

THE GUILD LEADER

Thursday, Nov. 8, 2012

Company Lays Off 16

The company laid off 16 Guild members Wednesday, as well as seven (we'd heard ten Wednesday night, but that was wrong) non-Guild employees.

From the Guild, nine of the jobs were from editorial and seven from advertising. The company did not provide a breakdown of the non-union layoffs.

In advertising, six of the positions were from the inside sales department (four sales people, two assistant managers) and one from on-line. In editorial, three photographer positions were eliminated as well as three editorial assistants, two photo editor/page designers and one library assistant.

We are holding off on releasing a list of the individuals until we get each laid off member's permission to use their name.

Union and non-union employees were called to human resources throughout the day. After being told their positions were being eliminated and having the severance packages explained, the Guild members were given time to clean out their desks and go over their work computers for any needed files. The laid off workers will remain on the payroll until Nov. 23, but won't have to report to work.

At the end of that period they will be offered a choice between taking a severance package that mirrors the voluntary buyout offer and severing all connection with the company or taking two week's severance pay and staying on a rehire list, meaning if their old job is to be filled, they would have to be called before another outside hire was chosen.

They will have medical coverage through the end of the month. After that they will have to purchase coverage via the COBRA program by paying for their own premiums, which range from about \$450 a month for single coverage to about \$1,400 per month for a family.

The layoff date triggered a new two-week buyout offer. It's the same as the previous one, 1.25 weeks pay for each year of employment (up to a maximum payout that equals ten weeks pay), plus a check that, after deductions, will be equal to the 2012 pension transition payment the employee would have gotten had she or he been on the payroll Nov. 23, all subject to company approval.

A laid off Guild member could return to work after Nov. 23 if, during the two-week period, another Guild member in his or her job classification takes the buyout offer and the company approves it.