

f POST GUILD UNIT forum



Local 32035

The Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild

September 6, 2005



Guild Fights for Fairness, Better Pay, Benefits, and Working Conditions

Guild Action Works

Many of you from various departments at The Post have been attending scheduled "Let's Talk" meetings in the Guild office, to discuss particular problems in your work areas and to develop strategies for solving them. Here's a summary of how some of these meetings have helped so far. Many thanks are due to all who have been involved. Your participation proves that together we can make changes for the better at The Post.

1. CENTREX OPERATORS

Centrex department employees were told they could no longer eat meals at their desks and were given a list of some 18 "approved" snacks, which they could consume while at their workstations.

Action: The Guild publicized this injustice throughout The Post.

Resolution: Post management rescinded its decision and now the employees can eat at their desks again.

(continued on page 2)

Help Families Devastated by Hurricane Katrina

Donate to the special Hurricane Relief Fund of the AFL-CIO Union Community Fund, labor's nonprofit 501(c)(3) charity for working families and communities in distress. By filling out a form available on the seventh floor of the Post, employees can have their contributions matched by the Washington Post Company.

DONATE AT:

https://secure.ga3.org/08/UCF_Katrina_Relief

The Guild Contract expires November 7 and bargaining for a new contract will begin in less than two weeks. Guild members can act now to help determine our next three years of pay, benefits, and working conditions. **Attend the Guild Membership Meeting on Thursday, September 8 at 12:30 at Metropolitan AME Church, 1218 M St. NW, just around the corner from The Post.** There will also be a night shift meeting at the Guild office at 8 PM.

At the meeting, the Guild Bargaining Committee will present a set of proposals covering fairness for all, pay, benefits, and working conditions to discuss and ratify. Guild bargainers will present these proposals to Post management on Wednesday, September 14. Management is scheduled to present its proposals the same day.

Bargaining Committee members have been meeting every Tuesday throughout the summer to put together a package of proposals designed to help every Guild-covered Post employee. Success at the bargaining table requires the active support and participation of every member. If you haven't joined yet, there's no better time to join than now.

Your Guild Bargaining Committee: Ann Marie Ditchey, Ann Gerhart, Robin Groom, Veronica Ingram, Stephen King, Gerald Martineau, Darlene Meyer, Robert Pierre, David Robie, Keith Sinzinger, Rick Weiss, Rick Ehrmann, Tiffany Harris, Bruce Nelson

Help Build Our Communications Network

Please send your home e-mail address to:

jmillhouse@wbng.org

POST GUILD UNIT

Guild Action Works *continued:*

2. MAIL ROOM

Mail Room employees informed the Guild of a problem involving work-related injuries.

Action: The Guild convened a Joint Labor-Management Committee meeting to show that employees had been sustaining injuries to their wrists from continuously having to stamp each piece of mail that enters the mailroom and to ask for the speedy installation of new equipment to alleviate this problem.

Resolution: A new machine has been purchased so mail room employees no longer have to stamp each piece of mail.

Mail room employees also brought to the Guild's attention some security concerns involving poor lighting and a worrisome inability to see beyond the area's entrance.

Action: The Guild asked for higher mailroom security.

Resolution: The Post has now installed mirrors at the door and better lighting.

3. RECRUITMENT ASR'S

Recruitment ASR's were told they would be responsible for additional classified sales duties to help the inside sales representatives.

Action: The Guild filed a complaint with management about this potential contract violation.

Resolution: Management decided to keep the ASR's duties the same without imposing the additional sales duties.

This has been a gratifying experience for those of us who are covered and protected by the Guild. The Guild is here to serve as YOUR representative in the workplace. Its voice – OUR voices — can make a difference. In these and many other cases, the Guild has helped employees bring about positive changes that have directly affected their lives at The Post.

Guild to Post: Follow Your Code of Conduct!

The Guild Post Unit played a leading role in reversing the Post's decision to co-sponsor the Pentagon's Freedom Walk from the Pentagon to a concert on the Mall headlined by country music singer Clint Black. Black is well known for his pro Iraq war song "Iraq and Roll." The Post was set to provide free advertising for the event. Post unit co-chair Ann Gerhart delivered the following resolution to the office of Publisher Bo Jones:

The Washington Post Unit of the Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild (Local 32035), which represents nearly 1,400 employees of the Washington Post, strongly encourages Washington Post management to reconsider its decision to co-sponsor the Defense Department's Sept. 11 "Freedom Walk."

Post news employees are subject to disciplinary action for participating in political activities that may be perceived as revelatory of personal opinions or bias. The Washington Post itself should be held to the same high standard. Moreover, arguments that the Freedom Walk is anything other than a political activity – and indeed, a political activity in support of the war in Iraq – should be put to rest by the prominent participation of country music star Clint Black, best known of late for his war-glorifying song "Iraq and Roll."

The Guild supports The Post's stated intention of honoring the nation's veterans, including those who have served in Iraq. But the Post undermines this goal by lending its support to a political event that links the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks to the war in Iraq – a link that The Post, in its reporting, has shown to be false.

If The Post wants to encourage greater respect for veterans among its employees, it should consider giving those employees something that the Guild has repeatedly sought in bargaining: A day off on November 11, Veterans Day, to honor the patriots who have served our nation.

That evening, the Post announced it was dropping its support for the Pentagon event. The Washington Times swiftly denounced the Post decision in an editorial on August 17 criticizing the Post for bowing to "a near revolt in its newsroom." The Guild praised the Post's decision.