

Update

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCTOBER 2006 MEMBERSHIP
MEETING* - ALL TIMES ARE LOCAL

OAK

DATE/TIME: Tues., 10/17/06 at 10:00 AM
LOCATION: OAK International Airport
Esther Love Conf. Room
(Take elevator to 2nd Floor,
Go through wheelchair
accessible door, turn left,
room is on right)
(510) 563-6424

PHX

DATE/TIME: Wed., 10/18/06 at 10:00 AM
LOCATION: PHX Sky Harbor Airport
Terminal 3 - Level 2
HMSHOST Conf. Room
(Go to the end of hallway
next to Sbarro Restaurant)

DAL

DATE/TIME: Thur., 10/19/06 at 10:00 AM
LOCATION: Holiday Inn Select Love Fld.
3300 W. Mockingbird Lane
(214) 357-8500

HOU

DATE/TIME: Fri., 10/20/06 at 10:00 AM
LOCATION: HOU Hobby Airport
The Cloud Room
(713) 641-7723

BWI

DATE/TIME: Wed., 10/25/06 at 10:00 AM
LOCATION: BWI Airport
BWI Conf. Room NTE 247
(At the end of the Air Tran
counter, turn right to the
Meditation Room, then take
another right. The BWI
Conf. Room, #NTE 247, will
be on the left behind the Air
Tran ticket counter)

MDW

DATE/TIME: Thur., 10/26/06 at 10:00 AM
LOCATION: American Legion
Clearing Post 600
4352 W. 63RD Street
(773) 767-0230

MCO

DATE/TIME: Fri., 10/27/06 at 10:00 AM
LOCATION: Hawthorn Suites MCO
7450 Augusta National Dr.
(407) 438-2121

MEETING AGENDA: - General Business,
Election of Shop Stewards, Election of
Members of the Board of Election.

* All sessions constitute the meeting.

**GENERAL UNION MEETING - OPEN TO
MEMBERS ONLY - ID'S WILL BE CHECKED**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Thom McDaniel, TWU Local 556 President

The number one complaint I receive is about the increase in 4-days and poor line quality. Of course this is usually followed up with "What's the Union doing about it?"

Our Union fought very hard at the Negotiating Table to establish strict line writing parameters to ensure the quality of life for our Flight Attendants. We were successful to a degree, but the Company fought equally hard to maintain their right to manage our workforce. The result was some hard won maximums and minimums on line writing as well as an agreement to mutually establish a Scheduling Policy that the Company would adhere to.

This time last year, the Company and our Scheduling Committee had completely eliminated 4-day trips in some bases and reduced them dramatically in other bases. The result was a work schedule that our work group was very happy with.

Then, in an effort to improve productivity and hit a 14 day per month average, the

Company hit the maximum allowable 4-day ceiling, and without even notifying the Union, eliminated SIPs from most pairings. The result for our Flight Attendants has been reduced flexibility, a disgruntled work group, and increased cost to the Company. There have been similar efforts and results in the Pilot work group also.

As your President, I have spent countless hours one-on-one with your Scheduling Committee and Executive Board to reverse these trends and seek creative ways to increase productivity. Unfortunately, our collective efforts have fallen on deaf ears. Daryl Krause supports these practices and we see no indication that he will be changing his position.

Our new Executive Board has embarked on an aggressive campaign to solve the problem that affects us all on a daily basis. We have appointed Lisa Trafton as the New Scheduling Committee Chairperson. Lisa has served on the Committee for many years and has a wealth of



knowledge. In addition, Brett Nevarez and Kyle Whiteley will be serving in the role of Executive Board Liaisons to provide on site support when the Scheduling Committee is writing lines.

Of course our most valuable asset is Member mobilization which translated means - 'WE NEED YOUR HELP!' A Union Scheduling Survey will run from August 15 - September 30 on the TWU Local 556 Website. We need Membership support to show Management that our Flight Attendants deserve better lines. We can't do it without you. The last time we did a survey, turnout was very low. Please voice your opinion to affect your future.

Thanks for all you do. Get involved and together we will make a difference.

Your Union's New Office Space

Why we moved, how we chose this location, and answers to your questions

by Thom McDaniel, TWU Local 556 President

As a result of the recent relocation of our Union office, some Members have asked questions about our decision to relocate and why the current space was chosen. While there have been subsequent articles addressing various aspects of the move, this should explain any unanswered questions and squelch any rumors about our recent move.

Our Union Headquarters had been housed at 2520 Mockingbird since 1996. The building was built in 1958 and was an industrial building that had been converted to commercial office space. The building was approximately 7,600 square feet and our Union leased approximately 5,000 square feet. Unfortunately the current owner had failed to maintain or update the building and it was in need of numerous repairs including inadequate heating and air conditioning that presented quite a challenge during the dog days of summer and sometimes bone chilling winter days in Dallas.

Our current lease was due to run out in October 2006, so approximately a year ago, your Executive Board began researching the possibility of either leasing or purchasing a space for our Union that would provide a suitable office space within our price range. The Executive Board considered extending the lease or purchasing the space that we were already occupying, however the current owner had increased the price from the \$375,000 he had purchased it for in 1999 to \$875,000. To continue leasing the space, he wanted to lease the entire building and increase our price from \$5,200 to \$6,700 when it was renewed with yearly increases, with a final increase to \$8,700 in 2012. In addition to the rent, the Local would continue to pay some utilities, as well as janitorial and security costs that equaled approximately \$600 per month.

Finding a new space proved to be a difficult challenge and your Executive Board quickly discovered that while there are several industrial and warehouse facilities near Love Field, there are very few office buildings for sale that would meet the needs of our Local. To further complicate our search, speculation over lifting the Wright

Amendment created a boost in property values and the few properties that were available came at a premium price.

After considering several properties, the past Executive Board finally decided on a building a block away from the current office. The building had been unoccupied for at least two years, and was in disrepair. It would need major renovation work estimated at \$150,000. But the building did have a new roof and was in a desirable location, so the Executive Board agreed that if we could lock in a fair price, we could do the necessary repairs.

In 1999 our Local did attempt to purchase a building,

but the Membership rejected the purchase for a variety of reasons. The TWU International Constitution allows the Local's Executive Board to purchase office space with the approval of the International. However, your Executive Board agreed that we would enter a lease with an option to buy if the space met our needs, and that before purchasing any property that it would be approved by the Membership. In anticipation, the Executive Board



The building that houses our new office is just south of the intersection of Mockingbird Lane and Brook River Drive.

ran an article in the March 2006 *UNITY* Update to inform our Membership on our progress of seeking a new office location and compared the cost of buying vs. leasing.

Unfortunately, after several attempts to negotiate in good faith with the owners, it became apparent that the owners were not interested in leasing even with a reasonable purchase price. When the Board met their asking price, they raised the price and made some unreasonable lease demands that our Union could not agree to.

Due to the timing of the elections, this left the new Executive Board with some big decisions to make. After reviewing the impossible situation with the negotiations on the building, considering the cost of refurbishing the building, and considering additional expenses including electricity and maintenance that was included in the current lease, the new Executive Board agreed to withdraw the lease-purchase offer on the new building. After reviewing all options, the new Board toured a space avail-

able for lease in the an office building at 7979 Brookriver Drive Suite 750 approximately 1.5 miles from Love Field and agreed that the space was appropriately priced and met the needs of our Union. The Executive Board agreed to move forward to lease the space.

Michael Massoni and Gayle Ross entered into negotiations with the owner of the office space. They were able to negotiate an 8-year lease for 6565 square feet that included all utilities, maintenance, and security costs with a lease price locked in at \$8,370 per month. In addition, Michael and Gayle were able to negotiate all fit-out costs (renovations necessary to meet our office needs) to be paid by the owner as well as 12 months free rent resulting in a saving of \$100,440 to offset any moving costs. The Executive Board agreed to purchase necessary office furniture and upgrade our 10-year-old phone system that has broken down regularly for the last year and was beyond repair.

The end result of this journey is that Local 556 has a new home. Our look is more professional, but more importantly, our new location is more functional, better serves our Membership, upgrades our facilities, saves us money, and locks in our costs against rising expenses in

the future. The new space will also allow us to save money by holding Board of Adjustments and Arbitrations that we previously had to rent rooms for. In the face of a difficult market, your Executive Board was able to meet the needs of the Membership while upholding fiduciary responsibility with which we are entrusted.

Please make a note of our new address:

TWU Local 556
7979 Brookriver Drive, Suite 750
Dallas, TX 75247

Our phone, fax, and hotline numbers are the same:

Toll Free: 800-969-7932
Fax: 214-357-9870
Hotline: 800-806-7992

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact TWU 556 President Thom McDaniel, Treasurer Gayle Ross, or 1st Vice President Michael Massoni, and we would be happy to answer them. If you are in the Dallas area and would like to visit YOUR new Union Office, feel free to drop by.



Top Left: The reception area.

Top Right: The file room.

Bottom Left: Grievance Team Member Amy Lynn Neeper in her new office with our newest member of the Grievance Team, John Parrott.

Bottom Right: "The Cubes"... work space for out of town Board Members, visitors, and guests.



TWU's Fight for Northwest Airlines Flight Attendants

by Brett Nevarez, TWU Local 556 Board Member at Large

One of the primary keys to the strength of the Labor Movement is organizing. Our work group would have none of the benefits of our Contract if a few brave Flight Attendants had not approached TWU over 30 years ago and affiliated with our Union. Recently I got the opportunity to participate in organizing campaign first hand and would like to update the Membership on my experience.

During the summer of 2005, after their independent Mechanics Union (AMFA) was crushed in a strike, the Professional Flight Attendants Association (PFAA) realized they needed the backing of a larger Union and began interviewing several AFL-CIO Unions, including TWU. Unfortunately, in September 2005 NWA declared bankruptcy, and PFAA suspended their affiliation conversations until after the bulk of the bankruptcy negotiations were concluded, as they were already in Contract Negotiations when NWA filed bankruptcy. Once they had reached a Tentative Agreement (TA), they proceeded with seeking affiliation with TWU pending the ratification of their Membership.

TWU International committed financial and professional help to PFAA because they were facing important issues at the bargaining table that could affect the rest of the industry, including outsourcing of Flight Attendant jobs. The International also agreed to pay for all expenses associated with the affiliation because PFAA was joining our team. It was then, in mid-May, that Susan Kern and I were contacted by TWU International to assist PFAA in educating their Members about TWU and the benefits of affiliation. The International reimbursed our Local for all expenses for the work that Susan and I did including our salaries, per diem, and travel.

We began by going to Minneapolis and meeting in person with PFAA leadership. Our message was very simple: any successful

Union MUST be Membership-driven and the Members are the most important facet of any campaign. The solidarity demonstrated during our 2-year negotiations was exhibit number one. In short we were bragging on you, our Members, and the support we received from TWU International.

We spoke of our extensive communication system; *The Contract Connection*, *UNITY*, *Unity Update*, the hotline, website, and our grassroots efforts with the Precinct Captain program. Due to the nature of our job, the one-on-one face-to-face Member interaction was what created the dramatic shift in our group. We also spoke about the use of the strategic bargaining campaign which focused on the Membership, the community, and corporate ties. We brought examples of our Contract 2002 campaign such as t-shirts, picket signs, bumper stickers, flyers, and bag tags to help generate ideas.

After our initial meeting, we went out on the road to talk with their Members. We gave presentations in 15 Membership Meetings in 9 domiciles in 11 days. Susan spent a week in Narita, Japan and I spent a week in Amsterdam, Netherlands at the crew hotel doing lobby mobilizations with PFAA representatives. We also spent time in the 2 largest bases of Minneapolis and Detroit helping with lounge mobilizations and informational meetings at the PFAA offices.

Our task was made much more difficult by the fact that during this time: 1) NWA was in bankruptcy; 2) PFAA had a Tentative Agreement vote on a \$195 million concessionary contract; 3) the National Mediation Board (NMB) was conducting a representational election to choose between PFAA and the Association of Flight Attendants - Communication Workers of America (AFA-CWA); and 4) PFAA was conducting an internal vote to decide whether to remain PFAA or to affiliate with TWU International. TWU International received the support of 78% of the voters in the affiliation

vote; unfortunately in the NMB representational election the NWA Flight Attendants voted by 64% to become AFA-CWA, therefore the affiliation did not take place. Susan and I are disappointed that the NWA Flight Attendants chose to merge with AFA-CWA, but we are proud that the affiliation vote was 78% and grateful to TWU International for giving us the opportunity to work with PFAA and the NWA Flight Attendants.

Labor relations between Northwest Airlines and their Flight Attendants have a long history of contention and disrespect. The Flight Attendants of NWA have fought long and hard to hold the line on foreign nationals working domestic flights and ALL Flight Attendants owe them a debt of gratitude. The bankruptcy court has just denied NWA's request for an injunction which would have prevented the Flight Attendants from conducting a CHAOS strike- everything these brave Brothers and Sisters do is setting precedent, as no other group of Flight Attendants have taken it this far in the courts. Make sure to give them your support as you see them around the system.

No matter what the result, I am proud to have worked with the NWA Flight Attendants and I thank them for standing up to corporate greed for all Flight Attendants.

UNITY Update

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

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