

SONGSHEET

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SONG CELEBRATES 60TH ANNIVERSARY

By Brad Honywill
SONG President

Your Local celebrates the 60th anniversary of its certification this fall and, in April, the 60th anniversary of its first contract.

Today, CEP Local 87-M, also known as the Southern Ontario Newsmedia Guild (SONG), services 3,500 members in 35 workplaces from Windsor to Ottawa and Owen Sound to Belleville.

But in the summer of 1948, it was just an idea being hotly debated in the backyard of the late Beland Honderich who, at that time, was the financial editor of the Toronto Star. That fall, taking advantage of new labour law, the editorial department at the Star successfully organized, becoming the first unit in the Toronto Newspaper Guild, Local 87, of the American Newspaper Guild.

Honderich later became publisher of the Star. But in 1948 he was elected as the guild's first president. "We are now trade unionists...members of that great body of men and women who have been striving for years to improve the living standards of Canadian workers," Honderich wrote in his first newsletter..

The guild got its first contract in April, 1949, retroactive to Jan. 1, giving reporters/photographers with five years experience the princely sum of \$80 a week. Evidence suggested the average increase for senior staffers was about \$1,000 per year or 25%.

The Star proclaimed itself as the "first newspaper in Canada to have a five-day, 40-hour week for editorial employees," adding that "it now becomes the first and only Toronto daily newspaper to pay its editorial workers time-and-a-half in cash for overtime."

The new union set a torrid organizing pace. The Racing Form was added in '49 but the biggest growth was in other Star departments. The business office and circulation joined in '50 followed by six other Star departments over the decade. With the addition of editorial at the Toronto Telegram in '53 and the Globe in '55, the Toronto Newspaper Guild had grown from the original 175 to 1,300 members.

In the later 1950s the growth was in additional departments at the Globe and Telegram, which closed in 1971 to be resurrected as the Toronto Sun. And, in 1957, the editorial department at the Brantford Expositor became the first unit outside Toronto. Today, two-thirds of the units and about 50% of the members in SONG are outside Toronto.



Beland Honderich (rt) and Charles Lymbery sign first contract

KOREA TIMES REPORTER WINS SERVICE AWARD

Korea Times reporter Dwayne Park has been honoured with the Fred Jones Award for service to Local 87-M in recognition of his courageous work in a very intimidating, anti-union, environment.

Dwayne played a leading role in organizing the Korea Times in 2000 and took the unit chair's job in the fall of 2003, around the time of bargaining for the second collective agreement. No one else wanted to be unit chair at the Korea Times then, or since, fearing management repercussions.

"Dwayne's courage and commitment to the labour movement is a model for all of us to follow," SONG President Brad Honywill said.

In addition to standing alone on the unit executive, Dwayne was the only member in bargaining, and stands alone at membership meetings, single-handedly keeping afloat a unit which is so fearful of management that it won't give its bargaining committee authority to even threaten a strike.

Dwayne faced down a concerted company attempt to decertify the union in 2006, proving that the person filing the decert application was in management. Dwayne also has to work in multiple languages -- Korean and English -- and is often called upon to translate contracts and other labour documents.

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Korea Times unit chair Dwayne Park

KOREA TIMES REPORTER WINS AWARD cont'd from p 1

Fred Jones, after whom the award is named, was a longtime labour reporter at the Toronto Telegram and played a key role in organizing the three Toronto daily newspapers that started this Local.

In '54, Jones became president of what was then the Toronto Newspaper Guild, serving until '56 when he became a rep with the international union, The Newspaper Guild. He served as Local Executive Secretary from 1967-1972, retiring in '81 after three decades of service to labour.

An award was created in his name after his death in 1988, and is handed out annually in recognition of service to Local 87-M. Nominees are judged on their contributions to organizing, union-building, human rights, health and safety, etc.

The award includes a scholarship of \$1,500 for expenses and lost wages associated with union education. The first award was given to Joyce McKerrow of the Toronto Star for service in 1989.

Other past winners include Martin Mittelstaedt, Globe; Gerry Godin, Kitchener-Waterloo Record; Sandra Unger, Hamilton Spectator; Brad Honywill, Toronto Sun; Kathy Clee, London Free Press; Richard Leitner, Brabant; K.H. Wong, Sing Tao; Rob Reid, K-W Record; Ann Maguire, Toronto Star; Vince Rice, St. Catharines Standard; Jeff Mahoney, Hamilton Spectator; Steve Browne, Toronto Real Estate Board; Paul Taylor, Globe; Mark Stewart, Oshawa Times; Jeff Bodrucky, Toronto Star; Cathy Miehm, Cambridge Reporter; and Joe Matyas, London Free Press.

The three nominees for 2007 were Dwayne, Jordan Tovey, Corus Entertainment and Annie Chan, World Journal. Each has provided outstanding leadership in units under an unrelenting attack from the employer.

Employees made major gains in those years, largely without strikes. The first strike was at the Racing Form in July, 1951, when the 13 members walked out because they didn't get their negotiated raise. They were back 30 minutes later with their money.

Another significant event in these early years was the work-related death of former Local president Alf Tate, who continues to be honoured with a journalism scholarship at Ryerson. In 1955, Tate, a Star photographer, and reporter Doug Cronk went missing while on assignment flying over a hurricane near Florida. Their bodies were never found.

Fred Jones followed Tate as local president and his three decades of service continues to be honoured with an annual award for service to the Local.

The '60s saw more units outside Toronto, prompting a name change in the late 70s to Southern Ontario Newspaper Guild.

While the '70s were relatively quiet, a new militancy took hold in the '80s. Globe members took their first strike vote in '82. And, in '83, 1,500 Star members struck for four days. On the organizing front, 20 new units were added in the '80s.

Three presidents dominated the political scene in the first 60 years. Jack Dobson of the Globe served from '59-'66. John Lowe of the Star led from '76-'84. And Gail Lem of the Globe reigned from '89-'96.

With the rapid expansion, SONG moved in '84 from a Jarvis St. townhouse basement to its current home in a two-storey building at 1253 Queen St. E., just east of Leslie. At the time, the price of \$170,000 was controversial but today the building is worth about \$800,000 and the mortgage retired many years ago.

As the Local grew, SONG became increasingly dissatisfied with service from the Washington-based international. In '94, SONG members voted to leave The Newspaper Guild, formerly known as the American Newspaper Guild. Shortly after, SONG joined the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada (CEP), an all-Canadian union with more than 150,000 members and Canada's largest media union.

Despite restrictive labour laws passed by the Harris Conservative government in the 1990s, SONG continued to organize, adding 22 new units. This success continued in the new century in important directions like ethnic newspapers, the Sun Media chain, the internet and the broadcast sector.

These changes were reflected in a 2004 name change to the Southern Ontario Newsmedia Guild.

In 2008, SONG expanded in the Ottawa area where we'd already organized the Ottawa Sun, adding seven media units from another Local, including the House of Commons broadcast/technical group, the Ottawa Citizen mailroom, the Winchester Press, the Glangarry News, the Pembroke Observer, and audio-video services TelAv and ELC.

Sixty years of Certification History

Year	Employer Name
1948	Toronto Star - Editorial
1949	McMurray Publishing (Racing Form)
1950	Toronto Star - Business Office
1950	Toronto Star - Circulation
1951	Toronto Star - Truck Drivers
1951	Toronto Star Realty
1953	The Telegram Publishing Co. - Editorial
1953	Toronto Star - Garage Delivery Department
1953	Toronto Star - Truck Helpers
1955	The Globe and Mail - Editorial
1955	The Telegram Publishing Co. - Maintenance
1955	The Telegram Publishing Co. - Circulation
1955	Toronto Star - Painters, Garage
1957	The Globe and Mail - Truck Drivers
1957	The Globe and Mail - Maintenance
1957	Brantford Expositor - Editorial
1957	Toronto Star - Advertising
1957	Brantford Expositor – Mailing/Circulation
1958	The Telegram Publishing Co - Advertising
1959	The Globe and Mail - Advertising
1961	The Telegram Pub'g Co. - Promo and Art
1961	CFTO TV Ltd.
1963	Oshawa Times
1963	The Burlington Printing Co. Ltd.
1963	The Globe and Mail - Circulation
1963	The Globe and Mail- Cafeteria
1968	Peterborough Examiner
1973	CCH Canadian Ltd.
1974	The Toronto Citizen
1977	The Globe and Mail - Outside Circulation
1980	Oshawa This Week
1981	Burlington Post and Weekend Post
1982	The Globe and Mail - Branch Circulation
1983	Brantford Expositor - Circulation
1983	The Hamilton Spectator - Editorial
1983	Maclean's (Full-time)
1984	The Hamilton Spectator - Mail Room
1985	The Globe and Mail - Advertising Sales
1986	Starways Distributors (Harlequin)
1986	Starways Distributors (Harlequin) - Clerical
1987	Brantford Expositor - Classified
1987	Brantford Expositor – Business Office
1987	Brantford Expositor – Advertising
1987	Metroland - GTA
1988	Brabant Newspapers - Editorial
1988	Oxford University Press
1989	London Free Press - Editorial

1989	Brabant Newspapers - Production
1989	Polish Alliance Press
1989	Kitchener-Waterloo Record - Editorial
1990	The Globe and Mail -- Montreal Magazine
1990	Fairway Group
1991	Guelph Mercury
1993	Midland Free Press
1993	Metroland - Simcoe County Editorial
1993	The Financial Times
1993	Cambridge Reporter
1993	Now Communications
1994	Kitchener-Waterloo Record - Advertising
1994	Chatham Daily News
1994	Owen Sound Sun Times
1994	Belleville Intelligencer
1995	Niagara Falls Review
1995	Toronto Real Estate Board
1996	The Hamilton Spectator - Advertising
1996	Metroland - Barrie Advertising
1997	Kitchener-Waterloo Record - Reader Sales
1997	Share Communications
1997	St. Catharines Standard - Editorial
1999	Kitchener-Waterloo Record Production
1999	Toronto Star - Electronic Publishing
1999	Stratford Beacon Herald - Advertising
2000	Korea Times
2000	Hamilton Web Printing - Inserting/Bindery
2000	Sing Tao Daily
2001	Toronto Star - Carriers
2002	London Free Press - Wall-to-wall unit
2002	St. Catharines Standard Advertising
2003	Simcoe Reformer
2003	Maclean's (Part-time)
2003	A Channel
2003	Metroland - Midland
2004	Corus Entertainment
2006	Toronto Sun - Pre-Press
2006	World Journal (Daily News)
2007	Metro Toronto
2007	Ottawa Sun – Editorial
2008	House of Commons
2008	Ottawa Citizen
2008	Glengarry News
2008	Winchester Press
2008	Pembroke Observer
2008	TelAv
2008	ELC

SONG INITIATES LABOUR ESL PROGRAM

The Local launched a new language training program in August aimed at labour activists in our ethnic units who have difficulty in the English-based language of labour relations.

The \$7,000 in seed money for the program came from a member who donated the proceeds of an arbitration award he received in compensation for being fired after an organizing drive. In addition to the award, he was reinstated in his job and wanted the money to go back into a union cause.

In the first 12-week semester, four members from the Korea Times, Sing Tao and the World Journal are receiving English-as-a-Second-Language training from an instructor at the SONG offices each Saturday morning. Soon, the students, who are unit executive members but largely work in a Chinese or Korean work environment, will be given the opportunity to spend a day per week working out of the SONG office, helping with various labour relations tasks in an English environment.

“The purpose of the program is to give these activists a better understanding of labour law and to better communicate the labour relations process to their members,” CEP 87-M President Brad Honywill said. “We also hope to make them less vulnerable to employers who are able to exploit and intimidate members because of their lack of English skills.”

NEW CONTRACTS FOR GUELPH AND GLENGARRY

Winchester, A-Channel, Corus, Pembroke, Spec Sales, Fairway and St. Catharines up later this year

Two contracts were ratified over the summer and four others are on the horizon.

Glengarry News ratified a 2-year contract Aug. 28 which includes an increase in the kilometre rate of 3 cents on a sliding scale tied to gas prices. The new scale requires a kilometre payment of 44 cents at the current gas rate of \$1.25.

The News members also got a lump sum payment of \$150 for full timers and \$100 for part-timers toward the health tax, paid out each year of the two-year contract; a 25% increase in the employer's contribution toward the retirement plan; a 3% wage increase in each of the two years and an additional holiday.

"I'm satisfied because all the areas were covered equitably," Unit Chair Claire Wallace said. "Everyone's concerns got addressed."



Claire Wallace

Greg Rothwell

Guelph Mercury members ratified a 3-year deal on Aug. 6, including an increase in the kilometre rate from 33 to 38 cents; introduction of a longterm disability plan; a much improved pension plan and wage increases of 2%, and 1.75% plus CPI up to 3% in each of the final two years; vision care increasing to \$250 every 24 months; and a new prescription drug card.

"For the first time people are being offered a real pension plan," noted Unit Chair Greg Rothwell.

Meanwhile, contract negotiations are nearing the end at the Winchester Press where the contract expired May 30, Negotiations are underway at the Pembroke Observer, with unit deals expiring on June 11, July 1 and Sept. 30.

Talks are about to begin at A-Channel-London, and Corus Entertainment-Toronto, both of whose contracts expire Aug. 31.

Contracts at Fairway, Hamilton Spectator advertising and St. Catharines expire Dec. 31.

In April, the Ottawa Citizen mailroom ratified a new five-year deal to Dec. 31, 2012 including percentage wage increases of 2.5/2.5/3/2 and 2.

LE JOURNAL DE QUEBEC LOCKOUT FINALLY SETTLED

CUPE members at le Journal de Québec returned to work in August after a 473-day work stoppage over job security, multi-media work by journalists, two-tiered wages and the length of the work week.

SONG was supporting the CUPE members with monthly donations of \$1,500 because they were fighting to maintain a contract that was a beacon for the rest of the newspapers in Canada.

Leadership of the three locals involved in the work stoppage had recommended their members vote for the five-year deal, ending the longest contract dispute ever at a French-language daily in Canada.

About 280 employees of the Québec City tabloid were on strike or locked out since April 22, 2007, the first work stoppage to hit the paper since it started in 1967. They produced a Monday-Friday strike paper called MediaMatin which ceased on Aug. 8, after which union members began returning to work.

Some highlights:

- 2.5 per cent per year salary increases over five years.
- Classified ad services brought back to Québec City (from Kanata)
- 37.5 hour, four day work week (37.5 hours over five days for classified ad employees)
- One more week of vacation for temporary employees with more than 10 years service
- Introduce a floor for the number of journalists and photographers to maintain local coverage while allowing multimedia
- Changes to press room work rules in exchange for investment in new equipment
- Early retirement program: four weeks salary per year of service up to 18 months
- Possibility of jobs at Vidéotron for affected office employees



Local 87-M (SONG) Prez Brad Honywill (left) with CEP National Media VP Peter Murdoch in Quebec City handing out MediaMatin newspapers in support of locked out workers. Also helping was Rob Lamberti, unit chair at the Toronto Sun.