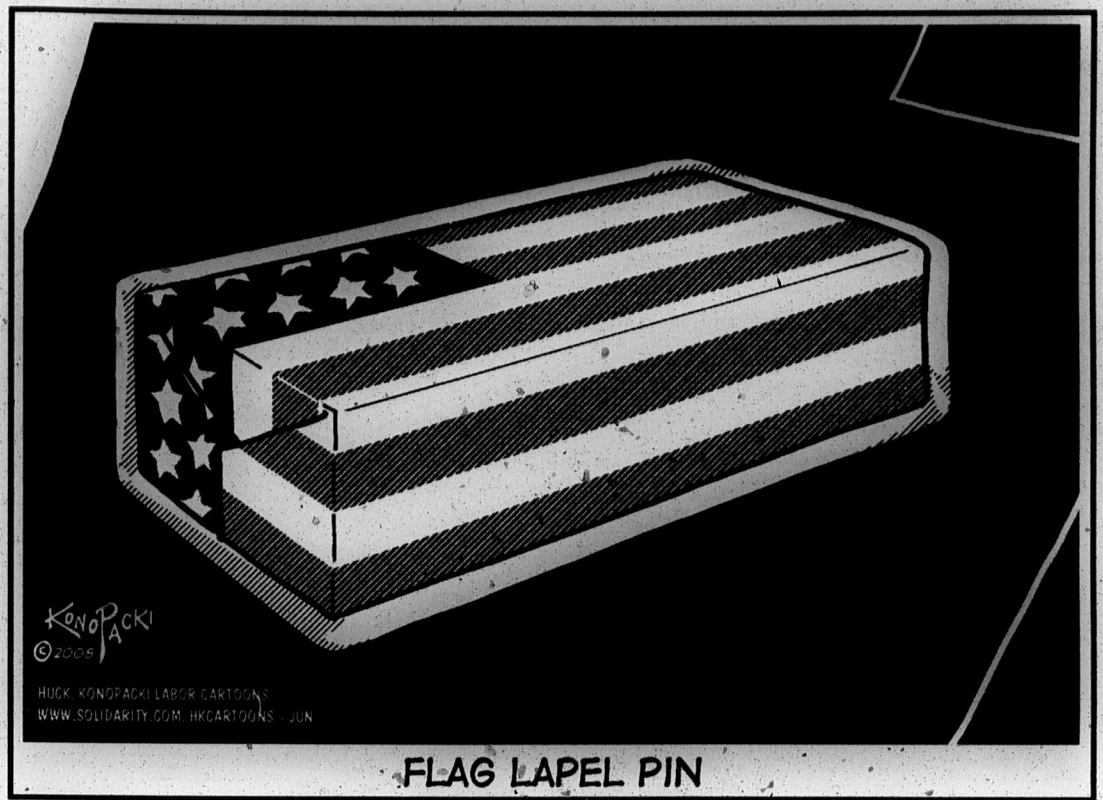
It's important for members to understand how little union money actually goes to partisan political activity. Over the past several years the amount has never been more than \$4 per year per member, and usually is less than \$2 per year per member. A myth perpetrated by those who don't like labor is that massive amounts of dues monies are spent on partisan political activities; that's simply not true. But if you are among that group of journalists who have a legitimate conflict, this program is a good one.

(I'd also like to note that we recently won an important arbitration, pursued by the Detroit Newspaper Guild, which concluded that most journalists have a right to make political donations. Specifically, the arbitrator ruled that the simple act of making a political donation does not hurt a newspaper's credibility; for more, see the story on page 1.)

The vast majority of union political activity is funded not through dues but through a program of voluntary donations, known as the Committee on Political Education. The Guild has not participated much in this program, and that's a mistake. Those members who are able to contribute should, or should find other ways to be active in bringing about justice on key social issues like health care and the right to form unions.

We'll continue to stay out of political candidacies: as the incoming president of the Guild, I'll always abstain from public endorsements, consistent with The Newspaper Guild's merger agreement with CWA. And I'll continue reminding our CWA partners that some of our journalists cannot participate in political activity. But it's high time for the rest of us to take part, be active and donate money for this important work. It doesn't happen by itself, and we know how active our employers are in these matters. We have that same right—and, truth be told, obligation.

'I don't feel we can shirk our duty on issues that are so fundamentally rooted in our rights as citizens.'



FLAG LAPEL PIN

Farewell



Dear Guild Member,

For three decades now, nearly every morning I have gotten up, rubbed my eyes, thought about whether I should go for a run and then wondered what would happen to The Newspaper Guild

that day.

Beginning with my election as Local 229's secretary-treasurer in Lexington, Ky., in 1978, right up until May 15, 2008, when I officially lost my re-election bid as the Guild's international president, our union of journalists and media workers has been the dominant force in my life.

I've had a long and wonderful relationship with the Guild and its members. I've had the opportunity to travel all around North America and the world. I ran bake sales to raise money for our fledgling local and conventions where we changed the course of our international union. I've spoken to bargaining committees with seven members and to conferences of 2,000 delegates. I worked with great men who steered the American labor movement during one of its most difficult periods. And I was inspired by strong women who shattered glass ceilings and brought about real changes.

I walked picket lines in places like Detroit, Seattle and Youngstown, Ohio. I celebrated with new members who voted to join the Guild in workplaces like the San Antonio Light, the Boston Globe and the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. I clapped when the Hawaii Guild saved the Honolulu Star-Bulletin, and I cried when the members of the San Diego Newspaper Guild voted to decertify their union.

I've met the president of the United States and the president of Greece. I pinned a Newspaper Guild button on Al Gore and listened to Walter Cronkite's stories about being an early Guild activist. I've congratulated Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists and consoled family members whose journalist relatives were killed in Iraq. I've helped an unjustly dismissed worker regain his job and encouraged a woman to fight the supervisor who was sexually harassing her. I've made friends in New York, Buffalo, Toronto, San Francisco, Vancouver, Minneapolis and Memphis. I also have friends in Brussels, London, Buenos Aires, Sydney and Moscow.

On some mornings during the last 30 years, I awoke with a sense of foreboding about what the Guild would face. But mostly I began my days excited and energized, with a sense that I was involved in something important—really important.

Important because of what the Guild is—a union of individuals—but also important because of what those individual members do for a living. And even though journalism and the news business (newspapers in particular) are threatened by a wave of corporate restructuring and digital market challenges, the Guild and its members remain the best hope for preserving a free and independent press in North America.

So as my parting shot (and for what it's worth), here is my take on where the Guild needs to go to ensure it fulfills the great potential it can have in shaping the coming years.

First, the Guild must stand for more than just decent wages, hours and working conditions. Our union must carry the banner in a movement for quality journalism, just as it

Continued on page 8

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor:

I am one of the 110 Guild members whose position was eliminated by Dow Jones, as referenced in the May 16 edition of The Guild Reporter.

Although the article refers to Dow Jones joining the "offshoring trend," please do not be fooled. My replacement will not be "offshore." Although I am a dues-paying union member, the person taking my position, who

works for a company based in India, will come to my work location here in New Jersey, possibly sit in my very cubicle, and take my position from me after many years of service to the company.

As an added insult, I will be forced to train this person under threat of having my contractually negotiated severance benefits, including health care, taken away from me. Although I met with union representatives

about this, they are either unwilling or unable to help us. This is happening to 110 of us, more is coming, and it can happen to you, too.

The "offshoring trend" currently being politically sanctioned in this country is a cancer on the American middle class and must be stopped. This is greedy American executives earning huge paychecks telling middle-class workers they make too much

and then collecting big bonuses for cutting payroll. These executives have no loyalty to the company and will leave before the chaos is realized, moving on to the next victim. Although the new trend is for these jobs to later come back "onshore," after the damage is done, it will be too late for the workers whose lives have been impacted by these actions.

—Name withheld by request

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: July 11.)

THE NEXT GENERATION

Getting tired of depressing GR headlines?

By Brendan Elliot, Chair
The Next Generation Committee

The TNG-CWA NextGen committee has a plan that quite literally could help save the union.

Yes, I recognize that's a pretty bold statement, based as it is on the premise that the union needs saving in the first place. But flip through the pages of the Guild Reporter and I think it's pretty clear to anyone who doesn't have their head in the sand that we need help.

I always have mixed emotions when I see the Guild Reporter arrive in my mailbox. On the one hand, I enjoy reading the stories because after doing so I feel a little closer to my brothers and sisters across North America. But I also find after reading many of the articles that I feel sad and worried about the future of the Guild. I see headlines pointing to concessions, scaled-back pensions plans, and slim—if we're lucky—wage increases.

So what can we do to reverse this trend?

Well, I'm sure there are a lot of things we can—and should—do. But the NextGen committee is committed to a couple of long-term projects in particular that

should plant the seeds for a stronger, empowered union down the road.

First, we plan to wave the union flag on college campuses across North America. We want to reach journalism, web-design, and advertising students before management does. If we get out there with the message of how critical unions are to young workers, I'm convinced the next wave of impressionable workers will enter the workforce with a pro-union mindset.

When I think of the faction of the shop floor most vulnerable and susceptible to management bullying, it's the younger or newer employee. Many young employees are either too scared to rock the boat, don't think they're important enough, or worse, feel invincible and don't see the value or need in being part of a union.

Our committee, through a curriculum we're still creating, wants to debunk those myths. We intend to show students that unions are as important today as they were at the turn of the 20th century, when coal-mine workers fought to keep children out of the mines.

Younger NextGeners might not appreciate how many aspects of the workplace that they take for granted are there because

of unions, starting with weekends, the 40-hour work week and overtime. They also should learn early that the company's best interest and theirs won't always overlap, and that if there's a choice, the company will not be looking out for anyone other than No. 1—and that's not us.

If younger NextGeners want to do the same, their best chance is with the power of the collective behind them. And who knows? They might realize not only that there's power in numbers, but safety and support, too. Moreover, as we teach we'll learn, too—by listening to the students, so we can find out what a "new" union would look like in their eyes.

Second, the NextGen committee has an idea we would happily work on developing with president-elect Bernie Lunzer. We would like to see TNG adopt some sort of internship or young steward program that would provide university students with six-week scholarships to work with our union leaders in Canada, Puerto Rico or the United States.

These students would return to their college campuses with a better understanding of how unions really work—how they truly stand up for the rights of workers.

And that message could then be conveyed to other students, by fellow students, in a way they would understand and respect.

We could even bring these interns together at the end of the six weeks and draw upon their knowledge and observations so that TNG could remain relevant to our newer/younger workers. These students are quite literally our future, and we'd be foolish not to tap into this natural resource.

The NextGen committee looks forward to reporting back to you over the next year as we chart our progress with these two initiatives. Our goal is to slowly help turn the tide on the negative headlines you now see in the Guild Reporter.

If our plan works, many new, positive headlines will be due in large part to the young, vibrant union workforce that got its first education about the union from TNG while these future union activists were hitting the books at university. If you've ever seen this type of plan in action before, please drop us a line to provide your observations and insights.

To get more information on the NextGen movement, e-mail Brendan Elliott at: jrn1st@gmail.com

Farewell

Continued from page 7

has led the movement for better working conditions in the news industry for more than 70 years.

With apologies to our advertising and customer service members, the future of the Guild is the future of journalism, and vice versa. One day, all journalists should have a desire and a need to belong to the Guild. The Newspaper Guild has always had a larger-than-life quality to it. It must be more than a union; it must be an organization that is the envy of anyone who works in our industry. And yes, the "Newspaper" in our name should be dropped.

Second, the Guild needs to focus its staff and resources almost exclusively on organizing and recruiting new members. Layoffs, downsizing and concessionary bar-

gaining notwithstanding, our union will never again be a leading force for change in the news industry if we don't devote virtually all of our resources to growth. We must guard against making the same mistakes as our newspaper employers, focusing solely on maintenance and therefore breeding an endless cycle of cutbacks during this time of transition.

The Guild must educate its members about the importance of forgoing short-term gains in favor of long-term strategic goals. We must transform our struggles into campaigns, rather than mere fights or disputes. And we must gird our members for sustained efforts that will require them to put themselves in a perpetual state of mobilization and activation. That's an "ask" that isn't easy, given the low

1977: Takes copy editing job at Lexington Herald-Leader.
1977-78: Lexington Guild secretary-treasurer.
1979-80: Local shop steward.
1980-84: Lexington Guild president.
1984: Joins TNG as collective bargaining and research associate.
1989: Named executive secretary, TNG contracts committee.
1993: Elected Guild's first female secretary-treasurer; Carol Rothman acclaimed as Guild's first female international chair.
1995: Nominated for TNG president by Rothman; defeats Barry Lipton, 5,832-2,892, in election with 31.8% turnout.

morale and turnover in today's news business.

We must open up our union and establish unconventional relationships with all media workers, regardless of their employment circumstances. Barriers to membership should be obliterated, so younger media workers, whose careers likely will include huge swaths of freelancing, will be welcomed and eventually in control of the Guild. We also have to work at affirmatively recruiting and mentoring people of color and others whose voices still don't get heard.

Likewise, our relationship with media employers must change. We can't wait for our bosses to change their behavior and begin to collab-

orate with us, rather than always fight us. The Guild will have to make the first move. Otherwise, the newspaper industry is doomed.

Finally, we must recognize that the Guild's salvation is our parent union, the Communications Workers of America. Our merger with the CWA was the proudest accomplishment of my Guild career. We will be strong if we strengthen the CWA. If the CWA

succeeds, the Guild will succeed. It's the only way we can actually bring real resources to bear on the formidable challenges we face.

It has been the greatest privilege and honor of my life to serve as president of The Newspaper Guild-CWA these past 12 or so years. Although some periods, including the last year, have been very difficult both for me and the Guild, I wouldn't have missed any of it.

Eleanor Roosevelt, another woman who was a Newspaper Guild activist, said, "It is better to light one small candle than to curse the darkness." Please keep lighting candles. And remember what this Guild activist used to say: "Whoever has the most fun wins."

In Unity and Friendship,
Linda

FROM THE MORGUE

Seventy years ago this month:

The Guild's fifth annual convention is held in Toronto, the first time any CIO union has convened in Canada; 180 delegates representing at least 50 locals attend . . . Jonathan Eddy is re-elected executive vice president, the union's equivalent of chief executive, easily besting two challengers in the Guild's first open election campaign. . . Delegates are told Guild membership has increased 51% in one year, but lagging dues collection—locals are \$50,000 in arrears—means the Guild ended its fiscal year with an operating deficit.

Fifty years ago this month:

700 Guild members strike the Philadelphia Inquirer on the expiration of their two-year contract. . . 385 Guild members are thrown out of work as Scripps-Howard's United Press realizes a 30-year-old rumor by taking over Hearst's International News Service-International News Photos. . . By a vote of 11-4, the Guild's executive board authorizes negotiation of a first contract with its administrative employees, newly organized as the Federation of Guild Representatives.

Twenty-five years ago this month:

Maine becomes the first state to enact a VDT safety law. . . Rochester Guild members challenge Gannett Chairman Allen Neuharth at an annual shareholder meeting to detail how much the chain's 86 local newspapers have "contributed" to the new USA Today. . . A group of freelance writers creates the National Writers Union.

DAYBOOK

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:
azipser@cwa-union.org.
Next deadline is July 11.

THE GUILD
Reporter

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