An 11-year battle, NABET-CWA represented CNN employees finally received their measure of justice. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) on September 15, 2014, found “overwhelming” evidence of anti-union animus at the cable news giant and ordered it to “make whole” more than 300 employees who lost their jobs and the benefits of union representation in the wake of the company’s phony reorganization scheme to get rid of unionized workers.

“On behalf of our CNN members in Washington, D.C. and New York City, the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians-Communications Workers of America (NABET-CWA) is grateful for this decision by the National Labor Relations Board,” said NABET-CWA President Jim Joyce. “These workers have waited far too long for this measure of justice to finally be delivered and have suffered far too much as the result of these unlawful activities. CNN should finally do the right thing now and immediately comply with the orders of the National Labor Relations Board issued today.”

The most recent NLRB decision

CWA President Larry Cohen said, “All of us in CWA should be proud of our work and the coalition that helped support senate confirmation of the NLRB members in July 2013. Without a functioning NLRB, this decision would never have been possible. But today belongs to the 300 technicians and their families, and our hearts and minds are with them.”

The NLRB ordered that CNN rehire about 100 workers and compensate 200 more employees, who continued to work at the company without the benefits of a union contract, on the order of tens of millions of dollars. CNN is required to restore any bargaining unit work that was outsourced since the end of the contract. The company also must recognize the employees’ union and resume bargaining with NABET-CWA Local 11 and NABET-CWA Local 31.

“Today is a good day to stand up straight,” said Tyronne Riggs, who lost his job in 2003. “I never gave up hope. I never wavered. I knew justice would prevail.” Riggs, like many of his CNN brothers and sisters, had to relocate to find work, forcing them to make difficult decisions regarding their families.

This saga began in December 2003, when CNN terminated its longstanding technical subcontracting relationship at Team Video Services (TVS), a firm that had employed NABET-CWA-represented workers in Washington, D.C. and New York City. The union immediately filed unfair labor practice charges with the NLRB, which, due to various delays, were not brought to trial before an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) at the NLRB for almost five years.

Finally, in November 2008, after 72 days of trial, the ALJ ruled against CNN and in

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“A Good Day to Stand Up Straight!”

Today is a good day to stand up straight!” Those were the enthusiastic words that greeted me on September 15, 2014, from Local 31 member Tyrone Riggs when I called to inform him about the NLRB decision on the CNN/TVS case issued earlier that day. Tyrone had worked at CNN’s Washington, D.C., bureau, in 2003 when his job was unlawfully stripped away. After 11 years of waiting for justice, and never giving up hope, despite many setbacks, Tyrone’s words to me said it all. The day that he and nearly 300 other people had anxiously and more than patiently waited had finally arrived.

While there are many NABET-CWA members affected by CNN’s actions in New York City and Washington, D.C., no member’s story details the impact of this case more thoroughly than that of Tyrone Riggs. In 2003, after working 14 years as a field engineer, his career was shattered when CNN cancelled its services contract with Team Video Services, which had been providing the technical crews to CNN at those bureaus. Tyrone was one of 110 workers let go, and not subsequently re-hired by CNN. Tyrone told me that his children were nine and 12 years old at the time, and that 2003 was the last real Christmas his family could afford. After that, Tyrone Riggs had to take whatever jobs came along with no medical insurance for his family. He got into debt, lost his home and faced bankruptcy. But despite those setbacks, Tyrone never gave up the hope that he would see justice arrive.

In fact, he helped justice arrive by being part of the Union’s campaign in 2013 to get a fully functioning National Labor Relations Board confirmed by the U.S. Senate. He was one of the brave public faces on the “Give Us Fix!” campaign designed to reform the abuse of filibusters in the Senate. One of the reasons justice had been so long in coming was the dysfunction that prevented Presidential nominees to agencies like the NLRB from being confirmed. A select few Republicans, despite their party’s minority status, had obstructed NLRB appointees from being confirmed, even though those nominees had enough votes from the Democratic majority to confirm their appointments. The result was that none of these nominees had their names brought to the Senate floor for an up or down vote.

By taking his story public, including his personal setbacks, Tyrone helped achieve history when the Senate voted to change the rules on filibusters regarding certain Presidential appointments, including those at the NLRB. No longer could a handful of obstructionists block the goodwill of the majority. By Labor Day of 2013, a fully functioning five-member NLRB was in place, and immediately began issuing significant decisions. NBC NABET-CWA members were amongst the first to benefit from a fully functioning NLRB when the Board ruled in favor of the Union in the Content Center case.

While it would take nearly a year longer for the CNN decision to be issued, Tyrone and his NABET-CWA brothers and sisters have now witnessed their own victory, validating their years of fighting back and never giving up hope. CNN must now offer employment to those not hired 11 years ago, and must make them and those retained by CNN, but without their Union contract in place, whole, through back pay and other remedies. Thanks to Tyrone Riggs and many others in New York City and Washington, D.C., 300 people similarly now have “A good day to stand up straight!” while the rest of must use every day to stand behind them.

Summer Picnics Bring Local Members Together

Local 17 – Hartford, CT
NABET-CWA Local 17 held its first Pig Roast on Sat., August 16. The event was a picnic and pre-negotiation event rolled into one, with the roasted pig named in honor of WFSB-TV’s General Manager, Klaam DePalma, who last year settled an NLRB complaint against the station over threats to union employees. CWA Next Generation Committee member Darren Ramos, who also serves as Local 17’s Treasurer and works at WFSB as an Operations Technician, attended the negotiations. Local 17 President Andy Halpin, Ernie Whitehead, Cory Peck, Shop Steward Al Wurtz and NABET-CWA Staff Representative Louup Halpin offered their support. “I hope it will become an annual tradition for our Local,” said Halpin. “All members of the Local (retired members too) and guests seemed to have a great time.” Wurtz and his wife Gaylan generously served as location hosts and put the party together.

Local 21 – Schenectady, NY
Local 21’s annual “Fred Saburo Clambake” was held on September 6 in Latham, NY, at the College Elks. The picnic brings members from Albany-area stations WMHT (PBS), WNYT (NBC), and WRGB (CBS) together to celebrate Labor Day. This year, the Local honored outgoing Local 21 President Bill Lambda with an engraved clock for his 29 years of service. They have so much fun at the Clambake that they’ve already booked for next year. September 12, 2015!

NABET-CWA Charges Nexstar with Union-Busting Tactics in Rochester and Syracuse

NABET-CWA filed two sets of unfair Labor Practice charges with the Nation Labor Relations Board (NLRB) on behalf of its members employed by Nexstar Broadcasting at WROC-TV in Rochester and WSYR-TV in Syracuse, NY. On July 24, the Union filed charges over Nexstar’s labor law violations in the midst of months-long contract negotiations at both stations for Union members at Local 22 (Rochester) and Local 211 (Syracuse). The company’s behavior appears to be a concerted effort to end Unionization at these and other Nexstar stations.

WROC-TV
Talks at WROC have been ongoing since the contract expired on June 30, 2013. The two sides have met eight times through the end of June 2014. During the year of talks, Nexstar management repeatedly claimed that they were available to meet for several months at a time and further frustrated the negotiations process by asking to change previously scheduled meetings. During the most recent bargaining session on June 27, Nexstar management requested that the next set of talks be held under the auspices of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS). NABET-CWA immediately agreed to that request, which led to the appointment of a mediator, and the scheduling of four negotiations dates for July.

One week after those dates were scheduled, Nexstar announced that it was withdrawing recognition of the Union at WROC and later stated that WROC would not participate in the scheduled mediated negotiations. The July 11 letter announcing this decision was sent to all WROC employees from Nexstar’s Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Tim Busch. The letter stated that the company had “objective evidence” that the Union no longer represented a majority of the bargaining unit at the station. The Union charged Nexstar with unlawfully withdrawing Union recognition, cancelling scheduled negotiations and advising the FMCS that Nexstar will not bargain with the Union. In addition, Nexstar also faces charges of fully threatening discipline of NABET-CWA members for exercising their legal right to engage in protected activity and changing the terms and conditions of employment by stopping membership dues deductions. NABET-CWA has requested injunctive relief against Nexstar for this blatant activity.

WSYR-TV
In Syracuse, Local 211 members at WSYR had been working without a contract since January 31. In these talks, Nexstar management stalled negotiations by agreeing to meet only on occasion, putting onerous concessions on the table, and failing to seriously address economic issues and wage increases. At the end of May, the Local sponsored a rally outside of the TV station, attended by dozens of NABET-CWA members who worked at the station, as well as NABET-CWA leaders from across the country. Mobilization efforts included collecting pledges from public figures, including local, state, and federal legislators, to refuse to appear on WSYR. The members also appealed to WSYR advertisers to take their business elsewhere.

On July 9, Local 211 members voted 56 to 8 to authorize a strike should one become necessary in this contract fight. Within days, Nexstar management sent out a letter to employees in violation of federal labor law. In NABET-CWA’s filing with the NLRB, the Union cited this letter, in which the company provided false information about negotiations, threatened employees with discipline for participating in legally protected activities, created an impression of surveillance, and provided false information regarding dues authorization. The Union’s pressure has now paid off as WSYR management made a revised contract offer that was ratified on September 17.

Anti-Union Campaign in Fresno

Rochester and Syracuse aren’t the only Nexstar stations to experience this union-busting behavior. The company is trying to decertify IBEW and SAG-AFTRA at its Fresno, CA, station, KSEE/KGPE, two stations that merged in May. KSEE production employees are represented by IBEW and its on-air staff is represented by SAG-AFTRA. KGPE’s employees are non-union. The company’s strategy included hiring a law firm to wage the anti-union campaign. Despite these strong-arm attempts, IBEW members voted 35-9 to retain the Union as its representative. The IBEW reports that Nexstar’s actions in Fresno have only galvanized the membership to fight for as long as it takes to get justice at KSEE.

NABET-CWA is waiting for the Board to decide whether to issue a complaint against Nexstar. While the NLRB investigates the charges, NABET-CWA’s Sector Executive Council passed resolutions in support of the members working at WROC and WSYR and has allocated substantial financial funding to each Local in order to assist them in their quest for fair and honest treatment.

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Follow the GE shareowners meeting in Chicago on April 23, I decided that it was important for me to speak to the GE Board of Directors directly. The Directors are the only people who can change, modify, or reverse the disgraceful change in policy regarding GE’s post-65 retiree benefits. As you may recall, this change eliminates GE retiree medical benefits for all employees and retirees (and their spouses) who have not attained the age of 65 as of January 1, 2015. The Directors, after all, were the ones who authorized the change.

My first step was to write a letter to Jack Brennan, the newly elected Lead Director, who is the Chairman of the GE Board of Directors when it meets in executive session (that is, when CEO Jeff Immelt does not attend the meeting).

On June 13, I received an email from GE's Senior Vice President of Human Resources, Susan Peters, explaining that Jack Brennan had asked her to respond to my letter. I was disappointed that I didn’t hear directly from Mr. Brennan, but hearing from Susan was better than being ignored. Susan and I arranged a conference call for Friday, July 11, which also included Greg Capito, GE’s Vice President of Labor Relations and Operations. During the call, which lasted more than a half hour, I asked how GE could break its promise to tens of thousands of actively employed and retired GE family members. Ms. Peters, toeing the corporate line, tried to explain and defend GE’s position. The only positive result of this conference call was to reach an agreement for me to meet face-to-face with Susan and her Human Resources team on October 2 in Schenectady, N.Y. I expect to report on that meeting in the next issue of NABET News.

Although it’s always helpful to meet with GE executives regarding retiree issues, my goals remain to make our case directly to the GE Board of Directors, the only ones with the authority to revisit this damaging policy change.

GE Drops the Other Shoe

Having already taken post-65 retiree medical benefits away from the GE “family members” discussed above, GE is now set to force its post-65 retirees, who were not affected by the earlier change, into buying individual policies on an insurance exchange, if they want to continue having supplementary retirement medical benefits. By now, GE retirees will have received a letter from GE announcing this change, which is effective January 1, 2015. GE has contracted with OneExchange, a subsidiary of Tory, to provide a service “at no cost to us” to help each of us replace our current GE-provided plans. Perhaps I am too cynical, but when I read GE was doing this at no cost to us, I reached to see if my wallet was still in my pocket.

Netl by saying that his age (62) is a factor, as well simply became less fun, Lambdin says, just becau less, “The business has passed me by.”

Local 21’s Lambdin Steps Down, Retirement ends 29 Years as Local President

NABET-CWA’s longest-serving local president, Bill Lamdbin, is calling it quits after 29 years. Lamdbin retired from his job as a reporter on WAST-TV in Albany, NY, on August 22, after 34 years, and resigned his Union position soon after.

“I’ve loved my time as an on-air person and my time as a reporter,” Lamdbin said. “That’s a privilege.” Why is he retiring? It simply became less fun, Lamdbin says, adding that his age (62) is a factor, as well as seeing colleagues deal with serious health issues that made him realize “none of us are going to be here forever.”

“I’m looking forward to new opportunities while I can still do it,” Lamdbin said. “Since retiring, there is a level of relaxation that I’ve never felt before.”

Lamdbin attended Hamilton College in New York, majoring in music as a percussionist. Over the summers, he got part-time gigs at radio stations in Utica and Amsterdam, NY, and found he really enjoyed it. Upon graduation, his experience as a radio broadcaster landed him a job at ABC in Utica, which he held for two years. He then worked for two more years in Chattanooga, TN, before heading back home to the place he grew up.

He began his career at WAST (now WNYT) in 1980. He has seen television news evolve remarkably during his tenure.

“We’d spend all day working on stories for half hour shows at 6 and 11 p.m.”, Lamdbin said, who started out using film. "There were no live remotes and very limited video capabilities. We didn’t have the immediacy.”

Once live and portable video became the norm, the world of news opened up to more ambitious coverage: two hours in morning, a half hour at noon, an hour at 4, 30 minutes at 10, and 35 minutes at 11. As a result, the size of the audience for each newscast shrank.

“There was more and more pressure: a vice that was getting tougher, but you had less time to do the work,” Lamdbin recalls. “It’s the same job, it’s a news production line. When you pass age 60, you question why you are exposing yourself to this anymore. Fortunately, since I work at a Union job, I am able to choose my own exit.”

Though he says his job as a General Assignment Reporter became less fun, he always enjoyed covering Little League Hall of Fame inductions and significant State Capitol events. Over the last few years, he became the go-to guy to cover state politics. Lamdbin says he was really motivated to retire from work, but ambivalent about retiring from the local Union presidency, which he found fulfilling. He worried, however, that not being in the workplace would put him out of touch with the needs of the members.

He also feels strongly that members need to seek out the tools to answer their own questions and not rely on the old-timers as much just because it’s easier. “If I remove myself, maybe the younger members will try to find the answers themselves, which could bring about needed change and motivate them to act.”

Union involvement by the younger generation is critical to the Union’s survival, Lamdbin says. He’s not sure how to get people involved, but he has some idea of the reasons.

“It’s not the same to work at a station. It part only includes the services provided has their own video devices and the appeal is less,” he said. “The business has passed from a few companies that were broadcast-oriented to companies that are bottom-line oriented, who are paying people less or they are getting hired as Daily Hires or on a part-time basis without benefits. It’s not the same career for them. People have less loyalty and interest in the job.”

The new norm has had a “drastically negative affect” on the Union president says Loyalty to co-workers has suffered, and over the years, he often must explain the point of having a union, which for most people “wasn’t important because they were just going to be on the job for a little while, part-time, until they go on to do something else.”

Lamdbin’s years of service as Local President overtake that of RVP2, Fred Saburro, who was president of the local for 25 years and even has the local’s annual summertime Cornhole named after him.

Saburro says he initially was “very upset” when he heard Lamdbin was running for the local presidency back in 1985 because he was an “on-air” person who presumably didn’t have the same concerns as technical staff.

“One-on-one people at my station were AFTRA, and those people aren’t really unionized,” Saburro claims. “I was comparing an on-air person from WNYT to an AFTRA person from my station (WRGB), and that was a mistake because Bill turned all of the on-air people into private contractors. Now they are all unionized.”

“Bill turned out to be a fantastic local president,” Saburro said. “I think he was a good leader.”

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and benefits,” Sturm says. “NABET has been helped by joining with expanded NABET’s jurisdiction. Institutional converters, the Internet, etc. have expanded NABET’s jurisdiction. What used to take 20 people has been reduced to a half with the automation of television studio equipment.”

“Getting Taylor’s years at the Local was a great job. There were a lot of standing jobs, allowing in order to decide the cases.”

Today’s cases are mostly grievances, he said, with more than half related to job protection. “A lot of other Unions don’t litigate the way NABET does. We’ve always stuck to our philosophy of helping our members. Not necessarily to get new ones, but always to protect the ones we have,” Sturm said.

Having a neutral party determine your fate is much more fair than leaving a decision in the court’s hands, Sturm asserts. An arbitrator often will agree with the grievant and give them a second chance. “This in itself—job security—is worth the Union dues,” Sturm said.

NABET also relies on its cadre of long-serving members who understand the contracts and can testify about the bargaining history in contract interpretation cases. At the networks, the pay and benefits are “fabulous,” Sturm says, and ABC and NBC mostly use attrition instead of layoffs to downsize the workforce. There are exceptions, however, such as the layoffs at CNN a decade ago. Sturm was the first witness in NABET’s case against the cable network. By “reorganizing” and hiring fewer than 50 percent of the workers back, CNN attempted to break the Union,” Sturm says.

Representing workers in the broadcast industry, many of who started their careers in television’s infancy has allowed Sturm to work on issues that are on the cutting edge of the evolution of technology. “The industry and technology have aged together,” he says. “Technology has been both good and bad for NABET. What used to take 20 people to do now can be done by one or two.”

“On the other hand, technology has opened up many other areas for the Union that didn’t exist before: graphic artists, signal converters, the Internet, etc. have expanded NABET’s jurisdiction.”

“On the whole, the average guy in NABET has been helped by joining with others to improve their working conditions and benefits,” Sturm says.

Don Farnham, Sr.

Don Farnham Sr., age 88, is the longest-serving active member of NABET-CWA, the Union he joined 65 years ago while working at ABC-TV in Chicago.

After facing enemy fire for five years as a Marine in Guan and Iwo Jima, Farnham began his long broadcasting career in 1948. He initially worked for ABC radio, and then moved to television, where he worked as a cameraman at WENR-TV/Channel 7. He was there when the television station first signed on the air on Sept. 17, 1948. WENR was one of the original ABC-owned stations in the country.

As Farnham remembers it, WENR’s first night did not go quite as expected: “On opening night, the show included a 22-minute Rhapsody in Blue piece at the Civic Opera House and a 30-minute beauty contest from the Coliseum, where I was on the remote crew. We ended up running out of time and our audience never got to see the winner of the beauty contest.” The Civic Opera House is now the Kemper Building in Chicago. The station moved to the WKBK studios in 1957, after ABC merged with United Paramount, and WENR was replaced with WKBK-TV.

Farnham stayed on the remote crew as a cameraman for 12 years, until becoming a field supervisor/technical director. When the networks went to color broadcasts, all of the equipment moved to New York and Hollywood, so Farnham moved inside, to the studio. One of Farnham’s colleagues was President Emeritus of NABET-CWA Local 41, Ray Taylor, who worked camera under Farnham’s direction.

In 1970, Farnham was asked to work camera for Monday Night Football, where he worked for seven years. To take the job, he had to give up his role as a supervisor, but said he has no regrets. Always active in the Union, Farnham was a Local 41 Steward for 30 years and “wrote a lot of grievances.” He also once served as Local 41’s Vice President for a brief period. “They held an election and I threw my name in for the heck of it and won,” Farnham recalls.

Through the years, his job offered him the opportunity to travel and witness history. He was part of the ABC crew that traveled to China with President Nixon in 1972, he was the technical director for the drag car relays on the first “Wide World of Sports” in and he covered three presidential conventions, the 1968 Chicago riots, as well as the inaugurations of three presidents: Nixon, Ford and Reagan. He continued to work into his 60s, explaining, “It was just too good to retire.” During his last five years on the job, Farnham covered the fall fashions in Paris, took a cruise to Alaska, a safari in Africa, a trip to Jamaica. He retired at age 67, and has been able to enjoy a lifetime pension and medical benefits as the result of good union contracts.

Farnham maintains ties to the industry. He has served on the Cable Commission since 1996, and volunteers at Channel 6, a station he started in the late ’90s in Riverside Township, southwest of Chicago. He purchased the cameras, lights and equipment that are used today to cover local events such as Board of Education meetings, township trustee meetings, and parades.

Ray Taylor

Ray W. Taylor, President Emeritus of NABET-CWA Local 41 in Chicago, laments the “long, luxurious decline” of the television business from what he describes as TV’s “Golden Age”—from 1948, when WLS/ABC signed on in Chicago, through to 1987.

“Our whole existence is tied to technical equipment and writing and producing shows, and as technical equipment became more automated, our participation declined,” he said. As the equipment used to produce and broadcast television evolved, Taylor saw the Union change as well.

“The last 27 years has been a precipitous decline in the audience and our participation in the medium,” he said, citing cable and satellite television offerings that have diminished the concentration of the viewing population that was available in the past.

Many of the NABET-represented jobs at TV stations—telephone operators, traffic and communication operators, studio camera, transmitter personnel, videotape operators—have been automated, and Taylor believes there is more to come.

“I feel very fortunate that I was in that era where I saw the real growth,” he said. “From 1948 to 1987 was really an outstanding time for anyone to be working in Chicago television.”

The networks invested in high-level productions, with a focus on entertainment. Taylor said that NABET and its technicians, news writers, etc. all made an effort to create quality productions because television was a new, exciting medium. The industry’s decline is somewhat mirrored in diminished union membership. During television’s heyday, NABET’s Local 41 had close to 200 staff members at ABC and nearly 200 staff members at NBC, in addition to its members at several smaller stations, including WSNS-TV, WFLD-TV, and WCUC-TV.

Ray always active in the Union, Taylor credits the U nion with providing members with outstanding jobs, allowing many members to purchase homes and provide college educations for their families. “I really enjoyed the job and NABET made it a great job. There were a lot of good wages, plus medical and retirement benefits that were distributed throughout the television community because of NABET,” he said. In order to maintain this standard of living, NABET endured seven strikes and four contract implementations during Taylor’s years at the Local.

Marveling at the swift and expansive advances in technology, Taylor describes working on the bulky Ampex 2-inch video recorder machine that was developed and released for the broadcast television industry in 1956. The only recording medium available to the TV industry before then was film, which was used for kinescopes. The videotape machines allowed the replay of audio and images almost immediately, unlike film that had to be processed and developed before playback use.

“Videotape was a big advance in technology,” Taylor said. “It would be very difficult today to find a two-inch machine.” Tape gradually went from being 2-inches to 1-inch, 3/4 inch to 1/2 inch and is now almost nonexistent itself.

“If you would have come up to me years ago and said, ‘Somebody people are going to have videotape machines in their homes,’ I would question how they could possibly get this thing [Ampex] up the stairs!”

“What occurred technically in that short amount of time is incomprehensible to me. It would take four people to carry color cameras up to the press box. Now, you can record the sports event or any event on your phone and send the images over the Internet. Viewed from when I started in 1957, technically, television today is almost an inconceivable world.”

John S. Clark

For John Clark, who joined the Union in 1967 as a vacation relief engineer at the ABC Radio Network, the merger of NABET and CWA was his most formidable undertaking as a NABET leader. Clark was serving as the President of NABET Local 11 in New York when he became aware of serious concerns about the Union following a crippling strike against NBC in 1987 and a contract implementation in 1990.
Clark, who was also a NABET International Executive Council (IEC) Vice President, discussed these issues with then-International President Jim Nolan. Since the IFC had again in the 1980’s rejected an attempt to merge with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Nolan looked into joining with CWA.

The initial exploratory meetings soon became meaningful negotiations in 1992 and lasted several months. Clark, Nolan and Larry Cohen (then-CWA Director of Organizing) were heavily involved in the discussions. “CWA had done several mergers before, but we went into it looking to keep as much of our autonomy as possible,” Clark said. “The sector idea was modeled on CWA’s affiliation with the Allied Printers.”

“We eventually were able to hash out an agreement that we could put out to the membership for a one-year affiliation, followed by a full merger starting Jan. 1, 1994,” said Clark, who was NABET’s principal draftsman for the Merger Agreement.

“The vote passed by a landslide,” he said. “‘Joining CWA was the best thing that we did during our time at NABET. It gave us a lot of strength, more backing for running campaigns (defense funds, funds for advertising and mobilizations, and a member relief fund). There is a lot of support at CWA that gives us strength and credibility.’

Clark said the Union was doing well financially at the time, funding its own schoolarships, etc. NABET became a model of how to be successful in a merger.

When Jim Nolan retired, Clark became president of NABET in October 1993 and was named Sector President upon the full merger with CWA in 1994. Clark then was elected to a full, four-year term and became a CWA Vice President for the Broadcast Sector. Clark retired from the Union in January 2010, and by unanimous decree of the Sector Executive Council, he was bestowed with the title of NABET-CWA President Emeritus.

Bill Freeda

The merger with CWA included additional support for the retired segment of NABET’s membership. NABET-CWA now had a seat on CWA’s Retired Members Council. John Clark appointed Howie Atlas, a long-time member of the International Executive Council as NABET-CWA’s first Retiree Coordinator to the RMC. The new role provided a presence that helped the Union maintain its ties with retirees and address issues of importance to this emerging group. When Atlas left 10 years later, Bill Freeda took over and continues in that role today.

Freeda, a NABET member since 1977, retired from his career as an editor at NBC’s New York bureau in 2000. Freeda has served as a Union official in various capacities since 1979, including a short stint as Local 11 President in the late 1990’s.

Freeda came to NABET by way of the International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees (IATSE), IATSE represented film editors at NBC and ABC, but film was being phased out in the mid-70s in favor of videotape. Starting in 1975, NBC decided to move film editors, cameramen and audio into NABET. Those who chose not to move to NABET were phased out because there was no film anymore.

For Freeda and film editors like him, “The move protected the jobs and made them better because NABET had a better contract,” Freeda explains. “NABET was a much more democratic union than I had expected before, so I was delighted by the change.”

According to Freeda, the most noticeable difference was the size of IATSE’s contract. “IATSE’s contract contained a paid lunch hour provision and better wage scales,” Freeda estimates that his income doubled after he became a NABET member.

“I credit NABET with helping me be able to continue my career,” Freeda says. “Being 37 years old at the time of the transition to videotape, I was thrilled to be able to stay at NBC, continue my trade as an editor, and have a great contract on top of that.”

In his current role as the Retiree Coordinator, and regular NABET News columnist, Freeda is a strong advocate for his fellow broadcast industry retirees. He noted that NABET’s involvement in negotiating retirement packages when NBC sold its NBC to GE in 1985. At RCA, Union members received full retirement at age 60. When GE took over, 60 was still the retirement age, but new provisions opened up other avenues to allow for early retirement, as well as provisions in the pension plan to provide payments due to layoffs and plant closings. When RCA’s Income Savings Plan dissolved in 1991, GE was forced to create a “mirror plan” of the GE plan.

Today, NBC Universal employees who are 60 years or more are collecting their unpensioned and pensioned GE retirement if they are still working because they are considered “re-tired” from GE as a result of Comcast’s purchase of the company in 2011. When Comcast took over, all NBC Universal employees were “terminated” as GE employees. Any pension earned from GE up to that point can now be collected.

Freeda explained how retiree benefits have shifted over the years when corporations change hands: “When GE took over, it allowed former RCA employees to take their pension as an RCA employee, which also included a lump sum provision that the GE plan didn’t. From 1991 on, employees collect the GE pension. When the merger with Comcast, employees initially were offered a defined benefit plan for two years, but that ended in 2013. Now, Comcast offers a 401(K) plan.

Today, CWA’s Retired Members Council – described as “a growing army of thousands of CWA retirees” – has 50,000 members, including several hundred NABET retirees. Freeda serves as the Media Sector President on the national RMC Executive Board, representing NABET-CWA, The Newspaper Guild, and the Printing, Publishing and Media Workers Sector retirees.

Fred Saburro

RVP 2, Fred Saburro, who recently celebrated his 60th year as NABET member, first joined the Union on December 7, 1953, at Local 21 in the Albany area of New York. It was a small Local of about 35 members at the time, and Saburro got involved in the Union he says because “I couldn’t keep my mouth shut.”

“When I joined NABET, we were one Union, an international organization across North America,” Saburro recalls. That all changed at the Union’s 1974 convention in Atlanta, Ga. Saburro was the Chairman of the Constitution Committee (now the Sector By-laws Committee) that consisted of members from Canada and the U.S. During caucus, a decision was made to separate Canada into its own grouping because the U.S. NABET at that time had more members than Canada.

Saburro says that despite the restructuring, “NABET-U.S. and NABET-Canada maintained common ‘work rule standards’ in contracts and continued to hold joint meetings every year, alternating locations between U.S. and Canadian cities, until the merger with CWA.

Saburro also recalled the era when NABET also represented workers in the film industry. “The film members wanted the NABET seal in order to get work, especially on the west coast, New York City and Chicago,” said Saburro. “If you were Union, you could get work, so we allowed them to get into NABET.” The film members paid $2/member per quarter and were chartered strictly for film at three NABET locals in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles.

When the transition from film to video began to take hold, the film workers struggled to keep industry jobs. During a NABET strike with NBC, Saburro remembers, tensions arose between the film workers and the television workers. The NABET International Council was restructured to provide the film workers with a spot on the Executive Council. This was a short-lived fix, however, and the film Locals were dissolved in the early 1990’s.

In 1987, a real test for the Union came when the networks introduced the concept of Daily Hires. “That was seen as a real challenge to our system, which had been about protecting staff employment,” said Saburro. “Even though the Union went out on strike at NBC at first over this issue, NABET’s membership was growing because of Daily Hires,” he added. “In many Locals, there are now more Daily Hire members than Staff members, but we all have the same goals of improving our working conditions and providing for our loved ones.”

Soon after the strike, Saburro said NABET’s leadership realized that we couldn’t survive on our own because NABET was not large enough to have all the resources necessary in the 90’s, like political power. “We were well respected with good contracts, making NABET an attractive merger partner,” says Saburro. “We really had to merge and seek out the best Union that was the best fit for us and that was CWA,” he said. “We didn’t do this on a whim. We did it for the members.”

Though the merger has kept NABET as a viable labor organization, Saburro says the last 10 years have been particularly rough for his Region, to which he was first elected to lead as RVP in 1979. Region 2 has eight fewer locals than it did in 2003, including WWOR (Local 209), Local 23 in Wilkes-Barre, Local 213 in Harrisburg, Local 291 in Pomon, N.Y., Local 19 in Springfield, and Local 222 (CBS news couriers).

The loss of these members has been tough, Saburro acknowledges. “But NABET has been wonderful to us. I supported five sons because of NABET. I love this Union.” Saburro (Continued on page 6)
History
(Continued from page 5)

has always kept his wife Ida involved in NABET activities as well. “She knows everybody that I know in NABET, since the Union was so much a part of my life.”

He says he wouldn’t have been elected RVP by acclamation for the past 36 years if he weren’t appreciated. He always signs his Union letters with this send-off: “Always remember who loves you, Fred Saburro.”

Jim Harvey
Fred Saburro says he met Jim Harvey in 1965, when he was running for Executive Vice President of NABET’s International Executive Council, and described him as “a laid-back guy and very bright.” Harvey ended up winning the election and serving as the Vice President for 13 years.

Harvey first began working on NABET’s staff as a regional director in New York City in 1956. Six years later, he traveled south to work in Washington, D.C. for ABC as a technical director and a member of the mini-cam crew. While there, he served the Union as Local 31’s president for six years. “Everything in the beginning was technical,” said Harvey. “Everyone was an amateur radio operator, and there was very little in the way of Union activity.” NABET, he explained, was started as a technical union. He especially enjoyed working with the Canadians back in the day: “It was exciting working with them. They were very militant organizers. They even had a local in the Arctic Circle.”

Harvey traveled widely during his career. He was part of the advance team to set-up the network’s facilities for President Nixon’s visit to China in 1972. He also was a member of the mini-cam crew that recorded Barbara Walters’ historic joint interview of former Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin in Jerusalem in 1977. Most of his work revolved around the Capital, where he covered many State of the Union addresses and Oval Office speeches.

“I worked with quite a few presidents: Carter, Reagan, Johnson, Ford, and Nixon,” Harvey said. “I did a lot of Nixon speeches, including his Oval Office speech when he famously committed the ‘Saturday Night massacre’ during the Watergate scandal.”

Today, at age 87, Harvey lives outside of Washington, D.C., and is the President Emeritus of Local 31. Like many his age, longtime friends such as NABET-CWA network coordinator John Krueger aren’t around any more. In addition, Harvey laments that most of his colleagues don’t remain in the D.C. area once their broadcast days are over. However, he says many old-time ABC crew members and correspondents participate in an ABC alumni group that meets every other month in Virginia. Harvey mostly stays in touch with the Union through this newsletter. “I love to read the NABET News. It’s a friendly paper,” he says. “I like reading what all of the locals are doing and what’s going on in their negotiations.”

80 Years Later
President Emeritus John Clark sums it up this way, “Due to all of the technological change, this continues to be a period of great turmoil. We’ve gone from analog to non-linear and now digital broadcasting. Just in the last 10 years, it has become so much more digital. We now have distribution ‘broadcasters’ that don’t even broadcast, and distribution systems like Netflix and YouTube that do their own broadcasting. Cable and satellite add yet another dimension. It’s become a long and lingering period of the unknown. All of this produces an uncertainty as far as jobs and job security. There are so many fights over jobs and jurisdiction due to technological change. Anything goes. It’s the original amateur hour.”

NABET was there at the dawn of the industry, another period of great technological change. As Ray Taylor said, it is hard to imagine what is next on the horizon. The Union will continue to anticipate its members’ needs and adjust in order to stay relevant in this fast-moving, tumultuous century, as it has done for the past 80 years.

CNN
(Continued from page 1)

favor of NABET-CWA. The ALJ found, in part, that CNN had engaged in “widespread and egregious misconduct” and had demonstrated “a flagrant and general disregard for and egregious misconduct” and had demonstrated “a flagrant and general disregard for the employees’ fundamental rights.” The ALJ’s 169-page decision ordered the employer to take seven basic actions to remedy the widespread violations of the National Labor Relations Act.

Yet, CNN ignored the decision and delayed justice further by appealing the ALJ’s ruling. Two years later, in October 2010, CWA filed another motion with the NLRB, calling on the board to give this case priority over all other pending cases. CNN opposed that motion.

In 2013, the company took its obstruction a step further by challenging the NLRB’s legal authority after a federal appeals court created uncertainty over excess appointments of members to the NLRB.

Delays in the case have already taken a terrible toll on workers who have lost their homes, gone bankrupt and struggled to pay their medical bills while they awaited justice. Sadly, the latest NLRB decision comes too late for a half-dozen NABET-CWA members who have since passed away, leaving their families to see justice finally meted out. As this edition of NABET News was going to press, the Union has been informed that CNN has filed an appeal in the right direction.

In upholding Judge Amchan’s 2008 decision, on September 15, 2014, the NLRB affirmed that CNN violated the National Labor Relations Act (NRLA) by (1) Terminating the subcontracts with TVS out of anti-union animus and thereby causing the discharge of TVS employees; (2) Failing to bargain with the Union about the decision to terminate the subcontracts and the effects of that decision; (3) Making coercive statements; (4) Implementing a hiring plan designed to limit the number of discharged TVS employees it hired to staff its in-house operations in order to avoid a successorship bargaining obligation; and (5) As a successor, failing to recognize and bargain with the Union and unilaterally changing employees’ terms and conditions of employment.

Included in the NLRB decision are orders that the company cease and desist from discharging bargaining unit employees of Team Video Services (TVS), its joint employer and predecessor employer at the Washington, D.C. and New York City bureaus because of their union-represented status in TVS’ operations; or because of their union activities and membership; or otherwise discriminating against these employees to avoid having to recognize and bargain with NABET-CWA Locals 11 and 31. The company must also cease and desist from refusing to comply with the collective-bargaining agreements or from in any like or related manner interfering with, restrain- ing, or coercing employees in the exercise of the rights guaranteed them by Section 7 of the NLRA.

The Board has also ordered CNN to, among other directives, recognize the Union as the exclusive representative of the unit employees, rescind any changes in the terms and conditions of employment of its bargaining unit employees that were unilaterally implemented after December 6, 2003, at the DC bureau, and January 17, 2004, at the NYC bureau, and retroactively restore the preexisting terms and conditions of employment, including hours of work, pay rates, and benefit plans. The company must also offer employment to the former TVS workers to their former positions or, if those jobs no longer exist, to substantially equivalently positions, without prejudice to their seniority or any other rights or privileges previously enjoyed. CNN must also make the workers whole for any loss of earnings and other benefits suffered as a result of either being unlawfully discharged or having unilateral changes made in their terms and conditions of employment if they were hired by CNN in 2003 or 2004.

In response to the ruling, NABET-CWA members are planning rallies throughout the fall at CNN’s offices in New York City and Washington, D.C. The first rally was scheduled for September 24 in Washington, with a companion rally in New York on September 26. Both rallies were to include support from CWA Locals, state and local labor federations, and turnout from social justice allies like Jobs with Justice. Reports on these events will be featured in the next edition of NABET News.

L 21’s Lambdin
(Continued from page 3)

Fred Saburro (front-second from left), early in his career, with his colleagues.

turn his feet, but I look forward to the challenge and hope to keep our local mov- ing in the right direction.”

Kendrick reiterated Lambdin’s concerns over member involvement, explaining that one of the biggest challenges the local and the national Union face today is how to get younger members involved.

Lambdin’s knowledge and wisdom over the years as a local president and member of NABET’s Executive Board will be missed, as will his penchant for wearing Hawaiian shirts at Union meetings. “When I first started going to meetings, I wanted to make an impression on the reporter, image with a suit and tie, when I’m on my Union job.”

Kendrick also worked together for 25 years with Lambdin, 38 years until Lambdin retired in 2011 after 42 years. His father’s declining health with ALS was one of the triggers for Lambdin’s retirement.

“Bill Lambdin was a magnificent presi- dent and he did a fantastic job for our local, said Kendrick, 47, who is now in his 28th year at the station. “It will be hard to follow in his footsteps, but I look forward to the challenge and hope to keep our local moving in the right direction.”
Christopher Bales
Christopher Bales of Oakdale, MN., is the son of Local 411 member David Bales. A graduate of Tartan Senior High, Christopher describes himself as “a youthful, creative and intelligent student.” He served as the Treasurer of the National Honor Society at his school, and also was a member of the Theatre Stage Crew and Student Council. Christopher spent three summers volunteering at a children’s museum and worked as a sales associate at a retail store. Christopher won the George Smith Scholarship Award, and attends the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN.

Stephen Fryrear
Stephen Fryrear of Valencia, CA., is the son of Local 57 member Fred Fryrear, Jr. Stephen graduated from William S. Hart High School, and is currently testing for his Black Belt in Karate. He also volunteers as a basketball coach with the Special Olympics. Stephen won the James P. Nolan Scholarship Award and attends the College of the Canyons as a Computer Science major, with long-term plans to transfer to a four-year college.

Philip Levens
Philip Levens of S. Salem, NY., is the son of Local 11 member David Levens. Philip was a member of the National Honor Society, received a Scholar Athlete Award (Ski Team) for three years, and graduated from a three-year Humanities Research Honors program while attending John Jay High School in Cross River, NY. He also plays piano, takes lessons in Mandarin Chinese and worked as a columnist for a local newspaper. Philip won the Edward M. Lynch Scholarship Award and attends the University of Pennsylvania.

Chase Skorczewski
Chase Skorczewski of Bay City, MI., is the son of Local 46 member Mark Skorczewski. Chase ranked eighth in his class upon graduation from All Saints Central High School, where he was a member of the National Honor Society and of the football, basketball, baseball and track teams. Chase also graduated from Bay City’s Fire Cadet Program and is certified as a Firefighter I & II and CPR/AED certified. He performed healthcare rotations with doctors at McLaren Bay Region Hospital. Chase won the Lawrence Dworkin Scholarship Award and attends Saginaw Valley State University, where he will study pre-med with the hope of becoming an Emergency Room physician.

Blake Tickell
Blake Tickell of Moorpark, CA., is the son of Local 53 member Mark Tickell. Blake graduated with Honors from Moorpark High School, where he thrived both academically and musically. He was a member of the California Scholarship Federation (Vice President), the National Honor Society and played the Tenor Sax in his high school’s Jazz A Band and Wind Ensemble. Blake found community service through the band program especially rewarding, organizing food and clothing drives and providing school supplies for local children in need. He also worked as an ongoing tutor at his high school for math and science students, and interviewed and shot documentaries for 4Culture in Seattle, where he interned for two years. Blake won the Dorr C. Wilson Scholarship Award and attends the University of California-Berkeley, with an eye toward a career as a physicist with an emphasis on green energy and technology “so that I can be instrumental in decreasing global warming through scientific research.”

The following students received a one-time NABET-CWA Scholarship of $1,000:

Jacob Kocic
Jacob Kocic of Hamburg, NY., is the son of Local 25 member Michael Kocic. A graduate of Frontier High School, Jacob was a member of the National Honor Society and the high school Wind Ensemble for three years. He also played Varsity Soccer and Lacrosse. Jacob won the Region Two James P. Nolan Memorial Award and is enrolled in the Engineering Science program at Erie Community College in Buffalo, NY. In two years, he plans to transfer to the University of Buffalo for Environmental Engineering.

Claire Schneider
Claire Schneider of Pleasantville, N.Y., is the daughter of Local 16 member Mark Schneider. A graduate of Pleasantville High School, Claire tutored through National Honor Society and was the Vice President of the French National Honor Society. She also played Varsity Tennis in each year of high school, participated in the Yearbook Club, performed various volunteer work, and worked part-time in a retail store. Claire won the Thomas F. Kennedy Scholarship Award and attends Suffolk University in Boston.

The following student received a one-time NABET-CWA Scholarship of $500:

Jonathan Maxey
Jonathan Maxey of Detroit, MI., is the son of Local 43 President Dorethea Brown-Maxey. Jonathan graduated from Case Technical High School in Detroit and currently is a sophomore at Prairie View A&M University in Texas, majoring in Mechanical Engineering. He received the Spirit of Detroit Award in high school, is a member of the National Society of Black Engineers and attended a Georgia Technical University Engineering and Science summer program in 2012. Jonathan worked at the Ford Rouge plant in Dearborn, MI, over the past summer. Jonathan won the James Harris Scholarship Award.

And the Winners Are...

This year’s 2014 NABET-CWA scholarships went to five accomplished high school students who are the daughters or sons of active NABET-CWA members. They each will receive $750 annually for four years—a total of $3,000 toward their college educations. In honor of their academic and community leadership, these students won merit-based scholarships named in past NABET-CWA International Presidents and/or employees:

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Independent Report
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room would “work for” its advertising-sales department, and that future company plans include the use of NewsChannel 8 and WJLA as a platform for a national news network that would involve the company’s stations around the country. Charles Lewis, the founder of the Center for Public Integrity in Washington said, “I’d be nervous if I were working at WJLA right now. They are stuck with an idiosyncratic owner with its own political views and agenda. It’s a nightmarish scenario for journalists.” (Under new ownership, WJLA-TV takes a slight turn to the right,” Washington Post, Sept. 17, 2014)
KWHY-TV – Los Angeles, CA (Local 53)

A new contract was ratified by the 30 camera operators, audio and field technicians at KWHY-TV/MundoFox22. The station, formerly owned by NBC, was purchased in 2011 by the Meruelo Group, a Hispanic company with a varied business portfolio that includes a local fast food pizza chain and a gaming resort in Reno, NV. NABET-CWA negotiated for the next two years with the new owners, and finally reached this contract after a previous settlement was rejected by the Daily Hire membership. The Union had initially bargained for 50% of the unit to be converted to staff, including benefits, vacation and sick days, in exchange for wage cuts. However, the membership preferred the new package of 2% raises in each year of the contract. The unit had been working under an expired KVEA contract that did not include exclusive jurisdiction or seniority protection in the event of layoffs, both of which were added to the new contract. “Getting jurisdiction in this contract is very significant,” said Local 53 President Steve Ross. “Many companies these days are trying to take that away.” NABET-CWA Staff Representative Eric Seggi was the Union’s spokesperson in the talks.

KOIN-TV – Portland, OR (Local 53)

During the most recent discussions, LIN Media maintained its stance on disallowing “take-home” vehicles, adding MMs to do all of the unit’s jurisdictional work, saddling the Union employees with a 30% increase in health care costs, and giving minimal wage increases. Furthermore, the company insisted that MMWs would not be in the contract, and any photographers who leave the station due to regular turnover or retirement, would not be replaced. The company also has posted a job listing for a “Content Producer.” The Union is attempting to develop counterproposals that would lessen these economic hits. In response to NABET-CWA’s charges on the use of MMWs, the NLRB has said it can’t act because the Union has not yet been harmed by the proposal. According to NABET-CWA Staff Representative Carrie Biggs-Adams, bargaining dates are set for October 2-3. Since June, community supporters have been “crashing” KOIN live shots around Portland. On Labor Day, KOIN aired a live shot from the AFL-CIO Labor Day picnic and got set for October 2-3. Since June, community supporters have been “crashing” KOIN live shots on the air.

WNEM-TV – Saginaw, MI (Local 48)

An agreement was reached on a contract for the newly organized assignment editors. NABET-CWA Staff Representative Eric Seggi said that the company also agreed to merge this contract with the main contract that was settled in January of this year. The two contracts are set to expire in April 2016, with a wage reopener for the main agreement in 2015.

WSKG-TV – Binghamton, NY (Local 26)

The membership ratified a new one-year contract that calls for a 2% wage increase and minor language changes. The bargaining committee included Andrew Ploch, Cristal Sarakas, Christine Lantz and NABET-CWA Staff Representative William Murray.

WITF-TV – Harrisburg, PA (Local 31)

On August 20, the unit at WITF ratified a three-year contract extension, as well as a contract amendment that reduces the minimum call to three hours for part-timers working on the newly awarded Pennsylvania Lottery production that will be broadcast daily, 365 days per year. In exchange, the Union won wage increases for all classifications, effective immediately, and moved the members to greater increases in the merit pay process. However, there will be a trainee rate (at 10% less than the basic rate for each job, minus Senior Engineers). By 2017, employees will have the moral minimum wage of $15 per hour in effect for the TV production crew. The Union was represented in bargaining by Local 31 President Rich McDer- mott and NABET-CWA Staff Representative Carrie Biggs-Adams.

WDIV-TV – Detroit, MI (Local 43)

The two sides met for the first time in a year on September 8-9 under the auspices of a federal mediator. No progress was made, however, as the company continues to insist on its “final” proposal from October 2013 and will not consider modifications or counter proposals. NABET-CWA Staff Representative Eric Seggi says the Union will hold a meeting with the members to bring them up to date and determine “our next move.” In the meantime, the mobilization campaign continues in September with rallies at local advertiser’s Happy’s Pizza, ABC Warehouse, Mr. Alan’s and the Mike Morse Law Firm.

WJET-TV – Erie, PA (Local 28)

Bargaining will begin soon over the effects of the company’s relocation of master control to Memphis, TN, in late September or early October. The move will eliminate five staff positions, which is a significant cut to the 35-40 full-time positions at the station. NABET-CWA Staff Representative Eric Seggi said that bargaining on the current collective bargaining agreement will start sometime before the contract expires at the end of this year, though no dates have been set.

FOX Hub – Las Vegas, NV (Local 53)

Despite having met several times, talks are moving slowly without much progress, according to NABET-CWA Staff Representative Eric Seggi. More talks are scheduled for late September. NABET-CWA filed an unfair labor practice charge with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) against the company after Fox unilaterally stopped yearly evaluations and associated merit increases on July 1, saying they instead want to bargain over employee wages. NABET-CWA is waiting for the NLRB’s determination.

KTV – Los Angeles (Local 53)

An administrative law judge decided against NABET-CWA over the complaint issued on Fox’s implementation of the engineering unit’s contract. The unit is effectively working without a contract now and continues to mobilize to bring the company back to the table and work out an agreement. Members are posting large 30-foot banners asking people not to shop at KTV advertisers, including at one of its largest advertisers, Sit N Sleep, a large local furniture chain. On July 5, mobilizers took a page from NABET-CWA’s successful activities in Portland and displayed a “Don’t Shop Here” banner in front of the Sit N Sleep store on high-traffic Ventura Blvd. in Tarzana, CA. Local President Steve Ross and Vice President Joe Ayala put together a video of the event which can be found at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HlmBaicqnxw&feature=player_embedded. So far, the Union has visited six Sit N Sleep stores. The Union is set to meet with the company on Sept. 22-23. “I’m hoping that having this campaign will make a dent in the negotiations,” Ross said.

WJLA-TV – Washington, D.C. (Local 31)

Since the sale of the station to Sinclair Broadcasting is complete, the Local has requested bargaining dates with the new owner. Sinclair has said it will honor the existing contract, despite making changes to several employee benefits. An article in The Washington Post reports that the station’s long-time management team was fired recently. Sinclair CEO David Smith told employees in an introducory staff meeting that “the station’s news-