

ShopTalk

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Editor, Lisa O'Donnell Connors, x4-6803

The Long Journey to Press Operator

Press operator may arguably be one of the toughest jobs at The Post. It has the physical demands of working on the five-story high Mitsubishi presses and the mental demands of understanding and working with complicated computerized machinery and processes.

To get the best press operators to meet those demands, the Production Department has a rigorous

apprenticeship program that lasts between three to four years. It is also a highly sought after apprenticeship. Late last year, eleven people were hired from a pool of several hundred appli-

cants. In past years, the position has attracted more than 1,000 applications.

"We feel we have the best press operators in the country and we want that to continue," explains **Joel Barefoot**, assistant superinten-

"We feel we have the best press operators in the country and we want that to continue."

—**Joel Barefoot**
Asst. Superintendent
College Park Plant



PHOTO - LEROY LEAVE

The newest class of press operator trainees includes (front row, left to right) **Robin Oswald, Carol Camero** (a visitor from IT), **Laukisha Benton, Bobby Anwar, Nicanor Robles, Kevin Rogers**, (back row, left to right) **Michael Grant, Michael Meyer, Bobby Rosenberger, Keith Scott, Marshal Cooke, and Jocelyn Gaines**.

dent at the College Park Plant.

According to **Jim Coley**, vice president of Production, the decision to hire a new class of trainees is made by the production management team. They pay close attention to pressroom staffing levels, including retirements and attrition such as illness or injury.

The position is then posted internally and in The Post's classi-

fieds. There is a minimum requirement of a high school diploma, but experience in the printing trade is not a determination of who will become a trainee. "We hire desire," explains Coley. "We teach people how to do this job. You need to come to the table wanting this job. It's expensive to train press opera-

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Discounts for Post Employees

Still feeling the sting of holiday bills and discouraged by the looming tax season? Here is some help - a listing of several of the discounts that are available to employees of The Washington Post:

Classified Ads

Employees are eligible for a 25 percent discount on Post classified ads. (The discount does not apply to special rates.) The ad must be ordered at the Front Counter at the Northwest Building, which is located to the right of the linotype machine at the front entrance. You will need to present your ID to receive the discount.

Free classified ads are also available to employees in the Marketplace section of ShopTalk. Deadlines and other information can be found every week in ShopTalk, or call **Lisa Connors** at x4-6803.

Announcements

A 25 percent discount on announcements that appear in the Style section is provided to employees.

Announcements can include weddings, engagements, anniversaries, births, birthdays, or graduations. All announcements must be paid in advance with a credit card, check or money order and materials must be received seven to 10 days prior to publication. Please identify yourself as a Post employee. Call **Gail Burkley** at x4-5736 for rates and other information.

Employees can also receive a 25 percent discount on death notices for family members. Please note

that death notices are classified announcements and are not obituaries, which are news stories. For information on placing a death notice call x4-4122.

Publications

A 50 percent discount on The Washington Post *National Weekly* is available to employees interested in purchasing subscriptions for friends and family who live outside the Washington area. The cost is only \$39 (instead of the regular price of \$78) for a gift subscription to the weekly publication of selected Post articles on politics, foreign affairs, popular culture and business, edited for a national audience. For information about subscribing, contact **Karen Hill** at x4-4278.

Post employees can subscribe to *Newsweek* for themselves or as a gift to friends and family for the low rate of only \$20.54 a year for 52 issues. To receive your discounted subscription, you can pick up a form in the Human Resources Department on the 7th floor of the Northwest Building, call 1-800-631-1040, or send your name, address, city, state, zip code and phone with a check payable to *Newsweek* to: *Newsweek*, Order Processing, P.O. Box 912, Mountain Lakes, N.J. 07046.

Online Stores

To receive a 20 percent discount on photos taken by Washington Post photographers, you can go to the online photo store at www.washingtonpost.com/buyphotos. The site can also be accessed by clicking on the online photo store link on the [washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)

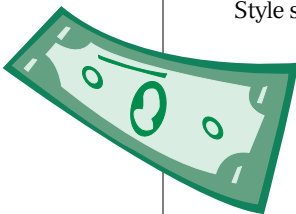
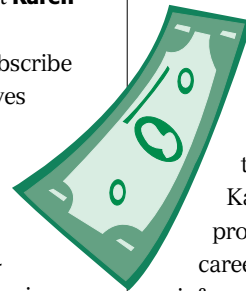
home page (located at the bottom of the home page on the right). There is also a link on the *Intranet* home page. The employee discount code "emp927" is entered by clicking on "Validate Coupon" in the left bar of the order pages during the order process. Enter the code in the pop-window.

Interested in picking up a TWP jacket, sweatshirt, hat or a copy of *The Washington Post Dining Guide*? To visit The Post's online store, go to www.washingtonpost.com/store. Post employees receive a 10 percent discount on orders. Enter POST in the coupon field during checkout.

Educational Services

Employees and their immediate family members are also eligible for a 10 percent discount on some of the services provided by Kaplan, Inc., a subsidiary of The Washington Post Company. Kaplan, Inc. is a premier provider of educational and career services. For more information about the discounts contact Laura Bierbaum at (212) 492-5973. For more information on Kaplan, click on www.Kaplan.com.

NOTE: All prices and discounts are subject to change. The information in this article was verified at the time ShopTalk was published. ■



tors, so we look for people who will stay and become an integral part of their press team.”

During the hiring process for this most recent class of trainees, the large pool of applicants was trimmed to 75 people. Each of them was interviewed by one of two panels made up of a representative from Human Resources and two production managers. Just prior to the interview, the applicants were given two exams, one for literacy and understanding using actual pressroom reports and another to test basic mechanical knowledge.

The panel interviews and exam results scaled down the 75 applicants to 20. These “finalists” were interviewed by both **Greg Estep**, pressroom superintendent at the College Park Plant, and **Melinda Ford**, pressroom superintendent at the Springfield Plant.

Information on the final 20 applicants was included in a matrix that highlighted several desirable attributes such as mechanical aptitude, work history, adaptability to a team environment, and attitude, among others. The two panels who interviewed the applicants, **Kevin O’Neill**, plant manager at College Park, **Jenny Rymarczuk**, plant manager at Springfield and Coley used the matrix to determine the group of 11 who were hired as trainees.

On November 22, the members of The Post’s newest class of trainees met together for the first time to begin three weeks of intense classroom and hands-on experience. The trainers are all long-time Post pressroom vet-



PHOTO - LEROY LEAKE

The training starts in the reelroom and the trainees learn every button, function and process on the five-story high presses.

erans including **Zell Minor**, **John Harper**, **Kjell Johns**, **Leroy Leake** and **Donna Shaw**.

Three of the trainees have pressroom experience at other publications. **Mike Meyer** worked at the *Journal* newspapers, **Bobby Rosenberger** came from the *Army Times* and Springfield Offset, and **Michael Grant** was a press operator at *USA Today* for 15 years.

During the first two weeks, the apprentice class met from 7 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and during the third week the class met from 2:30 to 9 p.m. Each class began with a quiz and a review of safety procedures. And ended with another quiz. Their training starts at the bottom of the presses in the reelroom where the reels of newsprint are brought to the presses, and the training continues up to the top of the presses. They learn the web path of the newsprint, plate

handling, balancing ink and water, and how to use every button and control on the presses. The trainees are tested on all functions of the presses. For example, they must know the purpose of a new roll accelerator and what three switches should be changed after a hand paster is made.

The trainers use a method that Minor calls “read it, see it, do it.”

The trainees study the press manuals,

review the information during the trainers’ presentations and then get a hands-on lesson. Each night they are assigned homework and are expected to come back each morning with pages highlighted and notes.

For most of the trainees, this was the first time in decades they had spent time in a classroom. “It was hard going back into class and studying,” said **Bobby Anwar**. “There was a lot to learn and every day it was something new.”

Safety is stressed throughout the training. It is so important, that after two safety violations, a trainee will be let go. “Our operators come in here with ten fingers and we want them to leave with ten fingers,” emphasizes Coley.

On Dec. 10, the 11 press operator trainees “graduated” from classroom instruction. They had one more week of

hands-on experience with their trainers and then became full-fledged members of a press team. For the next three to four years, they will be evaluated and tested every three months.

They will also continue to receive training. After a year, the trainees will spend six months on the maintenance team to get a better understanding of the inner workings of the presses. They will get more comprehensive training on the intricacies of the press folders. By the fourth year, they will receive personal development training to guide them toward possible management positions.

The press operator development training program is completed when a trainee meets 16 goals. He or she must be competent in the skills needed to operate any assignment on the press and have an in-depth knowledge of the presses. The trainee must demonstrate skills to identify and correct potential problems, the ability to optimize press performance, and be prepared for a leadership role.

*Weekly tours are available to groups who are interested in seeing The Post’s presses and other parts of the College Park and Springfield production plants. For more information, contact **David Jones**, Public Relations at x4-4917. ■*

Rec Association News

The Recreation Association is offering a limited time \$3 membership fee for 2005 that is available until March 31. After March 31, membership will be \$5. Please call any of the Rec Association contacts listed below for membership information. Rec Association members can save a lot of money by pre-purchasing tickets for Six Flags, Kings Dominion and movies.

The following is a list of Rec Association contacts:

MOVIES

Northwest

Adrienne Taylor x4-7101

LaRongenette Snead
x4-8306

Michael Goodman x4-7048

Pam Mitchell-Scott x4-5882

Tyson's Corner

Jamie Ward-Black x2-1604

College Park

Les Martin x6-1107

SIX FLAGS

Northwest

Dean Felten x4-4418

Nicole Morton x4-7041

College Park

Les Martin x6-1107

Springfield

Daryl Martin x6-1963,

KINGS DOMINION

Northwest

Christie Branham x4-5970

College Park

Les Martin x6-1107

Pre-purchased movie ticket costs are:

Loews \$5.50

AMC \$5.50/\$7.00

Regal \$6.50

More information will be forthcoming on 2005 pre-purchase ticket costs for Kings Dominion and Six Flags.



Stages For All Ages

The Post is the presenting sponsor for the Sixth Annual Stages For All Ages. A project of the League of Washington Theatres, Stages for All Ages introduces young people 17 and under, to live, professional theatre in the Washington area. Tickets at many participating theatres are available now and the program continues into June.

For select performances, more than twenty area theatres will offer a free ticket to a child 17 or under, with each adult ticket purchased.

Complete information on the participating theatres and performances can be found on the League of Washington

Theatres Web site
www.lowt.org or call
(202) 334-5885.

Correction

Amor Ulanday was misidentified as a male in the Feb. 10 issue of ShopTalk. She is a new hire in the Accounting Department.

No Marketplace Next Week

Marketplace ads will not be published in next week's ShopTalk, the Feb. 24 issue. Marketplace ads will next appear in the March 3 issue. The deadline for ads for that issue is Friday, Feb. 25 at noon. If you have any questions, contact **Lisa Connors** at x4-6803. ■

Marketplace

FOR SALE: Elegant diamond and ruby bridal set, .25 carat in 14K gold setting. Paid \$800, asking \$500. Call Scarlet at x4-7318.

FOR RENT: Falls Church/Arlington, 1 BR condo with scenic patio. Lakeside Plaza condominiums. Washer/dryer in apartment, indoor and outdoor pool, tennis court, exercise room, Jacuzzi, steam room. Assigned parking. 30 minutes from Post. \$1,200 +utilities (\$50 cap)/month. Pets allowed. 1-year lease. Available now. Call Jeff at (202) 334-5776.

FOR SALE: 1996 Jeep Grand Cherokee Limited V8 4WD, gold, black leather, moonroof, CD/Mp3, sound system, Runs great, 160k. \$4,995. Call Andy at x4-7005 or (301) 379-7772.

FOR RENT: One BR apt. at The Cairo at 1615 Q. St. Sunny, updated kit, rftp deck, no pets available week of March 7, \$1,400/mo+utl. Call Jill at x4-7516, or (301) 565-9115.

FOR SALE: RCA Lyra MP3 player, 256 MB storage, holds approximately 70 songs. All software, headphones included. Requires 1 AAA battery (included). Great to use on the go! \$80. Call Dan at x4-5479 or (240) 426-5930.

FOR SALE: Vacation time at the Villas of The Boardwalk Resort in Virginia Beach. Ocean Front, indoor pool, gym, kitchen, 1BR, 2 Sofa beds. \$650 for the week of Aug. 5 and \$550 for the week of Sept. 3. Call Trinh at x4-4021 or (703) 658-2120.

DETAIL WORK: Detail work done on cars, vans and SUVs. Excellent cleaning job, your vehicle will be spotless. Call David at (301) 505-6633, or x 6-2220.

FOR SALE: 1985 Cadillac Deville Sedan, 4-door, mileage is 137,430, CD/AM&FM radio, Dayton rim spokes, champagne color. Will include parts for a tune-up, motor mounts & air struts. Best offer. Call Marsha at (202) 583-6819 or cell (202) 550-5418.

FREE: To a loving home, my 14-year-old tabby, Cluseau. The new husband's allergies have become untreatable. He is a very, spunky, loving and playful cat, adaptable to most environments and loves to romp in the outdoors when given the chance (not declawed). Please call Traci at x4-5383 or (202) 363-7785.

FOR RENT: Roomy 1 BR, 1BA condo in a quiet complex in Northern Virginia. Available now. All utilities included. Sunny, clean, French doors, balcony, swimming pool. Reserved parking for tenant and two guest permits. \$1,100/month. Close to Old town Fairfax/NVCC and GMU. Easy access to shopping and restaurants. Vienna metro. (I-66 and Nutley) Capital Beltway (50 & 495) Contact Maria Gatti at (202) 544-7338, or cell (202) 489-7877, or x4-4466.

MARKETPLACE DEADLINE: Noon Fridays. Please include your name, extension and home phone number. Ads are for Post Employees only. Send ads to Shop Talk, 7th floor, or call x4-6803. To send ads via fax dial x4-4963; via e-mail send to shoptalk. Ads run two issues unless otherwise requested. One ad per employee, please.