



# OUR COURSE FORWARD

## THE STATE OF OUR UNION

Laura Glading, APFA President

**T**he APFA Constitution provides that the President "shall address an annual report to the membership."

Traditionally, this has been done as an assessment of the state of our Union, an evaluation of where we have been, and—more importantly—where we are going.

In gauging the progress of any project, campaign or action—of a labor movement even—it is by looking back that one often gains the clearest vision of the overall direction forward. It is akin to piloting a boat on a calm lake, where the *trailing wake* provides a visible sign of the course taken and from that, the eventual heading. Our path as an organization is evidenced by the signposts of our past.

Of course, the lake in which we sail has been anything but calm. It has been full of eddies and cross-currents which have obscured our progress forward. Obscured, but not deterred.

One record of our Union's immediate history—its trailing wake, as it were—is the APFA weekly HotLine. Defined in the APFA Policy Manual as "a weekly update of APFA and industry news," the HotLine forms a time line when viewed as a series of events. Coupled with our Press Releases, it becomes a *de facto* report of our Union's activities. As markers of where we have been, these "voices" of APFA can provide clues to our future direction.

A review of our accomplishments and not just our aspirations becomes an important aspect to seeing the whole picture of what is APFA. Events which may seem insignificant when considered one-by-one, take on larger meaning when viewed in the context of the greater tapestry formed by this historical narrative.

Reading through—in a single sitting—the over 80,000 words that comprise the weekly HotLines and Press Releases com-

plied since the start of the current APFA Administration in April 2008 would be monumental—not to mention monumentally mind-numbing.

Nonetheless, the National Communications Coordinator has skimmed through the website archives and assembled the high points, in bullet form. The recent achievements of our membership are indeed numerous and notable, befitting our aspirations, proof positive that we will not be deterred.

### April 2008

- New National Officer Administration begins four-year term of office.



- **Decline! / Resign!** campaign is launched.

*"Our lives have been turned upside down. People are working harder than ever to support their families and keep up with the skyrocketing cost of living. Now we see a handful of already wealthy executives pocketing the sacrifices we made. It's outrageous. ... [Mr. Arpey and his executive team] simply cannot continue to lead our Company with legitimacy and credibility if they continue to reward themselves while you pay for their bonuses with your personal sacrifices."*

- MD 80 grounding impacts thousands of Flight Attendants. AA agrees to protect Flight Attendant pay with voluntary PVDs. APFA urges more substantive



pay protection. AA eventually pressured to provide protection and a method to voluntarily restore PVDs that Flight Attendants had used to protect their earnings.

*"The flight attendants of American Airlines have already sacrificed a 33% cut in pay, benefits and work rules since 2003 after labor saved this company from bankruptcy. Flight attendants are often forced to bear the costly brunt of management's mistake. This plan simply won't fly."*

- EC confirms new Coordinators for Hotel, Health, Scheduling and Communications, plus Representatives for Retirement and EAP effective May 1.
- AMR reports quarterly loss and APFA demands resignation of the top five corporate officers—Gerard Arpey, Tom Horton, Dan Garton, Robert Reding and Gary Kennedy—citing they "lack the kind of judgment required of corporate leaders."

*Even assuming these officers were willing to turn their back on their commitment to American's employees, customers and shareholders, the debacle of 3600 flight cancellations in a single week, and today's reported \$328 million quarterly loss, should have compelled Mr. Arpey and company to refuse their bonuses. Unfortunately, neither integrity nor shame could convince them to make the right choice."*

## May 2008

- Collective Bargaining Agreement becomes amendable. APFA and Company meet to establish schedule of talks.
- BA and AA announce plans to form a marketing alliance while AA joins several other carriers in charging \$25 for second checked bag. Eventually announces charge for first bag.

*"We will do what we can under our contract to protect Flight Attendants' jobs, and the service we can provide to passengers. We wish that management had the same commitment to protecting the air service our airline has built over the years."*

- Company expands use of the Docking Guidance System (DGS) and crews are prompted to compare actual and reported times amidst reports of inaccuracies.
- APFA Flight Attendants join APA in picking the AMR Shareholders' Meeting.



*"... our Flight Attendants are unified and dedicated to our profession [and will continue] to work closely with the pilots and other employees to restore our standard of living."*

- AA announces that it will implement capacity reductions in the coming months in response to declining business and increasing fuel costs. At the same time, expedited deliveries of new 737s are detailed. A new charge for the first checked bag for many fare types is instituted, drawing much derision from the travel business press and public.
- APFA joins other Flight Attendant unions in pressing the US Senate to pass the "Airline Flight Crew Technical Corrections Act" to extend Family Leave Coverage to airline crews not currently covered.
- Agreement achieved on removing perishable food items from the aircraft.

## June 2008

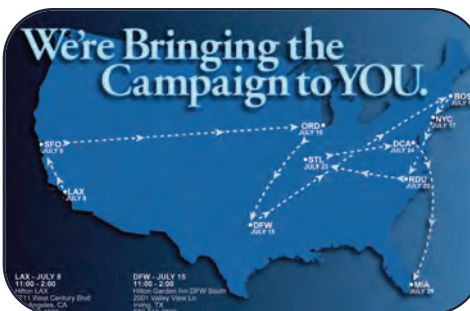
- APFA Negotiating Team meets with the APFA Board of Directors to brief them on the bargaining schedule in preparation for the exchange of openers on June 10.
- APFA and Company meet in an intensive three-week bargaining session with the company focused on immediate relief for Flight Attendants.
- Three-week immediate-relief bargaining session concludes June 26 without an agreement. Team prepares for the **Mobilize to Maximize** informational Road Shows to each base city.



- AA shares more details of planned cuts and aircraft retirements.
- Presidential Grievance filed over use of the Docking Guidance System.

## July 2008

- AA sends WARN letters to 900 Flight Attendants over pending manning cuts. APFA negotiates the one-time Voluntary Bridge to Retirement (VBR) to supplement the Overage Leave and Partnership Flying provisions of Article 16.
- Road Shows bring members of the Negotiating Team, National Officers and Coordinators to all base cities for membership meetings.



- Oil hits a high of \$147/barrel and Flight Attendants participate in efforts to contact their Senators and urge support of the "Stop Excessive Oil Speculation" bill.

- Over 360 VBRs awarded while Crew Resources continues to process Overage Leave and Partnership Flying requests.
- Dismissals issued by the Federal District for the Eastern District of New York in the "Cooper" and "Marcoux" cases regarding Seniority Integration and the Restructuring Participation Agreements, respectively.
- Overage Leave and Partnership Flying awards announced, absorbing expected manning overages and avoiding furloughs.

## August 2008

- LAX-I crew of 5 evacuates AA flight 31 upon return to LAX shortly after take-off for HNL in response to smoke and fumes in the cabin. APFA joins passengers in praising Flight Attendant action. Responding to media speculation over the evacuation and the company's initial lukewarm response, President Glading commends the crew: *"The safety of the flying public rightfully depends on Flight Attendants and the successful outcome of this evacuation is a tribute to our members' skills and training. They should be praised for their quick and appropriate response."*
- AA, BA and IB announce plans to for a Joint Business Agreement while American again accelerates the 737 deliveries in the face of continued high fuel prices.



- Negotiation Team sends out a scheduling opinion survey for the membership.
- Plaintiffs in the "Lindsay" case (formerly "Marcoux") file an appeal of the decision.

## September 2008

- APFA, APA and TWU issue a joint press release, affirming a commitment to combine forces to pressure AA to restore lost wages and benefits. Laura Glading accuses AA of *"double dealing, paying lip service to employees while handing out million-dollar bonuses to top executives. . . . Flight attendants are earning 30 percent less than they did five years ago, and many are struggling. Meanwhile, top executives are patting themselves on the back and padding their bank accounts."*



- AA seeks permission to delay for one year the ORD-Beijing service, planned for April 2009. (Request later granted.)
- APFA and AA officially exchange openers.

*"With oil falling by more than \$35 per barrel, American is paying approximately \$2.5 billion less for fuel. A single dollar reduction in the cost of a barrel of oil could fund a 10 percent increase in Flight Attendant's wages. These will not be easy negotiations, but we must work together to fix the many problems that exist and make our airline the best it can be."*

- AA announces plans to reconfigure a number of 757 aircraft for use in certain US-Europe markets. APFA's Presidential Grievance over 757 crew rest provisions scheduled for December hearing.
- APFA EC endorses Barack Obama for US President with these words: "On every issue important to Flight Attendants and working families, Senator Obama is and has been in our corner."



### October 2008

- APFA and Company continue face-to-face talks. In light of the company's stated plans to begin an onboard retail sales program, APFA reiterates its firm position against any attempt by the Company to unilaterally implement additional onboard sales requirements during Section Six bargaining.
- APFA InfoReps conduct a targeted campaign at DFW, MIA, LGA and LAX. Handing out informational leaflets and travel pillows in the **Pax for Pax** event, we take our grievances to the traveling public and engage them in our fight for a better contract for Flight Attendants and a better traveling experience for them.



- AA announces it will bow to pressure from public and employees alike and implement technology to filter pornographic content over its expanding on-board Internet service.
- FAA signs Memorandum of Understanding for the Cabin Aviation Safety Action Program (Cabin ASAP) after extensive work with, and promotion by, the APFA Safety and Security Department.
- FAA Civil Aero Medical Institute (CAMI) receives approval to send out the Flight Attendant Fatigue Study.
- AA announces a small profit for the second quarter, (\$45 million) and reveals plans to purchase 42 Boeing 787 Dreamliners, with options for 58 more.
- APFA and AA Teams continue talks and start the steady process of reaching Tentative Agreements on numerous articles.
- APFA Board conducts two days of business during the Fall Convention. Among other items, Board authorizes a dues increase referendum for the spring of 2009.

### November 2008

- APFA celebrates the 15 anniversary of our 1993 strike in the **Remember November** campaign. Videos and photos from the time are posted on the APFA website for member and public viewing. APFA conducts spot picketing at JFK, DCA and LAX with signs reading: "Will History Repeat Itself?" and "We Are Still Willing."



- While the negotiations for a new agreement continue, APFA sets a target of May 1 to make May Day, Pay Day. Union proposes moving the talks outside the DFW area to cut down on distractions and focus on the tasks of bringing the Flight Attendants an improved contract. The company refuses.

### December 2008

- System-wide Base Representational Election cycle begins.
- APFA President Laura Glading meets with those members of U.S. President-Elect Barack Obama's transition team responsible for preparing a report and making recommendations regarding the National Mediation Board.
- APFA and AA file jointly for Federal Mediation in the ongoing contract talks.

*"There is no way Flight Attendants will agree to a contract with no significant pay raises for almost 10 years, and at the same time that AMR's top executives continue to reward themselves with huge bonuses—\$336 million over the past three years. This is just not acceptable. Flight Attendants have made difficult sacrifices to keep this airline flying and deserve a fair and just contract. We will not consider further concessions. ... The company is refusing to recognize the commitment, dedication, and sacrifices Flight Attendants have made for this airline. If mediation does not work, we are ready and willing to take all necessary steps to win a fair agreement."*

- Negotiating Team announces the data-gathering test of the Volunteer to Fly (VTF) program at four bases (DCA, DCAI, DFW and IDF) mid-January to mid-March.
- Arbitration begins over crew rest facilities on the modified 757.

### January 2009

- AA proffers Personal Leaves of Absence (PLOA) for the period February through November citing declining traffic in the weakening US economy.
- APFA and AA resume contract talks under a Federal mediator.

*"With a new Administration and Congress friendly to workers taking their seats in Washington, we expect that airline workers can get a fair shake under federal law. American Airlines Flight Attendants have sacrificed for years to help our company succeed, and we're determined to get back what we lost. In light of management taking multimillion dollar bonuses the last three years, it's not asking much to restore what we gave up six years ago to keep this airline out of bankruptcy."*

- VTF test program begins a 60-day trial.

- APFA negotiates an offer by AA of a Voluntary Travel Separation (TSP) Program, Overage Leaves and Partnership Flying to offset an expected manning overage of 200-400, though no specific furlough warnings are issued.

- AA reports a loss for the 4th quarter as spring executive bonus time approaches.

*"We made tough sacrifices to help American stave off bankruptcy six years ago and now is the time for management to step up to the plate and stop increasing their salaries and taking massive bonuses. Congress needs to watch this closely and hold AMR's top executives accountable."*

- Cabin ASAP program begins.
- AA states it had received sufficient requests for the Travel Separation, Overage Leaves and Partnership Flying to cover their expected overage.
- Arbitration over 757 crew rest facilities end with a decisive settlement in APFA's favor.



### February 2009

- APFA Negotiating Team releases 2nd scheduling opinion survey
- Team meets with APA counterparts to discuss areas of common interest.
- Mediated talks with AA continue.
- AA sends WARN letters to 410 Flight Attendants. Voluntary Travel Separation Program is again proffered along with Overage Leaves and Partnership Flying to help mitigate overage.
- Ballots counted for Base Representational elections at: LGA, JFK, IOR, IDF, STL and RDU-I.

### March 2009

- Annual APFA Board of Directors Convention convenes in Boston. Recognition banquet includes two first-time awards to Senator Edward Kennedy and IMA Flight Attendant Cindy Horan, for labor and humanitarian achievements respectively.



- APFA Board of Directors approves budget for fiscal year 2009-2010 which boosts Negotiations funding while adjusting departmental and base budgets downward to match expected revenue. Dues increase referendum, proposed in the fall 2008, is withdrawn.
- Volunteer to Fly test program ends.
- Furlough mitigation options close with a shortfall of proffers, resulting in the furlough of 323 members effective April 1. Travel Separation Program is proffered to eligible Flight Attendants on the recall list.
- Negotiators make first of two scheduled day-in-ops visits.

### April 2009

- Mediated talks continue on an increasingly frequent schedule. Comprehensive proposals submitted on all outstanding articles in a drive to make May Day, Pay Day and reach an agreement by May 1.
- Team increases number of articles with TAs reached to 21.
- Second day-in-ops visits by APFA Negotiators to all bases.
- Several APFA Officers and Representatives meet with the Coalition of Flight Attendant Unions to continue discussions on commonly shared goals and strategies.



- AMR announces a loss for the winter quarter while top executives and managers again take bonus payments.

*"Employees deserve to be rewarded for their hard work and sacrifices. None have worked as hard or have sacrificed more than Flight Attendants: over \$340 million in givebacks per year since 2003. Our members are hungry for their due and American has no more excuse to deny them."*

### May 2009

- One year anniversary of contract amendable date.

*"We care about this airline and our customers and want American to be the leader in the industry. While we have not yet reached an agreement, we remain steadfast in our resolve and are willing to take all necessary steps to achieve that goal."*

- APFA Team begins planning for Membership Outreach meetings to visit each base city in June.
- Mediated sessions end in May with a TA on Article 10 – Reserve, and two new week-long sessions planned for July. Company refuses to present comprehensive pay proposals. Immediately on the heels of the end of May talks, Flight Service rolls out its On-board Sales initiatives.

- Membership Outreach meetings begin at DFW while Flight Attendants are urged to return the Onboard Sales HI6 marked "NEGOTIATE IT" to their Flight Service Manager.



- APFA protests the Sales Initiatives and prepares to file a Presidential Grievance.
- AA proffers leaves (PLOA) for the summer months to cover an unspecified manning overage.

## June 2009

- Pins and Wings campaign launched as Membership Outreach meetings continue.
- Company agrees to promote Onboard Sales program as a voluntary test while APFA continues to insist on negotiating any such scheme. APFA delays Presidential Grievance while still advising against any voluntary participation.
- Company announces further capacity cuts and a manning overage of up to 1,200 for October 1. Sends WARN letters while opening proffers for Overage Leaves, Partnership Flying and Travel Separation Programs. APFA negotiates modification to Partnership to parallel former part-time flying and increase its popularity.

- APFA commissions a report by the non-partisan public policy research organization Demos highlighting the failures of airline deregulation. Joining AFA-CWA President Pat Friend in endorsing the report, President Laura Glading states at a Washington, DC press briefing: *"[The Obama] administration should establish a task force to find how to stabilize an industry that's not working. ... Deregulation has damaged the traveling public hand in hand with the damage that's been done by the huge reductions in the work force."*
- APFA Team winds up the Membership Outreach meetings (last one in JFK on July 1) and prepares for resumption of mediated talks for the end of July. Number of TA's articles stands at 22.

## July 2009

- Members speak out regarding Onboard Retail sales without a contract in two online quick polls. APFA.org takes on a new, more graphically oriented, format.
- American reports a loss for the second quarter.
- Legislative efforts heat up with widespread labor and member support of Senate bills for the Family Leave Technical Corrections Act and FAA Reauthorization Legislation.
- Two weeks of mediated bargaining end with TAs on six more articles and concessionary proposals from AA in the areas of scheduling, vacation, health benefits and retirement. AA has yet to make any significant pay proposals. Further talks scheduled for the end of August and mid-September. ▲



**Show Our Unity.**  
**Wear only your APFA pin and wings.**