

# POST GUILD UNIT

# FORUM...



The Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild, Local 32035, TNG-CWA

January 25, 2007

## Devaluations Stir Concerns

Have you been devaluated lately? Many employees have been on the receiving end of surprisingly negative evaluations in recent weeks. Several have asked Guild officers and representatives what recourse they have when the content of these documents does not, in their eyes, match up with the facts.

No employee should settle for an inaccurate or misleading evaluation. Not only should the contents be true, they should be complete. An evaluation is incomplete if it leaves out important contributions you have made, such as dutifully filling in for others during times of short staffing or making contributions to The Post's other news platforms such as the Web site or radio programs.

There are two steps you can take to set the record straight. First, get in touch with the supervisor who gave you the evaluation and tell him or her, either in person or in an electronic message, why you think the evaluation is inaccurate or unfair. Be specific. If there are factual errors, note them. If there are omissions, list them. And if there are subjective statements that you think do not reflect the quality of your work, your attitude or your value to the company, spell them out. This is no time to be modest. It is not clear what the company's strategy is with regard to evaluations at this point – whether, as some suspect, they are increasingly being used to build a paper trail to push some employees either out the door or to less attractive job classifications – but it is important that you stand up for yourself before you find yourself knee-deep in negative judgments. Once you have listed all the aspects of your evaluation that you believe are inaccurate or incomplete, ask your supervisor to consider them seriously and to rewrite the evaluation in a way that better reflects those facts. Several employees have successfully challenged their evaluations in this way and won appropriate changes.

If your supervisor refuses to make changes, or makes some changes but not others that you think deserve to be made, you have the right to compose a response to that evaluation and have that response placed in your personnel file. Having such responses on file may help you later if a trend of unfairness or discrimination starts to become apparent over time. Remember that although the Guild cannot, under the terms of our labor contract, arbitrate individual evaluations, it can grieve them and it can challenge discriminatory behavior against individuals. And remember, if you are called in to an investigatory interview with a supervisor, you have a right under federal law to have a Guild steward with you. If a meeting unexpectedly turns out to be one that could lead to disciplinary action, you also have the right to have your Guild steward present. You should stop the meeting and ask that a steward attend.

If The Post moves from voluntary buyouts to a new cost-saving phase that includes some involuntary push-outs, take advantage of your Guild contract and stand up for your rights.

## Guild Meeting

**Are you concerned about the future of newspapers, evaluations, ever-expanding work demands, the new health benefit and prescription plans? Attend the first Guild unit meeting of the year to share your views about how the Guild is addressing these issues. All Guild-covered employees are welcome.**

**Wednesday, February 14**

**12 noon until 1 pm**

**and 1 pm until 2 pm**

**At**

**Metro AME Church, 1518 M St, NW**

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### Guild Gets Pay Stub Fix

As some of you learned the hard way, The Post broke a promise when it stopped providing paper pay stubs and switched to an all-electronic system: Despite assurances the company gave the Guild during last year's contract talks that electronic stubs would have all the information that had been included in the paper stubs, the electronic versions did not include employees' "leave accrual date" – the personalized "use it or lose it" date on which your annual vacation balance expires.

Lacking that information and reminder, some employees lost accrued vacation time before they got around to using it up. Following a complaint from the Guild, The Post has revamped the electronic stubs to show that date, which differs for each employee. Remember, all "Deferred Vacation" must be used by your leave accrual date, or it will be forfeited. All hours in "Current Vacation" rolls over on that date and is available as "Deferred Vacation" for another year.

### Workers Already Sick of New Health Plan

Lots of complaints are rolling in about the new HealthFund, which most employees were herded into this year. Washington Post managers have said it may be more than a year before they get enough feedback to decide whether it needs to be changed. We think that is too long and too late. But to push for improvements sooner, we need data. Expect to see a questionnaire soon, asking about your experiences with the HealthFund so far. The Guild will use your anonymous responses to start building a database of what's working and what's not. Meanwhile, if you have tales you want to share, talk to any officer or write a description of your experience and either e-mail it to Rick Weiss (news) or Darlene Meyer (commercial) or (if you are worried about privacy) leave an anonymous note in one of our mailboxes.

### Expense Reimbursements

A reminder: The old days of infinite leeway for expense reimbursements are so over. Under the terms of our contract, you must file for reimbursement within 90 days after the expense is incurred, or you risk not being reimbursed. Deadlines are even shorter at the end of the year. Pay attention to reminders from the accounting folks and take them seriously.

### Welcome New Members

**Adrian Ackles   Lori Aritani   Liwan Berhane   Alla Dreyvitser   Kim Fisher   Jennifer Ford**  
**Jon Goldberg   Shirley Hairston   \*Sophia Holmes   Bernita Howell   Yvette Jones   Emily Messner**  
**Olatayo Oygsola   Glenn Paterson   Annys Shin   Tia Smith   Jane Touzalin   \*Kelly Vanison-Lunn**  
**Jacob Vanwoerkom   Stephen Vogel**

\* denotes effective upon reaching continuity

### Build the Guild, and Get \$50 Card Instantly

The Guild's winter recruitment drive is in full swing, rebuilding the losses we endured from the recent buyouts that led to the disproportionate departure of many longtime Guild members. Now more than ever, with all the changes going on in the industry, you need the Guild to be strong. That means we need every Guild-covered employee to do your share. And for a limited time, new members will receive a \$50 gift card that can be used in any store that accepts American Express. Contact any Guild officer listed below or call the Guild office for more information: 202 785-3650 ext. 14.

### Guild Officers and Stewards

**Darlene Meyer, Co-Chair, Commercial, 334-7007**  
**Rick Weiss, Co-Chair, News, 334-5514**  
**Ann Marie Ditchey, Vice Chair, Commercial, 334-5716**  
**Andreia Douglas, Vice Chair, Commercial, 334-6353**  
**Robert Pierre, Vice Chair, News, 334-5607**  
**Stephen King, Vice Chair, News, 334-7356**  
**Dita Smith, Secretary, 334-7517**  
**Alan Lengel, Delegate to EC, 334-5556**

**JoAnn Goslin, Steward, News, 334-7217**  
**Dita Smith, Steward, News, 334-7517**  
**Stephen Richardson, Steward, Ad Ops, 334-7730**  
**Sandi Randall, Steward, Adv, 334-7031**  
**David Robie, Steward, Circ, 334-4313**  
**Chris Schoppa, Steward, Book World, 334-6954**  
**Andreia Douglas, Steward, Ad Ops, 334-6353**  
**Darlene Meyer, Steward, Adv, 334-7007**  
**Ann Marie Ditchey, Steward, Adv, 334-5716**  
**Craig Hall, Steward, Drivers**  
**Jake Jarboe, Data Center**