

January 23, 2008

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Friday, 3 p.m.

Afternoon meeting

We've had difficulty finding a meeting room this week large enough to give us all a chance to go through this complicated memorandum of agreement. The best we could do is Friday afternoon, the 25th, at 3 p.m., again at the Harbour Castle Westin across from 1 Yonge. Sorry for the delay. We've asked the company to excuse employees so they can attend the meeting.

Still discussing changes

Our intense six days with the mediator last week took the form of bullet-point bargaining. This means the small print of what we agreed to has to be turned into memorandum of agreement language. As you might expect, this has led to more discussions with the company. We hope to have all resolved in time for our meeting. The vote will still go ahead..

Highlights

This is a very complex agreement. It's 70 pages long. Blackout or not, we'll do our best here to give you at least a handle on what we came away with last Saturday: This is not enough for you to fully understand what we tried to do in the face of a determined company assault. It's very important that all of you come out to the meeting. Your committee unanimously recommends the deal.

- **Term:** 3 years
- **Wages:** 2% each year
- **Profit sharing:** an immediate payout under altered formula (amounts TBA)
- **Thestar.com:** Moved to main agreement
- **Editorial job consolidation:** Staggered intro; protections for existing staff; higher wage rates
- **PrePress consolidation:** Immediate; protections for existing staff; higher wage rates for some
- **VSP:** A voluntary separation agreement; 90-week maximum payout
- **Benefits:** No takeaways. Improved vision care. Extended health premium increases from \$4 weekly to \$7 single/\$9 family
- **Overtime:** No change in formula
- **Sunday premium:** 1.5 times in '08; 1.25 times in '09; 1.0 in '10
- **Commission sales:** Problems fixed
- **Part-timers:** Problems fixed
- **Sick leave:** Improvements
- **Stat holidays:** Family Day added, no loss of birthday (stat premium unchanged)
- **Two-tier:** New hires will have same wages, benefits, sick leaves, bumping rights and OT pay as us. Defined contribution pension instead of Star plan

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)