

ASSOCIATION OF FLIGHT ATTENDANTS-CWA, AFL-CIO®

Flightlog

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Inside:

Member Mobilization / FA Bargaining Summit / Delta Organizing

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Contents

- 4** Seniority Protection Law
- 5** Leadership Training
- 6** Negotiations Training
- 7** Mobilization Training
- 8** FA Bargaining Summit
- 11** Delta Organizing
- 14** Cabin Air Quality

Board of Directors to Meet in July in Milwaukee

The 2008 Board of Directors Meeting will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, July 8-10 rather than in the customary months of October or November. Registration will open Tuesday, July 8 at 4:00 p.m., and the meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. with reports from the International officers and some Committees. Sixty days prior to the Board, the office of AFA-CWA International Secretary-Treasurer Kevin Creighan will send out the 'Agenda Item Form' which is the form for submitting items to be included on the BOD agenda. Questions regarding the upcoming BOD should be directed to Kevin at kcreighan@afanet.org.

Register to Vote!



The United States presidential election of 2008 will be held November 4, 2008. Are you registered to vote?

On November 4, we will be electing the president and vice president of the United States, members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, and many state and local government seats.

If you are not yet registered to vote, AFA-CWA has made it easy. Just visit our website at www.afanet.org and click on 'Register to Vote' at the bottom of the page. Voting is not only a privilege and a right, it is also your responsibility. For a quick and easy way to find out where the candidates stand on important issues, visit www.cwavotes.org.

On the cover: Delta Air Lines flight attendant activists deliver signed union authorization cards to the National Mediation Board on February 14, 2008. A majority of the over 13,000 Delta flight attendants signed cards in support of a union representation election. Pictured from the left are Rick Smaglo (LAX), Marianne Bicksler (SLC), and Mark Stell (SAS).



Building Our Power with New Alliances, Member Activism

As this issue of *Flightlog* goes to press, 13,000 Delta flight attendants are preparing to cast their votes in an election they requested on February 14 which was approved on March 18 by the National Mediation Board. The campaign has been marked by broad participation and eager volunteerism among a group of over 1,000 Delta activists. The enthusiasm driving this campaign is indicative of the Delta flight attendants' hope for a better future. They hold that hope for good reason.

Throughout our industry, flight attendants are seeing the dawn of a new era — not just as defined by the latest airline industry shake-up, but as defined by the employees who make the aviation industry work. We are coming together in new ways as never before. We are forming powerful coalitions across work groups at our airlines and across airlines within our profession. Flight attendants are at the helm of redefining the meaning of labor solidarity and the Delta flight attendants want to be a part of the better future that only labor solidarity can deliver.

In early January, AFA-CWA hosted the first-ever Flight Attendant Strategic Bargaining Summit to seize the golden opportunity that lies ahead in the next two years when a majority of contracts in our industry will be open for negotiations. Summit participants set in motion a far-reaching coordinated, strategic plan for developing maximum bargaining leverage on each and every issue dear to our profession.

The AFA-CWA week-long training for new union leaders in the fourth week of January, and the two-day negotiations training for AFA-CWA negotiators and officers that took place in mid-February both furthered the themes of the Strategic Bargaining Summit: we must ener-

gize our entire membership in support of the wages, benefits and working conditions that we deserve. Another first-ever event, was a mobilization workshop on the heels of the negotiations training in February. It was dedicated to identifying best practices among AFA-CWA leaders in engaging members in support of our common goals.

I hope that, in reading this issue of *Flightlog*, you will learn about some of the important campaigns AFA-CWA is waging and the initiatives AFA-CWA has taken to improve our profession. In this issue, you can read about our legislative victory in protecting seniority for all airline employees in mergers, our groundbreaking work in advancing cabin air quality, and AFA-CWA's historic gains on behalf of all flight attendants. We must always remember that all of the many advances we have made in our profession over the decades can be attributed to the flight attendants who have stood behind the issues and demanded change.

I believe that our union is an exemplary model of democracy in action. Our elected LEC and MEC officers are among the most dedicated and hard-working labor leaders I have had the pleasure to work with. I believe we are all in good hands and that, with the active support of members like you, there is a great deal we stand to gain as we take the reins and redefine the standards under which we work in our industry.

I look forward to working with each and every one of you, demonstrating the power that we can wield, through our own strategic planning, willingness to dedicate ourselves to our common goals, and the knowledge that we truly deserve the improvements we stand to gain. →



With the active support of members like you, there is a great deal we stand to gain as we take the reins and redefine the standards under which we work in our industry.

AFA-CWA Secures Landmark Seniority Protection Law

The dogged efforts of AFA-CWA government affairs activists paid off in two major victories at the close of 2007: funding for a comprehensive study of flight attendant fatigue and employee seniority protections when airlines merge. Signed into law as part of the Omnibus Appropriations bill — essentially the federal government's operating budget — these long-time flight attendant priorities represent the culmination of extensive planning, hard work and many, many hours devoted by AFA-CWA government affairs member activists, LEC and MEC leaders and International union staff.

The new law provides clear guidelines for

the often muddled and contentious process of seniority integration. The new seniority protection provision guards against any flight attendant group ever being stapled to the bottom of a seniority list again, as occurred in the tragic case of the American Airlines-TWA merger. The airlines and the unions involved there (neither group had AFA-CWA representation) failed to secure the seniority of the TWA flight attendants.



AFA-CWA government affairs activists join Sen. Claire McCaskill (D-MO), pictured at center, following passage of airline employee seniority protective provisions. Sen. McCaskill acknowledges importance of AFA-CWA lobbying efforts in letter at left.

CLAIRE MCCASKILL
Missouri



UNITED STATES
SENATE

February 27, 2008

Patricia Friend
President
Association of Flight Attendants-CWA
501 Third Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Patricia:

Thank you for your kind note after passage of the airline merger seniority amendment as part of the "Omnibus" last year.

As you know, protecting seniority rights of airline employees has been a priority of mine since coming to Congress. AFA-CWA provided support necessary to secure passage of labor merger integration language during the Senate Commerce Committee's consideration of the FAA reauthorization bill, S. 1300, last June. The lobbying efforts of your 55,000-plus members helped keep the issue alive as the FAA reauthorization bill unfortunately stalled last summer.

Late last year, your willingness to reach out to Congressional leaders and other unions was a key part of our effort to include merger integration language in the Omnibus, which the President signed into law. We shared a belief that this issue was too important to wait for the FAA reauthorization bill to pass.

I'm so pleased our year-long effort paid off and will mean that hundreds of thousands of airline workers have a more secure future. I look forward to working with you in the coming years.

Sincerely,


Claire McCaskill
United States Senator

While AFA-CWA's merger policy of date-of-hire seniority integration ensures protection of the full current seniority for our members, AFA-CWA promoted the new law to safeguard the seniority of all flight attendants in our industry.

The law now provides a floor to protect our seniority even in a merger with a non-AFA-CWA airline. The Air Transport Association (ATA), the airline management lobbying group, strongly opposed the seniority provision. Having lost the battle, however, airline management groups will not be able to wield seniority as a weapon in merger negotiations.

Senator Claire McCaskill (D-MO) and Rep. Russ Carnahan (D-MO) were valuable allies in securing this vital provision. We owe them a debt of gratitude. →

Week-Long Training Prepares New AFA-CWA Leaders

Newly-elected Local Council leaders from 11 different airlines attended AFA-CWA leadership training, January 20-25 in the new Lane Kirkland Center at the National Labor College in Silver Spring, Maryland. The Center's open, contemporary design provided a relaxed setting for the intensive week-long training.

Participants arrived on Saturday evening and, working through the Martin Luther King holiday, prepared for the leadership duties they were elected to perform while strengthening the network that forms the foundations of our union.

"This is a unique group," said AFA-CWA International Staff Representative (ISR) Suzanne Kirkpatrick. "They relate very well to one another and seem to care very much about building consensus. These are excellent qualities in union leaders."

AFA-CWA ISRs Guy Bosworth, George Donahue and Suzanne Kirkpatrick conducted the training which covered the basic duties of the LEC officers; resources of the International office and staff; building and strengthening the union through effective local committees and member communications; and using the grievance procedure and tools for working with management to advocate on behalf of AFA-CWA members.

The ISRs discussed the fundamental duties of Local Executive Council officers, their myriad responsibilities—to members, other officers, union committees, their MEC, the International office, to themselves and to their families, and ways to meet and balance them all. They reviewed the resources of the International office and the basic structure of our union as outlined in the AFA-CWA Constitution & Bylaws. They also outlined effective ways to mobilize members around key issues, to build and develop the structure of the union, and how to most effectively work with volunteers and committees.

The new leaders heard from AFA-CWA International officers, department directors and staff members, as well as from the National Labor College President and staff members. International Vice President Veda Shook discussed the program, ground rules and expectations of the training. International President Pat Friend spoke about AFA-CWA's work to rebuild our industry and our profession. International Secretary-Treasurer Kevin Creighan gave an overview of budgeting and reporting requirements, officers' financial responsibility to members, balloting and election issues. AFA-CWA General Counsel David Borer discussed various laws that affect elected officers.

Associate General Counsel Ed Gilmartin gave an overview of the Code of Ethics as specified in Article

XV of the AFA-CWA Constitution & Bylaws. The Code addresses, in plain language, the conduct required by an elected union officer under federal law. The Code of Ethics also establishes a standing Ethical Practices Committee, appointed by the President and approved by the Board of Directors, to hear complaints regarding any violations of the Code, as well as a Hearing Board.

In separate presentations over the course of the training, AFA-CWA International staff introduced themselves and spoke on various topics including: collective bargaining under the Railway Labor Act and contract trends; the grievance process; insurance and retirement options; employee assistance; current legislative issues and other government affairs work; ongoing safety and health campaigns; and public relations and effective communications with members, other leaders, the press and the public.

"The training was phenomenal," said Bill Green, Air Tran Airways. "It taught me a lot about my role as a leader and how I fit in personally. We talked a lot about different personality types and how to adapt your communications style to reach everyone."

"I've been in leadership for two years and have taken the advanced leader training, but this filled in the gaps for me," said Barb Niessen, Air Wisconsin. "Also, the networking was great. We exchanged emails and all communicated about the meeting afterwards. I could have stayed on for another week." →



Negotiations Training Dovetails Bargaining Summit, Mobilization Training

While the February 12-13, 2008, AFA-CWA Negotiations Training encompassed all of the nuts and bolts of past negotiations trainings, this year, the event had an edge of promise. On the heels of the Flight Attendant Strategic Bargaining Summit, held in the very same conference room at AFA-CWA International headquarters, and immediately followed by a day-and-a-half mobilization training, this year's negotiations training was part of a greater, interconnected strategy.

"There is a wave of change in our industry," said International President Pat Friend. "By building labor coalitions, building our strategy and building mobilization structures among our members we stand a good chance of not only surviving in this environment, but of bargaining and enforcing good contracts."

With many airline labor contracts becoming amendable in the next several years, combined with the fact that contract negotiations in the airline industry currently average two to three years, unions representing airline workers are entering a 'perfect storm'. This is our opportunity to leverage our collective influence in raising employment standards in our industry.

AFA-CWA General Counsel David Borer gave a detailed explanation of negotiations procedures as specified in Section 6 of the Railway Labor Act (RLA) as well as AFA-CWA's unique CHAOS™ strategy of intermittent strikes and other unconventional tactics. Regarding strikes, David pointed out that "management often says 'if you vote for the union, you'll be out on strike'. The fact is that we almost never go on strike. But an effective threat of a strike is sometimes

essential to induce management to conclude a reasonable settlement. We have to be prepared to deliver on that threat."

Clare Burt, AFA-CWA Manager of Collective Bargaining, summarized Section VI, Contract Negotiations, of the AFA-CWA Policy Manual which she called "the bible of collective bargaining." It stipulates the limits and responsibilities of AFA-CWA negotiators and the procedures that must be followed during the collective bargaining process. She stressed the importance of communications with members throughout the negotiations process, from announcing open positions on the negotiating committee and conducting an initial survey to determine the issues most important to the work group, to communicating through road shows, crew room sits, podcasts and by any other available means. By the same token, she emphasized, the critical importance of a mobilized membership. Only with the support of an informed and active membership can the negotiating committee conclude successful negotiations with the company.

Clare also reviewed current trends in negotiations, from mergers, acquisitions and bankruptcies that "poisoned the bargaining climate," to profit sharing, onboard sales and numerous amendable contracts in our industry over the next several years. She stressed the strategic importance of forming labor coalitions at all of our carriers, whether we are entering negotiations or not.

Among the 26 flight attendant officers and members of negotiating committees from six AFA-CWA carriers who attended the training, each extracted a unique set of lessons.

"I loved the segment on the need to develop precise contract language so that it can be effectively enforced — it must be very literal," Kathleen Laughlin, ATA.

L.T. Lathan, AirTran Airways, gave the training a two-thumbs-up. "I have done other trainings but learned a lot here about what AFA has to offer that I didn't know before."

"The training had a lot of depth and helped me understand my role as an officer at the table and how to give direction to negotiating committee members," said Bill Green, AirTran.

"AFA has the resources to help set up online surveys and to help with communications to members. The sample surveys and timelines were also helpful, especially for those of us who have never conducted surveys before," noted Paulette Oskarsson, Midwest. →



Mobilization Training Promotes Member Activism, Building Structure

Member mobilization will be the driving force behind effective strategic collective bargaining in the coming years and, in successful AFA-CWA campaigns in the past, has proven to be the key. At a February 13-14 member mobilization training, AFA-CWA negotiating committee members, officers and various other union representatives from carriers with amendable contracts, examined ways to build mobilization structures within their carriers, empowering members to mobilize effectively around specific issues. Forty-one flight attendant leaders from AirTran, Alaska, America West/US Airways, Air Wisconsin, ATA, Horizon, Midwest, Northwest, Piedmont, PSA and United were in attendance.

Most of those who attended the training, 'Planning for Mobilization at Your Carrier', also attended AFA-CWA Negotiations Training during the prior day and a half. The first of its kind, the mobilization training will serve as a model for similar future trainings.

It was designed specifically for AFA-CWA leaders to understand the importance of mobilization and to teach them how to build a strong mobilization structure to support not only negotiations, but also the work of their local councils on an ongoing basis.

"We will tailor this training to your specific needs at your carriers," said International Vice President Veda Shook. She defined the key elements of mobilization: building unity among members; inclusiveness; one-on-one communications between members and union leaders; creating a mobilization plan; defining a structure; recruiting volunteers for committees; turning obstacles into opportunities; educating members; and taking collective action.

"Airlines operate in a very competitive environment: they must constantly reinvent themselves to get an advantage over their competitors," noted AFA-CWA General Counsel David Borer. "Within that environment, we have to be aggressive at the bargaining table or our interests will get trampled. But, if we negotiate without adequate mobilization, we will fall short. Pressure motivates them to bargain with us. Negotiations do not just happen at the bargaining table. We need an orchestrated effort to achieve a successful result. If we're out there demonstrating, management, the media and the traveling public will see that we're serious about the issues."

Participants examined different leadership mod-

els and effective ways to keep members informed about the issues and throughout the negotiations process. They listened to success stories from carriers where members took visible action to support their bargaining goals. And, they were encouraged to take advantage of the expertise of AFA-CWA professional staff. On day two of the training, AFA-CWA Communications & Research Manager Darlene Dobbs spoke about the many ways the International union can assist with campaign communications and provided examples of past campaign materials.

When asked about her experience at the mobilization training, Piedmont MEC President Betsy Tettelbach said the most valuable aspect was the opportunity

to network with leaders from other airlines. "Their wealth of experience and the ideas they generated sparked new ideas for our own campaigns. Coming to these trainings reminds me that we're a huge team of creative, inventive people working toward the same issues and goals."

"Mobilization is the critical element that unites the flight attendants to achieve success," Betsy added. "It gives us the ability, power and leverage to succeed in any environment, whether contract negotiations or specific issues at a specific time. A mobilized membership provides the solidarity needed to keep our union strong." →



From left, Air Wisconsin MEC Secretary-Treasurer Adam Novish, Midwest MEC Vice President Paulette Oskarsson, AirTran MEC President Bill Green.



Piedmont MEC President Betsy Tettelbach (left) and Alaska MEC President Renee Elson.

Unified Strategy Emerges at Bargaining Summit

Still angry over shattered promises and deep cuts during airline bankruptcies, flight attendants and other aviation employees are standing together to recoup our losses as the long-anticipated era of airline mergers begins to unfold. Leading the way are flight attendant union leaders who hosted the first-ever Flight Attendant Strategic Bargaining Summit, January 8-9, 2008, at AFA-CWA International head-



International President Pat Friend and TWU Local 556 President Thom McDaniel.



Former Mesaba MEC President Carla Rogat and former Mesaba ALPA representative Captain Tom Wychor.

quarters. Prompted by the fact that a majority of flight attendant contracts will be open for negotiations over the next two years, the Flight Attendant Union Coalition resolved to work together to leverage our collective bargaining power for the common good of all flight attendants. Following the Summit, the Coalition established a Strategic Action Task Force and charted a plan of action.

Among the over 100 Strategic Bargaining Summit participants were leaders from the Association of Professional Flight Attendants (APFA) representing American Airlines flight attendants, the International Association of Machinists (IAM) representing Continental Airlines flight attendants, the Transport

Workers Union (TWU) representing Southwest Airlines flight attendants, AFA-CWA representing flight attendants at 20 different carriers, union leaders representing other aviation employee work groups including pilots and mechanics, and legal and industry experts. The Summit agenda covered a gamut of topics—industry trends, legal perspectives, the proven power of coalitions, mobilizing members, and the various components necessary to conduct a successful strategic campaign to recoup wages, benefits and working conditions and to assert a forceful agenda on behalf of all aviation workers. The consensus was clear: the convergence of open contracts presents an extraordinary opportunity for union solidarity.

“In the same way that airline management groups coordinate negotiating tactics, flight attendant unions have identified our priority issues and we are aligning our negotiating positions,” said AFA-CWA International President Pat Friend. “The result will be that, in negotiations, airline managements across the industry will be faced with a unified, focused response on each key issue.”

Leaders of other flight attendant unions reflected on the spirit of the Summit as well.

Thom McDaniel, Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 556 President, highlighted the need for building coalitions in the industry. “Coalitions are useful and necessary at Southwest. We know where we are and where we need to be, and we look forward to working with flight attendants from across the industry to move forward together.”

“Just as management is planning and strategizing, we will do the same to ensure that we can push forward,” said Tommie Hutto-Blake, President of the Association of Professional Flight Attendants (APFA), which represents American Airlines flight attendants.

A panel of union leaders who formed labor coalitions at Mesaba and Southwest Airlines spoke of how banding together empowered employees at their carriers. A mobilized membership and constant communications enabled each coalition to more effectively defend the work groups involved during bankruptcy.

“We didn’t realize the power we had behind us until our first rally which we simulcasted to all of our local councils across the country,” said former AFA-CWA Mesaba President Carla Rogat in the panel discussion. “After that, the movement took off and it was because of the overwhelming support from our memberships that we were able to emerge from the bankruptcy pro-

Commit Labor Solidarity to Define Merger Era

cess in a much better position than we would have been if management had its way.”

Concluding the first day of the Summit was a presentation by Phil Comstock, a professional pollster from the Wilson Center for Public Research who has interviewed over 250,000 flight attendants and other airline employees over the past 27 years. He noted that, in recent years, airline employees’ wages and retirement benefits have been deflated due to all the bankruptcies; they are working more to compensate for the shortfall in salaries; and airline CEOs have taken enormous bonuses. Results from the latest airline employee survey revealed a strong desire to “take back” the industry from what are perceived as greed-driven airline managements and to improve compensation and work rules through negotiated contract gains. The research also showed that, not only is morale among airline employees now lower



APFA President Tommie Hutto-Blake (left) and IAM District 142 General Chair Julie Frietchen.

than ever, a general feeling of animosity toward airline management permeates the industry. Airline employees are “unsettled” and are ready to make positive gains in their profession.

Transportation Economist Dan Akins opened the second day of the Summit with a detailed economic and strategic overview of the industry. Akins’ analysis provided the financial foundations for our upcoming negotiations.

A panel of lawyers, including Robert Clayman of Guerrieri, Edmond, Clayman & Bartos, P.C., Mark Richards, Labor Attorney, and David Borer, AFA-CWA General

Counsel, led a discussion on strategic bargaining. They pointed to the “unprecedented opportunities” before

continued on page 10



International President Pat Friend introduces Labor Coalition panel.

Bargaining Summit *from page 9*

unions to radically improve collective bargaining agreements. "In negotiations, we must change the nature of the debate," said Clayman. Airlines have increased fares by \$26 billion to pay for increased oil prices and to enrich executives with nothing but concessions for labor. "We must put revenue back into the collective bargaining equation." They outlined a strategy that entails forming labor coalitions and initiating an industry-wide campaign to demand improvements that are truly 'fair and equitable'.

At the conclusion of the Summit, there was broad agreement on employee rights, the vulnerability of airline management, and the enormous potential for rallying public support fueled the discussions and participants outlined a unified strategy in the final hours.

On the morning following the Summit, the Coalition of Flight Attendant Unions met to debrief on the previous days' work.

They began developing a strategy aimed at raising standards for wages, retirement, health care, benefits and working conditions for all flight attendants and retirees. The Coalition also issued a joint statement (see below, left), established a Strategic Action Task Force to formulate a plan of action, and held another Coalition meeting on March 18. Coalition leaders pledged to establish labor coalitions among different work groups at their carriers or to strengthen existing coalitions with the goal of coordinating contract




**Joint Statement of the Coalition of Flight Attendant Unions
following the
First-Ever Flight Attendant Strategic Bargaining Summit
January 10, 2008**

Our unions, representing over 90,000 Flight Attendants at 26 U.S. airlines, leave the Strategic Bargaining Summit committed to a coordinated campaign to raise the industry standard for wages, retirement, health care, benefits and working conditions for all Flight Attendants and retirees. Together we launch a campaign to reverse the era of concessions forced on many of us during recent bankruptcies and restructurings. We commit to collective action to advance Flight Attendant contracts and careers.

With the majority of Flight Attendant contracts open for negotiations in the next two years, we have a rare opportunity to increase our leverage through close coordination of bargaining strategy, field mobilization, information sharing and communications.

Our fight extends beyond our legitimate and necessary contract demands. We also stand together to overturn the trend toward ever more excessive executive compensation, and to put an end to anti-worker labor relations practices across the industry.

In the year of a U.S. Presidential election, and important Congressional elections, the Coalition unions are making plans for political mobilization of their 90,000 members. We most stress the importance of electing candidates who support issues important to Flight Attendants and other airline workers.

The Coalition's member unions also pledge to fortify or establish intra-carrier and industry-wide union coalitions and bargaining networks to strengthen cooperation and coordination for contract negotiations and collective action.

In other action, the Coalition appointed a Strategic Action Task Force to formulate specific plans to put the Coalition's goals into action. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for March.

Patricia A. Friend
AFA-CWA

Tommie Hutto-Blake
APFA

Julie Fritches
IAM District 142

Thom McDaniel
TWU Local 556

negotiations and mobilizing members in support of bargaining goals.

"With close coordination of bargaining strategy, field mobilization, information sharing and communications, we can leverage our collective strength to raise the industry standards for all flight attendants and retirees," said Pat Friend. "This strategy can also improve the negotiating leverage of our AFA-CWA leaders currently engaged at the bargaining table."

"In the aftermath of the concessions forced upon so many of our members in the bankruptcy era and the continued practice of excessive rewards for management for placing the financial burden of their failures upon employees, the anger and determination of union leaders is palpable. Together, we will fight to reclaim our wages, retirement, health care, benefits, working conditions and dignity, and to further elevate those standards in our industry for all work groups," she added. ➔

Welcome DELTA Colleagues!



In the past year, over 1,000 Delta Air Lines flight attendants have volunteered to take an active role in bringing a unified voice to their work group, building a strong mobilization structure and raising to a new level the campaign to win AFA-CWA representation. By early February 2008, a majority of the 13,000 Delta flight attendants had signed union authorization cards

and, on February 14, leaders from the Delta-AFA Organizing Committee delivered those cards to the National Mediation Board (NMB) to file for a union representation election. It may take up to several months until voting is completed. During this time, your assistance is essential in ensuring the will of the Delta flight attendants is realized and the interests of the flight attendant profession are protected.

Delta has changed in recent years, and the hard lessons of bankruptcy are fresh in everyone's memory. In the absence of a legally binding contract, executive promises fell flat. Delta flight attendants have worked diligently to build the foundation for a strong union. Now more than ever, as they face a possible merger, Delta flight attendants find that they need a voice in determining their future.

With the enthusiastic support of AFA-CWA members from Alaska, Northwest, United, US Airways and other AFA-CWA-represented carriers, this exclusively flight attendant-led campaign is about more than bringing

a democratic process and a voice to the Delta flight attendants: it is about preserving and advancing our entire profession. CWA has devoted its resources to funding and supporting the campaign because they recognize its importance to the flight attendant profession and to American jobs as a whole.

"We have two basic goals in this campaign: one is to bring democracy to our workplace and the other is to defend our profession," said Delta Flight Attendant Mark Stell. "The airlines are in business for profit and, because of limitations in management's business model, they continually look to labor for cost savings. For example, Northwest management tried to outsource 70 percent of flight attendant jobs but the union refused to budge. If management had won, outsourcing would have cascaded through the industry overnight. American jobs are at risk and our profession is at risk.

"We have a responsibility to seek to preserve and improve what we have here at Delta, and to defend our profession. We have an enormous opportunity to tap into our collective power. We must insist that any changes going forward will be improvements, not concessions. Delta flight attendants are extremely smart and engaged and we realize that we don't live in isolation—we have to work with our professional colleagues if we want to have an impact."

The impact of a Delta merger with Northwest would not only affect Delta and Northwest flight attendants, but all other AFA-CWA members as well. Just as airlines used bankruptcies as an opportunity to extract concessions from labor, the same is likely as mergers take place unless we stand united in defense of our

continued on page 12



common goals. Without union representation, Delta flight attendants took some of the deepest concessions in bankruptcy in terms of pay cuts, work rule changes and unnecessarily harsh management policies.

Our entire profession has a vested interest in Delta flight attendants winning AFA-CWA representation. Only as a unified work group with union representation can we have a say in how any merger discussions will address cost cutting, merging seniority lists or any other deals. In the fiercely competitive airline industry, if labor standards are eroded at one carrier, enormous pressure will come to bear on the rest of the industry to lower standards. The need for unity in our profession is greater today than it has ever been before.

As an example of the power of labor solidarity among professionals in our industry, Delta and Northwest pilots have been able to assert their interests in the merger process through their union, the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA), pressuring management to reach an agreement on seniority integration and other issues of concern to pilots. The Delta and Northwest flight attendants deserve no less. They deserve to have a strong, unified voice with the strength of the world's largest flight attendant union to back them: AFA-CWA.

Several obstacles must be overcome for the Delta-AFA organizing campaign to achieve success. First, Delta management has already begun to unleash a fierce anti-union campaign, rife with suggestions of "third party representation" and ulterior motives by "union bosses." In such a climate, the courageous Delta flight attendants who have publicly stated their support for AFA-CWA representation deserve and need our support.

In this second request for a union election, Delta flight attendants are working within a different set of circumstances than those faced nearly seven years ago. After filing with the NMB in August 2001, the NMB had called an election. Then came September 11. In an unconscionable display of opportunism, Delta management suggested that any employee who supported union representation was 'anti-Delta'. By capitalizing on the lingering fears following the attacks and by contorting the mood of patriotism in our nation, Delta management successfully undermined the Delta flight attendants' campaign for union representation.

Another obstacle to the campaign is the harsh elections rules under the NMB, the federal agency that oversees union representation elections in the transportation industries. The NMB rules are far stricter

than those under the National Labor Relations Board, which governs union elections in every other industry. Beyond the requisite majority vote, an election victory under the NMB is contingent upon voter turnout—50 percent plus one of eligible voters must cast a vote for outcome to be valid. In other words, if you don't vote, the NMB automatically counts your vote as a 'no'. This

policy reminds us that, no matter how much support there is for the union, we cannot rest on our laurels. Getting out the vote is of the utmost importance and your support is needed to ensure the will of the Delta flight attendants is heeded in this election. Everyone has a responsibility in this election, whether it is simply discussing the issues on your crew van to the hotel, helping with telephone banking, attending a member organizer training, or making sure your flying partners cast their votes.

In the United States of America, voting is our Constitutional right—a right people fought and died for. We have a choice about the rules that govern our jobs and our work place.

Let's not take that right for granted and leave the decisions that directly affect our personal lives to people whose priorities are not in our own best interest. A strong union means management has to share the decision-making power with the employees who make the company work and, let's face it: while management claims the company bottom line is their priority, we have seen that they are in this business for their own personal gain. They will say, do and spend whatever it takes to silence the voice of flight attendants in this election and beyond.

AFA-CWA is about building flight attendant power so we can have a stronger voice to rival management at the bargaining table. To that end, other organizing campaigns are in progress at carriers including Allegiant and Ryan International. For the present, however, our efforts must be singularly focused on supporting the campaign to bring AFA-CWA representation to our flying partners at Delta Air Lines to ensure success in this campaign. From that vantage point, we will then focus our collective energy in support of the next unrepresented group of flight attendants until we achieve our goal, as stated in the AFA Constitution & Bylaws, to unite every flight attendant within our union.

Each individual flight attendant in our profession stands to gain so much by working together toward our common goals in AFA-CWA and there is so much we risk losing if we allow ourselves to be divided. Please do your part, however large or small, to bring greater unity and strength to our profession by helping to bring Delta flight attendants into the AFA-CWA family. ➔



AFA-CWA: The Building of a Profession

Like the popular adage, 'Unions: The Folks Who Brought You the Weekend', AFA-CWA has been building better working conditions for flight attendants for nearly 80 years. Decades of work at the bargaining table securing contract protections and on Capitol Hill securing legal protections, form the industry-wide standards we enjoy, and perhaps take for granted, in our profession today.

When we sat at the bargaining table in 1946, breaking new ground on behalf of the United flight attendants with basic contract language, we were raising the bar for all flight attendants. When we secured raises and contractual protections at other AFA-CWA-represented carriers, management at non-union airlines saw the writing on the wall: adopt the same policies or the workers will organize and demand them. With each contractually-protected right we secure, we are elevating our profession throughout the entire industry, furthering the best interests of all flight attendants.

By the same token, when management at one carrier succeeds in eroding flight attendant working conditions, it is a threat to all flight attendants. A strong union is our best insurance against the erosion of our profession and the loss of our jobs. For example, the economics of this competitive industry quickly forced all airlines to adopt the B-scale once that divisive pay system established a foothold in the industry for ground workers at American. But outsourcing has been limited because the flight attendants at United and Northwest held the line against outsourcing domestically and internationally.

Remembering our own professional history enables us to put our current issues and struggles into context. Our history helps us identify our friends and our foes, and gives us the ability to interpret the present with clarity and accuracy. Know our history and we will also know the lessons earlier generations of flight attendants learned as they helped to build our career and our union.



That's why every flight attendant should know the history behind the industry standards we have established for our profession and the role of collective bargaining in creating those standards. We see the language and work rules we have negotiated reflected, not only in the contracts we have negotiated at our carriers, but also in the work rules at carriers without union

representation. The difference, of course, is that our contracts are legally binding, and we have a right to negotiate over changes to those contracts. Non-union flight attendants have neither.

When members are organized and collectively demand improvements, the union can leverage that power to negotiate contractually-protected rights beyond the previously established standards in the industry. For example, Linda Sorenson, a Delta flight attendant for 40 years was bumped from a trip she bid due to a canceled flight but could not pick up flying, despite her years of service. Without contractually-protected seniority rights, she had no recourse.

By contrast, Joshua Freeze, an AFA-CWA-represented US Airways flight attendant tells of a very different experience: "In October of 2007 I was paid for 20 hours of reserve trips that scheduling denied me out of seniority order. Because I have access to our seniority list, and access to the list of trips awarded to my reserve colleagues, I could prove the trips I bid were not awarded in seniority order. If I didn't have a union contract I could not have verified this or made the company compensate me for this contract violation."

The contrast between Linda's situation and what Joshua was able to do is the perfect illustration of the value of a union contract. With a contract you have rights, without it you don't. The difference between having a legally binding contract and having only a company scheduling policy is just that simple. ➔

AFA-CWA Study: Toxic Cabin Air

Our members, officers, and staff are involved in an ongoing federally-funded research study on the health impacts of exposure to engine oils that sometimes contaminate the aircraft air supply system. This is important research because, while it certainly does not happen on every flight, we are all at risk of breathing in these chemicals on a given flight. Jet engine lubrication oils and hydraulic fluids have been identified as sources of carbon monoxide and oil additives called tricresylphosphates (TCP). Both of these chemicals are linked to health effects that range from discomfort to disability.

The first breakthrough data on this issue were collected 11 years ago from our flight attendants who took the time and trouble to report contaminated air events. Flight attendants' reports, coupled with aircraft maintenance records and medical records, yielded disturbing evidence: air contamination incidents were associated with long-term and chronic health problems. At just one airline, there was an average of seven reports per month of either oil or hydraulic fluid contaminating the air supply system in concentrations sufficient to result in a mist, smoke and/or odor in the cabin. These were most frequently reported in the MD-80. AFA-CWA published the results in the 1997 Review of Air Quality Incidents which was subsequently submitted to the National Research Council Committee on Aircraft Air Quality in January 2001. Recent research by AFA-CWA has found that these incidents also have been reported in the B757, A320 and ERJ-145 aircraft.

AFA-CWA's ongoing research and testimony have gained significant attention in the media, among medical researchers and in Congress where two studies on the problem were mandated: a 2002 study by the National Research Council, "The Airliner Cabin Environment and the Health of Passengers and Crew," and a current study that includes capturing and analyzing actual samples of cabin air in flight, along with a health survey of flight attendants. The AFA-CWA Air Safety, Health and Security Department (ASHSD) works with AFA-CWA members to identify and correct problems related to air safety and health, reaping immediate and long-term benefits for all flight attendants.

"The number of air contamination incidents on MD-

80s was a first step in our understanding the extent of the bleed air supply contamination problem," said AFA-CWA ASHSD Director Chris Witkowski. AFA-CWA continues to assist its members who have reported exposure to these toxins with practical information and emotional support.

One very important tool for flight attendants to prove that they have breathed in these toxic oil mists or fumes is a blood test being developed by University of Washington Professor Clem Furlong. The research is being funded by crewmember unions, including AFA-CWA and we will report on developments in this area at a later date.

Meanwhile, the University of Oregon is leading the Occupational Health Research Consortium in Aviation (OHRCA) and is in partnership with the Airliner Cabin Environment Research (ACER) group, in a federally-funded study of

contaminated air events, as ordered by Congress. The OHRCA and ACER researchers have written a document intended to help doctors recognize and manage the health problems associated with exposure to these toxins. The document can be found at www.ohrca.org by clicking on 'Guide to Health Care Providers'. Researchers will share further results from this survey and ongoing in-flight air sampling with AFA-CWA as soon as results are available.

The OHRCA and ACER researchers also conducted the Flight Attendant Health Survey that was distributed at major hubs of several AFA-CWA carriers and mailed to randomly-selected flight attendants. ASHSD was instrumental in mobilizing the large numbers of flight attendants who responded to the survey — close to 45 percent of survey recipients. The extraordinary response rate clearly indicates the continued importance flight attendants place on the health of our work environment.

"The AFA-CWA members who participated in the study are to be commended for their professionalism and compassion in volunteering their time to improve workplace health and safety for all flight attendants while simultaneously contributing to the AFA-CWA Disaster Relief Fund," said Witkowski. "Their efforts will be a big help to this groundbreaking research." →

“Flight attendants’ reports, coupled with aircraft maintenance records and medical records, yielded disturbing evidence: air contamination incidents were associated with long-term and chronic health problems.

The number of air contamination incidents on MD-80s was a first step in our understanding the extent of the bleed air supply contamination problem.”

— AFA-CWA Air Safety, Health and Security Department Director Chris Witkowski



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AFA-CWA Launches New Websites



Membership Election Information: Your Guide to AFA-CWA Elections provides members with easy Internet access to up-to-date election information. At www.AFANet.org/Elections, you will find:

- nomination and election timelines
- nomination results
- election results
- LEC Election Handbook
- Q&A about voting and VIN/PIN authorization codes
- electronic balloting voting notice and instructions
- definition of eligibility to vote
- links to Ballot Point, the AFA-CWA on-line dues payment site
- AFA-CWA Constitution and Bylaws
- Department of Labor Guide to Union Elections
- list of current AFA-CWA officers
- links to LEC and MEC websites
- and more!

The answers to your elections questions are easy to find at www.AFANet.org/Elections.org.



Vice President's Viewpoint is dedicated to mentoring, new leader development and organizing. On this site, AFA-CWA's International Vice President Veda Shook presents a fresh new approach to flight attendant activism within our union. The site facilitates member mobilization, leadership development and organizing among those who seek to join AFA-CWA. *Vice President's Viewpoint* features news from AFA-CWA International departments, a calendar of events, a Blog with news from the field, and a secure link for our leaders to training materials, newsletter articles, and more. To find out what's happening and to get involved, visit www.AFAVPViewpoint.org. →

AFA-CWA Opens On-Line Flight Shop

AFA-CWA novelty items can now be purchased on-line at Flight Shop! At www.afastore.org/afa, you will find tote bags, bag tags, travel mugs, polo shirts, t-shirts, ladies' shirts, jackets, pens, notebooks, lanyards, and more. Visit Flight Shop at www.afastore.org/afa.



Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, AFL-CIO

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