

# Northern Light

## Election of District 143 Officers and NWA Negotiating Committee Members

**When:** First Local Lodge Meeting in June 2010

**Where:** See the *District 143 Election Flyer* (which had been sent to each member on March 22, 2010, and is posted on our website at [www.iam143.org](http://www.iam143.org)) which includes the list of locations where the vote is taking place and the times the polls will be open for each local lodge, or contact your Local Lodge Recording Secretary.

**Voter Eligibility:** All members voting must be in good standing with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers as of the date of this election.

**Absentee Ballots:** See the District 143 Election Flyer for the "absentee ballot information," which has the form and procedure for requesting an absentee ballot. *Requests for an absentee ballot **MUST be made singly**, in writing, by the requesting member and delivered in person or mailed to their local lodge recording secretary (at the address shown on page three of the District 143 Election Flyer.*

## Alaska Airlines Update

### Part-Time Workers - Future of Alaska Airlines?

What is the biggest issue or concern being voiced to this General Chair? Staffing and the possibility of an unsafe work environment to both the operation and the individual workers.

What is generating the questions? Doesn't the Union always criticize the Company's full-time employee (FTE) numbers? The questions are being generated by the Company's staffing plan and absolute determination to hit their allowed contractual part-time percentages. Entire shifts are now comprised of only part-time people who work the 20-hour minimum shifts (minimum hours in both agreements). So much so, that the ramp part-time percentages have been exceeded! This IS a contract violation (Stores has no part-time workers). COPS employees are not yet over the part-time allowed percentages. Both of the General Chairs assigned to the Alaska property are monitoring these percentages regularly.

The percentage of part-time allowed in each agreement is COPS 40% and RAMP 30%.

Gone are the traditions of bidding back and forth in the COPS agreement with the unwritten guarantee you would get back to full-time when you planned it.

All members should be warned that their local manager has little or no control over what direction the Corporate group will demand of them—they can only offer input (this is what various managers have told our members). To be fair,

there are job cuts across the system. All Alaska labor groups are feeling the downsizing as is the management group as well.

To be sure, working part-time hours works beautifully for many members. Part-time people contribute daily to a safe, on-time operation. They too have insurance costs as a concern. Some are new employees and want the full-time job opportunity.

As Alaska runs its operation across the system at maximum part-time percentage numbers, a variety of issues need to be considered. Safety First—An entire crew of part-time members may very well be able to get all the work done and the flight out on time. However, if an entire crew of part-time people, as it relates to the ramp group, are not getting the correct numbers to operations (CLP), and they are ignoring CLP's load plan, driving too fast and cutting corners in an effort to get an on-time departure, THIS IS NOT A SAFE OPERATION and the Company cannot nor will they require you to work in an unsafe manner due to short staffing.

What can you do if you are in a part-time position but you assumed you'd be full-time by now? Put your bids on file; consider other bid locations at your station. NEVER assume there isn't a chance you will get a bid. People move, quit, transfer—life goes on!

Please weigh ALL your options before you bid to a part-time shift. The people you should talk to about this career change are your immediate family members (wife, husband, partner and children), not your manager—not any more. As of April 30, ramp is once again at the 30% level of part-time, COPS is less than 40%. These issues are foremost in the membership's mind in my area, which is the entire state of Alaska and the various groups I have in Seattle.

Here come the fish!—*General Chair Nan Otto*

### Sign Up—Stay Connected

Your negotiating team has made communications during these negotiations a top priority. We can tell it's working because you are telling us so on our station visits.

Your local shop stewards have received ASA Negotiating Update cards so you can provide your personal email and update your address. This will ensure you receive the updates in a timely fashion. If you have not filled one out yet, please contact a shop steward.

And next time Joe Shultz, Sandy Field, Bea Knott, Kiana Peacock and Jeff Tobius (your negotiating committee) are at your location, please come talk with them.—*General Chair Jackie Fay*

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# Northwest Airlines Updates

**UNI** - The first three letters of union are U-N-I. Simply put, it means you and I, together, can accomplish great things. One of the greatest accomplishments one can do is make a historically significant change in our society or everyday walk through life. We, the PMNW IAM members along with our sisters and brothers at PMDL, have the opportunity to make history in the American labor movement. That opportunity is there for the taking, to make DELTA AIR LINES a Union-represented carrier for ALL workers. In its 86-year history, DL has successfully fought off every attempt at organizing our classes and crafts on its properties. Yes, DL has history on its side, but we have each other working in unison to make a monumental impact on organized labor in our country.

I have heard PDGC Stephen M. Gordon comment many times on the historical aspect of our winning this representation election and the impact it will have for our union and American workers everywhere for years to come. Think for a minute of those who have come before us and the sacrifices those courageous men and women endured to give us, to date, the benefits in our bargaining agreements. Do not let their valiant efforts be in vain. Join with me in preserving our rights and privileges as UNION MEMBERS—*General Chair Sam Ellis*

**First, They Ignore You.  
Second, They Laugh At You.  
Third, They Fight You.  
Finally, You Win.—Gandhi**

I accept as true the above citation from Mahatma Gandhi. For us, it encapsulates most, if not all, the phases Delta Air Lines has weighed down their employees and our members with thus far.

One needs to heed, to take note of the warning signs, listen to and understand the subliminal messages being maneuvered and contrived by the world's largest airline to keep their employees in the dark. Why is knowledge discouraged here? Does Delta respect you when they suppress and stifle you from your right to be knowledgeable and up to date? Could it be Delta believes an uninformed employee is a better employee? Is it Delta's culture to keep everyone in the dark? Throughout history, society has witnessed tyrants keeping the masses unaware and oblivious to information which would inform and give power to the people. The domination of employees at Delta (a reality PMNW folks are unfamiliar with) is rather bizarre. Is it, in fact, that an uninformed employee can be pressured and controlled with ease and zero objections? Maybe that's the reason to keep information out. What's next, book burning? The world has witnessed cleansing activities in the

early thirties when a single entity believed it knew what was best for all. That entity staged and successfully orchestrated a smear campaign against a religious group they didn't like or want. In a symbolic act of ominous and threatening significance, the entity denied freedoms, presaging an era of censorship and control of culture. Did the leaders of this airline pilfer the CliffsNotes? The similarities to the suppression of individual freedoms are eerie. Let's face facts. There's plenty that Delta doesn't want PMDL employees to know about the benefits of union membership, and for good reason. Look, they can hang up those silly posters all over the place, they can write the stuff on DeltaNet, or have PLs make all that noise at briefings about your having all the facts and being informed. Really, is that the Delta way? How can you be informed if Delta controls the information! Delta has denied the Union opportunities to meet with employees, answer questions and provide facts so an informed decision can be made. Moreover, they've ordered all union literature in break rooms be destroyed and thrown out. I know what you're probably thinking. It's not book burning after all; fires aren't allowed in workplaces by most city and county ordinances; and while Delta isn't burning the materials that would inform you, their actions are as dogmatic and discriminatory as the actions of that entity a few decades ago. So why do all this? Why not allow folks their freedom? Could money and control be a pretty strong incentive for Delta's continuation of their wicked behavior? Yup, I think so.

Okay, we've figured out why they don't want us talking Union. Now, imagine the effect on the life of a PMDL employee if all of a sudden they got their hands on what has been negotiated for all PMNW employees covered under their IAM contract: After voting for the IAM, the *guarantee* of full-time employment, the *guarantee* of overtime and double-time rates of pay, the *guarantee* to exercise your seniority to the location of *your* choice, the *guarantee* of six weeks of vacation, the *guarantee* of unlimited sick time to unlimited OJI pay and retiree medical insurance, plus how about that guaranteed pension plan (*Can you wrap your head around that?*). That's a quality-of-life change for the employee and their loved ones. In addition, as a union member, you have a right to have your interests represented when the Company disciplines you. As you all know, at Delta there's no opposing position or means of expression by which to defend, protest and protect yourself against unjust punishment. At Delta, when the PL decides you're getting reprimanded, that's the end of the line, the act is final; and, at Delta, levels of discipline stay in your official corporate file for eternity! That's a really long time, folks.—*General Chair Richard Suarez*

## **This Election is Ours to Win, And We Will Win!**

If you're a PMDL employee, and reading this article, wouldn't you want the same benefits and protections guaranteed in a contract for you and for the welfare of your family? Who wouldn't! Contracts provide guarantees in writing; a change within a company doesn't mean a change in your livelihood. Do you really believe Richard Anderson and the rest of his executive team aren't protected by the same contracts they don't want you to have? CEO Anderson and his team have contracts that define their benefits, stock options, pensions and all the other conditions of their employment. These executives don't take Delta Air Lines at their word, they demand contracts that spell it all out, and nothing is ever verbal with these attorneys. What seems to be inconsiderate and selfish is these same executives don't want the workers to have a contract. While the folks running the Company won't take Delta at their word, they insist and require the employees to do so and do so without objection.

Why is it that in the most democratic country in the world, the employees of Delta Air Lines must *whisper* while at work? We've all seen it firsthand, the fear on the faces when we attempt to share information about the Union. Let's all face facts. If what Delta was offering was better than what is contained and guaranteed in an IAM Union contract, why not allow the individual the freedom to choose? Here's why: IT'S NOT BETTER and, alarmingly worse, truly scary stuff. Can you imagine working under whispering conditions? While we are all proud to be a part of Delta and work alongside our new colleagues, let me ask you again: Can you think about working in an environment where you're afraid to speak? No one should work in fear; we should all be free to think and act and speak without worry of tattletale. The rumormonger culture this corporation supports and aggressively encourages on a daily basis by workplace leaders is intended to humiliate, embarrass and disgrace workers. Beyond doubt—reprehensible and appalling.

I am speaking to all of you now; your future is in your control. Collectively we will maintain the quality of life with the protections afforded in our Union contract. Our families will continue to depend on their affordable medical insurance with reasonable deductibles and economic safety guidelines to protect against runaway medical costs. We can and we will be successful if you demand truths from this corporation, demand their promises be in writing and, most important, don't be afraid. Seek out your Union representative and report any abuse, coercion and intimidation.—*General Chair Richard Suarez*