

Alaska Airlines Update

Franklin D. Roosevelt said, "We have always held to the hope, the belief, the conviction, that there is a better life, a better world, beyond the horizon."

So it was, with countless union people who fought after Alaska Airlines locked out nearly 500 of its own on May 13, 2005. So it is, now, with the majority of the COPS IAM members of Alaska Airlines, led by their IAM-elected COPS negotiators. Whether through the court system, an arbitration hearing, or in the face-to-face negotiations, there are those of us who hope, believe and work with conviction to better the working lives of those around us.

The final award for the lock-out case was released on February 10, 2010. After 5 years, there was no restoration of employment to those who were wrongfully locked out. There will be no opportunity for reconciliation between the IAM and Alaska Airlines to restore the work at SeaTac to union people.

The Union will receive damages from the Company for the fees the Union paid to prove the Company did, in fact, violate the language in Article 2.B.5. All Alaska IAM union officers and the local lodges have received a copy of the award. As a member, you may ask your local union official for a copy and one will be provided to you.

The IAM COPS negotiators have traveled around the system explaining what happens next and dispelling rumors. It seems there is some confusion about the recent voting process. A few voting COPS members did not understand that the elected negotiators must explain their collective recommendation, the vote was NO. This explanation precedes the member receiving a ballot. Hopefully, these in-person visits from the negotiators will provide the explanations these voting members need to stay engaged in the process.

A few nonvoters from the COPS group immediately complained to their managers about the outcome of the COPS vote. The managers cannot vote, nor address these types of complaints. After all, the Alaska management group made it very clear how you should have voted! In daily conversations, WaterCooler postings and in a personal Christmas letter to your home and families, the Company directed you to vote Yes.

On February 10, the day the RSSA award was announced, there was one ramp agent who went to a manager. He wanted to "quit" the Union. This member's dues helped fund the lock-out case. Yet, this member was angry with his Union, not the Company. . . .

The words of General David M. Shoup, U.S.M.C., Retired Commandant, say it best. "The galleries are full of critics. They make no mistakes because they attempt nothing. Down in the arena are the doers, they make mistakes because they try many things. The man who makes no mistakes lacks boldness and the spirit of adventure. He is the one who never tries anything. . . And yet it cannot be truly said he makes no mistakes, because his mistake is the very fact that he tries nothing, does nothing, except criticize those who do things."

Your COPS negotiators are your "doers" in the negotiation arena. They believe and have the conviction that the parties can work together toward a better labor agreement. You support yourself when you support them.—
General Chair Nan Otto

Northwest Airlines Update

On December 31, 2009, the FAA approved Delta's single operating certificate (SOC). There have been Delta ACS bulletins,, email chatter and general rumors floating around, all spelling doom and gloom for pre-merger Northwest IAM members. Comments range from "complete contract abrogation" to "will this affect the way Northwest employees bid?"

The short, simple answer is that all of the IAM Northwest contracts will remain status quo until the IAM is no longer the certified bargaining agent for the pre-merger NWA employees. So, again, until the matter of representation is settled with a vote, the current IAM contracts remain in "full force and effect," as President Stephen M Gordon said in a January 5, 2010 Flashpoint bulletin. "Only the National Mediation Board can issue and/or extinguish union representation certifications, and there is presently no time line for that to happen. If Delta Air Lines violates your IAM collective bargaining agreements—just as Northwest Airlines tried to do for 60 years—we will use every legal means possible to enforce the provisions of our agreements."—*VP NWA DTW & Michigan Area and Communicator/Editor*



NWA Updates cont.

It's Been Real

All things must come to an end. Sometimes it's not the way we expected, imagined, or wanted.

Due to health problems, I'm unable to continue my duties as a General Chairman. As many of you know, I haven't been able to travel or perform all the duties required of a GC for several months. Unfortunately, or "fortunately" depending on your perspective, these problems aren't going away. To try and continue wouldn't be fair to the membership, the other general chairs, my committees or the DL organizing drive. We need "all hands on deck" for this endeavor and, according to the doctors, that doesn't include me, although P/DGC Gordon and DL143 know that I'll help in ANY way I can.

If you're not involved, please get involved. We have everything to 'win' and everything to lose. Imagine how much we can recoup if we're 50,000+ strong! Many others and I likely wouldn't have been able to leave with the "package" we have had we been non-union.

"The greatest sin of airline management of the last 22 years is to say, "It's all labor's fault."—Donald Carty, Chairman and CEO American Airlines, 12 August 2002 (shortly after AA bought the heavily unionized TWA and had seniority problems that are still contentious). Numerous references; but see: <http://www.local564.org/564%20MASTER%20FILE/Kasher/KasherDRC-Decision17-18%2003Jan06.htm> for one.) Scenario sound plausible? Organize for a better life.

I have to thank some people that have helped me these past 31 years. First off are YOU, the membership. We may not have always agreed, but I've always had your best interests in mind and tried my best to represent you. Next would be all the committees and union reps I've been involved with the past ten years; there are too many to name here but you know who you are. Thanks also to the GCs I've worked with and learned from, negotiators, District Executive Boards, Grand Lodge reps and organizers past and present. A special thanks to the District's administrative staff who are the best in the business. And thanks to President/Directing General Chair Stephen M. Gordon and Secretary-Treasurer Steve Dunn for helping me through a very difficult time.

Last but not least, thanks to my wife Lori. It takes a special significant other to live with and support a District officer; she filled the bill and then some. Hopefully, if any of you find your way to TPA, you'll look me up.

In closing, it's been 'real.' Thank you!—General Chair J Scott Peterson

A Step Back In Time

Seems as though the pre-merger Northwest Airlines employees have stepped back in time in more ways than one. Our passenger service agents are completely frustrated with what they term an outdated computer system. Passenger complaints are taking a rocket ride to the sky, and the goals for SSD machines are going to the bottom. Did Richard really help develop the pre-merger NWA system only to throw it away with this merger? Only Richard knows! Oh yeah, he helped with the language in our bargaining agreements too!

It would appear now that he also wants to throw away our contracts. While he and his executive staff admit that our agreements are in place until the mediation board says otherwise, his low level managers are saying "The contracts and the Union are gone so we can rule however we want." Some are saying, "The NWA union thugs will be gone soon as they lose the election." (GOD FORBID.) Our contracts are being pushed to the extreme, in spite of Richard's long-term relationship with the IAM. In spite of this, we must remain strong and patient until we get to an election and win the right to represent and bargain for ALL the employees of Delta.

Remember, when Richard refused to give the promised and legally binding stock put price from the '93 concessions, we took him to court and won. Then, when NW filed bankruptcy, we went to court and won again. WE WILL PREVAIL ONCE AGAIN!—General Chair Sam Ellis

More Promises

In locations where we have pre-merger Northwest ESEs and CSAs and Delta has a vendor, there have been meetings with Delta managers telling our members that once the representation issues are resolved, the work will no longer be done by the vendor they currently have, and that work will become Delta's work. The promise is, the vendor goes away and the work becomes Delta ramp. My question to those managers is why wasn't Delta staffing these locations with their people before they bought NWA? Will they continue to promise work when the IAM wins the election or is this, once again, Delta driving us down the union-busting highway with no exits for us to get off?

Some of the managers are using the same verbiage as others with key buzz words like transition, representational issues, performance, viability and opportunities, just to name a few. Don't fall prey to the marching order coming out of the Atlanta Kremlin!

As we move into the final stages of determining IAM representation, let's not be swayed by future promises. We NEED negotiated guarantees to secure our future. Protect the integrity of our agreement, report all violations to your union representative or call your general chair.—General Chair Jerry Cross

District 143 Officers and Negotiating Committee Election—June 2010

The last of the District Officer and Negotiating Committee endorsement tally sheets will be in to District 143 by the end of this month. A mailing will be issued in March to all members (at their last known address currently on file with District 143) giving you detailed information on the election date, place and time for each local lodge, and where you can send a request for an absentee ballot if one is needed.

Please update your address, if you have moved, with your local lodge and District 143. District 143 can be notified via email at iamaw143@aol.com. Please update with us as soon as possible so you get this and any other mailings released by District 143.