Buffalo Mailers Reach New Three-Year Agreement at Buffalo News

After nearly a year of negotiations, Buffalo Mailers M-81 has reached a new three-year agreement with the Buffalo News. The contract, which covers Journeymen A mailers, Journeymen B mailers, and part-time helpers, was ratified by the membership on November 6.

Since the opening of negotiations in November, 2015, the company had made it clear that their number one priority was to make changes to the employee health care coverage. “We knew from the beginning that healthcare costs were going to be our big issue,” said M-81 Local President Joseph Cannizzaro.

The previous contract stipulated that the company pay 100 percent of the premiums for eligible employees’ healthcare costs or pay an annual reimbursement should the employee have, and provide proof of, insurance elsewhere. “Their initial proposal was to amend that language, asking for a 70/30 split—employees would be responsible for 30 percent of the cost of the premium—as well as changing the formula of hours worked to qualify for insurance and the elimination of future retiree benefits,” said Cannizzaro.

Knowing that the two sides were far apart on the economic portions of negotiations, the bargaining committee took a strong stance not to

DUES NOTICE REMINDER

Article VII, Section 3 of the Sector Bylaws states: CWA and Sector dues for each month shall be collected by local unions and transmitted to the CWA Secretary-Treasurer via means established by CWA, no later than the 20th day of the succeeding month. Locals failing to conform to these provisions shall be considered delinquent and debarred from benefits.

Article XXI, Section 2 of the Sector Bylaws further states: Local Unions within the Sector may be compelled to merge into other Sector Locals for violating the CWA Constitution and/or Sector Bylaws.

Compliance

Each local, and local officers, are required to perform specific functions in accordance with the Sector Bylaws. Unfortunately, we are sometimes forced to remind all locals and their officers of their obligations and when they are delinquent in their dues. The ITU used to print and publish the names of any local that became delinquent to aid in the correction of any delinquency.

The Sector gets no joy when it has to issue these notices or enforce Article VII and Article XXI. It’s also a drain on the very limited resources we have. Please take immediate action if you are notified of any delinquency. If for some reason your local needs assistance with dues issues please let us know, we want to help resolve any problems. Dues cannot be paid every other month, or quarterly, or whenever a local feels like it.

Enforcement

Beginning January 1, 2017 and all times thereafter, the Sector will be strictly enforcing these articles. If you are having problems with a shop that uses the union label, and they are or become delinquent, let them know they will run the risk of losing their authorization to use the union label. If an entire local is repeatedly delinquent and debarred from benefits, they will run the risk of being compelled to merge.

Again, we want to be perfectly clear: If you need assistance with dues issues please let us know, we want to help resolve any problems before they start. The Sector does not want to issue these notices or enforce these articles; this is solely brought on by locals that fail to comply.
M-81 Maintains Company Paid Health Coverage for Buffalo News Mailers

p. 4A → discuss economics until after all non-economic issues had been resolved.

From November 2015 through February 2016, negotiations moved very slowly with both sides taking hard stances. Finally, in February, the company withdrew some of its proposals and a tentative agreement was reached on staffing that strengthened language on filling job vacancies and updated existing ergonomic safety and training.

After two more months of negotiations, the two parties made additional enhancements to the contract language, including more vacation time and flexibility of use of time and improvements to the arbitration process to make it easier to file, should arbitration be necessary.

“As negotiations progressed, these were huge wins for us. The increased work hours not only guarantee our members more money, it could give the company the ability to bring more work into the mailroom, which would increase job security and create a win-win situation for everyone.”

— Dan Wasser, Sector President

Continued negotiations also led to tentative agreements on updated work hours, increasing from a 35-hour week to a 37.5-hour week. The two parties also agreed to language that will create new jobs and training. The increased work hours not only guarantee our members more money, it could give the company the ability to bring more work into the mailroom, which would increase job security and create a win-win situation for everyone,” said Dan Wasser, Sector president.

M-81 Member Larry Bordanaro agreed, “In our situation these enhancements could lead to the company bringing in work that is non-traditional or non-newspaper mailers union work.”

In addition to the work hour changes, the bargaining committee secured a provision pertaining to jobs with differential pay. The language ensures that every employee, with the exclusion of “blue shirt” positions, will have the opportunity to work a differential job should they so choose. This will guarantee that favoritism will not be used in assigning differential jobs.

Finally, after nearly 10 months of negotiating, and after all non-economic issues had been addressed, the elephant in the room had to be discussed — healthcare.

“We could not allow the healthcare changes to happen,” said Wasser. “If we did, it would negate all our accomplishments over the past 10 months, any gains we had made would be gobbled up by the premium costs that members would be saddled with.”

Working with that goal in mind, the bargaining committee came up with a proposal that would not only maintain the current medical coverage, it would potentially save the company a few million dollars over the term of the contract. While the company was very receptive of the proposal, the insurance company pushed back and tried to block the plan, threatening to drastically increase premiums if implemented. With the insurance company as the only impediment, the company and the union worked together to finally resolve the issue with the insurance company and sign a three-year contract with the Buffalo News without making any changes to the healthcare package.

Cindy Whalen, a M-81 Helper at the Buffalo News for the past five years said that she thought the contract was very fair and that she “thinks the healthcare issue was definitely handled correctly.”

“Although the negotiating process took a long time, I think all the members will benefit from the hard work of the bargaining team,” said Wasser. “In today’s corporate climate, they managed to negotiate a good contract. I’m very proud of them.”

The bargaining team included M-81 Secretary-Treasurer John Fletch, M-81 President Joseph Cannizzaro, and Steven Fry.
CWA Local 4250/CTU 16 recently organized shop GG Media, LLC, in Palos Heights, Illinois (standing from left) Mike Russell, Laura Ziemann, Michelle Tovo; Seated, Elizabeth VanDerWoude and Mark Hornung

Linda Morris Cooley, Staff Representative

CWA 4250/CTU 16

CWA Local 4250/CTU16 reached an agreement with Cook County that settled two grievances and an unfair labor practice charge on changes the County made to paid lunch hour and breaks.

The bargaining unit employees will resume taking their paid lunch periods and breaks as they had previously until the Union and County come to an agreement on the meaning and intent of the language in the section of the agreement that addresses lunch and breaks in either a side letter or as part of the bargaining in the next Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Alliance Printers and Publishing

CWA Local 4250/CTU16 continues to meet with the Alliance Printers and Publishing in the Composing Department and maintaining our position that the supplemental agreement is ongoing and layoff is by priority.

Political Boot Camp

Local 4250/CTU16 VP Michelle Tovo participated in the political boot camp held by District 4 and volunteered along with other local members in the 2016 elections.

Central Illinois Typographical Union

Central Illinois Typographical Union 177/ CWA Local 14406 reached a four-year agreement with Pana News, Inc., that provides for a 2 percent raise in 2017 and 2018. COPE language was also bargained into the new agreement.

St. Louis Mailers

St. Louis Mailers 3/ CWA Local 14620 is bargaining with Humphrey Printing in Kokomo, IN, the company has been looking into the other health insurance plans. They have contacted the CWA/IUE health insurance also. This issue is still open and we are discussing it. We have reached tentative agreements on new Union Label language, Union membership language and dues deduction language.

Organizing Win for CWA 4250/CTU 16 at GG Media

CWA Local 4250/CTU16 organized a new shop and bargained a first contract with GG Media, LLC in Palos Heights, Illinois. Currently they have three new union members and plans to add more. They signed a two-year contract with 3 percent wage increases set for each year of the contract.

Duluth Mailers

Duluth Mailers 62/ CWA Local 14733 reached a three-year agreement with the Hibbing Daily Tribune. The new agreement provides for increasing the starting wage and increases at each level, adding additional step increases in years 7 and 10. The union also bargained to add new funeral leave language that includes nieces and nephews in the leave policy. The agreement also ensures that probationary employees receive job training and training reviews with input of the union chairman. COPE language was also added to this new agreement.

New York Typographical Union

Negotiations were held with the Albany Times Union and the Union was successful in obtaining a three year Agreement through April 2019. The Agreement will include wage increases each year of the Contract along with increases each year to the Employer’s monthly contribution to the Local Union’s Health and Welfare Fund.

Deschamps Printing

The Contract for Deschamps Printing was opened for a wage re-opener for years 2016 and 2017. In an effort to cover both years and get the Contract wrapped up through August 2018, the Union was able to achieve wage increases for the members effective September 2016 and September 2017. The Contract will be back up for negotiation on August 31, 2018.

Boston Herald

The members at the Boston Herald reached a new Agreement through October 2018. In an effort to try and maintain the Unit, the Union was able to obtain a minimum manning number, which would allow for there to be new hires after attrition. In order to obtain this, a new wage tier was negotiated for the new hires. In addition, medical coverage, pension, and all other benefits were maintained.

Organizing Win for Charleston Typo

Charleston Typographical Union, CWA 14210 organized three new members at Patriotic Promotions and bargained its first contract. The Contract is for a three-year term along with 2 percent wage increases each year of the agreement.

Sn
ITU History Uncovered in Wall of Union Printers Home

According to the Colorado Springs Gazette.com, painters performing maintenance to the lobby of the old Union Printers Home found an interesting surprise in the wall of the old Colorado Springs building.

The workers removed a 50-year-old commemorative plaque off of the wall and revealed a patch of faded plaster that had the words, “Documents inside this area,” written in red ink.

Opening up the wall the painters found a metal vault that contained newspapers, photographs and literature from the International Typographical Union (ITU), now known as the Printing, Publishing and Media Workers Sector (PPMWS). The vault also contained a wrinkled one dollar bill and an inventory list of the contents dated September 28, 1965.

A note in the box read: “This container was packed just prior to the occasion of dedicating the newly reconstructed Medical department of the Union Printers Home.”

According to staff at the home, which was sold by the union in 2015 to a private nursing home company, the items were repacked into the container and the staff added some new artifacts too, and then all of the items were put back into the wall.

Faith Nation-Hooper, the Union Printers Home Admissions and Public Relations Director, said that the staff wanted to allow future staff to “experience the same excitement the current staff enjoyed” upon finding the vault.

The Union Printers Home will celebrate its 125th anniversary in May 2017. Nation-Hoopers said that the current owners are “going to respect and keep the history that is here.”

Pittsburgh Typo No. 7 Ratifies New Agreement with Art Printing

Pittsburgh Typographical ratified a new two-year agreement with Art Printing located in Lancaster, PA.

“Healthcare costs were the main issue,” said Steve DeIanni, Sector representative and a member of the negotiating team. “The company is small, and provides a stipend to employees for their healthcare. Since the last contract negotiations, the employees have been trying to get an increase in the amount of the stipend. They were unsuccessful last time, which is why it was only a one-year contract.”

This time however, the employees were successful in getting an increase in the monthly stipend from management.

DeIanni explained that the employees were able to get the employer to understand the hardships they were facing with the continued increases in medical costs. And that the existing $300 per month stipend, “just wasn’t enough.” The new contract increased the stipend by $50 per month.

In addition, the new contract included a 2 percent wage increase in year one and a $0.25 per hour wage increase in year two.

The membership was happy with the overall package and ratified the contract. The new agreement runs through October 31, 2018.

PPMWS Welcomes New Staff

The Printing, Publishing and Media Workers Sector-CWA welcomed a new administrative secretary in November, Marcia Mikesell. Marcia joins the Sector after a lifetime of serving in all aspects within the publishing and communications field.

From her early start, using a wing mailer for a direct mail business; to resolving countless customer complaints at a major metropolitan newspaper; to numerous advertising sales positions; and most recently serving as Secretary Treasurer to Pittsburgh’s oldest labor union, Marcia will use her extensive experience and knowledge to assist Sector President Dan Wasser in the day-to-day duties at the PPMWS headquarters.

“I knew that Marcia would be a good fit. Not only because of her background strengths and experience, but because of her great personality. Before long, the membership will see what a benefit she is to the Sector,” said Wasser.

“I am delighted to continue in a career that will employ my skills and further develop my involvement within the printing industry at PPMWS Headquarters,” said Marcia.

Please join us in welcoming Marcia to the Sector family.