

SEPTEMBER 5, 2014

unity update

Your bi-monthly
Unity supplement



President's Message



Audrey Stone is a Las Vegas-based Flight Attendant and the President and Lead Negotiator of TWU Local 556.

As the President and Lead Negotiator of the TWU Local 556 Negotiating Team (NT), I want to give as much of an overview as I am able regarding the status of our Contract Negotiations with Southwest Airlines Management after back to back negotiating sessions over the last two weeks.

I have spoken to many of you in person during my Listening Layovers, and common questions I have been asked are, “where are we?” and “why aren’t you putting out details of what’s being discussed at the negotiating table?” The answer to the first question is that we have Tentative Agreements (TA) on several Articles of our Contract, and are in open discussions on almost all of the remaining Articles. There are only a handful of Articles that we are not currently dealing with at the table, and I anticipate that we will see these final Articles opened during our next scheduled sessions with Management. (For a list of the Articles and current progress, [click here](#).) Many of the outstanding Articles indirectly involve money but are outside of Article 21 – Compensation. It is my hope that the last few Articles not dealing with money will be wrapped up soon. If so, then we are quickly approaching talks about direct compensation, and we will see if the progress we’ve been making continues.

The progress our NT continues to make is the answer to the second question. We are choosing to bargain directly with Management at the negotiating table. Management, in turn, has also been negotiating directly with our NT, and not circumventing the negotiating table to try to bargain directly with you. Both parties have engaged in candid, sometimes spirited debate about what we believe are problems, as well as how we would like to find solutions those problems. We have been up front about our expectations while remaining respectful in our delivery, which was a commitment both sides made over a year ago when we first began this process. As long as Management continues to uphold their commitment, we will too. Every TA is also subject to changes, pending a final TA on the entire Contract, and either party reserves the right to propose modifications as the process continues.

The fact that there are not finalized details to share at this time in no way belies the fact that the NT continues to take our marching orders from you, the Membership. Even be-

fore I joined the process, you gave direction to your NT that you wanted the Contract opened, but that you wanted to see minor changes made and not a rewrite of our Contract. Currently working under an industry-leading Contract makes it both easier, and sometimes harder, at the negotiating table. Easier in that we have been able to identify changes that would build upon the existing language, and harder because Management is quick to remind us that our Contract is already above most carriers in almost all areas. We have also remained focused on working through much needed clarification in existing language that both sides have either disagreed on or interpreted differently because the language fails to address certain situations. We are exercising diligence in trying to make sure we address any potential loopholes. While the “what ifs” can be exhausting at times, I believe that eliminating as much grey as possible will only be a benefit to both sides.

We have been fortunate thus far to continue making headway towards a final TA on which you will have an opportunity to vote. While I recognize the difficulties our other Union Sisters and Brothers are currently experiencing at the table, that is not where we are. Currently, IAM, representing Customer Service and Reservations Agents, has filed for mediation, and TWU Local 555 has been in mediation for a while now. Our Pilots, under SWAPA, have been in negotiations for almost three years. We do not currently share some of the same struggles that these other groups do, like fighting part-time Employee percentages, but we support them in their fight to protect their Members. There are other fights that we have been successful in staving off, like a Preferential Bidding System (PBS), which would get rid of monthly overlap, and an Absence Management Plan designed to slash our sick bank.

Our upcoming sessions at the table will give us a better picture of where we are headed. While we know we are coming from two different perspectives, both sides at the table recognize that we want Southwest Airlines to continue to be successful and this should be every Employee’s goal. However, we are also very aware that Southwest stock is at a record high, largely due to the continued profitability the Company is experiencing. As the face of Southwest, your outstanding service to our Customers every day contributes to the success of Southwest and reminds Management why you deserve another industry leading Contract. Please continue displaying this great service and I will continue fighting for you at the table. Thank you for being the best Flight Attendants in the industry, and I am proud to represent you.

In Unity,

Audrey Stone

Contract Education 101

Jetway Trades



Denny Sebesta is a Dallas-based Flight Attendant and former Member of the TWU Local 556 Negotiating Team. She is a regular contributor to Unity Magazine and Unity Update.



If you've never jetway traded before it does have some great perks such as, provide an opportunity to get to and from work when commuting, may help you get to a location to visit family and friends or, help you get to your final vacation destination when flights are full and 4th jumpseat is not available. While there are some restrictions that apply, jetway trades were enhanced in our current Contract to allow more flexibility to Flight Attendants who choose the option to jetway trade within the Southwest system. There is also one area that was clarified after the Contract was implemented in a Letter of Understanding which outlines the steps for overnight jetway trades. Below is a summary of how jetway trades work:

- A Jetway trade will apply to any leg(s) of a pairing and must encompass the remainder of the pairing involved. This means a jetway trade could be utilized anywhere in the Southwest system and start on day 1, 2 or 3 of the pairing.
- Both Flight Attendants must be FAR legal. If contractually legal, the Flight Attendant who picks up the leg(s) will receive straight time pay for the flight(s).
- Both Flight Attendants must be present (at the airport) and notify Scheduling for the jetway trade to be processed.
- No specific timeframe is required to notify Scheduling before departure; however, Flight Attendants must allow sufficient time to process the trade and perform required duties.
- At the time of the call, Crew Scheduling must not have a planned reroute for either Flight Attendant.
- Reserves may jetway trade the day prior to the first day of the Reserve assignment or after release from all Reserve obligations.
- On the last day of a Reserve obligation, a Reserve may give away the last working leg(s) of her/his pairing to another Flight Attendant as long as the following conditions are met:
 - The Reserve is not legal for an additional assignment
 - The Flight Attendant accepting the jetway trade is scheduled as a paid deadhead on the exact same flight number(s) and is legal to fly according the FAR duty limitations.
 - No additional cost to Company is incurred
 - All other applicable conditions under Art 12.6 are met

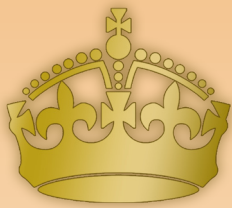
Overnight Jetway Trades

- When a Flight Attendant arrives at an overnight, she/he may jetway trade (giveaway) to another Flight Attendant.
- Both Flight Attendants must be present and notify Scheduling.
- The Flight Attendant accepting the jetway trade must be scheduled with FAR legal rest and will not be allowed to schedule themselves with FAR reduced rest.
- The Flight Attendant accepting the jetway trade will be given the hotel room on the overnight unless otherwise specified at the time of the call.
- Per diem will end at the time of the call for the Flight Attendant giving the jetway trade thirty (30) minutes after arrival of the RON. Per diem will begin for the Flight Attendant accepting thirty (30) minutes prior to departure the following day.
- The portion given away will be considered a separate pairing, and will not be combined with any other pairings to determine contractual illegalities. Each pairing will be considered separate for illegalities and will be compensated if applicable.

All jetway trades may be posted via electronic means in advance under Crew Web Access; click "Bid Input" then under the drop down box click "Jetway Trades" This provides Flight Attendants the ability to view who and what jetway trades are being offered.

Currently, a jetway trade is not the same as electronic trading/giveaway between Flight Attendants because it involves giving away at a point other than an SIP in a pairing, which is why it requires the assistance of Scheduling and the presence of both Flight Attendants. While this current contractual language may not be what some would like, at this time, it does provide flexibility and opportunity for options if you ever decide you want to pick up or giveaway at a point other than a SIP in your pairing.

Please refer to the Contract under Exchange of Trips, Article 12.6 to review the full language regarding Jetway Trades (page 69 hard copy). For additional help, you may also check out the Question and Answer section for Article 12-Exchange of Trips, pages 235-236.



KEEP STRONG AND EDUCATE ON



During the month of August your Contract Action Network (CAN) Base Leaders and Volunteers were in the lounges discussing RIG's and educating our Members about the current language in our Contract. If you were unable to meet with your CAN Leaders or Volunteers please pick up a current copy of Unity Magazine and read Denny Sebesta's article about RIG's on pages 16-19.

On September 10 your CAN Base Leaders and CAN Volunteers will be in the lounges from 0500-1800 local time discussing Premium Pay Protections and educating our Members about the current language in our Contract. We will also be updating our Members on our current Negotiations with Southwest Airlines Management.

Remember, on the 10th of every month your CAN Base Leaders and Volunteers will be in the Base Lounges and Terminals. Please mark your calendars for the September 10 Lounge and Terminal Mobilization.

If you are interested in volunteering to be a part of the CAN in your base please contact your Negotiating Team at nt@twu556.org or contact your CAN Base Leaders.

A TWU Local 556 Field Trip



Jennifer Vitalo is a Baltimore-based Flight Attendant and Shop Steward.

Do you ever wonder just who the Union is? After every crazy re-route there is always someone saying, "Girl, you need to call the Union?" and "Y'all need to take that to the Union." Um, ok, but just who IS the Union? What happens when I call that magic Texas phone number to ask all of my questions about the Contract and my extended duty days and my reduced crew rest and my pay protection? It was time for me to see how "the sausage was made" (vegan sausage, of course!)

I made an appointment to go to Dallas and spend a day in the field at TWU Local 556. Excitedly, I boarded my flight to the big D and when I arrived, I was warmly welcomed by my fellow Union Brothers and Sisters. After a tour of the Union Office, I sat with our Negotiating Team (NT) and observed their dutiful work as they diligently engaged in the mental effort of preparing a Tentative Agreement (TA) for the Members to vote on. After emails were answered, it was time for a quick conference call with some of the Domicile Executive Board Members (DEBMs). Next, after getting a lesson in the grievance process, I observed the Grievance Team prepare a grievance packet. I am amazed at the arduous task that is taken on with each grievance and I am astonishingly marveled at the amount of passion that goes into preparing each packet.

Next, the time had finally come! The phones were ringing! It was finally time to hear from Members like you and to listen to how our questions get answered. I was overwhelmed with respect for the amount of contractual knowledge that these folks have. And patience. Wowza. Did I mention their patience? I felt like I was that Passenger asking "What's your route?" with each question that I had, yet these team members willingly answered each question with kindness and grace.

Field trip! I was next given a tour of our TWU International Office and had the opportunity to see several poignant photos regarding the history of our Union. It ceases to amaze me what the power of the people can accomplish. After saying goodbye to the lovely ladies and gents at the International Office, it was time to put my serious face on and head over to Southwest Airlines Headquarters. That's right folks, I was heading back to where it all began! I had flashbacks of red lipstick and nervous sweats as I reflected back on my days at initial training. Good times. After I brought my mind back from my trip down memory lane, I met with some of the Inflight Management Team and was given a tour of the new building. It is almost unbelievable to see what goes on behind the scenes. There were groups of people working on massive amounts of computers piecing the daily operation of Southwest Airlines together. It was so strange to see my life from this perspective. What I mean is that I am the person that is physically running (ok, not running...) from one aircraft to another when there is an aircraft swap and it was a completely different perspective to see things as viewed from a computer. It truly was a remarkable experience.

Ok, so now let's talk tofurkey. Show me the money! It was time to see our bank roll and pay some bills. I met with our Union's Treasurer and he patiently gave me a guided tour of our finances. I also had the opportunity to see how our dues are collected from all of our active status Flight Attendants, beginning with our newly winged ones...our new hires. (Can you hear your seniority growing?)

I truly felt like the entire TWU Local 556 Team just scooped me up and carried me in their pocket throughout this learning experience and for that, I am humbled and grateful. I encourage all of you to get involved with your Union. This is YOUR Union. YOU ARE THE UNION! If you don't like something, get involved and change it! If you like something, get involved so you can fight to maintain it! I implore all of you to get involved! I'm nobody special; I'm just a stewardess that flies on the LUV jet that wants to maintain the excellent quality of life that this job affords me. I just decided to get involved.

On my flight home, another Flight Attendant asked me what I was doing in Dallas. When I answered him that I was doing something with our Union, he said, "Oh, are you part of that?" I smiled and replied, "Yes I am. Aren't you?"

New Hires and Mandatory Meetings



Matt Hettich is an Oakland-based Flight Attendant and serves as the Oakland Domicile Executive Board Member and Chairperson of the TWU Local 556 Education Committee.

Over the past few years, the TWU Local 556 Membership has grown significantly: we now have over 12,000 Flight Attendants at Southwest Airlines. In an effort to inform our newest Flight Attendants, and to remind those Flight Attendants who have been with us awhile, your TWU Local 556 leadership would like to remind you of your right to have Union representation in all meetings with Management.

The right to have Union representation is defined in our Union Contract. Article 19.3.H guarantees that a Union representative may be present at all Flight Attendant meetings, if requested by the Flight Attendant. The request for Union representation will not be denied by Management and this right applies to all Flight Attendants, regardless of their probationary status. Additionally, our Union Contract requires Management to inform a Flight Attendant of their right to have Union representation present at any mandatory meeting; this right can be found in Article 27.17. If asked by Management to participate in a meeting and your Contractual rights are not offered or denied, respectfully inform Management "if this discussion could result in discipline, I request my Union representative present at this meeting. Without Union representation, I choose not to participate in this discussion". If requested to participate in a meeting with Management, call the Union office at 800-969-7932 so we can schedule a Union representative to accompany you.

All Flight Attendants are entitled to the right of Union representation. Insisting on your rights can be intimidating, uncomfortable, or awkward. However, it is up to each and every one of us to insist upon our rights and ensure they are evenly applied to all.

Membership Meetings September 25-29

(All Meeting Times are Local)

BALTIMORE

Thursday, September 25, 10:00 A.M.
Doubletree by Hilton-BWI Airport - (410) 859-8400
890 Elkridge Landing Road, Linthicum Heights, MD 21090

OAKLAND

Thursday, September 25, *12:00 P.M.
OAK Airport Rear Conference Room (510) 563-6424
Terminal 1, Before checkpoint take a right, take the elevator to the 2nd floor, right through the double doors, 2nd door on the right

ORLANDO

Friday, September 26, *10:00 A.M.
Hampton Inn-International Airport (407) 888-2995
5767 TG Lee Blvd, Orlando, FL 32822

LAS VEGAS

Friday, September 26, 12:00 P.M.
**Hyatt Place (702) 369-3366
4520 Paradise Road, Las Vegas, NV 89169

ATLANTA

Saturday, September 27, *10:00 A.M.
Renaissance Concourse Atlanta Airport
(404) 209-9999
One Hartsfield Centre Parkway, Atlanta, GA 30354

PHOENIX

Saturday, September 27, *12:00 P.M.
Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport
(602) 273-4391
T-4 Next to British Airways First Class Lounge

HOUSTON

Sunday, September 28, *10:00 A.M.
Houston Hobby Airport (713) 845-2140
Astros Room-Down the hall from the FA Lounge

DENVER

Sunday, September 28, *12:00 P.M.
Holiday Inn Express (303) 373-4100
6910 Tower Road, Denver, CO 80249

CHICAGO

Monday, September 29, 10:00 A.M.
Hampton Inn Midway (708) 496-1900
6540 S. Cicero Ave, Bedford Park, IL 60638

DALLAS

Monday, September 29, *10:00 A.M.
Transport Workers Union Local 556 (214) 640-4300
7929 Brookriver Drive, Suite 750, Dallas, TX 75035

*indicates a change in Meeting Time

** Indicates new Meeting Location

Hot Aircraft & Hot Flashes: Fabulous Flight Attendants Over 50!



Lori Lochelt is an Oakland-based Flight Attendant and serves on the TWU Local 556 Board of Election (BOE).

As the wise Golda Meir once said, “Old age is like a plane flying through a storm; once you’re aboard, there’s nothing you can do!” Disclaimer: I am over 50 years old. The following are general observations from myself and other Flight Attendants and are in no way meant to disrespect other age groups. Just wait until you get here!

A composite of many crew conversations:

“Hi Honey! Cute glasses! Are they new?”

“Thanks Sweetie! Yes they are. I had to get a stronger prescription.....again! How’s your hip? Didn’t you have a surgery last year?”

“Doing well, thanks. Just dealing with a little arthritis. Geez, it’s hot on this plane!”

“Don’t I know it! Hey, don’t you think her dress is a little too short. I used to be able to pull that off!”

There is no doubt that Southwest Airlines’ hot aircraft are uncomfortable for Crew and passengers alike. However, for some of us that temperature rises by several more degrees. Without making sweeping generalizations, let’s just say many Flight Attendants over 50 have different issues and concerns than their younger counterparts.

Generally speaking, the over 50 crowd has different health concerns such as failing eyesight, a few more aches and pains, and other physical changes we may not exactly embrace. We also have different life events occurring and the concept of “retirement” is in our sights, that is, if we can see it!

I decided to take a look at the over 50 population within TWU Local 556. I was a little astounded at the numbers provided by Treasurer John Parrott:

- By the end of this year, 4,596 Southwest Airlines Flight Attendants will be over age 50.
- This is about 40% of our entire Membership!
- Our most “seasoned” Flight Attendant is 79 years old.
- There are 3,328 Flight Attendants in their 50’s, 1,185 in their 60’s, and 83 are in their 70’s.

Of course, some of this group began flying in their 20’s, having spent most of their adult lives flying the turbulent skies while others stepped aboard as a second (or third) career or after raising children. Either way, it turns out the Southwest Airlines Flight Attendant population overall is aging and, according to a recent study, unfortunately suffering some health issues at higher percentages than the general population.

In a study by McNeely et al, published this year in Environmental Health, regarding the self-reported health of Flight Attendants in the United States, compared to the general population, the mean age of Flight Attendants was 47 years old and 41% of them had twenty or more years on the job. They found not only that the study participants had higher rates of chronic bronchitis, heart disease in females, sleep disorders, fatigue, and migraines but that these health conditions increased with longer job tenure. Also, “other notable associations with job tenure were skin cancer, hearing loss, and depression/anxiety.”

Wow! We’ve always known we are tough and put up with a lot of you-know-what but this data is somewhat concerning. Awareness and education are key as is taking care of one’s health, physical and mental. In addition, I believe we do a damn good job of taking care of and watching out for each other.

Perhaps my favorite thing about being a Southwest Airlines Flight Attendant is the variety of people I am honored to work with: fascinating people of all ages and backgrounds. I am continually energized, enlightened by, and well entertained by the 20-, 30- and 40-some-thing’s. However, I have to say I feel a different kinship with my Fab Over 50 Flight Attendants. Like Mark Twain said, “Age is an issue of mind over matter: if you don’t mind, it doesn’t matter.”

unity
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