



Tribune Lays Off 61 in Sun Newsroom; 40 Are Guild-Represented Workers

After firing 21 senior editors and managers at the Baltimore Sun on April 28, Tribune Co. distributed 40 layoff notices to Guild-represented employees on April 29.

The editors and managers were fired without advance notice; many were ushered out of the Sun building by security guards. Laid-off WBNG members included photographers, critics, columnists, sports reporters, copy editors, page designers, and graphic artists,

“Tribune, through careless management practices, has saddled itself with \$13 billion in debt, and now Baltimore is paying a price,” said Cet Parks, Executive Director of the Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild.

“Tribune is siphoning good jobs from Baltimore and sending work that talented editors, reporters, photographers, copy editors and designers have done here to its home base in Chicago. That is not right.”

Tribune plans to lay off the 40 newsroom employees by May 27. Targeted employees include four columnists, photographers, critics and copy editors, all of whom received hand-delivered letters April 29 signed by Monty Cook, senior vice president and editor. The Sun also laid off seven employees in advertising and customer service in late April.

Since Tribune acquired the Sun in 1999, the Guild-represented staff has been cut from roughly 420 employees to what is now projected to be approximately 150 by the end of May.

“While we understand that media companies, especially newspapers, are reeling from declining advertising revenue, shrinking circulation and a year-and-a-half of recession, we believe Baltimore needs a metropolitan paper that covers the important events in the region,” said Angela Kuhl, Guild Unit Chair who works at The Sun.

“It is imperative that Baltimore maintains a newspaper that brings people news, excit-

ing and provocative stories and enriches the lives of all who live here.”

Last June, Tribune began redesigning all of its newspapers to reduce them in size and staff. The Baltimore Sun Media Group eliminated 100 jobs companywide in early August, many through voluntary buyouts. In December, Tribune said it was forced to file voluntary bankruptcy protection to restructure its crippling debt.

104 Guild-Covered Post Employees Receive ‘Voluntary Separation’ Offers

One-hundred-four Guild-represented Post employees received Voluntary Retirement Incentive Program (VRIP) offers May 1. This was the fourth such program to be offered in recent years.

This buyout, as were those in the past, will be funded by the surplus in the Post-Guild Pension Plan.

Per the Post-Guild collective bargaining agreement (which the Post Guild unit voted in mid-April to extend one additional month, to June 7), negotiations over the terms of the buyout were mandatory.

During five bargaining sessions from April 13 to 22, the Guild was able to negotiate some improvements, such as an increase in the number of eligible employees, which the Post had originally set at 84.

The eligibility list now includes limited numbers of Directories and Real Estate Account Executives, Metro and Travel Reporters, and National Night Editors.

The Guild also negotiated an increase to the Cash Pension Supplement, from \$210 per year of service to \$225 per year for up to 30 years, and increased the Pre-Age-65 annual supplement from \$3,500 to \$4000. The Guild also was able to negotiate a written guarantee that VRIP retirement benefits for those who accept it will not be reduced in the future.

Eligible employees will be 50 years old by Dec. 31, and will have had at least five years of service. Early retirement benefits will be increased by adding five years to the employee’s age (e.g. an employee who is 60 will receive the benefits normally paid at age 65).

Collective Bargaining Update

The Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild bargains and enforces 25 collective bargaining agreements with 24 employers. These are the dates of the signed contracts as of May 1. **(Number of WBNG members in the unit.)**

American Nurses Association (101).....	Feb. 15, 2006 to Feb. 14, 2009
AFL-CIO (150)	Oct. 1, 2006 to March 31, 2009
National Labor College (19).....	April 1, 2008 to July 31, 2009
Washington Post (393)	Nov. 8, 2005 to June 7, 2009
Working for America, Inc. (6).....	Jan. 1, 2007 to June 30, 2009
Solidarity Center (23)	Sept. 26, 2006 to Sept. 25, 2009
Int'l Labor Comm. Association (2).....	Nov. 1, 2006 to Oct. 31, 2009
United American Nurses (9)	March 24, 2005 to Dec. 31, 2009
Agence France-Presse (42).....	Jan. 1, 2007 to Dec. 31, 2009
Catholic News Service (18)	Jan. 1, 2008 to Dec. 31, 2009
Radio Free Asia (107).....	Jan. 31, 2008 to Jan. 30, 2010
BNA (273)	March 1, 2006 to Feb. 28, 2010
Dept. for Prof. Employees, AFL-CIO (3).....	July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2010
MCCSSE-SEIU Local 500 (15)	July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2010
BNA Correspondents (23).....	July 15, 2006 to July 14, 2010
United Food and Commercial Workers (71)	Oct. 7, 2007 to Oct. 6, 2010
American Postal Workers Union (15)	May 21, 2007 to Nov. 20, 2010
Change to Win (26)	Jan. 1, 2008 to Dec. 31, 2010
Kaiser Coalition (17).....	April 1, 2005 to March 31, 2011
United Way of America (9)	May 1, 2008 to April 30, 2011
Baltimore Sun (205).....	June 25, 2007 to June 24, 2011
Casa of Maryland (42)	July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2011
American Rights at Work (12).....	July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2011
E-L & Associates (2)	Jan. 1, 2009 to Dec. 31, 2011
Jobs With Justice (9).....	Jan. 1, 2009 to Dec. 31, 2011

OFFICIAL NOTICE

WBNG General Membership Meeting

Thursday, May 14, 6:30 p.m.

Washington Guild Office, 1100 15th St. NW 202-785-3650

GUILD FORUM

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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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Address Correction Requested