

GUILD LEADER

On the web at www.riguild.org

Volume XIX, Issue 8

Providence Newspaper Guild TNG-CWA Local 31041

September 5, 2008

ProJo Layoffs Q&A: What We Know and What We Don't

Q: How will layoffs work?

A: The Company says it will follow the contract. The contract says the least senior people must be laid off first and that part-timers are junior to full-timers.

Q: Does this mean part-timers will be laid off first?

A: Maybe. The Guild and the Company have identified two contractually consistent ways to implement layoffs.

Method A: Start with the least senior people and work up. This would hit part-timers first. Advantage for the company: there would be no bumping, because only the least senior people are laid off. Disadvantage to the company: the company could lose people in jobs they don't want to cut.

Method B: Identify the jobs the company considers to be over staffed. The least senior person in the eliminated job could bump to a position they are competent to perform. The bumped employee could also bump to another position. Advantage to the company: Cuts can be targeted to specific classifications. Disadvantage to company: Bumping can be extremely disruptive and there would likely be disputes over pay rates for bumping employees and how to determine competence.

Q: When will we know which method will be used?

A: We don't know yet.

Q: How many jobs will be cut?

A: We don't know yet.

Q: When will we know how many jobs will be cut?

A: We don't know. The Guild wants people to know as soon as possible so that they can make necessary plans.

Q: When will the layoffs occur?

A: Mid to late October.

Q: What will employees being laid off receive?

A: Under the contract, laid off employees get two weeks pay and are placed on a rehire list. At other AH Belo properties, employees are being offered a severance package of 1.25 weeks pay per year of service up to 20 years, and 2.5 weeks pay for time over 20 years, capped at 35 weeks pay. The Guild is seeking to extend this benefit to laid-off Journal employees; the company is considering agreeing to this if employees taking the enhanced severance don't go on a rehire list.

Q: After the layoffs, will my hours or assignment change?

A: We don't know.