NABET-CWA Kicks Off 2015 with 200 New Members

NABET-CWA started the new year on an up note, adding 200 new members who are employed at stations and production companies on both coasts and in-between. The Union will help its newest members gain valuable benefits and job protections through carefully negotiated contracts. They join the more than 7,000 broadcast workers who currently enjoy the perks of NABET-CWA representation. Welcome!!

WTIC-TV/FOX CT – Hartford, CT (Local 17)

On February 18, NABET-CWA won an organizing election to represent 53 workers at WTIC-TV/FOX CT in Hartford, CT. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) conducted the election for the unit, which includes anchors, reporters, meteorologists, news photographers, editors, and assignment desk editors. In 2003, NABET-CWA lost an election at this station by a single vote. Tribune had not been giving raises most years, and employees feel like the company is doing better, “but not yet sharing with the workers,” Biggs-Adams said.

Big Shoulders Productions – Chicago, IL (Local 41)

The photographers and audio engineers at Big Shoulders Digital Video Productions in Chicago chose NABET-CWA Local 41 as their bargaining representative during a meeting on January 27. Big Shoulders founder and President Frank Hanes, a veteran broadcast professional, voluntarily recognized NABET-CWA after more than a half-dozen full-time employees chose the Union. Founded 15 years ago, Big Shoulders draws its name from Carl Sandburg’s poem “Chicago… City of Big Shoulders.” The company produces content for a number of popular TV programs, including “E! News,” “Fashion Police,” and “The Soup” programming.

These shows were accreted into the NBC Master Agreement as part of the network’s ongoing efforts to combine operations at its new Universal City facilities. As more production operations move from the former NBC lot to Universal Studios, there may be more opportunities for cross-assignment of personnel. “Access Hollywood” plans to move from its current Burbank home to Universal Studios in June, and the company may have some crossover job functions on these programs. Of the 135 affected employees, 75 are Staff and the remainder are Daily Hires.

NBC Bargaining Update: Talks Underway for a New Master Agreement

The NABET-CWA Bargaining Committee met in New York City with representatives of NBC Universal on January 20-28 and again on February 3-10 in Los Angeles. The parties have agreed to an on-the-record, limited issue bargaining approach as they re-negotiate terms and conditions in the Master Agreement. The current agreement is set to expire on March 31, 2015. The Company’s package of proposals contained a number of regressive moves, which could set terms and conditions of employment back years — even decades. Included in the package is a proposal for an unpaid meal period, resulting in a 7-hour workday and a 35-hour workweek. The net result of this proposal equates to a 12.5% reduction in pay. Other economic proposals from the Company include reducing the night shift differential corridor, a proposed change to the holiday payback system, along with yet another proposed incursion into the seniority system. The Union’s package is designed to enhance holiday (Continued on page 7)
Local 211 Honored for “Struggle of the Year”

On February 5, the Greater Syracuse Labor Council awarded NABET-CWA Local 211 its “Struggle of the Year” award for the Local’s long contract dispute with Nexstar Broadcasting’s WSYR-TV. The annual award recognizes unions or workers who went through a particular struggle for justice.

Each year, the Council holds a Recognition Awards Dinner to honor outstanding labor activists and leaders whose contributions to the labor community fulfill the council’s mission for social and economic justice. This year’s ceremony took place at the Oncenter in Syracuse, NY, where Local 211 Vice President Edward Jones accepted the award on behalf of the Local. Local 211 member Tammy Palmer also was in attendance.

Local 211’s months-long struggle to negotiate a contract at Nexstar’s ABC affiliate exemplified the Council’s award criteria. The Council’s Wendy Colucci said the Local was recognized because of its mobilization campaign and difficult bargaining: “No one else in our area went through what they did.”

“It was a long nine months of negotiations and mobilization,” said Local 211 President Anthony Vecchio. “We had a successful rally in June 2014 that was a turning point and really brought unity among the members of our Local.”

Vecchio thanked CWA Local 1123 and the Central New York Labor Council for their help throughout the ordeal. In September 2014, NABET-CWA Local 211 members at WSYR ratified a four-year contract with raises for all of those in the bargaining unit.

“It was truly an experience to deal with such a tough company, and I’m so proud that we never backed down,” Vecchio said. “If we hadn’t reached an agreement when we did, we would have had a full-blown mobilization right before the New York State Fair.”

The event’s organizers proclaimed the evening a success, with “the best crowd ever,” according to a Facebook post on the GSLC’s site.

During his address to dinner attendees, GSLC’s President Dr. Dennis Nave, stated, “We will not back down; we will continue our fight to ensure that the American middle class exists for our children’s children. Though the road will be long and the work will be hard, we owe it to those who have shed their blood, sweat and tears before us to endure. With 2015 still in its infancy, we must pledge our unity to each other; it is only through our solidarity that we can succeed.”

Vecchio thanked the Council for recognizing the Local: “It means so much to us,” he said.

NABET-CWA Member Comes to Aid of Crash Victim

NABET-CWA Local 41 member John Truitt, a photographer at WLS-TV/ABC-7, was on his way to an assignment when he and his co-worker, reporter Evelyn Holmes, came upon a fiery crash on Chicago’s Lake Shore Drive on Saturday.

On the way to a mayoral campaign event, Truitt and Holmes saw people trying to rescue the crash victim. Truitt pulled the news van over to assist in the rescue of a teenage driver who was trapped inside the burning vehicle. Truitt grabbed a fire extinguisher from the van and sprayed the flames with foam. Holmes then continued to cover the flames while Truitt assisted with the rescue.

“When we got there, I didn’t even think of the camera, or where I worked. It was just trying to get him out of the car,” Truitt told a Chicago Tribune reporter. “That was super-intense. (The others) were in a blind panic. You could feel it in the air.”

After an off-duty police officer and firefighter arrived and the flames had subsided, Truitt began to take footage of the scene. The rescuers eventually were able to get the 17-year-old high school driver out of the car moments before the flames engulfed the engine.

The single vehicle accident occurred when the teen, who was later charged with driving under the influence, lost control of his car and struck a tree in the median.

ABC-7 reporter Holmes said she and Truitt tried to balance their desire to help in the rescue with their instincts to cover the story for the news.

Information for this article was compiled from a Feb. 22, 2015 article published in the Chicago Tribune.

The Plus of Being a Union Member

Union “Plus” means just that: those extras that come with being a union member. NABET-CWA supports you at work, but these helpful benefits and services give you and your family that extra boost to help you enjoy your life beyond the workplace, 24/7.

NABET-CWA members are automatically eligible for many Union Plus benefits and discounts, including:

- **AT&T Wireless**: Save 15% off select monthly wireless plans from AT&T, the only national unionized wireless provider. Available to new and existing AT&T customers. Go to [UnionPlus.org/ATT](http://www.unionplus.org/union-member-benefits)

- **Entertainment**: Enjoy the largest variety of discounts at over 50 theme parks, including Disney, sporting events, theater, movies, restaurants, Costco and more. Get 40% off movie tickets. Call 1-800-565-3712 (use ID 744387769) or go to [UnionPlus.org/Entertainment](http://www.unionplus.org/entertainment)

- **Travel Center**: Get members-only deals on flights, car rentals, entertainment discounts, worldwide vacation tours, union hotels and condo rentals. Go to [UnionPlusTravel.com](http://www.unionplus.org/union-member-benefits)

- **Car & Truck Rentals**: Save up to 25% on car rentals. Alamo: 1-800-462-5266, ID# 7015700; Avis: 1-800-698-5685, ID# B723700; Budget: 1-800-455-2848, ID# V816100; Budget Truck: 1-800-561-1157, ID# 06000127763; Enterprise: 1-877-222-9711, no ID; Hertz: 1-800-654-2200, ID# 205666; National: 1-800-227-7368, ID# 029562; Dollar: 1-800-800-4000, CD# TB7546; Thrifty: 1-800-847-4389, CD# 0010231364 or go to [UnionPlus.org/CarRentals](http://www.unionplus.org/car-rentals)

- **Credit Cards**: Three credit card choices designed for union members, including 2 rewards cards that earn unlimited 1.5% cash back on every purchase. Learn more and select the card that’s right for you at [UnionCard.Apply.com](http://www.unionplus.org/union-member-benefits)

To see all of the available benefits and discounts, visit: [http://www.unionplus.org/union-member-benefits](http://www.unionplus.org/union-member-benefits)
On Sunday, February 8, I was walking on my treadmill, and watching “SportsCenter” on ESPN. There was a tribute to Dean Smith, the legendary basketball coach for the University of North Carolina. One of the prevailing themes was Coach Smith’s loyalty. It made me wonder what will be said of Jeff Immelt under similar circumstances. It is clear that loyalty is not Mr. Immelt’s strong suit. On January 1, 2015, he decided it was necessary to abandon tens of thousands of GE retirees and their families when he all but eliminated GE’s post-65 retiree medical benefits.

Mr. Immelt took this action under the guise of doing what is best for GE. How is it possible that making GE retirees scapegoats because Mr. Immelt has not been able to get GE’s stock price above the mid-20s in the best interest of our company? It is important to remember GE’s stock price was $40 when Mr. Immelt became CEO, and GE’s dividend is still well below what it was in 2008. Mr. Immelt’s solution is to treat GE’s retirees as though they were obsolete equipment to be discarded when retooling one of GE’s plants. Mr. Immelt has made it very clear for years that he wanted to do away with what he referred to as “legacy benefits.” When, in fact, he is desperately trying to save his own legacy. Brackett Denniston III said it best when he told a retired GE executive, “It’s all about the money.” Mr. Immelt claims that GE retirees are a drain on GE’s earnings, ignoring the fact that there would be no GE let alone earnings without the retirees. He makes no reference to Jack Welch’s pension of $800,000 a month as a drain on GE’s earnings. He makes no reference to his own supplemental pension of more than $50 million dollars as a drain on GE’s earnings.

I will not be voting FOR Mr. Immelt in the upcoming GE retirees meeting. When he told a retired GE executive, “It’s all about the money,” he was giving a loaded weapon to his critics, guaranteed to be used against him. In the end, GE’s retirees are a drain on the company’s performance.

Bargaining in Vegas

March marks one year since the start of contract talks for the 34-person unit at the FOX hub in Las Vegas.

“Bargaining is slow, and the company is not very interested in giving employees rights or a say in working conditions,” said NABET-CWA Staff Representative Eric Seggi.

The unit, which was organized in November 2012, consists of engineers who coordinate and operate master control systems for all 28 O&O stations, including NABET-CWA-represented stations in L.A., Detroit and Chicago.

Tentative agreements have been reached on some issues, including grievance procedures, but there has been no resolution on other critical work issues, such as scheduling, definition of the workweek, seniority, layoffs and recall, or economics.

Compounding the bargaining difficulties at the table are obstacles to actually being able to get people to the table. The company has been unwilling to release bargaining Committee members from work for negotiations. Two of the Union’s team members work on the second shift, so their available hours are limited to a 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day. This leaves little time for substantial discussion, especially when bargaining is scheduled just two days at a time. The bargaining committee includes Charles Atkins, Robert Beck, Tracy McIntosh, Matt Pirkowski, John Sullivan and Seggi.

“Though it’s clear that the company isn’t interested in getting an agreement anytime soon, the spirits of the committee remain high in terms of supporting the effort to get a contract,” Seggi said. He also said members are ready to come to the bargaining sessions.

When the members voted for Union representation last year, the company discontinued its practice of giving employees annual performance evaluations, which also served as a means for wage increases. NABET-CWA filed unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board. The NLRA agreed with the Union and ordered the Company to continue providing the evaluations. However, the Board stopped short of recommending that the merit increases be part of the evaluations since the two sides are in bargaining.

NABET-CWA has since filed additional charges to reinstate the merit increases.

“The evaluation form the company is using even has a space to write in the amount of the wage increases,” said Local 53 President Steve Ross. “Why give evaluations if you’re not going to grant raises?”

Other workplace issues have added additional stress to already stressful jobs. Seven job positions are vacant as a result of four resignations and three leaves of absence. The Company has not filled those vacancies, and the remaining engineers are working long hours, extra shifts and are responsible for overseeing more stations.

In order to put pressure on the company and move the negotiations forward, NABET-CWA is discussing job actions with members. The isolated, nonscored workplace does present some challenges to mobilization activities, however.

The recent retirement of Beth Swanson, executive VP, chief financial officer and head of technical operations at Fox Television Stations (FTS), does offer a glimmer of hope, said Ross.

“She was the force behind many of the cuts,” he explains. “Hopefully, the company will hire someone who can resolve the is- sues we are having at many of our FOX stations, including the Vegas hub,” Ross said.

New bargaining sessions have been scheduled for March 11-13 and in late April.

He has proven on January 1, 2015, that he cannot be trusted to keep his word, and he has failed as a leader when he explains that other corporations are taking similar actions and that other corporations are not GE. We ARE GE! Jeff Immelt should not penalize the very people on whose shoulders he stands.

I suggest all GE retirees write a letter to Jeff Immelt and explain how this selfish and reckless action has personally affected them. I have no expectation that Mr. Immelt or his lawyers will read those letters, or even care what they say, but let all GE retirees make a statement.

These letters should be addressed to: Jeffrey Immelt
Chief Executive Officer
General Electric Company
3335 Easton Turnpike
Fairfield, CT 06828

Let me suggest that, in addition to the address, you include in capital letters, I AM A PROUD GE RETIREE.

As I approach my 75th birthday today, I wonder whether or not I have made a difference in other peoples lives. I would be curious to know how Jeff Immelt would answer that same question.

WBK in Detroit: A Contract at Last

Nearly two years of contract talks between NABET-CWA and WJBK-TV/Fox management wrapped up in December when a new three-year agreement was ratified by the membership. The contract covers 60 technical engineers, news department personnel, maintenance editors and master control employees at the station. The unit had been working under expired contract terms.

The new agreement provides wage increases of 2%, 2%, 2.5%, per diem increases, new MMJ language which allows for limited use of cameras by non-union personnel, and some associated job security provisions for photographers.

The station is the last one in the market to incorporate MMJ language into the collective bargaining agreement. The Union was also able to maintain dues check-off despite the recent legislative change that made Michigan a “right-to-work” state.

The protracted, contentious negotiations included informational picketing, which began after the first bargaining session, railroading station MJs, and ultimately, federal mediation. The Bargaining Committee included Local 43 Vice President Mike Moore, Kathy Hurd, Local 43 Treasurer Kent Culpert, and NABET-CWA Staff Representative Eric Seggi.

“The local provided great mobilization and leadership through the long negotiations,” said Seggi, who led the talks for the Union’s team. The campaign included rallies at the FOX/News Corp-owned station and large-scale mobilization events at Detroit Tigers baseball and Detroit Lions football games. Vice President Mike Moore credits the mobilization campaign for helping to move the talks along, including billboards purchased through a $50,000 CWA Strategic Industry Fund (SIF) grant and live shot crashes.

Over the long term, he believes the billboards made the station’s sales and numbers dip, and a live shot crash in which the WJBK anchor said, “We are having some Union difficulties,” on-air really got things moving.

At a mid-point of negotiations, and during a very contentious period, Local 43

President Brian Moore retired. Soon thereafter, Local Vice President Brown-Maxey was elevated to the presidency in accordance with the NABET-CWA By-Laws. At that point, Mike Moore, a photographer at WJBK, was elected Vice President. He was the fourth member of the Steward’s deliberations. Moore has been with the Local for 18 years, and spent six of those years as Chief Steward.

The unit suffered a pay cut in 2008, so the members were looking for pay to be restored once the economy and the station’s finances rebounded.

“After two years of bargaining, I felt we got the best we could get,” said Moore. “I felt it was my duty to get the best I could, balanced with what the members wanted. It could have come to a stalemate and more time would have passed without getting any money. I was making the same amount I made seven years ago, so very little has happened.

Moore and Brown acknowledge the assistance of the Detroit Metro AFL-CIO and a number of other unions and labor-friendly organizations. “They were all very supportive, helping us and holding us up,” Moore said.

With some of the new MMJ provisions, Moore said the Local is looking to tighten up its monitoring of contract language to ensure the company doesn’t take advantage of the new contractual easements. “I’m proud of the negotiating team and the way they hung in there,” said Brown-Maxey. “There was a learning curve for a lot of people, but it was a good lesson. I think they learned that negotiations isn’t just at the table. It’s what you do outside to initiate the conversation. We learned and now we’re building our army. We’ll be ready for WDIV and WJBK when they come up.”

Brown-Maxey is forming Contract and Mobilization Committees at the Local in order to help the Unions that helped and supported NABET-CWA during the contract struggle.

“Michigan being a right-to-work state is really going to affect us,” Brown-Maxey warned. “We need to watch how the laws affect the other Unions and how they might impact us down the road.”
When you are asked to work an event like the Super Bowl, you know that you will be a part of something very special,” said NABET-CWA Local 31 member and Daily Hire Mike Croke.

This year’s Super Bowl, the NFL’s 49th, was crewed by more than 100 NABET-CWA Staff and Daily Hires. NBC trucks were in place on January 19, nearly two weeks before the game.

As in years past, the 2015 NFL Championship Game became the most-watched program in American television history, breaking the record set during FOX’s coverage of the 48th Super Bowl. NABET-CWA crews are assigned to the broadcast every few years, as the rights to televise the game are rotated annually among the NFL partner broadcast networks (ESPN, NBC, CBS, and FOX).

The 2015 Super Bowl at the University of Phoenix Stadium in Glendale, AZ, was seen by an average of 114.4 million viewers. The show reached 118.5 million viewers during the halftime show featuring Katy Perry, and peaked to 120.8 million people who stayed tuned to see the New England Patriots’ fourth-quarter comeback.

Game coverage was preceded by a six-hour pre-game show.

For the very first time, NBC streamed comprehensive coverage (from pre-game, to the game itself, to halftime and beyond) on the internet.

“Your mindset going in is that you know you are prepared. This is something you have been doing all season long on Sunday Night Football,” Croke said.

He gives credit to NBC’s production team, led by Producer Fred Gaudelli and Director Drew Esocoff: “They come in with an excellent plan to ensure we know our assignments and they stress: ‘Just do your job.’” The advice helps the crew maintain a sharp focus on the production.

“You don’t have any control over the game on the field, but you hope and you know you will be there to capture the Big Moment when it happens as it did at the end of this year’s Super Bowl,” Croke added.

Viewers at home may not realize how much goes into capturing game-changing moments, which can happen in the blink of an eye. The NBC Sports team spent three years planning the program and used more than 40 cameras for this year’s game, including 4K cameras and isolated cameras on the field.

The production team not only had various game factors to take into account, including a retractable field, but also had to plan the facilities for all of the networks other programming that came to Glendale for the week: the NBC Sports Network, Comcast SportsNet, and other NBC entities such as Sports Illustrated.

The set of NBC’s “Football Night in America”

When the game-winning interception occurred on the next play, NBC’s planning again paid off. Isolated cameras on Sea hawks’ Lockette and the Patriots’ Butler helped to capture a Hall of Fame moment. The production team’s ability to get the reactions of players and coaches on the sidelines gave the TV audience a 360-degree view.

Sports Illustrated Senior Editor Richard Deitsch’s review of the production? “Viewers expect a lot out of NBC’s broadcast group because they have established themselves as the best production. This broadcast was solid.” He also appreciated the small details like getting shots of the Sea hawks’ Lynch eating his lucky Skittles.

“I am proud to be alongside a very talented bunch of highly skilled technical engineers who seem to take on any task that is asked of them to put together a flawless telecast,” Croke enthused.

In 2018, NBC Sports and the NABET-CWA represented crew will return to cover Super Bowl LIII in Minneapolis, MN.
The National Hockey League’s 2015 Winter Classic game—the league’s seventh Winter Classic—was held this year at Nationals Park, Washington, D.C., on January 1. Approximately 70 NABET-CWA Daily Hires and Staff employed by NBC and NBC’s Washington affiliate WRC-TV/Channel 4 worked the event, which matched the Washington Capitals against the Chicago Blackhawks.

The Winter Classic—a regular season game held outdoors—has become a New Year’s Day tradition since the inaugural game in 2008. NBC came up with the idea for an outdoor hockey game as a television event, and holds the NHL contract to televise the game through at least January 1, 2021.

The 2015 game was televised nationally on NBC, and drew 3.47 million viewers. Last year, the game averaged 4.4 million viewers and was the second-largest audience for an NHL regular season game since 1975. In addition, the Chicago vs. Washington matchup had an attendance of 42,832. The turnout was significantly less than the 105,491 people who purchased tickets to the 2014 game, which also marked the first time that a Canadian team participated. The Winter Classic had previously been reserved for American teams.

The NHL announced that the 2016 game will be held at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, MA, with the Boston Bruins hosting the Montreal Canadiens.
### Civil Rights and Equity: a Place for Everyone

**By: Dorethea Brown-Maxey**  
President, NABET-CWA Local 43  
Member: CWA National Civil Rights & Equity Committee

I am honored to represent the Media Sector Locals on the CWA National Civil Rights and Equity Committee. The mission of the Committee is to develop and promote the CWA Civil Rights and Equity Program. The vision of the committee is to build an inclusive Union where members of all cultures, religions, sexual orientations, genders, disabilities, ages and nationalities are respected and heard; and where the leadership team reflects the diversity of our membership. The makeup of society is radically changing and the workplace of today reflects this change. The CWA Human Rights Committee has chosen to acknowledge the reality of this change and encourages a spirit of inclusiveness. Working with all sides of the CWA triangle, we have included all of the sectors within our Union.

This committee is not only a minority committee or a committee for women; everyone is invited to join. An active Civil Rights Committee committed to all union members sends a clear message that our Union is committed to supporting the needs and protecting the interests of the entire membership, as well as our communities. Civil rights for all people is a human right protected by the United States Constitution, and one of the cornerstones of socialism is fair and equal treatment in the workplace.

With the 75th CWA Convention coming up this summer, it is a very important time for CWA and NABET-CWA. Major elections and decisions will bring about change and growth to hopefully improve and grow our Union. Part of this change includes the Civil Rights and Equity Committee and the Women’s Committee. These committees will focus on current and relevant human rights issues that affect us as a Union and throughout society: from paycheck reform to women’s rights reform, 1965 voting rights to gerrymandering, and police discrimination to age discrimination, just to name a few problems in America today. I welcome you to Detroit for our 2015 NABET-CWA Sector Conference. Local 43 is looking forward to hosting all of you in our “Comeback City.”

### NABET-CWA Local President Elected to Michigan’s House

Sheldon Neeley, Local 46 President, was elected to the Michigan House of Representatives on November 5. He will represent the 34th District, which encompasses most of the city of Flint, starting January 1.

Neeley, who also is a broadcast engineer at WJRT-TV in Flint, plans to move to a part-time schedule to allow him to be at the capital during the week. He will stay on as Local President.

Neeley is the first newcomer to the seat in six years after the former state representative reached his three-term limit. Neely won the August primary election over seven other Democratic candidates and, ultimately, the general election with more than 90 percent of the vote.

In his third term as Flint city councilman, Neeley has served the diverse Sixth Ward for nine years and was the first African-American to represent that Ward. Before that, he sat on the Civil Service Commission for the city of Flint for four years.

As a councilman, Neeley merged his news career with governing by introducing a media center to the Flint community schools. The media center will bring resources and equipment to Flint students to promote broadcast and other media learning opportunities.

Neeley’s priorities as a state representative are to increase resources for the Flint community in the areas of education, public safety, water infrastructure, economic development and business growth (jobs). He plans to hold bi-monthly tours for youth groups to develop government engagement.

Neeley, 46, grew up in Flint and received a degree in Communications from Saginaw Valley State University in Michigan.

### Talks Set to Start at KGTV

**First Full-Scale Talks with New Station Owners**

NABET-CWA Local 54 is preparing for contract negotiations at KGTV in San Diego. The current agreement for the 35-member unit was reached between NABET-CWA and the E.W. Scripps Co. in 2012 and expires on May 31.

Scripps purchased the station from McGraw-Hill in 2011, while NABET-CWA was in the midst of extremely challenging negotiations with the company. McGraw-Hill’s five-year, union-busting campaign came to a head that year when employees voted to retain their Union of 60 years in the face of a company-backed decertification drive. Ninety days later, McGraw-Hill decided to abandon the broadcasting business and sold its stations to Scripps.

Before selling the station, McGraw-Hill had declared impasse in negotiations and subsequently implemented a number of contractual provisions. This will be the first opportunity to engage in full bargaining for a new contract with Scripps.

Because McGraw-Hill implemented some of the jurisdictional proposals that were folded into the current memorandum of agreement with Scripps, those issues still must be fully bargained over and mutually resolved. Local 54 President Dennis Csillag said.

Csillag describes the Union’s relationship with Scripps as “fruitful and mutually respectful.” Csillag lost his job at KGTV during the McGraw-Hill talks. “We are optimistic and looking forward to sitting down with them to bargain,” he said.

The same Bargaining Committee that endured the five years of negotiations with the former station owners will be at the table again, including Csillag, Local 54 Vice President Robert Buchanan, and Shop Stewards Frank Castillo, Jr. and Tony Velez. NABET-CWA Staff Representative Carrie Bigger-Adams will assist with these talks for the Union.

### Scripps in Acquisition Mode

Since the purchase of KGTW, Scripps has bought two other television stations, including WKBW in Buffalo, N.Y. In addition, the company is close to a merger with Milwaukee-based Journal Communications that will effectively double its size and bring radio into the company for the first time. Once they merge, they will spin off their combined newspapers and create two publicly traded companies. E.W. Scripps will become one of the largest owners of TV stations and will have a powerful presence in eight states. According to The New York Times, it is expected to collect more than $800 million in annual revenue. The other entity, named the Journal Media Group, will own newspapers in 14 markets.

The deal’s structure allows both companies to pursue growth through acquisitions without being hindered by cross-ownership rules.

“In one motion, we’re creating an industry-leading local television company and a financially healthy newspaper company with the capacity and vision to help lead the evolution of their respective industries;” Richard A. Boehne, chairman and chief executive of Scripps, said in a statement.

In November, Scripps reported that its television station revenue in the third quarter of 2014 was $121 million, up 22% from the same quarter in 2013.
2015 NABET-CWA Sector Conference, Detroit — June 4-6, 2015

NABET-CWA's Sector Conference will be held in June at the Westin Book Cadillac Hotel in Detroit. This will be the Union’s first Conference since the terms of office for national officers were changed from three to four years in 2011. Sector Officer elections will be held at the Conference. Delegates will travel for the Conference on Wed., June 3, and a special orientation meeting will be held that evening. The Conference will convene on the morning of Thurs., June 4, and sessions will be conducted through Sat., June 6, at which time the Sector Officers will be elected. CWA provides each Local with its official membership count around March 1. Delegates are elected by secret ballot by the members of their Local in accordance with Local and Sector By-Laws and the CWA Constitution.

Important Dates:

- **March 6, 2015:** Deadline for Locals to submit proposed amendments to the Sector By-Laws
- **April 20, 2015:** Local Officers will receive a copy of the 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.
- **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 8-10, 2015:** 75th CWA Convention

**Detroit – The “Comeback City”**

These days, Detroit is billing itself as “the great comeback city of America.” In recognition of the city’s rich union history, CWA chose the city as the location of its 75th convention and is the site of NABET-CWA’s Sector Conference. CWA has lent its support to workers at its Detroit-based unions, including NABET-CWA. In February 2014, CWA approved a Strategic Industry Fund (SIF) grant of just over $50,000 to help NABET-CWA Local 43 members get a contract at WJBK-TV. CWA also fought hard to bring good AT&T customer service jobs back from overseas call centers to Detroit. In a recent video produced by the Union, “If We Can Bring Jobs Back to Detroit...” CWA promotes the theme that “bringing good jobs back is the beginning of an economic recovery for Detroit and for America.”

**What to see and do in Detroit**

Detroit also is the home of Diego Rivera’s *Detroit Industry Murals,* housed at the Detroit Institute of Arts, the “Motor City” exhibition which celebrates 100 years of automotive history at the Detroit Historical Museum, as well as the Henry Ford Museum, where visitors can learn about the creator of America’s first cars and the first assembly line.

*Detroit Industry Murals*

In the early 1930s, the Detroit Institute of Arts director commissioned Diego Rivera to do a set of murals in the central Garden Court of the museum based on the theme of “The Spirit of Detroit.” Rivera believed this spirit was found in the city’s factories, especially the Ford Company’s River Rouge plant that housed “the largest mechanized site of communal industrial activity in the world.” The *Detroit Industry Murals* consist of 27 panels, with the two main panels depicting laborers at the Ford plant. At the center of his work, Rivera portrayed collective labor as the driving force behind many of mankind’s historic achievements. Nearly 100,000 people visited the murals in the first month of their opening in March 1933. On April 23, 2014, the murals were given National Historic Landmark status.

**NBC Bargaining Update**

(Continued from page 1)

The Union was represented in January’s bargaining by Lou Marrano (New York, Local 11), Steve Mitnick (Washington, D.C., Local 31), Ed Dabrowski (Chicago, Local 41), Steve Ross (Burbank, CA, Local 53) as well as Local 11 attorneys Steven Star and Barry Peek. NABET-CWA Acting Sector President Charles Braico led the talks for the Union's team. During the February session, Local 53 attorney Ralph Phillips joined the bargaining committee at the table.

Attending on behalf of the Company were executives and business leaders from the NBCU Entertainment Division, Payroll, West Coast O&TS, Network News, and KNBC. The comprehensive and lengthy discussions focused on proposals made by both the Union and the Company.

The parties resumed negotiations on February 24 in New York City for three weeks. Bulletins and other official information concerning these negotiations will be distributed by the Sector and Locals as necessary.
WKBW-TV – Buffalo, NY (Local 25)
NABET-CWA members at Scripps-owned WKBW-TV in Buffalo ratified a new four-year agreement on January 21. Scripps purchased the station from Granite Broadcasting in June 2014, making this the first agreement negotiated by the Union with the new owners. The contract for the 55-member unit of producers, engineers, reporters, photographers and assignment desk editors calls for wage increases totaling 7% over the life of the agreement, an increase in meal penalties, improved jurisdictional language and enhanced building security provisions. The agreement was negotiated over 2.5 days by Local 25 Vice President Robert Hellwitz, Chief Steward James Herr, and NABET-CWA Staff Representative Bill Murray.

Negotiations between NPR and NABET-CWA Local 31 began on January 21. The current contract expires on March 31. The unit members, who work in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles (NPR West), New York, and Chicago, include Broadcast Recording Technicians, Satellite Operators and Electronic Engineers, among others. During the first session, the company proposed removing the Media Center Coordinator position; changes to Article V; Changes to Leave in Article X; removing “no layoff” language; and a new “Zipper Clause” that could affect any issues not discussed or locked down during bargaining. Overall economics have not yet been discussed by the parties. More bargaining dates are scheduled for March 3-4, March 10-11, March 23-27, and March 30-31.

The bargaining committee includes Joe Mills, Kurt Stalnaker (alternate) and NABET-CWA Staff Representative Eric Seggi.

WKJRT-TV – Flint, MI (Local 46)
NABET-CWA reached a tentative agreement at WKJRT after just a week of bargaining for the 40-member unit of production (studio), engineering/maintenance, master control, traffic and creative services workers. Talks began the week of Feb. 9. The bargaining committee includes Local 46 President Sheldon Neely, Local Vice President Peter Hernandez, Local Secretary-Treasurer Jerry Look, and NABET-CWA Staff Representative Eric Seggi.

WROC-TV – Rochester, NY (Local 22)
NABET-CWA has lost representation of the 40-member unit at the Nextar-owned station, following the NLRB’s denial of the Union’s appeal of a “withdrawal of recognition” petition. Nextar filed a similar petition in Fresno, CA, at station KSEE, where IBEW represents workers. In that case, the Union members voted overwhelmingly to retain their Union representation. At the time of the certification petition, NABET was in contract talks with WROC.

KTVV/KCOP – Burbank, CA (Local 53)
There have been no negotiations scheduled for the News or Engineering unit contracts at KTVV/KCOP. NABET-CWA members in the engineering unit have been working under an implemented contract for 18 months. Mobilization activities, including rallies at the advertisers and the station, will continue.

Preparations for upcoming contract talks are underway. Petitions to nominate a three-member bargaining committee have been mailed to the membership and will be processed shortly. The contract covers 600 employees who work at FOX’s cable operations, FOX Sports 1, and the FOX MyNetwork. Negotiations could begin as early as April or May for a contract which expires June 30. Blue NABET-CWA 53 t-shirts have been distributed to the membership and individuals are being asked to wear the shirts on Thursdays in a show of unit solidarity.

The negotiating committee has been established and will represent NABET-CWA in contract talks for the 55-member unit. Bargaining begins the week of March 23. The current contract expires on June 30. “We are looking for a fair and equitable agreement that will help us support our families,” said Local 17 President Andy Halpin. The Bargaining Committee includes Halpin, Local 17 Vice President Emrie Whitehead, John Discenza, Kyle Buchanan, Al Wurst and NABET-CWA Staff Representative Lou Fallot.

NABET-CWA has lost representation of the 45-member unit at the Nexstar-owned station, following the NLRB’s denial of the Union’s appeal of a “withdrawal of recognition” petition. Nexstar filed a similar petition in Fresno, CA, at station KSEE, where IBEW represents workers. In that case, the Union members voted overwhelmingly to retain their Union representation. At the time of the certification petition, NABET was in contract talks with WROC.

Cumulus Radio (Locals 16, 31, 55, 57)
After many long years of negotiations, the parties have finally reached an overall tentative agreement on terms and conditions for a successor contract. At press time, NABET-CWA Staff Representative Lou Fallot was working with Company counsel to construct a Memorandum of Agreement and begin the process of integrating the new terms and conditions into the existing contract.

FOX Network Engineering and Operations Group (NE&O) – Los Angeles, CA (Local 53)

Preparations for upcoming contract talks are underway. Petitions to nominate a three-member bargaining committee have been mailed to the membership and will be processed shortly. The contract covers 600 employees who work at FOX’s cable operations, FOX Sports 1, and the FOX MyNetwork. Negotiations could begin as early as April or May for a contract which expires June 30. Blue NABET-CWA 53 t-shirts have been distributed to the membership and individuals are being asked to wear the shirts on Thursdays in a show of unit solidarity.

WFSB Bargaining Committee: Local 17 President Andy Halpin, Local 17 VP Emrie Whitehead, John Discenza, Kyle Buchanan, and Al Wurst

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We are still accepting applications for the 2015 NABET-CWA Memorial Scholarship Awards. The contest is open to the sons and daughters of active, retired or deceased NABET-CWA members. Preliminary applications must be received by March 20, 2015. The award provides $750 annually for four years—a total of $3,000—toward tuition and other expenses to the school designated by the winner.

For more information, contact your Local President or the Sector office at (202) 634-7970, or visit http://files.cwa-union.org/NABET/1stApplicationNABETCWA2015

WKBW Bargaining Committee: Local 17 President Andy Halpin, Local 17 VP Emrie Whitehead, John Discenza, Kyle Buchanan, and Al Wurst


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October 1, 2007

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