

**RESPECTING
OUR CULTURE**



**800 MINI EVACUATION
A PARTICIPANT'S PERSPECTIVE**

unity

THE MAGAZINE OF TWU LOCAL 556



**THOM
MCDANIEL:
OVER A DECADE OF
SERVICE TO LOCAL 556**

WAS I JA'D OR RESCHEDULED? FIND OUT!

Volume 4, Number 4
SPRING 2012

We Go On

This is my final issue of *Unity*. I'm pleased to introduce **Kevin Barber** and **Erich Schwenk** as our new Communications Co-Chairs for TWU Local 556. Both Kevin and Erich bring different skill sets to their new position, and as they work through the on-the-job-learning curve, they have made a commitment to the new Executive Board, and to you, to do the very best job of keeping you informed.

At the beginning of the year, I read the Holstee Manifesto on Facebook; it's printed on the back cover. I decided then that it was time for me to move on to a new chapter in life. When I submitted by resignation as Communications Coordinator and *Unity* Editor to the Executive Board back in January, I had no idea what a huge amount of change our Union would face following the recent election of our new Executive Board. Certainly, the Seniority List Integration pushed and pulled our Members in many different directions, and in just a little over a year, our Union will enter our next round of Section 6 Contract Negotiations.

Frankly, it's time for the Members of TWU Local 556 to reunite, and this is a common thread running through many of the articles in this issue. For many contributors, this is their final *Unity*, too, but we all recognize that if we don't put aside our differences, the divisiveness among our Flight Attendants will be Management's number one advantage as we move into Contract Negotiations—we risk losing our industry-leading Contract and hard-won benefits if we continue the bickering and infighting that has become so common lately.

Southwest Airlines will continue with or without us, and if we wish to remain successful as a Union, we must go on, too, with a renewed sense of unity.

I want to thank all those who have contributed, edited, and read our publications, and while we have only received a handful of "letters to the editor" over the last three years, I certainly wish to thank those people who have taken the time to respond to the information and opinions published in *Unity*, *Unity Update*, on the Web site, and elsewhere. I would also like to thank the two Executive Boards and all the Grievance Team Members with whom I have worked, first as Chicago Domicile Executive Board Member and then as Communications Coordinator, for their support. I cherish each of you, and will always be grateful for the opportunities and memories we have shared.



Finally, I need to thank one more person without whom I would never have been able to successfully produce such a

high quality product, my partner of fourteen years, Daniel Lestarjette. Daniel has been there for me when I had questions, found myself in over my head, and as support when Union politics became too much for me to handle. Although Daniel was never paid, his participation and help was questioned on more than one occasion. I thank him for all of his support, and am ready for us to move to our next adventure.

All my best, 

On the cover: Baltimore Flight Attendants
Jennifer Acosta, Jonathan Jose, Bradley Rogers.



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 500 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.

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

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SPRING 2012

4 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Outgoing President **Thom McDaniel** sends a thank you to coworkers and our Membership.

5 WE'RE PREPARED FOR CHANGE

Mark Torrez discusses the transition training, and the efforts being made to prepare for the next Executive Board term.

7 BEFORE THERE'S NOTHING LEFT TO WASTE

Nicole Jarvis, one of Southwest's Green Team founders, writes about how we can all make a difference to our planet's future.

8 CONTRACT EDUCATION

What's the difference between being rescheduled and JA'd?

Denny Sebesta explains how to tell the difference.

16 ANATOMY OF A MINI EVAC

Michele Moore and **Justin Whittington** explain what happened during the FAA's mini evac for Southwest's approval of our new 800 series aircraft.

20 OVER A DECADE OF SERVICE

Think you know **Thom McDaniel**? Think again. **Jim Little**, **Michael Massoni**, and a few other impressive guests discuss Thom's service to TWU Local 556.

22 TRUST, INTEGRITY: MICHAEL MASSONI

Thom McDaniel discusses **Michael Massoni**'s unstoppable love and work for our Membership.

23 OUR DEPARTING OFFICERS

We take a look at our outgoing Officers and the legacy they leave behind for future TWU 556 Leadership.

25 WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON?

Cuyler Thompson's Tina and Britney have a straightforward conversation about the Seniority List Integration.

Editor's notes

Thom McDaniel and **Michael Massoni** were unaware they would be writing about each other.

Phoenix Representative **John DiPippa** has respectfully declined to submit further articles to *Unity* for personal reasons.

The **Holstee** Manifesto is printed on the back cover with permission. Special thanks to Mary at Holstee for her assistance in making this happen for us.

Some photos provided by **Michael Broadhead**. *Thanks!*

Letters to the Editor:

We received three letters to the editor since our last issue of *Unity* in support of my editor's article, "The Spread of a Miserable Disease." All three agreed with my position that we should make every effort to welcome the AirTran Flight Attendants to Southwest.

In one of the letters, the Flight Attendant stated that they felt the Union did not adequately represent the junior Flight Attendants in the Seniority List Integration efforts. They also felt the Union and the Company pushed too hard to sale the agreement so our Members would vote in favor.

Regretfully (and embarrassingly), I am unable to publish two of the emails; they were misplaced in the shuffle of my final days as your Communications Coordinator and *Unity* editor, despite my best efforts to recover them. I sincerely apologize for the oversight. The third email is published below.

Dear Kyle:

I just want to say thanks for stepping up to the plate and addressing the issue of our new family Members. "The Spread of a Miserable Disease" was just what needed to be said although it will probably have to be said many more times.

I had flown for TWA for 30 years when American Airlines (AA) bought us in January of 2001. We ended up being stapled to the bottom of their seniority list and in the aftermath of 9/11, the furloughs began. By July of 2003, with 32 years seniority, I was on the street with no insurance, two kids in college and a college degree that was 33 years old. I felt lucky to get a job at Starbucks where I worked for minimum wages plus tips. I worked 20 times harder at Starbucks than I have ever worked as a Flight Attendant. Fortunately, I was hired by Southwest and started all over here in 2004.

I am just about to celebrate my eighth anniversary here and I am so grateful. When I hear the ugly things that are being said, I can hardly believe my ears. This is the Company that runs itself by the Golden Rule?! If this poison continues, it will destroy our Company.

Many employees at AA treated the TWA people horribly. They rejoiced that we had received no credit for our years of service. As we can see by the events of today, hateful attitudes do nothing but destroy those who exhibit them.

We should all, every time we go to work, make sure that no passenger will ever have anything but praises for our service. We have a long way to go on that challenge. People don't believe it can happen here. Trust me, it can.
P.B.

Want to comment on something in *Unity*? Send us an email at communications@twu556.org to let us know what's on your mind.

Thank You.

TWU Local 556 President
Thom McDaniel

This is my last President's Message. It is a little overwhelming to wrap up the rollercoaster ride of the last twelve years in just a few short sentences, so I won't try. I do have a few people to thank, however. I won't do it by name, but if you took the time to read this, you will know who you are.

If we have served together on the Executive Board, thank you for your service. Elected office can be thankless, and if you do it right, you will face criticism. If you have taken on this tremendous responsibility, done the hard work with integrity, and respected your office, whether we agreed or disagreed on issues, you have my admiration and gratitude.

If we have worked in any negotiations together in any capacity on the Union side, you have my gratitude and respect. When we started this journey in 2001, we were near the bottom of the industry in pay and benefits. Since that time, we are the industry leader in all areas, and even managed to agree to an acceptable seniority integration to allow our Company to grow by 25 percent, and hopefully, become more profitable. To do that takes tremendous trust and courage from the people on both sides of the table in an attempt to find a solution for an incredibly diverse workgroup. Whether you were sitting at the negotiating table, holding a sign on the street, mobilizing our workforce, answering questions in the lounge, or taking the time to educate yourself and vote, you are part of our success. That's a very proud tradition that we need to continue.

If you were on the other side of those negotiations, thank you too. We had a rocky start where it seemed like winning was the goal, but after a time, we discovered together that our goal should be solving problems, and we have all been better for it. I have watched relationships between Labor and Management fall apart at other airlines, and I am so grateful that TWU Local 556 and Southwest Airlines Management have developed a relationship that starts with a foundation of respect for us to build on, where we can disagree without being disagreeable.

If we have worked together in the Union Office or as a Shop Steward, you are my heroes. Union advocacy is never easy, and

the work you do on a daily basis can be demoralizing and frustrating. In spite of that, you fight like hell for justice each day, and carry each other through the heartbreak when it doesn't happen. And when it does happen because of your efforts, it is so sweet.

If you had anything to do with achieving the Seniority Integration/Transition Agreement, you have my lifelong gratitude. You stepped up to do the most difficult task our Union has ever done and we did it. We faced many dark days during that time, but you never faltered in spite of the criticism and we accomplished the near impossible because of your hard work. Thank you again.

To our new Union Members from AirTran, welcome aboard! We are excited about the opportunity to welcome you to our family, and will do everything we can to help you be successful.

Finally, to our incoming Executive Board: congratulations and best wishes.

Our Union faces great challenges in the next three years, and we are counting on you. I hope that our Members will support you and hold you accountable as you go forward. More importantly, I hope that our Members will hold themselves accountable and stay informed, active, and united, because that is where our true strength lies.

Thank you for the opportunity to work for you for the last twelve years. It is my wish to remain an active Member of our Union in any way I am needed, but I will never have a higher professional honor than serving as your President.



THOM MCDANIEL

is a Houston Flight Attendant, and TWU Local 556 President. He can be contacted at tmcdaniel@twu556.org or 214-640-4301.

We're Prepared For Change

by Mark Torrez



Every three years, it's the same thing. A new Executive Board takes office and the learning curve begins. When I was a new Officer, I was brought into the Union Office, trained on how to fill out my monthly timesheet, how to request a pull when I needed to do Union Business, and shown where Grievances were logged. I worked the phones so that I could get used to looking up the answers to our most common Contract questions. Then I flew back to Oakland more confused than ever before.

I knew back then that there had to be a better way. While I was a "mid-term replacement" at the time, I knew that a new Board would have an even larger challenge with more "new" Officers all transitioning at the same time. It takes time for each officer to figure out what their new role will be. With Contract Negotiations just around the corner, the current Board realized

that now more than ever, it was important to implement a transition plan to ensure our new Executive Board would be prepared to hit the ground running. Several months ago many of us began preparing for this transition. It is an investment in the continued success of Local 556.

In the past we have brought new Officers in the day before the first Executive Board Meeting for a "crash course." This wasn't followed up with any real new direction until six months later when we engaged in the annual Strategic Planning Retreat.

This past January, the Executive Board approved a three-week transition plan. The plan entails one week of New Officer training, one week of Executive Board Meetings, and is followed by one week of Strategic Planning. If that seems like a lot of time invested, you are right, it is, but

there are plenty of topics to cover. The first week of training entails:

- ASAP training
- Laborsoft training
- Grievance procedures
- Emergency response procedures (Go Team),
- Officer-On-Call procedures
- Weekend office phone procedures
- Mock Board of Adjustment/Arbitration training
- Microsoft Outlook training
- Contract/Leave training
- Bylaws/Roberts Rules of Order training
- CISM and Professional Standards training,

That is just Executive Board duties; several current Officers and Chairs have been working on extensive manuals to pass the torch. For instance, our outgoing Grievance Chair

Allyson Parker-Lauck created a manual that can be used as a reference guide for whomever replaces her in that position. This is incredibly important since this position is open to anyone, and isn't necessarily filled by an Officer. Another key position not necessarily filled by an Officer is Communications Chair. The Union is engaged in more avenues than ever getting information to our Members. Facebook, Twitter, www.twu556.org, *Unity*, *Unity Update*, the TWU556 App,

TWU TV, voice messages, and Hotlines are some of the items that fall under this position's umbrella. The current Executive Board approved adding more people to this position to better manage the workload. The current Communications Chair has already begun training new people to hit the ground running when the new Executive Board takes over.

I am so proud and excited to say that I have been able to assist in the planning of training the new Executive Board, and to make sure that 556 stays strong by giving our leadership the tools they need to build on our success.



MARK TORREZ

is an Oakland Flight Attendant and TWU Local 556 Board Member at large. He can be contacted mtorrez@twu556.org or at 214-640-4313.

If you would like to send Thom a message of thanks for his years of service to TWU Local 556, you can do so on the TWU Local 556 Web site. www.twu556.org

Q2 F.Y.I.s with Kathy Anderson

- If you are released from Jury Duty prior to the end of a scheduled pairing, you are to contact Scheduling for the purpose of recovering your pairing. If agreeable to you, Scheduling may assign you in one of the following manners:
 - If your pairing is available, recover your original pairing in a timely and cost efficient manner
 - Assign you another pairing
 - Assign you Ready Reserve for the remaining day(s) of your scheduled pairing
 - If you choose none of the above, you will remain off duty for the remainder of the pairing at no pay.
- If you waive a deadhead at an outstation and you are picking up the next live working leg in that outstation, do not forget to call Scheduling. Failure to let them know you are there could result in an FTR.
- When you use a PIN, do not forget to call-in sick to Scheduling for all pairings intended to be covered by the PIN.
- You can extend a PIN with a Doctor's note but you cannot extend a Doctor's note with a PIN.
- During overlap, original pairings and Reserve days must be adjusted for the contractual 48 hour break in seven working days, and twelve-hour domicile break, as well as all legal duty combinations.
- Overlap adjustments will only be made in the current month, if there is a SIP that overlaps into the new month. Then the adjustment could be made at the SIP.
- If you exercise your option to fly any portion of a contractual illegality pull for premium pay, and you decide to trade that adjusted pairing for another pairing, the premium pay will no longer apply.
- If you are on a stranded or unscheduled RON and choose to waive the deadhead to return to your domicile, you are still entitled to receive the one for three RIG.

KATHY ANDERSON

is a Dallas Flight Attendant, and a member of the Grievance Team. She can be contacted at kanderson@twu556.org or at 214-640-4319.

CISM Update by Eileen Rodriguez



Have you ever wondered what exactly the CISM Team does?

During 2011, the CISM Team responded to a total of 560 incidents.

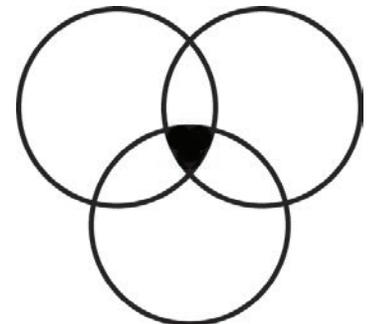
We responded to both work-related and personal life incidents. Each incident that is called into the hotline is 100 percent confidential. We only keep a record of the type and total number of incidents- no names or any other personal information is ever written down. Each incident usually involves two or three phone calls.

When Flight Attendants are involved in an incident, Inflight Management, Scheduling, TWU 556, a fellow Flight Attendant, or the Flight Attendant themselves notify the CISM Team. Initial and follow up phone calls are made, and many times referrals are given if needed.

There are 51 Flight Attendant peers on the Team and approximately four to six CISM Members in each Base. Every peer on the Team attends a three-day Recurrent Training each year covering the basics of CISM, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), grief training, suicide prevention, stress management, and reviewing all accident and incident debriefing procedures.

The CISM Team is also trained to help in any type of accident that Southwest Airlines may encounter. In case of a major accident, your CISM Team would be available in each domicile, the accident site, the hotel that would be accommodating the affected crew, the hospital to which the affected crewmembers were transported, Southwest Corporate Headquarters and the TWU 556 Office.

If you are involved in an incident and are not contacted by the CISM Team, please call us. We are here to help! We have a hotline that is answered 24 hours a day, 1-800-408-3220.



EILEEN RODRIGUEZ

is an Orlando Flight Attendant and is the Chair of the CISM Team. She can be contacted at 214-592-3014.

Before There's Nothing Left To Waste

By Nicole Jarvis



For those of you who have seen the movie “*Dances with Wolves*” with Kevin Costner, the most impactful scene of that movie that I remember is when the Indians and Costner’s character were on their way to hunt “tatanka” (bison). I remember how they were celebrating the idea of the “life” that the tatanka would provide for their tribe throughout the harsh winter. The tribe was teaching Costner how they use every part of the tatanka; the meat for food, the bones for hardware, and the fur for clothing and blankets. Nothing was left for waste.

I will never forget that scene when they came to find all of the tatanka skinned only for their fur and left to rot and waste. Thinking of that scene makes me realize that we sometimes take advantage of our planet Earth. We are “wasting” Earth. We are skinning it of its fur and letting the rest of it rot and waste.

How can we change our ways to celebrate the “life” of Earth? One impactful thing that we have the opportunity to do is to recycle. We can recycle on our airplane, in our hotel room, in the airport, in our crew lounges, at the malls, even in our homes. If you have a newspaper or magazine that you have finished reading, don’t throw it away; recycle it. Plastic bottles are one of our number one destroyers of Earth. Try buying a stainless steel water bottle that you can wash in the dishwasher and reuse instead of buying bottled water.

There are some things that we are limited to recycling on the airplane. Glass is something that we cannot recycle. Why not place it in a recycle bag, and then when you’re off the plane you can recycle it in the airport, or at the hotel.

Did you know that all crew lounges have blue recycle bins? How about when we go to our mailboxes in the lounge and find we have flyers from the Company or the Union that we’ve read and don’t need anymore we look for the nearest blue bin and recycle it!

I know that changes can’t be made overnight and that not everyone is as passionate about saving our planet. However, I can try to persuade you to take it one step at a time. All I ask is that you think about the consequences of what you are doing to our Earth when you throw something away that is recyclable. Please don’t let our planet become “wasted” like the tatanka were. I don’t want to become extinct.

NICOLE JARVIS

is a Chicago Flight Attendant and was a founder of Southwest’s Green Team. She can be contacted through communications@twu556.org.

Reschedule versus a Junior Available (JA)

by **Denny Sebesta**



If you've ever been rescheduled, or know a fellow Flight Attendant who has, some automatically think or say "I've been JA'd!" This is a term that has been in our Contract since the dawn of time. Okay not that long, but it does date back to our very first Contract in 1978, and was used to refer to every situation where a Flight Attendant was either required to fly on their days off or rerouted after check-in by Scheduling. Fast forward several years later and our Contract now has two separate definitions; Reschedule and Junior Available (JA).

Reschedule - Is any change to your flying assignment made after check-in from your original pairing. This could include less flying, more flying or in some cases, an unscheduled overnight. You are pay-protected to receive what you were scheduled to fly or what you end up flying, whichever is greater over the life of the pairing for the number of days you were scheduled to work. If you do fly more than scheduled for example, 22.0 TFP, but rescheduled for 24.0 TFP, the additional 2.0 TFPs will be paid at time and one-half (1.5). Now your total pay for that trip would be 25.0 TFP. There is another premium that would apply if you are given an unscheduled overnight; if you are a Lineholder you will have the option of receiving a RIG that would pay one trip for every three hours from the time you block in at the overnight until you are released the next day back in your Base, or a day off of your choice without pay. If you are a Reserve that is given an unscheduled overnight you will receive both the one for three RIG and another day off of your choice. It's important to remember the choice of day off for either Lineholder or Reserve must be at the beginning or end of a pairing or Reserve block. The decision for the day off must be made at the completion of the reschedule (before end of debrief).

You should never be rescheduled with multiple unscheduled overnights in a pairing! If you do, call the Union immediately. This is a violation of our Contract.

Junior Available (JA) – A Flight Attendant is required to work an assignment on her/his scheduled day off; such assignments must be legally scheduled. Flight Attendants may be assigned for JA duty by the following methods of contact only:

1) Telephone contact at the Flight Attendant's primary tele-

phone number. Flight Attendants must provide their primary number to Crew Scheduling.

***For example:** Scheduling calls you on your day off at 0700 and says "Joe you are being JA'd to work pairing #XYZ today and we need you to check-in at 1500." The phone number Scheduling must use is your primary contact number listed on your CWA screen in SWALife. This is different from your emergency contact number listed with the Company.*

2) In person only by members of Crew Scheduling or Inflight Management in the Flight Attendant's domicile lounge or a training facility.

***For example:** An Inflight Supervisor comes into the lounge where you are based and tells you that you are being JA'd and to call Scheduling, or a Recurrent Training Manager or Supervisor informs your Recurrent Training class that everyone is being JA'd and must contact Scheduling. Although it's very rare, it has happened.*

3) After your pairing is already in progress. What this means is that you are contacted by Scheduling during the current pairing you are flying, and the Scheduler tells you that you are being JA'd to fly another pairing after you complete your first one.

***For example:** You are on a 2-day pairing May 10 and 11, and on the last day you receive a call from Scheduling informing you that you are being JA'd for another 2-day pairing that checks in the next day on May 12.*

Keep in mind, if you ever fall into that unfortunate situation and are being JA'd, there are provisions in our Contract that protect all of your contractual legalities, such as legal bid line combinations, domicile break, crew rest, 48 in 7 break, etc.

Compensation for a JA'd situation has options for premium pay of time and one-half (1.5) or day(s) off, but vary depending on whether the JA affected your scheduled pairings. You can read more about Reschedule and JA language under Article 9 – Additional Flying, in our Contract.

DENNY SEBESTA

is an Orlando Flight Attendant and TWU Local 556's Contract and Leave Coordinator. She can be contacted at dsebesta@twu556.org or 214-640-4316.

Baltimore

Audrey Stone, BWI DEBM



I want to start off by welcoming your new Baltimore Domicile Executive Board Member, **Stacey Vavakas**, to the job. She will be taking over as your Base Representative on May 1, and I have offered her my assistance through the transition. Also, congratulations to everyone in Baltimore for once again winning the Customer Service Award. There were over 6,000 commendations received for our Base.

The Inflight Office has two new Supervisors who are scheduled to complete training this month. Also, Inflight Supervisor **Glenn Hodge** is going to Chicago to work as a Recurrent Training Supervisor, and the Base will be looking to fill his, and one other position. Following that, all positions will be filled in the Baltimore Office.

Construction will begin soon to add a new security checkpoint that will serve as a connector between the A, B, and C terminals. Don't forget that we also have the new security checkpoint down on the baggage claim level. It tends to be less busy than the main security lines.

You do not have to be an actual "commuter" to utilize the commuter policy. Everyone is covered under our Contract. Just make sure you have everything you need. Lineholders, make sure you are listed and present yourself for one flight on Southwest, scheduled to arrive an hour before check-in, or two consecutive flights on an offline carrier. The two flights do not have to be on the same carrier. Remember that AirTran is still considered offline. Reserves have different requirements for commuting. Check out Article 33 to learn more.

In closing, I would like to say that it has been an honor to serve the Baltimore Base. Whether representing you in a meeting, or answering your calls through our expanded Union weekend and holiday hours, I have enjoyed working for you. I am glad I had the opportunity to help increase the Contract education provided by our Union, and our presence at Base Orientations. I appreciate the Baltimore Inflight Leaders who have worked with me over the last four years to help solve problems and improve the service you receive. Thank you to everyone who gave me the opportunity and helped me along the way. I'll see you online!

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



Hello Chicago! Congratulations to everyone for winning Base of the Year for 2011! Chicago rocks!! I sincerely wish to thank you all for allowing me the honor of representing you for the next three years – I look forward to seeing you all soon, and consider myself very lucky to be the Chicago Domicile Executive Board Member.

Along with the change in seasons, there have been a few managerial changes in the Chicago Base. We have three new Supervisors, **Coleen Hodge** and **Janice Gorivica** will be attending training in April and **Leanne Mieszala** joins us from Las Vegas Inflight. When you have a minute, say hello.

Please be aware that Attendance Meetings are continuing in all Bases. Management is looking for alleged patterns in the use of sick leave and high sick leave totals. This by no means should prompt anyone to come to work when they are ill. If you are sick please stay home and get well, but if you are not, please come to work. Always call the Union Office at 214-352-9110 and arrange to have representation in meetings.

We have a new revision for our Flight Attendant Binder that was due by March 25, as well as new bulletins that have been issued. On SWALife, you can always check for Binder revision information, and also print out your bulletins if you are not near the lounge.

The long awaited new uniforms are here! The Lands' End site is up and running and many of you have already ordered and received your new items. For those of you that have not, there are a variety of pieces in the lounges for you to try on for size before you order.

If you or anyone you know is interested in running for the position of Shop Steward, watch for the date of our next Membership Meeting. In that meeting we will be nominating and electing Shop Stewards to serve as Representatives for the next three year term. If you have any questions about the Shop Steward position or the duties it entails, please give me a call and we can talk. It is truly an important position for the Membership and a good stepping-stone to many other opportunities within our Union.

DONNA KEITH

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

I still can't believe we get paid for this job, much less how much. Since this is my retirement job, it's great working three days on and four days off. Thom, thanks a bunch! Carol

Treasurer's Update

Our new Board will be the Stewards of a *very* strong Treasury, says **John Parrott**



First off, I want to congratulate the new Executive Board on their new Leadership roles in our Union. This Board will take over the reins in May, and will be the new Stewards of a very strong Treasury.

As of March, there is over \$2,400,000 in our bank accounts and investments. As the 2,300+ Flight Attendants of AirTran become dues paying Members, we will be even financially stronger.

I am very proud of my work on the Dues Recovery System. The system was activated in July of 2010 and over \$520,000 has been collected. We have recovered more in outstanding dues than at any other time period in our Union's history. This system has brought us monthly billing and provides a more consistent stream of income from the dues that we collect by hand. There is one behind the scenes person I want to thank in helping me make this dues system such a success. **Keenan Manzo**, you are a true leader in our Union and I want to thank you for all your hard work.

We are facing many new challenges as a workgroup and as a Company. Technology is a double-edged sword and I am very concerned that social media will tear us apart. The negativity that has flourished must stop or it will spread like a disease and consume us. We are responsible for our own destiny. Please

remember that we have achieved all of our success as a Union through a united front and it is my hope we will continue along a successful path.

Before I go, I want to thank one person in particular that has been a huge contributor to the success of Local 556. **Madeleine Howard** – For over 23 years you have served this Local and kept us on track. You have seen many of us come and go, but you have been the constant. The Membership has no idea how much you care about each one of us. Thank you for the outstanding job you have done and will continue to do as long as you call TWU 556 your home.

Finally, I want to say that it has been a pleasure serving you in the various Union roles I have held. While I am looking forward to returning to the line and my own opportunities ahead, as well as getting a part of my life back, I am pleased with what has been accomplished. My heart will always be with the Membership.

JOHN PARROTT

is a Dallas Flight Attendant, and the Treasurer of TWU Local 556. He can be contacted at jparrott@twu556.org or at 214-640-4304.

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Dallas

Karen Amos, DAL DEBM



I want to thank you for electing me to serve you for another term. It is truly an honor and a privilege to work for you. The Dallas Base had the highest percentage of voters with just over the fifty percent mark. Way to go Dallas! Your newly elected Executive Board will take office May 1.

Congratulations to our Base Manager **Shannon Hiatt** and her husband Bobby, as they were blessed with a healthy baby boy named Charlie.

The Lands' End "fit line" as it is referred to, is located in the old gift room behind our Customer Service Desk. You can try on the new uniform pieces, and save yourself time and trouble so you won't have to deal with order returns. Any feedback regarding the new uniforms should be sent to Crystal Reven via email at uniforms@twu556.org.

Please make sure your Binder is up to date! The FAA is out there prowling in the airports and they are checking manuals! If you find yourself on a pairing and realize you do not have your manual, you can obtain one from Operations. This will keep you from getting fined. If you borrow a Binder from Operations, return it to the Base for them to return to the proper city.

Congratulations to the 43 Dallas Flight Attendants that had perfect attendance for 2011. Inquiring minds would like to know what kind of vitamins you all are taking. Speaking of attendance, Management is still conducting Attendance Meetings regarding alleged patterns of sick calls. Understandably, there are many ailments that will not allow one to come to work as a Flight Attendant, but if you worked in an office you would be able to perform your job duties. Call the Union Office if you are contacted to attend an Attendance Meeting.

If you are deadheading or are a must ride, and are asked to take fourth, please inquire if there is anyone already signed up. We do not want to bump coworkers off an aircraft.

Finally, we are ahead of schedule on the airport and should be in our new Flight Attendant Lounge April of 2013! There are also many new food options planned for us as well.

KAREN AMOS

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

Houston

Crystal Reven, HOU DEBM



Spring has sprung and more than just the time is changing! There are many changes happening within our Union. I ask you to join me in welcoming **Valerie Jean Boy** as your new Houston Domicile Executive Board Member. Likewise on

May 1, we will welcome the other newest Members of the TWU556 Executive Board.

Ironically, since my last article, there have been no administrative changes in the Houston Inflight Office. Fact-Finding and Attendance Meetings are consistent; however, if you find yourself called in for a meeting with Management, please make the Union Office your first call to secure Union representation.

I must admit that this article is bitter sweet for me, as I know it will be my last chance to address you as your Domicile Representative. Serving you through our Union for the last six years has been a great experience for me personally as I have gotten to know many of you on a personal level. While vacating my position did not come without great thought, it is with a heavy heart that I do say goodbye. I am uplifted as I look forward to committing myself to my family and returning to a being a full-time line flying Flight Attendant working alongside you onboard the aircraft doing what we all do best; serving our customers and coworkers.

Thank you to the Houston Inflight Office for working with me for the betterment of our workgroup. Thank you to the Houston Shop Stewards for assisting me throughout the last three years, and thank you Houston Flight Attendants for allowing me the opportunity to serve you.

In the spirit of change, know you have changed me for the better and I thank you for that.

CRYSTAL REVEN

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

Thank you for your many years of unwavering service to the Flight Attendants. You will be missed. **Ann**

True Stories

by Lyn Montgomery



During final descent on the last leg of a weather affected three day, Lineholder Chrissy heard the Pilots sound the double chimes. Chrissy's stomach sank a little. She had a hunch about what they were going to tell her. Her hunch was correct, "Call Scheduling upon arrival." She felt a knot in her stomach. She was so exhausted and she knew Scheduling would ask her to work more. She had not slept at all the night before and had made it through the day on caffeine and sugar. It seemed like she was constantly being asked to work additional legs and she found herself starting to feel angry. "Why am I always the one who has to work it? I need to get home. I am so exhausted; I do not feel like I can perform my duties safely! Someone else needs to work this," she thought to herself. As the plane's wheels touched the ground, Chrissy contemplated on what to tell Scheduling.

Meanwhile, Flight Attendant Sabrina sat frustratingly in a traffic jam tapping her fingers on the steering wheel. She had already called Scheduling to MBL and now it looked like she might get a No Show as well! Nervously, she checked her watch. "I better call Scheduling to let them know I may not make the push time!" She picked up her cell phone and began to search her call log to contact Scheduling.

Flight Attendants Jared and Vanessa waited in the jetway for their plane to arrive. They were just beginning a three day trip. Neither Jared nor Vanessa had seen their third Flight Attendant and they were starting to wonder if they should call Scheduling.

Chrissy opened the aircraft door and was immediately told to contact Scheduling by the Operations Agent. After deplaning, Chrissy took a deep breath and picked up the jetway phone. Before she knew what was happening the heated words "Am I the most junior? Didn't you know about this in time to get a reserve for this assignment?" And shortly thereafter "I am calling in fatigued" spewed from her mouth. Chrissy slammed the phone down and hurried to her car.

Later, Management contacted Chrissy because her fatigue call had to be fully investigated. Her words gave the appearance that she was refusing an assignment. She could have been terminated had she not been truly fatigued. Fatigue calls of this nature should be made with extreme caution. The fatigue policy should only be used if one is too exhausted to work safely.

The traffic Sabrina had been sitting in began to clear. "Fantastic," she thought and put the phone down deciding she was going to make it after all. "Hopefully since we are in Base, Scheduling will have the APSB board the flight. No need to be delayed!" she supposed.

Jared and Vanessa were definitely worried now since their plane had arrived and still no third Flight Attendant had appeared. The inbound crew was only making an aircraft swap and had another flight to work. Reluctantly, Jared picked up the jetway phone. The Scheduler told him the Flight Attendant working the flight was Chrissy and she was scheduled to come inbound any moment. They were completely out of reserves due to inclement weather, so they had to wait for her. The deplaning process was almost complete. Jared thanked the Scheduler and the Operations Agent looked at his watch.

The Operations Agent working Jared and Vanessa's flight was frustrated that he could not start boarding. Suddenly, Sabrina came running down the jetway. "Are we boarded up and ready to go?" she breathlessly said.

"Chrissy?" Jared asked, not knowing what had occurred only a few jetways away.

"No I am Sabrina. I had to MBL. Are we ready to go?"

"Uhhh no," uttered the Operations Agent. "We have been waiting on you."

"Huh, well I am not taking the delay for this flight!" Sabrina lamented as she called Scheduling. "Hello Scheduling, this is Sabrina, and I am reporting for duty. By the way, I let you know I was going to be late. I don't know why you did not have a Reserve board this flight. I am not going to take the delay on this one!" She angrily hung up the phone and curtly said to Jared, "You would think Scheduling could figure out what they are doing for goodness sake!" Finally they began to board the flight which left five minutes late.

Both Chrissy and Sabrina were contacted by Management to come in for Fact-Finding Meetings to investigate the fatigue call, the delay of flight and also the manner in which Scheduling was spoken to. Union representatives helped them through the Fact Finding process and Management determined not to cite discipline to either Flight Attendant due to the fact that Chrissy's fatigue was valid and Sabrina had utilized her contractual ability to MBL. Base Leaders did discuss the approaches taken with Scheduling.

LYN MONTGOMERY

is a Dallas Flight Attendant, and a member of the TWU Local 556 Grievance Team. She can be reached at lmontgomery@twu556.org or 214-640-4317.

Las Vegas

Bryan Orozco, LAS DEBM



I need to start off with welcoming and introducing **Addie Crisp** as our new Las Vegas Domicile Executive Board Member. Addie has been a Shop Steward this past term. She has also assisted me with most of the duties of a Base Representative and I look forward to her continuing to represent us.

The construction in the C terminal should be done mid to late spring and will include some new spots to eat. The bag room that was located by C-22 should be opening with the completion of the construction as well.

If you are someone that picks up a lot and there's no VJA being offered, I would encourage you to pick up from other Flight Attendants, even if you want a trip in Open Time. You can always trade the trip you pick up for that same trip in Open Time. You shouldn't care if your trip is traded, kept, or given away. You don't have your trip and they have the trip they wanted. Everybody should be happy.

For those of you that are still not aware, we have someone answering the phones on Saturday, Sunday and holidays from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Vegas time. It is only one person working the phone those days, so if it goes to voicemail leave a message. You should receive a return call shortly.

With the uncertainty of oil prices, our new Executive Board, and other airlines' bankruptcies, I would recommend that we are all conscientious of any major purchases over the next few years. Be mindful of what is going on with our employment through Southwest Airlines and our Union, Local 556.

It has been my pleasure to be the Las Vegas Domicile Executive Board Member. I won't miss the monthly trips to Dallas (the Wright Amendment can't end soon enough), and the 8:30 am Board Meetings were rough, (that's from a west coast P.M. flyer). I was able to learn and grow as a person from being your Base Representative. I had a few not so good experiences, but I had far greater good experiences.

Thank You.

BRYAN OROZCO

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

Oakland

Matt Hettich, OAK DEBM



Thank you Oakland Flight Attendants for electing me as your Base Representative. As the Oakland Domicile Executive Board Member I will continue to represent you in a professional and ethical manner; we have a lot ahead of us, so let's get started.

Please make every effort to attend the next round of Membership Meetings. Shop Steward nominations and elections will occur at this upcoming meeting; check the glass case in the Flight Attendant lounge for date, time, and location. If you are interested in becoming a Shop Steward, if you have any questions about the role of a Shop Steward, or if you want to learn about other ways in which serve our Membership, please contact me by email, phone, or in person.

We are switching Short Term Disability providers to Principal. The previous provider, Lincoln Financial, has raised premiums by 35 to 40 percent; while Principal will increase rates by only 11 percent. Principal will guarantee this rate for three years, and you will be able to file claims three ways: telephonically (no claim form), online (no claim form), or you can print off the claim form, fill it out, and send it in. Open enrollment will begin in April; please come down to the Oakland Inflight lounge and speak with a benefits counselor to discuss which level of coverage is right for you.

Management continues to focus on Class 1, #17 violations: "failure to fulfill or complete reserve obligation by not being within two hours driving-distance from domicile during reserve contact hours." If Management can show that you are not in your Base during contact hours, your employment will be terminated. CWA automatically records your IP address when you login; every IP address has a location stamp that is traceable, and Management has referenced these IP address location stamps when investigating Reserve sick calls, Reserve UTCs, and Reserve No Shows. Don't gamble with your career; be in your Base during your Reserve contact hours.

Lastly, there will be a New Hire class in April that will encompass internal Employees from other departments at AirTran and Southwest Airlines. The first Special Merger Training Class of AirTran Flight Attendants will be in June.

MATT HETTICH

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

Thank you for your tireless efforts for our Union in our negotiations. We have the best Contract ever! The bar has been set very high. Stephen

Uniform Update

by **Crystal Reven**

Several great things are happening in the uniform world. The wear test period for the uniform dress began on March 16, and will conclude on April 6. Wear-testers of all shapes and sizes are out on the line in the proposed uniform dress collecting feedback and testing the fit and functionality of what we hope will be the next addition to the uniform line.

The Lands' End Uniform launch is in full swing. You have heard me say repeatedly that Lands' End Business outfitter is the right choice for Southwest Airlines Customer Contact Employees, and it is ever so true - even now. Lands' End has worked tirelessly on making what they call "The Southwest Launch" successful, and boy is it ever! In the first 24 hours of the launch, over 4000 orders were received from Southwest Airlines Employees. I am reassured every day by how truly committed Lands' End is to the customer, and I do not just mean Southwest Airlines; they are committed to *you*. Their motto is: "Quality. Value. Service. Guaranteed *period*" and they fiercely stand behind that motto.

An example of Lands' End commitment to quality is their return policy; if you are unsatisfied with any article you purchase, you can return it to Lands' End even if you have worn and/or washed it for a complete refund or exchange. This is a characteristic unmatched by most, especially Cintas.

The definition of *value* is not necessarily associated to monetary worth, but in our case, it is the value Lands' End places on each uniform wearer. Lands' End wants to ensure your satisfaction in their products, so in each lounge, they have provided (at their own cost) the full "Fit Line" of Men's and Women's uniform pieces including outerwear. You will find that Lands' End sizes are slightly different from Cintas sizes. Reason being is they so are committed to keeping their sizes 'true' across the line so that you know exactly what *your* Lands' End size truly is. Stop by if you haven't already, and try on your Lands' End uniform.

Lastly, Lands' End commitment to service was shining bright in the first week of the launch. There were a few unanticipated glitches and oversights by the Uniform Steering Committee, such as inseam lengths, short sleeve white shirts and smaller tall sizes that Lands' End quickly rectified by working around the clock to correct for the Employees of Southwest Airlines. Lands' End embodies the word commitment and that is what will keep them around for the long haul.

I have addressed many of the frequently asked questions on the TWU556 Web site Uniform page. To see the Lands' End Uniform Look Book, log onto SWA Life > Inflight > Resources > Uniforms. To order your Lands' End Uniform Pieces, log on at southwest.landsend.com (no www in the Web address)

As I close this article, please know that it is truly my pleasure to serve as your Uniform Chairperson. Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to serve you.



If you have thoughts or questions, please send them to uniforms@twu556.org.

Phoenix

Editor's note:

John DiPippa, Phoenix Domicile Executive Board Member, has once again declined to submit an article for *Unity*.

TWU Local 556 is made up of Flight Attendants from all faiths and beliefs, and it is my opinion that our Union should be as inclusive and respectful as possible. This past holiday season, I held firm in my belief that we would wish our Members "Happy Holidays" rather than simply "Merry Christmas," as this excludes a great many of our fellow Flight Attendants who do not celebrate Christmas or are not Christians. Because of this, John informed me that he would not submit further articles to *Unity* while I was the editor. This is most certainly his choice.

As the TWU Local 556 Communications Coordinator and *Unity* editor, I am not "waging a war on Christmas." However, our non-Christian Members are required to pay the same dues to be a Southwest Airlines Flight Attendant as anyone else, and I have always been committed to respecting everyone's beliefs—especially during the holiday season, which is, at its most basic, a time of generosity and friendship for all people, not just Christians.

Our new Communications Coordinators **Kevin Barber** and **Erich Schwenk** have agreed to forward your comments to me, so please feel free to share your thoughts on this issue.



FREE HOBBY

Southwest has unveiled a Web site where Houstonians *and* international travelers can show their support to the proposed international terminal at Houston Hobby. Anyone can sign a petition and send it to their elected officials. It's time to free Hobby!

freehobbyairport.com

Orlando

Jimmy West, MCO DEBM



Have you ever been in a conversation with someone, and you wonder where it was going? Maybe the bubble above your head, if it could be viewed, would read "What's your point?" We have had these "conversations" or written articles regarding Flight Attendant's knowing their point status several times in the past, and here we go again. Terminations are once again on the rise due to Flight Attendants reaching twelve points. It is your responsibility to know your point status. Keep in mind that reaching certain point totals warrant a letter to be sent to you, it is sent to your @wnco (Company) email account. It is not an excuse to say that you did not receive the notification if you do not check your Company email. I have had conversations with Flight Attendant's who have stated their points were "somewhere around 5 or 6." When they checked they were actually at 8 or 9 (numbers vary). The next time you check in for a trip, I strongly encourage you to check your point status. The point here is by knowing your total, it will save you a trip into the Inflight Office.

Recently, I have had several complaints regarding the new 'liquor bags' and their use. While they do look nice and would be more suited being used as a beach bag, I think in time their use will be adapted to a more convenient location, as we are always thinking outside the bag, or box, I mean.

The last three months have been very busy for our Union, the SLI vote, the 2012 TWU 556 Officer elections and the completion of 800 training (ice-scoop training will be announced soon). To date, Overwater/Near International Flying Negotiations continue and hopefully we will have an agreement soon.

Lastly, it is your responsibility to make sure your Flight Attendant Binder is up-to-date. This includes all bulletins, revisions, etc. You can be levied a steep personal fine if the FAA were look through your binder, and find it is not current.

JIMMY WEST

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

Anatomy of a Mini Evac

by Michele Moore with Justin Whittington

I recently attended one of our Company’s historic events – the mini-evacuation of our newest aircraft, the 737-800. I walked away truly in awe of my fellow Flight Attendants that actually participated in the mini evac, and also of the process itself. I had no idea what to expect walking into the situation and was amazed with the process. There were seventeen Flight Attendants who helped pave the way for our newest aircraft, and we should all thank them for making this day an overwhelming success. One of those Flight Attendants was Justin Whittington, and while I was an observer, he was part of the second working crew so I’ll share the experience from his perspective as well.

Several crews of four Flight Attendants and Pilots were selected, based on recommendations from their Base Leadership. Several full crews were available in the event that multiple attempts at the process were needed over a two day period.

Justin: I got the call asking me to participate in February, and I was both honored and excited! We all flew into Dallas the day before the drill, and while we’d been told the basics on what to expect, it was reiterated that we know our Flight Attendant Manuals really well, especially as it related to the 800.

The day we arrived in Dallas we spent time getting to know one another, and then got some time on the aircraft itself getting to know where the emergency equipment was, how the galleys were laid out etc. etc. We all took turns opening the forward galley service door; the Company reminding us that that particular door can be hard to open, and how important it was to open the door in one fluid motion so that the slide would properly inflate. I have to be honest, my biggest fear was that I’d end up in C position and have to open the armed forward service door.

The mini-evac is an FAA requirement so they were the facilitators for the day. The morning began with a briefing from the FAA on what to expect during the day from all the parties involved with a special emphasis on what would be expected of the crews. It was obvious from the very beginning that this was the Flight Attendants’ show – the pressure was all on them. At this point, I was feeling the stress for them and was actually glad that I was only an observer, and not one of the Flight Attendants selected to “work” the mini-evac. Their job was simple, according to the FAA; just do your job as you would normally, according to your procedures.

Justin: Sitting in that huge room the FAA went over what would be expected of us and how the drill would be run. At

one point they said, “Well, once the flight-deck door closes, the Pilots don’t exist.... It’s all in the Flight Attendants’ hands after that.” I think that’s when it hit me... just how much was riding on the us. There were people from many departments at Headquarters, and in that instant all eyes were on the seventeen Flight Attendants.

At a designated time, an emergency would be simulated and two of the four doors would be opened. He explained two doors would be blocked, and explained the process of assessing conditions outside your door and blocking your exit if a red light representing fire was visible. He explained that the mini evac didn’t require an actual evacuation of people, and that there were no tricks involved. Once the simulated emergency occurred, the Flight Attendants had fifteen seconds to get the doors open and initiate the evacuation. The only “passengers” onboard the aircraft would be a group of FAA inspectors, and one Company representative, but they would not actually leave the aircraft.

Immediately, my entire perception of what an evacuation drill was went away. Until that point, I didn’t realize that the Flight Attendants would be simulating a very thorough security sweep, the equipment check, a crew briefing, the over wing window exit briefing, the boarding process, the actual PA’s and demos, and even details down to what information was on the rev nap. The FAA was evaluating our training process in a real life scenario. They wanted to make sure our group was following all the procedures in our manual – this wasn’t just about being able to open an exit in an emergency. Once the preliminaries were over, the day continued with the drawing of the names of the first crew.

Justin: When it came time to pick the crew they pulled out two Southwest cookie jars. One contained eight Pilots names, the other had seventeen Flight Attendant names. It was explained that the first name to be called would be the A, the second name the B, and so on. There could be no position trading. They drew the first two pilot names and then the first four Flight Attendants. I breathed a huge sigh of relief knowing I was off-the-hook... and finally relaxed back into my chair. The four chosen Flight Attendants stayed in the board room and the rest of us were escorted into a sequestering room. On the way we were all given special ID’s that would get us into and out of the main hangar, which, aside from those with these yellow ID’s, was locked down.

Once the first crew was chosen, the remaining crews were sequestered. If the first attempt was unsuccessful, the crew chosen for the second or third attempt would not be able to know any details of the previous attempts.

Justin: We didn't see the first crew, or anyone else for that matter, for a while. We were brought into a large meeting room in the Maintenance Executive offices and took seats around the table. At first I was impressed with the amenities. We had fruits, cheeses, pastries, coffee, nuts, sweets... etc. Shortly thereafter I'd come to learn that these were all to make up for the fact that we were locked in there for several hours.

The FAA explained that we would remain sequestered until either the first drill was successful and we were free to go, or it wasn't successful and they needed to select a second crew. We were to have no access to the outside nor was anyone else allowed into the room. We had to turn off our cell phones and place them face-down on the table in front of us in view of the FAA inspector. Suddenly those pastries didn't seem so important anymore. Even when we needed to use the restrooms there were people stationed in the hallways just outside the doors to ensure we had no contact with anyone else. We had no idea what was going on in the hangar.

We all made our way to the darkened maintenance hangar as the final preparations were completed. Having front row seats outside of the aircraft, I had full visibility into the cabin. I was able to see the security sweep, the crew briefing and the boarding process. Once the forward entry door was closed, by a real Ops Agent, we were able to observe the emergency demonstration. As the demo was being conducted, it was clear that there was some type of issue on the aircraft as the Flight Attendants were walking back and forth. Finally the demo was complete, the Flight Attendants were seated, and were "Cleared for Departure."

Shortly thereafter, the aircraft "lost power" signaling the onset of the evacuation. The doors opened and the slides deployed in under nine seconds. The initial reaction was that the mini evac was successful. After the initial excitement faded, we realized that three slides had deployed, instead of two. At this point we were all told to return to our initial meeting room to debrief.

Justin: The time seemed to go by so slowly but most of us stayed occupied by reading, telling stories, or in my case, completing several crosswords. Every time the door would open we would all stop and look up, each of us hoping that it was the FAA coming to tell us the first drill was a success and we were in the clear. But time just ticked on and we had no idea of what was happening.

During the debrief, we learned that the PA system had not been working, which is why we saw the crew walking back

and forth. They had used the megaphone to communicate the emergency demonstration information to the passengers. The FAA praised the Flight Attendants for their quick thinking. It was also determined that one of the doors had been opened that should have been blocked. There had been discussion, and it could not be proven that the red light, indicating a blocked exit, had not illuminated at the proper time. The first crew was not held responsible for the third door being opened.

We were given a lunch break while the aircraft was prepared for round two and the next four Flights Attendants and two Pilots names were drawn.

Justin: Finally the door opened and this time it was one of the recognizable FAA inspectors who'd lead us through the process that morning. He was accompanied by a familiar face from Southwest Headquarters and they looked serious. I was expecting them, at any moment, to smile and say "We Passed!"... but they didn't. Instead they said the first drill was not a success, and that a new crew would have to be selected for a second drill. Whatever tension I'd released immediately found it's way right back to my stomach. Out came the cookie jars and as the names were pulled I was called third, "Justin Whittington, C." I tried to smile but I started running through everything in my head... we got a few minutes to review and then went to lunch. Even at lunch we were kept separate, only now, it was our new crew, and we were separated not only from crew #1, but also those sitting Reserve.

At the scheduled time, we made our way back to the maintenance hangar for the next attempt at a successful evacuation. I took my seat, and once again witnessed the security sweep, the crew briefing, and the boarding process. Prior to the front door closing, it seemed like there was something that was concerning to the crew. Maintenance was called and boarded the aircraft. After ten minutes the forward entry door was closed the emergency demo commenced.

Justin: We were lead back into the hangar and told not to make eye-contact, or talk to anyone. Just to look straight ahead and walk up the stairs onto the plane. I could see familiar faces out the corner of my eye, as well as crew #1. For them it was the first time they knew who would be on crew #2. We boarded and the security/equipment check went perfectly until the D Flight Attendant came forward and informed me that the aft entry door slide gauge needle was outside the green band. I passed it along to the A, and she to the Pilots. As if it were a real flight they called Maintenance, and in no time they'd replaced the slide. It gave us a few minutes to adjust to having the FAA Inspectors in our space. There was one for each Flight Attendant, one would be in the forward lavatory to watch me, the C Flight Attendant operate the door (if it wasn't to be blocked), and one would

FEATURE ARTICLE

be leaning over the entry- monument watching the A. Once all was accomplished, doors closed and armed we took our seats and were cleared for departure which signaled a double horn in the hangar to let everyone outside know the cabin was "secure." From then on we knew anywhere between 30-45 seconds later the lights would go out and the drill would start. My heart was pounding in my throat as I sat in my brace position, ready to start yelling my commands.

The Flight Attendants took their jumpseats, and once again the aircraft "lost power" signaling the onset of the evacuation. The evacuation commenced and the doors were once again opened in record time.

Justin: All of a sudden the lights were off and in an instant the emergency lights were on... so fast, in fact, that I didn't have time to start yelling "RELEASE SEATBELTS." I "swam" out of my harness with ease and made my way to the service door. I looked through the view-port hoping... hoping to see a red light which would indicate exit blocked and I wouldn't have to open the door...there was no light. All I saw was blackness. My greatest fear was being realized... I grabbed the control handle with my right hand, and the door-assist handle with my left and said to myself, "Here you go..." I turned the handle, let the door settle in a bit and then threw it out as hard as I could. With the sound of a shotgun the slide blew. By the time I looked down I barely saw the end of the slide unfurling onto the floor of the hangar and all of the integral slide-lights illuminating the bottom of the slide. I looked out as I was yelling to see Crew #1 sitting just beyond the yellow safety-rope surrounding the plane. I reached down and grabbed the inflation-handle and pulled... still yelling "RELEASE SEATBELTS-RELEASE SEATBELTS!" The handle pulled up, but never came free. I tried again but no luck, knowing the slide was inflated I threw the handle to the side and with my back to the galley and my left hand on the assist handle I began "COME THIS WAY, THIS WAY OUT, LEAVE EVERYTHING, CROSS YOUR ARMS, JUMP!" I had started on my second round of commands when I felt the FAA inspectors hands on my shoulders. He was saying "Stop.... Stop, it's okay you can stop. The drill is over." I had been in such a state of adrenaline that I didn't hear anything but my own voice. I didn't even hear the loud single air-horn blast signaling "drill over." I was shaking... and made my way to a seat in row 1. The inflation handle had gotten caught on my ring and my finger was swelling such that I was worried my ring wouldn't come off. As I sat there being looked over by a Southwest colleague, the FAA inspectors were looking at the inflation handle. I was

worried I'd done something wrong, and sensing that, one of the FAA inspectors came over and said, "No matter what, you did a great job. You tried twice and kept going and whatever happened with the slide wasn't your fault." I was relieved.

It appeared that the attempt was successful but we were asked to return to the meeting room for the official briefing. Once everyone arrived in the room, we were told the debrief would occur as soon as the sequestered crew arrived. At this point we knew the mini evacuation had been successful.

During the briefing we were informed that one of the slide readings had not been in the green band. The equipment check worked exactly as intended, and the Captain had the slide fixed prior to the second attempt. Thanks to the thoroughness of the C and D Flight Attendant, it was caught prior to the drill. Had it not been taken care of, it could have caused the slide not to deploy, forcing us into a third evacuation attempt.

Once again, we should all express our gratitude to our awesome fellow crewmembers for their hard work enabling our new 800 series aircraft to be placed into service.

Justin: It took a while to come down from the high of the experience, especially given that I went right into an 800 Galley Ops meeting, but that night we were treated to a celebratory dinner and I was able to enjoy and appreciate our accomplishments! The Company was wonderful throughout the process of supporting all of us, and making sure we felt no extra pressure from them. There was already built-in pressure, and I felt like the Company did everything they could to make us as comfortable as we were. They really had a lot of faith that we'd be able to perform successfully and it was a true honor having the opportunity to live up to their expectations! I will always remember this when I see an 800 out on line.



MICHELE MOORE & JUSTIN WHITTINGTON

Michele is a Dallas Flight Attendant, and TWU Local 556 Health Committee Chair. She can be reached at mmoore@twu556.org or 214-352-9110. **Justin** is a Chicago Flight Attendant and frequent contributor to *Unity*. He can be reached through communications@twu556.org

In Remembrance Nancy Ellison

by Thom Mcdaniel

When Nancy Ellison lost her battle with breast cancer on February 10, TWU Local 556 lost a very special Member, SWA lost a wonderful Employee, and we all lost a great friend.

Nancy was a 25-year Employee with Southwest Airlines. She began working on the ground in ABQ but found her true calling as a Flight Attendant for most of her career. Every person who met Nancy, whether a Customer or fellow Employee, was touched by her kindness and love for life. She opened up her home to a friend in need and her wallet to a new Employee to share dinner. She would stay up all night laughing and talking about the daily adventures on the airplane over her two favorite vices - cheap wine and cigarettes.



Nancy loved her job and her Customers and her coworkers loved her back. She was an “old-timer” and never hesitated to share her knowledge and make Southwest Airlines a better place to work. She was the “Spirit of Southwest Airlines” in every way.

In addition to her work with Southwest Airlines, Nancy loved her family, including her twin sons Kennedy and Daniel, daughter-in-law Lindsay, and granddaughter Sydney – the baby girl she always wanted.

When Nancy was laid to rest in Henderson Nevada among her very special friends and family, Southwest airplanes flew by as if on purpose to honor her life. She always had a smile on her face. She always had a kind word for everyone. She will be missed so much. When you remember Nancy, and we know you remember her often, let it be a reminder to be a little kinder, smile a little more often, and laugh a little louder – Nancy would have wanted it that way.

*Memorials to Nancy Ellison can be made to Shade Tree, 1 W Owens Ave, N Las Vegas, NV 89030.

Grievance Committee

by Allyson Parker-Lauck



In the last issue of *Unity Magazine*, my Grievance Article was titled “Three Ways to Get Fired.” I have received more feedback from this article than any article I’ve written in my eleven years of Union work.

I hope everyone will continue to spread the word since an alarming number of Flight Attendants continue to be terminated for either a) not understanding their responsibilities as Reserves, or b) playing “the game” and thinking they can get away with it. If you didn’t read last quarter’s issue, please go to www.twu556.org, log in, then click “Resources,” and then “Communications,” and select the Winter 2012 issue.

There are two other scenarios that I didn’t cover last quarter that I want to address in this article. In the interest of space, I’m not going to write full scenarios, so I’ll get straight to the point. If you self assign or if you receive your assignment from Scheduling the night before your reserve block, you are still responsible for being within two hours driving distance of your domicile during all of your contact hours. The Commuter Policy only covers you to begin your contact hours, not to commute in for the pairing you were assigned or self assigned. If you decide to wait it out at home and commute in for your pairing after your contact hours have begun, if you get caught, you could be fired. We haven’t seen many of these scenarios play out, but it’s yet another gamble that is not worth losing your job over.

This is my last article for *Unity* as my last day as Grievance Chair was Friday, March 30, and I’m now back flying the friendly skies. The last three years have been some of the most challenging, but most rewarding of my life. As I write this article, the new Grievance Chair has not yet been named, but I do wish him or her all the luck and the success I have experienced in my three years in this capacity. My advice to the new Grievance Chair is simple... Come to work early and stay late. Spend at least twice the time listening as you do talking. Don’t base your success on tallying wins and losses, but by the problems that are solved. And lastly, make sure you can multi-task since you will find yourself with ten different things going on in ten different directions at all times. Find a way to succeed in these ways, and you will succeed in your new position.

ALLYSON PARKER-LAUCK

is a Houston Flight Attendant and our former Grievance Committee Chair. She can be contacted through communications@twu556.org.

Where to start? 1) Improved trip trading 2) Commuter policy 3) Jumpseat privileges. What a life saver for commuters flying off-line. 4) Of course the pay structure is much better now, and it came about at a time when most airlines were taking pay cuts and laying off. Thanks for all your hard work. Bettina

Thom McDaniel

As International President of the Transport Workers Union of America and prior to that as the head of the Union's Air Transport Division I've had the privilege, over many years, of meeting airline workers from across the nation and for that matter across the globe. I've learned over time that Flight Attendants at Southwest Airlines stand out.

Reporters and business analysts always remind me how productive Southwest Flight Attendants are. Customers often tell me how friendly and personable their Southwest Flight Attendant was on a recent flight. Union leaders regularly ask me how is it that the Southwest Flight Attendants have the industry's leading contract and how is it they have achieved higher wages and improved benefits in a period when other airline workers were facing concessions?

How is it? The answer to the labor questions can be answered with a four-letter word – Thom. Thom McDaniel personifies the Southwest culture; he is productive, personable, friendly and smart. As Union President he has used those attributes to lead Local 556 and represent the best interests of his Members.

It hasn't been easy. Thom has served as a local union president during a very difficult time, probably the hardest decade, in the history of commercial aviation.

Almost as soon as the smoke cleared from the World Trade Center, Thom was preparing his team for Negotiations. He almost immediately went into *tough* negotiations with the LUV airline during a period when the rest of the industry was falling apart. He didn't experience a lot of love while negotiating. These were talks where one Company leader said across the table, "the problem with you Flight Attendants is you are either old and sick or young and pregnant." Thom didn't take any guff. He led a campaign as much to save the Southwest culture as he did to improve wages, benefits and working conditions. In the end, he came out with a great contract, more respect for Flight Attendants, improved labor relations and a new Southwest CEO.

Airline acquisitions, later negotiations, battles for improved professional conditions – Thom was fighting for 556 Members every day; Thom was always up for any challenge. I took advantage of his many skills and often called on him for advice or help.

If Thom were a professional baseball player he would undoubtedly be classified as a "utility player," someone who could play multiple positions well.

In both baseball and in TWU, a utility player is really useful to the team. In baseball there is a Hall of Fame. If we had one in TWU there would be a special place for Thom McDaniel. In the Union world we really don't need a plaque on the wall. Thom will be long remembered for his successes, for the Members he has helped, and for guiding a local Union that is far stronger today than the day he was elected. Good job Thom.

In unity,

James C. Little

International President

Transport Workers Union of America

Thom deserves our appreciation. Union Leadership is hard work and not everyone is willing to serve. Thom is a passionate and courageous Leader. He has fought hard for our wonderful Flight Attendants and served them well. It is clear, he has great LUV for this cause we call Southwest Airlines. Thom, well done, my friend. Gary Kelly

We would like to add our thanks and appreciation to Thom for 'owning' his responsibilities as the President of TWU Local 556 and as a member of the SWA Family. Not only did Thom share his passion for Legendary Internal and External Customer Service delivery at all times, he did so by "Living the Southwest Way" on a daily basis. He was (and remains) a true representative of the very special Culture that we all enjoy at our beloved Company. With fondness and respect, Colleen & Herb

Over A Decade of Service To Local 556

The fact of the matter is that more than 75 percent of our Flight Attendants have never known another TWU Local 556 President besides Thom McDaniel. That being said, I know of no other leader—within our Union or Southwest Airlines for that matter—who is, on the one hand, revered, worshipped, loved, while on the other hand being politicized, vilified, and just misunderstood.

This perpetual oxymoron is probably due to the very complex and intellect that makes Thom the exemplary leader he is. Love him or hate him, the list of accomplishments our Union has achieved under his watch is truly remarkable and unprecedented. Even his biggest detractors cannot dispute the historic, factual record of successes that are owed to Thom McDaniel's leadership. The part of the picture that's a little more difficult to express is: who is Thom McDaniel, the person of deeds, and not "just" leader of Union successes?

It's important to know that I started my Union career being a Thom McDaniel rival, as I ran against him in the 2000 elections...and was soundly defeated! Little did I know at the time, I would be working with Thom several months later as his First Vice President. Luckily, he and I were able to make a pact, put the election behind us, and, more importantly, agree that in order for us to right the ship, we would have to become friends. Fortunately, he and I honored this pact from the get go, and over a decade later, we are truly close friends.

From this perspective as his friend, I feel I have great insight into whom Thom the person is. He is a person of integrity, expecting no more or less than you or me. Thom is a man of conviction who is always striving to make things better for the underdog and those less fortunate. He is generous both with his time and resources, as demonstrated by his countless charitable causes, including the centerpiece of his heart, volunteering one week each year as a counselor at Camp for All, a barrier-free camp to enrich the lives of children and adults with challenging illnesses or special needs and their families.

Furthermore, Thom is courageous when it comes to defending people on any level from injustices and unfairness. I have

seen this many times, from meetings with Management about wrongful terminations, to expressing Flight Attendant issues to elected officials in our nation's capital. He is loyal; having his teams' back at all times is a personal mantra that I have adopted, too.

Finally, Thom is human with all the same feelings, flaws, insecurities, and dreams we all have. It's easy to lose sight of the fact that leaders are people who sometimes, somehow become non-human in our eyes—we expect them to have all the answers to all the questions delivered to us in just the way we want to hear. Of course, leaders also make mistakes, the good old fashioned kind, with no malice or agenda involved. Again, the human condition is always present. In reality, real leaders lead from the heart as much as from the mind, and sometimes they must tell us things we really don't want to hear. That's not being mean or deceptive; that's simply being honest and forthright, two essential leadership qualities.

This couldn't have been more thoroughly demonstrated than during Thom's herculean leadership throughout the AirTran SLI negotiations with all its associated negativity and drama. Again, Thom never lost sight of the greater good: the vital stake we all share in the success of Southwest Airlines, the preservation of our culture, and the ultimate job security for all.

All-in-all, the best way to judge true leaders is actually very simple. Just ask:

What are the results achieved during their tenure of leadership? Given the results displayed by your Union over the last twelve years of Thom's leadership, the judgment is obvious and indisputable. To be sure, we are truly experiencing the end of an era, and I, for one, will miss Thom in his role as President of TWU Local 556, not just because of the spectacular achievements made under him, but because of the fantastic person and friend I will see that much less of. I'm confident that all of you, in the not so distant future, will come to feel the same way.



MICHAEL MASSONI
is a Phoenix Flight Attendant, and TWU Local 556 First Vice President. He can be contacted at mmassoni@twu556.org or 214-640-4302.

Thom's leadership style always made me want to do better. He never micromanaged and trusted me to make hard decisions and find the best solutions. Thom made me a better leader, better advocate, and a better person. Allyson

Thom is full of hope for those who strive, an inspiration for those seeking to advance, a man full of confidence for those who come together in unity for the betterment of a cause. Thom is strong in his convictions, but always willing to listen and learn. He has taught the teachers, and learned from his students. I wish you continued success wherever your path may lead. **Mark Richard**

Thom is an effective and responsible Labor Leader. He fully understands his duty to be an effective voice for Flight Attendants, but he also understands the value and wisdom of being a responsible partner with Southwest Airlines. Intractable, short-sighted positions not only lead to gridlock, they can be self-destructive as well. Some never get it. Thom does. His leadership will be missed, and we wish for him the very best as he moves on to new endeavors. **Joe Harris**

Over the past five years of working with Thom, I've gained a lot of respect for him and for the way he articulates facts. In fact, I always appreciated listening to what he had to say, because with every discussion, he kept the continued prosperity of Southwest Airlines and our People his primary focus. He truly cares for our Company and the Flight Attendant group, and I've enjoyed partnering with him on ensuring the success of both. Best wishes in the future, Thom. **Mike Hafner**

It's been twenty years since we first met in Houston Inflight, and like you, I'm appreciative that we both have had the opportunity to be "raised" at Southwest. Your continued LUV for our Flight Attendants, other work groups, Customers, and our Company is sincere—and you are to be commended. Thank you for being passionate about our cause. Best wishes as you move forward. **Naomi Hudson**

Sitting next to Thom at the bargaining table, I have been present to and learned from a decade of success which has given me the experience, knowledge and courage to fight for what is right in the face of fierce opposition. Thanks Thom. **Debra Petersen** - Lead Negotiator, TWU Local 577 Allegiant Flight Attendants

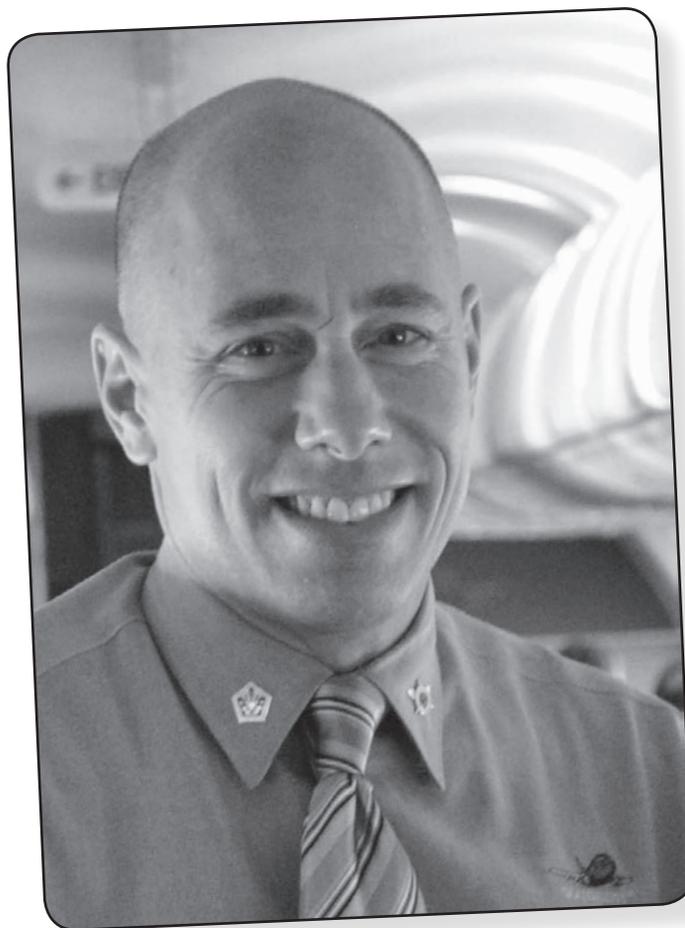
Trust, Integrity:

Michael Massoni

by **Thom McDaniel**

Michael Massoni has been TWU Local 556's First Vice President for the past eleven years, but even before that he was working as our National Safety and Security Coordinator. Our Members know Michael for his amazing achievements during his time in office, some of which include our Reciprocal Cabin Seat Agreements, the ASAP program, and most recently his work with the new 737-800 aircraft. But there are some other things you might not know about Michael—and you should.

Michael is a self-proclaimed "airline geek" and student of the airline industry with 28 years of service as a Flight Attendant, including with two other carriers before landing at Southwest, and bringing a wealth of diverse knowledge to the work he does for our Union. He is certified and trained on fifteen different aircraft, and has done evacuations and proving runs on four, including our new 737-800s. TWU



Local 556 Members have benefited not only from his airline experience in areas of safety, cabin design, grievance handling, and negotiations, but his organizational and business knowledge has also allowed us to provide expanded customer service in our Union office. Of course, the fact that Michael is a consummate professional and perfectionist make those of us who work directly with him strive to be better at what we do.

I first got to know Michael when we ran against each other for First Vice President in the 2000 TWU Local 556 elections. I ended up getting the highest number of votes, but we both won, because we ran a respectful and honest race, and we both committed to continuing to work for our Members no matter who took the office. Michael did become First Vice President a year later during a very difficult time for our office, and he handled the transition to the role as he handles everything: put his head down, ignored the politics, and did the work that needed to be done for the benefit of our Membership. Our workplace is safer and our travel is more accessible because of Michael's ability to reach across the table and work with Management, regulatory agencies, and other Union leaders to make our work lives better thanks to the honesty and integrity he has demonstrated over the years.

Michael believes in the power of strong relationships. Many people come into Union work believing that effective leadership means pounding your fist, drawing a line, or being the loudest person at the table. From the day I met Michael, he has demonstrated the mutual respect and problem solving are the key to almost every situation, and you can maintain your position and find a solution by working together—but only if there is trust and integrity on both sides of the table.

All our work lives have benefited from Michael's commitment to excellence, but his professional accomplishments pale in comparison to his passion for his family and friends, especially those of us lucky enough to know him best. No matter what's going on in his world, he takes the time to share a kind word, give a hug, or remind us that he loves us. In short, he has the ability to care about people in a way that makes us a better Union and a better Company, and I am so proud to call Michael Massoni my coworker, my Union brother, and, most of all, my friend.

Thank you to Our Outgoing Board Members



Bryan Orozco

Before being elected as the Las Vegas Domicile Executive Board Member, Bryan served as a Shop Steward and was active in our Local's legislative efforts and in our Civil and Human Rights Committee. Bryan's quiet demeanor and thoughtful approach to Union work should be admired, as he knows that when you're talking, you're not listening. Once elected to the Executive Board, Bryan was a Board Member who truly understood the importance of developing new Leaders, and helped build a cadre of highly-skilled and qualified new Leaders in his Base. A shining example of his efforts is the new Las Vegas Domicile Executive Board Member, Addie Crisp.



John Parrott

When John became Treasurer in 2009, our Local had just over \$300,000 in uncollected dues. John has worked hard to recoup those funds and increase transparency through better reporting to the Membership and the Department of Labor. In 2010, John became Office Manager where he handled the day-to-day operations of the Local's office and reports all time to the Executive Board. In this role, John saved our Local even more money by maintaining a lean but very productive Office Team, proving that the Office Manager position was not a full-time job, but could easily be incorporated into the Treasurer's duties. John's frugal approach to our finances has prepared our Local for the times ahead.



Mark Torrez

When Mark first joined the Local's Executive Board in 2003, he was the youngest and most junior Flight Attendant to serve on our Executive Board in our Local's history. Mark first served as Oakland Domicile Executive Board Member, and then as Executive Board Member at Large. He has also served our Membership as the Chair of the Scholarship and Survey Committees, as well as the Executive Board liaison for the Scheduling Committee. Mark was the Board's "idea guy". He came up with new and innovative ways to solve common problems. Mark has set an example for future Leaders to not be afraid to try new ideas.

Thank you to our outgoing Board Members



Audrey Stone

Before becoming directly involved in our Union, Audrey saw a need that had yet to be addressed by our Union, and that was making our Contract easy to understand by all Flight Attendants. This prompted her to write the Contract guide called "Contract Quickies."

It didn't take her long to become a Shop Steward in 2006, and then she joined the Executive Board as the Baltimore Domicile Executive Board Member in 2008. As an Executive Board Member, Audrey played a major role in increasing our Union's availability to 365 days a year. She helped negotiate an understanding on the Maryland Flexible Family Leave Act, and she has continued to keep education as a top priority through our Union's Contract Live videos, Contract guide sheets, E-Connections, and Base Orientations. Audrey set the bar very, very high for all Board Members, but especially for the Domicile Executive Board Member position.



Cuyler Thompson

In 2006 Cuyler became our Recording Secretary for the Executive Board. Since that time Cuyler has worked to digitize over 37 years worth of Executive Board Minutes. He has also served as the Chairperson for the Shop

Steward Committee where he has created accountability procedures and excellent training for our Representatives. During Cuyler's time on the Executive Board he has been the liaison to the Communications Coordinator, increased transparency through accurate reporting, and worked to increase the availability of Union programs. Cuyler took on the tough jobs others weren't willing to, and put the decisions of the Executive Board into action. He has set the example that future Recording Secretaries should follow.



Crystal Reven

Crystal became the Houston Domicile Executive Board Member in 2008 after serving as a Houston Shop Steward. Her compassionate and passionate Leadership in Houston helped countless Flight Attendants avoid unjust discipline, including termination.

Crystal has worked extremely hard as our Uniform Committee Chairperson and our Local's only voice on the Company's Uniform Steering Committee. She was often a lone voice on that Committee standing up not only for Flight Attendants, but for workers everywhere since Cin-tas has a long history of anti-Union, anti-Worker practices. She played a major role in convincing Southwest Airlines to consider Lands' End, which resulted in our new, higher quality uniforms. The spark Crystal brings to Union work is one that any new Board Member should attempt to emulate.



Don Shipman

Don has a long history of Union involvement including Shop Steward, Scheduling Committee Member, Contract Negotiator, and Executive Board Member at Large. Don's ability to see every angle of an issue made him an in-

valuable asset to our Contract Negotiating Team and the 800 Subcommittee often identifying problems nobody else could see. While Don's first passion is Contract and Scheduling issues, he was also a strong advocate for Members who were facing possible discipline or termination. Don's advocacy, intelligence, technical abilities, and creativity are a rare combination of qualities to find in a single individual. Our Union has benefitted greatly from Don's service and truly unique abilities.

Respecting Our Culture

by Cuyler Thompson



Tina teetered on the edge of the aft jumpseat with an iced cold beer. She bewitchingly brushed the well-coiffed mane from her nape and pressed the unopened refreshment against her beating jugular, allowing daring droplets of water to sneak down into her Cintas blouse. She offered a coquettish smile to the stranger as he entered the aft lavatory to relieve himself. Tina purred, “Fort Meyers is so hot.” The man dithered, and then disappeared.

“The steamy hot stewardess is reluctantly keeping her cool today, Britney” Tina sighed.

“Maybe it’s menopause” said Britney.

“Maybe it’s because you are making my blood boil today” Tina replied.

Britney responded, “I heard you tell that commuting AirTran Flight Attendant that I didn’t get my drinks out because I’m new and can’t find anything in the galley. It’s not my fault that everything in the galley changes every time we land; I’m so sick of it. And I’m *not* new, Tina; I have been here for four years. And I don’t appreciate you talking about me behind my back—especially to an AirTran Flight Attendant. Whose side are you on anyway?”

Tina thought about jerking Britney into the LAV by the phony ponytail and pushing her face-first into a blue water swirl, but she remembered that it was occupied.

“Oh, that’s right. You voted FOR the SLI Agreement; you’re a Senior Mama, so it doesn’t affect you does it Tina?”

Maybe she could blame a beat-down with a drink tray on turbulence. They had begun their descent into Orlando after all.

“You voted to give AirTran *everything*; screw your coworkers, right Tina?”

Tina decided that a serving of Cheese-Nips™ and a splash of tomato juice into Britney’s phony ponytail and tight white shirt would be easily explained to a Supervisor during a Fact-Finding Meeting. Tina was just about to execute her plan when Management’s star witness exited the LAV.

“I forgot you were in there, handsome. Did you miss me?” Tina offered him the tomato juice she was holding in her hand. “Careful; it’s messy.”

As the witness walked away, Tina reconsidered her response.

“If you were twice as smart, you’d still be stupid. Or maybe it’s just that you’re too pretty to be smart? As the old saying goes: pretty

is, as pretty does. Every girl has the right to be ugly, Britney, but today you have abused the privilege. You were downright ugly to that AirTran Flight Attendant; I was *so* embarrassed. What did she do to you? Nothing! She was sweet as could be, brought us chocolates and was curious and excited about her bright future with Southwest Airlines. She was well put together and looked great in her size-appropriate uniform. That’s a heck of a lot more than I can say for you, your piss-poor attitude, and that muffin top you got going on there. She’s the kind of person that I want to work with; I’ll take her over you any day, Miss Debbie Downer.

You have done nothing but complain for three days: My job is sooo hard because they’ve moved all of the stock in the galley; There’s not enough gin in the liquor bag; That man asked for two drinks; nobody ever closes the LAV door and they don’t wear shoes. And *then* I’ve had to listen to you whine about how unfair it is that the AirTran Flight Attendants don’t have to share a hotel room during Special Merger Training or pay for their uniforms, and then there’s the BIG ONE---they don’t have to sit probation: O. M. G. !

You are just full of envy, Britney; envy comes from people’s ignorance of, or lack of belief in, their own gifts. It is the art of counting other people’s blessings instead of your own.”

“Didn’t you have to sit probation, Tina?” Britney snarled.

“Yes, I did, and I also shared a hotel room at Barbie Boot camp. I had one-hour report times on Reserve; you get two. I worked 15-minute turns; you get 30 minutes or more. I could only trade a trip once; you are allowed unlimited trip trades. I had no Commuter Policy to cover me; you don’t even get in trouble when your commuter flight goes out full. Do you think that I voted against those improvements because the people hired after me would receive something that I didn’t? Should I be rude to you because you get to do things that I didn’t?

My seniority was also required to step on a scale in front of a Supervisor every now and again and I still

If you would like to send Thom a message of thanks for his years of service to TWU Local 556, you can do so on the TWU Local 556 Web site. www.twu556.org

FEATURE ARTICLE

have to work to keep this gorgeous figure. It's obvious that things have changed, Big Booty Judy. Have I been mean to you because you are 'plump.' No. I just have to accept that things change; someone has once again 'moved my cheese.' But you'll probably eat that, too!

You're not as smart as you think you are, stewardess, but you obviously like arithmetic: you consistently add trouble, subtract pleasure, divide attention, and multiply ignorance to our day on the LUV Jet. I would love to stick around and watch you suck in your stomach for a while longer but I have a job to do." Tina grabbed a trash bag.

"We should have gotten more out of the deal. And I just think that they should have to sit probation, Tina."

"Why? Just because you did? When Delta Airlines bought Northwest Airlines, the Flight Attendants did not have to sit probation again. They didn't do it at Continental and United either. And you know what? They also all got 'Date of Hire' seniority. None of them got a two and a half year 'bump' in seniority like we did. They only got 'Date of Hire.' Do you not understand how amazing it is that we got what we did? We made history, Britney. NO other Flight Attendant workgroup has done better in their Seniority List Integration since the McCaskill-Bond Amendment. Period! And you are going to complain that you ONLY got two and a half years? And you're mad that the AirTran Flight Attendants don't have to sit probation?"

When I used to complain to my Dad about having to take the bus to school or having to wear hand-me-downs, he would tell me the story about him walking five miles through the snow to get to school, uphill

BOTH WAYS. When I was 17 years old, my curfew was 11 p.m. My sister, who is five years younger than I am, got to stay out until midnight. Is that fair? Should I care? I was happy for her.

Is this how you are going to treat our new family Members? You're going to be mean to them because you are envious that they got something that you didn't—or at least you think so? Your pettiness and envy towards the AirTran Flight Attendants is very unattractive, Britney, and certainly not becoming of a Southwest Airlines Flight Attendant. I am totally embarrassed.

'The envious man thinks that if his neighbor breaks a leg, he will be able to walk better himself.' We should all learn that it is better to want what you have than to have what we want.

You can be envious and ugly if you want to, Britney; I guess haters are just gonna hate. I choose to love what I have here at Southwest Airlines, the most profitable and most heavily Unionized airline in America. I work under the best Contract with the highest pay and shortest duty day in the industry. I am going to do whatever I can to make sure that my 2,500 AirTran family Members feel welcome here at Southwest Airlines; I will defend them against you and people like you. And if you and yours don't like it, you can all just kiss my hazmat."

Britney didn't know what to say.

"I'll secure the cabin while you close your kits, Britney. Thank goodness we are almost home. I wish I could say that I have enjoyed flying with you. I'll never forget this trip, although I'll keep trying. Oh look, there's some tomato juice on your ponytail. Watch out; it's messy."

CUYLER THOMPSON

is an Oakland Flight Attendant, and TWU Local 556 Recording Secretary. He can be contacted at cthompson@twu556.org or 214-640-4305.

TWU Local 556 will be losing some of our hardest working "behind the scenes" Union advocates in April and May, as several of our Local's Office and Grievance Team will be returning to flying the line. Many thanks to the following for their many years of serving our Membership: **Brandon Hillhouse, Keenan Manzo, Allyson Parker-Lauck, Catherine Rea, Denny Sebesta, and Joe Skotnik.** In addition, **Erich Schwenk** will be leaving the Grievance Team to work on our Union's Communications Team.

Thanks to each of you for your service to our Membership.



2012 SUPPLEMENTAL INSURANCE OPTIONS



Open Enrollment

April 2, 2012 through April 30, 2012
in Flight Attendant lounges
Call center enrollment will only be
May 1, 2012 through May 18, 2012



Colonial Life Products Available during open enrollment

Accident – On and off duty (24 hour) coverage. Available for Flight Attendant, spouse, and /or dependent child(ren). Helps offset the unexpected medical expenses, such as emergency room fees, deductibles and copayments that can result from a fracture, dislocation or other covered accident injury. Optional riders are available at an additional cost.

Cancer – In the event of a Cancer diagnosis, this coverage helps offset the out-of-pocket medical and indirect non-medical expenses related to cancer that most medical plans don't cover. This coverage also provides a benefit for specified cancer-screening tests once per calendar year, per covered person.

Critical Illness – Complements your major medical coverage by providing a lump-sum benefit that you can use to pay the indirect and direct costs related to a covered critical illness. Critical illnesses: heart attack, stroke, major organ failure, and end stage renal failure are just some of the illnesses covered

Universal Life Insurance – Enables you to tailor coverage for your individual needs and helps provide financial security for your family members. This is available for Flight Attendants, spouses and/or dependent children. Premiums remain the same as long as they are paid and cash value accumulates.

Claims information:

Claims forms can be obtained from the TWU 556 Web site at www.twu556.org.

Premium payments:

If you miss a premium payment, Colonial will send you notice that a premium has not been received and will provide options to maintain coverage through bank draft if necessary. Check your pay stubs monthly to verify your premium has been deducted correctly.

The Supplemental Insurance Service Center is here to help you with any questions you may have.

Please call 1-877-885-9191

Monday through Friday 8:00 - 5:00 p.m. Central time

Principal – Short Term Disability Available during open enrollment

Guaranteed Issued during open enrollment, however a pre-existing condition clause still applies. Anything that you have been treated for, had medical advice for, or received a prescription for three months before the effective date of the policy (7/1/2012) is excluded for the first six months following the effective date

Principal – Short Term Disability (off-job only):

Please meet with a Benefit Counselor during open enrollment. The insurance carrier will be changing to Principal Insurance. The open enrollment period listed above is the only time to make changes to your policy. Salary updates should be provided on an annual basis during open enrollment since your benefit payout is based on that salary. There will be no salary changes at point of claim.

Items to review:

- Salary - W2 needed
- Weekly benefit amount
- Elimination period
- Benefit period
- Premium

Items to remember:

- Due to your fluctuating work schedule premiums may not be able to be deducted from your check.
- Review your twentieth paycheck to make sure the proper deduction amount was taken.
- If you owe any back premium, your claim may not be paid until you have a zero balance.
- If you miss a month of payments you will need to pay it directly to the Third Party Administrator.
- The Principal claims forms and frequently asked questions are available at www.twu556.org.

Certificates of insurance will be mailed in July for this open enrollment period. You should be given an enrollment election form showing weekly benefit amount, elimination period, and benefit periods from the Benefits Counselor you meet with. If you are not, please request one. This is your proof of enrollment.

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THIS IS YOUR **LIFE.**
DO WHAT YOU LOVE,
AND DO IT OFTEN. **LIFE.**
IF YOU DON'T LIKE SOMETHING, CHANGE IT.
IF YOU DON'T LIKE YOUR JOB, QUIT.
IF YOU DON'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME, STOP WATCHING TV.
IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR THE LOVE OF YOUR LIFE, STOP;
THEY WILL BE WAITING FOR YOU WHEN YOU
START DOING THINGS YOU LOVE.
STOP OVER ANALYZING, ALL EMOTIONS ARE BEAUTIFUL.
LIFE IS SIMPLE. WHEN YOU EAT, APPRECIATE EVERY LAST BITE.
OPEN YOUR MIND, ARMS, AND HEART TO NEW THINGS
AND PEOPLE, WE ARE UNITED IN OUR DIFFERENCES.
ASK THE NEXT PERSON YOU SEE WHAT THEIR PASSION IS,
AND SHARE YOUR INSPIRING DREAM WITH THEM.
TRAVEL OFTEN; GETTING LOST WILL
HELP YOU FIND YOURSELF.
SOME OPPORTUNITIES ONLY COME ONCE, SEIZE THEM.
LIFE IS ABOUT THE PEOPLE YOU MEET, AND
THE THINGS YOU CREATE WITH THEM
SO GO OUT AND START CREATING.
LIFE IS LIVE YOUR DREAM
SHORT. AND SHARE
YOUR PASSION.

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The Upcycled Wallet: Original

- + Minimalist Design perfect space for the essentials: credit cards, cash, and sliding window for your ID or transit card.
- + Made from upcycled plastic bags and newspapers collected from the streets of Delhi. Providing fair wage employment and subsidized healthcare and education for each employee's family.