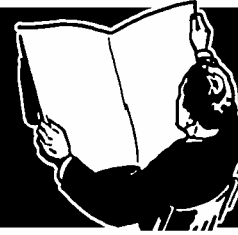


WASHINGTON - BALTIMORE
NEWSPAPER ★ GUILD

TNG-CWA LOCAL 32035 ★ SUN UNIT: www.wbng.org/sun



Guild Accepts Buyout Proposal

June 30, 2008

After three days of bargaining, the Guild agreed today to the terms of the Sun's voluntary separation program, opening the buyout to nearly 400 members in the unit. The Sun said Guild members should receive buyout packets as early as this afternoon.

Despite attempts by Guild leaders to convince the company to allow employees more time to decide whether to apply for the buyout or not, the Sun would not extend the timeline. The deadline to apply for the buyout is July 11.

We, your Guild leaders, think that two weeks is not nearly enough time to make such a life-changing decision. We offered every conceivable argument to get the Sun to see that. But the company is more concerned about its own self-imposed deadlines for getting about 100 employees off the payroll and out of the building. We think that's really sad.

Nevertheless, we agreed to the buyout terms because we believe that there are some employees who might want to take what the company is offering: 1 week of pay for every completed 6 months of service, plus an additional 3-percent to help cover some taxes.

We managed to win agreement on one major point: The company wanted the ability to pick and choose who would be approved for the buyout if there were more than they needed in any particular classification. We got them to use employment seniority as the basis for selection. It's the fairest way.

Even with these buyouts, however, the company has told us that there will more than likely be layoffs, principally in the Newsroom and in our Call Center. We know that if more employees take a buyout, fewer colleagues will be forced out by layoffs.

Frankly, neither choice is very good. Either way, good people leave and are faced with starting anew in this depressed economy. For some in the Newsroom who will have to leave, this will mean saying good-bye not only to a beloved newspaper, but also to an industry.

By Aug. 1, the Sun wants all employees taking the buyout to be gone; laid off employees will no longer be on the payroll by Aug. 15th. By those dates, the Sun will have a leaner payroll but a badly-bruised staff left behind.

Despite that, Guild members have shown their determination and willingness to fight for the best newspaper we can produce. You've asked great questions and been incredibly supportive. But we still have work to do. And we will be coming to you with mobilization ideas very soon.

Tanika White and Lynn Anderson, Unit Co-Chairs