

IN THE  
UNITY 2.0  
STARTS RIGHT HERE!

What can RIGs do for you? | The anatomy of an accident debrief

VOL. 2, NO. 1 SUMMER 2009

# unity

THE MAGAZINE OF TWU LOCAL 556

## HOW DOES YOUR BRAND NEW CONTRACT COMPARE TO *OTHER* AIRLINES?

PLUS

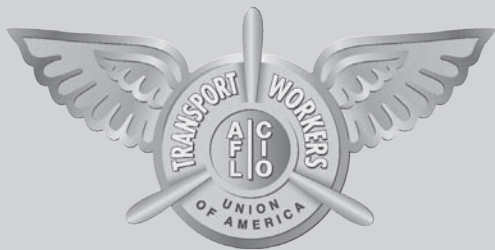
### HEALTH MATTERS

TWU Local 556 talks about the latest developments with the H1N1 swine flu virus.

### COOL, DUDE!

Ever wonder how the air conditioning system onboard the aircraft works?





# unity

THE MAGAZINE OF TWU LOCAL 556

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

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

Articles submitted to *Unity* will not be considered for publication if they exceed 750 words, are 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 inclusion 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 only.

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

## FROM THE EDITOR



Welcome to the first issue of the all-new *Unity*, the magazine of Transport Workers Union Local 556! As you can see, we've been hard at work giving the publication a fresh, new look (and we'll continue to make adjustments and improvements with each issue) just in time for the latest chapters in our Union's history, as the new Executive Board gets underway to work for you, the Flight Attendants of Southwest Airlines, and as we have

another industry-leading Contract!

Personally, I'm honored to have been chosen to fill the big shoes of **Allyson Parker-Lauck**, who stepped down as *Unity's* editor at the end of April after eight years. Under her editorship, *Unity* was transformed into an award-winning publication, of which your Union is incredibly proud. She has been an invaluable source of advice during the preparation of this first issue. Allyson, thank you for eight incredible years, and for all your help during this transition!

I'm also honored to be able to continue working for you, the Flight Attendants, and to continue my involvement in the Union. We have another fantastic, industry-leading Contract that safeguards our livelihood, both onboard the aircraft, as well as providing important improvements in our pay and quality of life, but this is no time to sit back and take a break. In fact, this is a wonderful time to step-up your involvement in the Union to ensure that we continue to stand strong as a unified group.

*This being my first issue of Unity, tell me what you think. Did you like or dislike a particular story? Do you have suggestions on how to make the new format of Unity easier to read? What types of articles would you like to see in our future editions? Send a Letter to the Editor, and give me an earful. If you would like to have your letter considered for publication, follow the guidelines that are printed just to the left.*

*In the next issue of Unity we are going to bring you some true stories from the Union's frontline—and maybe you'll pick up a tip or two. Also, we are turning our spotlight back on, and it will shine on one amazing Flight Attendant who's story will touch your heart.*



# IN THIS ISSUE



BALTIMORE CONTRACT RATIFICATION PARTY

## 4 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*TWU 556 President Thom McDaniel on what our new Contract means for our Union.*

## 5 BING-BONG! WE'RE TOO HOT!

*Justin Whittington finds out how the air conditioning system onboard the aircraft works.*

## 6 THE ANATOMY OF A POST-ACCIDENT DE-BRIEF

*If an accident or incident occurs, people will want answers, maybe from you.*

## 8 IS THIS LITTLE PIGGY A KILLER?

*Swine flu is still in the news, but what does it mean for TWU Local 556 Members?*

## 10 RIGS & YOU

*RIGs can help ensure that you receive the most pay for your time spent working.*

## 12 REALITY CHECK

*Kyle Whiteley asks, "Are you a whiner? Or are you a winner?"*

## 13 HOW DOES YOUR NEW CONTRACT COMPARE?

*How does TWU Local 556's new industry-leading Contract compare to Flight Attendant Contracts at other airlines?*

## 26 DUE I, OR DON'T I?

*TWU Local 556 Treasurer John Parrott answers some common Member questions.*

### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Make your Voice Heard by Voting.....	8
COPE-ing with Political Issues.....	8
Scheduling Update.....	17
Kathy Anderson's F.Y.I.s.....	17
Grievance Team Update.....	18
System-Wide News.....	19
Domicile News.....	20

# President's Message

The Employee Free Choice Act would take the choice of forming Unions from the employer and give it to the employees, says TWU Local 556 President **Thom McDaniel**



Houston Flight Attendant **Thom McDaniel** is President of TWU Local 556.

We've been very lucky here at Southwest that in the early days, our founder Herb Kelleher encouraged his employees to form Unions. There's an old story about one of the other founders of SWA telling Herb that they should encourage our Pilots to unionize; otherwise, they would have to pay higher wages to keep unions out. Herb countered that the Pilots *should* have a union—not to keep wages down, but because it was the right thing to do.

Unfortunately, most employers don't share Herb Kelleher's sense of business or fairness. For that reason, there is currently a piece of legislation in Congress called the **Employee Free Choice Act** ("the Act"). This proposed law would make it easier for workers to join Unions and to negotiate first Contracts.

Currently, if workers want to join a union, they sign cards stating their intention. When at least 50 percent of the workers sign cards, the union files their intent with the employer. The employer can then choose to accept the cards and recognize the union (the Herb way), or require a special election to recognize the union, which is what's usually required.

When the employer demands an additional election, many times they begin a campaign to discourage employees from vot-

ing for the union. Some common tactics include mandatory meetings with supervisors designed to strong-arm workers from voting to form a union, propaganda, outright threats, and intimidation of union supporters. A recent statistic revealed that *one in every five union supporters is fired for their efforts to bring a union to their workplace.*

Interfering in union elections is against the law, but these laws are seldom upheld. During a recent organizing campaign for Delta Flight Attendants, management sent every employee a 30-minute video discouraging them from joining a union, and asking them to throw their ballots away; remarkably, this was not considered interference. The Act would impose heavy penalties on companies that interfere with employees seeking to join a Union.

The Act would take the choice from the employer and give it to the employees to decide which process should be used for recognizing the union. There has been a huge, expensive campaign against the Act claiming that it takes away secret ballots. It doesn't; it just takes the choice away from the employer, and gives it to workers.

Another provision of the Act is that if a first contract can't be

**Continued on page 24.**

# BING-BONG!

## We're too hot!

Flight Attendant **Justin Whittington** looks into a burning issue: keeping the cabin comfortable for everyone while flying the friendly skies.

Maintaining a comfortable cabin temperature in both the forward and aft cabin zones isn't as simple as turning a knob and hoping for the best. In fact, there are many components that come together to create a comfortable environment for both the passengers and our Flight Attendants while at cruising altitude. On the ground, while parked at the gate, our cabin environment is controlled through use of the Gate Services systems that uses the probe to maintain as constant a comfortable temperature as possible. This system works much like your home or car air conditioning system in that air passes over expanded gasses that absorb the heat from the air and then push



CABIN TEMPERATURE SENSOR

small grill located just under the overhead bin on the right side at row two or three. This gives an approximate cabin temperature, but it can give a false reading due to the fact that the forward cabin is generally warmer than the aft. Remember, under the forward galley and on the flight deck there are lots of constantly-running computers. If you've ever noticed how hot your laptop gets on your lap, you can understand that even one small computer can generate lots of heat. The aircraft is equipped with it's own system to cool the avionics and flight deck instruments, but it still generates enough heat to keep the forward cabin a bit warmer.

"Of course we want to ensure that we're looking out for our passengers' comfort. If you feel the cabin is getting too hot or too cold, then you should contact the Pilots to ensure that they're aware of the situation. This would hold true on the ground or in the air." *Mike Hafner, Vice President, Inflight*

the cooled air back into your home. Of course, Flight Attendants' time is spent at altitude, where the systems managing our cabin temperature are completely different than anything in your car or home.

When we're at cruising altitude, the engines produce pressurized air that goes to the two air conditioning packs beneath the aircraft. There, the temperature is adjusted before sending it into the cabin or flight deck. Air is delivered through the ceiling via overhead distribution ducts, and then circulates within the cabin through a series of other ducts in the sidewall panels and the floor. A recirculation fan in the belly recycles a portion of the cabin air back into the cabin, while some air is expelled through an outflow valve in the aft portion of the cabin. The system is designed so that every two minutes the cabin air is fully exchanged. But what about when we're hot or cold?

The cabin temperature sensor is behind the

When we call the flight deck to have them warm it up (or cool it off), there's really only one control knob for the whole cabin, they can't really cool/heat just one zone of the cabin. On larger 737 models, there are multiple cabin temperature sensors that provide for a more consistent temperature. The 737-300, 500, and 700 models aren't as long as their counterparts, however, and thus were only designed with one sensor for the entire cabin.

While it's encouraged that you call the flight deck anytime you feel the need to adjust the cabin temperature, realize that it's not an exact science, and there are a lot of variables that go into mak-

Continued on page 24.



**Justin Whittington** is a Chicago Flight Attendant and TWU Local 556 Shop Steward.

Southwest jets belong **in the sky**. But if something goes **wrong**, people are going to start asking **questions**. TWU Local 556 First Vice President **Michael Massoni** tells you what to expect.

# THE ANATO ACCIDENT

**M**ost of us, thankfully, will never have to experience a post-incident or accident debrief. However, since it's one of the most important representational functions your Safety Team offers, and we have had an increased number of debriefs lately, it's paramount that each of you at least a) consider the possibility of being involved in an event that may require a debrief, and b) understand the process, should you be placed in the unenviable position of having to be debriefed and/or interviewed by Management, the regulators or even law enforcement.

The following Q&A, while not exhaustive, should give you a taste of what goes on in post accident/incident debriefs and interviews.

## What is the purpose of a Post Accident/Incident debrief or interview?

In short, the purpose of these debriefs/interviews is to obtain information that would otherwise be unobtainable. The debrief information is subsequently used to develop safety recommendations, such as training and/or changes to procedures and regulation.

## Can information I give during these debriefs/interviews be used against me by Management?

No. Southwest Airlines debrief policy states that "in order to encourage Employees to provide unrestricted information (even in the case of potential FAR and/or Southwest Operating Procedure violations), SWA will conduct all debriefs under a **non-punitive** policy for all participants. Information obtained from debriefs **will not** be used for any form of discipline, *but rather for the sole purpose of developing recommendations to prevent recurring events*" (emphasis added).

## Can information I give during debriefs/inter-

## views with a regulator or law enforcement agency be used against me?

Only in situations of gross negligence; in other words, by disregarding procedures, regulations or training standards thereby causing serious injury or death to others, or intentionally breaking the law in a criminal manner thereby causing harm to others and/or serious damage to property.

## What type of events usually trigger a need for debrief or interview?

The following criteria are examples of circumstances that might warrant debriefing and/or an interview:

- Operational "high" risk events; for example, a near mid-air collision, evacuation with slides
- Significant aircraft damage events
- Significant Employee injury; for example, injuries to one or more Employees during turbulence
- NTSB reportable events

If it is reasonable to assume that no additional information will be obtained by conducting a debriefing (relative to existing information derived from Irregularity Reports, ATC tapes, etc.), then a debrief will not be held.

## Who will attend these debriefs or interviews?

The debrief attendees may include the people directly involved in the event, their Union Representative(s), and individuals who are deemed to be subject matter experts. The goal is to have the fewest attendants, which helps fosters an open and confidential environment, while sufficiently maintaining extensive participation. This enhances our ability to understand what happened and why it happened. Typically, this includes the Flight Attendant Crew, Member(s) of the SWA Operational Safety Team within the



# COMY OF A POST- DEBRIEF

Safety and Security Department, the TWU Local 556 National Safety/Security and/or Health Coordinators and the Director of Inflight Standards.

## What is the actual debrief/Interview process like?

After explicitly communicating the non-punitive nature of the debrief process (in the case of a SWA-only internal debrief), the facilitator will go around the room asking each attendee to identify themselves, and their position. An attendance sheet will be distributed so that a record of debrief participants will be maintained. The Operational Safety representative will initiate the debriefing by asking the Employees involved in the incident to describe their involvement in and observations of the event. Once all Employees have spoken, the facilitator will go through a series of questions to ensure sufficient information is obtained and to establish a timed sequence of events for the incident. When the facilitator has finished, the observing participants will each be allowed to ask clarifying questions. The Employees will also be given the opportunity to ask additional questions based on the interactive discussion.

priate.

## Is there much difference when the debriefing/interview is with Regulators or law enforcement officials?

With the exception of not articulating the non-punitive nature of the meeting and who is facilitating, the format and process is almost identical.

The most important thing to know is that the Union will be there with you every step of the way as your advocate, should you have to participate in one of these rather nerve-racking experiences. We will be there both visibly and behind the scenes. Our involvement will start with a pre-debrief/interview meeting or phone call, and not end until the investigation is closed. Our goal is to learn all we can from your accident or incident in order to prevent it from happening again.

I hope this overview has helped you understand the process, thereby making it a little less intimidating if you find yourself in this situation.

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO KNOW IS THAT THE UNION WILL BE THERE WITH YOU EVERY STEP OF THE WAY AS YOUR ADVOCATE, SHOULD YOU HAVE TO PARTICIPATE IN ONE OF THESE RATHER NERVE-RACKING EXPERIENCES.

Immediately following the formal debrief, a brief meeting will be conducted with Company and Union representatives. This post-meeting will ensure that all parties have a reasonably similar assessment of the information provided at the debriefing and will allow for initial discussions concerning safety recommendations, when appro-



Phoenix Flight Attendant **Michael Massoni** is TWU Local 556 First Vice President and National Safety/Security Coordinator.

# Is this little piggy a KILLER?

The H1N1 virus is the real culprit, says TWU Local 556 Health Committee Chair **Michele Moore**.

I never realized how little I knew about the flu virus when I was offered the position of Health Chair at the beginning of the year, and how something so common can cause such worldwide suffering.

Did you know that more than 200,000 people are hospitalized each year for influenza-related complications, and that about 36,000 Americans on average die from these complications annually?

We've been hearing a lot lately about swine flu (H1N1), which is suspected to have emerged in a rural community in Veracruz, Mexico. Typically, flu viruses infect only one species, but occasionally mutate and "jump" from one species to another, just as the swine flu virus jumped from pigs to humans, though these are often isolated cases, and the virus

cannot easily continue to spread from person-to-person.

What makes this particular strain of swine flu so scary is that it is able to spread easily between humans—who have no natural immunity to the virus—with most cases affecting people under the age of 25 (rather than infants or the elderly), according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

In fact, the WHO raised the worldwide swine flu pandemic alert on June 11 from phase five to phase six, the highest level, noting approximately 30,000 cases in 74 countries. It's

important, however, to understand the context in which words such as "pandemic" are used. Simply stated, a pandemic is an outbreak of a disease that has spread to more than one country (epidemics are more localized outbreaks). Pandemic in the case of swine flu, though, refers more to the spread of the disease rather than its severity. Dr. Margaret Chan, Director-General of WHO, says that "globally, we have reason to believe that this pandemic, at least in its early days, will be of moderate severity." Chan adds that severity can, of course, depend upon many factors, and vary from country to country.

Your Union has been monitoring the swine flu outbreak since we first learned of it back in April, and we continue to do so. Our jobs as Flight Attendants bring us into close and sometimes prolonged contact with people from diverse backgrounds, and

**Continued on page 24.**

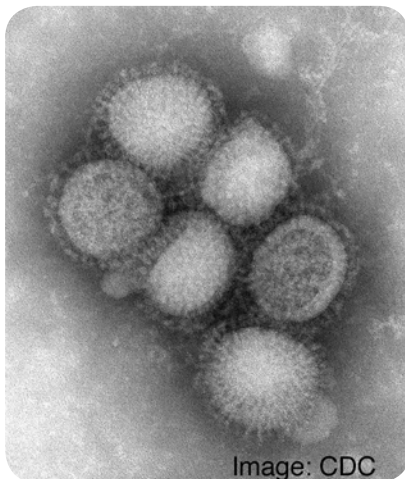


Image: CDC



Dallas Flight Attendant **Michele Moore** is TWU Local 556 Health Committee Chairperson.



# Make Your Voice Heard by Voting

**Sonia Hall**, Board of Election Chairperson

Nominations of delegates to represent our Local at the Transport Workers Union's Twenty-Third Constitutional Convention were held in June's Membership Meetings. TWU Local 556 is entitled to send 33 delegates to the convention, which will be held September 14 – 18, 2009 in Las Vegas. Our Bylaws provide that current Executive Board Members are already qualified delegates without further election; therefore, 18 delegates and three alternates will be elected via secret mail-in ballot just as the Executive Board election was conducted earlier this year. Each Member eligible to vote will receive voting instructions and a mail-in ballot at their most recent address on file with Southwest Airlines.

Voting begins on August 3 at noon Central time, and ends at 10 a.m. Central time on August 24. Notice of the results will be posted in the Flight Attendant lounges on the Local 556 bulletin boards, the TWU Hotline, and the TWU Local 556 Web site.

This will be the fourth secret ballot in the past three years in which our Members have had the opportunity to cast their vote. The outcome of these important decisions will affect all of us for the next three to four years. Our voting statistics have been as follows; percentages indicated are of eligible Members who voted:

**Negotiating Team Members (2007): 13.5%**

**Executive Board (March 2009): 44.2%**

**Contract Tentative Agreement (May 2009): 61%**

By comparison, SWAPA recently had 96 percent of their Members vote on their tentative agreement.

Please use your right to cast a vote in the upcoming Delegate election, as this Convention will impact all Transport Workers Union Members for the next four years.

# COPE-ing with Political Issues

**Gwen Dunivent & Susan Kern**

Our goals in writing this column are many. First, we want to report on all things that politically and legislatively can impact our Membership at work. Gwen will be reporting on the development of the TWU State Conferences in locations where TWU Local 556 has Members. California and Florida already have successful State Conferences, and Local 556 has been well-represented by Mark Torrez and Susan Kern, respectively. It is amazing what knowledge and insight can be gained when airline workers sit down with bus and train operators within the TWU, discussing the issues and challenges we all face in the transportation industry. We want to educate, motivate, and arm you with the tools needed to impact our legislative issues. Having both lobbied on State and Federal levels, we want to build an army of informed, impassioned Members ready to get involved in the process. The TWU COPE Field Program is available wherever needed to provide guidance in addressing issues on any level of the legislative process.

One of the first steps you can take as a Local 556 Member is to become involved with the Local's Committee on Political Education (COPE). This group held its first two meetings in 2008; they included brain-storming sessions on how to talk one-on-one to fellow Flight Attendants about legislation, and several guest speakers from TWU explaining how your COPE dollars are spent and how to build a successful lobbying campaign. The goal of our Local's COPE is to share information and ideas about how to have a voice in the legislative/political process. Going forward, we hope to build on this knowledge and expand the participation in and understanding of COPE. If you are interested in joining the Local 556 COPE, please email Susan at [cope@twu556.org](mailto:cope@twu556.org) or Thom McDaniel at [president@twu556.org](mailto:president@twu556.org).

We want to encourage your participation in the building of this column. Please let us

**Continued on page 24.**

# RIGs and You

Contract 2008 Negotiator **Cindy Ritner** discusses how RIGs ensure that you get the most pay for the time you spend at work.

**R**IGs, in Flight Attendant terminology, are a form of pay protection/pay minimum based on your duty day, and were negotiated to ensure efficiency and productivity in our pairings and to bring the bottom up. We have four different RIGs that can be utilized to ensure that a Flight Attendant receives a guaranteed minimum pay for each day worked, as well as a minimum pay protection for an original pairing built in the bid packet. Southwest Airlines Flight Attendants have, by far, the best duty day protections in the industry, along with the shortest duty day length. With the reduction in our schedules since January of this year and more to come, I think we can all see how imperative these RIGs are within our Contract. The definitions and examples of the four RIGs by which our pairings and duty day are protected are listed below.

## 1. DUTY PERIOD MINIMUM (DPM)

DPM is the number of TFPs that each day of a pairing must pay. Our contractual DPM is 4.0 trips for pay (TFP). That means that each day of a pairing must pay at least 4.0 TFP. If you see an M on any day of an originally-built pairing out of the bid packet, that means that day has been brought up to pay the DPM. There is no change to this RIG in the 2008 Contract.

## 2. DUTY HOUR RATIO (DHR)

DHR is applied to each hour you are on duty from check-in (report) through the end of debrief. DHR is a form of pay protection to ensure that you are utilized productively throughout each day of your pairing. If you are scheduled with excessive ground time, this RIG can compensate you during that non-flying time.

The DHR would also protect you in the event you went over a twelve-hour duty-day, but did not fly after twelve hours. Our Contract protects us when we fly over twelve hours in a day with double time, but you would not receive any additional compensation if you remained on-duty over twelve hours without flying. The DHR could protect you in this situation.

Here is an example of the DHR minimum pay protection. In the 2002 Contract our DHR was .70 TFP for each hour on duty from check-in through the end of debrief. A ten-hour duty-day would pay a minimum of 7.0 TFP. In the 2008 Contract, we were able to achieve the Pilots' DHR, which is .74 TFP for each hour on duty from check-in to end of debrief while maintaining our 10.5-hour duty-day. If you apply this RIG to a ten-hour day, the day would pay at least 7.4 TFP. If you see a D on any day of your pairing, it means that that day has been brought up to pay the DHR. This new DHR RIG will go into effect September 1, 2009.

## 3. AVERAGE DAILY GUARANTEE (ADG)

The ADG is to ensure efficiency/productivity in our pairings. Our ADG is 6.5 TFP times the number of days in the pairing. ADG is applied over the life of the pairing. When applying the ADG RIG to a pairing, it does not mean that each day has to pay the ADG; rather it means that over the life of the pairing and combining all days, the pairing must pay that minimum. There is no change to this RIG in the 2008 Contract.

A turn must pay 6.5 TFP, a 2-day 13.0 TFP, a 3-day 19.5 TFP, and a 4-day 26.0 TFP. Remember, each day does not have to pay 6.5 individually. Since our Duty Period Minimum (DPM) is 4.0 TFP as described above, a 3-day pairing could be built so that the first day pays 4.0 TFP, the second day pays 8.5 TFP, and the third day pays 7.0 TFP. The total of all three days combined meets the requirements of the DPM (4.0 per day) as well as the ADG, since the pairing paid 19.5 TFP (6.5 TFP x three days = 19.5 TFP). If the pairing did not pay 19.5, then it would have to be brought up to 19.5 TFP. If you see an A next to what the total pairing pays, that means the pairing has been brought up to the ADG.

## 4. TRIP FOR HOUR RATIO (THR)

THR is a form of pay protection calculated from the time you check-in for your pairing through the end of your pairing back in-domicile, including through the end of debrief. Our THR is 1.0 TFP

for each four hours away from base. However, in an unscheduled RON or stranded situation, the calculation of the THR would be 1.0 TFP for each three hours away from base from block-in at the unscheduled RON or stranded situation until end of debrief back in domicile. There is no change to this RIG in the 2008 Contract.

Now that you know how each of the four RIGs work, you may be asking, “What do they mean to me, and how are they applied?” Each of the daily RIG credits (DHR and DPM) in a pairing will be calculated separately for each duty period in the pairing. Pay for each duty period will be the greatest of the DHR, DPM, or trips flown. The sum of the daily trip totals will then be compared to the THR and ADG, and the pairing will pay the greatest of those three. Listed here are three examples to further explain how RIGs are applied to our pairings.

In Scenario #1, you would be paid the DHR for the first two days, and original schedule on the third day, which would be reflected on your paycheck.

In Scenario #2, you would be paid the DHR for the first, third, and fourth days of the pairing, and original schedule on the second day, which would be reflected in your paycheck.

In Scenario #3, the Average Daily Guarantee (ADG) pays the greater, and 13.0 TFP would be reflected in your paycheck.

### Optimized Pairings / Split Pairings and new pairing protections in the 2008 Contract

In the 2008 Contract, there are many new protections for pairings rebuilt out of Open Time. A few of those changes are discussed here. An op-

timized pairing is a pairing, pairings, or pieces of pairings removed from Open Time by Scheduling to be rebuilt more efficiently. Scheduling may rebuild these pairings only to balance Reserve utilization and ensure efficiency with Open Time pairings. Many of you may remember these pairings as 1,000-numbered pairings. Scheduling will not be able to rebuild these pairings more than four days prior to the pairings being optimized, and no more than three days prior if Crew Planning didn't originally build any 4-day pairings in that base. Prior to having this limit in our Contract, Scheduling was able to rebuild pairings many more days in advance without any time restriction. The

only exception to this rule is if an original piece of a pairing built in the bid packet is rejoined with another piece of that original pairing, then it can be done at any time, since most of the time it is put back together at the request of a Flight Attendant.

When Scheduling optimizes a pairing out of Open Time, it may be rebuilt up to 12.5 hours. If an optimized pairing is scheduled to exceed

10.5 hours, the flights scheduled to arrive after 10.5 hours will be paid at double the applicable trip rate. Once the pairing has been optimized it retains all of its pay regardless of whether it's picked up and then traded to another Flight Atten-

**Continued on page 24.**

SCENARIO #1: 3-day pairing	SCENARIO #2: 4-day pairing	SCENARIO #3: 2-day pairing
Day 1: 6.5TFP - 10 hour day Check-in @ 0500 (DHR = 7.4 TFP)	Day 1: 6.0 TFP - 9 hour day Check-in @ 1200 (DHR = 6.66 TFP)	Day 1: 5.0 TFP - 8 hour day Check-in @ 0600 (DHR = 5.92 TFP)
Day 2: 5.0TFP - 8 hour day (DHR = 5.92 TFP)	Day 2: 7.5 TFP - 10 hour day (DHR = 7.4 TFP)	Day 2: 5.5 TFP - 9 hour day end of debrief @ 1500 (DHR = 6.66 TFP)
Day 3: 8.0TFP - 9 hour day end of debrief @ 1500 (DHR = 6.66 TFP)	Day 3: 5.0 TFP - 9 hour day (DHR = 6.66 TFP)	
	Day 4: 7.5TFP - 10.5 hour day end of debrief @ 2330 (DHR = 7.77 TFP)	
Based on the above example this is how it would be calculated:	Based on the above example this is how it would be calculated:	Based on the above example this is how it would be calculated:
Without RIG = 19.5 TFP	Without RIG = 26.0 TFP	Without RIG = 10.5 TFP
With RIG	With RIG	With RIG
DHR Day 1: 7.4 TFP (6.5 TFP sched.), Day 2: 5.92 TFP (5.0 TFP sched.), Day 3: 6.66 TFP (8.0 TFP sched.),	DHR Day 1: 6.66 TFP (6.0 TFP sched.), Day 2: 7.4 TFP (7.5 TFP sched.), Day 3: 6.66 TFP (5.0 TFP sched.), Day 4: 7.77 TFP (7.5 TFP sched.)	DHR Day 1: 5.92 TFP (5.0 TFP sched.), Day 2: 6.66 TFP (5.5 TFP sched.)
ADG 19.5 TFP (3 days x 6.5 TFP)	ADG 26.0 TFP (4 days x 6.5 TFP)	ADG 13.0 TFP (2 days x 6.5 TFP)
THR 14.5 TFP (58:00 TAFB ÷ 4)	THR 20.88 TFP (83:50 TAFB ÷ 4)	THR 8.25 TFP (33:00 TAFB ÷ 4)
<b>Total Pay = 21.32 TFP</b> [7.4 TFP (DHR) + 5.92 TFP (DHR) + 8.0 TFP (Scheduled) = 21.32 TFP]	<b>Total Pay = 28.59 TFP</b> [6.66 TFP (DHR) + 7.5 TFP (Scheduled) + 6.66 TFP (DHR) + 7.77 TFP (DHR) = 28.59 TFP]	<b>Total Pay = 13.0 TFP</b> [ADG is greater than Scheduled, and THR]



Las Vegas Flight Attendant **Cindy Ritner** is a Negotiator on the Contract 2008 Negotiating Team.



# REALITY CHECK

with *Unity* Editor and TWU Local 556 Communications Coordinator **Kyle Whiteley**

After a brief conversation with my Crew Members about my new role as the Editor of *Unity*, I heard the same comment time and time again, and it always began with, “tell people...” This repeated response prompted me to begin keeping notes of everything I was supposed to be telling people. One Flight Attendant actually provided me with her own complete list of items to include that filled an entire drink order sheet.

So here it is, the number one issue I am supposed to tell people:

## STOP WHINING!

We all need to vent occasionally—that’s OK—but this article is really directed to the serious whiners, the Debbie Downers in our profession.

For the most part, everyone knows who the whiners are, and trust me when I say we’ve all heard the multi-day rants. “I hate the passengers,” “I hate the Company,” “I hate the Union,” “I hate the Uniform,” “I hate Scheduling,” “I hate Provisioning,” “the Cokes are too fizzy,” “the Pilots are mean,” “it’s not the same job,”

the day you received your letter stating you were hired at Southwest Airlines. For many of us, it was a day we really hoped would become a reality.

Sure, there have been changes in our jobs over the years, but it’s essentially the same today as when we started. As a Flight Attendant, we knew we would travel, be away from home, wear a uniform, and work for and with the public (not always an easy task regardless of what you do for a living).

We may not have known that we would be “forced” to spend an afternoon walking around a really great city, or that we might need to spend time at the pool reading a book or spending a great evening with coworkers at the end of the day. Many of us may not have fully expected to meet some really great people that would become life-long friends, or better yet, maybe the loves of our lives.

Negativity breeds negativity, and I believe it’s time we nipped it in the bud.

Maybe it’s time to pay yourself a Reality Check. Are you a whiner? Or are you a winner?

## MAYBE IT’S TIME TO PAY YOURSELF A REALITY CHECK. ARE YOU A WHINER? OR ARE YOU A WINNER?

“this ice is awful,” and the list of gripes goes on and on.

On behalf of all of us that are sick of hearing you whine about your job: *quit*. Quit whining or quit your job.

Take a moment, first, to reach into the back of your memory to

Whether you agree or disagree with my opinions, please feel free to let me know what you think. Email me at [kwhiteley@twu556.org](mailto:kwhiteley@twu556.org). Opinions from both sides of the coin will be posted on the communications feedback page of the TWU Web site.

## OPTIONS

The information below is from the most recent information available, May 2008, from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Fifty percent of workers in the occupations below earn the hourly wages shown, while fifty percent earn hourly wages above the median wage (\$35,000 annually in the United States).

Advertising Managers	\$38.57
Farmers and Ranchers	\$16.13
Food Service Managers	\$22.27
Funeral Directors	\$25.10
Claims Adjusters	\$26.81
Employment Specialists	\$21.86
Meeting Planners	\$21.28
Accountants and Auditors	\$28.57
Appraisers of Real Estate	\$22.77
Personal Financial Advisors	\$33.20
Tax Collectors	\$23.12
Computer Programmers	\$33.47
Computer Support Specialists	\$20.89
Network Administrators	\$31.88
Statisticians	\$34.91
Aerospace Engineers	\$44.48
Civil Engineers	\$35.87
Nuclear Engineers	\$46.68
Mapping Technicians	\$16.88
Microbiologists	\$30.94
Foresters	\$25.84
Physicists	\$49.47
Market Research Analysts	\$29.36
Family Therapists	\$21.44
Rehabilitation Counselors	\$14.87
Probation Officers	\$22.07
Clergy	\$20.06
Arbitrators	\$24.36
Paralegals	\$22.18
Curators	\$22.70
Librarians	\$25.26
Fashion Designers	\$29.41
Floral Designers	\$11.17
Actors	\$16.59
Dancers	\$12.22
Radio and TV Announcers	\$12.95
Photographers	\$14.15



## HOW DOES YOUR BRAND NEW CONTRACT COMPARE TO OTHER AIRLINES?

Since receiving their “marching orders” from you, the Flight Attendants of Southwest Airlines, more than a year ago, the Contract 2008 Negotiating Team, lead by TWU Local 556 President Thom McDaniel, worked diligently to bring you another industry-leading Contract—and they succeeded! We believe the numbers speak for themselves, so we’ve let them. These charts highlight some of the areas that are most important to you and your quality of life compared to other domestic carriers.—*Dan Akin, TWU Local 556 Economic Advisor, with Kyle Whiteley.*

Below, you’ll see two columns that represent SWA Flight Attendants (WN). The first column has our trip-for-pay rates converted to an hourly rate, as the rest of the industry works block hours. The second column shows our actual TFP payrates.

A Step Three SWA Flight Attendant makes \$25.33 for approximately every 45-minutes of flight time. To convert this to a block hour rate, multiply \$25.33 by 1.15. This shows the adjusted block hour at \$29.13.

### DOMESTIC FLIGHT ATTENDANT HOURLY PAY RATES

Year	AA (a)	CO	DL (b)	NW (b)	UA	US-E (c)	US-W (c)	WN (d)	WN - TFP (e)
1	23.27	19.50	19.67	17.81	18.46	19.13	16.18	24.63	21.28/21.55
2	25.27	22.78	20.46	19.19	19.51	20.23	17.54	27.16	23.62
3	27.38	24.06	21.85	20.53	20.76	21.51	18.76	29.13	25.33
4	28.80	25.95	23.64	21.86	21.34	22.11	19.98	31.51	27.40
5	32.15	27.84	26.05	23.62	24.19	25.06	21.24	34.07	29.63
6	37.17	32.30	28.01	27.31	31.83	30.81	22.30	38.86	33.79
7	40.19	34.32	32.98	29.92	33.53	32.48	23.20	41.07	35.71
8	42.37	36.18	34.05	33.19	34.37	33.27	24.47	43.16	37.53
9	44.10	37.54	34.99	33.53	35.48	34.35	26.31	45.72	39.76
10	45.89	39.44	36.28	35.63	36.62	35.45	28.23	48.40	42.09
11	47.38	40.65	37.29	36.42	37.42	36.23	30.24	50.86	44.23
12	49.03	42.67	39.07	37.34	38.30	37.09	34.74	54.45	47.35
13	50.38	44.27	42.30	38.47	39.14	37.90	35.72	58.26	50.66
14	51.65	46.12	42.30	39.57	39.74	38.73	36.67	61.62	53.58
15	52.92	48.15	42.30	40.16	39.74	38.73	37.59	61.62	53.58

Source: Contract pay rates in effect July 2009.

- Note:
- (a) American Airlines blended rate at 75 hours
  - (b) Delta Airlines and Northwest Airlines are currently operating under separate agreements pending a final merger resolution
  - (c) US Airways (US-E) and America West (US-W) are in joint contract negotiations but continue to be paid under prior separate contracts
  - (d) Southwest **hourly pay conversion at 1.15 times TFP rate**. Year 1 is a blended rate for the first and second 6 months
  - (e) Southwest **TFP rate as shown in the Contract**. Actual rate based on 243 miles or approx. 45 minutes. The first and second 6 months are shown.



## OVERRIDES

	Holding/Ground Pay	Short Crew Pay	Language Pay	Training Pay	Night Pay
WN	None	\$5.00/flt > 122 if no 4th F/A	None	7.5 TFP/day	\$1.00/TFP if dept 2300-0300 or arv 0100-0500
AA	\$15.00/hr (after 30 min)	\$5.00/hr	\$1.25	\$9.50/hr 3 hr min 12/hr FAA & 20 minute video free	None
CO	\$15.00/hr ground time >30 min	15 yr F/A rate divided by Crew >160 seats	\$2.50	2:15 hrs pay/day (2:30 12/30/09)	\$.50 2200-0600
DL	\$14.74 hold must exceed 1 hr	\$5.73	\$1.35	2:45 hrs/day Non-regulatory \$10.00/hr CBT \$12.00/hr aircraft	None
NW	None	None	None	4:15/day, \$5/hr home study 16hr/yr free	None
UA	1/2 credit for pay purposes after 10 min	\$5.00	\$1.45	\$9.00/hr 1 hr minimum	\$.35 2200-0600
US-E	\$7.00 (hold over 30 min)	\$10.50	\$2.00	\$60/day	None
US-W	\$10.00 (hold over 30 min)	None	\$2.00	6 hrs for recurrent, greater of 1:2 or 3 hrs if non-recurrent	None

## DAYS OFF - RESERVE - SICK LEAVE

	Line Holder Min Days Off	Reserve Min Days Off	Reserve Guarantee	Sick Hours Accrual Rate	Max Sick Accrual Hours	Sick Leave Compensation
WN	13	13 in 30 days 14 in 31 days	72 TFP to 102 TFP (a)	1 TFP for each 10 TFP flown or credited	2,400 TFP	Trips missed up to 118.2 TFP or Reserve 6 TFPs/day
AA	10	12	75 hrs	3 hrs/month	1,000 hrs	Trips missed up to 80 hrs/mo (85 Intl & Reserve) LH 3:53/day Reserve 4:10/3:56/day for 30/31 day mo
CO	8	10	83 hrs	4 hrs per month 7 hrs per month Rapid Re-accrual	1,000 + 250 hrs Catastrophic	Trips missed up to 83 hrs. If F/A has 500 hrs remaining at end of sick call, then no cap. Reserve 4:00/day
DL	10	10 No separate Reserve	No separate Reserve	2:18/month (27:30/year)	Hrs do not carry over from year to year	Trips missed Maximum of 27:30/yr
NW	None	12 in 30 days 13 in 31 days	80 hrs	3 hrs/month	850 hrs + grandfathered	Trips missed payed at 75% with 100% deducted for first 28:00 hrs of sick call. Then paid 100%
UA	10	11	75 hrs	4 hrs/month	950 hrs	Trips missed to Maximum of 100 hrs/mo Reserve 3:57/3:45 for 30/31 day mo
US-E	11	11	73 hrs	5 hrs/month	1500 hrs (additional hrs grandfathered)	Trips missed or 3:30/day whichever is greater (1st sick occurrence max 4 days paid and credited at 100%/calendar yr. All other sick calls paid 70% & charged 100%
US-W	10 in 30 days 11 in 31 days	12	70 hrs	45 hrs/year	120 Carry over dependant on system F/A sick used	Trips missed up to 75 hrs or Reserve 3:53 hrs

Note: (a) Variable - Southwest Reserve based on 6.0 TFP times days scheduled



## DOMESTIC PER DIEM

WN	\$2.15
US-E	\$1.90
DL	\$1.85
CO*	\$1.85
US-W	\$1.75
NW*	\$1.65
UA	\$1.50
AA	\$1.50

\* Northwest and Continental do not include turns.

\* Continental will include turns beginning 12/30/09

## RESERVE ROTATION

WN	65% Rotating Reserve month to month
AA	1 on 1 off for 3 years - then 1 on 3 off subject to seniority in base
CO	Straight Reserve based on seniority in base
DL	70% in base subject to 3 Reserve days/month
NW	Straight Reserve based on seniority in base
UA	Straight Reserve for 5 years - then 1 on 1 off
US-E	Straight Reserve based on seniority in base
US-W	Straight Reserve based on seniority in base

## LEGEND

IATA Code	Airline	Union	Contract Amendable
WN	Southwest	TWU	5/31/12
AA	American	APFA	4/30/08
CO	Continental	IAM	12/31/09
DL*	Delta	Non-Union	No Contract
NW*	Northwest	AFA-CWA	12/31/11
*Delta Airlines and Northwest Airlines are currently operating under separate agreements pending final merger resolution.			
UA	United	AFA-CWA	1/7/10
US-E**	US Airways East	AFA-CWA	12/31/11
US-W**	US Airways West	AFA-CWA	5/4/04
**US Airways-E (formerly US Airways) and US Airways-W (formerly America West) are currently operating under separate agreements pending a final Contract merger resolution.			

## VACATION

Years of Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30+
WN	14 days	14	14	14	21	21	21	21	21	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35
AA	9	9	9	9	9	14	14	14	14	14	14	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	23	23	23	23	23	23	28	28	28	28	28	28
CO	7	7	7	7	14	14	14	14	14	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	35	35	35	35	35	37
DL	14	14	14	14	21	21	21	21	21	21	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35
NW	7	7	7	7	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	14	14	14	14	14	14	18	18	18	18	18	18	21	21	21	21	21	21
UA	12	12	12	12	19	19	19	19	19	19	26	26	26	26	26	26	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	40	40	40	40	40	40
US-E	7	7	7	7	10	11	12	13	14	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	27	27	27	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
US-W	7	7	7	7	14	14	14	14	21	28	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35



**Dan Akins** is TWU Local 556's Economic Advisor.



Chicago Flight Attendant **Kyle Whiteley** is Unity Editor and Communications Coordinator.



**TWU LOCAL 556 EXECUTIVE BOARD** Bottom row: Todd Gage, Michael Massoni, Thom McDaniel, Stacey Martin, John Parrott. Middle row: Crystal Rains, Audrey Stone, Colleen Griffin, Cuyler Thompson, Karen Amos. Back row: Donna Keith, Bryan Orozco, Mark Torrez, Jimmy West, John DiPippa.



**TWU LOCAL 556 GRIEVANCE TEAM** Bottom row: Brandon Hillhouse, Lyn Montgomery, Becky Parker, Amy Harthausen, Sara King. Back row: Kathy Anderson, Allyson Parker-Lauck, Jamie Lynch, Joe Skotnik, Stacey Martin, Prairie Mathews, Denny Sebesta, Catherine Rea.



# Scheduling Update

**Lisa Trafton**, Scheduling Committee Chair

**T**here are certainly not a lot of changes happening presently with our schedules. However, we have seen a slight increase in the line averages for both June and July, and I expect this trend to continue through the beginning of August. After August 15, though, all bets are off. The Company is again planning on reducing the number of flights, which will, in turn, impact the amount of flying available.

We have received some phone calls regarding the number of Reserves scheduled each month. The number of Reserves scheduled each month has typically been based on the past actions of our workgroup. This year as a whole, our flying behavior has been unlike any in the past. Our Reserve

## This year, our flying behavior has been unlike any in the past.

utilization in May, for instance, was 73 percent, while in May of 2008, that number was 81 percent. This change alone indicates that we are seeing fewer sick calls, and when those calls come in, those trips are being picked up from Open Time rather than requiring a Reserve to fly the pairing. We are also seeing more people picking up trips from Open Time during the week, thus requiring fewer Reserves scheduled on Mondays through Thursday.

“We have improved our ability to look at the past trends in the Flight Attendant flying habits,” says Claire Taitte, Manager of Inflight Planning, “however this year, we have seen substantial changes in these behaviors that make our [Reserve] coverage needs much more difficult to predict and plan for.”

Inflight Crew Planning has put together a great presentation demonstrating how our schedules are built. In the presentation, you will see the process from start to finish, and how all the different departments come together to make it happen. When you have time, check it out by going to *SWALIFE* > *Resources* > *Publications*, and click on “Your Schedule – beginning to end” above the April edition of *Onboard*.

Kathy Anderson's

# F.Y.I.s



- **RESERVES** who are scheduled over twelve hours will automatically receive premium pay for the leg that takes them over twelve hours.
- **A** bid line-holder who trades for a reserve bid position will be placed at the reserve seniority number for which they traded. The Flight Attendant that originally bid Reserve will retain credit (\*) for the reserve line.
- **THE** Company will be sending letters of discipline regarding attendance to your SWA email account. Forward your SWA email to your personal email so you do not miss the discipline letter. Be sure to delete outdated email from your SWA account so your inbox does not fill up and prevent the newer emails from being forwarded.
- **ON** the Personal Illness Note (PIN), the only information you should include regarding your condition is whether it is an illness or an injury.
- **IF** you are tying a PIN to a doctor's note, the PIN must be turned in first, and then a doctor's note can be linked to it.
- **A** PIN and Quarterly Doctor's Note cannot be used in the same quarter unless they are used as stated above to link a single continuous occurrence.
- **A** Flight Attendant who calls in sick online will be treated as a Must Ride, and will not be required to occupy a jump seat.
- **IF** a Flight Attendant is awarded a Charter that was built with legal crew rest and she/he receives illegal crew rest, the Flight Attendant will be compensated triple time for all Charter flights, and double time for all deadheads or ferry flights on the duty period following the illegal crew rest.



- **CHARTER** bids in domicile are awarded in seniority order. After in-base charter bids have been awarded, the Out of Base Charter Bids will be awarded in order of submission not order of seniority. There is no longer a confirmation process.
- **YOUR** Union negotiated an increase in 401(k) match to 8.5 percent. You must contribute at least nine percent to receive the full benefit of the increase.
- **UPON** ratification of the new Contract, you can now trade your VJA pairing with another Flight Attendant's VJA pairing via CWA as long as each pairing departs during the last day of the month and the first three days of the bid month. (Trades with Open Time have not been implemented at this time.) **Note:** At least one of the two Flight Attendants involved in the trade must immediately call Scheduling, inform them of the VJA trade and request the "V" label be restored. If time permits, Scheduling will restore the "V" labels; otherwise, Scheduling will request the Flight Attendant call back. (This practice will remain in effect until the electronic process is developed and implemented.)
- **IF** you bid a charter and are awarded it, you are automatically responsible for it.
- **UNIFORM** allotments are awarded on the first day of your anniversary month. The month prior to your anniversary month, go in and spend what is left in your account or you could lose it because the maximum amount held in the account is \$500.
- **YOU** can pick up from Open Time during your vacation. Call Scheduling and they will manually put the trip on your board. In future months, this process will be automated.

Kathy Anderson is a Dallas Flight Attendant, and member of the TWU Local 556 Grievance Team.

# Grievance Team Update

## Allyson Parker-Lauck

As I write the Grievance Team Update for this issue of *Unity*, the words of former Vice Presidential candidate Admiral James Stockdale never seemed more appropriate: "Who am I? Why am I here?" Back in May when then Grievance Chair John Parrott was sworn in as our Local's new Treasurer, he left some really big shoes to fill as the Grievance Committee Chairperson, and by the time you read this, your new Executive Board will likely have a plan in place for future grievances—but somebody needed to do the job in the interim. That's where I come in. Luckily, I'm not doing this alone. Former Grievance Chair and Contract Negotiator Denny Sebesta has also offered her knowledge and talents to help us bridge this gap.

As of June 5, 2009, the Union had 170 grievances on the books:

**17 Termination Grievances**  
**38 Non-Termination Discipline Grievances**  
**90 Contract Grievances**  
**25 Group Grievances**

Cases that are resolved before entering the grievance process will be reported in the next issue of *Unity*.

During this review process, Denny took on the task of reviewing all the Contractual Grievances on the books to see if and how they would be affected by the new Contract language. I took on a project of reviewing non-termination discipline cases with a commitment to either resolve the cases by working on settlements with the Company, or move forward with the grievance process.

We met May 28, June 5, and June 15 to discuss almost seventy of these cases, resulting in numerous settlement offers, most of which have been accepted by the Flight Attendants involved. The cases that could not be settled will be slated in the very near future for the next step in the process: Board of Adjustment or Arbitration. Board of Adjustment and Arbitration are handled very much like a trial where the Union and Company present their cases, call witness, cross-examine each other's witnesses, and present evidence. In the Board of Adjustment, a panel of four people hears the case, with two people chosen by the Union, and two

Continued on page 25.

# New Contract, New Policies

Board Member at Large **Mark Torrez** discusses some of the big changes happening at Southwest that affect TWU Local 556 Members.

Greetings fellow LUV Jetters! So much has been going on within our ranks since our last magazine. We've elected new leadership, voted in a new Contract, have four-legged friends onboard, Unaccompanied Minors are the new Business Select, and we've got a whole new look with both our uniforms and *Unity*!

We have a great mix of invaluable experience and fresh ideas with seven Board Members re-turning to their positions, seven new Board Members, and one Board Member returning to the Board in a new position. This current Executive Board hopes to bring you a professional (and fun) Union.

An improved commuter policy, reserve system, pay scale, and trip trading system are just some of the highlights of the new Contract. For more in-depth details of the Contract, you can view it in its entirety on the DVD that was mailed to your address on file with Southwest Airlines, or online at the TWU Local 556 Web site.

I never thought I'd see the day that we let pets onboard. While I think most of us are excited to extend our POS to our Passengers' animal friends, I know that some Flight Attendants have serious concerns about possibly having to interact with them. Fortunately SWA has put limitations as to what can be brought onboard.

We shouldn't have Noah's Ark at 40,000 feet, and in fact, it more likely than not won't be any different than when assistance animals are onboard—except, of course, that these pets must be in their carriers during the entire flight. If you are extremely aller-

more onboard the aircraft to avoid paying that checked bag fee. Keep in mind that Passengers are allowed one carry-on item and one personal item. While it's not our job to police this, it is our job to ensure that carry-ons are stored properly.

We have seen more FAA officials than ever on our LUV jets, so I encourage everyone to be diligent when checking for compliance during our walk-through.

Finally, our friends in the Flight Deck are going back to the bargaining table. Please be supportive of their efforts in the upcoming months. Don't assume anything as to why they're heading back. If you ask any two of them their reasons, you'll very likely get two different responses. The best thing we can do for them and for our company right now is to just continue to be supportive of their efforts.

## The first thing out of our mouths when the front door opens should be, "Hi, do you know there's a UM onboard?"

gic to a specific animal, Management has assured us that accommodations will be made for you.

Speaking of pets, we are charging an additional \$25 for Unaccompanied Minors now too. With the added fee for UMs, it's more important now than ever to be diligent with them during their check in and release procedure when they are in our charge. The first thing out of our mouths when the front door opens should be, "Hi, do you know there's a UM onboard?" Like our Business Select passengers, UMs are now a new revenue-generating commodity for SWA, and we want to make sure that we are the airline and Flight Crews of choice for parents and other family members.

We are also now charging passengers for a third checked bag. While you might not think this will affect your job directly, most likely it will at some point. Passengers may attempt to bring



Oakland Flight Attendant **Mark Torrez** is a TWU Local 556 Executive Board Member at Large.

# BALTIMORE

Audrey Stone



Hello, fellow Baltimore Flight Attendants. We have a new Contract that the Union and SWA celebrated on June 8 with a joint party in the lounge. Base Manager **Jamie Willard** and Inflight Supervisor **Patricia Grimaldi** were both instru-

mental in assisting with this project. Thank you to everyone who took the time to make an informed, educated decision, and thank you to the TA educators **Cuyler Thompson, Mary Longobardi, Steven Romero, Stephanie Roberts, and Lisa Happer** who helped answer your questions in the lounge.

If you haven't heard yet, here's some big news for Baltimore based Flight Attendants! The State of Maryland passed legislation enacting the **Maryland Flexible Family Leave Act** which will allow employees in Maryland to utilize earned, but

The Maryland Flexible Family Leave Act will allow employees in Maryland to utilize earned, but unused leave-with-pay for the illness of an immediate family member.

unused leave-with-pay for the illness of an immediate family member, including children, spouses, or parents. The concept is similar to Kin Care in California, with one big difference: your leave *must* be paid, so you need to have available sick or vacation time to cover your absence.

In order to take advantage of the Maryland Flexible Family Leave Act, you will need to complete a request, which can be found on *SWALife > About Me > My Life Events > FMLA, ADA, & State Leave Laws > Maryland*. Then you will need to call the Baltimore Inflight Office at 410-981-1552 (not Scheduling) for reporting purposes.

As always, it's an honor to serve you, and don't hesitate to contact me by email at [bwi-debm@twu556.org](mailto:bwi-debm@twu556.org), or call me at 214-640-4308.



Flight Attendant **Audrey Stone** is Baltimore's Domicile Executive Board Member for TWU Local 556.

# DALLAS

Karen Amos



Hello Dallas! Thank you for giving me the privilege and opportunity to continue serving you. I would like to recognize **Dean Walker, Stacy Madison, Michele Moore, Nayo Muldrow, Jane Johnson, and Andy Sprinkle** for serving on the Contract Educa-

tion Team, and helping to inform the Membership on the Tentative Agreement.

On a somber note, Dallas Flight Attendant **Amy Barth** recently lost her courageously-fought battle against cancer. A memorial service celebrating Amy's life was held on June 4, and was attended by many of Amy's Southwest Airlines friends and coworkers. Many of us were also able to keep in touch with Amy and support her during her illness thanks to a group of Flight Attendants who started "Amy's Angels" on the social networking site, Facebook. A very special thank you goes out to those Flight Attendants who launched the group to give Amy hope and love during her time of need. She will be missed.

It's also my sad duty to report that **Sandra Bogan** lost her husband Tom due to complications from bypass surgery on June 9. Tom was a wonderful, personable man who put you right at ease the moment you met him, as well as a loving husband. Sandra and Tom were married for 31 years. Please take a moment to let Sandra know we're all thinking of her and her family during this difficult time.

At the same time as we remember those who are no longer with us, I'm very happy to report that Dallas Supervisor **Ken Oaks** is doing well after suffering a heart attack, and will soon be back in the office. Frankly, it's been way too quite around here without Ken's boisterous laugh filling the lounge. Be sure to stop and say hello when he's back on the job.

On a closing note I would like to encourage you to call me at 214-734-9384 with questions, concerns or topics you would like to discuss. You may also email me at [dal-debm@twu556.org](mailto:dal-debm@twu556.org).



Flight Attendant **Karen Amos** is Dallas' Domicile Executive Board Member for TWU Local 556.



# HOUSTON

Crystal Rains



**H**ello Houston, and congratulations on a new Contract! As you are aware, 61 percent of you voted to ratify our Tentative Agreement that not only increases your flexibility, enhances your quality of life, but gives you a six percent pay raise

with 100 percent retro! A huge thank you goes out to Flight Attendants **Phil Vaughn, Javi Garcia, Teri Queen, Troy Ford, Chad Knesek, David Kirtley, and Stephanie Tillman** for stepping up, and sitting in the lounge day in and day out in order to inform our Members about the Tentative Agreement.

Our quarterly Membership Meeting was held on June 19 where we elected new Houston Shop Stewards and took nominations for Convention delegates. Please visit the Houston base on the TWU Local 556 Web site to see a complete list of newly-

**Houston hasn't had any significant administrative changes in the last several months, and none are predicted.**

elected Shop Stewards and delegate candidates.

Houston hasn't had any significant administrative changes in the last several months, and none are predicted. The base as a whole has been quiet, but word on the runway is that a new buffalo wing joint may be arriving in the very near future.

If you aren't receiving the Houston *E-Connection*, please email me at [hou-debm@twu556.org](mailto:houston-debm@twu556.org), and I will add you to the mailing list.

That is it for now, Houston, and as always please keep abreast of all the changes that affect our workgroup and your daily life by visiting the Houston page at [www.twu556.org](http://www.twu556.org). Take care, and fly safe!



Flight Attendant **Crystal Rains** is Houston's Domicile Executive Board Member for TWU Local 556.

# LAS VEGAS

Bryan Orozco



I want to take a moment to introduce myself to anyone who doesn't know me yet. I've been a Southwest Flight Attendant for the last ten years. I was an Oakland-based commuter for most of that time, but I've been here in Las Vegas since our base

opened. I was a Shop Steward for about six years, a Precinct Captain, and most recently a Contract Action Team member during the last Contract negotiations.

A few Flight Attendants and Pilots have reported that their cars have been towed from the economy/employee parking lot after leaving them for an extended time. Remember, cars cannot be parked for longer than 30 days. Base Manager Scott Wells told me that he would bring up the issue with the Las Vegas Parking Authority, adding

We're starting out on what I hope is three great years together, Las Vegas.

that we should (hopefully) be transitioning to swipe cards in the parking lot sometime this month.

We're starting out on what I hope is three great years together, Las Vegas, but I want to thank a few of our coworkers who have helped get us to this point, starting first and foremost with **Kevin Onstead**, our previous Domicile Executive Board Member. Since our base opened, Kevin worked tirelessly for all of us—probably more than we realize. I also want to recognize all the Vegas lounge educators, namely **Kevin Barber, Michael Konkel, Dana Suechting, Maria Teresa Hank, Steve Guardado, April Bozarth, Brett Neva-rez, and Billy Makedonsky**, for all their dedication and hard work.



Flight Attendant **Bryan Orozco** is Las Vegas' Domicile Executive Board Member for TWU Local 556.

# ORLANDO

Jimmy West



**H**ello from the Sunshine State, where it's definitely summer based on the afternoon thunderstorms we've been having lately—and the delays they're causing. Remember to carry your Contract with you in the event you have an extended

duty day and you need to know your legalities for crew rest. Knowledge is power!

An issue here in Orlando outside the terminal by operations involving one particular TSA agent requiring Flight Attendants without an MCO badge to go back inside has been resolved. According to the Director of Operations for the airport, you are allowed in this area to make a phone call, but you must stay under the covered area, which is not considered part of the ramp, and this TSA agent now understands that it is fine for you to be there.

Another big issue that I've heard lately is Flight Attendants being forced-based out of Orlando. It's true that we're reducing flights in August, and as of now, we will reduce 26 flights Sunday through Fri-

Flight Attendants come into play for originating and terminating flights, so hopefully we shouldn't see anyone force-based.

day, and 33 flights on Saturdays. The good news is that we're only losing three terminators, and even this is only temporary (but could change based on the economy). Remember, Flight Attendants come into play for originating and terminating flights, so hopefully we shouldn't see anyone force-based.

Finally, I really want to thank Flight Attendants **Rick and Patty Mueller, Ian Johnson, Lindsey Hooten, Billy Makedonsky, and Jesse Cano** for their tireless efforts in helping educate our Members in the Orlando lounge on the new Contract during April and May.

Please don't hesitate to contact me directly at anytime with questions, comments, or concerns.



Flight Attendant **Jimmy West** is Orlando's Domicile Executive Board Member for TWU Local 556.

# CHICAGO

Donna Keith



**H**ello Chicago! My name is Donna Keith, your new Domicile Executive Board Member representing the Chicago Flight Attendants. **Kyle Whiteley** has left some big shoes for me to fill, and I plan to do my ut-

most to provide the Midway Flight Attendants with the same great representation.

What an exciting few months! We introduced our new Tentative Agreement, voted on it, and now have a new Contract! Thank you to all the Flight Attendants who helped with the T.A. education in the Chicago Lounge; the sharing of your knowledge was invaluable.

We have a new Assistant Base Manager here in Chicago. **Jim Mitchell** comes to us most recently from Orlando, where he held the position of RT Supervisor, as well as Assistant Base Manager. Welcome to the Windy City, Jim!

Summer is almost upon us, and we know what that means! More UMs! Even with new procedures they are still slipping away, so please be diligent when UMs are onboard the aircraft.

Remember, if a Supervisor calls you to schedule a fact finding meeting, please call the Union office at 800-969-7932 and speak with a Grievance Specialist who will schedule your meeting and assign you a Union Representative to attend the meeting with you. If in doubt about a conversation, call the Union office and request that one of the Grievance Specialists perform a three-way call with you and the Supervisor. If you have any questions or concerns my contact number is 214-640-4335 or email me at [mdw-debm@twu556.org](mailto:mdw-debm@twu556.org).

Fly safe, and have a great summer!



Flight Attendant **Donna Keith** is Chicago's Domicile Executive Board Member for TWU Local 556.

# OAKLAND

Todd Gage



**G**reetings, Oakland! It's great to be finally getting started as your new Domicile Executive Board Member, and I am deeply grateful to you for electing me to represent the Oakland base. For those of you who don't know me yet, I've been

a Southwest Flight Attendant for eleven years, and here in Oakland for a decade. I'd also like to thank **Mark Torrez**, our outgoing DEBM and incoming Board Member at Large, who made the baton exchange very painless for me.

These first few months on the job have been exciting ones, especially the brand new Contract that's going to provide much more flexibility in our working and personal lives, and a lot more money in the bank. Our Tentative Agreement Lounge Educators deserve a special shout out for all their countless hours spent educating our Oakland Flight Attendants so they could make an informed decision about the T.A. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication.

Parking is an ongoing issue in Oakland. The parking lot is not secured as it should be, and this is something Mark has been dealing with the Port of Oakland since 2006, and I will continue to work with him on this. There is another parking option, however. Please visit the Oakland base page on the TWU Local 556 Web site for information on FASTTRACK Airport Parking, which is offering Southwest Airlines employees discounted monthly parking for only \$25 a month.

I recommend you visit the Oakland base page for the latest information about what's going on in our base. I update the page at least once a month, and send out a monthly *E-Connection* with important highlights related to Oakland.

Finally, if you commute, please keep up with the constant schedule changes we keep having with flights. I don't want to see anyone caught off-guard while they're heading to work. Ciao, and fly safe!



Flight Attendant **Todd Gage** is Oakland's Domicile Executive Board Member for TWU Local 556.

# PHOENIX

John DiPippa



**G**reetings Phoenix, and congratulations on a new Contract and especially a big thanks to the TA Lounge Educators **Nathan Koschmann, Mark Savage, Michael Broadhead, Della Saucier, Dorothy Rogers, George LaMonda,**

and **Chris Knops**. I hope everyone enjoys their Retro Checks and all of the other newly-gained Contractual Items, such as the PIN, a better Commuter Policy, and enhancements to Reserve. The Ratification Party on June 8 was a big hit, and a special thanks to Inflight Management for helping with this event.

In the June Membership Meeting, we elected new Shop Stewards: **George LaMonda, Mark Savage, Anne Barnes, Louie Sibaja, Nancy Kallas, Kathleen Gregory, Tim Blore, Darryl Daoang, Sonia Hall, and Della Saucier**. A big thank you for the last three years is in order for **Richard Locher, Michael Broadhead, Mike Foley, and Lisa Vallet**.

On a sad note, we recently lost a member of our Phoenix Flight Attendant family. Former Phoenix Flight Attendant **Matt Ridolpho** has passed away. Many of you might have flown with Matt in the past, and remember what a great guy he was. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Ridolpho family fund at Chase bank (account number 826717316). Please keep Matt's family in mind during this difficult time.

Also, please keep Phoenix Inflight Supervisor **Arnie Cogan** in your thoughts and prayers during his hospital stay and recovery.

In closing, I write the *E-Connection*, and if you or a coworker doesn't receive it, visit the Union Web site at [www.twu556.org](http://www.twu556.org) and add your email address to your profile. My Union email address is [phx-debm@twu556.org](mailto:phx-debm@twu556.org) and union phone number is 214-640-4314 or 800-969-7932 ext. 4314.

Best wishes for a safe summer.



Flight Attendant **John DiPippa** is Phoenix's Domicile Executive Board Member for TWU Local 556.



**“President’s Message,” continued from page 4.**

reached in a certain amount of time, a neutral arbitrator will impose a contract. While arbitrations should always be a last choice, one of the biggest problems for unions is that if management stonewalls their efforts, the employees can become frustrated, and may lose faith in their union. Time is always on management’s side, but the Act requires both sides to bargain in good faith—or risk letting an arbitrator decide on the terms of the contract.

Finally, the Act is good for all unionized companies. While we haven’t always agreed on issues, we work for a company that has supported the formation of unions. Many other companies do everything they can to keep unions out, and as a result, impose unfair work rules and wages that may allow them to unfairly compete with unionized employers.

As we are all enjoying the benefits of our new Contract, we should never forget how fortunate we are to have a strong Union to stand up for us, and try to imagine where we would be without it. Pick up the phone and call your elected officials, and tell them that you support the Employee Free Choice Act and they should too. Like Herb says, “It’s the right thing to do.”

**“We’re too hot!,” continued from page 5.**

ing the cabin comfortable. Also, older aircraft are like older cars or houses in that they’re not as airtight as a newer aircraft. Insulation gets old and the systems are just not as efficient over time even when maintained well. It’s always helpful to carry a uniform sweater/cardigan and to keep the pilots aware of any extremes in

cabin temperature. It will never be perfect, especially given that our turns are so quick, it takes time on either end of a turn for the entire cabin to adjust.

It’s our goal to make sure our passengers enjoy their flight, and part of that is reacting to and understanding cabin temperature management.

**“Is this little piggy a killer?,” continued from page 8.**

who *may have been* exposed to the virus on their travels.

Please continue to protect yourselves and your family by following the same common sense guidelines we’ve been advocating all along: wear gloves when collecting trash, cleaning the cabin, and especially anytime you’re dealing with an ill passenger. Remember to wash your hands regularly, both on and off the aircraft, and take what you hear from the news media—and Joe Biden—in stride, verifying facts from reputable sources, such as the WHO ([www.who.int](http://www.who.int)), the Centers for Disease Control ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)), the National Institutes of Health ([www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov)), or, better still, your own personal physician.

**“COPE-ing with Political Issues” continued from page 9.**

know what legislative and political issues you would like to see addressed in this space. As we grow in these new projects, the new Unity, and the new TWU COPE Field Program, your feedback as readers is crucial to our success; please don’t be shy. Gwen’s email is [gdunivent@twu556.org](mailto:gdunivent@twu556.org). We look forward to hearing from you. When we all pull together, we truly can have an impact on legislation that affects our lives at work. Stay tuned next time for a success

story about Flight Attendants getting involved and making a difference!

**“What can RIGs do for you?,” continued from page 11.**

dant, or picked up and then given away. However, Reserves are not entitled to the additional pay over 10.5 hours, since you may be scheduled up to 12.5 hours on a Reserve assignment. Scheduling will, furthermore, apply full RIGs to an optimized pairing so that pairing must be pay protected as if it were originally built by Crew Planning for the bid packet. If Scheduling combines an unaltered original pairing with additional legs, the pay and any applicable RIGs for that original pairing will not be reduced from adding additional legs to that original pairing. In fact, the additional leg pay and any applicable RIG pay will be added on top of the pay of the original pairing. Check out Article 21, section 22 of the new Contract at [www.twu556.org](http://www.twu556.org) for additional duty-day protections when a pairing has been optimized.

Another new item in Contract 2008 regarding optimized pairings is that Scheduling will not be allowed to build pairings any longer than the pairing length originally built by Crew Planning, except when assigning Reserves. What this means, for example, if Baltimore had no 4-days built for July, then no optimized pairing could exceed three days, unless being rebuilt for, and assigned to, a Reserve.

**Split Pairings**

There are a couple of improvements to Split pairings, which are also described in-full in Article 21, section 22 of the new Contract, available on the Union’s Web site.

One of these very important

improvements is that an Open Time pairing that is split by Scheduling will not only be protected with DHR and THR, but the DPM of 4.0 TFP will be applied to the split portion of that Open Time pairing. If a 3-day pairing is split on the second day, for example, both the second day of the first portion and the first day of the second portion will pay at least 4.0 TFP, if both split portions of the 3-day are assigned to Reserves. If the Reserve is also assigned additional flying or APSB, the DPM will be recalculated for the entire duty period. This protection is for Reserves only.

Another change to split pairings is when a Flight Attendant would like to split a pairing for give-away or trade. When a Flight Attendant would like to give part of a pairing away or trade it prior to check-in, any RIG associated with that part of the pairing being given away or traded will be prorated. This means it will be evenly distributed over the pieces of the split pairing as if Scheduling itself had split the pairing. This is a change from the 2002 Contract, and helps maintain the efficiency of those pairing pieces that were split-off and traded back into Open Time.

If the Flight Attendant would like to give away or trade part of this pairing after check-in, she/he may choose to keep all the RIG, prorate the RIG, or give away all of the RIG. This may better help the Flight Attendant give that portion away. Once again, the Flight Attendant has to check-in for the pairing first before she/he is able to split the RIG affected pairing and keep the entire RIG or give the entire RIG away. The rest of the split pairing language is still in effect and can be viewed at the TWU Local 556 Web site in

the Compensation Article 21, section 22 of the 2008 Contract.

Hopefully, you have a better understanding of RIGS, Optimized Pairings, and Split Pairings. If you have questions or comments in reference to any of this information please do not hesitate to email anyone of your Negotiating Team Members at [negotiators@twu556.org](mailto:negotiators@twu556.org) or call the Union office 800-969-7932 and ask for anyone on the Negotiating Team.

**“Grievance update,” continued from page 16.**

people chosen by the Company. Their decision is final and binding. In an Arbitration, on the other hand, the case is heard by a single neutral Arbitrator, but like the Board of Adjustment, his or her decision is final and binding.

Before going on to give you more details on the current “State of the Union” in regard to grievances, I want to acknowledge the Grievance Team who spends countless hours researching cases. The entire process from the first phone call to the receipt of the Arbitrator’s decision relies on their attention to detail and research. I would also like to commend your Executive Board for the time they spend reviewing cases and determining which cases should move forward through the process.

## We're off to Boston!

To celebrate Southwest's newest city, we're having a bean counting contest, a **Boston Baked Bean** counting contest!

**Make a quick stop by the Union's Glass Case in your Lounge, and take your best guess at how many Boston Baked Beans are in the Container.**

The person that guesses the closest, without going over wins a \$25 iTunes gift certificate.



**Official entry forms are located by the Glass Case!**

Contest Ends August 13, and winners will be announced in the August E-Connections!  
**GOOD LUCK!**

# DUE I, OR DON'T I?

TWU Local 556 Treasurer **John Parrott** answers some common Member questions

I first want to thank you for electing me as your new Treasurer. As I promised during my campaign, I am working diligently to ensure that our treasury is closely monitored so we are prepared for whatever lies ahead.

I also would like to answer some of the most common questions I receive, and to provide you with some future plans from your Treasurer's office.

Many Members have questions regarding the supplemental insurance that is offered through Colonial and Lincoln. While the group plans are offered through the Union, we do not have access to the detailed information to answer your questions. If you have questions regarding coverage, claims, or your premiums, please contact the Colonial/Lincoln insurance service center at 877-

855-9191 noon to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, to speak to with a TWU Member advocate. If you receive an automated answering service, please allow up to 24 hours for them to call you back.

Every six months we send out statements to those Members who, for one reason or another have fallen behind in paying their Union dues. The latest round of statements was mailed at the end of June and the beginning of July. When we send out these bills, we receive lots of phone calls asking why they owe past dues. The most common answer is because these Members didn't earn enough money during the month to have their dues payroll deducted.

With our current practice of sending a bill twice a year,

sometimes our Flight Attendants forget that they took a month off five months ago. We will be changing to a quarterly billing system in the near future to help correct a portion of this issue. A good rule of thumb is that dues are owed for any month that you have received compensation from the Company that was negotiated in our Contract. The chart below indicates when you are required to pay dues, and those rare occasions when dues are not assessed.

If you have ever have questions to ask me, please feel free to contact the Union office at 800-969-7932.



Dallas Flight Attendant **John Parrott** is Treasurer of TWU Local 556.

## Examples of when dues are Owed / Not Owed

### When dues are owed:

- First month following probation period
- Received 5th Paycheck & 20th check
- Received 5th Paycheck & No 20th check
- Received 20th Paycheck & No 5th check
- On leave and receiving sick leave pay on 5th check
- On leave and receiving sick leave pay on 20th check
- On leave and receiving 15 weeks salary continuation on 5th check
- On leave and receiving 15 weeks salary continuation on 20th check
- On leave and receiving vacation pay on 5th check
- On leave and receiving vacation pay on 20th check
- Active and giving away all flights, Not receiving pay on 5th check
- Active and giving away all flights, Not receiving pay on 20th check
- Did not work enough to pay Union dues (partial payment) on 5th check
- Did not work enough to pay Union dues (partial payment) on 20th check
- Transfer from Supervisor position to flight status

### When dues are not owed:

- On Probation (first six months of employment)
- Extended Probation Period (beyond first six months due to leave)
- On leave and not receiving a check
- On leave and only receiving Workers Compensation Indemnity checks from Insurance Company (after the 15 weeks of salary continuation)
- Transfer to Supervisor position



# We're Bringing Our Union to Your Desktop!



If you are having trouble viewing this email, [view it in your web browser here.](#)

## Baltimore E-Connection July 1, 2009

### Base News

• If you drive to work in BWI, allow a few minutes as the employee parking lot is being repaved.

• We have

**We're working hard to bring you  
the news YOU can use as quickly  
as possible.**

**Sign-up today to receive the E-Connection  
and Unity Update by simply adding your email address  
to your profile on the Union's Web site,  
and take a look around.**

**If your email is already listed - check your spam filters  
to ensure email from [twulocal556@cbmail2.com](mailto:twulocal556@cbmail2.com)  
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