

## NWA-AFA MEC Weekly Hotline Message May 29, 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)

### ***WE CHANGED THE LAW IN MINNESOTA!***

As we have been reporting in several communications to you, your Government Affairs Committee has been working closely with Minnesota lawmakers to try and change a statute in the Minnesota law that denied unemployment benefits to our MSP based members taking a company SLIP leave in lieu of involuntary furloughs. For over 2 years we have been meeting with lawmakers making our case that this statute was unfair in hopes of changing the way that the Minnesota Unemployment Insurance department views our MSP members. This past month our efforts came to fruition when a change to the statute was proposed and inserted into the 2009 Minnesota Omnibus Jobs and Economic Development Appropriations Bill and presented to Governor Pawlenty for his signature. The governor signed the bill into law on May 12 and filed by the Secretary of State on May 14 with some specific line-item vetoes made by the governor. For the complete text of the bill and specifically our provision, Article 3, Section 10, BENEFITS PAID DURING CERTAIN VOLUNTARY UNEMPLOYMENT, go to <http://www.senate.leg.state.mn.us/bills/billinf.php?ls=86>

This development is a tremendous victory for us and our union. All Northwest AFA-CWA members and especially those that were denied unemployment in the state of Minnesota can feel proud that we were part of something very special. Thanks to the many people that worked on your behalf for the past two years, we were able to change the law in Minnesota and thanks to all our efforts our members based in MSP cannot be denied unemployment benefits when they accept a leave of absence in lieu of an involuntary furlough. However, if you read the law carefully, you will also notice that this applies only when "the election is authorized under a collective bargaining agreement or written employer policy". This is important to remember because **without a binding contract under a collective bargaining agreement, the company may or may not agree and could in fact keep you from receiving unemployment benefits.**

We have worked tirelessly to make this happen and we, your union changed a Minnesota state statute. Now it is our responsibility to ensure we keep our union and continue to allow our collective voices to be heard loud and clear, not only in our workplace, but also in the legislative arena.

I would like to personally thank Rene Foss, MEC Communications Chair and NYC Government Affairs Chair as well as Camilla Wolkerstorfer, MSP Local 95 Government Affairs Chair for all of their hard work and persistence in bringing this victory to our members based in MSP and all of us. -- Submitted by Albert Garcia, MEC Government Affairs Chair

### ***LINDA IS IN... NOW WHAT?***

The Union welcomes the Senate confirmation of Linda Puchala to the National Mediation Board (NMB). With a new NMB in place, we look forward to a fair and unbiased process for both representation elections and collective bargaining under the Railway Labor Act for all U.S. air carriers. It is the responsibility of this independent agency to protect workers from employer interference and influence - that unfortunately - had become routine under the previous NMB.

Flight attendants at Delta and Northwest are working hard to provide all flight attendants with access to information that is vital for a fair and honest election process. However, a discussion with 21,000 flight attendants takes time. We will move forward with regard to our representation election this summer, allowing time for information-sharing and research on this important decision. Once we file for the election, the NMB takes over the process - certifying all eligible voters on each carrier's seniority list, establishing the election timeline and mailing voting instructions to flight attendants' addresses on record at DAL or NWA.

It is our goal to ensure that all flight attendants at the 'new' Delta make an informed choice, free from intimidation or undue influence. When speaking with other flight attendants about their choice, each of us should be prepared to listen and keep in mind that we are all one family now, regardless of our personal opinions. It's OK to disagree, as long as we respect each other. In addition, as safety and customer service professionals, please remember that we should not discuss union issues while performing flight attendant duties on the aircraft. Our focus at those critical times should be on responsibilities related to the safety of our flight and the customer service we provide for our customers.

**Should you encounter or experience any anti-union activities/efforts by members of the Northwest or Delta management team while having discussions with coworkers, please contact your Local as soon as possible.** Be prepared to give us as much information and as many details as possible. We will report any anti-union activities to the National Mediation Board (NMB) in order to ensure a fair election and allow all 21,000 flight attendants to determine our future voice at the 'new' Delta. You can also download and print an [Interference Report](#) at [www.deltaaafa.org](http://www.deltaaafa.org). Please forward the completed report via email to [communications@deltaaafa.org](mailto:communications@deltaaafa.org) or your local union office. -- Submitted by MEC Government Affairs Chair Albert Garcia

### ***AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE REGARDING UPCOMING CHANGES TO LEAVES AND EAP SERVICES***

Your MEC President Janette Rook and MEC EAP Chair Rosemary Miller were briefed last week by NW & DL management regarding two upcoming transitions that affect our group. We want to make sure all members are notified of these key changes, which go into effect June 1st, 2009.

The first item has to do with how certain leaves will be processed. Each flight attendant received a company email explaining that Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) situations, military leaves, and workplace accommodations will no longer be handled by NW's Central Administration, but rather by **Sedgwick Claim Management Services**. This is consistent with DL's practice of outsourcing various departmental tasks that have traditionally been processed in-house at Northwest. The legal right to FML in our contract will not be affected! It's just the process of handling it that has always been a policy and therefore subject to change. As part of the transition, FMLA forms will no longer be available on ATLAS. To initiate a new FML request, please call 877-67-DELTA, and also notify NW Central Administration. Questions regarding eligibility can be directed to the Northwest Benefits department. **PLEASE NOTE: Your MEC was also informed that the new policy will require notification of FML request within 2 business days of an unexpected leave, instead of the current 4 calendar days.**

The second change is that NEAS will no longer be the off-property, confidential EAP provider. As of Jun 1st DL's provider, Optim Health, will take over these services. There will be no reduction in services! We will still have access to a 24-hour, confidential hotline, and three free face-to-face sessions with a local mental health professional, as well as other legal, financial and work-life referral services. And, in order to smooth the transition, from June through December, 2009, the NEAS phone number will remain active. Any NW employee who calls NEAS will be automatically routed to Optim Health. To contact Optim Health, call 800-533-6939. All calls are confidential.

### **ONLINE REPORTING & NEW LOD PAGE AT NWAafa.COM**

Did you know you can submit reports about layover hotels, LOD, and scheduling issues online at [www.nwaafa.org](http://www.nwaafa.org)? The MEC Hotel Committee gathers information from their online form. Your input is vital so we can ensure layover hotels comply with contractual standards. To report your hotel issues go to: [http://afahotels.org.master.com/texis/master/search+/form/FA\\_Hotel\\_Report.html](http://afahotels.org.master.com/texis/master/search+/form/FA_Hotel_Report.html). If you have a hotel issue and pictures to share with the committee (stains, missing fixtures, torn carpet, etc.), please complete a hotel worksheet at the above link, and send your photos to MEC Hotel Committee chair Anne Odenwald at [adenwald@nwaafa.org](mailto:adenwald@nwaafa.org). The MEC Central Scheduling and LOD Committees gather input about pattern construction, LOD questions trip length, problems with schedulers, etc., by using the Scheduling Worksheet at <http://www.nwaafa.org/onlineforms/scheduling/> and the LOD page at <http://www.nwaafa.org/committees/loa/>. Remember, if you plan to pursue an issue as a grievance, please speak with one of your Local Council Officers. Always ask for a Review of Crew Orders when you question the legality of an assignment or rescheduling! (6.F.). -- Submitted by MEC Vice President Daniel Grey

### **AIR SAFETY AWARD PRESENTED**

On March 30, 2009 The Association of Flight Attendants - CWA presented the Air Safety Award to Northwest MEC Air Safety, Health and Security Chair Jeanne Elliott and Vice Chair Gary Helton. This award recognizes outstanding contributions and service by an AFA-CWA member or members in the field of Air Safety. Jeanne and Gary have worked tirelessly with MEC and LEC officers, International office staff, management, and have established cooperative relationships with regulatory agencies to reduce flight attendant injuries and accidents onboard Northwest flights.

The team continues to work on an Aviation Safety Action Program or what is also known as ASAP, advocating lightweight serving carts, timely communicable disease notification to flight attendants and Inflight incident notification and reporting protocols.

Jeanne and Gary, along with Air Safety Committees at other AFA-CWA carriers, put in countless hours to improve the health, safety and security of all our members. Their hard work, commitment and passion in this area definitely have a positive impact in our work lives. We congratulate them on their well deserved award. -- Submitted by Rene Foss MEC Communications Chair

### **2ND ANNUAL HERO4HERO BBQ FUNDRAISER**

It's almost time for the 2nd Annual Hero4Hero BBQ Fundraiser in DTW Inflight - July 1-2 from 8am-8pm. Hero4Hero [www.hero4hero.com](http://www.hero4hero.com) is a group of NWA/DL flight attendants that do light renovation to rooms at military hospitals, such as Walter Reed Army Medical Hospital in Washington, DC, that are not mandated for government renovation. We 'support the support' - the families of injured soldiers and staff. This project will go out to local VA hospitals or Fisher Houses later in 2009. Each local project will be headed up by a flight attendant that lives nearby. BBQ sandwiches, soda, chips, cookies, logo t-shirts, lapel pins, ID lanyards, baseball caps, tote bags and night-shirts will be available. Hero4Hero is a non-profit 501c3 charity, so every cent donated to Hero4Hero is tax deductible. You can see more of the project work under "About Us" at [www.hero4hero.com](http://www.hero4hero.com) -- Submitted by DTW FA Chris Smith

### **CORY MCKAY FUND**

Cory, the son of one of our own SEA FA's Linda Mackay, was injured in a car accident while travelling home for Mother's Day from college after completing final exams. Cory will need some extensive (and expensive) rehab over a long period of time, but only a portion of that cost is covered by insurance. On top of that, Linda and her family will need to make major structural modifications to their home to accommodate Cory in his wheelchair. The Mackay's are well aware of our love and prayers being sent their way and please keep that up, but they also are in need of financial help. They have established a foundation that will be used not only for Cory's needs, but will be ongoing to help others in similar situations. On behalf of all of our officers within AFA, I encourage you to contribute whatever you can to the Cory Mackay Fund. We have a bond with our

fellow FA's and union members which extends beyond the confines of a aircraft tube or layover hotel and we watch after each other outside of work as well. Send your donation to: "Cory Mackay Fund", PO Box 814, Redmond, WA 98073-0814 or go to any US Bank branch to give your donation to the "Cory Mackay Fund." -- Submitted by SEA AFA VP Scott Woll

***IN THE NEWS***

DELTA 2.0: A PROGRESS REPORT

[http://www.travelweekly.com/article3\\_ektid194788.aspx?terms=\\*delta+air+lines\\*](http://www.travelweekly.com/article3_ektid194788.aspx?terms=*delta+air+lines*)

DETROIT TO REMAIN KEY DELTA HUB, CHIEF WILL SAY

<http://www.detnews.com/article/20090528/BIZ/905280409/1001/biz>

DELTA BACK IN ALL CARGO

[http://www.aircargoworld.com/break\\_news/26052009a.html](http://www.aircargoworld.com/break_news/26052009a.html)