

# GUILD forum



Local 32035

Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild

Jan. 10, 2006

## Front Page, Guild Service Awards Entry Deadline Set for Jan. 31

With the turning of the calendar comes an annual event for the Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild: The Front Page Awards contest.

These awards, in a wide range of categories, honor the best work by rank-and-file employees – no supervisors, please! – at bargaining units we represent. We also have Guild Service awards, which honor outstanding dedication to the workers and causes that WBNG stands for.

Cash prizes go to the winners of the Front Page Awards and Guild Service Awards. Here's the prize payout for winning entries: Bill Pryor Memorial Grand Prize for Writing (\$250); Bill Pryor Memorial Grand Prize for Photography (\$250); John Albano Memorial Grand Prize for Art (\$250); Dan de Souza Memorial Award for Guild Member of the Year (\$250); Nadine Grinder Memorial Award for Shop Steward of the Year (\$150); Herb Block Memorial Award for Community Service (\$150); Unit Officer of the Year (\$100); Organizer of the Year (\$100); and Customer Service Professional of the Year (\$100).

The rules:

- All entries are free.
- You may enter up to three works in one category.
- You must submit **two** copies of each entry for judging.

While newspaper/magazine/newsletter clippings are preferred, computer printouts are permitted.

- Judges have the right to move entries into different categories.
- Judges have the discretion to not confer an award in any category.
- All work must have been published during the year 2005.

■ The Front Page Awards are open to all WBNG members, and to all who work under a Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild contract. Only Guild members, however, are eligible for the Grand Prizes in writing, photography and design.

■ If you were bought out, promoted to an exempt spot, laid off, or even dismissed, you may still be eligible to enter as long as you meet the above requirements. So, tell your former colleagues that Guild glory could very well be theirs.

Start leafing through your clip file (or your updated resume – we won't tell!), for your best work done in 2005. And don't

count on deadline extensions as in years past: We anticipate judging to be conducted in early February.

### *Categorically Speaking*

For the complete list of the Front Page Awards and Guild Service Awards, see back page.

All entries must be received no later than the close of business **Tuesday, Jan. 31.**

You can deliver them in person, or mail them to: Front Page Awards, Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild, 1100 15th St. NW, Suite 350, Washington, DC 20005.

The awards ceremony will be conducted in late March somewhere in Baltimore. Pay close attention to [www.wbng.org](http://www.wbng.org) for details.

If you have questions or desire more information, call either Front Page Awards Committee's co-chair: Mark Gruenberg ([press\\_associates@yahoo.com](mailto:press_associates@yahoo.com) or 202-898-4825) or Mark Pattison (202-541-3263 or [mpattison@catholicnews.com](mailto:mpattison@catholicnews.com)).

# President's Perspective

I feel like I'm in a cake-induced depression.

Most years, it happens around this time at The Baltimore Sun. Tribune does some quick calculations in December and doesn't like the answer it gets. The solution, it decides, is to pay good people to leave. Traditionally, we recognize them in the newsroom with a cake,

It's bittersweet at best to see colleagues and friends move on, even if they're moving on with smiles on their faces and buyout checks in their pockets.

But the cumulative impact of the departures is what's really depressing. While the papers' professed ambitions and standards are shrinking, the staffs are. Readership declines, and papers respond by giving the customers less to read. Then, readership declines the next year.

The trade publication *Editor and Publisher* picked as its top news story of 2005 that 2,000 jobs had been lost in the industry. Commenting on the story, it said (remember, this is *Editor and Publisher*, not *The Guild Reporter*):

"Using the bizarre premise that newspapers can bring back lost circulation and ad revenue by making their products WORSE, top executives at major chains from The New York Times Company to Tribune took a butcher knife to staffing with buyouts and layoffs that appeared almost epidemic. Although some claim to be adding jobs on the business side for the purpose of boosting revenue and circulation, the loss of hundreds of jobs at so many major newspapers – most of which are making tidy profits – does not bode well for the industry's future and shows the dangers of the recent corporate takeovers of the business."

While papers are losing readers, they aren't losing money. Tribune Company, which owns The Sun, reported net income of \$400 million through the third quarter of 2005 – up 18 percent over the first three quarters of 2004. And that comes setting aside money to pay a billion-dollar tax court judgment from a Times-Mirror transaction before Tribune bought Times-Mirror.

The Washington Post company, the other large newspaper employer with which the local has a contract, had \$358 million in net income through the first three quarters of 2005, on \$2.6 billion in revenue.

As Knight Ridder, pressed by anxious shareholders, puts itself up for sale, the newspaper industry seems at a potential choice point, with some serious questioning of whether publicly-traded corporations are the best ownership model for newspapers.

The Newspaper Guild international engaged investment advisers to try to put together a "worker-friendly" buyout of some of the KR papers, although the chain said it wanted to sell the whole company, not newspapers singly or in groups. Some Knight Ridder alumni said they would try to put together a slate – committed to quality journalism – to run for the board of directors. Others have suggested some form of non-profit ownership.

On the other side, there are very real fears that Knight Ridder could be sold to owners even more determined to cut costs.

As this gets fought out, where does it leave us? Let us eat cake.

– *Bill Salganik*

## GUILD forum

The **Guild Forum** is published by the Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild, 1100 15th St. NW, Suite 350, Washington, D.C. 20005-1707. Tel.: 202-785-3650 Web Site: [www.wbng.org](http://www.wbng.org)

WBNG is Local 35 of The Newspaper Guild; Local 32035 of the Communications Workers of America, AFL-CIO, CLC. WBNG is solely responsible for **Guild Forum** content.

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### OFFICIAL NOTICE

WBNG Membership Meeting  
Saturday, Jan. 28, 10 a.m.  
Washington Guild Office  
1100 15th St., Suite 350

*Agenda includes nominations for delegates to the 2006 conventions of the Newspaper Guild and the Communications Workers of America.*

**For further information:**  
202-785-3650

### **Sun Unit Meeting**

The Baltimore Sun Guild unit will meet Wednesday, Feb. 1 to hear nominations for unit-officer positions. The meeting will be at noon at the Guild's Baltimore office, 415 St. Paul Place. For more information, call 410-752-6930 or 202-785-3650 (Ext. 15).

# Martin Luther King Jr.'s Labor Legacy

By **Keith G. Barnes**  
*American Postal Workers Union*

During a heavy rainstorm on Jan. 31, 1968, about two dozen Memphis sewer workers – all of them black – were sent home without pay. Their orders came from supervisors – all of them white – who were paid for *their* day's work.

The next day, two black sanitation workers were crushed to death by a malfunctioning compactor in an accident attributed to standard operating procedure during inclement weather.

The workers staged formal protests and, on Feb. 12, learned that they would be compensated only two hours' pay for the full day missed. Demanding justice and union recognition, more than 1,000 black municipal employees walked off the job.

## Southern Style

Memphis Mayor Henry Loeb III took a hard line. A municipal strike was illegal, and he announced that he would not negotiate unless the sanitation force went back to work. Loeb offered raises and improved benefits, but he was determined not to become the first Southern mayor to recognize a black municipal union. The workers tried an end run, with more than 1,000 strikers and supporters attended a meeting of the city council a week into the job action. But the full council voted that the strike was an "administrative matter" and put it back in Loeb's hands.

The council action resulted in a massive departure from City Hall and an impromptu march to Mason Temple, a large building that had become strike headquarters. The marches became a daily feature and drew the interest of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., who had been preparing a "Poor People's Campaign" and was planning a massive nonviolent act of civil disobedience on the streets of the nation's capital for the middle of April. The uprising by the working poor, with its intertwining racial and economic themes, presented

an opportunity to push the civil rights movement in the direction King felt it needed to go.

King had long been arguing that unions had failed to reach poor people – organized labor had not gone beyond the ranks of well-paid, blue-collar industrial workers, he said, and had not begun to address "economic inequality."

## King Comes to Memphis

The inequity was keenly felt in American cities, particularly in the South. Low educational levels had left many blacks with few choices beyond unskilled labor. But in factories and on farms, such jobs were being mechanized out of existence. And as the numbers of rural workers fleeing the shrinking farm economy increased, unskilled labor opportunities in the cities diminished.

When the strike was about a month old, King was traveling through the South as part of a "People-to-People Tour" to recruit for the rally in Washington. On March 18, while in Mississippi, he made a side trip.

More than 10,000 workers, preachers, homemakers, and students greeted King at Memphis's Mason Temple. It was obvious that the large black community was solidly behind what was essentially a labor organization drive. Poor black garbage collectors were five weeks into a strike and asking a racist city government not just for decent pay, but for a collective bargaining agreement.

"There is something wrong with the economic structure when you work and are still in poverty," a striker said. "It's time people woke up to this." Said another: "Don't worry about what's happening to the workers – worry about what happens if the workers don't win."

Such remarks led King to conclude that if local blacks could make a city deal with sanitation workers, maybe his movement could force Washington to deal with all of

America's poor. "You are doing here in Memphis what I am trying to do nationally," King said. "You are reminding America that it is a crime for people to live in this rich nation and receive starvation wages."

International and national unions suddenly increased support and King announced that he would lead a rally in Memphis.

On March 28, King led 6,000 people in a walk from Mason Temple to City Hall. At the back of the slow-moving line, a group of teenagers began smashing windows and looting stores. King tried to get the rally called off, but before it was over, 155 stores had been damaged, 60 people had been injured, and a 16-year-old boy had been slain by police gunfire.

## 'The Mountaintop'

King announced that he would be back for a "massive nonviolent demonstration" in early April. At a pre-march rally the evening of April 3, he delivered what is known as "The Mountaintop Speech."

"*You may not be on strike,*" King said to the supporters of the sanitation workers. "But either we go up together, or we go down together. ... We've got some difficult days ahead. But it doesn't matter with me now. Because I've been to the mountaintop. ... And I've seen the promised land. I may not get there with you, but I want you to know tonight that we, as a people, will get to the promised land."

King was fatally shot the next day as he left his hotel room to go to dinner. He had re-energized a community movement and a strike, but at a terrible cost. Days of rioting rocked America's cities.

Within days, the city was pressured into recognizing AFSCME Local 1733 and allowing the check-off of union dues – key components that enabled the union to bargain over other grievances. A signed contract in mid-April ended the strike two months after it began.

# Transitions & Transactions

## NEW GUILD MEMBERS:

**AFL-CIO:** Judith Freeman. **Agence France-Presse:** Antoine Agasse. **American Nurses Association:** Rachel M. Conant, Myra Devese, Don Griesheimer, Kimberly Lee, Sharon Leigh, Debra Marshall, Todd W. Peterson, Catherine Sebold. **American Rights At Work:** John Anthony, Kristi Barnes, Elizabeth Cattaneo, Elizabeth Handy, Erin Johannsson, Jennifer Martinez-Moore, Jane Norman, Jennifer Pompei, Rebecca J. Wasserman. **Baltimore Sun:** Matthew Brown, Elizabeth Caffrey, Constance Curry, Heather Dutton, Christine Fellenz, John Fritze, Mary V. Hartney, James Javorski, Rachel S. Kent, Christina Krieger, Sherrise Maddox-Wise, Richard Malinowski Jr., Rona Marech, William Ordine, Laura Pats, Rachel Perkins, Margaret Regan, Heather Russell, Michael Ray Jr., Ashante Saunders, Samuel Sessa, Jennifer Weiland. **Bureau of National Affairs:** Amena Husein Saiyid. **Catholic News Service:** Kevin Parsakia, Emily D. Thompson. **Radio Free Asia:** Byungsook Choi, Enver Kadir, Minh-Ha Le, San San Tin, Tashi Yeshe, Jie Yue. **Solidarity Center:** Richard Hall. **United American Nurses:** Nichole Bennett, Majava Blackwell, Krista Devine, Jason Hatch, Donna Kennedy, Robert Lucore, Suzanne Martin, Sara Markle-Elden, Hector Ramos. **United Food & Commercial Workers:** Sherrell Holloman, Charles Rader. **Washington Post:** Cameron Barr, Libby Copeland, Paris Daryaei, Crystal Davis, Alla Dreyvitser, Jonathan Finer, Carl Jackson Jr., Farhana Hossain, Timothy O'Connell,

Joshua Partlow, Elliot Postell, Tara Prasad, Daniel E. Rose, Craig Runyon, Judy Sarasohn, Juua Ashby Strassburger, Rahiem Swann, Jeffery Turrentine, Crishawn White, Krissah Williams, Nathan Willis. **At-Large:** Katharina Hager, Joanna Millhouse.

## RETURNING GUILD MEMBERS:

**AFL-CIO:** Shavonne Perpena. **AFP:** James Watson. **ANA:** Jacqueline Stone. **Post:** Marva Telemaque. **UFCW:** Darren Fenwick. **Working for America Institute:** Tommy Burress, Jeffrey Soth. **At-Large:** Henry DeSio Jr., Robert Trussell.

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## *Front Page Awards: Categorically Speaking*

The Front Page Awards honor the best work done by Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild members for their employers. The Guild Service Awards honor the best work done by members on behalf of their fellow Guild members in their units, the union, and the community. Any Washington-Baltimore Guild member in good standing may be nominated for a Guild Service Award, and any member in good standing may write a nomination letter outlining the nominees' achievements.

### **WRITING**

Morton Mintz Award  
for Investigative Reporting  
Bernie Harrison Memorial Award  
for Commentary  
Frank C. Porter Memorial Award  
for Labor and Business Reporting  
Criticism  
Feature Writing  
Headline Writing  
International News Reporting  
Local News Reporting  
National News Reporting  
Non-Daily Specialized Technical Reporting  
Public Service Reporting  
Sports Reporting  
Unit Publication

### **PHOTOGRAPHY**

Black & White Photography  
Feature Photography  
Local News Photography  
National News Photography  
Picture Story  
Portrait Photography  
Sports Photography

### **ART**

Advertising Design  
Editorial Cartooning  
Illustration Design  
Labor Promotional Campaign  
Marketing and Promotion Design  
News Graphics Design  
Web Site Design

### **GUILD SERVICE AWARDS**

Member of the Year  
(Dan de Souza Memorial Award)  
Shop Steward of the Year  
(Nadine Grinder Memorial Award)

Unit Officer of the Year  
Organizer of the Year  
Customer Service Professional of the Year  
Herb Block Award for Community Service

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