As Company Demands Concessions
PPMWS-CWA Local 1170 Stands United

For almost a year, members of Rochester, NY CWA Local 1170 employed at the Democrat and Chronicle, Gannett’s flagship newspaper, have been in negotiations for a new contract.

Since 1998, the company has taken a hardline in negotiations – demanding pay concessions, as well as freezing the company pension, eliminating retiree health insurance for new hires and reducing health insurance benefits,” said Local 1170 President John Pusloskie. “We’ve been in negotiations since last November with essentially no negotiations taking place during that time frame.”

In 1998, members of Empire Media Local 15 merged with CWA Local 1170 to form the current collective bargaining unit at the Democrat and Chronicle. Pusloskie says that up until 2008, the Union and the company had relatively good labor relations.

“Beginning in 2008, the company took a hardline demanding draconian cuts that included a 15 percent pay cut.”

According to Printing, Publishing and Media Workers Sector-CWA (PPMWS) Staff Representative Steve Delanni, when negotiations opened, the company was looking to gain flexibility in their scheduling, which would allow the company to create either four or five shifts per week ranging from five to 10 hours per shift. The proposed schedule would still allow for the full-time requirement of 37.5 hours per week. The company also was looking for changes to the absenteeism policy, benefit changes that paralleled the non-union workforce, flexibility for the com-

After Sale UPH Still Supporting Its Members in the Printing Industry

Since its beginnings in 1852, the ITU has been an example of leadership and forward thinking for Trade Unionism in America. The eight-hour work day (achieved in 1906), democracy within the Union using distinct political parties (progressives and independents), marketable job skills and training (traveling cards and apprenticeship/journeyman programs) and equal treatment for women (first women as journeymen in 1869) are all trailblazing efforts championed by the ITU since its inception.

In keeping with that tradition, the Child-Drexel Home for Union Printers was built in Colorado Springs in 1892 to serve elderly and sick ITU members. At that time, the average life expectancy of a journeyman printer was 41 years, due in large part to the toxic mix of the equipment and the carbon-based inks used in the printing industry. A form of black lung and tuberculosis were caused by a lifetime of working closely with those chemicals. To aid members in their retirement struggles, ITU leaders decided to create a place for those infirmed members at the Printers Home. After several attempts, the project was eventually started with a donation of $10,000 from George Childs and Anthony Drexel. An additional $71,000 was obtained from active ITU members through donations and dues assessments, sometimes just a dime at a time, and a trust was created for the purpose of operating and continuing the mission of the Printers Home.

Founders of the Home purchased 80 acres in Colorado Springs. Its climate was beneficial for treating lung disease. Construction on the Home was completed in 1892.

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United We Bargain, Divided We Beg!

Finally ratified a contract with the company. During nearly 16 years after its last contract expired, members dragged out its negotiations with unions. In 2008, the company offered in their proposal.

Eight years ago, members at the Democrat and Chronicle took a 15 percent pay cut. They have never been made whole since, said Chapel Chairman Rahn Dagostino. “The company is trying to drive a wedge into the union by offering wage increases at the cost of members’ jobs and security.”

“Our members are united,” said Delanni. “Every Thursday, throughout our bargaining, they have worn their red CWA shirts that read ‘United We Stand.’ And we’ve seen really positive effects.”

The company has a long and storied history of fighting for a new contract at the Democrat and Chronicle. In 1989, the Home suspended by the merger, the Home began to open its doors to the general public in addition to Union members. With the 50 cent assessment for active members in the 60s, with the Printers Home being a shining example of what a labor union could achieve for members, even after their working years were completed. And how they could aid in the treatment of illnesses caused by years of hard work in noisy dirty and hazardous print shops. The Home was operated in part by a 50-cent per month assessment on each working ITU member.

However, nothing can remain unchanged. As evidenced by the onset of computerization. Adaptation and evolution are agents of change that caused the ITU to adapt to survive. The ITU peaked at 100,000 active members in the 60s, with the Printers Home having almost 400 residents. In 1979, the home had only 155 residents and the ITU was looking for merger opportunities.

Advances in medical treatments and technology began to minimize the need for the Colorado climate. Effective treatments became available where members actually lived. In 1987, the ITU voted to merge with the Communications Workers of America creating the Printing, Publishing and Media Workers Sector of the CWA. In 1989, the Home opened its doors to the general public in addition to Union members. With the 50 cent assessment for the home suspended by the merger, the home began selling land in order to fund operations and as of 2013 had reduced its holdings to 27 acres of land and the Home itself.

In 2014, the UPH board of trustees started looking closely at the operation of the Home, which had previously been operating in the red. With only one or two Union members in residence, trustees decided to look at options for the home, including sale. While maintaining the option for a member to still stay at the home, the sale was completed on April 15, 2015, and the original mission of the Union Printers Home Trust has been transformed by the formation of the Union Printers Home Foundation. Relocated from Colorado to the new PPMWS offices in Pittsburgh, the Foundation has maintained the original trust and its mission, funded by the proceeds from the sale of the Home. The trustees have begun the process of developing ways directly benefit the membership just as the original trust intended.

At this time, the Foundation trust is moving forward to develop an educational assistance award given directly to PPMWS members. This will include scholarships in a variety of majors, but awards will focus most heavily on labor-related disciplines. When the structure of this new benefit is fully determined, the UPH Foundation will send information on the award to members in good standing.

So, this is where the Union Printers Home stands today, adapting to a changing workplace, membership and composition, but never forgetting the original purpose is to provide the most direct benefit to the most members possible. As demonstrated countless times through the years, ITU members are survivors. Echoing that fine tradition in the future will be the Union Printers Home Foundation.
Representative Reports

Linda Morris Cooley
Detroit Media Partnership

Detroit Typographical Union 18/CWA 14503 has reached a tentative three-year agreement with the Detroit Media Partnership, a Garnett-owned joint operating agreement covering The Detroit Free Press and The Detroit News.

The agreement provides one-and-a-half percent pay increase upon ratification and another one-and-a-half percent pay increase in 2017. Employees who exceed their job requirements in 2018 will receive another one percent increase. In addition to the negotiated pay increases, the union secured Martin Luther King Day as paid holiday and locked health care premium contribution rates at the previously agreed 2014 rate.

In 2015, the company had planned on closing the composing unit and the union negotiated a severance package for affected employees. Currently there are two full-time and two part-time employees still employed in this unit, two of which are union members.

Judy Stewart, chairperson at the newspaper said, “It’s amazing that in the late 1960’s when I started in printing, there were 500 members at The Detroit News and 400 at the Detroit Free Press and they were making money. Now between the two papers we just have a few. That’s technology?”

Also in Detroit, DTU has renewed contracts with City Printing and Celtic Promotional.

Organizing Wins

Tom Grenfell, president of the DTU, organized two new shops, Neetz Printing, in Bay City, and Mass Mailings in Sterling Heights, Michigan. Both are small shops with three members each.

The Fight for $15

The St. Louis Mailers 3/CWA 14620 has filed a grievance against the St. Louis Post Dispatch. After ratifying an agreement earlier this year to ensure that mailers extras at the newspaper that had more than nine years of service would receive $15 per hour, nine years of service would receive $15 an hour including CWA 4250/ CTU 16. In recent negotiations with the Alliance Printers and Publishers, Inc., CWA 4250/CTU16 editorial department employees secured a tentative agreement that will set the starting wage at $15.00 an hour and ensure other increases across-the-board.

The three-year tentative agreement also outlined new step increases in two classifications. A 50 cent per hour increase for the deputy editor in chief classification, and a one dollar per hour increase for the graphic designer classification.

Everyone in the bargaining unit will receive a two percent wage increases in 2017 and 2018. Also negotiated, was an additional day for funeral leave along with changes in the sick leave policy. Employees will still earn sick days, but will not be able to accumulate them over time.

Negotiations are still ongoing between the company and the composing department. Outstanding issues include company proposals to delete the supplemental agreement that contains the job guarantee and changes in layoff language.

During the negotiation process, members of the scale committee toured the composing and editorial departments to gain a better understanding of the work the PPMWS members perform at the Alliance Printers and Publishers newspaper. The committee got to see first-hand how the members worked together to put together the weekly newspaper.

Chicago Local 4250/CTU 16 Files Charges Against Cook County

After Cook County management unilaterally changed the lunch and break schedule for members of CWA Local 4250/CTU16 in Chicago, the union filed charges with the Illinois Labor Relations Board. The union charges that management failed to give the union notice before singling out one unit and changing their lunch and breaks. The union has requested to meet with Cook County representatives on the issue and has requested additional information from the union.

Steven Delanni
Pittsburgh Typographical

The Art Printing contract is due to expire at the end of September and the Union is preparing for negotiations. We are looking for a longer term this time around as we settled for a one year agreement last year.

In addition, we will be looking at better wage increases along with other enhancements to our benefits package.

The Union met with Berks Western Telecomm to begin discussions for a new Contract and to get clarification on some outstanding items that were presented prior to their merger into their new Local. Both parties are continuing to work towards a new Agreement that will benefit the membership.

Phillipsburg Typographical Union

The Phillipsburg Typographical Union 14176 has come to a final agreement with the journal of Commerce and the contract has been ratified.

The Contract included a three-year term, internal candidates being considered prior to any outside candidate for new job bids, continuation of the wage increase structure, and an extra paid-time-off day for those that are assigned to weekend coverage.

New York Typographical Union

The New York Typographical Union and Syracuse Typographical Union have finalized their merger agreement. The agreement will merge the Syracuse members and jurisdiction into New York Typographical. This merger will allow for better representation to the membership in Syracuse and will give them a broader voice within the Sector and CWA.

Also in NY, the Local is in negotiations with the Albany Times Union. The Union is looking for a three-year term along with wage increases and increases to the Company’s contributions to the Health and Welfare Fund that is administered by the Local. Both parties are getting close to settling on an agreement and putting it out for ratification.

New York Typographical is continuing negotiations with Broad Street Media. The Contract at Broad Street Media has expired and after initial meetings, negotiations were put on hold due to one of the minority owners purchasing the paper. During ownership change, there were also changes in top management roles. As well, the company moved its production location.

Richard Donnelly, now majority owner and principal of Newspaper Media Group, has also acquired other publications during this period.

The Union and the Company are planning to meet soon to resume negotiations and discuss the recent changes.

Finally, negotiations are set to begin at NY Typographical and The City of Bridgeport. Members there have not seen a wage increase in four years, while healthcare costs have gone up drastically.

There has been a lot of turnover in the print shop which means that we will be going into negotiations with the majority of the membership being new as well as there being a new working supervisor.

Buffalo Mailers

The Buffalo Mailers are set to resume negotiations at the end of September after a brief hiatus. During the last sessions both parties were able to finalize several tentative agreements on non-economics issues and are now slated to begin the economics portion of bargaining.

The Company has made is clear that their main interest is in changes to the medical insurance benefits for employees that could increase the employee contribution to 30 percent of their premiums.

The Union is standing strong on that issue and will continue to work towards achieving the best contract for its members.

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Can You Help NPP Locate These Participants?

The following individuals have benefits payable from the CWA/ITU Negotiated Pension Plan (NPP), but the Plan Office has been unable to locate them. If you have information about any of these participants or their family members, please call the Plan Office at (719) 473-3862.

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Atlanta Mailers Working to Rebuild Local

The new officers of the Atlanta Mailers M-34 have been working hard with Steve DeLanni, representative for the Printing, Publishing and Media Workers Sector (PPMWS) to rebuild what was once a strong Local.

“We’ve been implementing an internal organizing drive and putting together an organizing committee,” said Local President Vickie Underwood.

In an effort to build solidarity among the membership and build upon its organizing successes, the Local held a picnic for the membership in July.

“The picnic was a great success,” said Ringer Hailes, M-34 vice president. “We were able to bring many members together to show solidarity!”

“This type of Unity cannot stop at a picnic and we cannot take on this fight alone,” said Jada Slate, M-34 secretary treasurer. “Vickie, Ringer and I, are asking that ALL members get involved and fight for your jobs, wages, benefits and workplace conditions. As Henry Ford once said, ‘Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.’”

Hailes wants to see the Local return to its heyday when membership was high. “With numbers we are stronger on the job. In order to succeed we need to work together and show Unity! Get involved, Join the Union and stand up for working families!”