

UNITY

April 2009

A retrospective of the last eight and a half years

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Are You Registered to Vote?

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Got Questions about the Grievance Process?
We have answers!

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TRANSPARENCY
WIDENERS
THE
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OF A
UNION

UNITY
A collage of various UNITY magazine covers.



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

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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

The time has come for me to say goodbye as your Publications Committee Chairperson and as your Board Member at Large. This, my last issue of **UNITY**, may seem a little smaller than usual, but I hate long goodbyes, and honestly, you've all been on information overload learning about our Tentative Agreement.

Who knows what the future may hold? In a few years I may be full of new ideas and energy and decide to try and take on another Union Leadership role, but for now, I'm retiring my keyboard. The last 8 years leading Publications and 6 years on the Executive Board have been exiting, challenging, sometimes exhausting, but always rewarding. I'm proud of the work I've done, and after putting together the montage on the cover, I realized how far we've come.

I put out an open call for those who might be interested in filling the role of Publications Committee Chair in the January issue of **UNITY** Magazine. I received five letters of interest, and of those five, two of the applicants completed the projects that I will present to the new Executive Board who will appoint my replacement in May.

In closing, I just want to say that being involved in our Union has connected me to some of my dearest friends. We started out as co-workers and/or casual friends, and we ended up with a bond that will last a lifetime. We fought hard, laughed hard, and the end result is that we had the privilege of serving the best Members of the best Union in our industry. Over the last couple of weeks the reality set in that I wouldn't be seeing them as regularly, and being the cry-baby I am, I've shed more than a few tears. Oddly enough, a quote from Dr. Seuss put it all into perspective... "Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened." I wouldn't have missed it for the world.

Farewell,

Allyson Parker-Lauck

MDW Flight Attendant #17928

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On our Covers: Cover Designs by Allyson Parker-Lauck and Kyle Whiteley.



President's Page

by Thom McDaniel - TWU Local 556 President

Wow, what a difference a month makes. We now have a Tentative Agreement to vote on, and I hope that each of you will take this opportunity

to vote on our future work rules and compensation as seriously as we did while negotiating them.

Your Union has gone to great effort and expense to make sure that each of you have all the resources necessary to make an educated vote on our Tentative Agreement. By now you should have received a DVD with our complete Tentative Agreement and videos of your Negotiating Team (NT) explaining all changes. The Tentative Agreement (TA) in its entirety along with informational videos can also be viewed on our website, www.twu556.org and a summary of all changes has been placed in every Member's mailbox. We are currently conducting Informational Meetings in every base and have staffed every Flight Attendant Lounge with Members educated on the TA. We have also opened a call center in the Union Office to answer your questions. In addition, if you would like a copy of the TA mailed to you, you can call the Union Office and request it.

It is our Union's goal to provide our Members with the information you need to make an educated decision. Please don't operate on rumors. If there is anything in the TA that you don't understand, please talk to one of the TA Educators in your lounge, or contact the Call Center at 800-969-7932. We're open 7 days a week, Monday-Friday from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM Central, and Saturday and Sunday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM Central through the close of voting at noon Central on May 18.

Now the ball is in your court. This is serious business as our votes will determine our futures.

For many Members, this is your first chance to vote on a Contract. You may have heard stories about how we stood together during our last negotiations through a tough fight. Fortunately the battle was easier this time because we made such great strides during our 2 years of Negotiations in 2002-2004, and our Company recognized our Unity.

For other Members this is a very different vote than our last Contract. Last time we were 30 percent behind the rest of the industry in compensation in spite of being the most profitable airline in

history. This time we are industry leading, but still need important work rule changes and protection against a higher cost of living.

For other Members, we are concerned about the state of the economy and the state of our industry and want to make sure that we negotiate a responsible Contract that protects our Members and our Company so that we can both survive and thrive in the future.

Still, for others, we want to fight for every last thing we deserve because we have contributed greatly to the success of Southwest Airlines and deserve our just rewards.

Where do I stand? I am in every group. I love my Union and Company like it was my first day. I remember our success and want to solve every problem. I see what is going on in the economy and industry, and I know that our Employees are the most important asset that Southwest Airlines has and should be treated as such.

So how should we vote? That is one question that I cannot answer, but I will ask each of you to use the resources provided and make a decision based on the future of every one of our Members. Don't be a one issue voter. Don't think that a gain for one group is a loss for another. Don't sell yourself short, and don't be unrealistic. Don't forget where we've been, don't forget where we are, and don't forget where we are going. Those sound like a lot of don'ts, but most importantly DO look at this agreement as a whole and decide whether it is one you want to work under each day.

Vote "yes" or "no" but own your vote. If you vote "yes", accept the agreement as the one you want to work under and support your Union. If you vote "no", stand behind that vote and commit to working for your Union to negotiate a better Agreement no matter what it takes.

The vote is in your hands and we trust you to make the best decision for yourself, your fellow Flight Attendants, our Company, and our Union.

In closing, please allow me to send a sincere thank you to our outgoing Executive Board and a welcome to our incoming Team. You have given me the honor to work with some of the very best people in our Membership. I am a better Leader, and we are a better Union because of their contributions. I look forward to continuing to serve you with our new Executive Board and building on our success. You deserve it!

Calendar of Events:

What's going on in your Union?

MEMBERSHIP MEETING SCHEDULE

JUNE 2009 MEMBERSHIP MEETING - ALL TIMES ARE LOCAL

BWI

DATE/TIME: Thur., 06/11/09 at 10:00 AM
 LOCATION: BWI Airport
 BWI Conf. Room NTE 247
 (At the end of the Air Tran counter, turn right to the Meditation Room, then take another right. The BWI Conf. Room, #NTE 247, will be on the left behind the Air Tran ticket counter)

DAL

DATE/TIME: Mon., 06/15/09 at 10:00 AM
 LOCATION: TWU Local 556 Office
 7929 Brookriver Dr., Ste 750

HOU

DATE/TIME: Fri., 06/19/09 at 10:00 AM
 LOCATION: HOU Hobby Airport
 The Astros Room
 (down the hall from Lounge)

LAS

DATE/TIME: Mon., 06/22/09 at 10:00 AM
 LOCATION: Hampton Inn Tropicana
 4975 S. Dean Martin Dr.

MCO

DATE/TIME: Tues., 06/09/09 at 10:00 AM
 LOCATION: Hyatt Regency MCO
 9300 Airport Boulevard

MDW

DATE/TIME: Wed, 06/10/09 at 10:00 AM
 LOCATION: Four-Points Sheraton
 7353 S. Cicero Ave.

OAK

DATE/TIME: Thur., 06/25/09 at 10:00 AM
 LOCATION: OAK International Airport
 Take elevator to 2nd Floor, Go through wheelchair accessible door, turn left. Room is down the hall from Esther Love room where meeting is usually held.

PHX

DATE/TIME: Fri., 06/26/09 at 10:00 AM
 LOCATION: Terminal 4 Conf. Room near gate B21 next to British Airways Executive Club

MEMBERS ONLY - IDs WILL BE CHECKED

For more meeting information and agenda go to: www.twu556.org

Crew Member Self Defense Training

To enroll in the CMSDT Program, simply select the location of your choice and go to www.twu556.org for contact information for that city. Click "Resources", then "Member Resources", then "Crew Member Self Defense Classes" - this will take you directly to the CMSDT portion of the TSA website. Call or email the Contact person listed for specific information dates, times, locations, and course requirements. Upcoming classes are available in the following cities:

Atlanta, GA: May 4, 15 June 6, 22 July 10, 25 August 10, 28	Baltimore, MD: May 5, 11, 20, 29 June 4, 9, 19, 24, 29	Charlotte, NC: May 1, 28 June 18, 27 July 18, 31
Chicago, IL: May 4, 12, 18, 21, 27 June 4, 9, 17, 25, 29	Dallas, TX: May 1, 8, 12, 18, 29 June 12, 23, 29	Denver, CO: May 12 June 15 July 20
Houston, TX: May 5, 26 June 5, 25	Los Angeles, CA: May 7, 14, 21 June 4, 11, 12	Miami, FL: May 5, 20, 27
Newark, NJ: May 7, 14, 21, 28 June 4, 11, 25	New York, NY: May 6, 11, 14, May 20, 26, 31 June 5, 13, 16, 24	Orlando, FL: May 13, 27 June 10, 24
Philadelphia, PA: May 1, 15, 26	Phoenix, AZ: May 13, 22 June 13	Portland, OR: Check website for dates
San Francisco, CA: May 4, 12, 21, 29 June 5, 11, 16, 22	Seattle, WA: May 14, 15 June 9, 10	Washington, DC: May 18 June 8, 23



BWI

by Audrey Stone,
BWI Executive Board
Member

Hello fellow BWI Flight Attendants! Let me start by saying "thank you" to everyone who voted in the recent Executive Board Member elections. These are your leaders and representatives, and your voice is important. Next, I'd like to thank each of you who elected me to continue serving you and the rest of the Membership on the Executive Board. I can't believe it has been almost a year since I stepped in as your BWI representative, and it has been a great journey so far. I look forward to the next three years, to continue the good work our Union has done, and I am excited for new things to come.

On the local front... We continue to see Fact Finding Meetings in the base due to write ups-either from co-workers or passengers. The first step is usually for Management to contact you by phone or CWA, and/or ask for an IR. Know that while you may receive the CWA message from the office, they do not check their messages regularly. Responding by sending a CWA message back does not guarantee it will be read, and it's very important that your side of the story is heard. Please comply with the request and provide your side of what happened (or what did not happen!). The best thing to do is to complete the IR and return the phone call to let the Supervisor know you have submitted your report, or send an email through your SWA account. If further information is needed, you may be requested to come in for a Fact Finding Meeting. Always utilize your right to bring a Union Representative with you to these meetings. It can be anxiety-provoking, but you don't want someone making a decision about your job performance without talking to you!

Thank you once again for the opportunity to serve you in the next three years! I look forward to working with you out on the plane, and for you at the base and in the boardroom. I am here to answer any questions or concerns you may have at **214-640-4308** or **bwi-debm@twu556.org**.



DAL

by Gwen Dunivent,
DAL Executive Board
Member

Your Decision. Your Contract. Your Vote. My friends, I certainly hope that by now you have taken the time to educate yourself on the Tentative Agreement (TA). If you have not, please do so right away. It is available on the website, **www.twu556.org**, in its entirety, and there is a call center at the Union Office. You will receive voting instructions in the mail and be able to vote electronically or by phone. Please take a minute to vote on your new Contract!!

I want to thank the Lounge Education Team that is working tirelessly in our lounge to answer your questions about the TA. Dean Walker graciously agreed to head up the team in my absence and my sincere thanks go out to Dean, Michele Moore, Karen Amos, Nayo Muldrow, Stacy Madison, Jane Johnson, and Andy Sprinkle. I hope you have each had a chance to visit with one of these people who have been such a help to me during this time. I also want to thank Juls Humphries, Jeannie Shaffer, Renda Marsh, Cory Wells, and Drew Kennedy for stepping up to help man the phones at the Union Office to answer questions about the TA.

It has certainly been my pleasure and my privilege to represent you on the Executive Board for the last three years. I congratulate your new DEBM, Karen Amos, and know that you will support her and all of the new Officers in TWU Local 556. Always remember, the Executive Board of your Union works for YOU, the Membership, but you have to make your voice heard. Although I will be doing some legislative work with TWU International, I will continue to be an active, dues paying Member of the best Union in the industry, TWU Local 556. I trust I have done the job you elected me to do; I know I have learned more serving in this role than I ever thought possible.

In closing, I salute my fellow Officers from the past three years. They are an incredibly talented and committed group of activists, and I am proud to call them friends. As always, Dallas, please stay informed, stay United, and fly safe!!



*by Crystal Rains,
HOU Executive Board
Member*

Hello Houston. As you know the TWU Officer elections are now over and you have a new Executive Board who will be taking Office May 1. I want to thank you for allowing me to serve as your HOU Domicile Executive Board Member for the next three years. I am up for the challenge to serve you. I will do my very best to represent you and what matters to you on the Executive Board.

I am committed to give you 100% as your DEBM throughout the 2009-2012 term. I will communicate with you on the issues that affect you through our HOU base page, E-Connection, *UNITY* Magazine and the lounge glass case. You can always communicate with me directly through email or phone. I will keep the base page up to date with local and industry news, safety and health updates, and Contract and housekeeping reminders. Visit the HOU base page at www.twu556.org. If you do not already receive the HOU E-connection please email me at hdu-debm@twu556.org and I will add you to the mailing list.

Again, I thank you for this opportunity. I want you to know that what matters to you, matters to me and I will represent YOU in the board room.

Crystal Rains
HOU-DEBM@twu556.org
832-754-8110 cell
1-800-969-4310 toll free

In closing, please take the many opportunities to make an informed decision when voting on our Tentative Agreement. If you have any questions, please talk to one of the Educational Representatives in the Lounge 7 days a week from 5:00 AM - 6:00 PM local in each base, or call the Contract 2008 Call Center at 800-969-7932 Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM Central or on Saturday and Sunday from 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM Central. This is YOUR Decision, YOUR Contract, YOUR Vote.



*by Kevin Onstead,
LAS Executive Board
Member*

Iwould like to congratulate Brian Orozco on his election as the new Domicile Executive Board Member (DEBM) for LAS. I know that Brian will do his best to represent and lead us.

It is a bitter-sweet feeling to be typing my last LAS Base Update Article. Bitter because I will miss representing all of you amazing LAS based Flight Attendants as your DEBM. Sweet because it isn't always easy to figure out what to talk about in these articles; and, to tell the truth, I won't miss writing this article. Please rest assured I will continue to assist our Union as a Shop Steward and in any other capacity the Union Leadership requests.

In addition to choosing a new LAS-DEBM, you have also voted in 7 National Officers that, in conjunction with the DEBMs, will be leading our Union for the next 3 years. I would also like to congratulate the newly elected Executive Board. I see this as a time of renewal for our Union. This is a chance to put past differences behind us, and to move forward. Our Union leaders have many challenges ahead. The new Executive Board will be sworn in at the May Board Meeting. If our Tentative Agreement is ratified, they will have the challenge of ensuring it is implemented correctly by SWA Management; if it isn't, they will have the challenge of bringing the Negotiations to a successful close and guiding us through whatever actions are necessary to ensure a fair and equitable Contract. Simultaneous with this, the Board will continue to defend our Members when they are disciplined unjustly. To top it off, they need to prepare for the TWU International Convention which is held every 4 years. Stay informed, Stay United!

Except for the elevator issue, LAS has been quiet. Please check www.twu556.org and the RBFs for alternate access information. The Red lock-box on the Union Red Rack is for any confidential information you need to get to your DEBM. It has been an honor serving each one of you. See you on-line.



by Susan Kern,
MCO Executive Board Member

Well MCO, this is the last Base Report I will be writing as your Domicile Executive Board Member. Congratulations to all who have been elected to office, and best wishes to Jimmy West. I'm very proud of all I have accomplished while on the Board, and believe I have helped "raise the bar" of accountability, responsibility, and integrity as a DEBM. I've also learned an incredible amount. A door doesn't close but a window opens. Unionism is in my blood, and I will continue to serve our Local in some capacity. It has always been about you, not me.

Well now, knock my socks off - we have a computer room and new mailboxes! After much gnashing of plans, it was decided to convert 2 of the offices into the computer room, which gives us a lot more open space in our lounge. Best of all, it was a very cost-effective fix to the problem.

Discipline in MCO has been light - a few delay of flights, a few "he said - she said" situations. If you are flying A, don't be hesitant to politely yet firmly inform our Ops and CSA's that pre-loading the jetbridge with UM's or wheelchairs is considered to be boarding, and we may run afoul of the TSA. I encountered this recently, and someone who identified himself as one of the "Station Trainers" came to talk to me. He said that in 4 ½ years, he'd never heard of such a thing. By the time I went into the lounge 2 days later, the base, and Brent Harper, Manager of Regulatory Procedures and Publications, had been contacted to find out that I was correct. If this happens to you, be polite but firm, and write an IR and an ASHDI report when you get back into base. It's up to all of us to retrain the "beast". As for the "he said - she said" situations, please utilize Professional Standards whenever possible!

Voting on our Tentative Agreement opens May 4 and closes May 18. **MAKE SURE YOU VOTE!** Fly safe, MCO, and I'll see you out on the line.



by Kyle Whiteley,
MDW Executive Board Member

Wow, it is hard to believe that it has been three years since I began this chapter in my life. I have had the opportunity to meet wonderful new people, get an eye on the processes that make such an impact on our daily lives, and a chance to see the bigger picture.

During my time in office, I have heard many rumors about both the Union and Company. While not all of the rumors were untrue, 99.9% of the time they were over exaggerated half-truths or simply so far out of left field that it was amazing anyone would believe what was being said. Our jobs in the sky are not easy, simply because we are a very disjointed work force. It is very simple for those who wish ill will on both the Union and Company to spread false statements.

Often, the successes of our Union go unheralded to the masses. This is mostly due to confidentiality and privacy issues. Sometimes we win big cases, and sometimes we lose them, but each time we learn from the situation and how to make necessary changes for the next case.

I really want to thank all of my Shop Stewards for their support in the trenches. In particular I wish to thank Donna Keith, Justin Whittington, Dale Wilson, and Erich Schwenk. These people have made a huge difference in many of our jobs, and often do so quietly. I would trust all of them with my life.

I also wish to thank those on the Executive Board and Grievance Team whom I have grown to know and love. Please remember that I am always going to be available to our Union; the work is that important and so rewarding.

Finally, I wish to thank my partner of ten years Daniel. He has allowed me to be gone for weeks at a time, has provided me support during the most difficult of times, and is one hell of a proofreader. To him I give my love - always.

I wish Donna the very best in her new role and I know that she will do a wonderful job for the MDW Flight Attendants. Thanks everyone!



OAK

by Mark Torrez,
OAK Executive Board
Member

It's hard to believe that this is my last article as the OAK Domicile Executive Board Member (DEBM). While I anticipate I will be writing for *UNITY Magazine* in my new role as Board Member at Large (BMAL), the OAK Base will always have a big place in my heart. The good news is that the Base is in good hands with your new DEBM, Todd Gage. I'd like to congratulate Todd and will do everything I can to help him succeed in his new role as OAK DEBM.

Todd hit the ground running and is already beginning to take on many of the DEBM duties during this transition period. He attended the Tentative Agreement (TA) Educator's Training in Dallas April 6 and 7, and immediately took on the role of managing the OAK Lounge Educator's schedule. He's working with a great Team of OAK Flight Attendants who are dedicated to making sure you have the information you need to make an informed vote. In addition to Todd, you'll be seeing these Flight Attendants in the lounge and in the terminal answering your questions about the new TA: Doreen Argyropoulos, Kerry Kohler, Evan Bliss, Mark Loudon, and Donald Silva. If you see any of them around, don't be afraid to ask them any questions you may have about our TA, and make sure to say thank you. They're doing a great job.

As for me, I'm not exactly sure what the Executive Board will have in store for me in my new role as BMAL, but I'm ready to do what is best for our Local. I'm currently helping lead the Executive Board Transition Team to help our new Board Members succeed in their new roles. I've been working with Thom McDaniel, Allyson Parker-Lauck, and Kyle Whiteley to develop training and informational tools so that your new Board's learning curve is steep.

In closing, I would like to thank the OAK Flight Attendants for your support over my last 2 terms as your DEBM. I am lucky to have been able to serve you, and look forward to continuing serving all Southwest Flight Attendants for the next three years.



PHX

by John DiPippa,
PHX Executive Board
Member

Greetings PHX. The Union Officer Election is over and there will soon be some new faces on your Executive Board. I would like to personally thank all of the Officers I have worked with during my term and look forward to working with the new Executive Board.

I'd like to make special mention of the Officers that I have worked with who chose not to run for re-election: MDW DEBM Kyle Whiteley, BMAL Allyson Parker-Lauck, BMAL Brett Nevarez, DAL DEBM Gwen Dunivent and LAS DEBM Kevin Onstead. Kyle was a joy to work with and was responsible for our wonderful new website. Allyson Parker-Lauck (the red-headed step child as I like to call her), our Publications Committee Chairperson, did a fabulous job delivering our Union's Magazine and newsletters. Brett Nevarez is the Drug and Alcohol Committee Chairperson, and we now have a new self-referral program thanks to him. Gwen Dunivent was responsible, along with Thom McDaniel, for further development of the COPE Committee and also kept the Union Hotline up to date. She is now working for TWU International and will be making a difference for all of us on Capitol Hill. Kevin Onstead was Las Vegas' first DEBM and set a high standard for his successor. He fought hard to streamline the parking situation in LAS. I can't finish this paragraph without mentioning MCO DEBM Susan Kern for her dedication and hard work in MCO and on any project she was given, and Treasurer Jerry Lindemann for the many improvements he made in tracking our Union's finances.

Finally, I wanted to thank you, the PHX Flight Attendants, for having the trust and confidence in me to allow me to serve you all as your DEBM for a second term.

In closing, I write the PHX E-Connection, and if you or a coworker doesn't receive it, visit the Union website at www.twu556.org and add your email address to your profile. My Union email address is phx-debm@twu556.org and Union cell phone is **602-295-0125**.

A Blast from the Past

A look back at *UNITY* Magazine

by Allyson Parker-Lauck, Board Member at Large and Publications Chair

Like many of you, I didn't grow up with a computer. I learned to type on a TYPEWRITER! The other day, one of the Flight Attendants working in the Contract Call Center saw me typing on my computer and asked, "How old are you Allyson?" A little puzzled, I answered, "39, why?". She said she could tell I was over 35 because of the way I type with my wrists up high. She said only people who learned to type on typewriters hold their hands in this way. I bring this up because I'd like you all to indulge me as we take a walk down memory lane and look at a few "classic" pieces from *UNITY* Magazine past.

I was an unlikely candidate to be a Magazine Editor. I didn't even own a computer until late 1996 and knew NOTHING about them. While I did study Journalism in college, I did so from a writing standpoint, not a design or technical angle. I taught myself everything I know about computers, software, and design.

A lot of people think I was responsible for creating *UNITY* Magazine. Not true. Before I

took over as Editor, Thom McDaniel actually published the first two editions of *UNITY* in 2000 and 2001 (hence the "eight and a half year retrospective"). I wish we still had electronic copies of those issues so that I could have included them in the spread on the cover.

Poor Thom. At that time he had no idea what "cut and paste" was, and when somebody submitted an article to him, he retyped the entire thing! He's learned a LOT since then, but it wouldn't be right to not give credit where credit is due... *UNITY* Magazine was Thom's brainchild. My first issue of *UNITY* was the January 2002 issue, and the Magazine you're holding now is the 32nd issue of *UNITY* including the two issues Thom published.

I've learned so much since that my first issue, and hopefully it's obvious when you look at the cover of this issue. The following is a walk down memory lane. I hope you enjoy looking over these past photos and excerpts as much as I enjoyed choosing them.

The more things change, the more they stay the same...



Cuyler Thompson in the inaugural issue of the "new and improved" *UNITY* Magazine in January 2002 (left) and Cuyler's photo from the July 2008 Magazine (right). Some things never change (I think I even saw him wearing that jacket last week!). By the way, the photo on the left prompted the first complaint I received that *UNITY* Magazine wasn't "serious" enough!

The Sky is not Falling...

This is one of my VERY favorite cover photos. I knew NOTHING about royalty-free or stock photos at the time, and did an exhaustive search on the internet for a picture of a chicken for our "The Sky is



NOT Falling" issue in February 2002. The issue's feature article discussed that even in the wake of 9-11, while other airlines were struggling, Southwest still managed to turn incredible profits. I found this photo on a website of an amateur photographer who was delighted to give us permission to use his photo free of charge. All he wanted was for me to mail him a few copies of our Magazine.

Priceless...

Payment on your economy car... \$250

Rent on your one-bedroom apartment... \$600

Monthly utility bills... \$150

The ability to pay these and your other monthly bills without having to worry about bouncing checks...

PRICELESS

There are some things LUV can't buy. For everything else, there's an Industry-Leading Contract.

Visit the TWU Local 556 website to see this "ad" in Video. Just go to <http://local556.twuatsd.org>, and click the link titled "Priceless Video". A very special thank you goes out to Kimberly Smith, DPL, F/A #15602, for volunteering to model for the photos and star in the video.

One of my favorite pages we ever ran (from the October 2002 UNITY Magazine)... This was a TWU Local 556 spoof on the MasterCard "Priceless" ads that were popular at the time.

"Da Bears" ...



This photo is of MDW DEBM Kyle Whiteley taken long before he ran for Office and appeared in a late 2003 issue. Poor Kyle was the only one to show up to leaflet NFL fans at a Bears game. Kyle asked a police officer to snap this shot. Now THAT's dedication.

Who's crabby?



This photo was from the April 2004 Magazine... this was during the most heated time during our last Contract Negotiations. My husband took the day off work to come picket with me in Oakland.

Reunion...



This is a photo from the April 2005 Magazine... a group shot of all the current and former Local 556 Officers in attendance at the 30-Year anniversary of the founding of our Local.

In Closing...

I hope you enjoyed this little walk down memory lane. I wish I had the room to re-run all of my favorite articles from years past, but that wasn't possible. I want to recognize all of those who contributed to the success of UNITY Magazine over the years including the many Executive Board Members and Committee Chairs I've worked with, authors, and of course my Editorial Team... there are just too many to mention by name; however, I can't finish my final article without recognizing three people. Thom McDaniel, Kathy Anderson, and Kyle Whiteley. Thom has been a constant source of support and encouragement (and material!). Kathy is the best copy editor I've EVER seen, and Kyle... I couldn't count how many all-nighters he's pulled helping me with last-minute graphic design. Again, it's been a pleasure serving you all, and I CAN'T WAIT to see what our next Editor has in store for us.



Are You Shop Steward Material?

by Susan Kern, MCO Executive Board Member
and Shop Steward Committee Co-Chair

Shop Steward Elections are coming! As Co-Chairs of the Shop Steward Committee, Cuyler Thompson and I want to give everybody a heads up that in our next round of Membership meetings (to be held in June), we will be nominating and electing Shop Stewards. If you've been thinking about becoming more involved with the Union, this might be the perfect fit for you.

First of all, you DO NOT have to be an expert on the Contract in order to be a Shop Steward! Lord knows both Cuyler and I have, on many occasions, had to ask someone smarter for a correct answer. All you have to do is say "You know, that's a great question! Let me find out the answer for you", and then get the answer and follow up. It's that simple!

A successful Shop Steward has integrity and is an advocate. You need the backbone to stand up for yourself and others, and when others say they "heard" that so-and-so has been given a suspension, you have to maintain confidentiality. Do you like to gossip? Then this isn't the job for you. The quickest way to ruin your reputation as a Shop Steward is to talk about the cases you have been assigned.

You should also have a passion for what I call the "rules of engagement". While the Company absolutely has the right to manage, they also must do so within the terms of our Contract, which includes a little concept called "just cause" (Article 19, 1 I). Bottom line, "just cause" means there has to have a good reason for the discipline – it can't be "just 'cause" they don't like you. They have to have all their ducks in a row, with supporting documentation, without prejudice, regarding an issue you would reasonably have knowledge about, and do everything within the timelines called for in our Contract.

So how does a Shop Steward fit into that sce-

nario? Within 45 days of your election (which does not involve creating flyers and putting them in mailboxes!), you will attend a training class where you will learn all about the Grievance process, and most importantly, Fact Finding meetings. Management usually conducts a Fact Finding meeting prior to issuing discipline. This is the Flight Attendant's opportunity to tell her/his side of the story, and Shop Steward plays a very important role in the meeting. You'll learn what to do during these meeting, and you'll learn your rights. You'll be taught how to manage the meeting, take notes, and how to best serve the Flight Attendant who is facing discipline before, during and after the meeting.

Conducting Fact Finding meetings are a primary responsibility for Shop Stewards, but if that isn't your cup of tea, there are other things you can do. The job of Domicile Executive Board Member is a big job, and they need help. Perhaps you're

more interested in educating the Membership. You can do that via lounge mobilizations. Publications need to be distributed; glass cases and red racks need to be maintained. Trust me – your DEBM would appreciate someone having their back!

The term of office for Shop Stewards is 3 years, and you have to have been a Member in Good Standing and on the Seniority List for a minimum of 6 months. You don't have to live in your base to participate, and if you change bases, you can continue serving in your new base. If this sounds like something you're interested in, plan to attend the Membership Meeting in June, and let your DEBM know you'd like to become a Shop Steward. It's an incredible feeling to know you had a hand in protecting someone's job, and a fabulous way to become more involved with the Union.

"The quickest way to ruin your reputation as a Shop Steward is to talk about the cases you have been assigned."



Scheduling Committee Update

Tracking the quality of your life

by Lisa Traffon, HOU F/A #9697
TWU Local 556 Scheduling Committee Chairperson

Three years ago, the Executive Board approached me to become the Scheduling Committee Chairperson. I knew this would be a very difficult undertaking, as the schedules we fly can always be better, cleaner, and more productive. What one person may find appealing on our lines, another person wouldn't dream of flying. Making everyone happy would be an impossible challenge; however, I believed (and still do) that making the majority of the Membership happy could be accomplished. Looking back to what our schedules were compared to where we are now, I feel our Committee work has made some pretty good progress.

While I would love to take all the credit for the changes we have made, I really want to thank my two Co-Chairs, Kyle Whiteley and Brett Nevarez. Their hard work and dedication to the Scheduling Committee during their time on the Executive Board was phenomenal. I could not and would not have done it without the two of you.

When the three of us first began to work together, we had a meeting and narrowed down some of the goals we wanted to accomplish. I kept the notes from that meeting and would like to share them with you; I'll let you judge our performance.

REDUCE THE NUMBER OF 4-DAY PAIRINGS: When we began, 18-22% of our pairings were 4-days. The feedback we received from Flight Attendants overwhelmingly urged us to reduce the number of 4-day trips. We have successfully built reduced 4-day schedules for almost three years. Our 4-day percentage has ranged from 0-6%. This reduction of 4-days has improved the quality of life for most of our Flight Attendants.

MORE TRANSPARENCY IN THE LINE WRITING PROCESS: We wanted Flight Attendants to be able to see how the lines were built so they could have a better understanding of the tools we utilize, as well as our thought processes. We used our space in *UNITY* Magazine each quarter to deliver an educational piece and created a video that shows how the line

building process works. We also now place the dates that will have Open Time left after the Scheduling Committee builds secondary lines. This information is available monthly on the TWU Web site.

BUILD A BETTER WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH INFLIGHT CREW PLANNING: We have successfully accomplished this by having an ongoing and open dialogue with Claire Taitte, Manager of Inflight Crew Planning, and Brendan Conlon, Director Inflight Scheduling, Crew Planning, Payroll, and Automation. When our Team runs into a problem, we all work together to find a solution for the benefit of the Flight Attendant group. I want to thank Claire and Brendan for sitting through countless meetings, and for listening and working with us as we addressed TWU Member issues.

SATELLITE BASES: Our biggest project for the past three-years was the development of language and the logistics of testing a Satellite Base. The Union and the Company have spent hundreds of hours on this project, and we hope that someday we can go live with our Satellite Base program. I look forward to seeing it through to completion.

Hopefully you will agree that we made some significant changes as we worked to improve your quality of life.

On a slightly different note, I'm not sure how many of you realize that your Scheduling Committee is made up of line-holding Flight Attendants from all seniorities and almost all of our Bases. I would like to thank the members of the Scheduling Committee for all your hard work, the long hours, and the time it takes away from your family. Again, I could not and would not want to do it without each and everyone of you. We have had some really hard months of line writing, and all of you always rise to the challenge in such a professional way. You each give your heart and soul to produce the best quality of lines for each and every Flight Attendant, and I am proud to say that I have chaired such a great Committee. Thank you Kim, Shelley, Sheri, Valarie, Richard, Kelley, Pam, Erich, Don, Mark, and Rebekah.



TWU Grievance Team

Defending Your Rights!

by John Parrott, Grievance Committee Chairperson

As of 3/20/2009, there are 148 active grievances. Since January 5, 2009:

- (57) New Grievances have been filed.
- (22) Grievances have been withdrawn.
- (9) Grievances have been settled in favor of our Members.

These settlements consist of the following:

- (3) Terminations Reinstated
- (2) Issued Lower Levels of Discipline
- (1) No-Show Removed
- 5.5 Various Points Removed
- 40.2 TFP Awarded 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) Termination Averted
- (1) Letter of Warning Removed
- (2) No Shows Removed (5.0 Points)
- (1) UTC Removed (2.5 Points)
- (3) FTRs Removed (3.0 Points)
- (7) MBL's Removed

Various Points Removed (12.5 Points)

192.57 TFP Awarded to Various Members

ISSUES

GRIEVANCE TIMELINES: It is important that all Flight Attendants know their rights when it comes to filing a grievance. Per Article 19, you have 7 days from the date discipline was issued. For Contractual Grievance, you must file within ten days of the infraction. Both timeframes are based on work days and not calendar days and are exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays and recognized holidays.

GROUP GRIEVANCE – HOLIDAY PAY: A Group Grievance was filed because the Union believes Management is not paying Holiday Pay in certain situations. Some examples include F.A.R. pulls, Duty Day Violations, Reschedules, and Unscheduled Overnights. We will keep you posted on this issue.

SICK CALLS TO SCHEDULING: There is very little information that needs to be given during a sick call to Scheduling. The Scheduler needs to have a clear understanding of what you are trying to say. The call should go something like this:

"Hi, this is Suzie Flight Attendant, Employee Number 1234 and I am calling in sick for BA01 for tomorrow."

I can't count the number of times this topic has been written in Unity but, you would be absolutely amazed at the number of people who feel obligated to give more information than is needed to the Scheduler on the other end of the call. If you are sick, by all means, call in sick. But, please remember that all conversations between you and Scheduling are recorded. Anything additional you add to the call can raise a flag and could subject you to a Fact Finding meeting for possible sick leave abuse.

UNIFORM ALLOTMENT: Your Uniform Account is credited on the first day of the month of your Inflight hire date anniversary month. The Maximum amount you may accrue is \$500.00.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS: Have you ever wanted to have a situation addressed without getting a fellow Flight Attendant or Pilot into trouble? That's the goal of Professional Standards. They are a peer group that tries to settle issues without the involvement of Management. Their motto has been Talk it out, don't write it up. Please keep in mind that Professional Standards will not get involved with you trying to collect money that has been placed on trips. The Professional Standards Hotline number is **888-322-3735**.

for fyour nformation



by Kathy Anderson
TWU Local 556 Grievance Team

fyi: If you receive less than 10 hours crew rest followed by a duty day that exceeds 12 hours, you will receive triple time for trips flown after 12 hours.

fyi: Always travel with your prescriptions in the original labeled prescription bottles. Do not mix different pills in to the same bottle. Not only will this make getting through Security easier, if you experience a personal medical emergency, health care professionals will know exactly what your medications are and will be able to provide treatment more readily.

fyi: Never make alterations to your Doctor's note yourself. If additional informational is needed on the note, take it back to your Doctor and have him/her make the changes.

fyi: You can be random drug or alcohol tested at outstations and at Domiciles other than your own. If you refuse the test, you are subject to termination.

fyi: If you are on Workers Compensation and your vacation falls during this time, your vacation can be moved outside the Workers Compensation period to the beginning of your active status only. It is the Flight Attendant's choice to forgo the vacation until returning to work or to take it while on leave, or to receive compensation.

fyi: If you feel you have suffered an OJI (On the Job Injury), please fill out an injury report immediately, regardless of the injury. If you do not report your injury in a timely manner, it could result in the denial of your claim.

fyi: No VJA will be compensated at less than 5.0 TFP or one and one-half times the applicable trip rate, whichever is greater. This language applies to those little round trips in Open Time during Overlap!

fyi: Reschedules requiring less than an entire crew will be requested in order of seniority and assigned in reverse order of seniority.

fyi: An overlap occurs when a Flight Attendant has a Contract and/or FAR illegality between the current bid period and the new bid period. Contractual illegalities may be waived by the Flight Attendant. FAR illegalities may not be waived by the Company or the Flight Attendant. All overlap adjustments will be made in the new bid month. (For additional information, refer to your Contract on page 31- Article 10.9 and page 157 Q & A #1, #2 and #3.)



Safety Team Report

The new Safety Reporting System (SRS)

by **Michael Massoni, TWU Local 556 1st Vice President
and National Safety Coordinator**

On March 31st Flight Attendants and all Southwest Employees gained the ability to submit Safety concerns, questions, and suggestions via the Safety Reporting System (SRS). This new system replaces the old Safety Recommendation Report Form and allows Employees to submit reports by either calling the toll free Safety Report Line (877-254-1626) or logging onto SWALife.

Some benefits of this new system:

- Enhances Safety knowledge by letting every Employee's voice be heard.
- Allows Employees to submit concerns anonymously if they chose to.
- Each Employee that submits a report and gives her/his name will receive feedback from the Safety and Security Department via their Company email address within 10 days.
- Available 24-hours a day and accessible anywhere.
- Ensures that we proactively address Safety and Security hazards.

The goal of the SRS is to enhance the Safety of every Employee by allowing us (The Company and Union) to proactively address Safety concerns, encourage Employee reporting, and deepen the Safety Culture at Southwest Airlines. The addition of this program does not change any of the current reporting or procedural processes of the Inflight department or the Union's ASHDI Safety Event Reporting System. It is not intended for emergencies or as a 'get out of jail free card'. If a report is submitted that discloses possible criminal activity, drug/alcohol related incidents, or an intentional disregard for Safety or procedures it will be routed accordingly for follow-up.

The TWU Local 556 Safety Team will be copied on all non-anonymous SRS submissions so we may follow-up with SWA leaders on trends observed through the system.

Your thoughts, concerns and ideas regarding Safety will assist in the development of new Safety initiatives and heighten awareness to Safety system wide. Thank you in advance for your participation!

Visit SWALife/Departments/Safety, Security & Environmental for more information.

"The TWU Local 556 Safety Team will be copied on all non-anonymous SRS submissions so we may follow-up with SWA leaders on trends observed through the system."





To Your Health

Spring is in the air...
And so is unexpected turbulence

**by Michele Moore, DAL F/A #6564
TWU Local 556 National Health Coordinator**

Ahhh Spring, one of my favorite times of year. I love all the spring flowers, Easter, and all those UM's during spring break! (Just kidding about the UM's). As much as I love this time of year, the one thing I don't love is the unpredictability of our weather.

This past month, I had the opportunity to visit with several Flight Attendants that have unfortunately been injured in turbulence. Some of the injuries were minor with the Flight Attendants returning to work immediately, while others were seriously injured and will be missing time indefinitely. The injuries have stemmed from anticipated turbulence to the "out of the blue – the sky is falling" type of turbulence.

The one common item stressed by every Flight Attendant I spoke with is the need for good communication with the flight deck. In some instances, the Flight Attendants had to initiate the communication, other times the Pilots were great about being pro-active with their communication. Not that communication would have prevented all of the injuries, but in some instances it would have helped the situation.

Our Flight Attendants are the best in the industry, and we take Customer Service very seriously – but we do not need to risk injury to make sure everyone gets a drink or a bag of peanuts.

If you feel it is not safe to serve but you have not received a call from the Pilots, it is okay for you to call them and tell them you do not feel it is a safe environment for service and you are going to take a seat for a while. Likewise, if the Pilots call or

make an announcement to please be seated, take a seat immediately. It's okay that the last few people in your section have to wait for their drinks. If the Pilots don't cover the weather in the pre-flight briefing, don't be shy about asking what the weather will be like throughout the day.

There are also steps you can take yourself to become more aware and informed of potential turbulence. Watch the Weather Channel as you

get ready in the morning. If you see areas where rain, storms, high winds, or frontal boundaries are reported, those are likely to be areas where you may encounter turbulence. First flights of the day can be hectic and we all have responsibilities to take care of when we first step on the plane, but if you are aware that you may be flying through a potentially turbulent area, take the time to get a thorough briefing from the Captain.

In closing, if you only get one thing out of this article, I hope it is this: Do not sacrifice self for service - if you feel it is not safe to be doing service, this is a choice your Crew can personally make. You have the empowerment to initiate the communication with the Pilots.

*“Do not sacrifice self
for service - if you feel it
is not safe to be doing
service, this is a choice
your Crew can personally
make.”*

Editor's Note: Michele wrote this article about turbulence before the recent Continental Airlines incident where a passenger broke her neck when unexpected turbulence affected a flight to McAllen, TX. Hopefully that incident will serve as a wake-up call to those of us who are sometimes lax about the seat belt sign or even about remaining strapped in ourselves.



Put Up or Shut Up

It's time to stop complaining and get involved

by Brett Nevarez, TWU Local 556 Board Member at Large

Improved Union Customer Service has been a constant goal of this Executive Board. Last summer, a Committee was created that would come up with ideas to increase Membership involvement and to improve how our Union operates. It was named Project Redesign 2009 (PR09). It was broken down into three Sub-Committees which focused on the domicile level, national or system-wide level, and the Executive level and Union Headquarters. Each group has worked independently in the initial stages and then will meet together in order to collaborate on the work product that each group generated to implement changes and to come up with suggestions for TWU Local 556 Bylaw changes if needed. PR09 was made up of people with varying opinions, seniority levels, and political bends. The goal wasn't to get together and sing Kumbaya, it was to be representative of all Members.

One of the Committee's recommendations was that the Domicile Executive Board Members (DEBMs) work full time in the bases to facilitate more Member interaction and an increased Union presence. We discussed the need for office space, which we have been unable to negotiate in the last two Contracts. Other alternatives are being researched, so just because we couldn't negotiate Union Office space in the bases, it doesn't mean this idea won't work.

The Sub-Committees also talked about the election of Shop Stewards being handled in a similar manner as Officer Elections. All Shop Stewards would be given basic advocacy training, and opportunities for specialized training would be given to those that show interest in the areas of community service, legislation and education. These can also be focus items for lounge mobilizations and Member actions. We talked at length about our Membership Meeting structure which is currently one continuous meeting held in our eight domiciles. Unfortunately, the attendance numbers have historically been very low and we have tried many different things in the past such as providing food and drinks and evening and afternoon sessions. There was the suggestion to have one on one or small group meetings with the DEBMs to go over agenda items for those unable to attend. The ability to have proxy voting, meaning letting some-

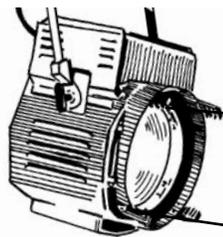
one cast your vote for you has been suggested, but this is something that is prohibited by our TWU International Constitution (and is illegal in many states). As an alternative we also discussed the possible election of delegates to attend and vote at our Local's meetings in a similar manner as we do at the TWU International Convention.

Web based meetings and educational seminars were brought up as another tool if security concerns were properly addressed. Domicile specific meetings could also be an option and could be held either before and/or after the general Membership Meeting. The prompt posting of the Membership Meeting minutes to the website would be beneficial for those unable to attend.

The Base Orientation for New Hires conducted by the DEBMs needs to be improved and expanded to include a crash course on our contract that concentrates on Reserve and a general outline of our Union structure. Getting these new Members involved early on will make them a more knowledgeable work group who will then approach us, the Union, for answers as opposed to asking Management. The education effort could also be expanded to the entire Membership to provide Contract classes to answer the most commonly asked questions and problematic scenarios. An updated Policy and Procedures manual which would outline the roles, responsibilities and job descriptions of all Executive Board Members, Committee Chairs and Grievance Team Members will not only help our Members to understand the way their Union operates on a daily basis but improve efficiency as well.

Unfortunately, the huge scope of Project Redesign will not be completed in 2009 due to budgetary constraints and the fact that these changes should be made BEFORE an Officer election instead of after so that if structural leadership changes are made, Members will know what they are signing up for when they run for Office. Project Redesign will continue to be a work in progress to improve our Union.

The past three years have been a tremendous learning experience and I want to thank all Members of our Local for the honor of representing the best Flight Attendants in the industry.



“SPOTLIGHT” ON Your outgoing Executive Board Members



Gwen Dunivent, DAL DEBM

Gwen is one of those people who you never have to guess what she is thinking. The expression on her face says it all. She was an outstanding Executive Board Member and served the

DAL Flight Attendants well. Gwen's devotion to the Labor Movement and legislation that affects working people has lead her in a new direction in her life. She has accepted a position with the International as a member of the Legislative Staff to ensure working people have a voice on Capitol Hill. Congratulations Gwen!



Susan Kern, MCO DEBM

“The Task Master”... While there are many wonderful words to describe Susan, this one would best describe her approach to Union work. When asked to do something, Susan doesn't ask

why or how, she asks when. Pardon my French, but Susan is the most “No-BS” kind of person you'll ever meet. Behind that “task master” exterior though, you'll find a warm and caring person. She worked hard for the MCO Flight Attendants and served them well. Susan calls herself a “special projects kind of gal”. When a special project comes up over the next 3 years that requires a “task master”, how much you wanna bet Susan's phone will ring?



Jerry Lindemann, Treasurer

Jerry's arrival on the Executive Board was during a tough time. Our Union had had 3 different Treasurers the 3 years prior to Jerry joining the Board, and while our finances were sound,

our accounting system needed a serious overhaul. Jerry took on this project with conviction and revamped our accounting system and introduced new investment opportunities for our Local. Jerry, thank you for your service and for making our new Treasurer's job so much easier.



Brett Nevarez, BMAL

At first glance, some may think Brett is gruff. But don't let the tough talk fool you, he has a heart of gold. Brett's crowning achievement in his term was that after years of failed efforts by our

Local, he developed a self-referral program for Members with drug and alcohol problems. This contribution alone won't just save jobs, it will save lives.



Kevin Onstead, LAS DEBM

Kevin isn't new to going into uncharted waters. As a 2-year Flight Attendant, he ran for and won a position on the Contract 2002 Negotiating Team. When the LAS Base opened, he again

jumped in head first as your LAS DEBM. Kevin's ability to fearlessly take on new challenges made him an invaluable Leader. We're gonna miss you Kev!



Allyson Parker-Lauck, BMAL

Allyson got involved in the Union because she felt her voice wasn't being heard. So she became an active and vocal Member. Th result is that she became the Publications Committee Chair in

2001 and a Member of your Board in 2003. UNITY Magazine is now an award-winning publication thanks to Allyson's efforts and talent.



Kyle Whiteley, MDW DEBM

When Kyle joined the Board in 2006, he had high hopes. He came in with an enthusiasm for our Union that never waned during his 3-year term. He truly helped redefine the role of the

DEBM by doing outstanding work in his base, while at the same time taking on a role on the Scheduling Committee and bringing our website into the 21st century. He is smart, talented, and one of the finest human beings you'll ever know.

Your Decision • **Your Contract** • Your Vote

Voting opens May 4 and continues through May 18. Please check the TWU 556 Website often for updated voting information:

www.twu556.org

If you have any questions about the Tentative Agreement (TA), please talk to one of the TA Lounge Educators or call the Contract 2008 Call Center:

Lounge Hours:

5:00 AM - 6:00 PM Local
Seven Days a Week

Call Center Hours:

8:00 AM - 6:00 PM CDT
Monday - Friday

9:00 AM - 5:00 PM CDT
Saturday and Sunday

800-969-7932