



JUNE 5, 2014

unity **update**

Your bi-monthly
Unity supplement

1st Vice President's Report



Todd Gage is an Oakland-based Flight Attendant and the 1st Vice President of TWU Local 556.

We are just weeks away from touching down in our first international destination and some of you already have a Regulatory Requirement (RR) flight in your pairing at the end of the month. As we begin this new chapter, I want to remind everyone of the new work rule requiring Flight Attendants to carry a valid passport and visas (if applicable). This rule went into play on June 1. Additionally, if you do not have your passport with you while on duty, Management will begin to issue discipline starting June 26. You may be charged with a Class III (#9) violation of the Flight Attendant Work Rules and Responsibilities. This new requirement extends to Recurrent Training (RT) as well. Effective June 26, your valid passport will be required just like your Crew ID, Flight Attendant Binder, and working flashlight. Failure to bring it could result in you being unable to attend RT and receiving a no-show.

Another reminder to those working RR flights, Flight Attendants must report to the aircraft 45 minutes prior to departure in both the domicile and outstation. For additional information on Contractual changes regarding RR flights, please familiarize yourself with [Side Letter 10](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the Union Office. We know this new endeavor is an exciting change, however with the change comes some new challenges. TWU Local 556 remains committed to addressing challenges that may arise, focusing on our Member's best interests.

Last week, we finished the second round of Membership Meetings of 2014. We heard a lot of ideas and concerns from our Flight Attendants. I'm giving a special "shout out" to the Las Vegas Base for having the largest turn out. Congratulations and thanks for the good food and conversation at the pre-meeting tailgate party in the hotel parking lot. If you were not able to attend any of the ten meetings, don't worry, there will be one more round this year. Once the dates are confirmed we will have those posted on the Website and in each Domicile.

I hope everyone has a great summer. Enjoy your vacations, the warm weather, and lastly Happy Father's Day to all the fathers in our Membership.

In Unity,

Todd Gage

Let's take the Pop out of Pop Cans

Have your pop cans flipped their lids? As the weather heats up so do the Provisioning trucks. When this happens, the soda we are serving our Customers can become a danger to us. With the built up pressure, the lids flip outward when opening the can and this can ruin your day by slicing your hand and sending you to the doctor. Here are some "handy" tips to avoid flipping your own lid:



- Rotate cans from the back stock which have acclimated to the cabin temperature
- Open the can by sliding your hotel key card under the tab from the back of the can as leverage.
- Grip the can down low to keep your hand a safe distance away from the danger zone.
- If you have hot cans you may need to open these for Customers that request the whole can to avoid injury to them.

Clearly, following these steps will take extra time and effort on your part. But on the other "hand" it saves time spent in a waiting room for stitches and a tetanus shot. As always, if you are injured on the job take the time to write an IR and follow up with medical care.



Rachel Brownfield is a Las Vegas-based Flight Attendant and the Las Vegas Domicile Executive Board Member.

What, Me Worry? Or, How I Learned to LUV my Contract.



Bill Holcomb is an Oakland-based Flight Attendant and a Member of the TWU Local 556 Negotiating Team.

Many of us have heard of, or seen, the new short-term and long-term disability programs provided for non-contract (non-Unionized) Employees here at Southwest Airlines. Some of you may have also seen similar programs offered to Unionized Employee groups.

Arguably, Flight Attendants are the most vulnerable to short and long term injury and illness issues. Over the years, our Union has negotiated industry-leading benefits. We accrue sick bank at a 10 to 1 ratio, can bank up to 2400 TFP, and are able to utilize up to 118 TFP during months we are on leave and unable to bid. Additionally, we have long-term disability benefit that kicks in after 90 days, we've made improvements to our FMLA "burn rates", and our Union provides excellent voluntary supplemental insurance packages through Colonial and Lincoln insurance providers.

The current offers to Unionized and non-Unionized work groups carry similar themes. Accrual rates are half the current rate, a cap of one week's worth of sick bank, short term disability at 60% rate of pay, and long term disability offered at 40% rate of pay. While Southwest Airlines Management has offered a buyout for accrued sick bank, groups have been offered only ten cents on the dollar.

To put some of this into real numbers, currently, if you work 80 TFP a month, you can accrue 96 TFP a year in your sick bank. This equates to approximately four to five three-day trips. The plan implemented for non-Unionized, non-Contract groups would take you almost one year of flying 80 TFP a month, to accrue a max of one week's worth of pay. Also, if you have 1000 TFP in your sick bank, that is enough to cover you for approximately eight and one-half month's salary continuation at 118 TFP. The buyout option would pay you approximately one month's salary for that hard earned sick bank. Just 10%!

What can you do to ensure your continued protection from those unforeseen illnesses and accidents?

1. Make sure to evaluate the Supplemental Insurance packages offered through TWU 556 to see if one fits your style of working and anticipated needs.
2. Accrue and maintain as much sick bank as possible.
3. Review your short-term and long-term disability benefits, along with FMLA rights and regulations in the "About Me" tab on SWALife.

Your Negotiating Team is determined to protect, maintain and improve your Contract. We are Membership driven and encourage you to take an active part in your Negotiations

In Unity,

Bill Holcomb

PS: News Flash!! On May 30, a Court ordered American Airlines to honor all retiree benefits to all current and former contract (Unionized) employees at US Airways, American and TWA only, and declined to protect the non-contract (non-Unionized) employees from the same current and former airlines. Just some food for thought.

NT Update



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

Over the years, TWU Local 556 Contract Negotiations Teams have employed the assistance of outside legal counsel, strategic advisors, public relations professionals, airline economists, industry experts, etc. Our Local has been fortunate to have many resources available to us, including the Transport Workers Union of America. Especially during Contract Negotiations, our Union's leadership has also regularly called upon our greatest resource: the Membership of TWU Local 556. Within our own Flight Attendant ranks, we have an abundance of creativity, talent and experience.

As we enter a new phase in our Contract Negotiations, our Negotiating Team (NT) recently chose three seasoned Flight Attendants to serve on our Coordinating Council. Houston-based Crystal Reven, Las Vegas-based Bryan Orozco and Oakland-based Sam Wilkins have been working closely with your NT, creating a plan to educate and mobilize our Members, readying our Flight Attendants for what comes next. Crystal, Sam and Bryan have been charged with the next phase of Membership involvement: the Contract Action Network (CAN). I'm very excited about this; you'll read more about the CAN later in this issue.

Negotiating Team Member Bill Holcomb is recovering well from an unexpected illness. Even though he is temporarily unable to fly as a working Flight Attendant, his doctor has cleared him to volunteer his time while on medical leave to remain an active and vital Member of our NT.

This has definitely been a busy couple of weeks for your NT. As I stated in the last NT Update, we have had very candid discussions with Southwest Airlines Management about the needs of our Membership in relation to Lineholder protections and reschedules. Between May 22-23 and May 28-29, we spent many long days and

Continued

nights drafting language on Article 8 – Hours of Service and Article 9 – Additional Flying. We presented and defended our changes to these Articles, and listened to Southwest Airlines Management's concerns and suggestions. Management has presented us with counter offers that we will review over the next couple of weeks. Your NT will continue to draft language for the other Articles of our Contract, which you, our Members, have said, are the most important.

Your NT has made it clear to Southwest Airlines Management that we must address certain quality of life issues and economic needs. Though our discussions over these topics have been challenging at times, both sides remain respectful and optimistic. We look forward to our next round of Negotiations on June 16-18 and 25-26. Until then, continue to reach out to your NT, show Management why we are the best Flight Attendants in the industry, wear your Union Pin ([request one here](#)) and most importantly support your fellow TWU Local 556 Brothers and Sisters each and every day on the aircraft.

In Unity,

Audrey Stone

Audrey Stone



Log on to the
TWU556 Website to
take this month's
Crew Check-In Poll.

Introducing the TWU Local 556 Contract Action Network (CAN)

The CAN will be made up of your Negotiating Team, the Coordinating Council, CAN Base Leaders, CAN Educators and most importantly you, the Member. You are the key to our success in enhancing our industry leading Contract for the best Flight Attendants.

We are approaching the one-year anniversary since we began our Contract Negotiations with Southwest Airlines Management on June 10, 2013. The key to moving Negotiations forward is Membership Mobilization. You can get involved! Please contact our CAN Base Leaders if you want to be involved. Our CAN Base Leaders will be in the Inflight Lounges on June 10, or feel free to drop a note in their box. Our CAN Base Leaders are as follows:

ATL: Allison Head #31023 & Josie Rose #29947
BWI: Allyson Schiele #49604 & Stephanie Roberts #63228
DAL: Andrea Garnett #26015 & Cory Wells #69637
DEN: Kristen Byrd #69581 & Ian Johnson #57002
HOU: Peggy Davis #74576 & David Jackson #41357
LAS: Amanda Gauger #82562 & Mark Anthony Reyes #90220
MCO: Billy Makedonsky #36548 & Edgel Maynard #45184
MDW: Tasha Cole #74645 & Fred Commo #75980
OAK: Lara Silva #21917 & Josh Rosenberg #73663
PHX: Kelly Reeves #90497 & Nathan Koschmann #77032

If you are unable to volunteer there are some simple things you CAN DO every day:

- ✈ CAN DO: Read your Negotiations Updates via Unity Updates that are sent to your email on the 5th and 20th of every month.
- ✈ CAN DO: Every day that you go to work wear your Union pin and orange ribbon. The orange ribbon symbolizes the cover color of the new Contract. Orange is a homage to Herb and the original Southwest Airline's plane colors.
- ✈ CAN DO: One key component to maintaining our industry-leading Contract is being the Flight Attendant Southwest Airlines hired you to be. Show up to work, and continue delivering Positively Outrageous Service to our Customers each day.
- ✈ CAN DO: Anytime you have a question, comment or concern email your Negotiating Team at NT@twu556.org. The NT took their marching orders from our Membership and remains committed to addressing your concerns.



Contract Education 101

What is Occupational Seniority Pay versus Longevity Pay?



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

When we were negotiating our current Contract back in 2008/2009, your Negotiating Team identified two areas through surveying the Membership that were important to Flight Attendants who planned on longevity in their career as a Southwest Flight Attendant: Additional vacation days and the length of time required to remain on Reserve, which in some bases had reached 22 + years.

Once a Flight Attendant had topped out on the pay scale at Step 13 and was past the 18 years where they gained that much coveted fifth week of vacation, there was no additional reward for longevity. Not to mention, the snail's pace to be in the top 35% in order to be completely off of Reserve. There was much discussion back and forth on these subjects. While we were not able to gain additional vacation days or change the percentage required to sit Reserve monthly, both parties agreed upon language that would help to add a financial incentive with career longevity.

This new language was incorporated into the final Tentative Agreement in Article 11 Reserve - Longevity Pay; and Article 21 Compensation - Occupational Seniority and, the Contract was ratified by a Membership vote on May 18, 2009.

Occupational Seniority Pay – Article 21.1, page 111

“A Flight Attendant who has 25 years or more of Occupational Seniority will receive an additional \$1.50 per TFP for trips flown to include RIGS, overschedule/overfly, excluding Charters.”

The \$1.50 is applied to the following:

- All trips flown including RIGS, overschedule overfly
- Cancellations
- FAR pulls
- Reserve Days with no Assignment

Any trip pulls other than FAR illegalities will not be paid the additional \$1.50 per TFP (e.g. Contractual Illegalities, Vacation, Jury Duty, Funeral Leave, and Sick Leave).



Longevity Pay – Article 11.7, page 56

“When a Flight Attendant with 12 years or more of Flight Attendant Seniority is required to sit Reserve (Reserve or VR line), during the reserve rotation, she/he will be compensated an additional \$1.00 per TFP for any trips credited or flown (sick trips excluded) up to her/his original line value or the value of TFP credited towards the monthly guarantee, whichever is greater.”

Original Line value means the Reserve bid award total TFP (Reserve or VR Line).

If the Secondary 35% line move down (recalculated after primary bid lines close) affects a Flight Attendant who would have been required to sit Reserve in that rotation, the Flight Attendant may choose go ahead and sit Reserve and will receive Longevity pay.

It's important to know that Longevity pay will *not* apply if a Flight Attendant chooses to bid down (in top 35%) or bids outside of their required Reserve rotation.

While I hope that every Flight Attendant with 25 years or more of Occupational Seniority would be off Reserve, if a Flight Attendant should ever be in that situation then that Flight Attendant would be entitled to both Occupational Seniority and Longevity Pay.

unity
THE MAGAZINE OF TWU LOCAL 556



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

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

TWU Local 556 Editorial Team:

Cuyler Thompson, Erich Schwenk, Robin Brewer, Audrey Stone, Donna Keith, Matt Hettich, Renda Marsh, Lori Lochelt, Rachel Brownfield, Alice Hinckley, Denny Sebesta, Matt Fearey, Trish Krider, Dana Suechting, Mark Hoewisch, Rob Swafford, Brandon Hillhouse and Kelly Lane.

The views expressed in Unity or Unity Update do not necessarily represent those of TWU Local 556 or TWU International. This publication is intended only to educate and inform TWU Local 556 Members. It is not intended to officially establish or clarify past practice, contract language or grievance/arbitration positions. It is therefore not to be utilized or relied upon by any person or party as evidence of the Union's position on any past practices, Contract language, grievances/arbitrations or any other disputes or issues between TWU Local 556 and Southwest Airlines.