

unity ^{update}

YOUR MONTHLY UNITY SUPPLEMENT

DECEMBER 2011

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's Not Been an Easy Year

Thom McDaniel takes a look back at the challenges faced in 2011.

Happy Holidays to All!

Looking back on the past year, it has been one of the most challenging in history for our Flight Attendants. We have a Contract with the best work rules and compensation in the industry, but that does not make our Members immune from the outside pressures, growing pains, and constant changes that, quite frankly, have made our every-day jobs very difficult this year.

In 2011, our Members began the year with the prospect of the AirTran acquisition, bringing the new 737-800 into our fleet, adding additional seats to our 737-700, and overwater /international flying. As a result, we have been through multiple and ongoing negotiations, ratification votes, training events, grievances, and the continued uncertainty of what changes are coming and how they will affect our daily lives at work and the Culture of our Company.

In addition, our Members have also faced three "Emergency Sick Call" declarations, the suspension of and blackout dates for the PIN, and repeated communications from Southwest Airlines Management that seem to blame our entire work group for the bad attendance behavior of a few. In the last few months Inflight Leaders have stated that they are finished talking about this issue and have begun to target specific patterns of behavior for individual Employees for alleged abuse through Mandatory Attendance Meetings. Unfortunately, however, our Members are still subjected to continued memos from Senior Management as well as a video message and discussion in 800 Training that really puts a damper on what should be a great new experience.

On the aircraft, we have experienced record load factors which is good for our profit sharing, but tough on our on-time performance and commuters. Along with the record load factors this summer, we also experienced record heat, inconsistent or ineffective gate procedures, and someone's (who we are sure is not a Flight Attendant's) brilliant decision to disable gasper vents in August. These factors coupled with continuous galley stocking changes (made by another non-Flight Attendant) and the "coupon war" seem to put Customer Service second and leave our Flight Attendants stuck in the middle of an impossible battle. These may be the reasons why a recent message from an Inflight Leader told us that only 45% of our Customers report a positive cabin experience – not due to a lack of Positively Outrageous Service from our Members.

In the public eye, our Members have also faced the unfortunate and poorly handled "stuck-microphone" event, as well as numerous situations where our Flight Attendants were placed in the spotlight for simply doing their job of enforcing onboard policies in the name of Customers making a buck or getting publicity.

Add all these things together, along with the fact that we can't even order new uniform pieces, unannounced audits, pressures at home, and that darn cat on row seventeen who won't stop meowing, 2011 has been a difficult and challenging year for our Members. With the exception of 9-11, I can't remember a time in my over nineteen years as a Southwest Airlines Flight Attendant and TWU Local 556 Member that our Flight Attendants have faced so much change and so much uncertainty in such a short period of time.

It has been a tough year and we will continue to face challenges, but some things have not changed for our Members. First, we do work for the best Company in the industry where Employees do matter and are the answer to our problems, and the key to our success. Secondly, we do have a strong Union fighting for our Members to ensure that they are treated fairly and maintain our industry leading Contract that we deserve. Finally, we will continue to work together with our Company against external and internal threats to protect our Employees, serve our Customers, and preserve the continued success of our Company.

Thank you for your continued dedication and commitment. As an Employee I am so proud to work with you, and as a Leader I am so proud to work for you. Happy New Year!

THOM MCDANIEL

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

2012 FIRST ROUND OF MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

All sessions begin at 10 a.m. local. Visit twu556.org for meeting locations and agenda.

Baltimore: January 23 Dallas: January 27 Las Vegas: January 20 Orlando: January 26
Chicago: January 25 Houston: January 16 Oakland: January 27 Phoenix: January 26



SURVEY

By: Kyle Whiteley, Comm

We are pleased to report that 2,156 of our Members took part in this year's survey. The Executive Board will use this information as a guide for our future decisions. We have asked for this space to answer some of the submitted comments. We

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE CONTENT OF OUR UNITY PUBLICATIONS?

More advance notice on union meeting dates, times, and locations.
We publish the dates for meetings at least 45 days in advance. The information is posted in the Union's glass case in your lounge, on our Web site, and in any publication that might fall between the posting date and the meeting date. Many DEBMs also include the meeting dates in their local E-Connection.

Don't appreciate articles that don't apply to our job, like Breast Cancer Awareness, etc..

If all you want to read about is Union business, I would suggest reading the Meeting Minutes. Membership and Executive Board Meeting Minutes are available on the TWU Web site under the Union Business tab. I have never received a positive note about a committee report, but I often hear about the other articles that we publish.

I just want to know what you all are doing daily and about my job.
All Executive Board Members, Committee Chairs, and our Office Team Members can voluntarily post to the Weekly Report, updating you on what they are doing. Almost every week, a reminder is sent urging these leaders to update their accomplishments so you know what work is being performed to earn those Union dollars. The Weekly Report is available on the Union's Web site.

Sometimes the Union comes across as Union versus Company.
Sometimes it's the Union versus the Company, and visa versa. There are many issues that we see eye-to-eye on, and there are issues that we are far apart on. Please find comfort in knowing that your Union is 100 percent vested in looking out for your interest as a Southwest Airlines Flight Attendant, as well as the health and continued success of Southwest Airlines.

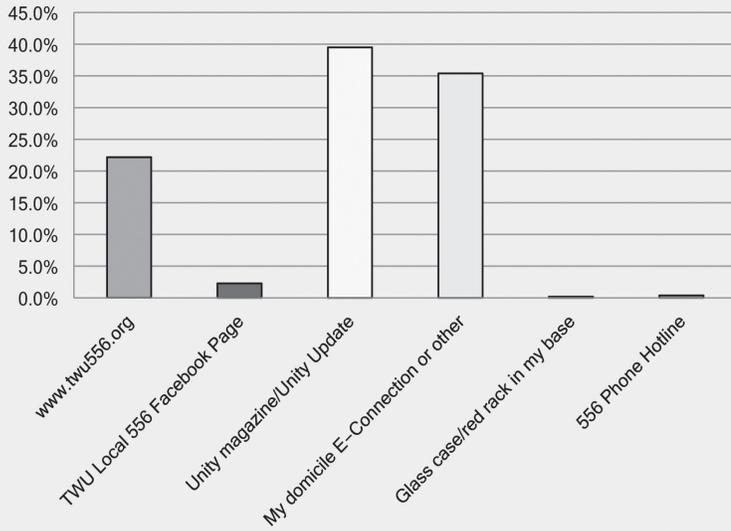
Save the cost of printing and just put it on the Web site.

In the past, we've tried an electronic email version of Unity Update. Through the wonders of technology, we were able to see that only 20 - 25 percent of those emails were opened, plus we only had email addresses for about seventy percent of our Members. We're Flight Attendants; when we're not at work, we're not thinking about work, and that is why we returned to a printed version of Unity Update for you to take on your pairing.

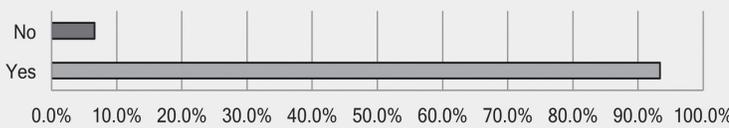
The look could be modified.

I am stepping down from my position at the end of April. The person the Executive Board selects to replace me will come up with their new look and approach to keeping you informed. There will be more information about this in the next issue of *Unity*.

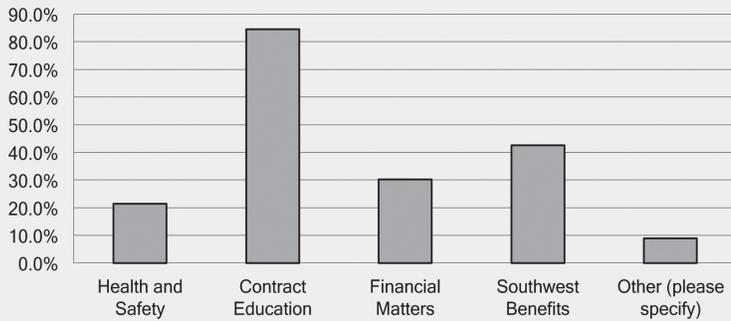
I most often get my Union information from:



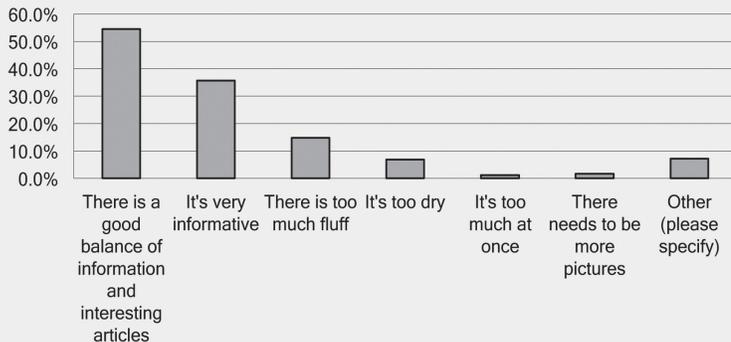
Do you read Unity Magazine?



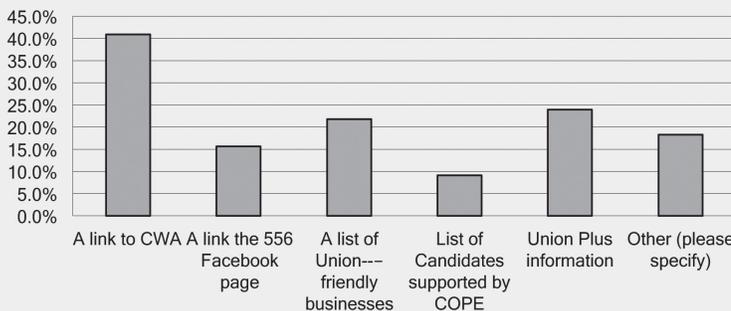
If yes, would you like to see more articles on: (Select all the answers that apply.)



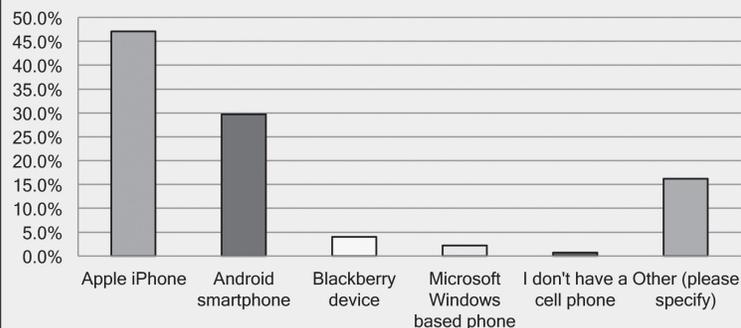
How do you feel about the content of our Unity publications? (Select all the answers that apply.)



I would like to see _____ on the TWU 556 Web site. (Select all the answers that apply.)



My mobile phone is a:



Y SAYS:

Communications Coordinator

ars survey. Your responses and comments mean a lot to us, and your
sions. Because many of the topics covered included communications, I
ve will include additional comments in future Union publications.

More detailed information about Hawaii, people ask and I don't know which islands we'll be flying into, etc! I don't feel informed.
The Union doesn't know any more about this than you do. As Flight Attendants, we are also excited to learn more about this exciting change.

Too much of the Union telling us how great they are.
Yeah, and? Just kidding! For far too long, no one knew what the Union was doing. It has been a mission of mine to make you more aware of our accomplishments, and there are a lot. The Weekly Report is a direct result of my goal to keep you informed. Be proud of your Union; there are a lot of Unions that look to Local 556 for guidance.

What the Company is planning for the future.
When Southwest makes a big announcement, such as buying AirTran, we are notified just hours to a couple of days in advance, and are often required to sign confidentiality agreements with the Company due to SEC regulations. At this time, there is nothing we can say.

To much concerning national union news, I care about Southwest.
Unity and Unity Update hardly ever have national union news in them, we simply have too much going on in our Local. TWU International mails a quarterly publication to your home called the TWU Express, that publication has lots of national union news.

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE _____ ON THE TWU 556 WEB SITE.

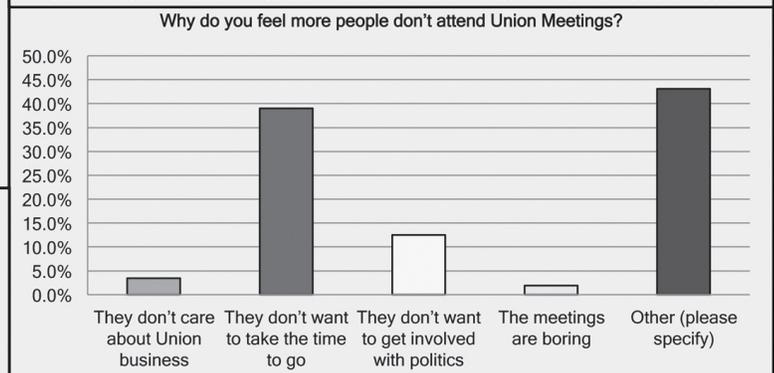
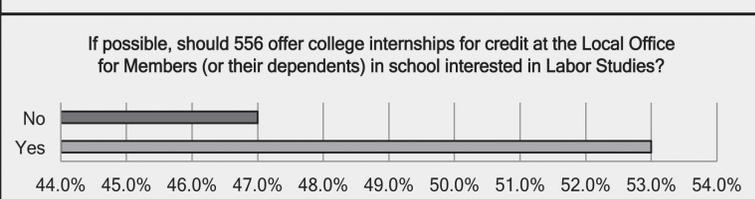
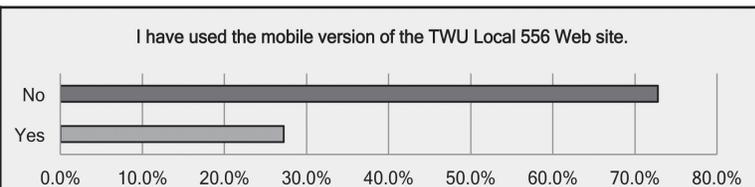
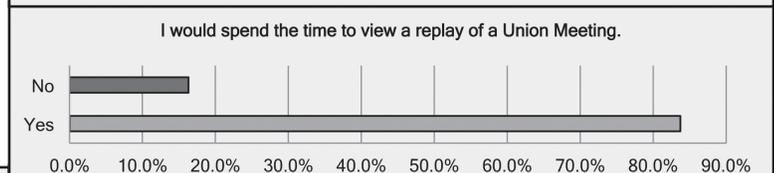
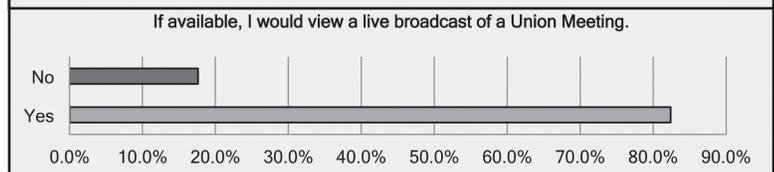
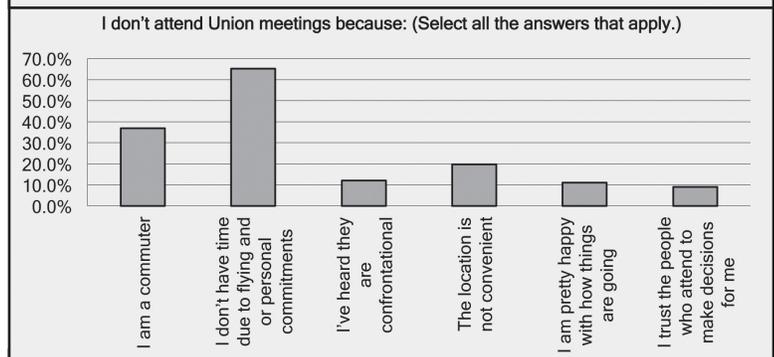
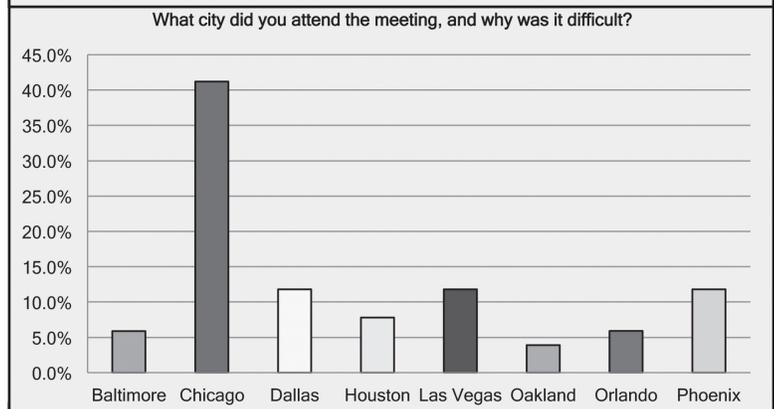
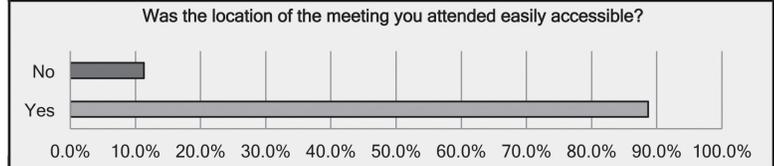
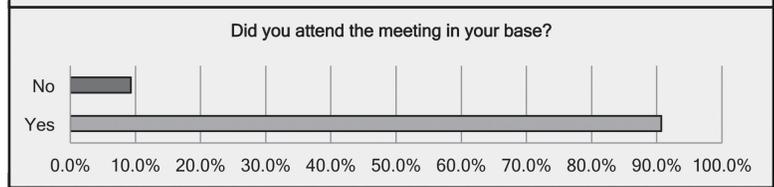
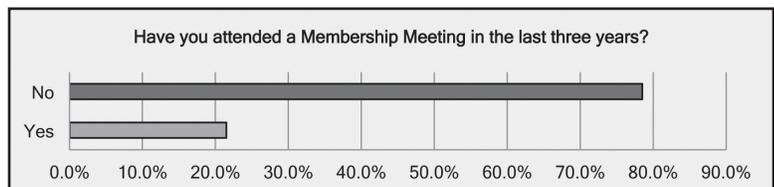
Video of the most recent meeting.

Clearly this is an important topic that the Executive Board is looking in to, and they will figure out how we can make this happen.

Get rid of Facebook. I do not believe a "business" should be on FB.
Business goes where the people are, and there are a lot of our Members on Facebook. Just ask Southwest Airlines Management.

An unlike button. Also it is ridiculous that you can't get to the Union site without pushing like! Again, an EB out of control.
The Union's Web site does not require you to Like us. If you wish to sign up for the Union's Facebook page, and have our updates in your newsfeed, then you have to Like the page. Again, a FB out of control.

A phone number to reach a union rep on the weekends. Sat. & Sun.
The same phone number used to reach the office during the week and for emergencies is also used on the weekends and holidays.
800-969-7932



Nomination and Election Notice for TWU Local 556

by Board of Election Chair **Susan Kern**

In accordance with the TWU Local 556 Bylaws, nominations and an election will be conducted for the following offices: President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Recording Secretary, Financial Secretary-Treasurer, two (2) Board Members At Large, and one (1) Domicile Executive Board Member for each domicile (BWI, DAL, HOU, LAS, MCO, MDW, OAK, and PHX). The term of office for all positions will be three years beginning May 1, 2012 and ending April 30, 2015. All Candidates elected will serve as delegates to the TWU International Convention to be held in the fall of 2013.

Any Member who has been on the Southwest Inflight seniority list for at least one year, and who has maintained continued good standing in the Local for the same twelve-month period shall be eligible for nomination and election to any office. Domicile Executive Board Members must be based and reside in the Domicile they represent, and will be elected only by those Members in their respective Domicile. The President and Secretary-Treasurer must conduct business out of the Dallas office during regular business hours. Winners will be determined by a majority of votes cast for that office. In the event of a tie, lots will be drawn to determine the winner. Anyone running unopposed will be declared elected to that office.

NOMINATIONS

Nominations will be accepted from the floor of the January Membership Meeting for TWU Local 556.

To be eligible to nominate candidates a Member must be in good standing at the time of the nomination meeting (completion of the 6 month probationary period). Self-nomination is permissible. If you are unable to attend one of the scheduled meetings, you may designate a Flight Attendant to attend and make the nomination for you.

A certified return receipt letter will be sent via U.S. mail to all eligible nominees on Monday, January 30, 2012. Nominees will have until noon Central on Tuesday, February 14, 2012 to state, in writing, the position they are accepting or declining. Written acceptance must be mailed or faxed to the Board of Election in order to meet the deadline.

Mailing address: TWU Local 556 Board of Election, PO Box 540519, Merritt Island FL 32953. FAX: 321-453-1982

The date and location for each meeting is listed below. All meetings begin at 10:00 a.m. local.

- BWI: Monday, January 23 at Four Points Sheraton, 7032 Elm Rd. in Baltimore. 410-859-3300
- DAL: Friday, January 27 at Local 556 office, 7929 Brookriver Dr, Dallas 214-392-9110
- HOU: Monday, January 16 at Hobby Airport Astros Room
- LAS: Friday, January 20 at Hampton Inn Tropicana, 4975 Dean Martin Dr 702-948-8100
- MCO: Thursday, January 26 at Hyatt Regency Airport 407-825-1328
- MDW: Wednesday, January 25 at Hampton Inn, 6540 S. Cicero Ave, Bedford Park 708-496-1900
- OAK: Friday, January 27 at In-transit Conference Room, Terminal 1, OAK Airport
- PHX: Thursday, January 26 at Concourse B, 2nd floor near B21, next to British Air Club 602-273-4391

ELECTION

The election will be conducted electronically or over the phone using VoteNet Solutions. A ballot package will be mailed to each Member's last known address between February 20 and February 23, 2012. Votes must be cast electronically via Internet or telephone starting on Thursday, March 1, 2012 at noon central. Votes must be cast by noon Central on Friday, March 16, 2012. Any Member who does not receive a ballot may request a duplicate ballot by contacting VoteNet Solutions at 866-984-3125 (Toll Free within the US) or 202-207-0540 (from outside the US). Any additional questions or concerns may be addressed to the Board of Election at 800-969-7932 extension 4324. Probationary Flight Attendants may not vote, but they will be mailed the ballot information.

It is the responsibility of each Member to advise the Union within thirty (30) days in writing of any change of address. Otherwise the Union cannot be held responsible if the Member does not receive correspondence or ballots.

The vote will be tallied at noon Central on Friday, March 16 2012 at the VoteNet Solutions office located at 1420 K St. NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20005. Their number is 866-984-3125 (Toll Free within the US) or 202-207-0540 (from outside the US). Election officials and observers will witness the certification of the vote. Access can be made available via Internet for anyone interested in witnessing remotely. Anyone interested in the remote access should contact the Board of Election at 800-969-7932 extension 4324. Results will be posted on the TWU 556 Web site, hotline, and all Union bulletin boards in each domicile in a timely fashion.

Be sure to contact your Board of Election at 800-969-7932 extension 4324 with any election questions.



Unity and Unity Update are official publications of Transport Workers Union Local 556, representing the Flight Attendants of Southwest Airlines.

KYLE WHITELEY

Unity Editor
Communications Coordinator
kwhiteley@twu556.org
MDW 35350

TWU Local 556
7929 Brookriver Dr. Ste. 750
Dallas, TX 75247
Phone: 800-969-7932
Fax: 214-357-9870
Hotline: 800-806-7992
www.twu556.org

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