

Second Round of Membership Meetings Kick-off July 6

Baltimore: Thursday, July 7
Chicago: Friday, July 8
Dallas: Friday, July 15
Houston: Tuesday, July 19

Las Vegas: Wednesday, July 20
Oakland: Thursday, July 21
Orlando: Wednesday, July 6
Phoenix: Friday, July 22

Meetings are open to Members only. Visit the TWU Web site at www.twu556.org for additional information. See ya there!

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YOUR MONTHLY UNITY SUPPLEMENT

JUNE 2011

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Management Should Raise the Bar

TWU Local 556 President
Thom McDaniel

It has been a disappointing week for Southwest Airlines. The offensive, discriminatory, and unprofessional comments made on a stuck open microphone by one of our Pilots, and Management's mishandling of the situation being discussed in the media, on social networking sites, and in our galleys have hurt and angered most of our Flight Attendants and embarrassed our Company.

While the most recent incident did involve a Pilot, it is certainly not limited to the Pilot workgroup. Most of our Pilots are true professionals who deserve the support and respect of our workgroup. To paint our Pilots with a broad brush would be as wrong as stereotyping Flight Attendants and it's not right. In addition, these types of statements are made all too often in all workgroups including our own.

While I am very disappointed in the words of this Pilot, I feel that our Flight Attendants and our Company have been most hurt by the handling of his actions by Management. Any employee can make a mistake, but we depend on our Company to address discriminatory behavior appropriately and consistently. Flight Attendants have received much more severe discipline for lesser infractions than this Pilot, and that is not fair to our Flight Attendants or good for our Company.

We have a very clear non-discrimination and harassment policy that prohibits all forms of discriminatory or harassing behavior including those based on sex, age, and sexual orientation as well as race, color, religion, and other legal status protected by law. Statements or actions

pertaining to race, religion, color, national origin, or sexual harassment generally carry harsh penalties. Events based on age, sex, and sexual orientation, however, often go unreported due to a belief that they will not be acted upon or when they are reported, are ignored depending on the nature of the complaint or the department to which it is reported. If this policy is not upheld equally for all employees, it is useless.

Southwest Airlines has stated that this incident was dealt with as an isolated incident. Unfortunately, it is not an isolated incident. There are comments and actions made every day at work that are discriminatory, demeaning, and disrespectful. When Flight Ops or any department sweeps an issue under the carpet, or gives a "slap on the wrist" for a serious violation of Company policy, it lowers the bar on acceptable behavior. We can only uphold the high standards of our Company if all departments hold all employees to the same high standards.

The statements made by the Pilot have been defended by some as a private conversation or simply a matter of him stating his opinion. I agree completely that everyone has the right to have private conversations and to state their opinions. Those rights do not extend to discriminatory, demeaning, or disrespectful statements or actions in the workplace that violate the rights of other employees in the workplace.

As we move forward, your Union will work with Management to address inconsistencies in disciplinary procedures, crew resource management safety issues, and a Company-wide effort to educate all work groups on the importance of adhering to all Company non-discrimination policies as a condition of continued employment. This incident should serve as an opportunity for us to forgive, but not to forget, because it is an opportunity for us to create acceptance, understanding, and a better workplace for every employee.

I believe one reason why this incident has received so much attention is because we are Southwest Airlines and people expect more from us. This kind of behavior is not part of our culture and cannot continue to be overlooked or tolerated. Southwest Airlines is a Company that cares about people and that means all people's rights must be respected especially as we bring new employees into our Company. Every Southwest Airlines employee should be accepted and respected every day for the job they do and not be subjected to disrespectful or discriminatory words, actions, or attitudes about who they are or what they look like.

THOM MCDANIEL

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

Having A Plan B

by Oakland DEBM
Todd Gage

As the plane touches the ground in Oakland, I begin to plan the next day. First and foremost on my mind that I need to pick up my two kids. The Ops Agent greets us by saying, "Todd, you need to call Scheduling." I am thinking "What?????" There has got to be a mistake. It's the end of the night and I am the most senior Flight Attendant.

I call Scheduling to learn the damage, and that I am the only one legal for this reschedule. Scheduling assigns me to work one more leg to Ontario with an unscheduled overnight; and then deadhead back the following day. I hang up the phone, and then it hits me! I am supposed to pick up my kids.

I scramble to initiate my back up plan. I call my neighbor and let her know I am not going to make it home tonight. She is already aware of the emergency plan regarding my children in the event I do not make it home. I notify my other friend to let them know I need them to keep my dog one more night also.

I am sharing this story in order to remind my fellow crew members, just how important it is to have a backup plan when you have dependents. Whether your dependent is a child, parent, sick partner, sick spouse, or an animal waiting on your arrival, you *have* to be prepared in the event you don't make it home as originally scheduled.

As much as I hate being the one getting a reschedule- I know that this is part of the "flexible schedule" to which I agreed when I was hired as a Southwest Flight Attendant. No matter how senior you are, line holder or not, or whether you sipped your trip out in order commute home, or Scheduling seems to be doing something completely senseless and idiotic, it does not change the fact that we are *all* subject to reschedules. The way weather has been lately, reschedules seem to be more of the norm than not. Arguing with the Scheduler does not help and always remember that all conversations with Scheduling are taped. *Refusal to fly is a Class I, Section 15 violation that will most likely result in termination of your employment.*

Your Union is very compassionate to Members and the unique situations that affect each of us while at work- we have all been there and we all know how frustrating reschedules can be, but when we finally get a chance to calm down and collect our thoughts, it boils down to getting that airplane out fully staffed.

This being said, I can't urge you enough to have that emergency backup up plan for your dependents and other obligations waiting for you at home. We all know it is a *huge* inconvenience but just as you may pack your toothbrush and an extra pair of skivvies when working a turn around, it is best to have your emergency plan in place.

Electronic Notification of Delays/Cancellations by Contract and Leave Coordinator Denny Sebesta

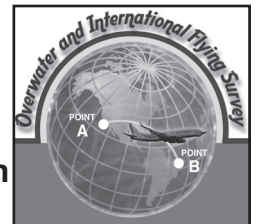
The Union office has received several questions lately regarding the current procedure for notification of delayed or cancelled flights, so we are reprinting this information from the May 2010 Contract Education article.

To be notified of a flight delay(s) or cancellations, you may use Southwest.com, which is the same system our passengers use. The Company and the Union agreed during negotiations that this would be the temporary solution until the Company develops another means of electronic notification. To get started go to www.southwest.com and click on "travel tools" in the top right corner of the page to sign up. It allows you to receive messages via a designated email address or text message sent directly to your cell phone. Remember if you are signed up and are not notified that your flight is over 2 hours late, you will be paid 2.0 TFP.

If you are notified via electronic means of a delayed or cancelled flight you have the option to call Scheduling and ask if you can remain at home or the hotel and if allowed, they will provide you with a new report or check-in time, or you may simply report at your originally scheduled time.

SURVEY ENDS JULY 5

The NT's Overwater and International Flying Survey has been extended. Please take a few minutes to let us know your thoughts before we return to the negotiating table.



unity
THE MAGAZINE OF TWU LOCAL 556

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

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