

January 15, 2008

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In your own Neighbourhood**Something for everybody**

We've already told you (Bulletin #13) about the nastiness the company hopes to impose on the Editorial department. That no-specialist, wide-open freelance agenda will cripple our ability to live up to the Atkinson Principles and will do serious damage to the precious Star brand.

But nobody is immune; all of us are in grave danger. Here's a nutshell version of what the company wants to do to our other departments:

Advertising

- The company insists it has the right to allow cross-selling -- allowing non-Star sales people and agencies to sell Star product ads. This would undermine job security across the department.
- No more company cars. This would force affected staff to pay for their own business-use insurance, at thousands more a year. We were told by the company that this move will save the Star exactly \$7 -- yes, seven bucks -- per vehicle annually.
- No more Guild observer to ensure fairness in the job interview process.
- Eliminate training positions for staff trying to move up.
- Job postings and interviews would be allowed outside the company at the same time as the process begins inside, making it more difficult for staffers to improve their position.
- Outside job seekers deemed the "best qualified" by the company could leapfrog over qualified staffers for that job. Seniority wouldn't matter.
- The company wants to "raise the bar" with a sharply higher points threshold in job competitions.
- We still have no confidence that company commission sales targets are attainable, which hurts commission staff and the paper's revenues.

Pre-Press

- Forced reclassification of all jobs -- including ad builders, electronic imagers, photo engravers and copy processors -- into one new job called pre-publishing technician.
- New job would require all staffers to be capable of doing all previous jobs, including work now done by non-union employees.
- Training programs and details would be decided by the company.
- An end to favourable job-scheduling rules in several areas.
- Loss of jurisdiction language by photo engravers.
- The proposed loss of Sunday pay and double time, plus cheaper overtime rates and other changes, would hit this department hard.
- Forced rotation through zone offices and 1 Yonge in the same week.

Circulation

- A loss of company cars hits this group hard, particularly in new self-paid vehicle insurance costs and 407 transponder costs.
- The proposed gutted shift premiums, OT, night differential changes and end to Sunday pay will mean a rise in non-social hours and lost income.



Finance

- New hires would be paid as little as half that of existing staff, devaluing their work and tempting the company even more to get rid of them.
- The proposed gutted shift premiums, OT and end to Sunday pay will mean a rise in non-social hours and lost income, particularly given the monthly cycles of the department.

Torstar.com

- Company rejects our proposal to merge this 11-person department with the rest of us in the main contract. (They now have a separate, less-valuable agreement.)
- Layoffs threatened – another big reason to be in the main agreement.

Electricians, engravers

- We are co-ordinating our bargaining with both the photo engravers (CEP local 591G) and the electricians (IBEW). They are facing the same issues.

Strike vote

Calling all members: Our strike vote meeting begins Wed. Jan. 16 at 5 p.m. at the Westin Harbour Castle, across the street from 1 Yonge.

Guild Bargaining Committee

Unit Chair: Maureen Dawson
Editorial: Dan Smith and Valerie Hauch (alternate)
Circulation: Steve Gjorkes and Jeff Bodrucky (alternate)
Finance: Cathie Nichols and Dawn Armstrong (alternate)
Advertising: Elizabeth Marzari and Dijana Maderic (alternate)
Thestar.com: Craig Wattie and Tony Camara (alternate)
Pre-Press: Lester Veszlenyi and Lorraine Wohlgemuth (alternate)