



June 10, 2008

CHANGES IN COMMISSION SALES

It should come as no surprise to anyone working here that the Sun has had a difficult year with ad revenues in decline. The people who have felt that impact directly are the 56 commissioned sales representatives. The Sun began 2008 by launching a new commission pay plan based on what it characterized as realistic sales goals and with a requirement that 90% of that goal be achieved in order for the salesperson to receive the better part of their compensation.

The sales force reacted to the new plan with cautious optimism.

Then the economy fell flat and has not picked up.

The Sun has since introduced three new plans, one for the territory reps, or what most of us would call the county bureau sales reps, and another for the Tribune Media Network Representatives, who secure and manage ad reservations for the Tribune Media Net accounts. The other is for the reps who are not any of those nor in recruitment.

Two of these plans, the Local Retail and TMN plans are diametrically opposed: the bureau reps are almost entirely straight commission --- a flat commission on what they sell with the percentage based on how large an account base they handle. The TMN representatives' plan, on the other hand, is very close to being a salary with most of their pay being fixed and only a very small variable commission amount.

The most recent introduction, the plan for non-local, TMN and non-recruitment was just received by the Guild and we are asking to meet and discuss it.

But again the affected representatives are cautiously optimistic that these new plans will

make it financially possible for them to continue working here.

We welcome any relief that makes it possible for our members, and therefore the Sun, to make more money.

Related to this are proposed changes to the way commissioned sales reps are compensated while on extended leaves of absence. The Guild requested bargaining on the changes proposed by the Sun and the parties have met for discussion. We believe we are very close to a resolution on the leave policy and are awaiting the Sun's availability to wrap up the discussions and finalize the policy. We'll keep you posted.

As always we encourage to come to us with any questions, concerns or issues related to any of these plans.

Angie Kuhl
Unit Vice Chair/ Commercial

ASBESTOS AVOIDED

The Sun's Howard County bureau employees won't be moving into asbestos-tainted offices after all.

When one Howard County bureau employee expressed concern last month that the Sun was considering moving the bureau to new offices that had "contained asbestos" in the ceiling, the Guild sent a letter to the company. The Guild requested that the building owner "provide documentation and proof" that there were not asbestos-containing products within the workplace. The Guild also was concerned that there could be deteriorated, airborne asbestos products in the workplace.

Last week, the Sun responded to the Guild, saying the company was "currently seeking other office space for the bureau and will not be leasing the offices that were of concern."

Tanika White, Unit Vice Chair