



March 14, 2011

Contract Extension Approved

Guild members at the Sun voted to approve the three-year extension to the 2007-2011 contract at a well-attended membership meeting Wednesday, March 9. During the voice vote, there were also several "nays."

Before the vote was taken, the unit leaders who had been aware of the off-the-record discussions with Sun managers that led to the extension agreement individually voiced their support or opposition to the plan.

Sun Unit Chair Angie Kuhl and Cet Parks, Executive Director of the Washington-Baltimore local, stressed the new provisions in the extension were economic or political --- that none of the changes were to the language of the contract.

Here are the key points to the extension:

- It is a three-year extension of the current contract. It would go into effect June 27, 2011 with an expiration date at the end of June 2014.
- There would be a two-year wage freeze. There would be raises in the third year --- \$10/week on the scales and \$15/per week per member in the pay-for-performance pool. People hired on the steps would continue to advance on the steps, getting raises as they go up, but would experience the two-year wage freeze once they reached the top of the pay scale.
- Pension freeze. Pension benefits remain intact, but the benefit is frozen at current levels. Employees hired after June 27, 2011, would not be included in the pension plan.
- The company's contribution to the 401(k) would rise to 3.5 percent.
- The Guild pledges not to challenge Sun over positions outside the bargaining unit with the National Labor Relations Board, absent significant changes in those positions for a period of 6 months after the extension begins on June 27, 2011.
- Two titles for web workers, covering currently three employees, would be added to Guild jurisdiction.
- The fee for parking in the garage at 601 N. Calvert St. will be reduced by \$10/month. There would be no increase in parking rates during the term of extension

All other provisions of the contract --- including vacations, sick leave, shift differential and layoff language remain unchanged.

‘Use or Lose’ Vacation Deadline Looming

We are in the final weeks of the accrued vacation use or lose period. Not only must you use the vacation hours for the 2010-2011 vacation year, **but you must also use or lose any previously earned but unused vacation days.**

This is Section 9.6 (b) of the contract and any unused vacation as of April 30, 2011 will be forfeited. If you’ve attempted to schedule vacation time but have been denied the time off by your boss, please contact a steward or activist and let them know.

If you are uncertain as to your vacation balance, you can find your information on The Loop. Once you sign in and click on the Leave Balance button you will find your current year vacation balance and your accrued balance.

Front Page Award Winners

The Front Page Awards honor the “best of the best” in writing and imagery created by workers in WBNG-covered units in calendar year 2010. The awards ceremony will be held at the next Guild General Membership meeting, in Washington on Thursday, March 31.

Winners from the Sun

Meredith Cohn

Distinguished Local News Reporting

“Doctors Concerned About Shortage of Imported Isotope”

Jean Marbella

Distinguished Feature Writing

“Pitcairn’s Brief Time in Baltimore Ended With a Final, Human Touch”

Bernie Harrison Memorial Award for Commentary

“As Ehrlich, O’Malley Were Saying 4 Years Ago...”

Jamie Smith Hopkins

Frank C. Porter Memorial Award for Labor and Business Reporting

“False Signings Cloud Foreclosures in Md.”

Congratulations to the winners!

Connie Knox – International chair

Angie Kuhl – Unit chair