

January 2009

# UNITY

**GET  
INVOLVED!**





The official publication of the Transport Workers Union Local 556, representing the Flight Attendants of Southwest Airlines.

7929 Brookriver Drive, Ste. 750  
Dallas, TX 75247  
Phone: 800-969-7932  
Fax: 214-357-9870  
Hotline: 800-806-7992

[www.twu556.org](http://www.twu556.org)

**UNITY EDITOR:**

Allyson Parker-Lauck

**TWU EDITORIAL TEAM:**

Kathy Anderson, Ed Cloutman,  
John DiPippa, Sonia Hall,  
Kelly Lane, Michael Massoni,  
Thom McDaniel, Audrey Stone,  
Cuyler Thompson, Mark Torrez,  
and Portia Reddick White

**TWU Local 556 Editorial Policy:**

Letters to the Editor may not be considered if the length of the submission exceeds 200 words (depending upon space available in the issue). All letters must contain your name, base, employee number, and contact information.

Submissions of articles to be printed in **UNITY** will not be considered if they are too long, libelous, defamatory, not factual, in bad taste, or are contractually incorrect. The TWU Local 556 Editorial Team reserves the right to edit any submissions that are received for the purpose of publication in **UNITY**. Submissions are due by the first of the month prior to the month of publication, and are considered on a space available basis.

The views expressed in **UNITY** do not necessarily represent those of TWU Local 556 or TWU International.



## From the Editor's Desk

Putting this issue together has been somewhat bittersweet for me. Last summer I made the decision that I would not run for Union Office in the upcoming election and also decided that it was time for me to step down as the Publications Committee Chairperson. Before any rumors get started, there's no juicy story here. I love doing Union work, have a tremendous amount of respect for the people I work with, and don't have any personal issues going on in my life that are causing me to need to step down. I am just burned out and am ready to be able to go home after work without having more work to do when I get home (except house work - I HATE cleaning house!). After 8 years of doing our Union's Publications, I've run out of ideas and think that it's time for somebody new to take on this important task in our Union. I will be staying on until my term is up in May, so the April issue of **UNITY** will be my last issue.

I know there have been stories of people leaving a Union position and abandoning it, or "just throwing the keys" to the new person taking over... some of these stories have a tiny bit of truth to them, but for the most part, people work through the transition with integrity and train their replacements. That is what I intend to do.

This ties into this issue's theme of "Help Wanted". Your new Executive Board will take Office in May. I would like to be prepared to present them with some recommendations of qualified Flight Attendants to Chair the Publications Committee. Later in this issue you will find more information on the necessary skills and knowledge for this position and how you can let us know you are interested. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy this quarter's magazine.

In solidarity,

Allyson Parker-Lauck  
TWU Local 556 Board Member at Large and  
Communications Coordinator  
[bm1-communications@twu556.org](mailto:bm1-communications@twu556.org)

## FEATURES:

- 10 *A Few Thoughts About My Term on the Executive Board*  
11 *Not Running for Office? No Problem!*

## DEPARTMENTS:

- 2 *From the Editor's Desk*  
4 *President's Page*  
6 *Domicile Reports*  
16 *Safety Team Report*  
17 *Scheduling Committee Update*  
18 *Grievance Team Update*  
19 *FYI*  
20 *Treasurer's Update*  
22 *Spotlight on Lisa Trafton*

## MISCELLANEOUS:

- 2 *TWU Local 556 Editorial Policy*  
5 *Calendar of Events*  
14 *Union Announcements*  
21 *And the Survey Says...*



**On our Covers:** Cover designs by Kyle Whiteley.





# President's Page

*by Thom McDaniel - TWU Local 556 President*

**H**appy New Year to everyone! As we kick off a New Year, it is important to start off on the right foot with the correct information. Recently I have

received some questions and quashed some rumors regarding Local Union's involvement in the political and organizing aspects of our International Union and I'll take this opportunity to correct any misinformation that may be out there.

As we have published numerous times, neither our Local nor the International Union can make political contributions to candidates using dues money. The only money that may be contributed to political campaigns is voluntary Committee On Political Education (COPE) contributions that our Members sign up for. This is separate from dues money and proper election laws and limits must be adhered to even with these funds. The TWU COPE monies are administered and distributed through the International Legislative Office in Washington, D.C. COPE donations are made to candidates from all parties and the only criteria is that their platform and voting record supports working people.

Our Union is allowed to and should educate our Members about the positions of candidates on Labor issues. This too is done in full compliance of all election and Labor laws and should not be confused with making campaign contributions.

Some may say, "Why get involved in politics at all?". Here's why - we work in one of the most regulated industries in the world and an act of the President, Congress, or appointed regulatory agency can change our industry or workplace literally overnight (think "Minimum Crew"). For that reason, our International Union does provide resources through flyers, canvassing, and phone calls to educate our Members of candidate positions on issues that affect working people and the transportation industry. We need the people making those laws and regulations to support working people and our industry, so we must support them. It would be impossible to make legislative changes like lifting the Wright Amendment or correcting FMLA without elected officials who support us.

These issues may not be your "hot button" issues when it comes to voting, but they are important to our Union. You will never find our Union pro-

viding information on social issues unless they impact the work place. A few years ago, a friend made the comment to me that "Union Members should live their morals and vote their pocketbooks". I have found that helpful when I go to the polls.

TWU International has also used some of our Members on temporary assignments to help other workers organize Unions in their workplaces. The facts are that through our Unity and strategic planning, we have built a very strong Union with an industry leading Contract at one of the very worst periods in the airline industry. We have accomplished this through "Internal Organizing", and have used these skills to help others form their own Unions.

Once again, some might say, "We already have a Union so why should we worry about others?". As we discovered during our last Negotiations and continue to benefit from during this round of Negotiations, one of our strongest tools at the table is our relationships to other Unions. If the "Labor Movement" is truly to remain a movement, we must help others to organize and create strength in numbers. I shudder to think where we would be now if 34 years ago, our International had not welcomed us into the TWU and organized our Local - some of us could still be wearing hot pants and many of us wouldn't even be here. Most of what we have achieved as a work group is because someone cared enough to help organize our work group.

I should go on to say that when TWU International does "borrow" our Members for "special assignments", they do reimburse our Local for their time and expenses just as Southwest Airlines pays Flight Attendants whenever they do "special assignments". I believe that our Flight Attendants are among the most talented and dedicated Members of the TWU and am proud that the International recognizes that and uses those talents and that dedication for the benefit of all working people.

As Flight Attendants, it would be shortsighted and irresponsible of us to say that we care only about our work group, and we don't care about Southwest Airlines as a whole. We win and lose together. We are TWU Local 556, we are TWU International, and we are The Labor Movement. We benefit from all and we must work for the betterment of all.

United We Stand for a productive 2009!

# Calendar of Events:

What's going on in your Union?

## Crew Member Self Defense Training Schedule

To enroll in the CMSDT Program, simply select the location of your choice from the list below and call or write the designated point of contact. They will provide you with all necessary details and requirements for attendance, and assist you in enrolling in a training date of your choice. Dates, locations, and contact information are available on [www.fwu556.org](http://www.fwu556.org) (click "Resources", then "Member Resources", then "Crew Member Self Defense Classes"). Upcoming classes are available in the following cities:

<b>Atlanta, GA:</b> Feb. 9, 27; Mar. 6, 23; Apr. 10, 25 Contact: Wally Weihe wweihe@gpc.edu 678-891-3016 Contact: Jackie James jjames@gpc.edu 678-891-3018	<b>Baltimore, MD:</b> Feb. 2, 12, 21, 27 Contact: Janine Bailey jebailey@aacc.edu 410-777-2942 Contact: Dawn Carter ddcarter@aacc.edu 410-777-2928	<b>Charlotte, NC:</b> Feb. 2, 13, 21, 28; Mar. 2, 5, 13, 20 Contact: Mary Ferracci mary.ferracci@cpcc.edu 704-330-4117	<b>Chicago, IL:</b> Contact school for new class dates Contact: Jonna Brodersen jbrodersen@ccc.edu 773-481-8861 Contact: Chris Wilkerson cwilkerson@ccc.edu 773-481-8842
<b>Dallas, TX:</b> Feb. 3, 9, 27 Contact: Paula Stubblefield Paula.Stubblefield@tccd.edu 817-515-7770	<b>Denver, CO:</b> Feb. 10 Contact: Michael Carter Michael.Carter@ccaaurora.edu 303-340-7211	<b>Houston, TX:</b> Feb. 3, 18; Mar. 10, 19 Contact: Deb Pruitt debra.l.pruitt@lonestar.edu 281-260-3598	<b>Los Angeles, CA:</b> Feb. 12, 20, 26; Mar. 12, 20, 26 Contact: Brad Young youngbj@lahc.edu 310-223-4066 Contact: Arlene Bailing bailinal@lahc.edu 310-233-4070
<b>Miami, FL:</b> Feb. 5, 20, 25; Mar. 4, 19, 31 Contact: Shawnee Fross sfross@mdc.edu 305-237-1347	<b>Newark, NJ:</b> Feb. 5, 12, 24, 26 Contact: Mary Beam pacademy@essex.edu 973-877-4350 Contact: Rocco L. Miscia miscia@essex.edu 973-877-4352	<b>New York, NY:</b> Contact school for new class dates Contact: Christopher Viteritti 212-346-8419 cviteritti@bmcc.cuny.edu	<b>Orlando, FL:</b> Feb. 10, 24; Mar. 3, 17, 31 Contact: Brenda Townsend btownsend@valenciacc.edu 407-582-8213 Contact: David Heffernan dheffernan@valenciacc.edu 407-582-8212
<b>Philadelphia, PA:</b> Feb. 20; Mar. 20; Apr. 17; May 15 Contact: Nan Smith nsmith@dccc.edu 610-359-7355	<b>Phoenix, AZ:</b> Feb. 13, 25; Mar. 20; Apr. 10, 29; May 13, 22 Contact: Ron Sterrett, M.Ed. ronald.sterrett@riosalado.edu 480-517-8461	<b>Portland, OR:</b> Contact school for new class dates Contact: Brenda Ferguson bferguson@sccd.ctc.edu 206-764-5339 Contact: Luisa Motten lmotten@sccd.ctc.edu 206-768-6782	<b>San Francisco, CA:</b> Feb. 6, 12, 17, 23; Mar. 2, 10, 19, 27 Contact: Janel Hadden jhadden@ccsf.edu 415-550-4428
<b>Seattle, WA:</b> Feb. 11, 12; Mar. 9, 10; Apr. 21, 22; May 14, 15 Contact: Laura Matson lmatson@sccd.ctc.edu 206-764-5339 Contact: Luisa Motten lmotten@sccd.ctc.edu 206-768-6782	<b>Washington, DC:</b> Feb. 2, 16; Mar. 2, 16; Apr. 6, 20; May 4, 18 Contact: William Gary wgary@nvcc.edu 703-323-2399 Contact: Janis Shellington jshellington@nvcc.edu 703-323-2399	Don't see the class dates that you want? Want to get a group of Flight Attendants together and schedule a private class? Many of the schools will accommodate your needs. Simply email or call the contact person in your city for more details.	



**BWI**

*by Audrey Stone,*  
*BWI Executive Board*  
*Member*

**H**ello everyone! I hope the Holiday season was a terrific one for all. Our "Toys for Tots" program in BWI was a HUGE success, and thanks to each individual who graciously donated toys, checks, and bicycles. It is great to be a part of a base that always jumps in to participate in these worthwhile causes.

One of our Supervisors, Rachel Loudermilk, was recently promoted to our vacant Assistant Manager Position. She joined the SWA team in 2004 as a Flight Attendant and then transferred into the office following probation. The BWI Office also welcomes a new face to the staff. Jill Ingson will be joining the group in January as a Leave Specialist. She comes to us with previous airline experience as well as a nursing background, so what a good fit for someone assisting our Flight Attendants with the complicated medical leave process. If you are experiencing any medical issues that could result in extended or ongoing absences, please refer to Article 15 in the Contract and call the Union Office at **800-969-7932** with any questions. It is always upsetting to see someone accrue points and put their job in jeopardy due to health concerns that could have been protected either through the federal FMLA program or SWA's Medical Leave program.

There has been much talk in BWI about the Company's announcement to reduce the number of gates we utilize. At this time, a decision has not been finalized about which gates in either the A or B terminal will be given back to the Maryland Aviation Authority. Currently, the projection for this to take place is in the 2nd quarter of 2009.

As always, I am here to answer any questions or concerns you may have at **214-640-4308** or **bwi-debm@twu556.org**. Thanks for the opportunity to serve!



**DAL**

*by Gwen Dunivent,*  
*DAL Executive Board*  
*Member*

**A**nother year has "flown" by, and we have weathered many changes, not the least of which are the changes in our Base Leadership. We have three new Supervisors: Dave Corey, Gina Medina, and Michelle Crum. All three come to the Base from Initial Training, and all three have been Southwest Flight Attendants at some point in their careers.

We have blue prints for our new terminal available for viewing in the Operations break room across the hall from the lounge, and we are enjoying our brand new elevator at Gate 6! Expect more changes in 2009, but one thing you will probably not see this year is any New Hires.

The annual Toys for Tots drive was a huge success, and once again, I applaud you for your incredible generosity. Although we are clearly suffering from an economic recession, your Christmas spirit of sharing was unparalleled. I am so proud to be a part of such an unselfish group of people.

Here are some tips that I hope will help you get 2009 off to a good start:

- If you have questions about the potential impact of your prescription medication on your ability to perform your job and pass a drug test, please call the Union office. Questioning a Supervisor about this after taking the drug in question and checking in for your pairing is not a wise course of action.
- If you flew a pairing on Thanksgiving, Christmas, or New Year's Eve, remember that your holiday pay is double the RIG, if you flew a rig-affected pairing. This is confusing because VJA pay is NOT calculated on the rig, only on what the actual trip pay was.
- Please join our Contract Action Team (CAT) if you haven't already, and be the first to receive updates on Negotiations. Just send an e-mail to **cbrains@twu556.org**.

Wear your Union pin, watch the website, and never hesitate to contact me at **dal-debm@twu556.org** or at the Union office at **214-640-4309**. It is an honor to represent you!



*by Crystal Rains,  
HOU Executive Board  
Member*

**H**appy New Year HOUSTON! I hope you each had a Happy and Safe Holiday Season. My name is Crystal Rains and I am your new HOU Domicile Executive Board Member. Over the past several years, I have served as a Shop Steward in Houston. I am a Contract Action Team (CAT) Leader and sit on the Coordinating Council where I work closely with members of our Negotiating Team and Executive Board in efforts to secure a Contract worthy of our Flight Attendants. I was happy to fulfill the DEBM duties in HOU in Michael McNeil's absence. I was appointed to the Houston Domicile Executive Board Member (DEBM) position after Michael's resignation in December. I'm in my eighth year of flying and during that time the HOU base has had some other great leaders as well; Stacy Martin and Jill van der Werff, who were instrumental in getting me involved. I have big shoes to fill and I relish the opportunity and challenge to serve the Flight Attendants in HOU as your DEBM. Please feel free to contact me by phone at **214-640-4310** or **800-969-7932** x 4310, or by email at **hou-debm@twu556.org**.

I'd like to update you on what has been going on in the HOU base. HOU has faced adversity in the wake of Hurricane IKE. Although the storm itself has come and gone, the lasting impressions are still apparent. Likewise, we lost a dear friend and wonderful co-worker in November when David Ford passed away due to injuries he sustained in a motorcycle accident. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with David's family during this tough time.

The HOU Inflight office has undergone some administrative changes over the past several months. Lisa Hahn returned to the line and Brian Ridgeway accepted the position of MCO Base Manager. Nora Shafer and John White serve as our Assistant Base Managers while Katrina Bannon and Shannon Hiatt (former DAL

*(Continued on page 23)*



*by Kevin Onstead,  
LAS Executive Board  
Member*

**H**appy New Year LAS! I hope everyone has had a wonderful holiday season. We've seen a lot of change in the past year. We celebrated our first anniversary as a base and now have over 1,000 Flight Attendants; the parking issue has been resolved; and if it is not already open, the connector to the B Gates will soon be open.

Your Union wants your help. The triennial Officer elections are upon us. And this is a great time to talk about how each of us can help our Union and each other. There are many ways you can be involved in your Union. The levels of involvement vary from simply keeping informed, becoming involved on a Committee, to serving as an Executive Board Member.

On the most basic level, you can participate simply by wearing your Union Pin and keeping yourself informed about the issues that affect your career. Staying informed is easy. Go to our website (**www.twu556.org**) on a regular basis. Read the many publications the Union provides. Talk with your Union Representative(s). Call the Union Office; it's staffed by Flight Attendants just like you and me that are there to help you. Next would be to join the Contract Action Team (CAT); you will receive periodic updates on the status of our Negotiations and are expected to share that information with your fellow Flight Attendants. Becoming a Shop Steward is a bit more time consuming, but no less rewarding. As a Shop Steward you will do many different things ranging from stuffing the Flight Attendants mailboxes with Union information, to helping your Base Rep with a Lounge Mobilization, to participating as the Union Representative in Fact Finding Meetings. Finally, the most time intensive level is running for Union Office and participating as an Executive Board Member.

Remember, regardless of your level of involvement, any participation strengthens the Union and that helps you and your fellow Flight Attendants. So, get involved now!





*by Susan Kern,*  
*MCO Executive Board*  
*Member*

**H**appy New Year! I don't know where the last year went; if time goes faster as you get older, then I'm in real trouble as I can barely keep up as it is. I hope you had a Merry Christmas and a Happy Holiday Season. We certainly had weather issues hit us hard; make sure you keep an eye on your payroll report to make sure you were paid properly. It's always a good idea to carry your Contract but especially during stormy weather so you can ensure you know what all your options are. Unscheduled RON was a favorite - did you remember as a Reserve you get a PAID day off in addition to rigs for the RON (Art.11 12.b)? Did you remember as a lineholder you could elect for an unpaid day off instead of the rigs (Art. 8 4.c)? This is very Useful information to have and available in your Contract! Another thing to remember: duty day at an OUTSTATION concludes when you block in. Don't be thinking the extra 30 minutes for debrief will help you get double time for trips flown after 12 hours, and it certainly won't help you get guaranteed time off if your duty day exceeds 12.5! Know your Contract, or do as I do, carry it with you!

The Union is having discussions with Management over the issue of boarding the aircraft for the outbound crew when they are late to the gate and it's the end of your day. That's why you saw the recent RBF dated 12/19 about Minimum Crew and Crew change procedures. What they didn't mention is that Scheduling needs to be apprised of the situation, as this absolutely impacts your duty day, both for pay and legality issues. If Ops asks you to do this, make sure you call Scheduling and get their blessing. No one has the authority to adjust your day other than Scheduling. We will keep you posted as progress (or not) is made.

Women are no longer being discriminated against by Cintas - we will now pay the same additional rate as men for longer sleeve lengths (tall sizes).

Fly safe MCO, and see you on line.



*by Kyle Whiteley,*  
*MDW Executive Board*  
*Member*

**H**appy New Year Chicago! Thanks everyone for the generous toy and cash donations to our annual Toys for Tots drive. A special "tip of the hat" to Jeff Wernicke, who won the third quarter "Kick Tail" drawing, and then purchased \$250.00 worth of toys with his winnings. I also wanted to note that Chicago Flight Attendant and Marine David Pacazo was working at the distribution center when I dropped off the toys. David was amazed at the size of the donation that came from Chicago's Flight Attendants, and sends a heartfelt thank you as well.

Have you been called about a passenger letter or had a Supervisor ask you questions about an IR you've submitted? If so, get a copy of your file. When we have discussions with Management, they make notations in our files. It's really not a big deal to have a notation in your file; however, recently these notations seem to be rather lengthy. I have said it before and will say it again and again, get a copy of your file. Your file is the record of your employment at SWA; it is so important that you know what is in your file, and work to get corrections made if necessary.

If you would like to continue to receive the MDW E-Connection, please ensure your email address listed on the Union's Web site is correct. We will be using that database for E-Connections in the near future. The MDW E-Connection is filled with quick blurbs dealing with MDW issues, Union activity, and industry news. I hope you will sign up.

Finally, when the Captain tells you to be seated due to turbulence or if you feel like it's too unsafe to be slinging sodas, sit down. And anytime the Captain asks you to be seated or if you feel you should sit down for your safety, make sure to buckle up. That 4oz cup of Coke is not worth you being hurt.

That's all for now. I am here for you. If you need anything, call me at **773-960-1702**. Fly Safe!





**OAK**

*by Mark Torrez,*

*OAK Executive Board  
Member*

I can hardly believe it's a New Year! I truly hope everyone had a Happy Holiday Season, whether it was spending time with your own family, or helping others to see theirs. The New Year is typically a time for resolutions and I'm sure we've all made a few. I recently read in the newspaper that "losing weight" and "saving money" are the top two resolutions people make. While these are both respectable goals, I would like to challenge everyone to a different one. Let 2009 be the year to stay informed. For some of us that might mean watching the news more frequently or reading the newspaper before you pick up that Gossip Magazine. There will surely be many changes in 2009 and it's important for all of us to keep abreast of the issues.

Besides keeping up with the world and national news, it's also important for all of us to also stay informed at work. You can easily stay informed by signing up for the Contract Action Team (CAT). You will receive email updates and text reminders of what's happening at the Negotiating table. You can read it first hand rather than hearing it through the grapevine (which is probably more rumor than fact).

Did you know your Union is making an effort to be green? Having an accurate email on file with **www.twu556.org** is more important than ever because we will no longer be printing *UNITY* Update. We will be emailing issues directly to you.

Finally, I'd like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to OAK Flight Attendant Stephen Osteen. He has recently accepted a position in the Inflight Office as a Supervisor. Stephen has been a wonderful Flight Attendant for the past 8 plus years and I believe he will be a true asset to the OAK Inflight Office. If his role as a trainer for Cashless Cabin is any indication, I know he will continue to bring his passion for Customer Service into his new role.

Let's make the most of 2009 both at work and at home! We're the best at what we do for the last 37 years, let's raise the bar in 2009!



**PHX**

*by John DiPippa,*

*PHX Executive Board  
Member*

Greetings PHX, I hope everyone had a great Christmas and are ready for the New Year. Thanks to all who participated in the Toys for Tots Drive.

As you can see, the theme of this issue is "Help Wanted." The reason for this is because Union Officer Elections are coming up, and along with that comes new opportunities for you to get involved. There are MANY ways you can do this: become a member of the Contract Action Team (CAT), become involved in one of our Local's Committees, run for Shop Steward, or run for Office. The possibilities are endless.

Before I became a Flight Attendant, I was a CSA in PHX. I remember the CSA training was very different than Inflight training and I was a die-hard "Kool-Aid" drinker as a CSA. However, when I became a Flight Attendant and went to training, I saw a different side of the SWA culture, a side that I wasn't sure I liked. I felt a lack of respect - some of you might have heard that we are treated like "Red-Headed Stepchildren" (*red-headed Editor's note: Careful Pip!*). Instead of letting this bother me, I decided to become involved in the Union and try to make a difference. I became active in the Precinct Captain program and a little over a year ago when the opportunity arose, I was given the wonderful opportunity to become your Domicile Executive Board Member. The reason I'm telling you this is because I don't think I'm that different from many of you. I saw a need for improvement and rather than wait for things to change on their own, I decided to become involved. I have flown with many other Flight Attendants who are just as passionate about the Union and our profession. I encourage you to put that passion to work.

In closing, I write the PHX E-Connection, and if you would like to receive it, or if you need a Union Pin, drop me a note with your name, employee number and email address in my box (#56750). My Union email address is **phx-debm@twu556.org** and my Union cell phone number is **602-295-0125**.



# A Few Thoughts About My Term on the Executive Board

A little advice from the trenches

by Kyle Whiteley, MDW Executive Board Member

**H**i, my name is Kyle Whiteley, and I am a Southwest Airlines Flight Attendant. I have been with the Company going on 13 years, and for the past three years I have had the opportunity to work for the Flight Attendants as the Chicago Domicile Executive Board Member for TWU Local 556. I have chosen not to run in our next election as there are some personal goals that I hope to fulfill before my parental clock stops ticking.

The last 3 years have been incredibly rewarding, and I have learned a lot. Because I am not running in the next election, I have asked for a little space to write about my experiences during my time on our Executive Board. It has really been an incredible ride that has been filled with ups and downs, agreements, disagreements, and incredible feelings of pride, satisfaction, and at times, disappointments. There have been personal successes (our new and improved website), and a few ideas that failed to take off ("Kyle's Losers and Quitters"... go ahead and pass me that donut!).

Being on a Board was not exactly what I thought it would be like. Our first two months were very challenging for me, and at one point I wasn't sure if I was right for the job or the job was right for me. But I decided to stick with it, and as our 14 (now 15 with the addition of LAS) Board Members became a Team, our work became much more enjoyable and rewarding. Every time we won a grievance, we celebrated each other's successes, and in cases that didn't turn out as expected, we questioned the "what ifs" ad nauseam.

The Flight Attendants that are elected to the next Executive Board will hopefully pick up the reins from where we leave off, and continue to make our Local one of the strongest in the country (we have a pretty good reputation when it comes to Labor Unions, and we're one of, if not the best Flight Attendant Union). The decision to ensure this legacy will be decided by you and your vote in the upcoming election.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO AS A MEMBER

You will undoubtedly see both familiar and new faces on the ballot. Get to know the people that are running for office in our next election. Ask them questions about their positions on the issues that are important to you. Find out if they are willing to work... no, make that work really hard. Find out if they have the time and energy to commit to working for you for the coming three years—the Flight Attendants at Southwest deserve nothing less.

## A LITTLE ADVICE FOR THE CANDIDATES

Be prepared. If elected, your life is about to change! Like I said earlier, Union work is incredibly rewarding, but be prepared for hard work and making some sacrifices. Most of, if not all of us on the Executive Board will tell you that at one time or another we've had to work days on end, cancel plans, even cancel vacations, because work had to be done. The position you may be embarking on if elected requires patience, dedication, and time. The Membership is depending on you. Likewise, things won't always go your way. You need to have thick skin - you'll never be able to please everyone, and one of the great things about Flight Attendants is that they're never afraid to let you know it! But at the end of the day, if you put the Membership first, you will find that it is all worth it.

## IN CLOSING

Three years ago, in the first article I wrote for *UNITY* as the MDW Domicile Executive Board Member, I stated, "Being your Domicile Representative is the most important thing I have ever done in my life". I can still say that today, but by far the most important *title* I have held was that of Southwest Airlines Flight Attendant. I also did some Union work on the side.

# Not Running for Office? No Problem!

Committee work may be just the thing for you

One of the first tasks of your new Executive Board will be to either re-appoint or appoint new Committee Chairpersons. There will also likely be openings on many of our Local's Committees. Below is a description of the work many of our Local's Committees do. If you are interested in becoming involved, please contact the respective Committee Chairperson.

**CARE AND CONCERN COMMITTEE:** The purpose of the Care and Concern Committee is to communicate to the Membership that the Union is there for them. The Committee sends letters and cards to Members that have been faced with unfortunate life experiences such as an illness, loss of a loved one, or other hardships. If you have a big heart and would like to be a voice of comfort for Flight Attendants who are experiencing a hardship, please contact acting Care and Concern Committee Chairperson Robin Hampton (filling in for Lucy White-Lehman) at [careandconcern@twu556.org](mailto:careandconcern@twu556.org).



**CISM (Critical Incident Stress Management):** The Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Team is a group of Flight Attendants who volunteer to assist their peers when they are experiencing Post Traumatic Stress due to a job related incident.

Team members are extensively trained to help guide a fellow co-worker back to work after such an event. Incidents may include, but are not limited to, a death in flight, a medical emergency, a rapid decompression, an on-duty injury, or an aircraft mechanical. Team members are available 24/7 to assist fellow Flight Attendants whenever the event may occur and all contacts with the CISM Team are confidential. For more information regarding becoming a member of the CISM Team, please contact Eileen Rodriguez, CISM Team Chairperson, at **214-592-3014**.

**CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE:** The purpose of the Civil and Human Rights Committee (CHRC) is to promote fair employment practices

and to help eliminate discrimination in the work place. The Working Women's Committee was established as a subcommittee of the CHRC to focus on positive change within our workforce. The CHRC has set out to become involved in our communities with volunteerism in various areas to promote working and living together without discrimination. Those interested in becoming more involved in community projects or constituency groups are urged to speak to their DEBM. For more information on the Working Women's Subcommittee, please contact Gwen Dunivent at [dal-debm@twu556.org](mailto:dal-debm@twu556.org).

**COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL EDUCATION (COPE):** The TWU Local 556 Committee on Political Education (COPE) is a group of Flight Attendants interested in the legislative process and how that process can ultimately affect their work environments and their lives. COPE Members are political and legislative activists committed to helping educate our work force on how to support pro-labor candidates and to lobby towards pro-labor legislation. COPE Members are also charged with encouraging our Members to contribute to the COPE fund, which provides the financial backing needed for pro-labor initiatives. If you are interested in joining COPE, please contact Gwen Dunivent or Thom McDaniel at the Union office, **800-969-7932**, or by email at [president@twu556.org](mailto:president@twu556.org) and [dal-debm@twu556.org](mailto:dal-debm@twu556.org).

**DRUG AND ALCOHOL COMMITTEE:** The Drug and Alcohol Committee's purpose is two-fold: 1) Ensures that DOT random and reasonable suspicion drug testing procedures are conducted in accordance to the CFR's as well as Company Policy. 2) Helps Flight Attendants with drug and/or alcohol problems to get the treatment they need. The Committee also oversees a peer support system for those struggling with drug and/or alcohol issues. If you would like more information on the Drug and Alcohol Committee, contact Chairperson Brett Nevarez at [ebm-at-large@twu556.org](mailto:ebm-at-large@twu556.org). If you have a problem with drugs and/or alcohol, don't wait to get help. Email [get-help@twu556.org](mailto:get-help@twu556.org) now.

**EDUCATION/SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE:** The Education/ Scholarship Committee Chairperson is

responsible for distributing scholarship information to the Membership and oversees the Committee that selects the recipients of our Local's two scholarships: The Paul Gaynor Scholarship, and the Shanna M. Martin Memorial Scholarship. If you are interested in helping others further their education, please contact Education/Scholarship Committee Chairperson, Allyson Parker-Lauck, at [bmal-communications@twu556.org](mailto:bmal-communications@twu556.org).

**GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE:** The duties of the Grievance Committee include: fielding general Contractual questions, comments, and concerns from Members; coordinating Union representation as needed for Flight Attendants; researching, filing, and settling grievances; managing an active caseload; presenting cases to the Executive Board; and other duties as assigned by the Grievance Chair. Important qualities include good communication and listening skills, organizational skills, problem solving abilities, and knowledge of our Contract. The Union Office is regularly seeking Flight Attendants willing to work on a temporary basis to fill in for Team members for vacations, illness, etc. If you are interested in learning more about becoming involved on the Grievance Committee, please contact Grievance Chairperson, John Parrott at [grievancechair@twu556.org](mailto:grievancechair@twu556.org).

**HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE:** The Local 556 Safety Team manages all health, safety and security activities for the Union and is responsible for the oversight of health, safety and security policies affecting our Members. The Safety Team's scope of operation covers: Safety, Health, Security, Accident/Incident Reporting and Response, and Regulatory and Legislative Activities regarding the Health, Safety and Security of our work group. The TWU Local 556 Safety Team has consistently helped "raise the bar" amongst all the players in health, safety and security at SWA. It has also solidified our Local's participation and leadership in health, safety and security policy creation, change and oversight both internally and externally. If you would like more information on the Safety Team or would like to become involved, please contact Michael Massoni at [vicepresident-safety@twu556.org](mailto:vicepresident-safety@twu556.org).

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT):** The IT Committee is responsible for all aspects of electronic communications for the Local including maintaining the Local's Website, mass email communications systems, etc. The TWU Website Manager is responsible for the presentation of all non-base related content on our Union's site. Responsibilities include coordinating content, message and delivery with the President, Executive Board, UNITY

Editor, and all Committee Chairs. The Website Manager is also responsible for maintaining existing programs and development of future programs with a desire to learn new systems. Excellent organization as well as good computer skills are necessary. Programs used in maintaining the website; Excel, Dreamweaver, and Photoshop. Other programs used are Flash and Illustrator. If you are interested in learning more about the IT Committee, please contact Michael Massoni at [vicepresident-safety@twu556.org](mailto:vicepresident-safety@twu556.org) and Kyle Whiteley at [mdw-debm@twu556.org](mailto:mdw-debm@twu556.org).

**NEW HIRE COMMITTEE:** The New Hire Committee is responsible for communicating important information regarding our Local and International Union to Southwest Airlines New Hire classes. The Committee also works in conjunction with the Domicile Executive Board Members who attend New Hire Base Orientations and other Union mentoring programs. If helping our New Hire Flight Attendants learn more about our Union is something you would like to do, please contact New Hire Committee Chairperson Thom McDaniel at [president@twu556.org](mailto:president@twu556.org).

**PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE:** The Professional Standards committee is a voluntary group of peers that assist Flight Attendants with issues and conflicts that arise in the work place. The work is conducted via the telephone. The committee operates within the parameters of FARs, safety, and conduct rules as defined by the Flight Attendant Manual and Handbook. It is supported by both TWU 556 and Southwest Airlines. It is sectorized into two regions, East and West. If you feel you are a good listener and have good problem solving skills, please submit a letter of interest. Those in the eastern region (HOU, BWI, MCO, and MDW) should email Eastern Region Professional Standards Chairperson Jean Chandler Brooks at [brooksey.pjb@verizon.net](mailto:brooksey.pjb@verizon.net). Those in the western region (DAL, PHX, LAS, and OAK) should email Western Region Professional Standards Chairperson Lorie Powell at [lp@jewelsbylp.com](mailto:lp@jewelsbylp.com).

**PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE:** The TWU 556 Publications Committee oversees all of the Local's printed newsletters. The Chairperson is responsible for editing articles for content, grammar, punctuation, etc. In addition to good communication and writing skills, it is important that he/she has very good computer skills and is proficient in Quark, Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, and/or similar publishing and graphics programs. Since Allyson Parker-Lauck will be stepping down as Publications Committee Chairperson effective May 1, the new



Executive Board will need to appoint a replacement as one of their first tasks. If you have an interest in this kind of work, please send a letter of interest to Allyson Parker-Lauck at **bmal-communications@twu556.org** no later than March 1. Allyson will send each of those interested a short sample newsletter project to complete, and she will submit the entries to the new Executive Board to help as they appoint the new Chairperson.

**SCHEDULING COMMITTEE:** The Scheduling Committee's primary duty is to write the Flight Attendant lines (not the pairings) twice a month on the 13th and the last Thursday of each month. It usually takes us about 10 hours to write primary or VR lines. There are usually 6-7 Committee Members who write the lines each month, so some of the members write more than one base. Within that day we must meet all Contractual requirements as well as Scheduling Policy requirements. In addition to line writing, the Scheduling Committee Chairperson plans for the team members who will be available to write lines, coordinates hotel rooms, and other travel arrangements for those who come from bases outside of Dallas. The Chairperson also works with Inflight Crew Planning when problems arise. If you are interested in becoming involved with the Scheduling Committee, please contact Scheduling Committee Chairperson, Lisa Trafton, at **TxLilTaz@aol.com** or Vice Chairperson Kyle Whiteley at **mdw-debm@twu556.org**.

**SHOP STEWARD COMMITTEE:** The Shop Steward Committee oversees the training and mentoring of newly elected Shop Stewards. If you are interested in becoming a Shop Steward, please contact either of the two Shop Steward Committee Chairpersons, Cuyler Thompson at **recordingsecretary@twu556.org** or Susan Kern at **mco-debm@twu556.org**.

**SURVEY COMMITTEE:** The Survey Committee oversees the annual survey our Local is required to conduct each year. If you would like more information on the Survey Committee, please contact the Survey Committee Chairperson, Kyle Whiteley, at **mdw-debm@twu556.org**.

**UNIFORM COMMITTEE:** While the Southwest Airlines Uniform Committee is not a Union Committee, along with the other uniformed operational groups, there are Flight Attendant representatives on the Committee. In addition, the one Member of our Local is appointed by the Union and serves as the Local's Uniform Committee Chairperson. Committee members attend meetings and give input on uniform items. If you are interested in

becoming involved in the Uniform Committee, please contact Uniform Committee Chairperson, Val Lorien, at **negotiator1@twu556.org**.

## IN CLOSING

As you can now see, there are many, many ways in which you can be involved in our Union without having to run for office. In addition to the Committees listed, there are many other ways to become involved.

- Join the Contract Action Team (CAT). Be the first to get important updates on our Contract Negotiations directly from the source. If you are interested in joining CAT, please contact Crystal Rains at **cbrains@twu556.org**.

- Volunteer to help in next year's TWU Local 556 Toys for Tots Toy Drive. Our most recent Toy Drive was the most successful thus far due to the generosity of our work group combined with the hard work of volunteers in each base. When you see the announcement for next year's Toy Drive, contact your Domicile Executive Board Member to find out how you can help. Your Domicile Executive Board Members can be reached at **xyz-debm@twu556.org** (insert your base code in place of the "xyz": e.g. **bwi-debm@twu556.org**).

- Attend the TSA's Crew Member Self Defense Training. Your Union is continuing our efforts to lobby lawmakers to make REAL self defense training mandatory for all Crew Members, but in the meantime, the program is available in most of our base cities (or nearby cities), and best of all, it's FREE! Ask anyone who has attended the TSA's program and they will tell you how beneficial it is. You can find a list of upcoming dates on page 5, or check the TWU Local 556 website at **www.twu556.org**. Simply click "Resources", then "Member Resources", and then "Crew Member Self Defense Classes".

- Wear your Union Pin! This one simple gesture shows unity - the sole reason for our Union's success at the bargaining table. If you need a Union Pin, contact your Domicile Executive Board Member as outlined in bullet point 2.

- Become informed by checking the TWU Local 556 Website regularly at **www.twu556.org**. Also, make sure you are registered on the site with your correct email address so that you will be able to receive the latest updates on Negotiations as well as our online newsletters and E-Connection messages.

# ***UNION ANNOUNCEMENTS:***



Congratulations to MDW F/A Ka'ryn Snow, the recipient of the 2008 Paul Gaynor Scholarship. Please join us in wishing her the best of luck in achieving her goal of a Master's Degree.

*Don't forget  
to wear your  
Union Pin!*

## **TWU LOCAL 556 INTERNSHIP PROGRAM:**

Would you like to gain knowledge, experience, or a better understanding of what it is like to work in the Union Office? If so, come join us for a Union Internship! In keeping with our "Help Wanted" theme, we will be extending an opportunity for all interested Members to apply for a chance to spend a day working with the TWU Local 556 Grievance Team, Office Staff, and Executive Board Members. We will make your travel arrangements, and ask that you pack your enthusiasm, and willingness to learn. Please submit a letter of interest by February 23, 2009 to:

Audrey Stone  
TWU Local 556  
One Brookriver Place  
7929 Brookriver Dr., Ste. 750  
Dallas, TX 75247

All letters will be entered in a random drawing and ten Flight Attendants will be the lucky winners. Our Internships will begin in March. One Flight Attendant will be spending one day each month at the Union Office through December, 2009. Winners will be allowed to select their preferred month in the order their names are drawn.

Don't forget..... the UNITY Update newsletter will soon be going paperless. It will be distributed via email beginning in February. Make sure the Union has your correct email address by visiting [www.twu556.org](http://www.twu556.org)

Congratulations to Chandler Hill, son of HOU F/A Jana Hill. Chandler is the 2008 recipient of the Shanna M. Martin Memorial Scholarship. He is a freshman at Texas A & M, Kingsville, studying Pre-Law and plans to be a Child Advocacy Attorney.



### **TWU 556 Names National Health Coordinator!**

It is our pleasure to announce that Michele Moore has been named the new TWU 556 National Health Coordinator. Michele has been married 25 years to Kevin (a Firefighter) and has 2 daughters Karli (a High School Sophomore) and Kyla (a College Freshman) who have had the good fortune to have grown up at Southwest.

Michele is a Dallas based Flight Attendant and has worked at SWA for just under 25 years and has worn a variety of hats: she was the Worker's Compensation Coordinator at SWA for 5 years (obtaining an Adjustors License from the State of Texas), and was an Inflight Supervisor for 13 years. As a Supervisor she gained extensive knowledge of the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and was a member of the system-wide Southwest FMLA committee.

Michele is currently a Shop Steward in Dallas and a CAT (Contract Action Team) Leader in the Dallas base. She looks forward to being able use her experience and knowledge in any way that helps to serve the TWU Local 556 Membership.



# Safety Team Report

The cabin air quality study

**by Justin Whittington, MDW Flight Attendant #77800  
and TWU Local 556 Safety Team Member**

***Ewww that smell, can't 'ya smell that smell...***

In the November issue of *UNITY Update*, you hopefully read the article that your TWU 556 Safety Team published about Cabin air-quality as well as a new resource available to airline crews, via NASA, for reporting issues with cabin air.

Currently there are no regulations, federal or otherwise, governing the quality of cabin air, but that may soon change thanks to an initiative from Congress requiring a study of the cabin air in foreign and domestic carriers. Proponents of cabin air quality studies started to make noise in Congress in early 2000 and after several years of slow but steady progress we're finally HERE! This study is being done by a company called Battelle and starting in late January or early February, Columbus based Battelle will begin testing on some 40 flights throughout our system. These flights will include a mix of both long and short-haul flying as well as both -300 and -700 aircraft. It's not yet clear whether the study will focus on the -500's seeing as how they make up less than .5% of our entire fleet and share all common air systems with the -300.

Battelle technicians will pre-board our aircraft (but will NOT be occupying the Exit Row seats) and will brief the Crew on how they'll be conducting the study in flight. They will bring study equipment onboard which will fit underneath the seat in front of them, and will be taping a small air sensor to the top of the seatback in front of them. Technicians will have to follow all FAA regulations regarding carry-on stowage as well as the seatbelt sign. A survey will be passed out to every passenger and Crewmember (the surveys for Crew and passengers vary slightly) and will be collected prior to landing. It's VERY important that we cooperate

with the study as this is the FIRST study of its kind and will set a precedent for any future studies and could affect the jobs that we all do on a daily basis.

Currently only one other carrier in the world has participated in this study and it was Singapore Airlines which operates a fleet of much larger Boeing 777, and 747 "wide body" aircraft on long-haul and ultra long-haul (+16 hr) international flights. The preliminary results are somewhat surprising, but they found that more often than not the quality of cabin air was better than that of most public buildings on the ground. While that's good news, it's important to now test smaller aircraft such

as our 737s. In fact, Southwest Airlines is the only other carrier to participate in the study and while our Company stepped up to volunteer for the study, once the results are made public, whether good or bad, they won't be made public specific to Southwest Airlines.

For now, study or no study, if you ever feel that your health has been compromised by something in the cabin air, if

you smell something you feel to be noteworthy or experience any other adverse symptoms you believe to be related to the cabin air, PLEASE fill out an IR, ASHDI Report, or call TWU556 and let someone know. Documentation can lead to change and your health is ALWAYS worth any effort on your part!

***\*\*\*If your LAV still smells like the Devil's breath even after you've shown it some LUV, please call 1-800-447-9291 (the VRU) choose Option 3-Inflight, Option 7-Cabin Appearance Hotline. It's VERY handy for anything appearance related (torn carpets, peeling paint, smelly lavs, nasty galleys/cabin etc) and it holds the Company accountable for cabin upkeep. Again, DOCUMENTATION, it helps us all! \*\*\****

***"Proponents of cabin air quality studies started to make noise in Congress in early 2000 and after several years of slow but steady progress we're finally HERE!"***





# Scheduling Committee Update

Tracking the quality of your life

by Kyle Whiteley, MDW Executive Board Member  
Scheduling Committee Vice Chair

## BUT THERE'S NO OPEN TIME...

Back in October, Mike Hafner released a pre-emptive RBF to let us know that there would be reductions made to the Flight Schedule this winter. Those reductions occurred as planned, and as we come out of the holiday schedule after the first week in January, I project this reduction in flying will be evident. I am going to do my best "Carnac the Magnificent" and predict that there will be a lot of sipped, low paying turns and two-days in Open Time.

Aside from the fact that we are currently staffed for our larger flight schedule, there are additional factors that impact the number of pairings you will find in Open Time.

I spent some time speaking with our Scheduling Committee Chair, Lisa Trafton, and Negotiator and Line Writer, Don Shipman, discussing this issue, and here are some of the reasons we are feeling the "Open-Time Pinch." (ouch!)

1. There are fewer flights in our schedule, resulting in a slight reduction in the number of pairings being generated.

2. Most of the time, your Scheduling Committee is able to leave some pairings in Open Time. These "left-over" trips are often due to the number of pairings pulled for Vacations. For the month of January, the number of vacation pulls was lower, as our Flight Attendants bid for money, rather than maximum time off.

3. Since Flight Attendants are more able to give away their pairings when ill, there are fewer sick calls.

4. Not all of the MRT and/or Job Share lines are

being bid. For every Job Share not bid, there are now two Flight Attendants holding full lines. This means additional pairings are being used to create more VR lines or more reserve slots are being generated.

5. With so many Flight Attendants giving away their pairings, Reserve Flight Attendants are not being used as often. This is forcing our Reserves to pick up additional flying, which can pull from Open Time.

6. In an effort to enhance the total number of one's Trips For Pay, Flight Attendants have been known to be creative the night of and the following days after Open Time is released; this impacts the amount of Open Time for the entire month.

*"I am going to do my best  
'Carnac the Magnificent'  
and predict that there  
will be a lot of sipped,  
low paying turns and  
two-days in Open Time."*

These are just a few of the reasons we believe that there are fewer pairings in Open Time. There are outside factors that need to be taken into consideration when looking at the overall flying habits of Southwest's Flight Attendants. The lagging economy, a desire to

pay off holiday debt, fewer people taking vacation in January, opting to fly more while children are in school are all additional reasons that Open Time is, well, open.

This is my last Scheduling Committee article (in case you missed it, check out my article on page 10 to see what my plans are after my term in office is over!). It has been such an honor to serve on this Committee and work with such a wonderful and caring group of people. I have learned so much over the past three years, and hopefully have been able to answer some of the questions you may have had.

# TWU Local 556 Grievance Team

## Defending Your Rights!



**by John Parrott,  
Grievance Committee  
Chairperson**

**A**s of 1/2/2009, there are  
130 active grievances.  
Since September 1, 2008:

- (69) New Grievances have been filed.
- (26) Grievances have been withdrawn.
- (15) Grievances have been settled in favor of our Members.

These settlements consist of the following:

- (2) Terminations Reinstated
- (1) FTR Removed (1.0 Points)
- 85.65 TFP Awarded to Various Members
- \$434.06 Monies Recovered to Various Members

Often issues are settled without the utilization of the grievance process, thereby providing substantial savings to the Membership. The following issues have been settled in this manner:

- (2) No Shows Removed (5.0 Points)
- (4) UTC's Removed (10.0 Points)
- (6) FTRs Removed ( 6.0 Points)

**319.85 TFP** Awarded to Various Members

**Record Improvement Group:** On December 27th, the Union received an affirmative decision from Arbitrator Massey on the Arbitrability of the case. We are now preparing to go to Arbitration on January 22nd and 23rd over the Company denying Record Improvement, as afforded under Article 32, to Flight Attendants who have reached 12 points. The Union believes this to be a blatant violation of the Contract. We will keep you posted on any developments on this issue.

**Optimization:** The Union has scheduled an Arbitration for February 4th and 5th on the Optimization of pairings. There are 5 grievances that are slated to be heard by Arbitrator Kelly. Hopefully we will have a decision on this matter and will write more as this information becomes available.

**Reserve End of Month Liability:** A Group Grievance was filed on December 12th over the Company violating Article 11. The Contract states that the Reserve's line type will determine whether the Reserve may be obligated at the end of the current month for additional days into the new month. If a Reserve Flight Attendant has only three (3) day Reserve blocks on her/his line, she/he may only be obligated up to a total of three (3) days. A Reserve Flight Attendant with a four (4) day block of Reserve on her/his Reserve line may be obligated up to a total of four (4) day.

**FMLA:** On January 7th, the Union met with the Company to discuss procedures with the FMLA process regarding Aetna's practice of seeking second opinions in order to complete an FMLA request. Both agree that the process is cumbersome, sometimes taking up to three to four months for the second opinion to occur.

The Union made it clear to the Company that we believe when scheduling second opinions, if required, that the schedule of the Flight Attendant is should be considered in the equation when setting these appointments. Both parties also agreed to both work on solutions and meet again to work on these issues. The Union does not support any measures that would require the Flight Attendant to lose the ability to manage her/his trips as is currently provided by the Contract. The Union is interested in more appointment options being offered to the Flight Attendant.

Also discussed was the manner in which the Flight Attendant is notified. Currently, the process is mail delivery, and we all agree that this process is not conducive to achieving quality results. With the Company being issued some new regulations around January 16th, it is important to understand those changes to the regulations so that both sides can understand and work together to achieve a better delivery to the Employee.

**Fourth Quarter Record Improvement Bonus (only available in the Fourth Quarter):** Per the CBA, page 115, "A Flight Attendant who has four (4) or fewer points at the end of the Fourth Quarter and who did not accumulate more than one (1) point since October 1st will have her/his record reduced to  
(Continued on page 23)

# for fly your information



by Kathy Anderson  
TWU Local 556 Grievance Team

**fyi:** You cannot be JAd for a duty day longer than 10 ½ hours. Also, legal combinations do apply.

**fyi:** The 10 ½ hours duty period is calculated from

- Check-in to end of debrief in Domicile OR
- Check-in to block-in at an RON.

**fyi:** If you Jetway trade and choose to fly another pairing within the 4 hour break you have to stay within the 14 hour FARs.

**fyi:** If you received an unscheduled RON on Reserve, you receive all of the following:

- Time and one-half for flights flown on the day off
- A RIG of 1 TFP for every 3 hour period from block in at RON to debrief at Domicile
- A day off without loss of guarantee (must be at the beginning or the end of a block)

**fyi:** If you receive an unscheduled RON as a Lineholder, you receive:

- Time and one-half for all trips that go above what was originally scheduled on that pairing
- A RIG of 1 TFP for every hour period from block in at RON to release at Domicile OR
- A day off without pay in lieu of the RIG pay

**fyi:** If you receive less than 10 hours crew rest (block-in to block-out) followed by a duty day that exceeds 12 hours, you will receive triple time for trips flown after 12 hours.

**fyi:** If you want to fly two pairings on the same day, you must have 4 hours (block-in to block-out) between the pairings and the duty day cannot exceed 14 hours. The duty day would be calculated from check-in of the 1st pairing until debrief of the 2nd pairing unless FAR legal crew reset is received between the two pairings.

**fyi:** If you call in sick less than 2 hours prior to push time, you will receive what is called an SL1, which is 2.5 points total for the entire pairing whether the pairing is a single day pairing or a 4 day pairing. A doctors not will not remove these points.

**fyi:** If your crew is scheduled as Must Ride Deadheads, two passenger seats and the 4th jumpseat will be blocked for you.

**fyi:** If you pick up a trip that is scheduled during your vacation and call in sick for that trip, you will not be paid for that trip.

**fyi:** Non-revenue passengers count toward the \$5.00 override compensation. Employees signed up for 4th jumpseat and cockpit jumpseat do not count.



# Treasurer's Update

A final word

*by Jerry Lindemann, TWU Local 556 Treasurer*

**A**s we enter the election of the 2009 Executive Board, I would like to take this opportunity to say "thank you" to everyone who has supported my efforts on the Executive Board and especially those who have taken the time to write, call or approach me on my commute to San Antonio. I sincerely appreciate your kind words of encouragement. This is also a great opportunity to inform those who may be interested in becoming the next Treasurer for our Union about the skill sets necessary to be effective and efficient in the position. One important thing to consider is this: it is not the same position as it was when I first arrived almost 2 years ago. The demands are enormous, the task is tremendous and the skills needed to be successful are both many and varied. Allow me, for one moment, to encourage potential candidates to "brush up" on the following.

The first thing to remember is that the Treasurer's position is mainly an accounting position and must be in order to understand the finances. You absolutely must be able to understand accounting principles and processes. To understand is the first step because you must then present the finances to the Executive Board. To present is the second step because you must then be able to explain the finances. With that in mind, these are just some of the concepts you must have command of to succeed: know what an account is (hint—there are many more kinds of accounts than bank accounts!); know the difference between a balance sheet account and a profit and loss account; know what the difference is between debit and credit and how it effects each account on the financial statements; know how to make a journal entry (you will do a LOT of those) and how those entries affect your statements; know how to reconcile bank accounts (probably the easiest in your mind, but not in THIS office—you will reconcile not only bank accounts but investment accounts as well!); know how to find mistakes in the tiniest of details; and be flexible in the time you put in to do the job, especially at the beginning of the term. It is a very sharp learning curve.

You must know Excel inside and out. You must know how to put together cash flow statements. Knowledge of various investing methods, while not necessary, would be very beneficial to you. Know not only what a budget is, but also how to put one together and keep track of it. An intimate knowledge of QuickBooks is required.

That, however, is just the beginning, and the things you must know innately! Your real "job" is two fold, and only half of it is crudely described above. QuickBooks will track the income and the expenses. The other half requires you to "bring home the bacon". Billing for past dues is accomplished through the new Dues Database Website, but you must be able to understand how dues are owed, billed and paid because you will get literally hundreds of phone calls from Members after your bill for back dues is mailed! You will spend a lot of time on the phone explaining what our Union dues are all about from beginning to end. Here is where your knowledge of Excel will come in handy because that is essentially what originates the billing. The file that your billing is based on is an Excel comma delimited spreadsheet, so it is important to know what it contains. Each week, Southwest Airlines sends several files to our server via a "File Transfer Protocol" (FTP) program. Knowing what information each of those files contains will help you determine the income of the Union. Some of those files will then need to be sent to the Dues Database so you need to know how to use an FTP program, which is really easy to learn.

I know what you may be thinking about now; "do I really do that every day"? The answer is both yes and no, because the day to day operation of the Union requires so much more than I have already described! That is simply the knowledge needed to accomplish the day to day tasks of the Treasurer. Every day, or just about every day, you will be using QuickBooks, paying bills, running reports, comparing Budget to actual amounts spent, answering questions from the Executive Board, and gathering data needed for them, and you, to do

*(Continued on page 23)*



# And the Survey Says...

Thanks to everyone that participated in our recent Communication and Uniform Survey. We heard from nearly 20% of our Flight Attendants, and for non-Contract topics, that's pretty good historically. The survey results are available on the TWU Web site, [www.twu556.org](http://www.twu556.org).

## Uniforms

The survey showed us clearly that the quality of our Uniform is our number one concern. Your Union and Southwest Management will be meeting in mid-January to discuss this issue, and we hope that positive changes will result. As always, we will keep you updated.

## Communications

As far as the Communication portion of the Survey, we have already implemented several of the changes that you suggested. We are working to become as tech-savvy as possible. We are about to implement a six-month test to see if we can permanently cut back on our printing. Unity Update, for example, will be sent electronically to your email account on file with TWU Local 556. This is an exciting trial, but it remains very important that during Negotiations that we continue to successfully get our message to our Members.

Furthermore, we will also be using our email address database to generate our E-Connection newsletter mailing list. E-Connections are quick "blurbs" about the happenings in your Crew Base, information we gather during our Executive Board Meetings, and timely or noteworthy special notices.

Finally, while you are at the Web site on your profile page,

you can also sign up to receive text messages regarding important notices and updates. In the past, we have sent these in hopes that they would be forwarded from friend to friend, it's time for a more formal approach.

Please visit our Web site at [www.twu556.org](http://www.twu556.org), and ensure the email address listed on your profile page is correct. While there, you can also opt-in to receive text message updates of important Union news, which you can share with your friends.

Remember that your privacy is important to us; all of these enhancements come with our guarantee that we will never sell or provide the list to a third party. Also, the phone number you provide will not be given to the Company. We also pledge that we will keep our communications as concise as possible so we don't overwhelm your inbox.

Once again, please ensure that the email address listed on

your profile page at [www.twu556.org](http://www.twu556.org) is correct—this is very important. Also, please set your spam filter to allow emails from [twulocal556@cbeachmail.com](mailto:twulocal556@cbeachmail.com).

## What else?

Other improvements on the Union's Web site include easier login and logout capabilities and forgotten password recovery. An enhanced security system will be implemented shortly that will only require you to login one time to access Member-only pages, then again only if you are entering your profile page. We hope these changes will make our site easier to use, while not compromising private information.

Look to the Union's Web site for further video announcements, polls, surveys, Contract Pop Quizzes, tips on FMLA paperwork, past issues of Unity, Unity Update, Contract Connection and much, much more. It is a great tool for you to utilize.

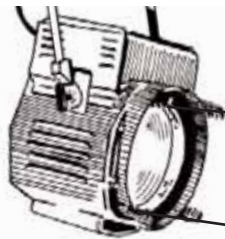
## TWU Local 556 "Subscription Card"

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Base: \_\_\_\_\_ Employee Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE NOTE:** Your email address will not be distributed to ANY other entity and will be used solely for Union communications. Please print clearly and return the completed form to the locked portion of the Union red rack in any Flight Attendant Lounge. If you prefer, feel free to email the above information to [mdw-debm@twu556.org](mailto:mdw-debm@twu556.org). Please write "Subscribe" in the subject line.



## ***"SPOTLIGHT" ON***

# **Lisa Trafton**

### ***HOU F/A #9697 and Local 556 Scheduling Committee Chairperson***

To many of you it may seem strange that somebody would do one of the most difficult and important jobs in our Union while not taking at least a little credit publicly for the results of many days, months, and years of blood, sweat, and tears. But that's how Lisa Trafton rolls. Since the Scheduling Committee's Vice Chair Kyle Whiteley has served as the spokesperson for the Committee in *UNITY Magazine*, there are probably quite a few Members who don't know a lot about the Committee's Chairperson, HOU Flight Attendant Lisa Trafton. Well, that's about to change. Let's start from the beginning.

Lisa was born in West Frankfort, Illinois, and before coming to Southwest, she managed a restaurant. She came to work for Southwest in June of 1987 in Reservations. Once she transferred to Inflight, she was interested in our Union from the start, having been born into a Union family. Lisa says, "I went through 2 coal mining strikes as a child and knew how much the Unions fought for and stood up for their Members. I voted for a closed shop Union when I started with Southwest in Reservations. It was a natural progression to become involved with TWU 556 when I transferred to Inflight".

Her interest in the Scheduling Committee came through her friend Kim Hamrick, who has been a Member of the Scheduling Committee for many years. "I felt like it would help me

understand the line building process more and help other Flight Attendants understand the process".

So we asked Lisa to describe the process of building lines. She explained, "The Scheduling Committee writes the Flight Attendant lines (not the pairings) twice a month. Always on the 13th and the last Thursday of each month. It usually takes us about 10 hours to write each month's primary or VR lines. We usually have 6-7 line writers at a time, meaning some of the Members have to write lines for more than one base. Within that day, we must write lines that meet all of our contractual requirements as well as our Scheduling Policy requirements".

When asked what she likes most about working on the Scheduling Committee, Lisa says, "Knowing that what we do really makes a difference in the quality of the lives of our Flight Attendants". But with the enjoyment also comes some challenges. Lisa explains, "Sometimes just making it all work is the biggest challenge. Some months with the schedule changes it makes it very tough. Flight Attendants are a very diverse work group, and we try hard to make something for everyone". Lisa understands that you can't always make everyone happy. She says, "We look into all complaints and try to find an answer for them. If it is something we can fix, we try our best to do it. If it is something that we have no



control over we explain why. We also let Crew Planning know about any complaints and work with them to see if anything can be done to resolve the problem".

The best advice Lisa has for Flight Attendants is, "If you have a question, ask. No one is going to bite you"... especially not Lisa. She has a real skill for explaining what may seem very complicated in a way that is easy to understand.

Lisa lives in San Antonio and commutes to Houston when flying trips, and to Dallas to work on the Scheduling Committee. She has been married to Ed, a Southwest Ops Agent since 1993. Lisa and Ed have 2 boys, 12-year old Jacob and 6-year old Zachary. Lisa doesn't have a lot of spare time, but when she does find a little, she enjoys spending time with her family and friends, and she loves to go camping.

Lisa, sorry we've blown your cover, but it is time to recognize your incredible contributions to our Flight Attendants. Thank you for your dedication and hard work.

## HOU DOMICILE REPORT

*(Continued from page 7)*

Supervisor) are in the Supervisor 2 positions. HOU welcomes two new Supervisors: Tammy Schanbacher from RES and HOU Flight Attendant Cindi Lee Fields. Mindy Steen is the new Leave Specialist. The office hours are changing. The new hours are 5am to 8pm.

As you already know, the lines for security have been re-routed due to pending construction therefore access to the 'out-side security' check in phone is somewhat blocked. It is still in service and can be reached by walking along the ticket counter. The check in phone inside of security is still in service and accessible.

A HUGE thank you goes out to the HOU base for making this year's TWU-556 sponsored Toys for Tots campaign a huge success. We filled three and a half large boxes with new unwrapped toys; one of our largest collections to date. Likewise, we thank Southwest Airlines for assisting our Local every year in this wonderful effort.

Winter weather has already taken a toll on our On-Time Performance. With that comes prolonged duty days and reduced crew rest. Ask any Inflight Supervisor for a copy of the Contract or refer to the Union website, [www.twu556.org](http://www.twu556.org), for frequently asked questions regarding legalities as well as an easily accessible online version of the Contract.

In closing, I would like to challenge you all to "Resolve to be Involved" this New Year. The Negotiations process is in full swing and we have already Tentatively Agreed on many articles that affect your everyday life. With the topic of economics on the forefront, the momentum in Negotiations has unfortunately slowed. Consider becoming part of our Contract Action Team (CAT) and receive first hand information from our Negotiating Team and nurture the Unity and Solidarity for which our work group is known. We need each of you to take part in securing a Contract that leads the industry and provides for our Flight Attendants-from the day it is ratified to the day it becomes amendable. That is what we deserve... Anything less is unacceptable.

## GRIEVANCE TEAM UPDATE

*(Continued from page 18)*

zero (0) points. An M.B.L. for which no points are charged will not count against the Fourth Quarter Record Improvement Bonus."

Note: If you have a sick call in the Fourth Quarter and utilize a Doctor's Note for that sick call to remove the points, you will be able to utilize

this provision in the Contract. Please also note that you will be accorded the greater points benefit from among the alternative methods of record improvement for which the Flight Attendant qualifies for that quarter. Please refer to Article 32.6 for the complete Record Improvement language.

**Help Wanted:** We are always looking for Flight Attendants that are interested in working in the Dallas Office on a part time basis. Temporary Team Members answer the phones and field a wide variety of questions from Duty Day, Crew Rest, Reserve, Overlap, to the Commuter Policy or No Show Policy and everything in between. If this is something in which you would be interested, please submit a letter of interest to Stacy K. Martin at [vicepresident2@twu556.org](mailto:vicepresident2@twu556.org).

## TREASURER'S UPDATE

*(Continued from page 20)*

your job. Every day you will be writing and signing checks and keeping track of what needs to be paid and when it needs to be paid. When the financial report is presented to the Executive Board, the checks written that month, sometimes as many as 200 or more, are also examined and approved by the Executive Board. You must be able to answer any concerns a Board Member may have concerning any one of those checks. In short, they must be accurate—every one of them!

The Treasurer is generally the Union Business Manager. Any and all business done with and by the Union is known and approved by the Treasurer. This is an awesome responsibility and, consequently, has very few rewards because the buck stops with the Treasurer. Currently, the Treasurer is also in charge of all the Union Pulls for Union Business. That is a daily responsibility and effects the largest expense we have—Lost Time. You will have to answer a lot of questions about that expenditure and be able to justify every one.

I would like my last word to be one of encouragement, no matter however impossible I may have described the job. If you like intellectual challenges and enormous responsibility, this is the position for you! You CAN do it; it just takes time to learn. I hope that the next Treasurer will be even more successful than I have been in this position and improve upon the office as I have. Remember, you won't be doing it alone; you will have help. There is more than one person in this office who is designated to help, and that includes myself as I will be more than happy to lend my hand, knowledge and expertise in any way and at any time you need!



Did you know that beginning in February, your Union will be delivering some of its publications by email & electronic download only?

# Are you ready?

Please visit [www.twu556.org](http://www.twu556.org) today to ensure the email address in your profile is correct.



You'll also be able to access the latest info regarding Contract Negotiations, join the Contract Action Team, and much more.

Visit [www.twu556.org](http://www.twu556.org) now!