



# SONG Sheet

## Toronto Star Edition

*News from The Star and our industry*

Monday, March 11, 2013

### Buyout offers delivered today

Individual offers under the voluntary separation program, or VSP, negotiated by your union last week are due to be delivered today.

The plan calls for those in job categories hit by last week's lay off announcement to get three weeks' pay for each year of service, up to 85 weeks. Those whose jobs are being contracted out may also be eligible for pension supplements.

There is also be a general VSP for all members. It, too, offers three weeks per year, but maxes out at 78 weeks.

A higher maximum for this being forced out just seemed to have some justice to it.

In either plan, the money can be taken as salary continuance, a lump sum, or a combination.

More details will be available in the packages to be delivered to those facing lay off today. Everyone else can get personal details by asking the company to run their numbers.

Negotiating the deal took longer than was hoped or expected. The final deal was signed late Friday afternoon, and announced just as most people were heading home.

Nobody wanted this. Any of this. But your union hopes that the VSP negotiated last week, in conjunction with the alternative process, will lessen the pain.

If you have any questions, your chief stewards and unit chair Stuart Laidlaw are here to help.

### Three elected to union rep council

Amidst all the turmoil of the past week, you union's election of Star delegates to the union local's representative council was completed.

Three were elected:

- **Jeff Bodrucky**, circulation
- **Richard Brennan**, editorial
- **Cathie Nichols**, finance and administration

As well, four of the candidates are now alternates:

- **Joanne Coelho**, switchboard
- **Steve Gjorkes**, circulation
- **Marcelo Pazan**, creative
- **Les Veszlenyi**, prepress

The alternates will serve when the regular delegates are unable to do so. Rep council is the local's highest decision-making body, voting on policy and spending issues.



### How alternative process works

A key part of the process ahead will be the alternative to lay offs talks triggered under our collective agreement whenever jobs are contracted out.

That process begins April 1, when the company presents to your union its business plan for contracting out the page desk to PageMasters.

A group of four will then work full time for 30 days exploring alternatives in hopes of making the contracting out unnecessary.

As part of the VSP deal worked out with the company last week, the team will be fully equipped with the resources they need to do their important work, starting three weeks from today.

The names of those on the team will be announced shortly. They will be looking for your input to help them in their important work. More details on that to come.

You can also talk to your chief steward or unit chair Stuart Laidlaw if you have any ideas.

Staff at the Star have already shown tremendous support for their coworkers throughout this difficult time. The team working on the alternatives process will need your support, as well.

### What your union's up to

This week will largely be spent helping people through the difficult and painful layoff and VSP process. The basic parameters have been established, but everybody's situation is unique.

As well, your union will be speaking with Ryerson journalism students Monday afternoon to help them understand what is happening at the Star and the industry.

Your union will also be hard at work getting the alternative process up and going, choosing those to be involved in the process and gathering the resources needed.

### Worth Repeating

"These are the numbers. We shake our heads. We move on. Behind the numbers are the people, the out of work people. On a big city newspaper. Or a tiny fishing village in Newfoundland." CBC host Michael Enright on his radio show *The Sunday Edition*, talking about job cuts at the Toronto Star and a fish packing plant on Bonavista Bay.