The NABET-CWA Network Negotiating Committee (NNC) is preparing for the upcoming negotiations with NBCUniversal for a successor to the Master Agreement. The NBC NNC has been holding periodic conference calls since August to plan and prepare for the upcoming talks. On November 17th, 18th and 19th, the bargaining committee met in New York City to discuss proposals, coordinate calendars and evaluate proposed locations for bargaining with NBCU. The current NABET-CWA/NBCU Master Agreement expires on March 31, 2015.

The Union's bargaining committee includes Local 11 President Lou Marinaro, Local 31's Steve Mitnick, Local 41 President Charles Braico, and Local 53 President Steve Ross. In addition, each Local has designated an alternate bargaining representative to assist in the process. Local 11 President Emeritus Ed McEwan, Local 31 member Mike Judge, Local 41 Steward Ed Dabrowski and Local 53's Warren Stern round out the team. Charlie Braico and Steve Ross have been elected by the committee to serve as co-chairs of the negotiating team.

NABET-CWA members at NBC have already submitted contract proposal forms and surveys to their locals as well as through the Sector's website. The volume of proposal submissions was impressive, with a sharp focus on Daily Hire issues, including a number of important proposals for Daily Hires working in the field.

The Union and the Company are finalizing the bargaining timetable, with full-table negotiations scheduled to commence on Tuesday, January 20, 2015 in New York City. The parties will meet for two full weeks in New York before moving to Burbank, CA, for two additional weeks of negotiations, beginning on February 2, 2015. Following a 1-week break, the bargaining teams will return to New York City for three weeks of talks February 23, 2015 to March 13, 2015. Both parties have expressed their full commitment to concluding these negotiations in a timely manner and delivering a tentative agreement before March 31st.

U.S. House Daily Hires Choose NABET-CWA


Of the 19 workers who voted, 11 voted for the Union. NABET-CWA Staff Representative Carrie Biggs-Adams described the organizing campaign as "a vicious, anti-union campaign." Management distributed eight different flyers and held four-hour, off-premises meetings with a "persuader" to urge "No" votes.

The workers initially sought Union representation after their wages were slashed by 34 percent. On Oct. 1, 2013, Maslow workers suffered a $17 per hour cut in pay when the House reduced their wages from $50 per hour to $33 per hour. The Maslow crews supplement the work done by NABET-CWA members under their contract with the House Recording Studio, who work at much higher rates negotiated under the Congressional Accountability Act.

Tyrone Riggs, who lost his job at CNN 11 years ago and currently works through Maslow, led the organizing campaign with NABET-CWA staff Representative Carrie Biggs-Adams and Local 31 President Rich McDermott.
NABET-CWA Local 31 Members Go the Extra Mile

Over the summer, several NBC/WRC-TV NABET-CWA 31 members gathered for a day of bike riding that raised over $15,000 for Food and Friends in Washington D.C. Craig M. Shniderman, the charity’s Executive Director, was on hand to thank the group as they ended their ride at Mt. Vernon, Virginia.

Each year, Food and Friends helps feed 3,000 men, women and children in Washington D.C. who suffer from HIV/AIDS, cancer or other life-challenging illnesses. Included in those numbers are clients who receive food deliveries at home.

WRC-TV’s General Manager Jackie Bradford, the newest team member, rode with the group that also included several active and retired NABET-CWA 31 members. NBC News Videographer/Editor Chester Panzer, the Team’s Co-Captain with NBC News Channel correspondent Steve Handelsman, has been a member of NABET-CWA Local 31 since 1974.

Team NBC 4 initially was formed for the very first AIDS Ride from Philadelphia to Washington D.C. in 1996. Over the years, the team has raised several thousand dollars and participated in many road races, including Seagull Century, Air Force Crystal Ride and Civil War Century. NBC 4’s Steve Handelsman is listed as the Top Fundraiser on Food and Friends’ website: www.foodandfriends.org.

Important Dates:

March 6, 2015: Deadline for Locals to submit proposed amendments to the Sector By-Laws

May 5, 2015: Names of each Delegate MUST be received by the Washington Office by this date and credential applications must be submitted to CWA.

April 20, 2015: Local Officers will receive a copy of the proposed amendments to the Sector By-Laws.

May 5, 2015: Petitions for Sector Offices MUST be submitted to the Washington Office by this date.

Delegates will be mailed their final information packet and a copy of the proposed amendments to the Sector By-Laws by this date.

Conference Schedule:

June 3, 2015: Travel day for Delegates. Delegate registration held all day. Orientation meeting for all Delegates at 5:30 p.m. Delegates Reception and Dinner.

June 4, 2015: Conference convenes at 9:00 a.m.

June 6, 2015: Conference adjourns.

June 7, 2015: Travel out for those not attending the CWA Convention.

June 9, 2015: CWA Convention will be held on June 9-11.

NABET Regions 1, 3 and 5 Election Notice

NABET-CWA members wishing to run for election as Regional Vice President in NABET-CWA Regions 1, 3 and 5 may obtain nominating petitions from their Local after Jan. 1, 2015. Original petitions must be filed by April 15, 2015, in the Sector Office in Washington, D.C. Candidates must be active NABET-CWA members in good standing for at least the three years immediately preceding nomination. Election procedures are specified in Article VII of the NABET-CWA Sector By-Laws.

Voting for these offices will be conducted by secret mail ballot. Ballots will be mailed on May 1, 2015, to all active members in good standing, in each of the three Regions, to the address on file with the Sector Office. If you have moved, please be sure your address is current with your Local and with the Sector Office.

If you do not receive a ballot within a reasonable time after May 8, 2015, and believe you are eligible to vote, notify your Local so that an inquiry may be made to the Sector Office, or call the office directly to request a duplicate ballot. The phone number is (202) 434-1254.

Ballots must reach the Sector Office by 5 p.m. Eastern Daylight Tim e, May 29, 2015, to be counted on June 1, 2015. Candidates who are elected will begin three-year terms on the Sector Executive Council on July 1, 2015.

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Recently, I asked one of my grandchildren what “LOL” meant in an email or text. The response was: “Really, Grandpa?” in an exasperated tone, accompanied by the appropriate look of utter amazement. It means “Laughing Out Loud,” she said with an air of dismay. The reason why I open this column with that anecdote will become apparent shortly.

At the conclusion of the 2014 GE annual shareholders meeting, Jeff Immelt made the following comment: “This is a great company, a high integrity company, and I want everybody to know that as you leave here today.” Here is where the LOL comes in.

Whatever integrity GE and Jeff Immelt claim to have will evaporate on January 1, 2015. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a definition of “integrity” is “the quality of being honest and fair.” Let us examine to see if GE’s cancellation of its post-65 retirement benefits is either honest or fair. And let us remember that there is a difference between what is right and wrong, and what is legal. Certainly our country has historical examples to bear that out.

Why don’t we start with GE’s own document, their post-65 retirement handbook, effective January 1, 2012, that states in part: “GE expects and intends to continue the GE Medicare Benefit Plans described in this handbook indefinitely.” In another GE document, their integrity policy is entitled “The Spirit & Letter of our Commitment.” LOL. The first page of this policy is titled “GE document, their integrity policy is entitled ‘The Spirit & Letter of our Commitment.’” Let us guess it) Jeff Immelt that includes this sentence: “GE expects and intends to continue the GE Medicare Benefit Plans described in this handbook indefinitely.” This is a great company, a high integrity company, and I want everybody to know that as you leave here today.” Here is where the LOL comes in.

What all of this adds up to is that GE, under the lack of leadership of Jeff Immelt, is not a great company of high integrity. I believe that Mr. Immelt has dishonored and embarrassed, once and all, the leaders that preceded him. Mr. Immelt frequently speaks of leadership. In this case, where a corporate giant has broken a long-standing promise to provide retiree medical coverage to its loyal former employees, they have done so in a manner that is clearly, and accurately, not just in the studio, but also out in the field, and conditions of their employment.

We are listening to staff and Daily Hires, important to them. We are really focusing on the key issues and improve the terms and conditions of their employment.

“We are listening to staff and Daily Hires, important to them. We are really focusing on the key issues and improve the terms and conditions of their employment.

D aily H ire issues.”

He strongly believes that the Union needs to focus both locally and nationally on organizing.

M arinaro will serve as the Local 11’s negotiator during the upcoming contract talks with NBC. He said that Local 11 is hearing from the membership and will do its best to address their issues and improve the terms and conditions of their employment.

“We are listening to staff and Daily Hires, not just in the studio, but also out in the field in the sports groups about what is important to them. We are really focusing on Daily Hire issues.”

M arinaro began his career as a Daily Hire at WNBC in 1995, and became staff in 1998, working as a graphics artist and then an editor. He served as the Local’s...
Local 22
Rochester, NY

NABET-CWA-CWA Local 22 was formed in 1956, representing employees at three affiliate stations. In 1969, the ABC affiliate’s employees voted to break off and join the Teamsters. Today, the Local maintains representation of nearly 75 members at the two remaining stations: WHEC-TV (NBC) and WROC-TV (CBS), as well as at WUHF-TV.

Local President Bob Pastecki began his career at WROC in 1995. Working his way from a cameraman/editor and an audio technician, he is now a technical director at the station. Pastecki became the Union’s Shop Steward in 1998 and the Local’s president in 2005.

“I was in the right place at the right time,” Pastecki said when asked how he became involved in the Union. He was approached about doing Union work after a number of Shop Stewards were leaving. He was neither too old, nor too young, but just the right age to offer a blend of knowledge and new ideas to NABET-CWA.

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“Once I got involved, I thought it was satisfying to be able to help my coworkers, even when they didn’t realize they needed help,” Pastecki said. “It’s surprising how many people don’t read their contracts. Reading and understanding are two very different things, and I’m gratified to let people know that they do have recourse and to be able to help them on the job to put out a good product.”

At his workplace, which currently has 29 NABET-CWA members, the Union played a significant role when WROC management proposed implementing a substandard healthcare product with a price tag that would have cost members hundreds of dollars a month. In October 2013, NABET-CWA won an arbitration, which put a better plan in place.

“It was a year-long battle,” Pastecki said. “If the Union wasn’t around, the employees would have had to take that [substandard] plan and a lot of people would be in dire straights because of their healthcare costs.”

NABET-CWA continues to battle the Company on this issue in its current negotiations with the Nexstar-owned station. Negotiations are currently very challenged as the Union fights a “withdrawal of recognition” petition. As of September 8, the NLRB upheld a Company petition that purportedly includes a majority of members’ signatures stating that they no longer desire to be represented by the Union.

“The Company tried this same thing once before during negotiations in 2007,” Pastecki said. “We ended up having an election and the members voted 30-4 in favor of the Union. I don’t think people realized just what the ramifications are of signing the petition.”

For members who felt like they didn’t have all of the facts when they signed the petition, NABET-CWA is encouraging them to call the NLRB and explain their concerns.

Another significant labor dispute in October 2000 involved a threatened lockout by Hubbard-owned WHEC. The Local told the Company that it would not agree to any further contract extensions, so the Company threatened to lock them out. NABET-CWA held a large demonstration in front of the station, with RVP2 Fred Saburro in attendance. NABET-CWA was able to fight off the lockout and win a new contract.

Today, there are 35 NABET-CWA represented workers at the station, however, new technology that computerized commercial playback caused layoffs, including that of Local Treasurer Paul Pakusch, who had worked at WHEC for 32 years. Pakusch has since moved on and established his own accounting business.

“Technology is changing our workplace and the number of people it takes to do our jobs. Change brings excitement at times, but also some fear because you wonder ‘Am I still going to be needed?’” He notes the critical role the Union’s lynda.com and CWA/NETT Academy training programs play in helping NABET-CWA members learn new skills.

“These are two good tools that members should take advantage of to either learn things ahead of time to become more valuable to your employer or to use if you want to go off and start your own business,” Pastecki said. He said he knows of several people who have started their own businesses. While most people leave for new jobs, Pastecki said the Local actually celebrated two retirements this year, which is somewhat unusual.

The Local isn’t all business; Pastecki said they hold a couple of social events every year to bring members from the two stations together. Each August, the group gathers for a day at the SeaBreeze Amusement Park, and feasts at a BBQ in the spring.
Local 47
Youngstown, OH

Local 47 represents 95 workers at WKBN-TV/WYTV/WYFX-TV (CBS/ABC/FOX) and WFMJ-TV (NBC). The Local’s founding in Youngstown may date back to the 1920s when both WFMJ and WKBN were radio stations.

WFMJ’s call letters are based on founder William F. Maag, Jr.’s initials. The Maag family, which publishes Youngstown’s daily newspaper The Vindicator, still owns the station, which went on the air for the first time on March 11, 1953, and is one of the few stations left in the country that is still locally owned and operated.

Local President Jeff Necko has been a NABET-CWA member since 1984 and has seen quite a few changes to the business in his tenure. He began his career at WYTV as a technician, but after the 2007 merger with WKBN/WYFX, he became a director. Thirty workers lost their jobs between the two stations, including quite a few engineers. Necko said he trained to become a director when the station converted to the Ross Overdrive system that automates production of newscasts.

“When we used to do a newscast, we used to have seven people on the crew,” Necko remembers. “Now, it’s just the director (me) and a production assistant who operates the camera.”

Necko became the Local President during that time, after serving for eight years as Local vice president. There are currently about 53 employees at WKBN, or 60% of the Local’s membership.

Being in the Union helped with the merger, Necko said: “The biggest benefit was that no one took a pay cut at WYTV or WKBN. Even though we had a contract, we had to negotiate the merger. We were able to keep our rates and seniority when we merged with workers at WKBN. Most of us probably would have been gone had the Union not been there.”

—Local 47 President Jeff Necko on the 2007 WYTV merger with WKBN/WYFX

Even though we had a contract, we had to negotiate the merger. We were able to keep our rates and seniority when we merged with workers at WKBN. Most of us probably would have been gone had the Union not been there.” —Local 47 President Jeff Necko on the 2007 WYTV merger with WKBN/WYFX

WKBN/WY FX-TV are all part of the same building, airing virtually the same newscast. At the start, there were two news directors for the two separate companies, but now there are just two Vaughan Media employees working at WYTV, with everyone else employed by LIN, which owns WKBN and operates WYTV.

Necko says he directs the WKBN newscast and a late newscast at WYTV and they are “basically the same thing: same reporters, same newscast.”

For its part, WFMJ regularly touts itself as “the only locally owned independent source of television news” and maintains its market leader status. NABET-CWA’s three contracts were all completed within the last year, so there are no negotiations currently, but things are always changing. Necko says that WKBN is set to try new technology in conjunction with WABC in New York using Ross Video’s “Unreel” system that offers “augmented reality,” computer-generated graphics that move with the camera. Once the studio is redone, the station will start using the system for its newscasts.

“Technology is always troubling. With mergers, you are afraid that every television station will be run by one station,” Necko said. “And you see how every year, you lose more and more members. It’s hard to stop technology.”

—Local 47 President Jeff Necko on the 2007 WYTV merger with WKBN/WYFX
Local 43 Works to Get Out the Vote

They knocked on doors, made phone calls and emailed Battleground Bulletins to members in an effort to get out the vote in this year’s elections. NABET-CWA Local 43 President Dorethea Brown-Maxey and Union leaders in CWA District 4 in Michigan worked tirelessly to motivate voters.

Unfortunately, like many other districts across the country, the election results in Michigan put the power in the hands of those who passed Right-to-Work legislation that was signed into law by Governor Rick Snyder in 2013, as well as planned cuts to workers’ pensions caused by Detroit’s bankruptcy.

Brown-Maxey saw the election as critical to protecting working families, and has a clear eye on the implications the elections have on negotiations at WBK-TV. “Our bargaining power at the table during these negotiations is dictated first by those who are elected into office in Lansing and in Washington D.C. We must elect representatives to the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives who will fight for the middle class and working families and a Governor who will stand up for all Michiganders,” urged Brown-Maxey prior to the Nov. 4 vote.

“W e need to think about how we as working class people can make this society better for ourselves, our kids and the future. Unions fought hard for what we have now, but we’re barely hanging on to what our brothers and sisters fought so hard for.”

— Dorethea Brown-Maxey, Local 43 President

Despite the hard work, the vote did not go the Union’s way. Although Snyder had low approval ratings, he was re-elected governor with 50.9% of the vote. Democrats also had an opportunity to flip the partisan balance of Michigan’s seven-member Supreme Court, but they were unable to win all three seats up for election this year. Gary Peters, who’d previously served as a Congressman, won his Senate race, due in large part to Union support.

Though it’s too soon to know exactly what went wrong and how people voted, Brown-Maxey said Unions need to “re-group and rethink the way we did things,” such as getting more people involved and to the polls, and clearly articulating the issues.

“We’re going to have to change the mindset if we are going to get people out to vote during mid-term elections,” Brown-Maxey said. She warned that if the Unions can’t change the way things are, circumstances are going to force change. “If we get totally beat down, we’ll have to fight our way back up. I hate to think we have to get to that point. Personally, I think the urgency is now,” she said, pointing to the Trans Pacific Partnership, Right-to-Work and pension cutbacks that everyone should be concerned with today.

In January, Brown-Maxey wants to start back to work and come up with a plan to engage Union members with the community, especially young people in high school and college, so that election time isn’t the only occasion that the community at large hears from Unions.

She also believes that Unions – especially the Communications Workers of America – should focus more attention on the media, utilizing commercials with a strong message to explain the importance of the issues to the electorate, not just Union members. “We need to find a common denominator: the types of issues that are affecting both citizens and Unions.”

Shared areas of concern transcend Democrat vs. Republican, she says: “Just because someone is a Democrat doesn’t mean they are for us. If you are talking the same language, you are our person. We need to get away from Democrat vs. Republican and find people who are speaking the same language.”

“It’s an ongoing, 24/7 thing,” Brown-Maxey believes. “We need to think about how we as working class people can make this society better for ourselves, our kids and the future. Unions fought hard for what we have now, but we’re barely hanging on to what our brothers and sisters fought so hard for.”

ABET-CWA Local 53 Reaches $10,000 Settlement over Jurisdiction

ABET-CWA Local 53 reached a settlement with FOX Network Engineering & Operations (NE&O) over a non-union producer performing ABET work. FOX agreed to pay the Union $10,000, plus Union dues.

Local 53 President Steve Ross said a non-union producer at FOX NE&O was spending 60-70% of his day editing, a job that CWA has jurisdiction over. The company paid rather than spending money arbitrating the case. Local 53 will use the money for its scholarship fund, which awards three-four-year scholarships each year in the amount of $1,000. The scholarships are named in honor of past Union members who were instrumental in building the Local.

“I really appreciate the labor relations people at the FOX network operations,” Ross said. “Management was made aware of the issue, found it to be legitimate, and took care of it promptly.”

ABET-CWA represents 600 people at FOX, 10 Staff and 590 Daily Hires, some of whom have worked there for 28 years and receive paid time off and participate in a flex plan that the company contributes up to 13% toward.

“So many companies are attacking the Unions that I want to acknowledge a company that is making sure the contract is enforced properly,” Ross added.
Rancor continues at KOIN-TV in Portland

For the first time since October, the Union and LIN-owned KOIN-TV bargained for two days during Thanksgiving week under the auspices of a federal mediator. Talks have been ongoing for 18 months.

The latest discussions concluded abruptly when the Company representative left early. In these meetings, the Union offered new proposals on wages, benefits and sick time to try to reach an agreement, but these issues remain unresolved. NABET-CWA is working with the mediator to set up more dates in January. Local 51 President Kevin Wilson, Frank Brown, Jeff Burda, and NABET-CWA Staff Representative Carrie Biggs-Adams represented the Union during the talks.

On December 4, the Union’s bargaining committee sent an open letter to KOIN General Manager Adrienne Roark in response to a Dec. 1 email she sent to employees about bargaining. In it, the Union expressed concerns over the Company’s history of refusing to clear bargaining team members from work on the day of bargaining, as well as its proposals to allow anyone to perform the Union’s jurisdictional work. NABET-CWA said such an arrangement would severely diminish and limit the bargaining unit.

“We stand ready to bargain over the issues that separate the parties, but KOIN and LIN Media must understand that our members are not willing to give up their jobs or their economic security to achieve a contract,” the letter stated.

The Union’s case against KOIN over the Company’s proposals to expand MMJ work to all reporters, anchors, producers and others who work in the newsroom is still on appeal at the NLRB. The NLRB’s initial ruling held that the Company hadn’t violated the law because it had not tried to implement its proposals.

In October, NABET-CWA filed a charge over emails sent by Roark, which contradicted statements and proposals made at the bargaining table. In addition, the NLRB issued a complaint in response to another NABET-CWA charge over the Company’s discipline of a photographer for a live shot “photo bomb.” The Company refused to settle the case, and a trial is scheduled for April 14, 2015.

Union negotiators are asking members to keep pressure on the Company by getting involved in regular Saturday actions and wearing red every Thursday.

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CAD: Architectural Rendering with Rhino and V-Ray; Creating Revit Templates: System Settings; 3D Scanning in Person; Creating Revit Templates: Annotation

* Segments that have grown the most in 2014
A new five-year contract for the 26-person wall-to-wall unit was ratified on November 12. The agreement, reached after just two days of bargaining, calls for a new wage scale for new employees with less than 8 years of service and raises of 2% to 4% for those with over-scale arrangements. Many of the younger workers will receive wage increases of 8% to 25% in the first year of the agreement. The starting rate will increase in each year of the agreement. The Union gained technological severance of 1.5 weeks per year, up to 52 weeks, bumping rights in lay-off situations, conforming health care language and increased audio talent fees. The Bargaining Committee included Local 26 President John Ziller, News Employee Mike Battist and, NABET-CWA Staff Representative Bill Murray, and Local 26 President John Ziller.

KVEA-TV – Burbank, CA (Local 53)

On November 21, the members ratified a new four-year contract with the company. President Jim Joyce attended the final bargaining session in October that helped reach the resolution. The new agreement calls for a 3% raise in the first year, followed by a 2.5% raise in the second year, and two 2.75% raises in years three and four. Additionally, members will receive a $750 signing bonus. The Bargaining Committee included Marco Ayala, Leysser Parada, Phil Deshay, and Arturo Davila. Local 53 President Steve Ross and Vice President Joe Ayala assisted during all of the bargaining sessions as well.

WSVR-TV – Syracuse, NY (Local 214)

The membership ratified a new four-year contract on September 17, which was reached after months of mobilization and difficult bargaining. The agreement for the 70-person wall-to-wall unit calls for raises ranging from 1% to 1.65% per year and preservation of union security, jurisdiction, and time off. The unit also gained increased comp time for on-call work. The Bargaining Committee included Local 211 President Anthony Vecchio, Treasurer Colin Bailey, Chief Steward Greg Thackston, News Steward Tammy Palmer and NABET-CWA Staff Representative Bill Murray. “The agreement would not have been possible without the hard work of the negotiating committee and the mobilization committee,” Murray said.

WJET-TV – Erie, PA (Local 28)

NABET-CWA met with Nexstar over the effects of the relocation of Master Control to Memphis, TN, on Oct. 30, but was unable to reach an agreement in a dispute over a contract requirement that calls for offering part-time work to laid-off staff employees. Five staff employees were laid-off as a result of the transfer, including two who had 20+ years of service at the station. These employees were not offered the part-time work, so the Union filed a grievance and an arbitration demand is pending. Meanwhile, the Bargaining Committee started negotiations for a successor agreement for the remaining 40-person unit. Bargaining was held in mid-November. The contract is set to expire at the end of this year. The bargaining committee includes Brian Moffett, Bob Neely, John Walkiewicz, Charles Deufal and NABET-CWA Staff Representative Eric Seggi.

WIVB-TV (Local 25) in Buffalo

Snow isn’t the only headline in Buffalo, according to NABET-CWA Staff Representative Lou Fallot, who wrote a letter to MCT management stating that the collective bargaining agreement must be honored should represented employees be called in to work during that time.

WGBH-TV – Boston, MA (Local 18)

The non-profit “Foundation,” which oversees WGBH, has insisted that new hires sign personal services agreements that make them “project employees. Local 18 President Mike Wilkins has filed a grievance and a request for information since there is no such classification in the collective bargaining agreement. The station’s labor relations attorney has failed to acknowledge the request, so NABET-CWA is prepared to file an unfair labor practice charge in Region 1.

MCT Media – Rockville, MD (Local 31)

The Company announced it will shut down operations from Dec. 24, 2014, to Jan. 2, 2015, and intends to leave the workplace unstaffed. Full-time staff employees will get the time off with pay and the time off will not be charged against vacation or personal time. There is some concern that the station closure not become precedent-setting, said NABET-CWA Staff Representative Lou Fallot, who wrote a letter to MCT management stating that the collective bargaining agreement must be honored should represented employees be called in to work during that time.

Company is abusing its merit pay evaluation system. Instead of dealing with an employee’s job function, they are using a system outside the realm of the agreement, and giving out less than acceptable merit raises. The station also announced that it is sending relief crews from other LIN-owned stations to assist “exhausted” personnel at WIVB. The Union wants to be sure all of these replacement workers are represented by NABET-CWA. The members say they are not “exhausted,” but instead believe this is a way for the Company to get around paying overtime.

FOX Hub – Las Vegas, NV (Local 53)
The Bargaining Committee met with the Company in September and again during Thanksgiving week. The parties tentatively agreed to a Labor-Management Committee that will meet at least twice a year to discuss matters of mutual concern. The Company said it is not interested in guaranteeing basic conditions such as days off, just cause for termination, or posting the schedule before the week begins. Therefore, there has been no progress made on these and several other major issues. According to NABET-CWA Staff Representative Eric Seggi, the Company has shown little interest in reaching an agreement. The unit is considering job actions. NABET-CWA filed unfair labor practice charges over the Company’s failure to continue the practice of employee evaluations. The National Labor Relations Board found that the Company was in violation of the contract and it agreed to continue to provide employee evaluations. In the past, these evaluations had been associated with merit increases. The Bargaining Committee encourages members to attend the negotiating sessions to give them a chance to participate and observe talks firsthand. Updates can be found on www.facebook/NABET53.

From left to right: Charles Atkins, Robert “Beck” Beck, NABET-CWA Staff Representative Eric Seggi, Tracy McIntosh, Matt Pliukowski, and John Sullivan

WICZ-TV – Binghamton, NY (Local 26)

A new five-year contract for the 28-person wall-to-wall unit was ratified on November 12. The agreement, reached after just two days of bargaining, calls for a new wage scale for new employees with less than 8 years of service and raises of 2% to 4% for those with over-scale arrangements. Many of the younger workers will receive wage increases of 8% to 25% in the first year of the agreement. The starting rate will increase in each year of the agreement. The Union gained technological severance of 1.5 weeks per year, up to 52 weeks, bumping rights in lay-off situations, conforming health care language and increased audio talent fees. The Bargaining Committee included Local 26 President John Ziller, News Employee Mike Battist and, NABET-CWA Staff Representative Bill Murray, and Local 26 President John Ziller.