

FALL 2017 ISSUE



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# UNITY

THE MAGAZINE OF TWU LOCAL 556

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# 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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of the TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA, AFL-CIO

I solemnly pledge on my honor to abide by the Constitution of the Transport Workers Union of America and the rules and Bylaws of Local 556; to discharge all my duties and obligations faithfully; not to make known any private business of the Union, and to conduct myself at all times as becomes a Member of the Transport Workers Union of America.

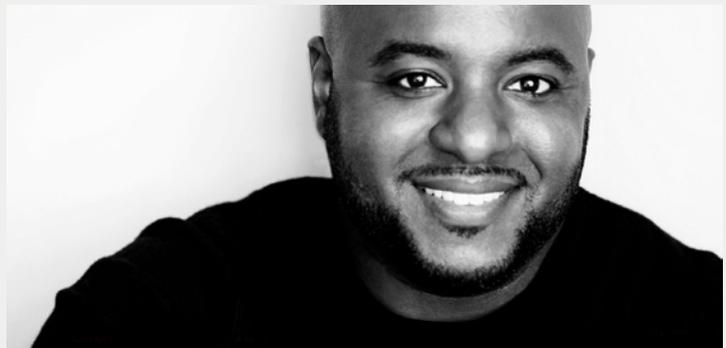
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Letters to the Editor may not be considered if the length of the submission exceeds 200 words and/or depending upon space available in the issue. All letters must contain your name, Base, Employee number, and contact information.

Articles submitted to Unity will not be considered for publication if they are libelous, defamatory, not factual, in bad taste, or are Contractually incorrect. The TWU Local 556 Editorial Team reserves the right to edit any submissions that are received for the purpose of inclusion in Unity. Submissions are due by the first of the month prior to the month of publication, and are considered on a space-available basis only.

The views expressed in Unity 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. Connect with us on Facebook ([facebook.com/twu556](https://facebook.com/twu556)), or follow us on Twitter (@twu556).

 /twu556  @twu556



Thanks to Atlanta-based Flight Attendant Cordell Carter for providing the beautiful cover photo of Chicago-based Flight Attendant Erica Carson for this issue. We appreciate Cordell's generosity, sharing his time, amazing skills and talents to capture Southwest Airlines Flight Attendants at their best.

Thank you for making us look good, Cordell.

CORDELL PHOTOGRAPHY, LLC // (404) 324-1140

# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



Cuyler Thompson is an Oakland-based Flight Attendant and serves as the Editor of Unity Magazine and Chairperson of the Communications Committee.  
[cthompson@twu556.org](mailto:cthompson@twu556.org)

**With the Holiday Season (and all that comes with it) upon us, we've tried to include some seasonal topics and pertinent resources in this issue that we hope will be helpful to Flight Attendants.**

Southwest Airlines has already navigated some extreme weather events this year, which have greatly disrupted our operations and schedules. Anticipating that we'll see more disruptions as winter approaches, the TWU Local 556 Education Committee reminds us of the Stranded/Unscheduled Overnight (Unscheduled RON) language contained in our Contract. I encourage Members to brush up on these Articles (9 & 11) now because when such events occur, we are often already experiencing an extended Duty Day and may be too tired to clearly understand our options. Do you have the TWU556 Connect mobile app installed on your smart phone or portable electronic device? It's an amazing tool for searching for specific Contract language. Visit the Apple Store or Google Play to download the free app.

As usual, Holiday travelers will have a lot of baggage. I've rewritten an article

originally published in the Summer 2011 issue of Unity Magazine that reiterates that *You Do Have a Choice!* regarding whether or not to lift a Passenger's carry-on for them. Please take care of YOU: if you want to be a healthy old Flight Attendant, you must make good choices while you are a young Flight Attendant!

The Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) and Flight Attendant Drug and Alcohol Program (FADAP) Committees remind us that the Holidays are not always happy for all of us; this time of year can be very difficult for your Co-workers for various reasons. There are resources for you and your loved ones and we appreciate the Flight Attendants who volunteer to be there for us when we need them most.

I wish you and yours a wonderful Holiday Season and a Happy New Year!

Some (but not all) Southwest Airlines Inflight Bases have been sending text messages to Flight Attendants' personal cell phone numbers as a means of communication regarding Irregularity Reports (IRs), etc..

Our Collective Bargaining Agreement does not require Flight Attendants to receive and respond to text messages from Southwest Airlines Management. According to Senior Director of Base Operations Mike Sims, Flight Attendants may elect not to receive messages from Management by notifying their Inflight Base Manager via email, telephone or in writing if they do not wish to receive text messages from their Base Leaders.

## HERE ARE YOUR BASE MANAGERS' EMAIL ADDRESSES:

- ATLANTA** Graham.Vandergrift@wnco.com
- BALTIMORE** Joe.Hux@wnco.com
- DALLAS** Tammi.Feuling@wnco.com
- HOUSTON** Scott.Wells@wnco.com
- DENVER** Ed.Schneider@wnco.com
- LAS VEGAS** Suzanne.Stephensen@wnco.com
- ORLANDO** Marisa.Merkel@wnco.com
- CHICAGO** Corey.Opoka@wnco.com
- OAKLAND** Carolene.Goulbourne@wnco.com
- PHOENIX** Deborah.Edwards@wnco.com

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The last several months have been a difficult time for not only for our Flight Attendants, but for the United States. We witnessed three hurricanes hit in a short timeframe, and one left Puerto Rico completely devastated. Then on the heels of catastrophic weather, the largest mass shooting in recent history occurred in one of our base cities. The conversations I've had with people have centered on the horrific fact that we had one Flight Attendant shot. We have many more who were affected, but it is so sad that we now live in a world where "it could have been worse" is what follows an event like this.

At first glance, you see the worst of Mother Nature and of people when you look at the surface of either weather events or man-made horrors. However, they depict the best of the human spirit. No matter the cause, we all see people put their differences aside and work to help each other out. The last few months have been no exception to that. People opened their doors, hearts, and extended a helping hand to those in need. TWU Local 556 has donated \$30,000 to hurricane relief to assist our Flight Attendants, TWU Members, and Southwest Airlines Employees. We have Flight Attendants who have organized supplies for relief flights to San Juan. There are countless quieter acts of kindness that continue to occur behind the scenes.

**This help has been provided without question.  
Not once have I heard anyone worry about whose side someone is on when they're offering support.**

It's the one time that differences are put aside and compassion is the first response. While I haven't been surprised, it has been a great reminder of what we as a group are capable of when we work together.

As Flight Attendants, we continue to be the face of Southwest Airlines. We were hired because we were warm, friendly, funny, quirky customer-service oriented individuals. Kindness is extended to our Customers on thousands of flights each and every day. However, that same kindness isn't always extended to each other.

As the end of my term continues to approach, it is my hope that we can remember that we can be unstoppable when we come together as a group. Taking care of each other can be our greatest strength, and next year we are going to have new Union Leadership facing what you've heard me say I believe will be a tough round of Contract Negotiations. They will need all of our support and all of us standing behind them.



Audrey Stone is a Las Vegas-based Flight Attendant and serves as the President of TWU Local 556.  
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## WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

### TWU LOCAL 556 FACEBOOK GROUP

The Official TWU Local 556 Facebook Group is in full swing. Our fast-paced lifestyle doesn't always allow for calls to the Union Office during regularly-scheduled business hours. We love having a convenient resource for you to get your Contract and Work Rule questions answered fast. The Q&A style of our page allows you to receive factual responses from our Contract-savvy Admin Team. Our Admin Team is available to answer questions from 1500-2400 Central Time, every day. Remember, if you ask a question outside of those times, our Admin Team will answer your question as soon as possible. If you have any questions or feedback about the Official TWU Local 556 Facebook Group, please email the Education Committee at [education@twu556.org](mailto:education@twu556.org).



**Official  
TWU Local 556  
Facebook Group**

# TREASURER'S REPORT

As our Membership has grown over the years, collecting Union Dues from Members who didn't receive a paycheck for one reason or another, has become quite a process. For the month of September of this year, 1,188 Members did not receive a 20<sup>th</sup> paycheck or earn enough income to have their dues deducted. We then manually look at each of those 1,188 Flight Attendant's CWA screen and evaluate if those Members were on a type of medical leave that was greater than fifteen days. After those amounts are waived, we start the billing process. Last year we manually collected over \$375,000. As of this writing, we have over \$39,000 in dues outstanding that needs to be collected. If you have a balance, we not only mail you an invoice but as a courtesy, we also send a short CWA message to alert you for those that are over 30 days delinquent. Please know you may pay your invoice via the TWU Local 556 Website, mail in a check, or pay your balance by calling us here at the Union Office. As always, thank you for paying your fair share.

The Union's fiscal year ended September 30<sup>th</sup> and I have been working in conjunction with our auditing firm on the preparation of the year-end LM-2 statements that are required filings with the Department of Labor (DOL). The LM-2 is the report that all Unions are required to complete that receive over \$250,000 in revenue. It details all income received as well as how those funds were spent. It is broken down into schedules and identifies any vendor that provided products or services that were paid in excess of \$5,000. It also details all monies paid to the seventeen Union Officers and/or Members regardless of how much is earned as well as any non-officer that received over \$10,000 performing Union Business. Once the report is finalized and submitted towards the end of December, you will be able to review it in PDF form under the Union Administration section of our TWU Local 556 Website. It may also be downloaded from the official Department of Labor website.

Lastly, it has been an honor to serve as your Treasurer. As the Holidays are quickly approaching, I want to wish you and your family a Happy and Safe Holiday Season.



John Parrott is a Dallas-based Flight Attendant and serves as the Financial Secretary/Treasurer of TWU Local 556.  
[jparrott@twu556.org](mailto:jparrott@twu556.org)

## DOMICILE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

### ORLANDO

I want to begin by saying that my thoughts and prayers are with our Co-Hearts in Las Vegas who were affected by the shooting that occurred in Las Vegas on October 1. This is a reminder to always stay vigilant whether you are on an overnight or your own personal time.

As of this writing, construction will begin soon on both the Flight Attendants' and Pilots' Lounge. Construction will begin on the Pilots' Lounge first, which will result in the Pilots moving into the Flight Attendant Lounge until theirs is complete. After that, we will move into the Pilots' Lounge during the construction on our lounge. Once the project is complete, we will have a larger, more modern space.

Recently, I have been contacted by several Flight Attendants regarding the bonus Might Be Late (MBL). There is a perception that if you have used a MBL in a quarter and then need to MBL again, your bonus MBL is automatically used. That is not correct. You MUST designate to Scheduling that you wish to use the bonus MBL at the time of the call to MBL. If you do not specify, you will incur .5 Attendance Points if you have already used an MBL in that quarter.

It's almost time for the annual Toys For Tots toy drive for the upcoming holiday season. Please plan to bring a new, unwrapped toy to brighten a child's Christmas.

**THANK YOU FOR BEING THE  
BEST FLIGHT ATTENDANTS IN  
THE INDUSTRY!**



Jimmy West  
Orlando Domicile Executive Board Member  
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## LAS VEGAS

I am writing this Unity Magazine article just days after the horrific shooting at the Route 91 Harvest Music Festival. Our city witnessed tragedy that night. I can't imagine what our neighbors, friends, family, and Co-workers have endured. Instead of reflecting on the devastation, I would like to focus on the heroism of the aftermath: on hope.

Complete strangers came together to save others, many of whom were wounded themselves. People stood in line for hours to donate blood. First responders worked tirelessly to transport injured concert-goers to every hospital in the valley.

I'm truly touched by the outpouring of care and concern displayed towards our Las Vegas-based Flight Attendant shot that night. The way our Co-workers have donated money and sent messages of encouragement to her is awe inspiring.

Healing takes time and support. I urge anyone who needs help to call any of our resources:

- **CISM 800-408-3220**
- **CLEARSKIES 800-358-8515**
- **FADAP 214-640-4307**

Let us all remember these acts of courage and love throughout the Holiday Season and the New Year.

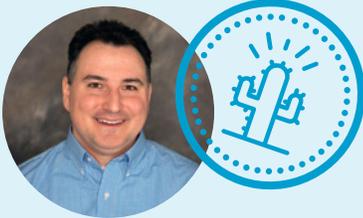
## MAY YOUR HOLIDAYS BE FILLED WITH LOVE AND HOPE.



Rachel Brownfield

Las Vegas Domicile Executive Board Member  
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## PHOENIX



John DiPippa

Phoenix Domicile Executive Board Member  
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As Thanksgiving is right around the corner, I wanted to take a moment to focus on the things I'm most thankful for and I hope you share some of these with me. First off, I'm most thankful for my faith. I'm also

thankful for my health, my family and my girlfriend Rachel and her two Yorkies Deacon and JoJo.

As far as my job, I'm thankful to work for the best airline out there and am thankful for the aftermath that happened after the first TA failed. I know this might be an odd thing to be thankful for, but please hear me out for a moment. I'm thankful that because the first TA failed, it energized our Membership in the sense that it brought more of a focus on our Union as a whole, which in my opinion is a good thing as we are only as strong as our Membership. A few examples of increased

Membership focus on our Union is the fact that I've seen many new faces at our Membership Meetings and also the fact that several of our delegates who attended the International Convention to my knowledge have never been involved in the Union before. A couple of them were our own Ray Presnall and Nancy Potts.

On a further note, elections for a new Executive Board are next year. With that being said, no matter who's in office, I hope we as a Membership will be united like we were in 2002, as the next Contract will not come easy as we will literally be in the fight for our lives.

## CHICAGO

### HELLO TO EVERYONE IN CHICAGO!

It is hard to believe that summer is over and we are moving into fall and the heavy traffic holiday season. You all know what that means – stressed out people with their children and gifts going to visit their families. Please remember that this is a stressful time for Flight Attendants too. We all have families and holidays to prepare for as well as trying to commute back and forth to base, so I ask all of you to please take a little time out to pamper yourself and relax. You deserve it. If the holidays get to be too much remember, we

have a great CISM team that is always available to help you if things get too overwhelming.

With the holiday season coming up soon another thing you may want to familiarize yourself with are the blackout dates for the Personal Illness Note (PIN). Blackout dates remaining for the year include: Thanksgiving, the Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve.

I would like to thank everyone who participated in the Telethon fundraiser in Chicago for Hurricane Harvey. We raised over \$8,000 which was matched by Southwest Airlines. You all rock!

As I close I would like to tell you all how honored I am to be allowed to represent all of you, the best Flight Attendants in the industry!



Donna Keith

Chicago Domicile Executive Board Member  
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## DALLAS

The last couple of months has been hard for several Flight Attendants in Houston, Florida and other areas with weather. I want to thank Dallas Flight Attendants Kristie Scarbrough and Wendy Sibley. They organized a team to drive to Houston to assist in saving animals and helping the residents. Together they coordinated a donation and delivery drive. All of those items were loaded into a 24' horse trailer with the help of Kristie, her husband Gary, Wendy's daughter and others. Thanks for all the donations, it was a huge success.

In the future, you may be asked questions by the FAA to show how well you understand our Safety Management System (SMS). Learn

more on [SWALife](#)>[About SWA](#)>[Departments O-Z](#)>[Safety & Security](#)> Safety Management System. It is imperative that Company procedures and guidelines are followed. They represent the level of risk Southwest is willing to accept, and are designed to keep you and our Customers Safe.

Our Union is an organized association of workers formed to protect and further their rights and interests; a labor union. Many people have failed to take in the lessons and experience of our history here at our local. A lot of the Union's hard work is being destroyed and the movement now is kind of in abeyance in many ways. With good leadership

and strong Membership support we can accomplish above and beyond anything we can imagine. Being disconnected and misinformed only separates us for the goal of unifying.



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## HOUSTON



David Jackson  
Houston Domicile Executive Board Member  
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As I write this article I've just returned from the TWU 25<sup>th</sup> International Constitutional Convention. The Convention brings together Members from all Locals. Our delegation was comprised of your Executive Board and 31 rank and file Members who stepped up to the plate and took on the challenge of representing such a diverse work group, thank you all.

Hurricane Harvey left many of our Flight Attendants homes and lives devastated. So many of you called me and the Houston Base looking for a way to help others and I can't tell

you how much it was appreciated. I would like to thank Houston Flight Attendant Kelli East for all of her help and hard work helping our Membership during the storm.

Thank you for the honor of serving such an incredible group of Flight Attendants. Please contact me by phone 214-640-4310 or email [djackson@twu556.org](mailto:djackson@twu556.org) anytime you need assistance. As always, when it comes to workplace conflict, remember to talk it out and don't write it up. Professional Standards is always available at 1-888-322-3735.

## OAKLAND

**TWU Convention Recap:** The TWU Constitutional Convention concluded on September 28, in Las Vegas. TWU locals from across the country came together and overwhelmingly elected our TWU International leadership. Congratulations to TWU President John Samuelsen, Executive Vice President Alex Garcia, Secretary-Treasurer Gary Maslanka, Administrative Vice President John Bland, and Administrative Vice President Jerome Lafragola. The TWU Convention was much more than an election of TWU leadership. TWU Delegates adopted resolutions aimed at establishing a broad agenda and creating a long-term vision for our international union, including allocating resources to help TWU Members win specific contract fights, improve upon our TWU International Health and Safety program, and develop a robust legislative agenda, to

name a few. All in all, the convention was very successful and TWU is ready to fight for its Members on a variety of fronts.

**California Kin Care Update:** On September 19, an Arbitrator settled a grievance filed by TWU Local 555, related to Southwest Airlines' Kin Care policy. The grievance dealt with the "auto-burn" aspect of Southwest's Kin Care policy, how Kin Care is automatically applied without the Employee's consent. Unfortunately, TWU Local 555 lost the Arbitration, with the Arbitrator holding "based upon the entire record as presented, the Company is not in violation of the CBA or California law by applying its automatic burn policy in regard to California Sick Leave." Even with this minor setback, we continue the fight for what we believe is the proper interpretation of the state law. Additionally, we continue to

await a ruling from the Department of Labor Standards and Enforcement on the "auto-burn" and "allotment" components of the Kin Care policy. We continue to fight legislatively for a fix that respects our Member's rights under California law.



Matt Hettich  
Oakland Domicile Executive Board Member  
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## DENVER

By the time you read this, those of us in the Mile-High City will have already encountered our first winter storm. For ski and snowboard enthusiasts, this is great news. For those of us who need to drive to work, please keep a close eye on weather reports and always allow extra time for driving during winter weather. Please be safe. Here are some safety tips for winter driving:

- Make certain your tires are properly inflated.
- Keep your gas tank at least half full to avoid gas line freeze-up.
- Do not use cruise control when driving on any slippery surface.
- Accelerate and decelerate slowly.
- Check and fill your windshield wiper fluid regularly.

If at any time you do not feel safe while driving to work, pull over and do not drive. Once you are safely pulled over, call Scheduling and apprise them of your situation. Take pictures (not while driving) of road conditions. If you MBL or No-Show, this documentation is beneficial to possibly have discipline removed. Bottom line is to BE SAFE!

I can't fail to mention our upcoming Holiday Party. The Denver Station Black and White Masquerade Holiday Party is on January 20 beginning at 6:00 PM at the Westin Denver Downtown. For more information and the link to register please check with the Customer Service Desk in the Denver Inflight Lounge or refer to your Company email for an email dated September 21.

As always, it is my pleasure to serve the Flight Attendants of Denver. Please feel free to contact me at [jparker@twu556.org](mailto:jparker@twu556.org).



Jessica Parker

Denver Domicile Executive Board Member  
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## BALTIMORE



Stacey Vavakas

Baltimore Domicile Executive Board Member  
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Happy Holiday's Baltimore! We have had a few rough months with hurricanes, weather events, and the Las Vegas tragedy. There were so many of our Southwest Airlines Family that were affected by each and every one of these tragedies. It was heartwarming as we all stepped up to show what it means to be a part of the Southwest Family. I know it has caused me to take a moment and reflect on the blessings in my life. I hope that we can all take this time to find what we are most thankful for and to spread a little bit of love and happiness.

Remember to always take pause if there is an issue and ask yourself if that person is going through something. Your smile and a simple "are you ok?" can go a long way.

With the holiday season upon us don't forget the blackout dates for your Personal Illness Note (PIN). The dates are as follows: Thanksgiving, the Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve.

As always fly safe and be kind to one another.

## ATLANTA

The past few months have been devastating for many of our Co-Hearts due to recent tragic events. I want to thank all of you for showing LUV, support, and encouragement to those in need during these difficult times. This holiday season will be tough for so many, as Members and their families try to rebuild their lives and communities. Thank you to the Flight Attendants that put themselves in harm's way to save lives. I appreciate you for your strength and courage.

Also, I would like to thank our TWU International Leaders and Members for raising

thousands of dollars for hurricane relief. Supplies and goods were air dropped to our Brothers and Sisters in Puerto Rico who are recovering from the devastation of Hurricane Maria. In the face of adversity, we all came together. We have proven once again that we are strong when we work together and I am proud to be a Member of TWU Local 556.

If you know of a fellow Employee in need this holiday season, remind them we have resources available:

**TWU LOCAL 556 CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT (CISM):**  
**800-408-3220**

### CLEARSKIES EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM:

Offers immediate counseling over the phone 800-358-8515



Pamila Forte-Oak

Atlanta Domicile Executive Board Member  
[poak@twu556.org](mailto:poak@twu556.org) | 214-640-4320

# GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

## REPORT

**As we wrap up 2017, this is a great time to reflect on the challenges and successes our Membership has faced in the Grievance world.**

Our Flight Attendant family has grown so much over the last few years. We have seen changes in the operation, the Contract, and the way Management manages our workforce, just to name a few. Your Grievance Team has also faced these challenges head-on as we have adapted to these changes to best represent you, our fellow Brothers and Sisters.

Since there are many of you who have never had to file a Grievance, or might not have called the Union Office with questions for the Grievance Team, we think it is good to let you know about the team here for you. The Grievance Team consists of three full-time and five temporary Flight Attendants who answer questions (of any issue) and help coordinate Shop Steward representation at your Base (one who is also our Leave Specialist to assist during those stressful times experiencing a major illness); six Flight Attendants serve as Grievance Filers who do anything from answering basic questions, to filing Grievances, and follow cases all the way through the arbitration process; the two of us who work as the Grievance Co-Chairpersons supporting the team, presenting cases to the Executive Board, and negotiating settlements with Management; and an administrative assistant (our one “civilian” worker on the staff).

The Grievance Team handles an average of 8,700 phone calls each month, and opens about 285 new cases each month. We began this year with 199 active Grievances, currently have 160 active Grievances, and at our peak had 237 active Grievances. To date, 55 termination Grievances have been filed, of which 13 have resulted in a reinstatement of employment. The Grievance Team has settled 336 Grievances total this year on behalf of individual Members, or the Membership as a whole. We have settled 38 Grievances for Online Recurrent Training issues and are working to resolve the remaining 20. TWU Local 556 is proud of the fact we are still able to get as many Grievances settled on behalf of the Membership, especially since we hear many of our other Union Brothers and Sisters on campus are not seeing the willingness from Management to resolve outstanding issues. Keeping those channels of communication open can be challenging at times, and depending on the circumstance can become strained. That being said, your Grievance Team works extremely hard to walk that fine line between negotiating with Management while standing strong on the issues at hand.

Brandon Hillhouse and I have both worked on the Grievance Team for more than ten years, beginning with answering phones, as Grievance Filers, and currently Co-Chairing the Grievance Team. The changes in Contracts, managing styles and philosophies of Management, and the needs of our Membership have been dramatic over those years. The frequency and level of disciplinary actions has greatly increased. The challenges of settling Contract disputes has increased. The one thing that has always stayed consistent though is a Grievance Team that is dedicated to representing the Membership. Team Members have come and gone over the years, but the hard work and drive has been passed along. This is the advantage of having Flight Attendants representing Flight Attendants. The team not only knows the ins and outs of the Contract, Work and Conduct Rules, and past cases, but also truly knows the job itself.

**Please know you have us as a resource 365 days a year. Our office is open Monday thru Friday 0800–1800 CST, and we have Team Members on call Saturdays, Sundays, and Holidays from 0900–1700. We also have an Executive Board Member on call after hours each day for emergency situations that need immediate attention.**

As we all head into a new year, we all look forward to representing our ever growing Membership, and facing challenges and success 2018 brings together.



Becky Parker is a Dallas-based Flight Attendant and serves as a TWU Local 556 Grievance Committee Co-Chairperson.

[bparker@twu556.com](mailto:bparker@twu556.com)

# STRANDED!

With winter fast approaching, and hurricane season having left many of our Members displaced for many days, it's important to understand our Stranded/Unscheduled Overnight (Unscheduled RON) language.

Stranded and Unscheduled RONs both result in not getting home on the day you were scheduled. The biggest difference between being Stranded and being on an Unscheduled RON is the (why) behind it. Being Stranded is when the situation is beyond Scheduling's control—a broken airplane, weather events, Pilot timeout, etc. Being on an Unscheduled RON is when Scheduling reroutes or adds additional flying to you knowing you won't get home.

Language for Stranded and Unscheduled RONs can be found in a couple Articles of our Contract. Article 9—Additional Flying contains the language for Lineholders, and Article 11—Reserve contains the language for Reserves.

There are a few things that Lineholders AND Reserves receive when being Stranded or on an Unscheduled RON:

- Deadhead back to domicile on the first available flight.
- Premium pay (1.5) for all flights flown on the day off.
- RIG of one (1) TFP for every three (3) hours away from base from block in at the overnight until the debrief of the deadhead back to domicile.

In addition, both Lineholders and Reserves have the option for a day to be pulled from a future pairing or Reserve day in the month. Exercising this option is the biggest difference between Lineholder and Reserve. If a Lineholder opts to have a day pulled, it is without pay AND the Lineholder loses the RIG of one (1) TFP for every three (3) hours away from base. If a Reserve opts to have a day pulled, the Reserve will not suffer a loss of guarantee, nor will she/he lose the RIG.

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Let's take a look at some frequently asked questions regarding Stranded and Unscheduled RONs:

## **CAN I BE REQUIRED TO WORK BACK TO DOMICILE IF I'VE BEEN STRANDED?**

Yes, Scheduling can have you work back to domicile if you have been Stranded.

## **IF I WANT TO HAVE A DAY PULLED, WHO DO I CALL AND WHEN MUST I CALL?**

To exercise your options, you must call Crew Scheduling within 60 minutes of the release of the pairing you were Stranded or on an Unscheduled RON.

## **CAN I HAVE THE MIDDLE DAY OF MY TRIP OR RESERVE BLOCK PULLED?**

No. The selected day off must be the first or last day of the pairing or Reserve block.

## **IF I HAD FAR ILLEGAL REST, DO I HAVE TO TAKE THE DH THAT IS ON MY TRIP?**

No. You are not required to take the DH if you have FAR illegal rest. If you want to take a later flight, call Scheduling and they will make a must ride listing for you. The DH on your trip will remain as is for pay purposes.

## **WHAT IF I'M SENT ON AN UNSCHEDULED RON AND DON'T HAVE ANY DAYS LEFT IN THE MONTH TO OPT FOR A DAY OFF?**

If you are a Lineholder, and do not have another pairing or Reserve day(s)/block in the current bid month, you may elect to take the compensatory day(s) in the next bid month (provided the lines have been loaded). If you are a Reserve, your choice of compensatory day(s) will be applied to Reserve day(s) in the current bid month. In the event you do not have any Reserve day(s) remaining in the current bid month, you can:

- Be pulled from a Reserve day(s) in the next bid month (provided the lines have been loaded), or;
- Be compensated at double time (2.0) above your guarantee for all flights flown or credited on the unscheduled day.

## **IF I WAIVE MY DH, WILL I LOSE ANY PAY?**

When you waive your DH, the only pay you will lose is per diem.



Amanda Gauger is a Las Vegas-based Flight Attendant and serves as the Chairperson of the TWU Local 556 Education Committee.  
[agauger@twu556.org](mailto:agauger@twu556.org)

For more information, refer to **Article 9 and 11** in our Contract. You can also contact the Union Office or utilize the Official **TWU 556 Facebook Group**.



## A REPORT FROM THE TWU LOCAL 556

# COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL EDUCATION (COPE)

Congress cleared legislation on September 28 to reauthorize federal aviation programs ahead of the September 30 expiration date. The six-month extension gives lawmakers more time to debate a long-term FAA bill. Spinning off air-traffic control to a not-for-profit private corporation and lowering the amount of required flight hours for new-hire Pilots were critical sticking points that prevented a long-term funding bill. For Flight Attendants, there seems to be broad support in both chambers on a number of fronts, including establishing an increased rest period, banning cellphone use onboard aircraft, and creating a fatigue risk management plan for Flight Attendants. However, these items were omitted in the short-term extension.

On September 28, the U.S. Supreme Court decided to hear *Janus v American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)*. This dispute revisits a question the Supreme Court answered 40 years ago in *Abood v City of Detroit Board of Education*: whether public-sector unions may charge a fee to non-members for the cost of negotiating their union contracts. With *Abood*, the court reasoned, so-called “agency” or “fair-share” fees preserve “labor peace” and prevent non-union member employees from hitching a free ride on the backs of their dues-paying colleagues. Within TWU, we have an “agency” or “fair-share” policy; and, within our Collective Bargaining Agreement (our Contract), we have a union security clause which guarantees union Membership and dues collection. Union dues are critical to negotiate and enforce a union contract; and, because the union is required to negotiate and represent all employees covered by a contract, it’s only fair that all employees pitch in toward the cost. *Janus* seeks to undo this arrangement in the public sector (firefighters, teachers, or other public service worker contracts) and many believe if *Janus* is affirmed, the attack on private sector unions (union contracts at private corporations - like

Southwest Airlines) will be next. Make no bones about it: this is an attack on unions. And the attacks keep coming...

H.R. 785 would ban Union security clauses in Union contracts. As stated previously, TWU Local 556 maintains a union security clause, which our Members vote and approve each time our Members vote on a Contract. If H.R. 785 would pass, it would ban our rights as Workers to negotiate these agreements in our contracts. And, Senate Bill 1774 seeks, among other things, to require all unionized workplaces hold referendum votes every three years to remain unionized, an attack that would force unions to spend dues monies on running expensive referendum elections instead of focusing on contract negotiations and enforcement. In response to these legislative attacks, your TWU Local 556 Leadership has created an ad hoc committee to proactively plan in the event these bad bills become law. In August, the ad hoc committee met to explore these legislative attacks and to brainstorm on ways to address these threats to Union rights. If you are interested in getting involved in the fight, please email [cope@twu556.org](mailto:cope@twu556.org).

We’ll leave you with a glimmer of hope: the Protecting Workers and Improving Labor Standards Act, H.R. 3827 in the House and S. 1838 in the Senate. This piece of legislation would repeal the authority of states to implement “Right to Work” schemes.

Matt Hettich is an Oakland-based Flight Attendant and serves as the Oakland Domicile Executive Board Member and Co-Chairperson of COPE.

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# YOU DO HAVE A CHOICE!

“Oh my, that old bag Bea can really carry on! And why was she up here beyond row eight anyway? B position works for her: Old-Bag-in-the-Back-on-her-Butt-with-a-Book-don’t-Bother-her-Bea. Don’t let her get to you, Steve; you have done nothing wrong, handsome. Now sit down here on this jump seat and let Miss Tina tell you why.”

I’ve been flying with that old biddy for a long time and I love her dearly. Aunt Bea definitely gives every Customer “the pickle,” every time (and will give them yours if you’re not careful). She treats older people like they were her grandparents and young ones like she gave birth to them. While she gives great customer service, some of the choices she has made over the years have come at a hefty price to her life. Bea has been out of work and on Worker’s Compensation four times. Years ago, she tore her rotator cuff lifting a Passenger’s bag and was out of work for over a year due to complications. She was unable to make her mortgage payments, lost her house and moved back in with her parents. As a consequence of another bag-related injury to her neck, she suffers from migraines, misses a lot of work and is now high in Attendance Points. The only reason she doesn’t lift Passenger’s bags anymore is because she can’t physically do it. Instead, apparently, she shames handsome young Flight Stewards into lifting them for her. I know you hurt your shoulder yesterday lifting a bag and that’s why you bowed out politely when our friend insisted that you lift that ridiculous bag just now. You made a conscious choice that your health and safety were more important than that bag. And that’s what’s important about this conversation: you have a choice.

Aunt Bea just said, “You don’t have a choice,” and that, “It’s your job to lift Passengers’ carry-ons for them.” That is simply not true!

**Our Flight Attendant Manual says that you will assist Passengers with stowing their carry-ons. The word “assist” is intentionally vague. Unless they are disabled or an Unaccompanied Minor, it is always your choice whether to lift a Passenger’s bag or not.**

You may lift their carry-ons for them; you may help them by lifting one end while they lift the other; you may ask a Co-worker for assistance in lifting it; you may make room in an overhead bin for the Passenger; or you may check the bag to their final destination. The choice is yours. In addition, the choice of how to assist a Passenger is a fluid one. You may be inclined to provide more assistance at the

beginning of your shift than at the end when you are tired, or on day one of your trip as opposed to day three. While we are free to choose our actions, we are not free to choose the consequences of our actions. I can make the choice to lift a Passenger’s bag—I cannot choose whether or not I am injured in the process. We all make choices, but in the end, our choices make us.

After thirty-two years of making the choice to lift Passenger’ carry-ons, Aunt Bea’s health in general has suffered. Mine has not. Someone told me a long time ago to “choose a job you love and you will never have to work a day in your life.” I love my job, this Company and my Customers, but I love myself, my health and my livelihood more. I learned early in my career that if I wanted to be a healthy old Flight Attendant, I had to be careful about the choices I made every day. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, workers aged 65 years and older had the lowest rates of on the job injury in 2015, while younger workers were injured much more frequently. That could tell you that more experienced workers recognize their body’s limitations and make conscious choices to avoid activities that may cause injury. You should know your own body’s limitations. It is assumed that an aircraft is designed to accommodate the greatest number of Passengers in safety and comfort with weight and balance considerations. This would result in the minimum amount of space being given to bathroom facilities, aisles, storage, galleys and Flight Attendant seats. We are all different: Flight Attendants shorter in stature perform a greater amount of extended, overhead reaches; taller Flight Attendants perform more bending movements.

Here’s something else for you to think about: Southwest Airlines Director Safety Programs John Andrus reported that our Company spent \$1,904,649 on lifting injury claims for Flight Attendants in 2016. This covered claims associated with Customer baggage, personal baggage and non-baggage related lifting. Flight Attendants lifting their own personal baggage accounted for approximately 6% of that amount.

John Andrus went on to say that generally Flight Attendants are covered under Workers’ Compensation if they are injured while lifting a Customer’s bag while on duty; however, all injury claims are handled individually and coverage is determined according to the prevailing state’s law.

I have heard Flight Attendants say that since we are required to “lift fifty pounds from the floor to shoulder height,” that means we have

to lift carry-ons. According to Michael Massoni, the Union's Safety Committee Chairperson, this requirement referred to the Over-Wing Window Exit plug on the now retired 737-300/500 aircraft and NOT carry-on luggage.

Back in the day, before roll-aboard suitcases became prevalent in the mid-nineties, Passengers usually packed only what they were able to carry in their arms or on their shoulders. The bags Stewardesses were asked to lift (back in the day) were very light. These days, Passengers pack their bags to roll from their bedrooms, to the car, through the terminal, to their seat. Consequently, carry-on luggage has gotten much heavier. Southwest Airlines certainly does not expect me to lift all of these bags. Albert Camus said that, "life is a sum of all your choices." I am not telling you that you shouldn't lift bags, handsome. I just want you to know that when you choose to lift a bag, you are risking a serious injury that could cost Southwest Airlines a lot of money and could ultimately cost you your livelihood and your health.

So, now Steve, when we get back to base, you are going to fill out an online Irregularity Report and tell Management that you hurt your shoulder yesterday.

"You pack it, you stack it," "You tow it, you stow it," "You bring it, you sling it," "I touch it, I tag it." These are funny jokes, Steve, but I had better not ever hear you utter these words to one of our Passengers. Although it is not your job to lift Passengers' bags, you must assist them in stowing it. You may choose how to do that. And you will do it with a smile on your face and kindness in your heart or Miss Tina and Aunt Bea will come and snatch that mustache that you think is so cute right off your face. Is that clear? Now get your whiny butt up off this jumpseat and sling some peanuts!

## REMINDER:

# CREW MEMBERS GATE CHECK BAG(S)

According to the Southwest Airlines Flight Attendant Manual, if there is no space in the cabin, deadheading or commuting Flight Attendants may gate-check their bags in the jetway using a "Claim at Gate" tag.

Here is the language as it appears in the Customer Care section of your Flight Attendant Manual:

### 5.6.0 GATE-CHECKED ITEMS—WN-392 CLAIM AT GATE TAG

Any item that a Passenger needs immediately on arrival can be checked at the gate or at the door of the aircraft and will be delivered to the door of the aircraft on arrival. These items are tagged with a destination tag and a WN-392 Claim at Gate tag.



This tag is used for:

- Medical equipment such as personal wheelchairs
- Assistive devices
- Baby strollers and car seats checked due to lack of space
- Southwest Airlines Crew Members' bags, whether deadheading or commuting in or out of uniform

The Southwest Airlines Ground Operations Manual (GOM) also contains language regarding the fact that Flight Attendants, whether deadheading or commuting, may gate-check their bags. Operations or Ramp Agents are responsible for bringing the bags to the jetway upon arrival at their destination.

Here are some excerpts from the GOM:

### 4.7.6 CREW MEMBER TRAVEL

Crew Members in or out of uniform are exempt from the "one plus one" rule. According to the TSA, airline employees displaying CREW on their badges are not restricted to the number of bags they may carry onboard...

If there is not enough space to accommodate a deadheading or commuting Crew Member's carryon baggage, the Operations Agent should check the baggage with a Claim at Gate tag...

### 7.16.4 WN-392 CLAIM AT GATE TAGS

WN-392 Claim at Gate tags are limited to assistive devices, baby items, pet strollers, and Southwest Airlines deadheading or commuting Crew Member (Pilot or Flight Attendant) carryon baggage...

Southwest Airlines Crew Members (Pilots or Flight Attendants) who are either deadheading or commuting and are unable to store their carryon baggage in the overhead bins may have the baggage checked at the gate with a destination tag and a WN-392 Claim at Gate Tag. Claim at Gate bags should be left in the jetbridge to be loaded in the bin of the aircraft.

Upon arrival at the destination, only working Pilots displaying a Southwest Airlines badge reading CREW may retrieve Claim at Gate baggage on the ramp. Flight Attendants may not claim their bags on the ramp and must wait for the Operations or Ramp Agent to retrieve their baggage. Ramp Agents bring items tagged with the WN-392 tag to the jetbridge for Customers and Crew members to retrieve, rather than taking it to the baggage claim area. When a claim at gate item is brought to the jetbridge at the final destination, the WN-392 must be removed and discarded.

If Flight Attendants experience issues with these procedures in the future, please contact Cuyler Thompson at [cthompson@twu556.org](mailto:cthompson@twu556.org).



Cuyler Thompson is an Oakland-based Flight Attendant and serves as the Editor of Unity Magazine and Chairperson of the Communications Committee.  
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## THE HOLIDAYS ARE NOT ALWAYS HAPPY

The past few months have been hard on all of us and although many find the holiday season a time of joy, others may find the holidays wrought with unwanted guests, additional stress or even unwanted memories or feelings. The TWU Local 556 Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) and Flight Attendant Drug and Alcohol Program (FADAP) Committees are here to help you, your Co-Hearts and your loved ones. This time of year can bring up many emotions that we may not know how to handle in a healthy way.

The holiday blues can trigger relapse for people recovering from alcoholism and drug addiction or sometimes they may cause us to experience feelings of melancholy, sadness, and grief. Some symptoms of depression may include: loss of energy, fatigue, appetite change, anxiety, feeling restless, headaches, digestive issues, chronic pain, feelings of hopelessness, pessimism, guilt, helplessness, and worthlessness, loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, irritability, and restlessness. Calling in sick for work when not truly sick, not being present at work, reporting to work not fit for duty, drinking on the job, and abusing prescription medication are not healthy ways to handle these feelings.

### HERE ARE SOME WAYS YOU CAN FIGHT DEPRESSION ON YOUR OWN:

Eat smart, avoid alcohol and drugs, exercise, get enough sunlight, get enough sleep, socialize, take a breather, meditate, or keep a journal. ...but what if you don't feel you can fight it on your own? That's ok, and it's better to be honest about where you are and what you need, than to try and power through.

Recovering from depression is not an easy task, but support from family and friends can have a lasting and positive influence as someone recovers from addiction and depression.

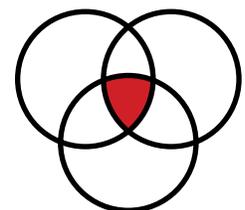
This is also the time of year where there will be lots of parties and drinking. While there is nothing wrong with having a good time, sometimes alcohol can take over, or control, someone's life. They may be using alcohol or other substances to try and escape from real life problems. If you feel as if you are drinking more than normal as a means to "get through", it may be time to talk to someone. The FADAP Team is here just for that. There are many resources available to you if you feel you have a problem with alcohol or drugs. FADAP can assist you in finding the help you need. FADAP is a peer group of Flight Attendants with two or more years of recovery from all mood-altering substances, who have walked the path and are available to share their experience, strength, and hope. For those of you that are in recovery from drugs or alcohol, remember to get to your meetings, interact with your sober network and reach out if you find you need help. There are telephonic meetings, just for Flight Attendants. Information about these meetings can be found by calling a FADAP peer or logging into [www.fadap.org](http://www.fadap.org).

The CISM Team is available to assist you through any "life event" that you feel you need to talk about or sort through. This could be work related or personal issues outside of work. Know that anytime you call on our two teams, it is confidential. We are peers, also trained in these areas and (with our own experiences) trying to help our fellow flyers in their time of need. There is also the option of getting professional help, and if you feel as if that is what you need, we can assist you in finding the appropriate resources.

Both CISM and FADAP are jointly funded and supported by TWU Local 556 and Southwest Airlines and they all would like to wish you all a very Happy Holiday Season! We hope that if you are experiencing personal challenges, you will reach out to us and begin to work on feeling better.

### NUMBERS YOU SHOULD HAVE IN YOUR PHONE:

- **CISM 800-408-3220**
- **FADAP 214-640-4307**
- **CLEARSKIES 800-358-8515**





CISM



FADAP



Eileen Rodriguez is a Dallas-based Flight Attendant and serves as the Chairperson of the TWU Local 556 Critical Incident Stress Management Committee. Dallas-based Flight Attendant Natalie Salsler and Atlanta-based Tom Spillers serve as Co-Chairpersons of the Flight Attendant Drug and Alcohol Program.



**THE 17<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TWU LOCAL 556 TOYS  
FOR TOTS DRIVE, IN CONJUNCTION  
WITH THE US MARINE CORPS RESERVE,  
STARTS SOON!**

Please help this be a Holiday Season to remember and make a dream come true for a child who might otherwise be forgotten; leave a new, unwrapped toy in the drop box located in the Flight Attendant Lounge. If you would prefer, simply leave a check or money order, made out to “Toys for Tots” in your Domicile Executive Board Member’s mailbox.

**[WWW.TWU556.ORG](http://WWW.TWU556.ORG)**