

## NWA-AFA MEC Weekly Hotline Message April 17, 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)

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### **AIDS WALK IN MSP AND NYC**

NWA-AFA is pleased that Delta Air Lines will be an official sponsor of the May 17, 2009 AIDS WALK New York and Minnesota AIDS WALK. The benefit walks will take place in Minnehaha Park in Minneapolis and New York City's Central Park. Please team up to support Delta's Force for Global Good and show solidarity in the fight against AIDS by walking in this worthwhile annual event. More details can be found on DeltaNet under Employee Info/Get Involved/Charitable Events.

### **LEC 90 ATL INTERIM OFFICER APPOINTMENTS**

With flying commencing in the Atlanta satellite base, NWA-AFA Local 90 ATL was approved and created during this year's Board of Directors meeting. On Wednesday, April 15, interim officers of [LEC 90](#) were appointed in accordance with [Article III.A.4](#) of the AFA-CWA Constitution and Bylaws. David Carter has been appointed as LEC 90 interim President, Jacklyn Richards, LEC 90 interim Vice President and Hugh "Alex" Adair as LEC 90 interim Secretary-Treasurer. Please join the MEC in welcoming these new interim officers who embody the core value of union activism and are dedicated to protecting the representational rights of our membership. Democratic elections for these positions will happen in the next couple of months, per the AFA-CWA C&B.

### **UPDATE ON BKK UNREST**

As reported in last week's Hotline, vigilance is always needed when flying into "at risk" locations such as Thailand. Even though the recent unrest in BKK appears to have quelled, please be reminded to avoid any areas where protesters wearing red or yellow shirts may be demonstrating. As a precaution, avoid wearing red or yellow as well. If uncertain of protest areas and their exact location -- for example, BKK's Government House was targeted last week -- check with the layover hotel's security staff and/or management to reconfirm. Remember, always report any threatening activity observed or safety/security concerns to hotel security, station management and/or NW Crew Scheduling. Continue to keep the Air Safety, Health & Security Committee informed as well. -- Submitted by MEC Air Safety, Health & Security Committee Chair Jeanne Elliott

### **UPCOMING INTEGRATION AND AIRCRAFT TRAINING ASSIGNMENTS**

There have been many inquiries as to whether or not the Company can assign flight attendants Integration Qualification (IQ) and/or Aircraft Qualification (AQ) classroom training months. The short answer is yes, the Company may assign training if the training is more than two days in duration per [Section 11.C.1](#) of our contract. IQ and AQ are both scheduled for three days, so it qualifies as a type of training that may be assigned before the PBS bid. According to Jeanell Walsh, Director of Inflight Training, the Company assigns individual training months based on FAA mandated training requirements and scheduling limitations. However, the Company did not provide tangibles as to why and how flight attendants are assigned months and locations.

Should you have further general IQ or AQ training questions, please consult the April 10 "What's New" communication under Integration Training on the Atlas home page. If you have specific questions pertaining to how your assignment month was determined we suggest you contact Inflight Training.

In the meantime, your union representatives are waiting for the Company's reply to determine answers and possible methods to lessen the inconvenience felt by many. We hope to also address if/when the trainings have been approved by FAA or if accommodations can be provided by the Company to all flight attendants. We will be sure to provide updates on this subject as they become available.

### ***MEC GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE -- MORE ON UNIFORM GRIEVANCE FILED***

On March 18, 2009, NWA-AFA MEC Grievance Committee Chairperson Greg Riffle filed an [MEC et al grievance](#) over unilateral changes made to existing AFA contract language regarding our uniform language.

Specifically, the grievance addressed two issues. First, in a memo titled "Inflight Service News Brief," the Company announced under a section headed "Uniform and New Wing Updates" that it was a requirement that the new combination name/wing bars be worn at all times, both on and off the aircraft. Secondly, in the same bulletin, the Company announced that "on the concourse and in public view, a vest, blazer, or dress must be worn as an outer garment at all times (applies year round)." The parentheses were added by the Company.

Both of these announcements violated [Section 19 Uniforms](#) language regarding the ability to remove your name bar once off the aircraft, as well as the summer shirt option domestically available to both males and females during designated warm-weather months (May 1 through Sep.1).

The MEC Uniform Committee held a conference call with representatives of both Northwest and Delta management in order to address both of these, as well as other issues that had arisen as a result of the conversion to the Delta uniform. No resolutions to these problems were arrived at during the course of the conference call, so the MEC grievance was filed as a result of the lack of progress in addressing these concerns. A short time later that week, in a memo from Delta Air Lines written by Sandy Gordon, Vice President of In-flight Service Operations and Safety, titled "Together in Style," Delta made an announcement regarding the summer shirt option available under Section 19 of the AFA contract. That announcement read as follows:

In an effort to continue to improve our customer's perception of professionalism and style, we have made the decision as a general rule for flight attendants to wear an outer garment (blazer, vest or dress) while in the concourse, during boarding and deplaning. This wearing standard is subject to exceptions for warm weather set out in Delta's policies and the Northwest contract.

There are the magic words: the Northwest contract. Delta agreed with us that our language in Section 19 gives us the right to wear the Delta short-sleeve shirts domestically as a substitute option for our summer shirt in the warm-weather months of May 1 through September 1. This means that you should be able to wear your Delta short-sleeve shirts with your wing/name bar attached both on and off the aircraft and you will be considered to be in compliance with the uniform policy.

A few days later, there was a CENTRY email sent to all flight attendants titled "Clarification on Flight Attendant Wing and Name Bar Policy." This email stated: "To clarify previous uniform communications, including the News Brief dated March 11, 2009, the new flight attendant wing with attached name bar, which debuts on March 30, may be removed when off the aircraft, as reflected in the pre-merger Northwest flight attendant agreement. Thank you."

Again appear the magic words: the pre-merger Northwest flight attendant agreement. So, in a very roundabout way, without acknowledging the filing of the MEC uniform grievance, Delta acknowledged the presence of our contract and its uniform language by addressing our concerns over the summer

shirt option as well as the removal of the wing/name bar once off the aircraft. What is the lesson here, if there is one? Hopefully, this is a testament to the fact that our contract, which provides us with the right to a grievance process and allows us the right to enforce our uniform language, is an invaluable tool whose true worth cannot be measured simply by the language it contains.

Without the right to a grievance process that our contract confers and the ability to file grievances when companies unilaterally implement policy changes that negatively impact our profession, we are subject to the whims and fancies of the policymakers who have no intention of conferring or consulting with us before their policies are implemented. -- Submitted by MEC Grievance Committee Chair Greg Riffle

### **BE A PART OF FACEBOOK AND YOUTUBE TODAY**

Be a part of the movement to educate and inspire our flying partners. Be a part of the discussion on how and why we can take our careers to the next level by setting industry standards as part of the premier global airline. Sign up [HERE](#) to be a part of the [Facebook](#) group where we, pre-merger Northwest and pre-merger Delta flight attendants, come together to learn about each other and the issues that concern us. Watch our co-workers on the latest [Delta Opportunity Unity video](#) through the [YouTube channel](#) and hear their heartfelt messages. Download the video to your iPhone, iPod, or other video capable device and share with your fellow flight attendants. Spread the knowledge, spread the truth, and spread the momentum.

### **ANTI-UNION POSTCARD: THINK BEFORE YOU ACT**

Some flight attendants have received a [postcard](#) that instructs them to write to the Company and ask to have their dues deduction discontinued. The postcard that is sent to flight attendants does not have a return address or any identifiable sender information; however, one can easily conclude that this is yet another union-busting, anti-labor organizing effort masquerading as a money-saving tip. Despite its avid call to stop automatic deductions, the sender hides behind the postcard's fine print that flight attendants should "instruct them that you will be paying directly." Following its instructions *does not* relieve flight attendants of their obligation to pay union dues.

This postcard neglects to point out the fact that the \$43 in dues provide each flight attendant with comprehensive legal protection in contractual and disciplinary disputes, influential lobbying for government legislations that defends and protects flight attendant rights on both state and federal levels, long-term job security and outsourcing protection, affordable employee and retiree health care benefits, paid minimum duty days and other work rules immeasurable by a simple, flat dollar amount. Unless we unite and pool our resources, our separate goals will be thwarted and our shared vision of a better workplace unfulfilled. Unity is power.

### **ROTH ROLLOVER AN OPTION FOR BANKRUPTCY PAYMENT**

We have received many inquiries regarding the letter that was sent to employees and retirees from Rob Kight, Delta Vice President of Compensation, Benefits and Services. The letter explains that the Worker, Retiree, and Employee Recovery Act of 2008 allows certain active and former airline employees to contribute bankruptcy-related payments to a Roth IRA.

You are not required to do anything as a result of the legislation, but if you received the letter then you are eligible to contribute to a Roth IRA. The advantage of a Roth IRA is that their earnings are generally tax free.

In order to determine if this legislation is beneficial to you we strongly suggest you consult a financial adviser. For more information on the web, go to DeltaNet and click on the Employee Portal on the top

left of your screen and sign in your username and password. Click on Roth Rollover IRA information and FAQs. If you decide to roll over the payments to a Roth IRA, you must make contributions within 180 days from December 23, 2008. For any future bankruptcy payments that you receive, you will also need to contribute within 180 days of that initial distribution.

### **AM/PM RESERVE ON-DUTY BLOCK AND OPR DUTIES**

The AM/PM request is awarded immediately after the 1400-1400 on-call request award. Once a reserve flight attendant is awarded an AM/PM request, all on-call periods during that on-call block will be converted to either an AM or PM designation. However, the next string of on-call duty period following a flight attendant's day(s) off will remain as regular RD. This is also true if a reserve block is consecutive from the end of one flying month to the beginning of the next flying month, the AM/PM award designation holds true for the current flying month and the on-call block during the next flying month will remain as regular RD unless a new request is submitted for the new flying month. Once the Company implements the On-Premise Reserve Provision, please note that a reserve assignment while on OPR may be made regardless of an AM or PM on-duty status. As always, please refer to [Section 7 Reserve](#) of our contract to educate yourself on reserve provisions and contractual rights associated with the reserve language.

### **TERRI OWEN GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS ACTIVIST AWARD**

On March 30, 2009 at the Board of Directors Meeting it was announced that five Northwest Airlines flight attendants were the recipients of the Terri Owen Government Affairs Activist Award. This award, named after former United LEC 21 Council President Terri Owen, honors AFA-CWA members whose action has significantly contributed to the advancement and protection of our profession and our union through dedication to AFA-CWA Government Affairs programs.

On April 15 the NWA-AFA MEC formally presented the five Northwest Airlines flight attendants, Camilla Wolkerstorfer (MSP), Sandee Russell (MSP), Rene Foss (NYC), Robin Wimmer (MSP), and Julienne Wyckoff (MSP), with their awards in the MSP MEC office.

On Capitol Hill these activists have become known as the "Fabulous Five." Under the leadership of Albert Garcia, MEC Government Affairs Committee Chair and Shane Larson, AFA-CWA Government Affairs Director, these flight attendant activists have lobbied for FMLA fairness, health care for all, unemployment benefits, a fair and interference-free representational election and were a voice and face during critical congressional hearings during the largest airline merger in years. -- Submitted by LEC 91 Government Affairs Chair Rene Foss

### **NWA-AFA MASTER EXECUTIVE COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT VACANCY**

Janette Rook has been elected Master Executive Council President and this creates a vacancy for the MEC Vice President. The election for MEC Vice President will take place at the next MEC meeting on May 12-13, 2009. If you are interested in being considered for MEC Vice President, please send a letter of interest with a resume to Karen Chapdelaine, Association of Flight Attendants, Master Executive Council, 8011 34th Avenue South, Suite 220, Bloomington, MN 55425, or email to [kchapdelaine@nwaafa.org](mailto:kchapdelaine@nwaafa.org). For a complete description of the duties of MEC Vice President, please refer to the [AFA-CWA Constitution and Bylaws Article VII, 2\(b\)](#). Please submit your letters of interest and resumes in a timely manner. If you have additional questions, please contact your [Local Council office](#) or the NWA-MEC office at (952) 241-4100.