

Northern Light

Alaska Airlines Update

You Did It Again!

Josephine Billings (a not-for-profit hospital advocate for over 60 years) once said, "To the world you may be just one person, but to one person you may be the world."

The IAM member, along with the other employees at Alaska, have once again won the coveted JD Power Award. Day-in and day-out, their professionalism on the job has won the Company bragging rights for good customer service yet again—a ready-made ad campaign!

Although many, if not all, work locations are short-staffed with many employees reduced to part-time employment, workers set aside their personal matters and worries about job security to help the person standing in front of them. Reservation Agents must apologize for the lengthy delays as the bugs get worked out of the new phone system. Customer Service Agents must explain and collect the new baggage fees. Ramp Agents must race to get the luggage to the customer to beat the 20-minute clock. Stores Agents keep shipping the parts while monitoring the dangerous goods they encounter. Cargo Agents help their customer wade through the complicated paperwork. Crew Schedulers sort out the complicated crew contracts and schedule the flight attendants and pilots during this busy summer season. These and all the other IAM Alaska members put their customer first. Congratulations on your achievement! You may very well have been the "world to that one person."

Cost of Great Customer Service?

The trend of discipline grievances is showing an interesting pattern. When reviewing the discipline being metered out, as of late, the member with 2007 seniority is getting oral, written and final warnings for both attendance and performance. Nearly every person filing a grievance is shown with 2007 seniority! When reading the grievance paperwork, the explanation seems to be either carelessness, short-staffing or lack of training.

The second group being disciplined has 20 or more years of service! The explanation in their paperwork is that they are doing their jobs the way they used to 20 years ago! Taking time with their customer, giving them an accommodation. "We've always done it that way in our station."

Awards or no awards, attendance reviews have made employees feel like they are walking targets—not champions. Accommodating the customer, because that was the right thing to do, has resulted in discipline "up to and including discharge."

It is only the beginning of summer! Please do not continue to race around at work to make up for short-staffing and in so doing make your self sick! There will be NO MERCY if that attendance occurrence triggers punishment. Can you really afford to upgrade someone without the proper authority in the interest of good customer service? NO, you cannot! You have a right to your breaks and lunch time. You have a right to proper training. You have a right to work with safe equipment. From the phone calls, emails and grievance data, many junior employees are out of sync with Company attendance expectations and senior employees don't understand why the "old ways" aren't okay.

Please remember, the person you need to be the "world to" is yourself. Otherwise you won't be any good to those depending on you at home or at work.

COPS NEGOTIATIONS

The COPS group has officially filed for mediation (Article 27, page 100). This means an outsider must come to the parties to try to get them to agree to a new contract. Winning the JD Power Awards just isn't enough!—General Chairs Nan Otto and Jackie Fay

District 143 Officers and Delta/NWA Negotiators Election Ballot Count

Tallying of ballots for the District 143 Officers and Delta/NWA Negotiators Election will be completed during the week of July 12. Election results will be posted on the District 143 website at www.iam143.org. The swearing in of all officers will take place October 2010.



Delta Air Lines Update

No More Delays

Each day brings us closer to the representation election that we have anticipated for over two years. Many obstacles have been placed before us by the executives at Delta to prolong the process in hopes of breaking the spirit of the many employees who seek to maintain union representation. We must all be patient and recognize the propaganda tactics being utilized by Delta to anger and frustrate the membership.

One of the tactics was to make every effort to delay and stall the process by filing briefs with the NMB that require responses from our attorneys. And then Delta, through the ATA, went to court over the election rule change proposed by the NMB. The recent attempt to stall the NMB rule change is proof that it has been Delta, NOT the IAM, who has made every effort to delay the process. However, the recent NMB decision will enable us to go forward with filing for an election.—*General Chair Sam Ellis*

The Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)

Let me tell you how my CBA worked for me. Without OJI pay, I would just be off on Worker's Comp. right now, but I accrue 8 hours of OJI time every month. What does this do for me? It allows me to stay on active payroll, collect a full paycheck and not worry about paying outrageous COBRA premiums, and it also gives me peace of mind. Everybody needs to read their contract: Don't wait for others to tell you what you're entitled to. There are tons of benefits in our contract; this is just one example that I happen to be very grateful for right now. STAY UNION STRONG!—*District 143 Trustee Steve Kostora*

Let's Get It On

As the judge ruled against the Airline Alliance that was comprised of only one major airline, Delta Air Lines, and several other much, much smaller carriers, the shout in ATL was "Let's Get It On!" The rally was a great success at the Delta parking lot. People blew horns, shouted "Union Time" and gave thumbs up as they came and left the parking lot. But, we still have to do the most important part, and that is VOTE when the time comes. "Union Time Delta" is the catch phrase for ATL.

DTW—Second step hearings are scheduled for the month of July. Last month's grievances have been processed according to the Company's answers. The Company has finally addressed the staffing issue for the customer service agents after being short 17 agents to work flights and all overtime exhausted. Now there will soon be approximately 58 flight agent positions in DTW.

CMH—Small station, BIG problems! The grievance committees continue to try to work the issues out. The PL Delta manager is in contract training and is having difficulty, but we will continue to work with him until he gets a good understanding that we work by the contract, we enforce the contract and intimidation will not be tolerated. You push—we push back!

When the workers stand up against the unjust, unfair practice, they call it voting; when they win, they call it Union!—*General Chair Sharon Caldwell*

Passing of a Union Friend

I want to take a moment to mourn the passing of Billy Hsin. He had worked for NWA since 1989, starting in Garden City Reservations, and then worked at JFK, EWR and LGA. Billy loved working for the airline and was proud to be a union member. He was one of the only men I knew who insisted on wearing the IAM pin on his uniform that says, "A Woman's Place Is In Her Union." Every station visit I made to LGA, he always wanted a full report of how our organizing efforts were going and he always responded with how much we needed the Union. Billy was a friend to us all, and we were all his friend. He will be sorely missed, and I know he will be smiling down from heaven when we win this representation election.

The Grievance System At Work

A friend from New York, Grace Casa, worked in the NWA District Sales Office for 33 years. After being laid off in November, filing a grievance, and working out a settlement with the Company, Grace was able to retire from an active payroll status and receive everything she was entitled to as a retiree. Grace, I wish you the best.

Station Visits

My recent assignment has been the CSAs at LGA, JFK and EWR; and it is always a pleasure to be back in New York—except for certain managers at LGA who, for some reason, don't make me feel very welcome during my station visits. I am not quite sure why as I am only speaking with our members; however, I guess it's quite possible because I might be able to also speak with some pre-merger Delta employees—at least they say hello to me with a smile and sometimes even ask questions. So, who needs a breakroom when you have access to everyone at the gates and the ticket counter?

What is truly sad is that I hear the same thing from CSAs and RSAs all over the country: stress, the new/ old computer system and lack of staffing—which equates to lack of time off. Operationally, we look back and miss the "Northwest way" and the professionalism, dignity and respect. In MSP reservations alone, an ambulance at the office is now a frequent event. We have a lot of work to do when we win—and we will win.

The support above the wing, for all of us, is building every day. Please don't be disillusioned by Delta's subtleties in their memos. Please keep informed: Read your union bulletin boards, emails from the IAM, literature and letters being sent to your home.

Vote "Yes IAM"—*General Chair Ruth Dorsty*