



Cuyler Thompson
WHY I TRAVEL



THOM MCDANIEL
on Unaccompanied Minors



Community

MAGAZINE OF TWU LOCAL 556



**LET'S GIVE OUR PASSENGERS
SERVICE WITH
A SMILE**

AND KEEP THEM COMING BACK FOR MORE!

ZEN & THE ART OF BEING A FLIGHT ATTENDANT

**Volume 3, Number 1
SUMMER 2010**

From the Editor

have a pretty simple thought process when it comes to our Union’s communications: tell the Flight Attendants the information, tell them that we told them, and then tell them that we told them that we told them. That’s why, if you follow our communications, it may seem like you have read the same information – albeit creatively-edited – presented to you a few times.

Beginning with this issue of *Unity*, we are making some changes to how some of our communications are presented. This issue and future issues of our quarterly magazine will be limited to 28 pages, allowing us to return to a printed issue of *Unity Update* that will again be placed in the mail-boxes twice quarterly – without any added expense. While our readership numbers are well-above the national average for transportation-related email campaigns, we were still not reaching enough people through email. Downloadable issues of *Unity* and *Unity Update* are always available on the TWU Local 556 Web site.

With that being said, this issue of *Unity* has a bit of a layout change. The articles have been edited down more

than normal in order to facilitate the layout, as well as present the information in a more concise way. Because there are so many articles this month, I have tried really hard to create additional “white” space to make it easier to read.

I would always like to have more pictures in each issue; however, this issue is packed with useful information on our quality of life, and the future plans of the Union. Also, at the bottom of many of the pages, you will see some of the accomplishments our Union has made in the past two months. In the future, I will find the space for the complete list. We do some pretty good work for our Members, and I think it is time we bragged a little.

I am very proud of this issue, and I hope you find it informative and a bit entertaining. Keep those comments coming, and let us know how we can make this publication even better for you.

Thanks for everything you do each day for our passengers and for each other.

Enjoy your summer!

Kyle

YOUR LETTERS

Bettina Woodard Baron’s article in the last issue of *Unity* really made me think about the choice we have when it comes to being an organ donor. I didn’t even know that programs exist that allow someone to designate a recipient, especially a co-worker at Southwest. I am sure this was difficult for Bettina to share, but it really opened my eyes.

– Amy W.

BRAGGING RIGHTS Look for what your Union is bragging about at the bottom of many pages in this issue of *Unity*.



unity
THE MAGAZINE OF TWU LOCAL 556

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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 500 words, are libelous, defamatory, not factual, in bad taste, or are contractually incorrect.

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Submit all comments and letters to communications@twu556.org.

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Unaccompanied Minors & You

TWU Local 556 President **Thom McDaniel** discusses the ongoing problems with UM procedures.

Unaccompanied Minor (UM) procedures are currently one of the biggest concerns reported by our Members. This issue first became a problem for your Union several years ago when, for some reason, we began to have a rash of Flight Attendants being disciplined for UMs being taken off the plane in the wrong city, or not being signed-off to their guardians. Obviously, this created a problem for our Company and our Flight Attendants

Your Union attempted to negotiate a provision in our Contract that would make Flight Attendants only responsible for the safety of UMs while they were on the aircraft. We were not successful in adding this to our Contract, but due to changes in FAA minimum crew requirements, Southwest Airlines was forced to change UM procedures so that Ground Operations employees were supposed to take responsibility for the UMs at the aircraft.

This change in procedure was an unmitigated disaster. The procedure was neither well-defined nor communicated. Our Flight Attendants and other employees continued to receive discipline based on this poor procedure, and our UMs continued to be mishandled.

Your Union pressed the Company for changes to the UM procedures, and this topic became a constant subject in Company “roundtable discussions.” The overwhelming consensus was that Flight Attendants should resume responsibility for transferring UMs so that there would be less room for error.

With the granting of our partial exemption from the FAA, Flight Attendants were once again able to transfer UMs to guardians. After several months (and continued unjust discipline for our Flight Attendants), the Company finally changed the procedure so that the A Flight Attendant is now responsible for the transfer of UMs. The goal of this change

is to limit the number of people to whom UMs are transferred, and thus eliminate mistakes. The Company originally wanted the A Flight Attendant to be responsible for the transfer of UMs on unscheduled aircraft changes, but your Union effectively changed that procedure since it created unnecessary liability for both the A Flight Attendant and the Company. We also took a strong position that every workgroup needs to be aware of the responsibilities of every other workgroup, so everyone would be on the same page.

Your Union believes that the UM procedures work only if everyone is doing their jobs according to the procedures. If everyone does not do their jobs as required, we will continue to have lost UMs, unjust

Everyone at Southwest Airlines needs to make a strong effort to prevent mistakes when it comes to unaccompanied minors.

discipline, and more delayed flights to compound the problem.

Since the changes have gone into effect, I have received numerous reports that the new procedures are still not being complied with in many cities. The purpose of these changes is to create checks and balances in our system. When one of our Pilots is going through a checklist and sees a problem, they don't ignore it; they follow proper procedure – that's why we have the best safety record in the industry. Everyone at Southwest Airlines needs to make the same effort in handling UMs.

I'm not a fan of pitting one workgroup against another or writing people up, but we all have to do our jobs to be successful. Ground Operations employees are aware of the changes in UM procedures and what their responsibilities are. Since UMs are now charged an extra fee, Ground Operations is aware that they are on the plane, and a Sweeper should be available – no matter what the time of day it is. If they are not available, this will cause a delay of flight. This needs to be written-up, so it can be corrected. If Sweepers go home at the end of the night leaving no one to transfer the UM to, call Scheduling to ask to speak to the Supervisor on duty. When there is a breach of policy that puts a UM at risk, the situation needs to be reported so that it can be corrected.

Southwest Airlines has always been a Company with a “whatever it takes” attitude, which is a good

thing. However, when “whatever it takes” absolves employees of responsibility for doing their jobs, it switches to “go along to get along,” our Company, our product, and the experience we provide to our Customers all suffer.

We are lucky to work for a Company that encourages Employees to *do the right thing* and in this case, that depends on each and every Employee *doing things right*.

A FINAL WORD ABOUT SICK CALLS

My original President's Message this quarter focused on the ongoing issue of Flight Attendant sick calls, which, at 7.3 hours per month per active Flight Attendant in 2009, are the highest in our industry. In short, sick calls are way over budget. Our next raise depends upon the Company's profitability, so if you're genuinely sick, call in sick. Otherwise, please come to work. We all want – and deserve – a raise in 2011, and our sick calls could make all the difference. Enough said on that subject.

THOM MCDANIEL

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LEADERSHIP CHANGE AT TWU LOCAL 556

TWU Local 556 Executive Board Member-at-Large **Colleen Griffin** resigned her position on the Executive Board effective June 17, 2010.

In accordance with the TWU Local 556 Bylaws, the candidate with the next highest number of votes will be offered the position if vacated during the first eighteen months following a general election. **Don Shipman** has accepted the position. We welcome Don, and look forward to working with him in this new capacity.



On behalf of the Members of TWU Local 556 and the Executive Board, we thank Colleen for her service during the last year, and wish her the very best in her future endeavors.

COPE: Local 525 & the FSC Shoot for the Stars

by **Susan Kern & Gwen Dunivent**

When NASA's **Constellation Program**, a human spaceflight initiative initially conceived to replace the Space Shuttle Program, was effectively canceled earlier this year by President Obama – who called the project “over budget, behind schedule, and lacking in innovation” – the TWU Florida State Conference (FSC) and TWU International sprang into action.

Rallying around TWU Local 525, representing many workers at both the Kennedy Space Center and Cape Canaveral Air Station who would be adversely impacted by the project's cancellation, we participated in public rallies and lobbied on both a state and federal level. We queried our legislators on their positions regarding the NASA budget, gauging their interest and involvement in finding a solution. We asked for their ideas and answered questions, and we successfully lobbied on a bipartisan level, even meeting with legislators who previously had no interest in talking to labor.

TWU Local 525 President **Kevin Smith** reported at a recent FSC meeting that the rock had moved, and progress had been made in closing the gap between the discontinuation of the Space Shuttle Program and the launch (figuratively speaking) of NASA's next project, which he felt was positively impacted by the efforts of the FSC and TWU International.

We're also pleased to tell you that we have a brand new TWU International COPE-Political Field Department responsible for creating and growing these state conferences, and will include the very important political work for the benefit of our Members. **Alex Garcia** is the department's new director, and will be assisted by **Terry Daniels** and TWU Local 556's **Gwen Dunivent**.

Your TWU Local 556 Executive Board is extremely supportive of the state conference program, and is making sure that you're well-represented at each of the state conferences.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOUR COMMITTEES?

SURVEY COMMITTEE

This year our survey will mimic the 2010 census, as we aim to gain a better understanding of the demographics of our Membership. The Company can provide basic information about our Members, but we want to know more about who you are, and how TWU Local 556 can help address your specific needs.

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

The Scholarship Committee’s current goal is to increase both the Paul Gaynor and Shanna M. Martin scholarships by \$1,000, bringing each award to \$2,500. Proceeds from the sale of the TWU Local 556 thirty-fifth anniversary Union pins will go toward this effort. In the future, we hope to offer additional scholarships to more of our Members and their families.

COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL EDUCATION

COPE is working closely with TWU International to further develop state conferences consisting of all TWU Locals within a specific region. These conferences meet on a quarterly basis to discuss issues affecting their Members and for developing strategies or impacting legislation and legislators on those specific issues and others relating to working families. TWU Local 556 is currently participating in state conferences in California, Florida, Texas, Illinois, and Nevada/Arizona.

UNIFORM COMMITTEE

We have added new uniform pieces, some of which are available now, including the untucked shirt and new sweaters, while the much-anticipated new metro parka is coming soon. Longer shorts are also coming, but skorts will be retired on December 31. Southwest is also beginning to develop its goals for our next all-new uniform.

SHOP STEWARD COMMITTEE

We continue to educate our Shop Stewards and ensure they have the tools available to adequately represent our Members during Fact Finding meetings. Going forward, we will be implementing programs to build future leaders for our Local, and encourage activism and membership on other committees, as well as on the base level.

SAFETY TEAM

Our top priority is the implementation of the Flight Attendant Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP), which, focuses on accident and incident prevention by encouraging voluntary reporting of safety issues and events that Flight Attendants see during their duty day (please see page 8). To encourage participation, nonpunitive measures are built into the program.

SCHEDULING COMMITTEE

The Scheduling Committee recently settled a grievance filed on behalf of our Flight Attendants in July of last year regarding the number of pairings that check-in later in the morning, and is working with Inflight Planning to test and develop pairings that are more productive and enhance our quality of life. Right now, the flying is better, line averages are up, and there are plenty of trips available to pick-up. Nevertheless, we anticipate that our flying may decrease in September.

TWU LOCAL 556

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Professional Standards continues to monitor ways to expand and improve the new and improved program, and make adjustments to better serve the needs of our Flight Attendants. In addition to the regular hotline, we can now be contacted by email via the TWU Local 556 Web site. Professional Standards is expanding our message of “no conflict, no case,” and will assist with duty-related conflict issues involving FARs, safety, and Southwest company policy.

GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

We have adopted an aggressive agenda to significantly reduce the waiting time between the initial call and final case resolution for Members who file a grievance. Furthermore, regular quarterly training is on the agenda for the Grievance Committee for the remainder of 2010 in order to continue providing each Member with even better customer service when you call the Union office. Also, we are focusing on additional research to ensure that no stone goes unturned when preparing each grievance.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

FAAP is continuing to screen new facilities, and recently entered into three new agreements with new facilities, two of which are managed by former Flight Attendants. We currently have more committee members on our team than we have work, but we urge those Flight Attendants who are seeking fellowship to reach out to us. FAAP is also working closely with Management and SWAPA in search of new enhancements for our program.

VETERANS COMMITTEE

The Veterans Committee continues to expand its knowledge of veteran’s issues, and will participate in any TWU International events that benefit or recognize veterans. We hope to have a list of every veteran and current active duty Members on the Web site by year’s end. Pertinent information for veterans will be posted on the Web site under the Veterans Committee page. Finally, we hope to have a catastrophic fund available for any Member who is injured while serving our country and becomes disabled.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

We have been busy working on easy-to-use, interactive tools to help our Flight Attendants enhance their Contract knowledge. We will continue our online Contract Pop Quizzes, and coming soon, our “Contract Live” video series, along with Contract resource guides to accompany them will be available on the TWU Local 556 Web site.

HEALTH COMMITTEE

Your Union’s Health Committee is making duty-related fatigue awareness a top priority this year. Flying while fatigued is dangerous, as well as mentally and physically debilitating. Remember, if you are feeling fatigued (as opposed to just tired), and are unable to perform your duties safely, you may take advantage of the contractual fatigue policy by calling Scheduling and stating that you are fatigued. They will immediately pull you for a minimum of ten hours. Article 25 details the policy, reassignment, and follow-up process.

WORKING WOMEN’S COMMITTEE

HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS COMMITTEE

We are excited to announce that our Working Women’s Committee and Human and Civil Rights Committee have joined forces in order to better serve both our Flight Attendants and our communities alike. Over the next several months, the joint WWC and HCRC will be organizing community service projects, and visiting each base to speak with you about what’s important to you and your community.

CISM

We recently participated in an internal survey to collect information on how we can improve our current incident tracking system. As a Team we are working on different ways to effectively communicate which services CISM provides, and we are working on having pamphlets available at each domicile, having representatives from Local 556, Inflight Management, and Scheduling attend our yearly recurrent training, and participating in domicile safety fairs. We are also constantly looking for new and improved ways we can help our Membership.

Flight Attendants & Fatigue

In March of this year, Chicago Flight Attendant **Justin Whittington** participated in the FAA's Congressionally-mandated Flight Attendant Fatigue Countermeasure Training at the Civil Aerospace Medical Institute in Oklahoma City, a pilot program designed for line-flying Flight Attendants to help validate the project's draft curriculum and to provide feedback. Here's what Justin had to say about the program.

The issue of crewmember fatigue isn't new, but most studies to date have focused almost exclusively on Pilots, and the issues that uniquely affect them. However, Congress issued a directive to the FAA's Civil Aerospace Medical Institute (CAMI) in 2005 to look into the issues surrounding Flight Attendant Fatigue, and fifteen Flight Attendants from various airlines and I recently attended CAMI's first **Fatigue Countermeasures Training for Flight Attendants** in Oklahoma City.

In a recent large-scale survey of Flight Attendants in the United States, 84 percent reported feeling fatigued while on duty during their previous bid period, and of those, 71 percent felt that their ability to perform safety-related duties was compromised as a result. These numbers, coupled with other statistics, paint an alarming industry-wide picture of an exhausted Flight Attendant workforce.

Fatigue is difficult to define, and is more complex than just feeling tired. According to the FAA, "fatigue can impair judgment and the ability to think clearly...it compromises the ability to respond immediately and effectively...[and it can] cause lapses in performance that go unnoticed."

More than eighty percent of Flight Attendants (and workers in general) report that their fatigue – which can cause

effects on the human body similar to alcohol intoxication – was caused by their work schedules. Crews are often taken up to their maximum allowable duty time, while being given the minimum amount of rest. However, the Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs) does not take into account transit time to and from the hotel, personal hygiene, eating, and the actual hours of sleep that leaves most crews well-below rest minimums and physically healthy sleep times. Combined with higher incidences of "air rage," increased load factors, tighter security restrictions, and "irregular operations," these factors create an environment that breeds fatigue and stress in our workforce.

Unfortunately, the number of Flight Attendant reports regarding fatigue-related incidents is far lower than it statistically should be given the size of the Flight Attendant workforce in the United States. This is understandable, in part, due to the prevailing focus on Pilots, but reporting systems are now being promoted to Flight Attendants, as well.

Until the data have been compiled, analyzed, and formally published, there are some ways that we, as Flight Attendants, can help mitigate, prevent, and in some cases, counteract fatigue, at least temporarily.

Go to sleep. Ostensibly, the only cure for fatigue is sleep, and getting enough sleep can sometimes be a challenge. Develop routines and habits that help you fall asleep quickly and easily at night in order for you to wake up as refreshed as possible.

Don't time travel. In the course of our jobs, we often cross time zones, but it can be useful to keep our internal clocks set for our home base. This is especially useful if you'll be returning there the following day.

Make the most of your layover time. If you have a fifteen-hour layover, there's no excuse for not getting enough sleep. If your overnight is much shorter, it makes sense to call it a night as soon as it's reasonably possible, even if that means "slam-clicking." [Ed. note: see Zen tip number two on page 11.]

Have a cup of Lift. Caffeine can be used strategically to help counteract fatigue. It can take up to a half-hour to take effect, and may work for up to four hours. However, avoid caffeine in the several hours leading up to sleep, as it could negatively affect your body's ability to sleep soundly.

After speaking with the Flight Attendants from other airlines while at the CAMI training, I realized how lucky we are at Southwest Airlines to even have a fatigue policy – especially considering that we have the shortest contractual duty day in the industry. Nevertheless, familiarize yourself with your Contract as it relates to duty, rest, and fatigue. Also, take advantage of reporting tools, including our own internal IRs, by submitting an Aviation Safety and Health Database International (ASHDI) report on the TWU Local 556 Web site or at www.ashdi.com, or by submitting a report to NASA's Aviation Safety Reporting System at asrs.arc.nasa.gov.

These reports can be submitted anonymously and without any fear of retribution. Remember, it's only through voluntary reporting that the truths behind inadequate safety regulations can be fully understood. As aviation safety professionals, we have a duty to our coworkers, our passengers, and ourselves to do all we can to make our jobs as safe as possible.

JUSTIN WHITTINGTON

is an Chicago Flight Attendant, and a TWU Local 556 Shop Steward.

Health and Safety Committee

by **Michele Moore**, Health Committee Chair

I recently attended the World Aviation Training Symposium (WATS), where one of the keynote speakers was FAA Director Randy Babbitt. Something he said really stuck with me, and I want to share it with you: "Professionalism is doing the right thing at the right time, all the time. It's not what you're doing when you're being watched; it's what you're doing when no one is watching."

Thinking about this, I've noticed Flight Attendants bending the rules and taking a lot of shortcuts lately: arming the doors early, texting from the jumpseat even after we've admonished the passengers for continuing to use their portable electronic devices, not being in our boarding positions, or even not performing over-wing window exit briefings. In a "perfect storm," our shortcuts have the potential to turn a controllable emergency situation into a disastrous one. As Health Committee Chair, it's my responsibility to remind everyone that our policies and procedures are designed to ensure the safety of both passengers and crewmembers.

I also want to share some information from the blood-borne pathogen training session at the WATS. Remember, anytime we're dealing with an emergency we need to use protective equipment, and even when we're doing something as mundane as picking up trash, we should be wearing rubber gloves. A story was shared where one crew didn't take the time to don gloves or use masks while performing CPR, and three of the six Flight Attendants contracted Hepatitis B, which has a mortality rate equal or greater than HIV and AIDS-related conditions. I recommend that all Flight Attendants talk to their doctors about getting vaccinated against this virus.

Finally, I want to reiterate that we have the ability and the responsibility to take health and safety reporting into our own hands, and report unsafe working conditions to the proper authorities. This could mean calling the cockpit and advising them it's too bumpy to serve at the moment. If you see an unsafe situation or health issue that cannot be immediately addressed, write an irregularity report, and also submit an Aviation Safety and Health Database International (ASHDI) report via the TWU Local 556 Web site. You should also give me a call at the Union office.

Grievance Committee Update

by Allyson Parker-Lauck

As of July 2, 2010, the Union has 146 Grievances on file: sixteen terminations, seventeen group grievances, 25 non-termination discipline grievances, and 88 individual contractual grievances. This represents a fifteen percent decrease in the number of open grievances on file since April. This is due in large part to the diligence of your Grievance Team in negotiating more than forty settlements in favor of the Flight Attendants since our last report in April.

WHY IS IT TAKING SO LONG TO RESOLVE MY GRIEVANCE?

The honest answer is that they take too long – and that’s no excuse! This is something that I have taken very seriously in the last year. We have been able to reduce the average waiting time on discipline grievances by several months, and the average waiting time for contractual grievances by approximately one year. Rome wasn’t built in a day, and we are maintaining our aggressive approach to continue this downward trend. Contractual timelines take some time, research, presentation of a case to the Executive Board, working towards a settlement or slating the case for Board of Adjustment or Arbitration. However, six months from initial call to final resolution is a goal I hope the Union can achieve in the very near future.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING ABOUT ALL OF THE CWA OUTAGES?

Your Union has been working hard to ensure that the Company knows how important it is that CWA is stable, especially during the initial Open Time release. There have been a lot of factors in play that explain the outages we have experienced over the last few months, and some of these factors have been explained in several RBFs. The fact is that no matter what the reason, five out of the last six Open Time releases have had serious issues. Your Union is concerned,

involved, and we have met regularly with the Company expressing these misgivings. This will continue to be a top priority.

WHY DOESN'T THE UNION ACCEPT EVERY GRIEVANCE FILED?

When a grievance is filed, your Grievance Team researches it, and prepares a “Management Case” and a “Union Case” for the Executive Board, who reviews the merits, looking at Management’s and the Union’s position on each case to determine whether to proceed. When it comes to going forward to a Board of Adjustment or Arbitration Hearing, we always have to keep in mind that in a discipline case, Management has the burden of proof. In a contractual case, the Union has the burden of proof, so just pounding your fist on the table and saying, “This isn’t right!” or “This isn’t fair!” isn’t going to cut it. We have to be able to prove to a neutral arbitrator through clear and convincing evidence that the Company actually violated the Contract. When a Member asserts a contractual violation, it is vital to know whether the Union can meet its burden of proof before proceeding. Likewise, in a discipline case, the Executive Board has to look at the information that Management has, and determine if they can meet their burden of proof. Your Executive Board must ensure that the cases the Union takes forward have merit, so that our treasury is protected, and so that we do not move forward on a case without merit, and risk an arbitration decision that could be harmful to the entire Membership.

I HEARD THAT THE EXECUTIVE BOARD DOESN'T REVIEW GRIEVANCES ANYMORE, AND THAT A COMMITTEE HAS TAKEN OVER.

It is true that a Grievance Review Committee has been formed to review all grievances before they are presented to the Executive Board. However, the committee simply makes recommendations to the Board in order to streamline the process. The Executive Board receives the full list of grievances prior to the Executive Board Meeting to review, and if they disagree with any of the Committee’s recommendations, they have the opportunity to discuss any case. Additionally, the Executive Board has the final vote on whether to proceed on every single grievance.

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Zen & the Art of Being a Flight Attendant

by Kyle Whiteley, with Daniel Lestarjette

*The morning glory which blooms for an hour
Differs not at heart from the giant pine,
Which lives for a thousand years.*

– Zen poem attributed to
Matsunaga Teitoku (1571 – 1653)

The word **Zen** may conjure up images of the Buddha sitting serenely in meditation, or even of New Age (or middle aged) hippies, flower power, and drum circles. But no matter what your particular cultural background or personal beliefs, injecting a little Zen into your life – both onboard the aircraft and off – can go a long way toward cultivating a greater sense of well-being.

Ostensibly, though, “Zen is not some kind of excitement,” according to the late Zen master Shunryu Suzuki. Rather, it’s a “concentration on our usual routine.” In other words, paying mindful attention to everything we do can make a world of difference in how we relate to what comes our way – for better or worse. Sound good? Here are four Zen tips to help you get started.

ZEN MASTER SAYS: “I’LL BE WITH YOU PRESENTLY.”

According to Zen, there’s no time like the present. In fact, there’s no time at all: no past, no future, only the present moment, the **eternal now**. But how often do you find yourself lost in thoughts of the past or the future – while the present moment passes you by? The solution is harder than it sounds, though. In whatever you’re doing, even collecting trash in the cabin, just do *that* thing, and attentively bring yourself back to the present moment whenever you find your mind has drifted away. You’ll be amazed at what you see and experience by staying focused on the present.

ZEN MASTER SAYS: NOTHING. HE “SLAM-CLICKED.”

In many respects, Zen has more to do with listening to what your body is telling you about its needs than it does about revealing the sublime truths of the universe. “If you’re tired,” says twelfth century Zen roshi Eihei Dogen, “go to bed.” Likewise, Dogen continues, “if you’re hungry, get something to eat.” It can be fun to meet at the hotel bar for a few drinks with your coworkers after a long day, but pay attention to what your real needs are. Sometimes, slam-clicking is a better option in order to be your best the next day – especially if you have an early lobby time.

ZEN MASTER SAYS: “START ACTING LIKE A BABY!”

This doesn’t mean throwing a temper-tantrum everytime you don’t get your way, but it *does* mean seeing and doing things as if it were the very first time. Shunryu Suzuki calls this “beginner’s mind.” To babies and young children, the world is a magical place full of wonder and excitement, and they interact in this environment in creative and innovative ways. Opening up to our beginner’s mind helps us do our jobs, connect with our passengers, and solve problems in wholly different ways that can offer profound benefits in both productivity and general well-being.

ZEN MASTER SAYS: “LET IT GO, AND BE NICE.”

We all get worked-up by something or someone sometimes. It could be a snide remark by a passenger or fellow Flight Attendant, or maybe Provisioning didn’t do something right in the last city. Occasionally, our first reaction is to “get ‘em back.” But we don’t always know the whole story, or maybe we took a comment differently from how it was intended. In fact, not being attached to negative (or positive) feelings is one of the tenets of Zen. Letting things go and responding with compassion and kindness is often a more productive and liberating response. Give it a try.

KYLE WHITELEY

is a Chicago Flight Attendant, and TWU Local 556’s Communications Coordinator. His partner **Daniel Lestarjette** works with TWU International’s Organizing Department, and is a member of the *Unity* Editorial Team.

Service with a Smile

by Patrick Dean

All of us are dealing with one issue or another: a potentially devastating medical condition, an addiction, caring for aging parents, raising children, or even keeping the faith while a loved one is serving overseas in our armed forces. Any one of these emotional, physical, or spiritual issues can prevent us from meeting our obligation to the mission of Southwest Airlines, which is a commitment to provide “the highest quality of Customer Service delivered with a sense of warmth, friendliness, individual pride, and Company Spirit.”

As Flight Attendants, it’s important to realize that we are not the only people affected by issues in our personal lives. Our passengers, who ultimately pay our salaries in the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression, also bring their own personal issues onboard. However, we have an obligation to do our best to make their experience on Southwest a positive and supportive one.

I have always tried to push through my own personal shortcomings over the past thirteen years since I was hired

at Southwest, and project a positive attitude when serving our passengers. Most of my coworkers never knew the real story of what I was dealing with in my personal life: the death of my mother from cancer in 1996, living with HIV, and an ongoing battle against a thirty-year addiction that, thankfully, I overcame with the support of Clear Skies, friends, family, and colleagues at Southwest.

This discretion was a choice I made for myself, for my passengers, and for my coworkers. On each and every trip, I tried to put aside my hardships, and keep a smile on my face when greeting or interacting with internal or external customers. We all have good and bad days at work, but it’s in our own best interest to self-correct negative behavior—even in the face of stressful situations, both on and off the job.

Many Flight Attendants, regrettably, have not picked up on the simple, intuitive nature of “service with a smile.” Make no mistake: our passengers know when they’re being viewed as a waste of our time, and no one deserves to be treated this way. Passengers deserve our understanding, support, compassion, and our legendary Southwest service.

Individual personality quirks aside, bringing your own negative energy to the workplace makes an already challenging job even more difficult for the rest of us, including our passengers who are facing their own challenges. At the end of the day, nobody wants to be around you personally or professionally.

Many of us pride ourselves on being the very best we can be at Southwest, while striving for a better understanding of both others and ourselves on our individual journeys in life. But regardless of our personal mission in life, the professional mission of Southwest Airlines should be followed each and every moment we wear the uniform.

PATRICK DEAN

is a Baltimore Flight Attendant, and TWU Local 556 Member. Email your comments to communications@twu556.org.

2010 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

The TWU Local 556 Scholarship Committee awards two scholarships to eligible Flight Attendants or their family members each year. The Paul Gaynor Scholarship is awarded to a Local 556 Member who is continuing their education in the field of Labor Relations. Unfortunately, we received no applications for the Paul Gaynor Scholarship this year so it went unawarded.

The Shanna M. Martin Scholarship was established in honor of families who support us in our careers as Flight Attendants and Union Members. Eligible recipients are immediate family members of a TWU Local 556 Member who must have demonstrated support for the Members in work as a TWU Local 556 Member or Southwest Airlines Flight Attendant. Special consideration is given to those applicants who have been involved in TWU Local 556 or Southwest Airlines activities.

This year **Kyla Moore** was chosen to receive the Shanna M. Martin Scholarship. Kyla is the daughter of Dallas Flight Attendant Michele Moore. She has been actively involved in Local 556’s annual Toys for Tots drive, as well as assisting her mother with her duties as Local 556 Health Coordinator when able. — *Mark Torrez, Scholarship Committee Chair*

Financial Update

by John Parrott, TWU
Local 556 Treasurer

In April, Southwest changed the way they report to us the dues money that is collected from our paychecks. Because our system needed to be upgraded, we decided to design a new system that will allow for additional reporting, as well as increased service options for our Membership. The new dues payment system is completely Web-based, and will be upgradable as necessary.

Currently, outstanding dues are approximately \$287,135.

The dues system is finally online, and 2,200 statements were mailed on July 8 and 9.

This new system has the following capabilities: one password for the TWU Local 556 main site and the dues site, monthly invoicing, online statement viewing, e-billing feature, and online dues payment.

This system also now offers us administrative reporting and functionality that we never had with any of our previous dues systems.

If you receive an invoice in the mail, please pay it promptly. You can log onto the TWU Web site to pay it online with any major credit card. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call.

Thanks for your patience as we have worked through the implementation process.

Professional Standards

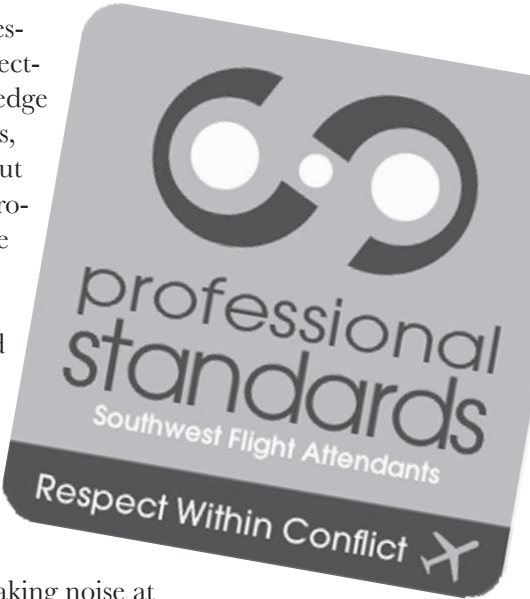
by Michael Broadhead

The new Professional Standards program is off to a great start, and is already showing some strong results; the committee members are doing outstanding work. Call volume has increased, and we’re grateful for every opportunity to reduce the number of Irregularity Reports being submitted.

Remember, as professionals (and adults), we’re expected to use our skills and knowledge to try to resolve our own issues, complaints, and differences, but when it moves into conflict, Professional Standards is available to assist. At the same time, however, Professional Standards is not a place to call and complain about a coworker and expect that to be the end of it – you must be willing to be part of the solution.

Professional Standards deals only with on-the-job conflict, so if a coworker is making noise at the hotel while on an overnight, for example, we cannot assist with that. But if an inbound crew leaves the aircraft with through-passengers onboard unattended, for instance, we can address the issue, often with excellent results.

Most Flight Attendants are very receptive to the work Professional Standards does. Occasionally, we are confronted with high levels of aggression and anger, but our role does not and will not change in those cases. Professional Standards is for assistance with duty-related conflict regarding FARs, safety, and Southwest Airlines policy – and it’s completely confidential. We’re supported and funded equally by TWU Local 556 and Southwest Airlines Inflight Management. For more information on how we can help you, please visit our page on twu556.org or call 888-322-3735.



Why I Travel

by Cuyler Thompson

I had just sprinted barefoot through the Bangkok International Airport, stopping at the duty free shop for a moment to catch my breath, and was now sweating on the tiniest jumpseat ever, though dressed appropriately for an invitation to first class. My travel blazer was still damp after a poorly executed airport restroom removal of some “souvenir stains” accumulated during seven weeks in Southeast Asia. I had over applied the best cologne my remaining Thai bahts could buy at the duty free shop to mask my manly musk – which may have explained why I was nauseated. Well. I was also hungover, but that’s beside the point. (Note: do not try matching your local host in a drinking contest, especially if it involves a bottle of rice wine with a dead snake in it. Trust me on this.)

So there I was on an oversold flight from Bangkok to Frankfurt, with nine sleepless hours sitting on this non-buoyant flotation device to look forward to – and I wasn’t even supposed to be on a jumpseat. Pitiful, little me.

My dear, sweet Granna always says to me, “I don’t see what’s so wrong with just staying home.” Ironically, it was my grandparents who gave me the money to fly on Southwest to Los Angeles on my first spring break at Texas A&M University back in 1985 – my first time on an airplane. Like everyone else, I’d grown up in a cultural box, and I’d been told that this was The Way Things Are. But it didn’t take me long to begin seeing things around me that I didn’t like about The Way Things Are, and as soon as I realized that there were other boxes, I wanted to explore them, dreaming of finding a box that would fit me perfectly. If I had known that the more I wandered the less I would fit in *anywhere*, would I have stopped?

Sitting on that tiny jumpseat, I thought about my new friend Noklek, a former Flight Attendant herself who now worked at the ticket counter in Bangkok. As we bonded over galley gossip and the box of chocolate I’d bought as a ~~bribe~~ gift, she quoted from *1,000 Places to See Before You Die*: “With travel, our minds become more curious, our hearts more powerful, and our spirits more joyous. And once the mind is stretched like that, it can never return to its original state.”

According to The Way Things Are, the world is a dangerous, frightening place, with the big, bad wolf lurking around every corner. So, then, why do I travel? I travel because it makes me less afraid of the world, and

more afraid of The Way Things Are. I enjoy sharing the best of American culture – hamburgers, individualism, diversity, and entrepreneurship – while appreciating the non-obvious intricacies of other places, such as mahouts in Cambodia, drug dealers in Columbia, and fishermen in Tunisia.

I travel abroad to remember why I love my own country, and I travel within the United States to remember that, while founded on perfect ideals, it remains an imperfect place. I travel to help me unlearn the prejudices engrained into each of us by The Way Things Are. Now I’ve been out of the box long enough to see my “American-ness” through others’ eyes.

I travel to escape. It breaks up the monotony and keeps me sane during the daily slog we call being a grown up, and because it forces me to live in the real world, as opposed to “in-my-head-land” – familiarity dulls my antenna to the world. When I’m in a new place, I have to pay attention to the street signs, the unfamiliar smells, strange sounds, new faces around me, and ultimately to myself. And it’s true that travel changes a person, sometimes superficially, sometimes in profound ways.

Traveling abroad always puts my life here in the U. S. into perspective. Occasionally, I get the urge to complain about having to wait fifteen minutes to see the dentist (or my hairstylist), or that Scheduling put me on hold *again*, or because the cook didn’t hold the onions. Then I remember some of the people I’ve met in Vietnam, Tanzania, or Morocco, and realize how silly my “problems” are compared to theirs. Did you know, for example, that half of the world’s 2.2 billion children live in abject poverty, that eighty percent of humanity lives on less than \$10 a day, but more significantly, that more than three billion of our fellow humans struggle to survive on less than \$2.50 a day? So many people right now at this very moment are wondering how they’re going to feed their children tonight, and who

certainly wouldn’t complain if there were onions on it. Many people don’t have teeth to polish even if there were a dentist within fifty miles. I’m so fortunate to live in a society where the possibilities are almost quite literally endless.

One of my traveling buddies never says *have to*; he says *get to*. When I say, “Ugh, I have to carry my backpack up five floors,” he responds, “No, you *get* to carry your backpack up five floors!” Then I remember all the landmine victims we’d seen that day, and I feel glad that I have legs to walk up a flight of stairs. When I say, “Ugh, I have to wash my underwear in the sink?” he responds, “No, you *get* to wash your underwear in the sink,” and I remember the little girl whose job it is to carry her family’s freshwater for the day six miles round trip. When I say, “Ugh, I have to sit on this tiny jumpseat for nine hours from Bangkok to Frankfurt,” I hear his voice in my head reminding me that no, I *get* to ride on this tiny jumpseat for nine hours from Bangkok to Frankfurt.

In the end, this is why I travel: to learn to see from as many different perspectives as possible; to learn to recognize fear in all its myriad forms, and to walk away from it; to learn to recognize and embrace a good heart when I see it; to learn to act with wisdom, compassion, and understanding, instead of the ignorance that comes from The Way Things Are. And you know something? I’m not there yet – far from it, in fact. But maybe with every journey around the world (or even around the block), I can get a bit closer.

Some people dance. Some sing. Some play the piano. It’s their passion, and their way of expressing themselves. My passion is to travel, and **I travel because I want to**, and because I’ve deliberately structured my life around it. And that’s the simplest answer.

CUYLER THOMPSON

is a Baltimore Flight Attendant, and TWU Local 556 Recording Secretary. He’s traveled to at least sixty countries, but he’s lost track.

Stock Clerk Negotiations

by **Robert Rasch**, Teamsters
Local 19 President

The Southwest Airlines Stock Clerks voted down the Tentative Agreement on February 23, 2010. On March 10, the Negotiation Committee met without Management to review the areas of the Tentative Agreement that would need to be changed before bringing it to our Membership for another vote.

We met with Management on April 19, where both parties discussed which areas of the Tentative Agreement would need modifications in order to proceed. After this meeting, the Teamsters Local 19 requested costing data on the current proposal, as well as comparisons with other Southwest Airlines workgroups and the industry-at-large. This information was compiled by Management, and both parties met again on June 1 and 2 to review the data and to continue negotiations.

After two days of negotiations, and seeing that neither Teamsters Local 19 nor Southwest Airlines could arrive at an agreement, the parties mutually agreed to request assistance from the National Mediation Board under Section 5 of the Railway Labor Act. The specific articles in dispute are Articles 4 (Classification), 6 (Overtime and Holidays), 14 (Wage Rules), 15 (Wage Rates), and 16 (Profit Sharing).

The Teamsters Local 19 Negotiating Committee wishes to thank the Members of TWU Local 556, the Union of Southwest Airlines Flight Attendants, for your continued support throughout our negotiations process.

IAM Represents Customer Service Agents & Customer Support and Services by **Ann Liu**

We are still struggling with the glitches in the CS2 and QIK4 systems. The high summer traffic demand, along with the reduced number of employees in each group, will be very challenging to our level of customer service. The good news is, however, that nobody does it better than these fine men and women – we shall overcome!

SWAPA Update

by **Jacob North**, SWAPA
Communications Committee


The Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association has been very busy in the last year. Several grievances, a newly ratified contract, and a lot of internal preparation to revisit Section 6 negotiations in 2011 are among the issues SWAPA has faced.

As is with any new Contract, the implementation process can be very complicated and tedious. Ours is no different. Our old agreement was fifteen years-old, and required substantial changes in the way we administer the Contract. Over 200 changes were required in the new CBA. In effect, this Contract has taken us from the analog (paper and pen) era to the digital age. Now, many of our scheduling processes will be handled through automation, and provide a less cumbersome interface between our Schedulers and Pilots. Additional flying will be more automated, and make the picking-up of extra flying easier through the use of smart phones and new technology.

Our Negotiating Committee is beginning the process of polling our group to understand their priorities for our next agreement when our current Contract becomes amendable next summer.

The last item to mention is the ongoing battle one of our peer groups has been engaged in for some time. The Pilots of Spirit Airlines voted overwhelmingly to call a strike if they are released after their cooling-off period this month. As an organization, SWAPA is dedicated in our support of the Spirit Pilots to garner reasonable work rules, benefits, and compensation improvements in their contentious negotiations. Their Management team has not bargained in good faith, and they've left their Pilots with little alternative but to seek self-help. This isn't an issue of a highly-paid group of professionals simply seeking more money. The list of unfair demands by their Company is long, and suffice it to say, they cannot agree to them, nor should they. It provides none of us any benefit for a group such as theirs to accept their Company's offer. The continued "race to the bottom" hurts every employee group, including Southwest Pilots and Flight Attendants, who enjoy reasonable benefits, work rules, and compensation.

On the **TWU Local 556** Web site, we asked you to nominate your coworkers who consistently pack a great food bag, and we asked some of those Flight Attendants for their secrets. Here's what they had to say.

<p>On the TWU Local 556 Web site, we asked you to nominate your coworkers who consistently pack a great food bag, and we asked some of those Flight Attendants for their secrets. Here's what they had to say.</p>	<p>What is your thought process when packing your food bag?</p>	 <p>JIM WOJCIECHOWSKI, CHICAGO</p> <p>I look at what I can make at home that will be quick and easy to package for my food bag.</p>	 <p>JOHN D. MOORE, CHICAGO</p> <p>It's all about variety. I try to pack different food items that will fill me up. I rarely eat everything I pack, but I rarely have to buy food on the road.</p>	 <p>DOUG WHITMORE, DALLAS</p> <p>Will it travel well, and will it stay fresh?</p>
	<p>What do you typically carry in your food bag?</p>	<p>I always carry yogurt and oatmeal. My main meals can be anything from steak, chicken, or pork chops to salmon, tuna, or a salad – anything I've had at home for dinner in the last week I take with me on the road. Anything can be heated up with hot water.</p>	<p>I do slam-click, but that's because I'd rather read in bed than go down to the bar.</p>	<p>These days, peanut butter, bread, crackers, and canned goods.</p>
	<p>Do you find that you "slam-click" more than others because you bring a food bag?</p>	<p>No – my food bag allows me to eat what, and more importantly, when I want. If I'm on a five-hour flight, I don't have to worry about getting food in whatever city I may be starting in, since I have it with me already.</p>	<p>I've been making a lot of recipes from Alicia Silverstone's new book, <i>The Kind Diet</i>, and everyone loves the layered bean dip, the barley casserole, and brown Rice Krispies® treats.</p>	<p>No.</p>
	<p>What is your "signature item" that has impressed your coworkers the most?</p>	<p>I make a mean spicy top ramen/egg drop soup. Cook some top ramen noodles, then slowly drop an egg into the boiling water, and let that cook for awhile. Then add frozen peas for a few minutes, and finish it off with sliced mushrooms and green onions. While it cools, sprinkle some cayenne pepper to add the spice. Separate into Ziploc® freezer bags and enjoy.</p>	<p>I can't say I bring anything "crazy" to eat, but I can tell you to leave the Brussels sprouts at home – they stink when they're reheated!</p>	<p>BBQ brisket, potato salad, and baked beans. I also love baking pound cakes, cookies, and pies for my coworkers to enjoy on our trip. [Ed. note: pick-up a trip with Doug!]</p>
<p>What is the craziest food item you've brought on a trip?</p>	<p>I don't think any of my food is "crazy," but I'm not afraid to bring anything.</p>	<p>Bring things that don't require refrigeration or any prep work. Muesli, single servings of rice milk, canned beans, precooked brown rice, instant mashed potatoes, apples, sunflower butter, and miso soup are a few examples. Also, make sure you have plenty of freezer bags to heat up your food.</p>	<p>Fire-grilled hot dogs and chili for the Fourth of July.</p>	
<p>What suggestions do have for those Flight Attendants who are "food bag challenged"?</p>	<p>Don't be afraid to bring anything – and I do mean anything. You can heat anything with hot water. The key is to pack food that you like and will eat, rather than what you might eat. It makes no sense to pack a bag full of food that you only eat every once in awhile, and then spend money on your trip to get food.</p>	<p>Try fruits. Always wrap bananas in foil, and eat berries on the first day.</p>		

What you need to know about FMLA

TWU Local 556 Contract & Leave Coordinator **Denny Sebesta**

Our latest Contract includes several improvements to the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) language, including a reduction in the number of qualifying hours. Since our 2008 Contract was ratified, the Federal government has further reduced the number of qualifying hours for crewmembers from 720 to 504.

In order to remain in compliance with Federal law, TWU Local 556 and Southwest Airlines signed Side Letter 6 in March of this year, which was distributed to each Flight Attendant’s mailbox. (If you haven’t already done so, please insert this revision into your Contract immediately following page 209.)

FMLA, which is different from the Medical leave outlined in Article 15 of our Contract, allows you to take up to twelve weeks of leave on a continuous or intermittent period for your own serious health condition or injury, or for the care of a child, spouse, or parent. Continuous means that a leave is unbroken by a return to work, whereas an intermittent leave is taken from time-to-time with a predetermined frequency and duration for the same recurring health condition.

Furthermore, FMLA leaves are confidential, and all paperwork is processed directly by Aetna, which is the third-party administrator. It’s your choice about whether to go through the FMLA process; however, if you’re eligible, FMLA hours run concurrent with any OJI, Maternity, Medical, or Parental leaves of absence, meaning that your FMLA hours will be reduced by the amount of time you’re on such a leave.

REPORTING SICK CALLS

You are responsible for calling in sick for every trip or Reserve obligation on your schedule until you receive notification that your FMLA leave has been approved.

For continuous leaves, your trips and/or Reserve blocks will be pulled by your base. If you are taking an intermittent leave, you should first call-in sick to Scheduling, then call your base-designated phone number to report your intermittent leave. Your base Leave Specialist can provide the appropriate phone number.

The only time you do *not* report a sick call to Scheduling is when you’re taking an FMLA leave for a family member. For these, please contact your base.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS & NOTIFICATION

Your eligibility is based on the 504 duty hours in the preceding twelve months, which includes accrued vacation. The Company converts your total duty and vacation hours into minutes, and divides that number by sixty to get your FMLA hours.

The Company’s responsibility for notification must be within two business days to your *wncocom* email account if you have been absent for more than three consecutive days due to illness or injury. This is new Contract language, and is more favorable than current FMLA regulations.

Your responsibility for notifying the Company depends upon whether your need is foreseeable, such as a prescheduled surgery date. You must notify the Company as soon as you become aware that you will need a leave.

An unforeseeable leave would be due to an accident or illness. If it’s not practical for you to notify Southwest, and none is given during the leave, you have two calendar days following your return-to-work date to inform your base that your leave be designated as FMLA. The Company will provide you with a case number and the appropriate paperwork to be returned directly to Aetna to ensure FMLA confidentiality.

QUALIFYING REQUIREMENTS & DEADLINES

Your treating physician must complete the FMLA forms, which should be returned to Aetna no later than twenty calendar days from the date the paperwork was mailed or emailed to you. If you picked up the forms in person, you have fifteen calendar days to return them.

Aetna will review your claim, and approve it, deny it, or request additional information before making a decision.

NOTIFICATION OF APPROVAL/DENIAL & RESPONSE

Either Southwest Airlines or Aetna will respond in writing with delivery confirmation, which may include Company email (beginning October 1) within seven business days from the date you submitted your FMLA application, and will include your approval status or will include a detailed explanation of why your application has been delayed.

If you receive a response that requests additional information, you have seven calendar days to send this information to Aetna.

The response deadline is new Contract language that was added to ensure a firm date as to when you would be notified of your claim status. Email implementation was delayed until October 1 due to technical difficulties.

PAY WHILE ON FMLA

If you’re taking FMLA for yourself, you may use your sick bank. However, if you’re taking it for someone other than yourself, you have the option to use your remaining vacation time for the current year.

DENNY SEBESTA
is an Orlando Flight Attendant, and a member of the TWU Local 556 Grievance Team. She can be contacted at *dsebesta@twu556.org* or at 214-640-4316.

Third Quarter FYIs

with **Kathy Anderson**

Reserves who choose to self-notify assignments are required to remain on-call for a change of assignment during your required contact hours. This language can be found under Article 11.4.B “Reserve” of the Contract.

The phone number that you give the Company is not the phone number that Scheduling retrieves from CWA to contact you. You must update your number either with Scheduling or CWA in order to have a current number with Scheduling.

If you have a trip in the give away box and it does not have a SIP on it, it will be deleted from give away two hours prior to check-in. If the pairing has a SIP, it will remain in the Give Away box until two hours prior to the check-in for the SIP flight.

Reminder: Inflight Management is conducting Unannounced In-flight Audits (check rides). Inflight Management can also conduct “ghost rides,” which are different from unannounced audits, and result from specific concerns or reports that the Company has received about a Flight Attendant.

If you waive a deadhead on a VJA trip, you will still receive premium pay for the deadhead.

If you self-assign Airport Standby (APSB), it does not count toward your five monthly maximum for APSB.

Under our Contractual Fatigue Policy, your fatigue must be duty-related. If you deem yourself unsafe to fly or unable to perform required duties due to fatigue, Scheduling will provide you with a minimum of ten hours uninterrupted rest. You will be returned home or reassigned either at the initial phone call or during your required phone call to Scheduling following the rest period. Scheduling will automatically pull you, and they may not question your reason.

You must turn in your doctor’s note (not PIN) prior to or on your next scheduled pairing or within seven working days after the ending of the last day of absence due to the initial report of illness, whichever is earlier.

Working crewmembers are not allowed to sign-up for fourth jump-seat in order to hold it for later use.

If you need to contact Lincoln and/or Colonial Insurance for any reason, the dedicated number for Southwest Employees is 877-885-9191.

If you show up for Recurrent Training without your ID, working flashlight, and/or your Manual is not up to date by the start of class, you will receive an FTR, and may possibly be sent home.

You must check-in at the base where your pairing originates, even if the computer prompts you to check-in out of the domicile.

If you have the option during overlap to call Scheduling and have a pairing (or piece of a pairing to the applicable SIP) pulled to allow for your twelve-hour domicile break, you may request to keep the pairing (or piece of pairing to the applicable SIP), and fly it for 1.5 TFP. (Note: the pairing or pairing piece will not be “ghosted” for overlap.)

BLACK-OUT DATES FOR USING A PIN

- New Year’s Day (January 1)
- Valentine’s Day (February 14)
- Easter Sunday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day (July 4)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday
- Christmas Day (December 25)
- New Year’s Eve (December 31)

INFLIGHT DELAY CODES

- IF 01 Duties for preparation to push the aircraft (e.g. late call for potable water)
 - IF 02 Sick or injured Flight Attendant
 - IF 03 Flight Attendant delayed due to scheduling-related issues
 - IF 04 Flight Attendant late for a flight
- *Inflight delay codes provided by **Keenan Ryan**, TWU Local 556 Executive Membership Coordinator*

KATHY ANDERSON

is a Dallas Flight Attendant, and a member of the TWU Local 556 Grievance Team. She can be contacted at kanderson@twu.org.

COMMITTEE UPDATE

Veterans Committee
by Todd Gage, Veterans Committee Chair

Did you know that with the Military Exigency Leave provision of the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), a family member of certain active duty service personnel is entitled to take a non-paid leave to be with them? You must have worked the required 504 qualifying hours needed for any FMLA leave in order to take advantage of this provision. FMLA applications can be found on *SWALife* under the “My Life Events” tab of the “About Me” section.

Governor Arnold Schwarzeneger recently launched Operation Welcome Home in California, which helps returning veterans reconnect with family and friends, and provides assistance in transitioning into civilian life. Operation Welcome Home is overseen by the new CalVet Corps, which will also create over 300 new jobs in California. Please visit www.veterans.ca.gov for more information, and if you know of any similar programs in other states, please forward this information to me, so that I can make it available to other TWU Local 556 Members.

Finally, I recently learned about an issue faced by other TWU Locals concerning Members who become permanently disabled while on active duty. Once a serviceman or woman who is permanently disabled is discharged from the military, they face a slow process to begin receiving much-needed benefits from the government, thus creating a financial hardship in the meantime. Because of this, I will be proposing a new program to the Executive Board in the near future, which would assist any TWU Local 556 Member who becomes permanently disabled while on active duty, and consequently can never return to work as a Flight Attendant once discharged.

National Update
by TWU Local 556 Executive Board Member-at-Large Mark Torrez

I had the opportunity to participate in a Board of Adjustment hearing for a Flight Attendant in the grievance process. One of the Union witness’s testimony really hit home. She said, “Just flying with him and seeing how much the passengers enjoy him made me want to be a better Flight Attendant.”

It was during a trip later that I realized how much of an affect we have on each other. Do I need to tell anyone else how to do their job? Nope. That doesn’t work anyway; all it does is make your crew hate you. I’ve even seen people retaliate by making it *more difficult* for someone else to do they’re job because they were offended. Pretty soon, the rumor mill is in full force and your name ends up on half the bases’ “no fly” list. How does that old saying go? “You catch more flies with honey than with vinegar.” [*Ed. note: see Zen tip number four on page 11.*]

I’ve also had the opportunity to participate in the ongoing organizing efforts by TWU International for Virgin America, JetBlue, and Allegiant Air Flight Attendants, and I flew on their airlines to “check out” the competition. I have to admit that I was impressed. I’ve always prided myself on the fact that even though we don’t have a lot of bells and whistles onboard, we give the best service in the air. I still think that’s true, but I also think we have to step up our game on the longhauls.

I just flew with a friend I hadn’t seen since I was pretty new at Southwest, and we did our drinks and snacks, then seconds, and finally trash. Normally I’d just continue going through the cabin from time-to-time checking on people until it was time to do coffee and water. However, I noticed about every hour or so, my friend would be in the aisle taking drink orders. Granted, she rarely had more than a tray on these runs, but she did always have drinks to pour. She also did seconds with snacks – I thought she must be crazy!

When I asked her what she was up to, she said, “You do a full service about every two hours when you’re doing short hauls, some of which have through passengers, so why wouldn’t you do the same on a long haul? You don’t just offer your short haul through passengers coffee and water on their second flight do you?”

I wasn’t convinced, but it all seemed very logical to her. Then I also noticed we didn’t have any call buttons sounding off, because people just got used to seeing someone every so often. People commented upon deplaning about how great they felt they were treated and about all the “free stuff” they got, and we even got a “good” letter on the spot, not to mention I got a doily from one of my passengers. They sure did notice our efforts that day. My friend made me want to up my game, and now I make an extra effort to do so.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Someone recently asked me if it was true we were in talks with the Company about pay for 737-800s. As far as I know, Southwest has no plans for 737-800s, and they definitely haven’t approached the Union about the possibility.

Also on the radar is the “probability” of a new class, which is the last thing we want right now. The flying, while good now, will again revert to the levels we experienced last year in the fall and winter. I, for one, don’t want to have to spread that around to even more people than last time! Southwest is well-staffed to handle the amount of flying we currently have, but only when people are showing up for work. Remember, please only call in sick if you are genuinely sick, and if you’re not sick, come to work and do your job.

On a more serious note, please be diligent with your Unaccompanied Minors (UMs). It’s amazing to me that the Company just did all this training for Ops, Customer Service, and Inflight, and I *still* had a flight just last week where my UM wasn’t listed on the Specials report! I also took over a plane from a crew who brought in twelve UMs to Austin, and there was no Sweeper to help. Oakland DEBM Todd Gage just had two flights in a row where no parent and no Sweeper met the flights, and was finally asked to sign them over to Customer Service. Remember, we are subject to discipline, up to and including termination in matters regarding UMs, and ultimately we are responsible. Don’t feel pressured to do something your not supposed to so we can “push on time.”

If you’re still with me, thanks for reading, and if not, I hope it’s not because you’re on the jumpseat and reading on that thing, which would be *bad* – “Hello, unannounced check rides!”

MARK TORREZ

is an Oakland Flight Attendant. He can be contacted at mtorrez@twu556.org or at 214-640-4313.

Baltimore

Audrey Stone, BWI DEBM

Summer is here, and along with hot temperatures, comes Unaccompanied Minors (UMs). If you encounter problems where no one is available to whom you can hand over the UM (e.g. a Sweeper), please document the incident in an Irregularity Report. Remember, Southwest can't address inconsistencies or problems with the new procedures if they don't know about them. Also, if you're ever in a situation where you need immediate assistance, such as in an emergency situation, an Inflight Supervisor is always on duty, even after hours.

As most of you know, **Robert Baker**, **Steven Monteiro**, and **Adam Grace** returned to the line in May, so I'd like to welcome new Supervisors **Tonya Lockett**, **Todd Kukura**, and **Tammy Schanbacher** to the Baltimore office. Good luck in your new positions. Also, **December Garringer** joins us from Boston as our new Coordinator. Currently, we have Inflight leaders from other bases helping out until we are better staffed.

A safety assessment was recently conducted in the lounge. Please ensure that if you're moving furniture that it does not block exits, exit signs, or fire extinguishers. The coffee pot and all supplies were moved to the kitchen. Please help each other out by keeping our shared space clean.

Regarding overlap, you have options when it comes to your domicile break between monthly pairings. You can pick up a pairing at the end of the month before bid awards post for the following month. If it gives you a less than twelve-hour domicile break, ask to be adjusted back. In other words, have your trip pulled as long as it doesn't have a SIP; alternatively, you may fly it for 1.5 TFP. However, your trip will not gray out as if you have options – you must call Scheduling to exercise either. Please refer to Article 10.9.J for more information.

AUDREY STONE
is a Baltimore Flight Attendant. She can be contacted at astone@twu556.org or at 214-640-4308.

Chicago

Donna Keith, MDW DEBM

The change of seasons has also brought a few changes in our base Management. We would like to welcome **Shannon Hiatt** from Houston as our new Assistant Base Manager, as well as new Inflight Supervisor, **Mike Reagan**.

Your TWU Local 556 Domicile Executive Board Members participated in system-wide lounge mobilizations this past May, and I want to clarify some of the more frequent topics we received.

If you self-assign while on Reserve, you must remain available for contact.

Reserves who commute. If you're a Reserve commuter, please familiarize yourself with the commuter policy in reference to the Reserve report time, which states that you must be scheduled to arrive in your base prior to your contact time. This also applied if you self-assign while on Reserve. Also, if you self-assign while on Reserve, you must remain available for contact, and if commuting, you must be scheduled to arrive at the base *prior to your contact time*, which is different from the report time for your self-assigned trip.

Deadheads. If you waive a deadhead at the beginning of a trip, you must check-in with Scheduling. If you don't call, you may receive a no-show or, at the very least, a failure-to-report.

Finally, keep in mind that construction along Cicero Avenue will continue through November. Please allow extra time for your commute to the airport due to lane closures and other traffic slow-downs during construction.

DONNA KEITH
is a Chicago Flight Attendant. She can be contacted at dkeith@twu556.org or at 214-640-4335.

Dallas

Karen Amos, DAL DEBM

Did you know that thanks to health care reform, children and young adults are able to remain on your insurance until they're 26 (without having to be a full-time student)? Even though your child may have dropped off your insurance when they turned 23, they will again be eligible for coverage on your insurance beginning in 2011. Southwest has indicated that information on how they will be implementing the new law will be available on *SWALife* around September of this year.

Don't forget to check your Company email account on *SWALife* regularly, as this is where you will receive point notifications, acceptance of your PIN usage, commendation letters, and many other important messages. Remember, point notifications are no longer placed in our mailboxes, nor can we access this information online. If you cannot access your Company email account regularly – and you should be – please see a Supervisor in the lounge to get your point totals.

Speaking of points, Management has been conducting file reviews when Flight Attendants reach 9.5 points. If you're contacted for a file review, remember that you should only be discussing your point total – nothing else. You can have Union representation in these meetings if you wish.

Just a reminder: when you're calling in sick, just call in sick. No other information is needed or required. If you are on Reserve and feel ill, don't wait to call in. Make that sick call as soon as you determine that you are not able to perform your duties as a Flight Attendant.

Finally, don't talk about your personal differences with other Flight Attendants with Management. Please address those differences directly with that Flight Attendant, or, if that's not an option, call Professional Standards or call me. Talking to Management about these issues is not the best option.

KAREN AMOS
is a Dallas Flight Attendant. She can be contacted at kamos@twu556.org or at 214-640-4309.

Houston

Crystal Rains, HOU DEBM

Summer is in full swing across the nation, and the heat has made itself at home here in Houston. At the same time, we're finally beginning to reap the rewards of the ongoing construction in our airport.

Shannon Hiatt has left us to become the new Chicago Assistant Base Manager. The vacant position will be filled internally, so we'll soon have a new face in the office. Also, **Tammy Schanbacher** has transferred to Baltimore. Both Shannon and Tammy will definitely be missed here in Houston.

I will not change the way I represent you.

I've put in a service request for the computers in the lounge in an effort to increase their speed. Several Flight Attendants received FTRs as a result of slow computers, so if you've experienced a slow computer in the Houston lounge while trying to log onto CWA, please send me an email – providing this information will not only help your coworkers who have received FTRs already, but could help prevent future occurrences.

Beginning in August, we will have our own coed Houston Flight Attendant softball team, thanks to outside sponsors. If you're interested in joining the team and playing with your peers, please email me.

Finally, you received a letter from me in June explaining that I have been receiving harassing notes and phone calls, and my car was vandalized. I want to thank everyone who has sent me emails and other messages with kind words of support. This letter was not political posturing or an attempt to air dirty laundry, but I wanted to tell you, the Houston Flight Attendants, that despite the intimidation efforts that some people have made recently to silence your voices, I will not change the way I represent you.

CRYSTAL RAINS
is a Houston Flight Attendant. She can be contacted at crains@twu556.org or at 214-640-4310.

Las Vegas

Bryan Orozco, LAS DEBM

I know many of you are picking up extra trips in order to pay your bills and other expenses, but remember to take care of yourself first and foremost. If you’re sick, call in sick. If you’re not sick, go to work, because sick leave abuse is grounds for discipline, up to and including termination – and this isn’t the time you want to be out of a job.

I’d like to welcome four new Supervisors to Las Vegas: **Traci Adams, Mike Champion, Eve Koganovitch, Leanne Mieszala.** Each of these new Inflight Supervisors bring many different skill sets and backgrounds, and I wish them luck.

If you’re sick, call in sick. If you’re not sick, go to work.

Beginning in August, Gates 1 – 9 in the C terminal will be closing for tarmac construction. The flights utilizing those gates will be moving to the B terminal. Make sure you allow enough time to get from one terminal to another, because while “late-to-gate” may seem like fun, it can lead to discipline.

Our ever elusive bag room seems to be pretty low on the to-do list, but according to Base Manager **Scott Wells**, construction is scheduled to begin within the next ninety days.

Thank you to all the Flight Attendants who volunteered recently with the Special Olympics. We’re looking forward to even greater participation at our next community service event.

Finally, as always, don’t complicate the system and make our jobs harder than they need to be, and to those Supervisors who went online this past May – good luck!

BRYAN OROZCO

is a Las Vegas Flight Attendant. He can be contacted at borozco@twu556.org or at 214-640-4344.

Oakland

Todd Gage, OAK DEBM

California will be electing both a new governor and a new senator come November, and some candidates are already showing their true colors by blaming many of our state’s problems on workers and unions. In order to protect workers’ rights, we need to elect labor-friendly officials, so please take a little time to research the candidates’ views on issues that are important to you. If you’re not yet registered to vote, now is a great time to do so.

The Alameda County Sheriff is increasing patrols of the employee parking lot, effective immediately. Their presence will hopefully help deter crime and vandalism to our vehicles while we’re out flying. They will be towing and impounding cars without an employee sticker, as well as cars that are parked illegally, so please make sure your sticker is visible.

Remember, once you check in, you cannot leave the airport, which includes walking to the “roach coach,” or even to get something out of your car. You are subject to discipline if you’re caught. If you’re cutting it close, you are contractually allowed one free MBL per quarter.

If you meet any Virgin America JetBlue, or Allegiant Air Flight Attendants commuting on one of your flights, take the time to talk to them about the benefits of a union. TWU Local 556 is committed to helping these Flight Attendant workgroups organize, and no one speaks the Flight Attendant language better than we do.

Finally, Firewood is a new restaurant that has opened in Terminal Two between Gates 23 and 24. If you feel like walking a little further, there’s a great Chinese place in Terminal One. We all know that a well-fed Flight Attendant is a happy Flight Attendant.

TODD GAGE

is an Oakland Flight Attendant. He can be contacted at tgage@twu556.org or at 214-640-4336.

Orlando

Jimmy West, MCO DEBM

We received our cost of living raises on June 1, which just serves as another reminder of how great our Union and our Company are. Considering the situation over the last few years, both in the airline industry and the economy as a whole, we’re very fortunate to still be getting increases in our pay. There’s that old saying that money talks – mine sure does, but usually it says, “Goodbye!” If we want it to keep saying “Hello” on the fifth and twentieth of each month, however, we need to do our part to keep Southwest profitable. Providing outstanding customer service will keep our planes full, and our profit margins in the green. It also means only calling in sick if you genuinely are sick, which also makes a huge difference. Don’t abuse sick leave and risk both your job and everyone’s future pay increases.

The Company is now conducting unannounced check rides. By following the service procedures outlined in your *real* Flight Attendant manual – in other words, not *People* or *Us Weekly* – you shouldn’t have any issues. If you see one of your coworkers hard at work on a level four sudoku, you might want to give them a friendly reminder about these unannounced check rides; this will help them avoid discipline in the likely event someone is watching.

Last year, two green passes wouldn’t have been enough to get someone to let me pick up their trip from them, because flying was scarce, and every trip was posted in blue. Fortunately, the flying is good again, so take advantage of it while you can!

The Orlando Airport Authority has decided that our elevator codes need to be changed quarterly. The Airport Authority chooses these codes, so please make sure you’re watching for the quarterly RBFs announcing the new codes.

JIMMY WEST

is an Orlando Flight Attendant. He can be contacted at jwest@twu556.org or at 214-640-4311.

Phoenix

John DiPippa, PHX DEBM

I’m pleased to announce that **Kathy Garner** is our new Leave Specialist here in Phoenix. She will be working alongside **Geri Parker**, our other Leave Specialist. Congratulations, Kathy, on your new role.

As many of you know, unannounced check rides begin this month. Many Flight Attendants confuse these unannounced audits with so-called “ghost rides,” but they’re really two different things. Unannounced audits are like secret shoppers, but the Supervisor conducting the check ride will approach you at the end of the flight, and let you know how you did.

Ghost rides, on the other hand, are performed if Management has received reports about a Flight Attendant’s behavior, including, for example, breaking FARs or taking liquor off the plane. In these situations, Management will gather the facts, and notify the Flight Attendant of their findings within the proper contractual timeframe. If this happens, please contact the Union so that a Shop Steward or other Union representative can be there with you.

I’ve received a few calls from Flight Attendants who have been contacted by base Supervisors after they submitted IRs. These Supervisors are calling with additional questions about the content of the reports. If you receive a call from a Supervisor regarding an IR you submitted, I highly encourage you to call the Union to arrange a conference call with a Union representative, the Supervisor, and yourself before providing additional information. I’m uncertain whether any discipline has been resulted from these calls, but I would rather Flight Attendants err on the side of caution, and get their Union involved.

Finally, I hope everyone enjoyed the BBQ on July 8.

JOHN DIPIPPA

is a Phoenix Flight Attendant. He can be contacted at jdipippa@twu556.org or at 214-640-4314.

CISM

by Chris Watson

Our Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Team handled 543 incidents in 2009. That’s a lot of Flight Attendants who experienced some type of post traumatic stress due to a work-related incident. The trends for 2010 hare even higher. Some of these incidents are completely out of anyone’s control, whereas in other situations, you do have some degree of control – if you stay on your toes, and follow some simple guidelines for personal safety, both on the job and on your overnights.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT HOSPITALIZATION

Twenty-seven Flight Attendants were hospitalized for a variety of reasons in 2009. In general, staying healthy, eating right, getting plenty of rest, and indulging in a reasonable amount of spirits can help keep you on track. Sometimes, however, hospital visits can result from being injured in flight. These, too, can happen for a variety of reasons, the most common being turbulence. Let’s talk about those next.

INJURIES & TURBULENCE

There were fourteen injury events and 26 turbulence events in 2009. Many turbulence injuries result from Flight Attendants not buckling their seatbelts when the captain asks us to sit down because of bumpy conditions. In these situations, make sure you always buckle your seatbelt. If the call to sit down comes while serving drinks, immediately discontinue your service, and take a seat. Being out-of-work due to an injury can be devastating both physically and financially – no drink is worth that.

ASSAULT ON AN EMPLOYEE

Believe it or not, eighteen Flight Attendants were assaulted or attacked last year. Some of these assaults occurred onboard the aircraft, while others happened on an overnight. Always be aware of your surroundings. By paying attention [*Ed. note: see Zen tip number one on page 11 of this issue*], you will be more prepared to handle an irate passenger. Be prepared to protect yourself, and never go out of your hotel alone on an overnight – always go with other crewmembers or trusted friends who may be meeting you in the RON city. When entering your hotel room, take an extra moment to check your room out, and make sure your other crewmembers are fine before closing your door for the night.

Your safety is incredibly important to your CISM Team, your Union, and Southwest Airlines. We’re always here to help when unforeseen events occur, but being proactive helps keep these situations to a minimum.

CHRIS WATSON

is an Orlando Flight Attendant, and member of the Critical Incident Stress Management Team.

True Stories

by Lyn Montgomery

Jenny was starting a three-day Ready Reserve block one morning, and woke up with a horrible pain in her side. She set her Reserve preference to pass, but did not call-in sick, hoping that she might not be used. After all, a day of rest might make her feel better.

Before lying down, Jenny checked her board, and was shocked to see that Scheduling had already assigned her a trip. She contacted Scheduling to find out why she was assigned a trip if she had set her Reserve preference to pass. She was told they were “spreading things around a bit.” She accepted her assignment, and the call ended.

Jenny was now very confused because she felt her question had not been answered. Where did it say “spread things around a bit” in the Contract? She contacted a Supervisor at her base. Jenny talked about everything from what she had for breakfast, to the fact that she might have a *Match.com* date later that afternoon, and she also asked the same question she had asked the Scheduler: why was she assigned a trip if her Reserve preference was set to pass? The Supervisor placed her on hold and contacted the Scheduler she had just spoken to. He came back and told her the same thing the Scheduler had stated earlier. Jenny still did not understand, but figured it must say “spread things around a bit” somewhere in the Contract if both a Scheduler *and* a trusted Supervisor said it did.

At that moment, she realized that she has gotten so caught up with the order of assignment that she had neglected the real issue: she was too sick to fly! Promptly, she picked up the phone and called-in sick to Crew Scheduling. A short while later, the Supervisor called back and asked her if she was truly sick. Jenny thought to herself, “How nice the supervisor is really worried about me.” She reiterated that she was indeed sick.

The Supervisor set up a meeting, so they could talk about

sick leave policies and procedures. She was told she could even have a Union representative come with her. She thought all this was strange, but arranged for a Shop Steward to attend the meeting with her.

Jenny turned in a PIN, and it was accepted, so she did not feel the need to go to the doctor. She had this pain from time to time and knew how to treat it. Regardless, she did get an SLA for calling in sick after receiving her Reserve assignment.

At the Fact Finding meeting, the Supervisor told her she had abused sick leave, and the penalty for that could be termination. Shocked and dumbfounded, Jenny got chatty again, and stated that she should not have called in sick, knowing now that it had placed her in such jeopardy. She did not have a doctor’s note because no one asked her to get one, and she was no longer suffering from her ailment.

Nevertheless, Management interpreted her actions as sick leave abuse. Jenny was terminated in spite of a flawless employee file.

SHARON & BRAD

Sharon and Brad were working A and C position on a super-fun three day. Sharon, the A, really wanted to make sure the aircraft arrived on-time that night, as she was eager to get to the hotel where the bar still offered 1-2-3.

Upon arrival into the gate, Sharon and Brad were discussing what they were going to order. Four beers for \$4 or two wines for \$4? While thinking it over, Sharon made the announcement to prepare doors, as the aircraft had just stopped at the gate. “You are crazy not to get the beer. The beer is the real deal!” she said, as she stood up.

While still looking at Brad, she rotated the entry door handle. The door felt heavier than normal and suddenly she heard a slipping sound. Sharon looked down to see the slide out of its casing lying on the floor! She had forgotten to remove the slide from the floor brackets. Darn, now she was going to order eight beers for \$8, without question!

Luckily, the slide did not inflate and no one was hurt. Management called her in for a Fact Finding meeting. Sharon admitted that she had been distracted, and had failed to prepare the door. She was issued a three-day suspension, and learned the importance of paying attention. [*Ed. note: Zen tip number one on page 11.*]

LYN MONTGOMERY

is a Dallas Flight Attendant, and member of the TWU Local 556 Grievance Team. She can be contacted at lmontgomery@twu556.org.



Eileen Rodriguez, CISM Chair

BALTIMORE

Al Castaldo, Rose Kirkpatrick, Michelle LeBell, Trebor McDowell, Bob Noll, and Ruthann Tucholka

CHICAGO

Ben Adis, Rachel Bleier, Carol Greco, Pauly Mallatt, Sharon Mateer, Maureen Roman, and Mitch Roman

DALLAS

Troy Alford, Brenda Brown, Katie Chitty, Kathy Cornwell, Neicee Coulson, Renda Marsh, and Mo Scott

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Laureen AnderSon, Sandy Bane, Pam Garfinkel, Mike Harris, Christy Hendricks, Vera Hendrickson, and Chris Watson

PHOENIX

Sherry Bendorf, Barb Bronson, Dina Quitiquit, and Sheri Smith

You can always call us!
1-800-969-7932

Monday - Friday
8:00 - 18:00 CST

Saturday & Sunday
9:00 - 17:00 CST

Emergency Line
24 hours a day

