In December, CWA endorsed Democratic candidate Bernie Sanders for President of the United States. The decision followed a three-month process that included hundreds of worksite meetings and an online vote by tens of thousands of CWA members. The Union said a clear majority of members chose Sanders, reflecting “the determination of our members to support a candidate whose vision of America includes a real place for working families in our politics and in our economy.”

With 700,000 members in telecommunications, media, and airlines, CWA’s endorsement was the largest Sanders received from a national labor union. The endorsement gives him access to thousands of grass-roots activists who can mobilize volunteers during the campaign and turn out voters at election time.

CWA has more than 300,000 active and retired members in the states that will hold primaries between now and April 1. In New Hampshire, hundreds of CWA member volunteers canvassed neighborhoods and talked with voters, phone-banked with union members, rallied for Sanders and spent Election Day helping voters get to the polls. In California, Texas, New York, New Jersey, and Ohio, where CWA has its largest concentration of members, activists are engaged in worksite actions, staffing phone banks, and signing up new contributors to CWA’s political program ahead of the 2016 election.

On New Hampshire Primary Day, CWA President Chris Shelton traveled to the Granite State, rallied local activists and participated in media interviews about why workers are joining Sanders’s political revolution.

CWA members have made a clear choice and a bold stand in endorsing Bernie Sanders for President,” said CWA President Chris Shelton, “I am proud of our democratic process, proud of CWA members, and proud to support the candidate whose vision for America puts working families first. Our politics and economy have favored Wall Street, the wealthy and powerful for too long. CWA members, like voters across America, are saying we can no longer afford business as usual. Bernie has called for a political revolution – and that is just what Americans need today.”

Bernie Sanders supports:
- The right to collectively bargain and form a union. In solidarity, he has picketed alongside CWA members fighting corporate greed at Fair Point and Verizon. Just a few weeks ago, he rallied in New York City to protest the illegal firing of a Verizon Wireless worker and CWA member.
- An increase in the minimum-wage to $15/hour, and strongly argues that employees should earn equal pay for equal work – regardless of gender.
- Public elections that remove the influence of large, secret or corporate donations in our elections. Sanders is the only Democratic candidate that doesn’t use a corporate-funded Super PAC.
- Making college education free by taxing Wall Street’s risky, speculative gambling practices.
- Trade policies that benefit working families, not just the CEOs of large, multinational corporations. Sanders vowed to stop the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement if he wins the White House. Sanders has opposed every bad outsourcing trade deal he’s faced since first being elected into office.

You can view Sanders’ positions on the issues at: https://berniesanders.com/issues/ Visit CWA’s new political website: http://cwavotes.org/ for news, information, resources, flyers, tools to help spread the word, as well as ways to get active and volunteer.
“Daily Hire” Isn’t Just Showing Up for Work

NABET-CWA Daily Hires came to ABC and NBC in the late 1980s. The companies sought to cut costs and reduce staff. NABET-CWA was challenged with preserving jobs, protecting members’ rights and making sure quality benefit packages were provided. It began as a tough, bare-knuckled battle. In the almost 30 years since the process began, the entire face of broadcast employment has changed. But solid, hard work from several negotiating committees – and many dedicated members – over the years has resulted in a system which allows us to make a living wage under decent working conditions.

In the beginning, we were paid a daily rate plus some compensation for benefits. Today, we have access to less-expensive group health insurance, 401K plans, paid vacation days and sick days for Daily Hires who work regularly. Perfect? No. Better? Yes. For a while it appeared that the companies wanted to eliminate NABET-CWA staff altogether. It seems that for the present, at least, the companies have reached the obvious conclusion that a mix of staff and Daily Hires makes better business sense. How long that situation will last is anyone’s guess. At both NBC and ABC, Daily Hires now make up well over 50% of NABET-CWA represented employees.

There is no question the companies continue to try to whittle away our jurisdiction and we MUST make sure all contract provisions are respected and enforced. The new NBC Master Agreement added additional rights and benefits that make Daily Hire work more palatable, but we must keep our eyes open at all times. To help achieve that, here are two things every Daily Hire should do:

1. Read and Know your contract. The ABC Master Agreement can be found on Local websites. At NBC, the proofreading process is almost complete and the new contract will go to the printers shortly and be posted on NABET-CWA websites. For now, the old contract is on the websites along with a separate list of “Contract Changes.” If you can’t find those changes, ask your shop steward, E-Board member or call your Local. If you don’t know the contract, you could be cheating yourself. This applies to members at the networks, company-owned stations and at all other NABET-CWA-represented facilities. We want to provide a voice for all NABET-CWA Daily Hires.

2. Get involved. Talk and communicate with other Daily Hires and staff members in your unit. Information is power. The more information we share, the more we can protect our rights and improve our working conditions."

"Get involved. Talk and communicate with other Daily Hires and staff members in your unit. Information is power. The more information we share, the more we can protect our rights and improve our working conditions."

on Jan. 27, NABET-CWA Local 46 President and Michigan state representative Sheldon Neeley was one of eight local panelists who took part in an MSNBC-sponsored town hall meeting about the Flint, MI water crisis that helped bring the issue into the national spotlight. Host Rachel Maddow led the meeting in front of 500 residents of the beleaguered city whose water is contaminated with high levels of lead after Flint’s source of drinking water was switched nearly two years ago.

Since the switch, lead levels have risen exponentially in Flint’s residents, causing serious health concerns now and possibly into the future. President Obama declared the situation a federal state of emergency. As the 34th District state House representative from Flint, Neeley is working to bring relief to the city’s residents, including helping to pass legislation that sent Flint $28 million to cover infrastructure upgrades, school nurses, food banks and lead exposure assessments for children. “Everyone must understand that the problems faced by Flint are not limited to getting clean drinking water, as important as that is,” Neeley said in a statement. “We must look at the long-term problems that families and children will be facing due to this crisis. With $28 million, we will be able to begin the healing, both as a community as well as individually, but the road is long and treacherous from here. The aid must not stop.”

In an effort to save money, a decision was made to switch Flint’s water source from the Detroit water system, which had served Flint for 50 years, to the Flint River. Lacking anti-corrosion additives, the river’s water corroded the aging pipes that then delivered polluted water into homes, schools and businesses. The crisis took hold when “emergency managers” appointed by Michigan’s governor to manage Flint and other cities, as well as the state’s Department of Environmental Quality, ignored warning signs and claimed the water was safe for residents to drink.

Neeley warned Michigan’s governor, Rick Snyder, about the water a year ago. Neeley sent a letter to Snyder in January 2015, asking for assistance in returning clean drinking water to the citizens of Flint: “The people of Flint bring bottles of brown water full of sediment and other foreign substances to community meetings, asking only to be treated as human beings. That is all I am asking of you – to see the suffering and anger from the people in one of Michigan’s municipalities and understand that there is a need to react and respond to this crisis.” His letter was ignored.

During the town hall meeting, MSNBC’s Maddow asked Neeley if he had faith in the state to provide the necessary resources to address this crisis, to which Neeley responded, “You know, our governor has been very disingenuous as he provided relief for this community. He’s been very late. Myself and State Representative Phil Phelps, and Senator Jim Ananich, we’ve been fighting on the state level. Money will be appropriated to those efforts, to prioritize school nurses and other resources for the Flint community schools. I made a request. Our current school district, we owe the state of Michigan $16 million. I asked the governor to forgive those dollars so they can re-appropriate those dollars for the onset of the kids they’re going to have to educate in the future.”

(Continued on page 3)
Meeting with General Electric

On November 12, 2015, I attended a meeting in Schenectady, N.Y., with the GE Human Resources team. Joining me were Kevin Mahr of IUOE-CWA Local 201 in Lynn, MA, and Ron Flowers of IUOE Local 506 in Erie, PA, as well as other union representatives from various GE unions. Greg Capito, Vice President of Labor Relations and Operations, chaired the meeting for GE.

Mr. Capito opened the meeting with a brief synopsis of what was happening at GE. A major subject of discussion was that GE was considering moving its corporate headquarters out of Fairfield, CT. At that time, several different locations were being considered, but as we now know, GE will be moving to Boston.

As you might imagine, there was some discussion regarding the termination of GE’s post-65 retiree medical benefits. Due to the two lawsuits that were filed, however, Capito declined to discuss the matter. GE would not commit to the $1,000 RRA past 2016, and our only option was that they provide a GE Pharmacy Assistance Fund (GEPAF), while other corporations do not. That is a fund that can assist only when you have reached Medicare’s catastrophic threshold ($4,850 in 2016). Email me if you need more information on the GEPAF.

We talked at length about how well One-Exchange was functioning in assisting GE retirees with healthcare plan selection. One-Exchange is the broker of record and can be called on to help, even after your initial enrollment in a medical plan. It seems that if you live in Massachusetts you are entitled to a discount on an AARP/United Healthcare Medgap policy of 15% the first year, 10% the second and 5% the third. I have been trying to find out why that discount is not available in all states. I recently spoke to my state senator, Kemp Hannon, and found out that this discount runs well out of the snow and apparently in New York there seems to be no money available. I would recommend you check with your state officials to see if this discount is applicable in your state. We also discussed the fact that GE is looking into selling the GE Asset Management Company, the company that manages our pension trust. We were told that, if that did happen, GE would remain the “fiduciary,” with all the responsibilities that entails. GE told us that in 2014 the trust paid $3 billion dollars in benefits out of a $48 billion dollar fund.

Medicare Coverage Outside the United States

There is no Medicare coverage for foreign travel; however, your secondary Medigap or Medicare Advantage plan may provide some coverage for medical expenses outside the United States. At the urging of our retirees, I checked with United Healthcare, the only other company that I know of that takes GE’s plan, and was told that their AARP/United Healthcare Plans C, F, and N plans allow for coverage of medically necessary emergency care services beginning during the first 60 days of each trip outside the U.S. This is how it works with United Healthcare: The member pays all of his/ her fees and hospital bills while overseas. You must keep all the receipts and, upon returning to the U.S., submit your bills and receipts to UHC. After a deductible of $250 is applied, UHC pays 80% of the remainder, up to a lifetime maximum of $50,000.

For the AARP Medigap Plans, there are no forms to fill out. Simply mail the receipts to the United Healthcare Claims Division at the address on the back of your membership card. I would suggest that you make copies of all of your bills and receipts and write to your Membership ID number on each of them. If you are going to travel outside the country and you do not have one of the AARP United Healthcare Medigap plans mentioned above, you should contact your insurance carrier to find out if any, coverage is available to you.

Changes in Social Security

If you intend to begin collecting Social Security before April 30, 2016, be aware that the federal government has closed several loopholes in rules on claiming the benefits. The claiming strategies – “file-and-suspend” and “restricted application” – are being eliminated as part of the federal budget bill used mostly by married couples who coordinated collecting benefits. The new restricted application rules apply to those who reach age 62 after 2015. The limitation on early retirement and full retirement age will go into effect six months after the budget’s effective date. AARP supported the changes because it affected a small number of retirees. Those who are already receiving benefits are not impacted at all.

Further information on the new legislation can be found at: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/31/business/retirement/rarely-used-social-security-loopholes-worth-thousands-of-dollars-are-closed.html

Flint, MI, Water Crisis

The 2016 GE shareowner meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 27, in Jacksonville, FL. Although I have not submitted a shareowner proposal this year, I expect to make a statement. You will be able to listen to the meeting on the web at www.ge.com/investors/events

In his role as a state representative, Neeley said he is guided by the fundamental philosophies of Unionism: bringing all like-minded people together to deal with the crisis. “We know that strength is there when we stand together,” he said. Unions are helping out with the effort, including the UAW, AFSCME, and the Teamsters.

“The most important thing right now is to get safe and affordable water to the residents of Flint and to reach out to those who can provide this,” explained Neeley. He wants to ensure that the work created by the recovery effort goes to unionized workers and skilled trades.

The Midwest is known for its strong union roots, but with right-to-work laws, many union jobs are leaving, and union-based communities like Flint—the birthplace of General Motors—are under attack.

“Attacks on these communities are very direct if you don’t vote for them,” Neeley added. “You are forgotten, you don’t get the level of service that you should, and a tragedy unfolds.”

“It is difficult to get the Republican-controlled government to provide the necessary resources to a mostly Democratic community of color,” Neeley said. “They are anti-union and anti- providing the necessary resources to this area. As of now, they are providing band-aid solutions.”

Union, NBC Meet on Safety Concerns in the Field — “Training is key”

By RVP1 Cristina Silver

On August 26, 2015, WTVJ reporter Allison Parker and cameraman Adam Ward were killed while on assignment in Roanoke VA. Their murders were witnessed around the world, broadcast on newscasts, YouTube, Vimeo, Facebook and other media outlets. The incident heightened our members’ awareness of how important it is to have a second set of eyes while working in the field.

In the wake of their deaths, Sector Vice President and Local 11 President Lou Marinaro, along with E-Board members Mike Noseworthy and Todd Locke and Local 11 field crews met with NBC management to discuss safety concerns in the field.

One of the primary concerns was the absence of situational awareness training for our crews. Noseworthy described his experience with High Risk HEFAT* (Hostile Environment and Emergency First Aid Training) training for crews in Afghanistan. He said that crew members felt much more at ease with their assignments after participating in the four-day course. Marinaro mentioned concerns with domestic scenarios, i.e., a mall shooting, being held up at gunpoint, having an active shooter at the scene, or door-knocks. The latter was expressed as one of the more frequent concerns because, often, one is unaware of who’s coming to answer the door. Gener-
Former staff
Technical Director (now Daily Hire)
Glen Furman
**NEW YEAR’S EVE**

**Local 16**

ABCD in New York: Videotape/Server Engineer Harry Loeffler working on a server in the Network Technical Maintenance shop. (Photo credit: Jim Nolan)

**Local 25**


**Local 41**

**Local 11**

**WVIB-TV/Channel 4, Buffalo, N.Y.: Tony Battilana, Director (right) and Dan Schrack, 10 Producer (Photo credit: Ron Gabalski)**

**WVIB-TV/Channel 4, Buffalo, N.Y.: John Fellinger, Engineer (right); Dave Brown, Technical Director (Photo credit: Ron Gabalski)**

**WVIB-TV: Mike Micoli, Maintenance Tech (right), and Glenn Silver, Technician (Photo credit: Ron Gabalski)**

**WVIB-TV: David Morales, Photojournalist / Editor, cutting the reporter package story (Photo credit: Ron Gabalski)**

**WVIB-TV: Jason Vinkler, Producer, writing the 11 p.m. news (Photo credit: Ron Gabalski)**

**NBC Production Coordinator Tracey Bosques, working the New Year’s Eve events. (Photo credit: Cristina Silver)**

**WGBO/Univision Assignment Desk Editor Yvette Cruz at work on New Year’s Eve (Photo credit: Dan Moreno)**

**WGBO/Univision: Dan Moreno doing Transmissions/Feeds/Ingest**

**GBO/Univision: Dan Moreno doing Transmissions/Feeds/Ingest**

**Local 25 members Ron Gabalski, Thomas Vetter and Kimberly Root.**

**Democratic Presidential Debate**

**NBC Audio Engineer Ricardo Gomez and NexTech Associate Luz Diaz at Democratic Debate in Charleston on Jan. 17 (Photo credit: Mike Noseworthy)**

**ABC in New York: Videotape/Server Engineer Harry Loeffler working on a server in the Network Technical Maintenance shop. (Photo credit: Jim Nolan)**

**WGBO/Univision: Dan Moreno doing Transmissions/Feeds/Ingest**
Free Training for NABET-CWA Members through lynda.com.

lynda.com provides online training to more than 4 million people to help them stay ahead of software updates, pick up brand-new skills, switch careers, land promotions, and explore new hobbies.

The training is FREE to all NABET-CWA members in good standing.

Talk to your Local officers about how to get started. If you’ve tried it before, come back for full access – and pick up where you left off!

Instruction is available in over 1,000 courses and tutorials in these areas:

**Video:** Learn about videography and motion graphics, including tutorials on storyboarding, color correction, lighting, and video editing in After Effects, Premiere Pro, iMovie, and Final Cut Pro.

**Audio + Music:** Expert-led audio tutorials show how to record and mix songs, make beats, play and customize software instruments, and use popular music production and sound engineering software like Avid Pro Tools, Logic Pro, Ableton Live, and more.

**Photography:** Train in raw processing, masking + compositing, lighting, color correction, and photo editing using Photoshop, Lightroom, Elements, and Adobe software.

**Developer:** Acquire programming skills that are in-demand today. Learn how to code, create, and build web applications, from the foundations of object-oriented programming in C and C++, to how to write Java. Learn how to create mobile apps, work with PHP and MySQL databases, get started with the statistical processing language R, and much more.

**Design:** Learn in-depth design techniques in page layout, typography, logo design, illustration through programs such as Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign.

**Web:** Gain knowledge in web development and design, embed video, format text, and create content strategy with courses in Open Source, Adobe, WordPress, Dreamweaver, CSS and HTML.

**3D + Animation:** Build 3D models, design virtual worlds, and create animations with expert-led tutorials. Learn about character creation, walk cycles, 3D modeling and texturing, and keyframe animation, and build skills with popular visual effects applications like Maya, 3ds Max, and After Effects.

**Business:** Explore a wide range of business skills from project management and negotiation to leadership skills and online marketing strategy. Professional development tutorials can help you learn SEO, spreadsheets, word processing, and more using Microsoft, Office, Excel and Apple software.

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Three Generations of Garnes’ in NABET-CWA

On January 6, the Local 11 Executive Board voted to accept Caroline M. Garnes’ application for NABET-CWA membership, thus making her the third generation of the Garnes family to become a member of the Union. Caroline is a Daily Hire employee working as an AVID Editor/Playback operator at MSNBC in New York.

Caroline’s father, Gene, also a member of NABET-CWA, first joined Local 11 in May 1979. He worked at NBC in New York, first in the radio division (WNBC Radio), then in television as a Digital Production Servicenes Engineer. Gene also served as a Local 11 officer for over 22 years. Gene retired in 2015, but remains active and engaged with the local, proudly maintaining his active membership in the Union.

Gene Garnes’ father, E. Eugene, joined NABET in 1951, when he became employed by NBC. The first generation Garnes started out in television and then transferred over to the radio division, where he worked as an engineer until his retirement in 1988.

According to Gene, “I cannot begin to tell you how proud I am that Caroline is continuing the family tradition of working at NBC, but also how proud I am that she is third generation NABET,” he said. “She grew up in a union-oriented environment, as did I, and I stuck with it,” he continued. “I know my dad would be so proud of her.”

Caroline’s membership adds to a combined total of 64 years of a Garnes family member being in active service in NABET-CWA.

Local 41 Administrative Staffer Celebrates 40 Years of Service

Shortly after graduating from Southern Illinois University, Sue Gerb got her first job… and she hasn’t left! Gerb, a Chicago native, began her career as a member of Local 41’s office staff on Feb. 10, 1976, for what was supposed to be a temporary stint, until she found a job in her chosen field.

Gerb received her degree in education in December 1975, but soon discovered that teaching positions were hard to find halfway through the school year. A friend who worked at ABC Radio put her in contact with Local 41 President Daniel Delaney, who happened to be looking for a new staff person in the Chicago office of the Union.

“I received my degree in Business Education, so I knew I could easily work in an office until I found a teaching job,” explained Gerb. “This was a good job, with good benefits, and I worked with nice people, but my teaching career went out the NABET window.” Before she got married in 1986, Gerb did end up teaching adult education and business classes for a few years.

Stability at Local 41 is not uncommon. In her four decades at Local 41, Gerb has worked with only four Local presidents. She worked with Dain Delaney for 16 years, Ray Taylor for 14 years, Charlie Bracco for five years, and now works with Local 41 President Don Villar.

“IT’s pretty rare. Some people switch jobs all the time, a new person each election cycle,” said Gerb. “For over 30 years, I worked only for two people.” And speaking of longevity and stability, in April, coworker Karen Groves will be celebrating her 30-year employment anniversary with Local 41.

The job stability at the office didn’t translate to the industry, however. In her early days, Gerb recalls having just three Daily Hire members in the Local. “Everybody was a staff employee back then… It’s really been an incredible change.”

Through the years, there have been some “very turbulent days in the Union, with jurisdiction at stake,” Gerb said. She has been through numerous strikes, including the NBC strikes in 1976 & 1987, a strike at ABC in 1977 and the strike/lockout at ABC in 1998.

Today, at 63, Gerb has no plans to retire but quips, “I guess I’m not getting a teaching job.”
Covering Winter Storm Jonas a.k.a. “Snowzilla”

Following the blizzard that stormed through the Washington, D.C., area on Jan. 22-24, PBS expressed its gratitude to members of PBS’ Operations team of Eric Lillienthal, Marcia Edwards and Warren Mayo and the Technician/Maintenance team of Cecilio “Oscar” Vazquez-Cruz and Alan Horning for “their amazing weekend-long efforts on PBS’ behalf.”

NABET-CWA Local 31 member Warren Mayo, a Network Operations Technician, works weekends at PBS, where he has served for 10 years. During the blizzard, he worked from Thursday, Jan. 21, until 5 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 25, spending his days and nights at the station because other colleagues were not able to make it in.

An article describing Mayo and his colleagues’ weekend-long saga was sent by email to everyone in the company, congratulating the crew on their extraordinary efforts:

“The recent blizzard made roads impossible for essential staff to arrive or depart the Technology Center in Springfield, VA, so this quintet of colleagues, now known as the ‘Jonas 5,’ went above and beyond, working from Friday afternoon until Monday afternoon. Their managers Craig Carter and Yvonne Bennett said, ‘These employees are true professionals. They didn’t complain and they came prepared.’

With the forecast calling for over two feet of snow, Warren and Marcia knew they would not be able to make it back for their shifts, so they decided on their own to take the necessary precautions. Warren started camping out after his shift on Friday morning and Marcia worked a double on Friday night and also stayed through the weekend.

Oscar and Alan began their shifts on Friday afternoon manning the satellite uplinks and keeping a close eye on the HVAC and Power Distribution systems in the Operations Control Center. After getting only one hour of sleep on Friday night, Eric, who was the supervisor on duty, kept everything organized, moving, and kept everyone in a good mood throughout the entire weekend.

Renard Jenkins, Senior Director of Production, Media & Distribution Operations for PBS, said that he was so proud of the team: ‘These employees showed dedication and took the initiative to prepare for and work through this historic storm. It truly is because of the unsung heroes in our engineering teams who work around the clock, on weekends and on holidays that PBS is able to stay on the air’.

NABET-CWA Local 18: “Enriching people’s lives through programs and services”

NABET-CWA Local 18 in Boston, MA, is “very much a part of the WGBH-TV Educational Foundation,” said Local 18 President Mike Wilkins. The Local’s members are full-time, part-time, and freelance (Daily Hire), working in radio and television production at WGBH, a non-commercial educational PBS member television station. The station is a major producer of programs for the PBS television network.

“Local 18’s members have proudly and professionally worked on ground-breaking and award-winning shows even prior to the formation of the Local itself,” said Wilkins. Four of the Local’s active members – including Treasurer Benny Krol – pre-date the Local, which was formed when the in-house union of technicians could not come to an agreement with WGBH management in the mid-1970s. They sought the help of NABET in 1978.

The relationship remained rocky. In 1980, after the members rejected three tentative agreements, WGBH locked-out the Union’s members for nine weeks in the midst of contract negotiations. The lock-out was rescinded only when management realized that the musicians’ union for the Boston Pops was not going to cross a planned NABET picket-line – something that would have prevented the start of the Pops performance season – and would have created a public relations nightmare for the station. Since then, a “no strikes/no lockouts” clause has been included in every contract.

NABET-CWA Local 18 members have worked – and continue to work – on a variety of popular local and national productions:

- American Experience
- Antiques Roadshow
- Boston Pops performances
- Boston Public Radio
- Boston Symphony Orchestra performances
- Frontline
- Gavel-to-Gavel (Mass. State House coverage)
- High School Quiz Show
- NPR’s All Things Considered
- NPR’s Morning Edition
- Nova
- PBL’s The World
- Sports broadcasts (college football, professional tennis, track & field – since the late 1960s)
- Tanglewood performances
- The French Chef (Julia Child)
- This Old House
- Victory Garden

“When we are proud of our past, we are aware of the present and looking forward to the future, keeping abreast of changing scales of economy, disruptive technologies, and market demands; mindful of how they will impact job opportunities for our members in the studio and in the field,” said Wilkins. He said NABET-CWA Local 18 will strive to maintain and even expand its responsibilities through training, while maintaining the core beliefs in WGBH’s mission statement: ‘Enriching people’s lives through programs and services that educate, inspire, and entertain, fostering citizenship and culture, the joy of learning, and the power of diverse perspectives.’

NABET-CWA Local 18 makes donations to local charities during the holidays and annually awards scholarships to the daughters and sons of Local 18 members in good standing.

“We are very proud to be part of Region Two, and to be represented by Vice President Fred Saburro,” said Wilkins.
WOIO/WUAB-TV – Cleveland, OH (Local 42)
A new three-year contract was ratified on Feb. 10. The package contains wage increases of 1.75%, 1.5% and 1.75%. Employees who earn more than $75k in base wages will receive annual lump sum bonuses in lieu of base rate increases. Additionally, the Union’s bargaining team was able to increase the minimum rates for all classifications by at least 1.5%, with the Group 1 (Production Assistants) receiving more than 8% increases, or about $1.25 per hour. The committee was also able to clean up jurisdictional language without ceding any work to the employer, and changes were made to streamline vacation selections with real-time vacation schedules, which allow employees to view the entire year’s availability electronically. NABET-CWA was able to persuade the company to withdraw proposals on eliminating overtime after 8 hours and wage increases based on merit pay. The 110-person unit includes all job categories at the station (including Multimedia Journalists (MMJs)) other than anchors and reporters. According to NABET-CWA Staff Representative Eric Seggi, these talks were unusual, as the Union negotiated with both Company and station management after negotiating the past several contracts with the same management team. The bargaining committee included Bill Kohagen, Rob Hillyer, Chris Dolcito, John Potter, Kate Miller and Seggi, who served as Chief Spokesperson.

Montgomery Community Television (MCT) – Rockville, MD (Local 31)
A contract was ratified on Feb. 5 that provides for a 3% wage increase retroactive to July 1, 2015. The parties will begin wage reopen discussions in June 2016 to determine wage increases through the rest of the contract, which ultimately expires in June 2018. There are many improvements in this agreement, including many classification rate codes that were placed into higher rate code classifications (people who perform certain jobs were moved into higher classifications with higher pay). The contract also increases premium pay for members who perform the non-technical duties of a producer. NABET-CWA represents roughly 15 Staff and up to 40 Daily Hires, depending on production needs. Once the deal was ratified, NABET-CWA Staff Representative Louis Fallot worked with CWA’s Kevin Celata to set up training on Adobe Premiere for about a dozen editors at MCT, as well as other union members in the D.C. region.

KTIV– Barbank, CA (Local 53)
Engineering Unit
In December, the 65-person engineering unit rejected the global settlement that resolved an overall tentative contract agreement, a hubbing grievance/ arbitration, and the termination of a Local 53 officer, which resulted in unfair labor practice charges being filed against the station. At press time, a new bargaining committee was being selected. The Union continues to wait for a decision by the NLRB to resolve the termination case, and the Grievance Committee has referred the hubbing arbitration back to the arbitrator for a final decision. No new talks between the parties are currently scheduled.

News Unit
Negotiations resumed for the 45-person news unit contract with KTIV in January. The two sides met for the first time in more than two and a half years. Despite the long period between meetings, the parties made significant progress over the two days of negotiations. Other than labor relations and finance, there has been a complete turnover in station management at the bargaining table since the last talks. The bargaining committee includes Pat Anson, Jeff Clarke, Rod Cohen, Joe Ayala, Steve Ross and NABET-CWA Staff Representative Eric Seggi.

KTVF – Fairbanks, AK
Distributed to all active and retired NABET-CWA members.

FOX Hub – Las Vegas, NV (Local 53)
The two sides met again in February for two days as they continue negotiations for a first-time contract for this unit, which joined NABET-CWA in November 2013.

FOX Network Engineering and Operations Group (NEGO) – Los Angeles, CA (Local 53)
The bargaining unit ratified a new four-year Agreement, which is retroactive to July 1, 2015. The new contract includes wage increases of 1% per year for network rates and 3.5% each year for cable base rates. Employees will receive two increases of one-half percent (0.5%) in Company FLEX plan contributions, and three days of paid sick leave were agreed upon for employees who do not work enough hours to earn paid time off (unused sick leave will roll over to the following year, up to a maximum of six paid sick days). The previous one-hour paid meal period was modified to 40 minutes, and two 60-minute paid breaks were added. There are 600 members in the unit, with all but a handful working as Daily Hires. The bargaining committee included Stan Edwards, Kevin Crane, Paul Ware, Albert Aquiglea, Local 53 Vice President Joe Ayala and NABET-CWA Staff Representative Eric Seggi.

WFSB-TV – Hartford, CT (Local 59)
A three-year Agreement reached between the Union and Meredith Broadcasting – with the aid of a federal mediator – was overwhelmingly rejected by the members on Jan. 16. The major reasons for rejection were anxiety over a corporate merger and the uncertain nature of possible wage freezes in the two final years of the contract. The members thought the freeze was a dismissal possibility because the company wouldn’t provide the Union with a trigger for wage increases. More bargaining dates will be set for late March to discuss economics. “Despite the fact that the company has record profits, we are being told that it doesn’t necessarily trickle down to employees,” said NABET-CWA Staff Representative Louis Fallot. “Instead, profits are usually used to fund the purchase of additional stations.” The Union represents 60 people at WFSB, 99% of whom are full-time employees. The bargaining committee includes Local 17 President Andy Halpin, Local 17 Vice President Emie Whitehead, John Discenza, Kyle Buchanan, Al Wurst and Louis Fallot.

WLJA-TV – Washington, D.C. (Local 31)
Bargaining for a successor Agreement with Sinclair Broadcasting is underway, with two sessions concluded. The parties were able to reach agreement in a few minor areas, but jurisdiction, seniority and premium payments remain sticking points. The talks were postponed because of the January 23rd blizzard in the D.C. area, so the Union is waiting to resume bargaining with new dates scheduled in March. The bargaining committee includes Local 31 President Rich McDermott, Alton Morris, Rich Guastadisegni and NABET-CWA Staff Representative Louis Fallot.

WKYC-TV – Cleveland, OH (Local 42)
After only a few days of bargaining, the Company (Tegna, Inc.) presented the Union with its “final offer,” which did not include Union security, dues checkoff, or a full grievance and arbitration procedure (all of which were lost as a result of implementing an contract three years ago). The Company also proposed eliminating the current seniority structure. Mediation is scheduled for March 7 in Independence, OH, at the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service headquarters. The Sector Executive Council adopted a resolution to fully support the bargaining committee and membership at WKYC in their efforts to achieve a fair contract. “Based on the depth of their proposals, it is clear to the Union that the Company doesn’t want us there,” said NABET-CWA Staff Representative Louis Fallot. “NABET-CWA stands behind the members and is willing to fight for a fair Agreement.”

NABET-CWA plans to take advantage of several public relations opportunities when Cleveland hosts the Republican National Convention this summer. “With the Summer Olympics, the DNC and the General Election in November, the company admits they are going to be making a lot of money, but they don’t want to share any of the profits with us,” Fallot said. “We are prepared to offer a comprehensive package to Tegna when we meet in March, and if that is not successful, then we are prepared to ramp up mobilization activities.”

Montgomery Community Television (MCT) – Rockville, MD (Local 31)
A contract was ratified on Feb. 5 that provides for a 3% wage increase retroactive to July 1, 2015. The parties will begin wage reopen discussions in June 2016 to determine wage increases through the rest of the contract, which ultimately expires in June 2018. There are many improvements in this agreement, including many classification rate codes that were placed into higher rate code classifications (people who perform certain jobs were moved into higher classifications with higher pay). The contract also increases premium pay for members who perform the non-technical duties of a producer. NABET-CWA represents roughly 15 Staff and up to 40 Daily Hires, depending on production needs. Once the deal was ratified, NABET-CWA Staff Representative Louis Fallot worked with CWA’s Kevin Celata to set up training on Adobe Premiere for about a dozen editors at MCT, as well as other union members in the D.C. region.

KTVF – Fairbanks, AK
Distributed to all active and retired NABET-CWA members.

FOX Hub – Las Vegas, NV (Local 53)
The two sides met again in February for two days as they continue negotiations for a first-time contract for this unit, which joined NABET-CWA in November 2013.

FOX Network Engineering and Operations Group (NEGO) – Los Angeles, CA (Local 53)
The bargaining unit ratified a new four-year Agreement, which is retroactive to July 1, 2015. The new contract includes wage increases of 1% per year for network rates and 3.5% each year for cable base rates. Employees will receive two increases of one-half percent (0.5%) in Company FLEX plan contributions, and three days of paid sick leave were agreed upon for employees who do not work enough hours to earn paid time off (unused sick leave will roll over to the following year, up to a maximum of six paid sick days). The previous one-hour paid meal period was modified to 40 minutes, and two 60-minute paid breaks were added. There are 600 members in the unit, with all but a handful working as Daily Hires. The bargaining committee included Stan Edwards, Kevin Crane, Paul Ware, Albert Aquiglea, Local 53 Vice President Joe Ayala and NABET-CWA Staff Representative Eric Seggi.

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