

## NWA-AFA MEC Weekly Hotline Message April 03, 2009

**MEC HOTLINE:** (888) 3-NWA-AFA or [www.nwaafa.org](http://www.nwaafa.org)

**PURPLE RIBBON CAMPAIGN:** Pro-Delta, Pro-AFA [www.deltaafa.org](http://www.deltaafa.org)

---

### **NWA-AFA MEMBERS HONORED AT AFA-CWA BOD MEETING**

It is a proud day for Northwest flight attendants. Representing 20 airlines, the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA normally gives out just four awards each year. For 2008 two of these awards were given to Northwest flight attendants!

We are pleased to announce:

1. The Terri Owen Government Affairs Activist Award was given to the MSP Government Affairs team under MEC Chair Albert Garcia: Camilla Wolkerstorfer, Rene Foss, Robin Wimmer, Sandee Russell, and Julienne Wyckoff. Their actions have significantly contributed to the advancement and protection of our profession and our union through their dedication to the AFA-CWA Government Affairs program. Their outstanding efforts have been truly inspirational and have led to positive changes in Minnesota state law and U.S. federal laws and in our elected officials.
2. The AFA-CWA 2008 Safety Award was given to our MEC Chair Jeanne Elliott and Vice Chair Gary Helton for their outstanding service in the area of air safety. Jeanne and Gary have advanced safety and security for our profession for many years and their efforts are unparalleled. As an aside -- this was not the first time Jeanne has received this award -- she also received it in the early 1970s while a Hughes Air West flight attendant and when AFA was still part of ALPA.

Please join your Master Executive Council in recognizing the achievements of these incredible volunteers and unionists. Their efforts have changed our profession for the better.

In recognition of the crew of #1549 and our AFA union members who have reminded us just what it means to be a safety professional, there was a fifth award this year. The C.B. Lansing Award for Heroism, described in our AFA Constitution, Section VII.F.1. of the Policy Manual, is the highest honor which AFA bestows upon a member and is reserved and awarded for heroism beyond the call of duty. We were honored to have the crew of US Airways Flight #1549 in Milwaukee, and they were recognized for their incredible heroism in the line of duty. -- Submitted by MEC Vice President Janette Rook

### **NEW LOCAL EXPANDS OUR NWA-AFA FAMILY**

At the Board of Directors meeting this week, our MEC President Kevin Griffin requested, and the AFA-CWA approved, the creation of a new Local in Atlanta, NWA-AFA Local 90 ATL. As we await the appointment of interim officers and local structure set-up, flight attendants flying out of ATL satellite base should continue to contact their union representatives at their mother base for union assistance and representation. See [HERE](#) or go to <http://nwaafa.org/index.php/contacts/atlbase/> for the AFA-CWA's resolution in the creation of our new Local. If you are interested in serving as an interim officer for Local 90, please contact

your current local president. Following the establishment of a local, there will be a democratic election for Local 90 officers.

***OUR UNION STAYS VIGILENT ON ALL CONTRACTUAL RIGHTS***

Recently you received notice that our management intends to lift the requirement that we call in 2½ hours prior to our trips. AFA wants to make it clear that we support anything that makes our jobs better, easier and more secure. Our union is an equal partner with management when negotiating changes to our contract. Our position on the proposed change is that we want to support this, but that it must be put into writing along with protections for possible no-shows that occur because of this change.

Not only do we monitor the contract, but we also monitor system regulations that are not covered by our contract. If our work rules or pay are altered in any way, we have a legal voice in those changes. We also take a proactive role and have frequent meetings with management to improve the quality of your work lives and we take all opportunities to have our voices heard. There are often opportunities, outside formal Railway Labor Act Section 6 negotiations, to bargain for changes that benefit us. The reciprocal cabin jump seat agreement between Northwest and United, initiated by AFA, is just one example.

As a union, we are pragmatic about how we conduct our role as your legal representative. Management does not have a unilateral right to change our working conditions or pay without our approval. But if they choose to give us a pay raise, or do something else that benefits us, obviously we will not stand in the way.

As we transition into the new Delta, we assure you we will be on high alert to any alterations management attempts, and we will demand repeal of these decisions or file appropriate grievances when management diminishes the current benefits, whether contractual or past practice, that we currently enjoy.

***AFA FIGHTS FOR ITS FAIR SHARE -- LOA 35 ARBITRATION***

The System Board of Adjustment, chaired by Arbitrator Dana Eischen and members Scott Goodman (AFA Staff Attorney) and David Driscoll (NWA Labor Counsel), heard three days (March 31-April 2) of testimony from witnesses appearing on behalf of AFA and Northwest Airlines. David Borer (former AFA General Counsel), Dan Akins, and Greg Riffle (MEC Grievance Chair) testified on behalf of AFA. Northwest Airlines called Robert Brodin (former NWA Senior Vice President of Labor Relations), Daniel Kasper (LECG, LLC), two ALPA staff attorneys, and Ryan Gilman (NWA Finance) as witnesses. Over 50 pieces of evidence were introduced into evidence, including video clips of news reports about the cancellation of flights during the summer of 2007, AFA Hotlines, and Excel spreadsheets of financial reports. During the next four weeks further evidence will be exchanged and possibly more witnesses will testify. The bulk of the testimony during the three days focused on the valuation of different contracts and grievance settlements. We will update you after all the witnesses have testified and all the evidence has been introduced. -- Submitted by AFA Staff Attorney

***WEAR YOUR UNION PIN AND NEW UNIFORM WITH PRIDE***

*Our uniforms and our executive leadership may change, but our legally binding contract is in place. Wear your new uniforms and your union pin together with pride.*

This past week, pre-merger Northwest flight attendants donned their new Delta Airlines uniforms and their union pins. This not only marked an historic moment in our professional careers, we also set a milestone as the first group of flight attendants in Delta uniforms with union representation and a legally binding contract. When flight attendants adorn their new uniform lapel with an AFA union pin, it sends a clear message that we are proud to be an integral part of a premier global airline and we are committed to the success of the New Delta.

The union insignia may be worn on the uniform as stated in Section 19.K.1 of our Flight Attendant Agreement. So please wear your union pin with pride, together with your new uniform, as we work together to achieve job security and industry-leading wages and benefits.

### ***FLIGHT DISPATCHERS CHOSE UNION REPRESENTATION***

Congratulations to our union brother and sister flight dispatchers of the Professional Airline Flight Control Association (PAFCA). Our combined Delta flight dispatcher work group voted last week to join our unionized Delta pilots in making the choice to retain a union and a legal voice for collective bargaining at the world's largest airline. We look forward to working with our union flight dispatchers and with management to make this the world's premier global carrier, and will work hard to ensure that employees receive the world-class pay and benefits that should go with it.

### ***IAM SOLIDARITY RALLY***

On March 29 members of your Government Affairs Committee attended a solidarity rally held by International Association of Machinists (IAM) brothers and sisters in Bloomington, Minnesota. Over 200 people from many different unions attended to show support for the upcoming representational elections for IAM and AFA-CWA at the New Delta.

Some of the distinguished speakers included Al Franken, Congressman Keith Ellison (D-MN), Congresswoman Betty McCollum (D-MN), State Representative Frank Hornstein, IAM Vice President of Transportation Robert Roach, IAM International President Tom Buffenbarger, former U.S. Senator Mark Dayton, IAM Local Lodge 1833 Vice President Lisa Stager, and New York City-based flight attendant and Government Affairs Chairperson Rene Foss, among others.

The message of the day was standing together and fighting to protect our unions, our collective bargaining rights and a voice in our future. All the elected leaders pledged their support in our struggle and vowed to lend us assistance in the coming months as we move closer to our election.

Congresspersons Ellison and McCollum both asked if they could have an AFA union pin to wear on their flights between MSP and DCA each week in a show of support of flight attendants, our right to union representation and a fair election. If you see them in your travels please acknowledge their work on our behalf. Most importantly, we thank all the MSP flight attendants that attended the rally. Your presence is solidarity in action! -- Submitted by LEC 91 NYC Government Affairs Committee Chair Rene Foss

### **EAP UPDATE -- FA QUESTIONS ABOUT PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS**

The Park Nicollet Clinic, where NWA's Medical Review Officer, Dr. David Zanick, was based, has closed its Occupational Health operations. From now on, calls will be taken by Dr. Zanick's longtime assistant, Sandy Taylor, RN, at the new "Air Crew and Passenger Health Services (ACPHS)" at 612-727-9757. For the next six to eight months, that number will be answered exclusively by Sandy, while she manages the integration of NWA's medical functions during the transition to Delta. After that, Sandy will be joined by three other Delta RNs. Rest assured that throughout this process, **all calls are still confidential**. Do not hesitate to call Sandy to get correct information about any prescription medications you are taking and how they relate to your work as a crew member. -- Submitted by MEC EAP Committee Chair Rosemary Miller

### **DELTA'S FURLOUGH POLICY -- FACT VS. FICTION**

Some of our junior flight attendants may be against voting for a union because they feel that having a union offers them no protection against furloughs. They believe furlough will not be dictated solely by seniority if and when the Company makes that decision. The reality is that, without a legally binding contract, flight attendants are completely at the mercy of the Company regarding reduction in force and the recall process. In fact, Delta's updated furlough policy actually calls for involuntary furloughs to be processed "in reverse order of the Involuntary Reduction System Seniority Roster." Delta management can also achieve reduction by closing a base, outsourcing certain flights, or any other means that the Company deems fit. Therefore, but for the occasional exception, nothing -- not seniority, not individual base, nor special qualification -- can spare a flight attendant from the fate of being furloughed.

There is a defined process protected by a legally binding contract, and flight attendant work groups actually have some input as to how reduction in force and recall are handled. Various sections of our contract, such as [Section 1](#), Recognition, Scope, & Job Security, [Section 6](#), Scheduling, [Section 12](#), Filling of Vacancies, [Section 13](#), Transfer Expenses, [Section 14](#), Reduction in Force & Recall, are active parts of our contract that serve to protect our work group should an involuntary furlough occur. Our contract is especially illuminating when it comes to the recall process. It clearly states management cannot conduct hiring if there are flight attendants on furlough. Without the contractual recall language, the Company can hire when "operational needs arise" regardless if there are flight attendants already on furlough or if staffing overage exists. This is most evident from Delta's March hiring notice for Japanese-speaking FAs at their JFK base even as flight attendants remain on furlough system-wide. To learn more about Delta's recently updated Furlough Policy effective March 20, please sign on to DeltaNet or go to our NWA-AFA web site [http://nwaafa.org/docs/policy/DAL\\_Furlough\\_Policy\\_032009.pdf](http://nwaafa.org/docs/policy/DAL_Furlough_Policy_032009.pdf) and [http://nwaafa.org/docs/policy/DAL\\_BasePreferenceandRecallProcess.pdf](http://nwaafa.org/docs/policy/DAL_BasePreferenceandRecallProcess.pdf).