

unity^{update}

YOUR MONTHLY UNITY SUPPLEMENT

SEPTEMBER 2011

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

556's Project Redesign

556 President **Thom McDaniel** discusses the who, what, and why your Union supports the Membership Assembly.

During this very busy time in our Union, some important issues may fall through the cracks and escape the attention of our very busy Members. Currently, we are involved in Seniority List Integration negotiations with AirTran and Overwater/International Negotiations with Southwest Airlines. These two issues alone have generated considerable rumors and speculation, and we remind everyone to make sure you are getting accurate information from your official Union publications, Web site, and other resources.

In addition to these negotiations, your Union will soon be voting on revising our Bylaws. Our Bylaws are basically the frame of the building of our Union. They govern the responsibilities of Officers, elections, Membership Meetings, and all other structural rules of our Union.

Our Membership Meetings have always been the most democratic at Southwest Airlines. TWU Local 555 and SWAPA hold informational meetings, but all decisions are made by their Executive Boards or Membership votes on contract ratifications or side letters. For years, one of the biggest complaints I have heard from Members is that they are unable to attend Membership Meetings because they commute or are working. This leaves important decisions in our Union being made only by the very few who are available and choose to attend. In fact, fewer than sixty Members out of 9400 attended our last round of Membership Meeting in all eight Domiciles combined.

It was for these reasons that your Union undertook a

huge project as part of strategic planning back in 2008 called Project Redesign. The purpose was to focus on specific areas in our Union to make it more efficient, effective, and accessible to Members. The Project Redesign meeting was held on September 28-30, 2009. Members were chosen from all bases, seniorities, and levels of Union involvement. Each Executive Board Member had the opportunity to make recommendations on the participants. As a result, Project Redesign came up with specific proposals to be presented to the Executive Board for adoption as well as proposals that would require Constitutional or Bylaw changes to enact.

Your Executive Board did adopt a large number of the proposals from Project Redesign, and created a smaller committee to actually write the Bylaw change proposals that would be required to enact the additional suggestions. The proposed changes were then submitted to TWU International to ensure that they did not violate or conflict with the TWU Constitution.

Due to low Membership Meeting attendance, one proposal is to actually increase Membership Meetings from three to four a year to provide information and get feedback from the Membership. These meetings would be facilitated by your Domicile Executive Board Member to discuss base and Membership issues. In addition, there would be a two-day "Membership Assembly" to be held every three years with elected delegates (your Shop Stewards) to vote on important changes that affect our entire Membership such as Bylaw changes.

Unfortunately the Membership Assembly proposal has been characterized as "taking away Member's votes." I disagree. No one can take away your vote, but if you don't or are unable to attend Membership Meetings and participate, you have given it away by default. The Membership Assembly proposal requires one Shop Steward/Delegate for every 100 Members in a domicile to represent our Flight Attendants. Currently far less than that attend Membership Meetings and the ones who do attend are not elected by other Members and may have their own agenda as opposed to representing and being responsible to our Flight Attendants as Membership Assembly Delegates would be.

Most discouraging about this process is Executive Board Members who have made claims that they were not informed about Project Redesign or did not have the opportunity for input. This project has been part of the TWU Local 556 Strategic Plan developed by your Executive Board since 2008 and has been discussed at almost every single Executive Board Meeting in some capacity this

Continued on the back page.

What is PIR?

By Oakland Flight Attendant
and Project Redesign Team
Member Lori Lochelt

Parity, inclusion, and representation (PIR) is an extremely important idea that works to bring people in need together with people who are in a position to help them. **Parity** means that everyone at the table is equal regardless of their background or history, and has just as much “power” in the conversation. **Inclusion** and **representation** ensures that all parties involved are included, no matter how small they may seem. Of course, representation of any population by a designee is at the heart of the U.S. Constitution, and is a concept that many of us may take for granted. PIR applies to almost any group, including the Membership of TWU Local 556, and it makes for a very interesting—and interested!—assortment of people.

We currently have nearly 10,000 Flight Attendants in eight bases, and that number will soon go up with the AirTran acquisition. During the course of any given year, our Union Leadership holds three Membership Meetings in each base, yet attendance at these meetings is typically less than one-half of one percent of the total number of TWU Local 556 Members. That’s about fifty Flight Attendants across all bases who attend Union meetings.

Think about that for a moment. Around fifty of your coworkers are making decisions and voting on important issues that affect the entire Membership.

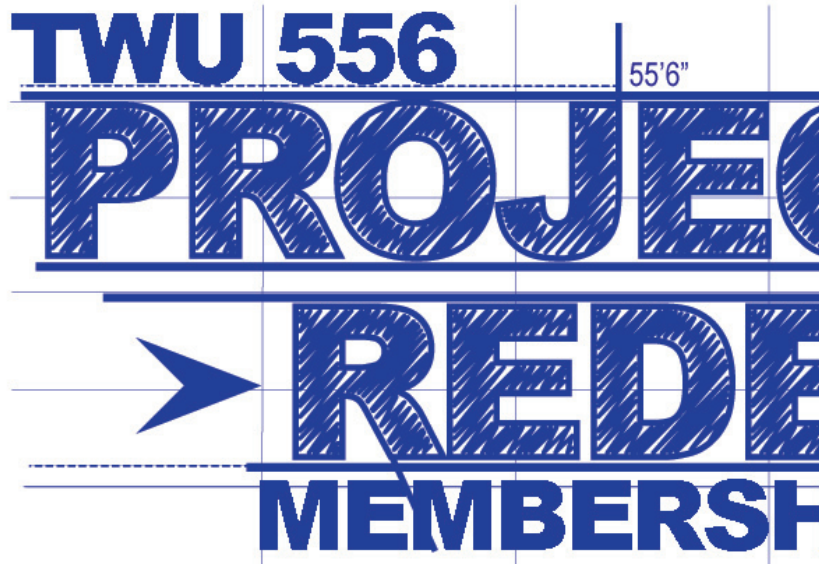
I’m just as guilty about not attending Union meetings. I’m a commuter, and I’m selfish with my time, and sometimes Membership Meetings can be dramatic and confusing. Clearly, we need to try something different.

We need better PIR for our Membership, and here’s one possible way to get it. This is a collective idea that originated from the ad hoc Project Redesign

Meeting Schedule

Baltimore: Tuesday, October 25, 2011
Four Points Sheraton 7032 Elm Road.

Chicago: Wednesday, October 26, 2011
Four Points Sheraton 7353 S. Cicero Ave.



sign Committee, and was further defined by five Flight Attendants who met for two days last March. We discussed how this can work, and came up with an improved vision to gather our Membership together and to have more meaningful, inclusive discussions, and decision-making.

What’s the big idea?

The proposal for a TWU Local 556 Membership Assembly works like this: a two-day meeting will be held every three years beginning in October 2013. Elected Shop Stewards (one for every 100 Members per base), as well as the Executive Board, would be voting delegates, and be required to attend the Assembly (barring any emergency). The purpose of the Assembly would be to amend Bylaws, vote on any motions presented from the Membership, and conduct the general business of TWU Local 556. The TWU Local 556 President will preside, and the Recording Secretary will take minutes. The Assembly will be governed by *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*, which is loosely based on the rules used by the U.S. House of Representatives, and is the standard rulebook for parliamentary assemblies.

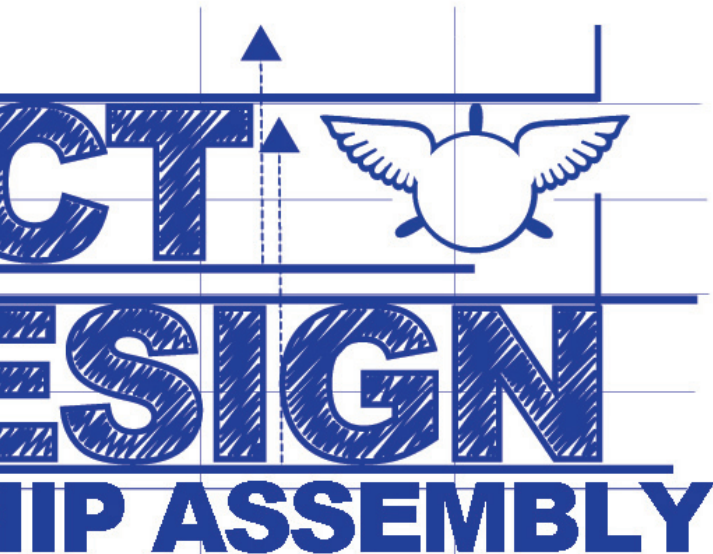
Any Member may attend the Assembly and enter into discussions. However, non-elected attendees will not be allowed to vote. This is very similar to the process we have in our local, state, and federal governments that creates a fair representational scenario, and allows for equal representation. This also makes the election of Shop Stewards and Executive Board Members more vital and significant.

Dallas: Thursday, October 27, 2011

TWU Local 556 Union Office 7929 Brookriver Dr.

Houston: Monday, October 24, 2011

Hilton Hobby Airport 8181 Airport Blvd.



ACT DESIGN MEMBERSHIP ASSEMBLY

In other words, you need to pay attention to who is representing you. As it stands now, for certain issues, it's whomever shows up at Membership Meetings, and brings enough friends to get their way in a vote. Furthermore, motions have to be "dragged" around from base-to-base before finally being voted on months later in the next round of meetings. This is unbelievably cumbersome and inefficient.

Each domicile would continue to have quarterly meetings, and a special meeting would be required in each base in the May prior to the Assembly to elect delegates, accept motions to be presented at the Assembly, and to accept nominations for the Board of Election. Additionally, in January of the year preceding the Assembly, each domicile will be required to hold an Executive Board nomination meeting with the new board taking office in May. All domicile meetings will be chaired and recorded by the Domicile Executive Board Member or his or her designee.

How would we transition to this new process?

Beginning in 2012, a special Membership meeting in each base will be held in January to nominate Executive Board Members for the 2012 - 2015 term. Nominations for the Board of Election will also be taken for a term that runs through October 2013. Next July, a special election meeting will

take place to elect this Board of Election, as well as Shop Stewards (whose term will run through May 2013). A new Board of Election Committee will then be elected at the first TWU Local 556 Membership Assembly in October 2013.

The Local 556 President may declare special meetings when necessary, and Domicile Executive Board Members may hold meetings in their bases for specific non-business purposes. **We will still vote on Contracts and Executive Board Members via individual secret ballot.**

The Assembly will have approximately 150 or more voting delegates depending on the size of our Membership, and any Member may present a motion to a delegate to be voted on at the Assembly. Additionally, any member may go to any Executive Board member at any time to have a motion presented at the monthly Executive Board meeting. This seems like a fair and equitable process, especially considering our current process that allows as few as three people who attend meetings to make decisions for all 10,000 of us. Surely a representational system based on the size of our Membership is a better option.

At this point, the TWU Local 556 Membership has grown to the point where our current meeting structure is dysfunctional, and does not incorporate PIR. More people are needed at the table, and more input is needed from more line-flying Southwest Flight Attendants who represent the diversity of our group. The dynamic of bringing together such a large group of Flight Attendants to do business will likely be exciting, fun, challenging, and maybe even a little contentions—in other words, it's just crazy enough to work!

Can't we just have online meetings?

In a word, no. The technical issues and the potential number of Flight Attendants involved make online meetings unfeasible.

A set of motions for amending our Bylaws to create the TWU Local 556 Membership Assembly will be voted on at the next round of Membership Meetings in October. I hope you'll attend a meeting, and vote to create something that will benefit all our Members, and improve parity, inclusion, and representation for all Southwest Flight Attendants.

Las Vegas: Tuesday, October 25, 2011
Hampton Inn Tropicana, 4975 Dean Martin Dr.
Oakland: Monday, October 24, 2011
Holiday Inn Express 77 Hegenberger Rd.

Orlando: Thursday, October 27, 2011
Hyatt Regency Orlando Airport 9300 Airport Blvd.
Phoenix: Wednesday, October 26, 2011
Phoenix Airport Marriott 1101 North 44 Street.

term as referenced in the official minutes. If any TWU Local 556 Board Member claims not to be aware of or have had the ability to give input to Project Redesign, they were either not paying attention or made the choice not to participate – neither is acceptable for an elected Leader.

Finally, I realize that Project Redesign is not perfect, but it is better than what we have. Project Redesign is an effort to create more Membership input into Union decisions through a representative structure. I hope the Membership Assembly motions pass; however, some Members have indicated that they will be attending Membership Meeting just to vote this down which is their right. I hope to see high participation at the upcoming Membership Meetings, because when our Members attend and discuss issues as

has been proposed with the Membership Assembly, educated and informed decisions are made. More importantly, I hope that if the Membership Assembly does not pass, anyone who attends only to vote no on the Assembly will make the commitment to attend the next meeting and the one after that to ensure that our Members have a voice instead of giving it away to people who were not elected by them.

THOM MCDANIEL

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

Rigs, Reschedules, and Pairings Split by Flight Attendants

by Contract & Leave Coordinator
Denny Sebesta

The Contract outlines how RIGs are applied when a pairing is split by Scheduling, as well as Flight Attendants; however, there has been some confusion on intent when it came to reapplying RIGs in a reschedule situation on a pairing split by a Flight Attendant, so the Union and the Company came to an agreement as to how they would be reapplied if a reschedule occurred.

In order to help you understand RIGS on a pairing split by a Flight Attendant and how a reschedule might affect those RIGS, I've broken the explanation out into sections for you.

Proration of RIGS on Split Pairings - When a Flight Attendant splits a pairing through a pickup or trade transaction with Open Time, where either the Flight Attendant's pairing or the Open Time pairing is split, the system

automatically applies contractual proration of the RIGS to each piece of the split pairing in an effort to make all pieces pay an equal amount. The same type of proration applies when you are splitting a pairing through trip trade/giveaway with another Flight Attendant. But wait, there's another piece to this that has options. Once you have checked in for your pairing, if you decide that you would like to split the pairing you just checked in for, say on day two, and place it in trip trade/giveaway, then the Contract allows you three options on RIG proration; keep all RIG, prorate all RIG, or give away all the RIG.

When DHR/THR RIGs are Recalculated – If you are flying a split pairing and it runs late, the DHR and THR will only be recalculated if that flight runs three hours and one minute (3:01) late or more. If your flight runs late three hours (3) or less, then the original RIG proration applies.

Reschedule and Reapplying RIGS - If you are rescheduled on a pairing split by a Flight Attendant the DHR and THR will be recalculated in the following manner:

If the reschedule results in a later scheduled release time than the original split pairing, DHR and THR will be recalculated.

If the reschedule results in an earlier or the same scheduled release time than the original split pairing, DHR and THR will not be recalculated unless the last flight of the duty period runs more than three hours and one minute (3:01) late.



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

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CONNECT WITH US



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