

Boston Members Boycott Twitter

Managers at the Boston Herald got an unwelcome surprise after they suspended reporter Chris Villani — allegedly for violating the company’s social media policy. The 2013 policy, which requires reporters to get approval from the Executive Editor or his designee prior to tweeting breaking news, had never been enforced before.



Reporters launched a three-day Twitter boycott to coincide with the dates of the suspension.

The dispute arose on April 20, when Villani tweeted an accurate, well-sourced scoop: “The notes found in #AaronHernandez cell were letters to his daughter & fiancée, saying he loved them & would see them in heaven, per source.”

The protest was organized through the union’s Facebook page, with dozens of people providing input, said Antonio Planas of The Newspaper Guild of Greater Boston.

Forty-seven of 53 local union members on Twitter blacked out their images, including one union member who opened a Twitter account just to participate.

“We have never undertaken

CONTINUED ON TNG-3



NewsGuild members at the San Jose Mercury News marked World Press Freedom Day with banners and desk signs.

‘Journalists Are Among the Heroes of the Moment’
Wave of Attacks Prompts Guild to Intensify Fight for ‘Right to Report’

An upswing in attacks on journalists in recent months has prompted The NewsGuild-CWA to intensify its efforts to protect the Right to Report.

“Hatred of the media has been stoked by the president of the United States and some who support him — and the results are not

surprising,” said President Bernie Lunzer when he learned that Guardian reporter Ben Jacobs had been body-slammed by a candidate for Congress in May.

“Ben Jacobs — and all journalists who ask tough questions in search of the truth — are among the heroes of the moment,” he added. “They are acting on behalf of the American people — reporting facts, filling in the blanks, and making connections.”

“Trump’s demonization of journalists has created a dangerous climate, ripe for intimidation, arrests and violence,” Lunzer said.

“But something else is happening as well,” he pointed out. “Journalists are persevering — and people are paying attention.”

A Federal Law

In response to the attacks on the media, the Guild launched the #Right2Report project on May 3, World Press Freedom Day. Since then, the union has joined with others to highlight and condemn attacks on journalists.

The Guild also plans to work with allies to support federal legislation to protect journalists by imposing greater penalties on those who harm them while they’re performing their duties. The union is urging support for legislation that would make it a felony to assault a journalist.



“While the Guild also is invested in protecting the rights of ordinary citizens to do things such as record police actions in public places, the Right to Report project is focused on the rights of working journalists,” said Guild International Chairperson Martha Waggoner.

In addition to the assault on Jacobs, other recent incursions into the First Amendment’s guarantee of a free press have occurred as well. They include:

- In West Virginia, Dan Heyman, a reporter for the Public News Service was charged with “willful

CONTINUED ON TNG-3

GateHouse Workers Launch Coordinated Strategy

The battle for fair contracts at GateHouse Media newspapers has intensified in recent months. Workers at the 16 Guild-represented publications engaged in joint actions, developed a coordinated campaign to take on GateHouse and its parent company, and scored a stunning victory at a meeting of shareholders.

Many members at GateHouse newspapers have gone without a raise for 10 years while absorbing staggering increases in their health insurance premiums. NewsGuild-CWA-represented newspapers at many GateHouse properties have suffered massive staff reductions that have reduced news-gathering operations to a fraction of their former size. These include the Providence Journal, Worcester Telegram, Sarasota Herald-Tribune, Lakeland Ledger, Peoria Journal Star, State Journal-Register, Rockford Register Star, Canton Repository, and Erie Times-News.

“The reporters, editors and other workers at these publications are determined to serve our communities and provide good, quality journalism while we fight for good pay and benefits,” said NewsGuild President Bernie Lunzer. “The entire union supports this effort.”

The Pushback

The recent pushback began on May 3, when GateHouse employees joined with NewsGuild-CWA members at newspapers owned by Digital First Media to celebrate World Press Freedom Day and publicize our common fight against the asset-stripping management philosophies that govern both chains.

Employees displayed banners and desk tent signs at their desks, with a message for each side: “Democracy Depends on Journalism” and “Invest in Us.” Participation was strong and included

CONTINUED ON TNG-5

DoJ Contractor Wreaks Havoc on Immigration Courts; Spurs Guild Organizing Drive

Officials at the Department of Justice probably didn’t realize they were about to wreak havoc on federal immigration courts when they signed an exclusive contract for interpreting services with a new company in 2015.

And they certainly didn’t realize that signing the new agency — SOS International — would provide the impetus for a spirited union organizing campaign among the 700-1,000 foreign-language interpreters that serve the nation’s overburdened immigration courts.

“The system has been failing, but now it is reaching a tipping point,” Benjamin Johnson, the executive director of the American Immigra-

CONTINUED ON TNG-4

Why Aren't Publishers Investing in the Future? Don't They See One?



By **Bernie Lunzer**
President, TNG-CWA

Last month, while sitting in on a local bargaining session, I asked management's chief negotiator what the publisher's plans were for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. The employer's rep was stumped. He had no idea.

But he knew he had to extract millions of dollars from the employees.

And so it goes across much of the industry. An April 3 report by the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that over the five-year period ending in September 2016, the workforce at newspapers declined by 26 percent. At some publications — like those owned by Digital First Media, which is run by a hedge fund — workforce reductions were more than twice that.

Many publishers are decimating staff, increasing employees' share of health care costs, and refusing to grant workers raises.

They act as if they are powerless to do anything else, shrug their shoulders, and blame their decisions on the Internet.

But is the end of print the natural outcome of the Internet revolu-

tion — as management asserts — or are news organizations suffering from a lack of imagination?

Block Communications, Inc., which owns the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and the Toledo Blade, also owns broadcast television stations and cable television systems. Last year it earned a profit of \$150 million — with most of the surplus coming from its TV and cable operations, which were built with revenue from the publications.

When those operations were in development, no one said, "We can't use that money because it was generated by the newspapers."

But now they insist that the Post-Gazette and the Blade must live or die of their own accord. And this is true across the board.

Employers refuse to use funds from their corporations' other companies to support a forward-looking business plan for their papers.

Instead, they use the common belief that newspapers have no future as an excuse to pillage and plunder.

Digital First Media, the company known for its aggressive acquisition of newspapers, doesn't particularly care about developing them. Their goal is to deliver 20 percent in the next quarter.

So, what is the future of newspapers?

We in The NewsGuild-CWA know this: We want and need strong news operations, regardless of the platform. Our nation's democracy depends on journalism, and our communities need strong,

locally-based news organizations.

Readers want to know what's going on in their neighborhoods. They want to know what's happening in their kids' schools, how the sports teams are doing, and what their local government is up to.

Journalists want to produce quality content and we want readers to consider us a trusted source. And we are more than willing to work with publishers and other stakeholders to explore new approaches and develop new business models that work. These could include employee stock ownership, non-profit owners, support from foundations and partnering local publications with national news organizations. In many cases, extending the life of newspapers could ultimately lead to

stronger digital-only operations.

In the meantime, owners that don't care about the future of their publications should find someone who does and get out of the way.

Our members should join with others in their communities to reconnect local news organizations with the communities we serve.

Too many Guild members have gone way too long without a raise. We are losing patience with that approach. Journalism is a noble profession and journalists deserve to be paid.

We believe that there is a future for news organizations. But we must get past the people who seek to manipulate common misconceptions to run down the publications they own. ■

A Retirement Plan That Provides Security, Stability, Lifetime Benefit? TNG-CWA APP

Why isn't there a retirement plan my local can negotiate that doesn't require me to sock away too much of my pay, leave me subject to wild swings in the markets, and that guarantees me a monthly income for life? And why can't the plan be just as attractive to my company with fixed costs like my 401(k) plan?

Now there is. It's The NewsGuild-CWA Adjustable Pension Plan, or APP, for short. The plan was developed for The Newspaper Guild International Pension Plan by the financial consultants at Cheiron. The NewsGuild of NY has already negotiated just such plans for Guild members at the *New York Times* and *Consumers Reports*.

An adjustable pension plan is an attractive alternative to a struggling defined benefit plan.

Defined benefit plans have the potential for larger payments to retirees when the economy is humming along, but when the economy tanks, these plans often suffer large losses. This can result in much lower-than-promised monthly benefits for retirees or necessitate large payments by employers to prop up funding.

Neither are welcome prospects.

Employers generally prefer 401(k) plans, which have lower costs and few surprises. In fact, with 401(k) plans, all the risk is on the employee — to make the right investment choices and to defer enough income for retirement.

Yet studies show that most workers are not saving nearly enough for retirement through their 401(k) plans, even where employers are making generous matching contributions. And, after accounting for fees, the returns are not enough.

Compared to 401(k) plans, bargaining an adjustable pension plan like The NewsGuild APP should result in a bigger payout per dollar saved.

Participation in the APP means each year you earn a guaranteed amount for retirement. The money to cover what you earn is based on the contributions the Guild negotiates with your employer combined with earnings from investments. There are no shortfalls for employers to fear. And the plan will remain fully funded.

Plan assets are invested by professionals. No need for you to guess on timing the market; choose the right blend of stocks and bonds; wonder how to balance investments in foreign or domestic products, or choose fixed rates or adjustable funds.

What could be smarter and give you more peace of mind when it comes to planning for retirement?

Retirement planning is hard. But, it can be much easier with The NewsGuild-CWA Adjustable Pension Plan. Your local can negotiate with your employer to get into the plan. Call (888) 893-3650 or email pension@newsguild.org for more information. ■



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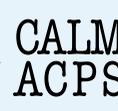
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Right to Report

Continued from page TNG-1

- disruption of governmental processes” when he repeatedly tried to question Health and Human Services Secretary Tom Price.
- Award-winning CQ Roll Call reporter John M. Donnelly was roughed up by security guards when he tried to question Federal Communications Commissioner Michael O’Rielly after a news conference.
 - At least six journalists were arrested and charged with felony riot at protests on Inauguration Day; charges were dropped against all but two independent journalists.
 - In February, the White House banned reporters from CNN, the New York Times, Politico, the Los Angeles Times and BuzzFeed from attending a press briefing. (In solidarity, reporters from AP and Time refused to attend.)
 - In February Trump labelled journalists “enemies of the people.”
 - Barely noticed in a May 16 New York Times article by Guild member Michael S. Schmidt was this gem: “Alone in the Oval Office, Mr. Trump began the discussion by condemning leaks to the news media, saying that Mr. Comey should consider putting reporters in prison for publishing classified information, according to one of Mr. Comey’s associates.”
- The White House has taken steps to limit the public’s access to information — refusing to release visitor logs, prohibiting journalists from recording numerous press briefings, and limiting access to cabinet officials.

A petition launched by the Guild on World Press Freedom Day condemns threats to press freedom and demands that government officials “allow journalists to do their jobs.” It also condemns attempts to demonize reporters and to undermine legitimate journalism by promoting fake news.

Not New

But attacks on the media are nothing new and they’re not limited to the current occupant of the White House or to Washington, D.C., Lunzer points out.

- In 2014, journalists were arrested while covering protests in Ferguson, MO, and in late 2016 and early 2017, reporters were arrested while covering demonstrations in Standing Rock ND.
- In June, two journalists were arrested in St. Paul, MN, while reporting on protests following the not-guilty verdict in the case of the police officer who shot and killed Philando Castile.

“The Right to Report project is a natural continuation of the work that The NewsGuild has done over the years,” Lunzer said. In 2014, the Guild gave its highest award, the Herbert Block Freedom Award, to New York Times reporter James Risen, who federal officials were threatening to jail if he didn’t confirm the name of a source for his book.

The Guild’s Executive Committee also quietly signs on as a “friend of the court” to many legal briefs involving the First Amendment. Examples include:

- A case in the Second Circuit regarding journalists’ rights to

record the police in public.

- A case involving the New York Police Department’s refusal to say whether it has records that are responsive to the request.
- A case involving the military’s plans to subpoena Mark Boal, a journalist and Academy Award-winning filmmaker, for his notes and recordings relating to interviews with Bowe Bergdahl, the soldier who was held captive by the Taliban in Afghanistan.

“These are not ordinary times,” Lunzer said. “We have a special responsibility to stand up for freedom of the press and to fight for transparency in government. That is a responsibility we take very seriously.” ■

Guild Fights UMN’s Investigation of Source



Guild member Jennifer Bjorhus delivers the petition to a university official.

When the Minnesota Newspaper and Communications Guild learned in May that the University of Minnesota was investigating the source of leaks about a sexual harassment complaint against an employee, members stepped up. They collected signatures from more than 300 journalists on a petition protesting the Board of Regent’s action, generating coverage in the Star Tribune, KSTP-TV, and on Minnesota Public Radio. ■

First Contract at VICE Canada Yields Major Wins

The first digital media company to be unionized in Canada ratified a contract on March 31 giving major gains in salaries and benefits, stronger equity provisions, and measures to protect editorial independence.

It is a first contract for the 170 VICE employees across the country, who joined CWA Canada’s largest local, the Canadian Media Guild (CMG), last June. Members voted 94.7 percent in favor of ratifying the three-year tentative agreement.

The agreement between the CMG and the global digital media giant was reached after nine months of intense negotiations.

Employees will see immediate wage increases ranging from 2 percent to 52.5 percent based on a negotiated salary grid, with an average increase of 9 percent. In addition, there are across-the-board annual increases of 2 percent in 2017 and 2.5 percent in both 2018 and 2019.

The collective bargaining agreement guards editorial independence, increases vacation time, doubles the number of paid sick days, improves parental leave benefits, strengthens protections for temporary employees, defends the right to perform outside work, improves severance, and establishes fair arbitration and dispute resolution procedures.

The agreement gives VICE interns a wage increase to \$15 per hour. It is the first media contract in the country to include language regarding interns modeled on a policy drafted by CWA Canada’s associate members and adopted at the union’s annual National Representative Council meeting in April 2015.

“This first contract sets us on the right path here as workers at VICE,” said Maggie McCaw, a member



The bargaining committee included (from left) Raffi DerGhazarian, Happy Pharwaha, Justin Ling, Maggie McCaw, Deb Hong and CMG staff representative Federico Carvajal.

of the negotiating committee. “We organized because we all agreed that the long hours, creative passion, and professional experience we were investing here were not being recognized fairly by management. This agreement ensures that everyone at VICE will be paid fairly for the work they do and will be treated with respect across the board — from interns all the way up to managing editors. It is an agreement that all of VICE staff and management can be proud of.”

CMG President Kamala Rao congratulated members for their determination and focus on tangible results that will improve their lives, both at work and beyond.

“CMG members at VICE have done what is required to make the improvements they deserve. They’ve pulled together in a union, our union, to strengthen their voices at work,” Rao said.

CMG worked with VICE and a pay equity consultant to review the compensation structure and recommend individual adjustments, which are being implemented as a result of the study. As a part of the new agreement, the CMG and VICE will continue to conduct periodic assessments to ensure pay equity is maintained.

Courtesy of Canadian Media Guild Local 30213 ■

Twitter Boycott

Continued from page TNG-1

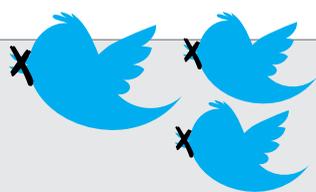
such a public campaign,” Planas said. “It took a lot of guts for our members to do what they did and to stand up for our colleague.”

Management took notice. “They were shocked and scrambling,” Planas said. “There were a lot of whispers and several closed-door meetings.”

Media in Boston soon took notice of the journalists’ Twitter boycott and began posting questions on social media, he noted.

“The Twitter blackout was great,” declared O’Ryan Johnson, chair of the editorial unit at the Herald. It was good for the reporter to get the support of his colleagues and to see support from many news organizations who thought our policy was bizarre, outdated and showed a lack of trust in reporters.

“It was good for management to see 90 percent of the Guild who participates in social media thought the policy was misguided,” he said. ■



DFM, GateHouse Workers Target a Different Threat to Press Freedom — Asset-Stripping Hedge Fund Owners

Nearly 1,500 NewsGuild members in 28 bargaining units joined together on World Press Freedom Day to focus attention on an often-overlooked threat — the damage done to newspapers by profiteering hedge fund owners.

On May 3, workers at publications run by Digital First Media (DFM) and GateHouse Media publicized their common fight against the asset-stripping business model the companies employ.

Displaying banners and signs at their desks that said, “Democracy Depends on Journalism” and “Invest in Us,” NewsGuild members pointed out that the aggressive cost-cutting harms the workers, weakens the publications, and undermines their ability to produce quality local news.

Data collected and analyzed by

DFMworkers.org shows that Alden Global Capital, the hedge fund that owns DFM, is downsizing staff at the newspapers it operates at an alarming rate. Over the past five years (through September 2016), newspapers across the country lost 26 percent of their workforce, according to an April 3 report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

That’s disturbing enough, but a poll of NewsGuild representatives at 12 DFM papers for roughly the same period reveals workforce

reductions that were more than twice the national average — with some staff losses at nearly 80 percent. Meanwhile, Alden pocketed

millions of dollars.

The New Media Investment Group (NMIG), the parent company of GateHouse Media, uses

the money generated by severe staff reductions and the sale of assets to pay dividends, fund acquisitions, and disburse fees to its external managers.

At GateHouse, the slash-and-burn strategy has resulted in lower stock prices and, on May 25, a vote of “no confidence” in the CEO at the company’s annual shareholders meeting. (See p. 1 for more.)

The May 3 joint action attracted widespread support throughout The NewsGuild-CWA and the labor movement. More than 5,000 people

have signed The NewsGuild’s petition for press freedom and the #Right2Report, which officially launched on May 3. ■

When hedge funds own newspapers...



Just a week after the East Bay News staff was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for “relentless” coverage of the deadly Ghost Ship warehouse fire in Oakland, Digital First Media, owner of the Bay Area News Group, announced plans to move copy desk work to Southern California, triggering 20 more layoffs from a shrunken roster of 92 Guild-represented employees in the East Bay.

DoJ Contractor Spurs Organizing Drive

Continued from page TNG-1

tion Lawyers, told the *New York Times* in December 2016.

Of those who appear in immigration court, 43 percent have no lawyer, and 89 percent of cases involve non-English speakers.

“Imagine trying to explain to a judge — without an interpreter — why, if you were sent back to your homeland, you would face torture, persecution and even death,” said Hilda Estrada, a DoJ certified Spanish language interpreter.

By the end of last year, the backlog of pending cases had ballooned to more than 540,000.

As a result, immigrants are denied justice, cases drag on — often for years — even as deportations increase and the government threatens to deport as many as 3 million people.

Putting on the Squeeze

Soon after it won the exclusive contract with the Department of Justice, SOSi put the squeeze on the interpreters, who they designated “independent contractors.”

The rates SOSi paid plummeted from \$60 per hour to just \$35. And despite the fact that SOSi called the interpreters “inde-

pendent contractors,” they issued plenty of rules for them to follow, including a strict dress code.

By labelling them “independent contractors,” SOSi made it illegal for the interpreters to bargain over wages.

Getting Organized

Torn between their desire to serve the public and SOSi’s poor treatment, the interpreters began to organize.

Over lunch breaks and before court, they made plans to try to talk to every interpreter in the system. Team captains waited outside courts and detention centers to talk to their fellow interpreters.

The interpreters objected to the reduction in their rates to levels below those paid by other federal courts. They also documented SOSi’s increased use of inexperienced and uncertified interpreters and the negative impact it was having on cases.

Eventually, the company buckled. SOSi agreed to pay the federal rate — and sometimes paid even more.

The news of the victory spread around the country. Inter-

preters from Texas, Florida and New York also wanted the “California deal,” and they reached out to the organizers for advice.

Retaliation

None too happy with the interpreters’ actions, SOSi managers began to retaliate: They refused to renew contracts with the interpreters they considered leaders. Undeterred, the interpreters continued to organize.

By April 2016, interpreters began filing Unfair Labor Practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) against SOSi. In August, SOSi failed to renew contracts with several leaders in California, Illinois, and Georgia.

The interpreters continued their efforts, with support from The NewsGuild-CWA, the Pacific Media Workers Guild and members of the Chicago Newspaper Guild.



SOSi employees and NewsGuild members brought word of their struggle to the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters & Translators in May.

NLRB Agrees

On May 31, 2017, the Los Angeles Region of NLRB issued a complaint against SOSi, charging the company with illegally misclassifying its employees as independent contractors and firing those who spoke out.

The NLRB complaint also charges SOSi with illegally interrogating employees about their organizing activities, surveilling union supporters, threatening legal action, and prohibiting employees from engaging in activities associated with union organizing.

“As an immigration court

interpreter who takes great pride in the profession, it is good to know that the NLRB agrees that labor law safeguards are essential to the vital work done every day in court by me and fellow colleagues,” said Kathleen Morris, a Chicago area interpreter.

The complaint seeks an order from the full board instructing SOSi to immediately reclassify the interpreters as employees. The NLRB also demanded reinstatement with back pay for several interpreters SOSi fired in retaliation for their union organizing activities.

The complaint has broad implications for the labor movement because employers in many industries misclassify workers as freelancers and independent contractors to avoid costs associated with hiring regular employees. The misclassification constitutes an unfair labor practice intended to deprive them of their labor rights, Regional Director William B. Cowen wrote.

It’s been a real morale booster for the interpreters, who are determined to unionize and provide top-notch interpreting services to the courts and communities that need them. ■

FOR MORE GUILD NEWS, SEE TNG-P. 5-8. >>

GateHouse Workers Score Shareholder Victory

Continued from page TNG-1

a heavy dose of social media messaging.

Workers were jazzed by the events, which promoted our message, instilled pride in our members, and promoted a spirit of solidarity.

“Linking the units from across the country was really inspiring,” said John Hill, president of the Providence Newspaper Guild, which represents workers at three GateHouse papers in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. (See page 4 for more on May 3 activities.)

Joint Mobilization, Bargaining Strategies

Soon after, the union established a working committee to develop joint mobilization and bargaining strategies at GateHouse-operated newspapers. At a meeting outside Washington, DC, on the weekend of May 19-21, activists representing Guild locals from six states started planning a national campaign patterned after the efforts of employees of Digital First Media.

The committee is working to establish common bargaining goals, deploy shared negotiating tactics, mobilize members, generate community support, organize non-union GateHouse newspapers, engage shareholders, and apply pressure on the company’s top managers.

Shareholder Victory

The first “shareholder strategy” victory came on May 25, when investors in the New Media Investment Group, GateHouse Media’s parent company, voted overwhelmingly for a proposal offered by our St. Louis-based local, the United Media Guild (UMG). The purpose of the “good governance” proposal was to establish a more responsive Board of Directors by holding elections annually.

In a letter to investors sent prior to the shareholders meeting, Lunzer noted that, “At a time when newspaper publishers and employees must work together to promote the value of real news and find revenue solutions in a distressed industry, New Media has demoralized its workforce with an eternal wage freeze... constant layoffs and a hostile negotiating stance at NewsGuild-represented units.

“In our opinion, cost-cutting through headcount reductions has reached the point of negative returns.”



Workers at the Peoria Journal Star on May 3, World Press Freedom Day.

UMG President Jeff Gordon presented the proposal at the shareholders meeting in Fairport, NY, and pointed out that aggressive cost-cutting has eroded the company’s core product — local news.

But the meeting itself was mostly a formality. Most of the

votes were cast by proxy, and the meeting lasted just 11 minutes. When the results were tallied, Guild members were thrilled: The proposal garnered an astounding 83 percent of the vote.

The balloting was interpreted as a repudiation of the company’s strategy of aggressive acquisition of publications, followed by aggressive cost-cutting in newsrooms.

A large majority of shareholders — 64 percent — also “withheld votes” in the re-election of board

chair Wesley Edens, signaling notable unrest among investors. Although Edens ran unopposed and was therefore re-elected, the result was essentially a vote of no-confidence.

Gordon, Sector Representative Tammy Turnbull, and UMG Business Representative Shannon Duffy spoke with New Media CEO Michael Reed after the shareholders meeting to reiterate Guild concerns and express opposition to the company’s hostile relationship with its employees.

Undermining the Whole

While the cuts maximized cash flow to pay dividends, fund acquisitions, and pay huge fees to Fortress Investment Group, the company’s external manager, it also undermined the enterprise as a whole. Analysts began souring on New Media stock last year, changing “buy” ratings to “hold” or “sell.”

Fortress Investment Group formed New Media from the ashes of GateHouse Media’s \$1.2 million bankruptcy in 2013. Since then, it has collected roughly \$60 million from management fees and incentive compensation.

The Guild’s newly-formed working committee will continue outreach to investors and analysts and engage New Media directors as well — urging the company to reinvest in its people.

“New Media’s policies have been terrible for journalists and for journalism. They are terrible for the communities these papers serve — and for the country,” Lunzer said.

“But it’s worth noting that journalism is thriving in many outlets across the country,” he added. “We hope the company’s shareholders will support our efforts to provide good, quality journalism and good, quality, professional jobs.” ■

Guild to WSJ: Yes, There is a Wage Gap

A year after it discovered significant pay disparities at the Wall Street Journal, Local 1096 has taken a closer look at the company’s pay practices — and still doesn’t like what it sees. The Independent Association of Publishers’ Employees (IAPE) found a gap between the rates of pay for men and women dating back to the year 2000, as well as between races and ethnicities.

This year, IAPE commissioned a follow-up statistical review of pay data at Dow Jones, publisher of The Wall Street Journal, Barron’s, MarketWatch, Heat Street and other union-represented entities. The study was performed by Strength In Numbers Consulting Group, and again found a significant gender gap among average salaries for IAPE-represented employees.

Especially for reporters, the local’s report to its members concluded that age regression data show “a statistically significant — and troubling — pattern.”

“Female reporters in their 30s have routinely been paid less than male reporters in their 30s, and this will continue to be true for most years that follow if they stay in the company,” the IAPE report stated.

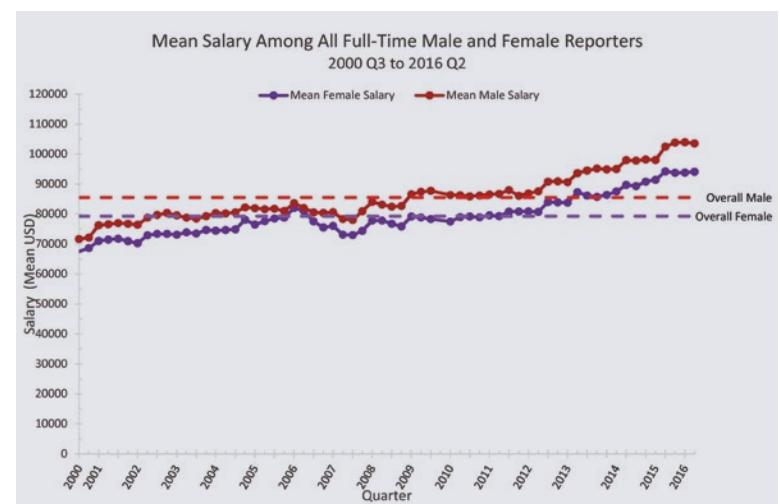
The comprehensive review of salary data from third-quarter of 2000 through the end of the second quarter of 2016 showed a mean salary of \$64,532.75 for women during that timeframe, while the mean salary was \$76,127.68 for men across all IAPE-represented positions and locations throughout the United States and in Canada.

Women were paid 81.61% of men on average at the beginning of the review period. The gender gap had narrowed to 87.20% by last year.

In March 2016, IAPE released its review of gender- and ethnicity-based pay gaps at Dow Jones compared to a similar union study presented in 1991. IAPE found little progress had been made in the intervening 25 years. Women at Dow Jones were paid just 86.8% of what their male colleagues made, the study showed. White and Asian men sat at the top of average salary rankings, while African-American and Latina females sat at the bottom.

After IAPE released the study, Dow Jones conducted internal and external reviews of their pay practices. In December, Chief People Officer Mark Musgrave sent an email to staff denying the existence of a pay gap. “The analysis shows that employee pay did not vary because of gender or ethnicity,” he wrote.

Musgrave added this: “The assessment did show that less than three



percent of our employees, a group that included both men and women and spanned multiple ethnicities, needed adjustments to align their salaries with those of colleagues as well as the overall marketplace.”

IAPE followed up with information requests to Dow Jones seeking details about management’s internal and external pay data analyses. Dow Jones has thus far refused to provide much of that information to the union, saying the documents requested by IAPE are proprietary, confidential, and “not relevant to the union’s ability to police the contract.”

The company did respond to IAPE’s request for information about salary adjustments after it conducted an external review, and produced a document showing additional pay increases — ranging from 3% to 27% — were granted to 31 union-represented employees retroactive to July 1, 2016.

Several other locals have documented wage gaps, including the News-Media Guild (at AP); the Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild (at the Washington Post); Minnesota Guild (at the Star Tribune); The NewsGuild of New York (at the New York Times); the Philadelphia Guild (at the Philadelphia Inquirer and Daily News), and the Pacific Media Workers (at the San Francisco Chronicle).

See the full IAPE follow-up report at <http://bit.ly/2rFgVd7>. ■

Protecting Our Futures — We are Older AND Bolder



By Myra Kreiman

The party was over, arranged for me by a long-time friend and colleague at her duplex near the Hudson Street digs of *Newsweek* magazine, then owned by The Washington Post Company. Celebrating with me were co-workers, editors, reporters and writers I had worked with and advocated for as unit chair of our union.

I had been given a month's grace past the "leave by" date after taking a buyout, to see current contract negotiations through to conclusion.

I had spent years serving as unit chair and as executive board vice president of The NewsGuild of New York. With the board's help, I ran a successful organizing campaign aimed at getting younger workers to join our union.

Suddenly I felt adrift.

But then a former Guild colleague said the words that would change my life. Why not join the Retired Members' Council?

The what? I didn't need a "why," just "how" and "where."

Still there was something troubling me. Why didn't I, as a NewsGuild activist, know about this retiree council that is part of CWA? I wanted more information, and what I found lit a fire in me.

Among the hundreds of retiree chapters in the RMC there were only two in The NewsGuild (TNG). I set out to change this, to get the word out, not just to those retiring, or taking buyouts, but also to active members.

Thus began my journey to president of the New York TNG-CWA Retired Members Chapter Chapter 31003 and eventually to TNG Retiree Coordinator.

By now you must be asking yourself, okay, so what is the Retired Members Council and why should I care? Here's one reason: As my colleague and RMC Media Sector V.P. Adolphe

Bernotas says, "You are all retirees in training. You just haven't finished your apprenticeship."

This is the easy part! To become a Lifetime Member of The Retired Members Council costs \$25. With this one-time fee you get a lifetime union card (good for discounts at banks, etc.) membership in Union Plus, and you stay connected to the CWA through the CWA News, and (via e-mail) our weekly CWA Newsletter. It takes only five members to form a chapter.

We now have more than 55,000 RMC members nationwide. We stand together to lobby for retiree concerns like protecting and improving Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and prescription drug benefits. We join forces with local active members to support them whether on a picket line, phone bank, or other demonstration of support.

Remember this: as retirees, we're not concerned about who sees us handing out leaflets or demonstrating — the time for management retaliation against us is long gone.

Then there are the social benefits. You can stay connected with former colleagues, make new friends, and network. Some locals hold informational meetings. I've had a NYC Deputy District Attorney speak about Internet and phone scams and what we can do to protect ourselves. AARP's educational division, which does NO marketing, sent a representative to one of our meetings to discuss Medicare options and prescription plan info and how to get financial help. These are just a few examples.

And that's what I want to do: Help you, your shop stewards, and active members learn more about the RMC while members are still active and engaged.

When you leave your job, you don't have to disconnect from your union. We're here for you after you retire, take a buyout, or move on, just as The NewsGuild is there for you now.

For more information contact me at mkreiman@gmail.com or Adolphe Bernotas at kaunas@aol.com. ■

2017 Reporter Top Minimum Salaries

The NewsGuild-CWA holds contracts with more than 300 media organizations in the U.S. and Canada. These reporter salaries (with the number of years needed to achieve them on the right) represent the minimum pay required in NewsGuild collective bargaining agreements.

The rates were effective on or before Jan. 1, 2017. Actual salaries may be higher, based on contract provisions that allow for salary payments above the minimum levels.

NEWS ORGANIZATIONS	WK. RATE	YR.
Thomson-Reuters of Canada	\$1911.39	6
New York Times & New York Times Digital	\$1886.65	2
Shaw Media (Formerly CTV Ottawa)	\$1814.06	8
Radio Free Asia	\$1722.39	2
Thomson-Reuters U.S.	\$1718.57	0
Catholic News Service	\$1648.00	5
Sacramento Bee	\$1609.50	3
Victoria Times-Colonist	\$1598.42	5
Canadian Broadcasting Corporation	\$1591.36	9
Canadian Press & Broadcast News	\$1524.40	6
Agence France Presse, U.S.	\$1499.69	7
Agence France Presse, CAN	\$1487.39	7
Ottawa Citizen	\$1473.49	6
Aboriginal People's Television Network-Current Affairs	\$1466.04	9
St. Louis Review	\$1447.73	5
Montreal Gazette	\$1436.00	6
St. Paul Pioneer Press	\$1421.99	6
Dow Jones/Wall Street Journal	\$1409.45	6
Halifax Chronicle Herald Limited	\$1400.02	5
Minneapolis Star-Tribune	\$1369.61	6
Boston Globe	\$1362.92	5
San Francisco Chronicle	\$1353.00	6
Denver Post	\$1331.00	6
Associated Press	\$1317.82	6
Philadelphia Inquirer and Daily News	\$1273.00	4

NEWS ORGANIZATIONS	WK. RATE	YR.
Providence Journal	\$1269.75	5
Chicago Sun-Times	\$1269.27	5
EFE News Services, Inc.	\$1243.10	4
Buffalo News	\$1229.13	5
St. Louis Post-Dispatch	\$1221.49	8
Honolulu Star-Advertiser	\$1218.70	5
Red Deer Advocate	\$1212.79	5
Regina Leader Post/Sunday Sun	\$1203.00	5
Moncton Times-Transcript	\$1204.25	5
TVOntario	\$1206.48	5
San Jose Mercury News	\$1202.00	6
Cleveland Plain Dealer	\$1197.16	5
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel	\$1188.00	4
Baltimore Sun	\$1187.00	6
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette	\$1172.36	5
Boston Herald	\$1152.31	5
Erie Times-News	\$1136.31	6
North Bay Nugget	\$1129.64	5
St. John Telegraph Journal	\$1124.34	5
Sudbury Star	\$1124.24	6
Quincy Patriot Ledger	\$1110.00	5
Santa Rosa Press Democrat	\$1104.45	6
Washington Post	\$1096.03	5
Waukegan News-Sun	\$1069.16	5
Fredericton Daily Gleaner	\$1059.58	5
TFOntario (French)	\$1058.53	5
Cape Breton Post	\$1056.75	6
Seattle Times	\$1055.40	6
Peoria Journal Star	\$1052.04	5
WPIX-TV	\$1051.72	4
Delaware County Times	\$1050.76	10
Philly.com	\$1046.24	5
Time, Inc.	\$1046.00	1
Kingston Whig-Standard	\$1042.67	5
El-Diario-La Prensa	\$1040.08	5
Sault Star	\$1034.25	6

NEWS ORGANIZATIONS	WK. RATE	YR.
Akron Beacon Journal	\$1020.00	5
Worcester Telegram & Gazette	\$1018.00	5
Albany Times Union	\$998.48	5
Memphis Commercial Appeal	\$996.96	5
Wailuku Maui News	\$980.12	5
Eugene Register Guard	\$972.60	6
Detroit Free Press	\$966.32	5
Kenosha News	\$963.98	6
Glenview Pioneer Press	\$962.23	6
Portland Press Herald	\$957.14	5
Duluth News-Tribune	\$949.69	6
Peterborough Examiner	\$948.76	6
Jewish Forward	\$947.83	2
Yakima Herald Republic	\$946.00	4
Daily Beast Online Magazine	\$936.82	1
Canton Repository	\$932.29	6
Skagit Valley Herald	\$920.00	5
Pottstown Mercury	\$917.61	4
Amsterdam News	\$909.73	6
Jersey City Jersey Journal	\$896.88	4
Hilo Hawaii Tribune-Herald	\$890.62	5
Kitsap Sun	\$881.20	6
Detroit News	\$879.38	5
Detroit Observer & Eccentric	\$877.03	5
Brockton Enterprise and Times	\$874.17	5
Manchester Union Leader / New Hampshire News	\$861.40	3
York Dispatch	\$860.32	4
Scranton Times-Tribune	\$859.75	4
Fresno Bee	\$848.54	3
Lexington Herald-Leader	\$825.00	5
Fall River Herald-News	\$820.90	5
Independent Newspapers: Macomb Daily and Royal Oak Daily Tribune	\$818.00	5
Indianapolis Star	\$806.58	6

NEWS ORGANIZATIONS	WK. RATE	YR.
York Daily Record	\$806.00	4
Medicine Hat News	\$801.00	5
Modesto Bee	\$795.00	6
Glenview Pioneer Press	\$783.76	6
Sioux City Journal	\$777.00	8
Kingston Daily Freeman	\$773.00	5
Bay Area Newspaper Group: Contra Costa Times, East Bay Times, Hayward Daily Review, Oakland Tribune and San Mateo County Times	\$772.50	0
Pueblo Chieftain	\$772.31	5
Massillon Independent	\$770.05	4
Terre Haute Tribune-Star	\$763.84	5
Knoxville News-Sentinel	\$745.83	4
Youngstown Vindicator	\$738.55	5
Toledo Blade	\$732.24	4
Cowichan Valley Citizen	\$720.38	5
Monterey Herald	\$718.00	3
Gary Post Tribune	\$717.65	6
St. Louis Labor Tribune	\$692.53	6
Hazleton Standard-Speaker	\$691.65	6
Scholastic Magazine	\$685.17	1
Waterville Morning Sentinel	\$678.98	4
United Press International	\$662.24	4
Northumberland Publishers: Coburg Daily Star, Port Hope Evening Guide	\$656.42	3
Norwalk Hour	\$655.93	1
Wilkes-Barre Citizens' Voice	\$640.37	4
Pawtucket Times	\$630.00	3
Woonsocket Call	\$630.00	3
Bakersfield Californian	\$608.00	3
Sheboygan Press	\$560.00	5
Norristown Times Herald	\$553.96	6
Pekin Daily Times	\$423.20	1
Dayton Daily News	\$394.62	1

Scrapping Copy Desk Risks Times' Credibility

The *New York Times* announcement that it would offer buyouts and eliminate editors prompted the response below from the president of The NewsGuild of New York.



By Grant Glickson

NewsGuild of New York journalists have been continuously breaking news for months. The first on the scene in many national and international stories, our members have meticulously handed their respective news organizations scoops with potentially huge consequences for our democracy.

But when readers hear the inevitable cries of “fake news,” how do they know what to believe?

It comes down to accuracy, to a news organization’s track record of getting even the smallest details right. When typos and misspellings jump off a page, readers are more likely to wonder what else is wrong.

So why would the *New York Times* want to join the sorry parade of other American newsrooms that have cut out the last, best line of defense against errors: the newsroom copy desk and the eagle-eyed editors who staff it?

“What we now know as the copy desk will no longer exist” is how management’s memo put it, words that are still reverberating in the newsroom. Media writers were stunned, too.

A Poynter Institute analyst said when citing President Trump’s war on the media and his claims about “the failing *New York Times*”: “The elimination of extra sets of eyes at the nation’s leading newspaper news organization couldn’t come at a more sensitive moment — when the credibility of the Fourth Estate is being challenged by the president and his loyalists.”

The *Times* is not, of course, eliminating editing. But it is radically restructuring how it is done — in a way that has not been clearly explained — and is removing a critical layer. Management argues that the process will be more efficient, and that the cuts will allow them to add as many as 100 people to the reporting staff.

If the paper is serious about new hires, we’re all for it. But credibility has to come first. For months, since the announcement that the *Times* planned to “streamline” its editing process, Guild reporters and editors have been offering suggestions to management about how to accomplish this. These journalists are on the front lines. They know how the *Times* is produced. They are clear-

eyed about how to speed up the process without sacrificing accuracy. But those suggestions were ignored.

Beyond losing the copy desk itself, the *Times*’ plan includes a voluntary buyout — but there is nothing optional about it since layoffs will happen if those targeted don’t leave. The elimination of copy editors will cost the newsroom hundreds of years of collected knowledge, experience and institutional memory.

Publishers across the country have been inflicting similar damage on their newsrooms, and readers, for more than a decade. Some have done away with the copy desk entirely; others are using consolidated copy desks in faraway cities where editors don’t know when a reporter accidentally mixes up two streets or incorrectly identifies who was mayor 30 years ago.

Readers spot those mistakes instantly and sound off in comment sections and letters to the editor. It doesn’t take long for minor irritations — let alone errors of fact — to erode trust.

No newsroom is immune from errors, no matter how many editors go over a story. Human beings make mistakes. But the *New York Times*’ commitment to avoiding them has always been a point of pride.

Eliminating its public editor position at this

time is no small coincidence. The “Paper of Record” clearly does not want someone on its own payroll criticizing them for the numerous errors that will regularly appear in their news reports due to their flawed editing process.

The Guild has asked for a meeting with *Times* management before the restructuring plan moves forward. Our members’ reputations are on the line. They deserve to be heard.

In journalism, nothing matters more than the public’s trust, which has never been so fragile. The *Times* couldn’t have picked a worse moment to gamble with its credibility. ■

NewsGuild Day Book

In May, The NewsGuild-CWA Executive Council approved a four-year cycle of national meetings. The schedule is intended to allow locals to budget and plan for district council meetings that are tied to Guild Sector Conferences and CWA Conventions.

The Guild will assist in planning and executing Multi-District Council meetings. Participating locals will be responsible for all other District Council meetings.

In accordance with custom, the costs of hosting District Council meetings will be defrayed by voluntary contributions from participating councils. Locals are encouraged to consider in advance of meetings to help host locals plan.

Four-Year Meeting Cycle

2017	
Aug. 3-5	NewsGuild Sector Conference – Pittsburgh
Aug. 6-8	CWA Convention – Pittsburgh
Oct/Nov	Fall District Council meetings – at locals’ discretion
2018	
April/May	Spring District Council meetings – at locals’ discretion
Oct/Nov	Fall Multi-District Council meeting
2019	
Jan/Feb	NewsGuild Sector Conference (Nominations for election of NewsGuild officers; No spring District Council)
July	CWA Convention – Las Vegas (CWA election of officers)
Oct/Nov	Fall District Council meetings – at locals’ discretion
2020	
April/May	Spring Multi-District Council meetings
Oct/Nov	Fall District Council meetings – at locals’ discretion

MORE GUILD REPORTER NEWS >>

Reuters Members to Management: WE'RE WORTH MORE

Now entering a third year without a contract, Thomson Reuters NewsGuild members have been mobilizing their co-workers and organizing job actions to demand that management come to the table and negotiate a contract that recognizes the contributions of the award-winning staff.

They have a very direct message: We’re worth more!

“It’s time for Thomson Reuters management to demonstrate that it values the work of the journalists who enhance Reuters reputation with skills and dedication,” said Grant Glickson, president of the New York Guild.

On May 11, scores of members marched across their newsrooms to plaster their manager’s offices with red Post-it Notes conveying their unhappiness with management’s disrespectful approach to bargaining. The highly successful event kicked off a campaign to hold Reuters management responsible for the regressive bargaining tactics company reps are using in negotiations.

Then, on May 22, Guild members hand-delivered a letter with nearly 300 signatures to Steven Adler, Reuters’ editor-



Reuters employees staged a Post-it protest.

in-chief, urging him to step in and ensure that his staff secures a contract that recognizes their contributions to Reuters’ reputation and bottom line. A photo collage of Reuters Guild members across the country demonstrating their resolve for a fair contract accompanied the letter.

Members have changed their social media images to keep the pressure on management, including Adler, and to publicly proclaim that they deserve acknowledgment and the respect of a fair contract.

Washington D.C.-based journalist Kia Johnson said,

“We show up every day for Reuters and make our managers and the company look good to clients and shareholders. It’s time they show up for us.”

In the meantime, members continue to take weekly “wellness breaks” as a reminder to take care of their physical and emotional health while demonstrating to management the detrimental effects of its disrespectful bargaining stance. At bureaus across the country, Reuters journalists have taken anywhere from 15- to 20-minute meditation and yoga breaks, as well as mindfulness and breathing exercises. As New York-based correspondent Hilary Russ said, “It’s so necessary to take care of ourselves in this incredibly difficult time of attacks on media, especially since it’s clear Reuters management isn’t doing the right thing by its journalists. I’m grateful to have a Guild contract that allows us to take these breaks, which help me stay focused on my job of reporting the news.” ■

Bytes

Buffalo Wins First Raise in Seven Years

Members of the Guild at The Buffalo News ratified a new two-year contract in April that provides a much-needed boost in wages for the first time in seven years. The agreement also beat back several damaging proposals from management.

But it wasn't all good news. The agreement includes some cost-sharing for the Guild base health plan, although employees may select less expensive plans without cost sharing but with higher deductibles.

More significantly, the contract allows the company to outsource the Classified Advertising Department. However, the bargaining team ultimately negotiated a strong severance package for employees who will lose their jobs: one year of health care coverage and one year's severance pay.



Guild members march through the office of The Buffalo News in an effort to win a fair deal.

Erie Ratifies First Contract

Eighteen months after GateHouse Media purchased the Erie Times-News, members of the Guild voted overwhelmingly to ratify an agreement for an initial three-year contract. The Guild also resolved several unfair labor practice (ULP) charges the union had filed with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

Prior to the January 2016 sale, the union was actively negotiating a contract with the previous owners, the Mead family. But GateHouse refused to accept the collective bargaining relationship that had been in place for more than 80 years.

Company representatives held meetings with employees where they outlined new conditions of employ-

ment and gave employees just a few days to decide whether they would accept them. Those who declined were considered to have resigned.

The Guild filed a ULP in July 2016, asserting that as the "perfectly clear successor" employer of all of the Times-News' employees, GateHouse was prohibited from unilaterally changing the terms of employment. The Guild demanded that GateHouse reinstate the terms of the contract.

That was a no go, as the new managers planned to subcontract bargaining unit work and lay off employees.

While the charges were being prepared, Guild and management reps negotiated an interim agreement.

The March 2016 agreement included some provisions of the contract with the Mead family — a grievance and arbitration procedure; just cause provisions, and severance pay to more than 15 employees whose jobs had been subcontracted. The following month, the parties began negotiating a full contract.

In September, the Guild filed additional ULP charges protesting the employer's failure to negotiate over wages above established minimums; refusal to pay step-up increases; failure to bargain over a voluntary separation offer, and for engaging in direct dealing with employees. The NLRB filed two complaints against GateHouse on Nov. 8, 2016. Sub-

sequently GateHouse proposed a settlement to the Guild, which was based on the contract with the previous owners.

The ensuing agreement provided substantial financial relief to the 70 members of the bargaining unit who had not seen wage increases in as many as eight years.

The estimated value of the settlement was approximately \$2.8 million, including \$597,000 in lump-sum payments to current unit members and subcontracted employees and another \$2.25 million in restored benefits.

The union anticipated that if settlement talks proved fruitless, the NLRB hearing would impose significant financial liabilities on the employer. That threat leveraged a bit of cooperation.

The three-year contract was ratified on May 30.

CPD's First Contract

The 36 members of the Washington-Baltimore NewsGuild at the Center for Popular Democracy voted unanimously to ratify their first Guild contract on Feb. 17. The agreement features a 3 percent raise each year.

In addition to wage increases, the contract includes significant advances for Guild members: annual pay-equity evaluations, cost-of-living adjustments, paid family leave, a union-shop clause, and grievance and arbitration procedures.

Dayton Agreement

After stop-and-start negotiations, members of the Dayton Editorial Units ratified a new two-year contract in March covering newsroom employees at the Dayton Daily News and the Springfield News-Sun.

Quite a bit has changed since the last set of negotiations, making this round of bargaining especially difficult: The combined units are now comprised of 22 people, down from 57 in 2014; the two Guild newsroom units are a minority of a blended newsroom — supporting three daily newspapers and broadcast media, and in 2016 the company decimated the copy desk unit through massive layoffs that affected local officers.

The agreement includes bumps to the minimum pay of more than 10 percent, though wages are still quite low.

One of the most contentious non-economic issues was "just cause" protection. Guild negotiators demanded and won a provision that includes a specific reference to the seven commonly accepted tests of just cause.

Wage Parity in Kenosha

Kenosha Newspaper Guild negotiators had a mandate when they began bargaining with management at the Kenosha News: Members wanted wage parity.

They wanted an end to pay rates that were extremely out-of-date and that had little relationship to their experience. When bargaining began, wages had not been increased in more than a decade, and weekly pay for employees doing the same jobs often differed by more than \$100.

Despite a difficult bargaining environment, union negotiators made substantial progress on parity, in exchange for give backs in vacation, severance, shift differentials, and overtime pay.

The pay scales were modified to add another year of experience and \$140 to the weekly top minimum

rate, an increase of 17.5 percent, with all 26 newsroom employees receiving wage increases or lump sum bonuses.

The Guild team — comprised mostly of first-time negotiators — retained many benefits the employer had proposed to cut. Members of the newsroom-only unit ratified the two-year contract on March 29.

Lakeland Gets a First

After an enthusiastic union organizing campaign last year, members of the Lakeland Guild unit of CWA Local 3108 ratified an interim Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) in April — their first formal agreement with their new employer, GateHouse Media. When a full collective bargaining agreement is reached, the terms of the MOA will be included.

Company representatives initiated the move to an interim agreement because they wanted to negotiate over three issues: scheduling, hiring and layoffs. Other Guild locals have used management's interest in those items as leverage to demand bargaining over any changes to initial terms of employment established by the new owners.

Negotiations resulted in the addition of four annual personal days; minimum wage rates that permit the company to pay higher amounts; job classifications for covered employees, and the requirement that any layoffs be done in reverse order of seniority — although the company has the right to skip up to two employees in each job classification in each round of layoffs.

The agreement also allows members of the bargaining unit to participate in a company-wide bonus plan under the same terms as managerial and other non-represented personnel.

The bargaining team also reached agreement on a grievance procedure and a "just cause" provision — a refreshing new concept for workers who were previously "at will" employees.

Sarasota MOA

Members of the Sarasota Guild unit of CWA Local 3108 ratified a Memorandum of Agreement covering the implementation of layoffs in February after management at the Herald-Tribune opened contract negotiations by declaring its intention to reduce the newsroom workforce the following week. The parties negotiated an agreement that reduced the number of layoffs, added two weeks of "notice pay" to severance pay, and provided a one-year rehire list.

The agreement required management to conduct the reduction in force by reverse seniority in six job categories, with a pair of exceptions that permitted management to skip over one full-time employee in any one category, and two full-time employees in another category.

Philadelphia Contract

Just a week after rejecting the Philadelphia Media Network's "final" contract offer by a vote of more than 2 to 1, in April members of the Philadelphia Newspaper Guild approved a revised proposal resulting in a three-year contract.

The revised contract averted an imminent health care funding crisis that could have increased employees' cost for coverage by as much as \$200 per week.

But management insisted on changes to seniority rules when layoffs occur — the primary reason members rejected management's initial "final" offer, which also failed to resolve the funding crisis for the health and welfare plans.

To discourage management from laying off employees out of seniority, the union eventually negotiated double severance for affected workers.

The contract provides no raises, but it includes a \$1,000 signing bonus. The agreement also merges the Inquirer and the Daily News contract with the Memorandum of Agreement that covers employees in the bargaining unit at *philly.com* into a single collective bargaining agreement. ■

...and bits

People's World Turns

The 10-member staff of the People's World joined the Chicago Newspaper Guild after winning voluntary recognition on Feb. 8.

Chicago AFT: Smart

The Chicago staff of the American Federation of Teachers won voluntary recognition for a unit of five workers at the union's Chicago regional office. ■