

the official publication of the association of professional flight attendants

**SKY**word Spring 2005

the  
**State of Our  
UNION**





A photograph of a path of stepping stones leading into a body of water. The stones are arranged in a line, starting from the foreground and receding into the distance. The water is a deep blue color, and the sky is a lighter blue. The overall scene is serene and suggests a journey or a path leading to a destination.

## **What Has My Union Done For Me Lately?**

**Contract to be Published in its Entirety**

**Hosting First National F/A Fatigue Summit**

**Seniority Lawsuit Dismissed**

**Duty Free and BOB Commissions for F/As**

**Membership Opinion Survey**

**Published and Distributed On-Duty Contract Guide**

**see page 6 for more...**



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**Correction:** In the 4th Quarter *Skyword* on page 32, it was reported that Sherry Cooper's charges against Juan Johnson had been dismissed. In fact, Andrew Berends was the charging party and those charges against Juan Johnson were dismissed.

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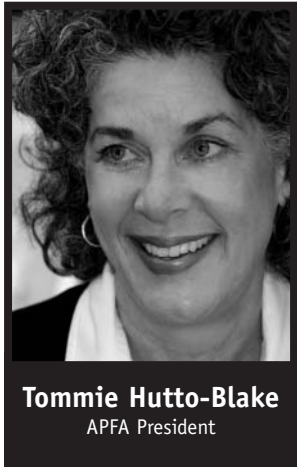
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## THE STATE OF OUR UNION

**As I write this State of the Union** address I am in my sixth month of office as president of our Union. Simply put, my team and I have had a very busy half year! It is my hope and my purpose that you, the APFA membership, can feel a difference in our Union's course since my watch began.

I have personally spoken with many of you on a one-to-one basis during my ongoing base visits. Since November, I have had two-day visits in two base cities each month. The March base visits will complete this ten-city journey. You have been both candid and supportive during our interactive discussions in the flight service operations areas. I have thoroughly enjoyed meeting with so many of you and listening to your suggestions and concerns. We are facing this challenging time together and your input is invaluable.

At the close of each of these base visits I have also met with

local management and openly discussed many of the concerns and suggestions you have raised. Some of these issues were resolved on the spot, some are still in an active local solution status and others have moved on for further discussions and resolutions at a national level.

Since open communication is one of my administration's primary goals, having this interactive dialogue with the APFA membership must continue well beyond these base visits. With this in mind, we have planned the 2005 APFA Convention to be more member friendly this year. The APFA Constitution requires an Annual Convention of the APFA Board of Directors once a year to conduct the primary business of the Union. During this convention the Board, among many other things, approves the annual APFA budget and establishes the future course of our Union for the year ahead. In addition, the Base Chairs, act-

ing as Delegates elect Ad Hoc Members of the APFA Executive Committee (see article on page 34). The Convention is scheduled for a full week and we, indeed, have a full agenda.

What is different about the APFA Convention this year is that we are encouraging rank and file members to actively participate. This is a first and we are hoping to create a new APFA tradition - having a member's agenda during the course of our Annual Convention. The APFA National Coordinators are planning interactive membership booths and workshops during day one of the Board's business meeting. Since the Convention is taking place in Chicago, it's our hope that many line Flight Attendants from throughout the



Tommie with Chicago-based Flight Attendant during Presidential base visit

system, whether living locally, traveling from out of town or on layover, will join us for these events. Our downtown layover hotel, the Allerton Crowne Plaza, is just a few blocks from the Convention site. We have also invited members to join us that evening for the APFA Annual Awards Dinner. We will publish the results of our efforts in next quarter's *Skyword*.

This is your Union and your leadership would like to see the Annual Convention become a tool that can stimulate involve-

**“What is different about the APFA Convention this year is that we are encouraging rank and file members to actively participate.”**

## “Historically, the APFA membership knows that the labor/management relationship of AA’s past has been notorious for its strife.”

ment and future activism. As I have said to you before, one of my goals during this term of office is to mentor a future generation of APEA activists, some of whom will ultimately become tomorrow’s APEA leaders.

Continuing on the subject of membership involvement, the first phase of the 2005 APEA Member’s Opinion Survey is complete and the University of North Texas Research Center is preparing their report. This is only the first part of a four-part



Patty French left, with Lonny Glover, right and fellow Chicago Flight Attendant

opinion survey. At this very volatile time in our industry the APEA leadership needs to keep a finger on the pulse of our membership. We need to know the collective interests of our members, your level of trust in our future course and your willingness to participate in the solutions we develop to protect and preserve our career. If you participated in phase one – thank you. Please watch for a future notice of phase two of our opinion survey.

I am very proud of what my unified leadership team has been able to accomplish in six months time. I urge you to read this *Skynword* thoroughly to see first hand how much APEA has to offer you as an AA Flight Attendant and an APEA member. We have six months of hard work and success behind us. My team and I are now looking

ahead to our must-do list for the coming months. On this list, among many other tasks, is a cautious attempt at a collaborative approach with labor and management working together toward our collective future. APEA will continue trying to make both our Union and our Company stronger.

Historically, the APEA membership knows that the labor/management relationship of AA’s past has been notorious for its strife. Today, the three labor unions on this property, APEA, the Allied Pilots Association and the Transport Workers’ Union are attempting to enter a new era by working, ever-cautiously, with senior management as an equal business partner. As I have stated before, like any partnership – there will be conflict at times. But like a marriage – it’s impossible to be alone in a partnership.

Who knows for certain what the future holds for this still proud,

80+ year-old airline of ours - or for that matter, for this 28 year-old independent Union of ours? But I, for one, will not give up on either organization. We have much work to do together. The financial community, whose borrowed dollars management uses each month to continue operating, is watching with interest as this new labor-management partnership moves cautiously down this new path. There are some land mines to weave through and a fragile relationship it is – but we are determined to give it a try. Please stay tuned, try to be patient, keep well informed and step forward to be a part of the solution.

Your APEA leadership will certainly continue to keep you updated on this new process.

*J. J. J.*

Some of you are still asking...

# What Has My Union Done For Me Lately?

## AUGUST

**25th** • Official installation of Tommie Hutto-Blake as APFA President during APFA Board Meeting

*-Election Procedures & Pension Task Forces established*

**26th** • Media press conference at APFA Headquarters in Euless, TX

**30th** • Introductory meeting with VP of AA Flight Service Lauri Curtis

*-Weekly meetings to discuss F/A issues agreed upon*

**31st** • APFA Executive Committee teleconference

## SEPTEMBER

Legislative Task Force visits key government leaders to support China route for AA

*-Membership action alert letter-writing campaign via APFA website*

**2nd** • Introductory meeting with AA CEO Gerard Arpey and senior management

*-President Hutto-Blake and CEO Arpey agree to publish AA/APFA Contract*

*-Team set up to format Contract for printing*

**6th** • Letter to membership from newly-installed APFA President Hutto-Blake with accompanying constitutionally-mandated membership card for all APFA members in good standing

**7-8th** • APFA National Coordinator position summit open to all members in good standing

**9-10th** • APFA President Hutto-Blake and VP Durkin meet with Union counsel to discuss strategy for pending Seniority Integration and Restructuring Agreement lawsuits

**14-15th** • APFA Executive Committee meeting at Headquarters

*-National Coordinators confirmed*

*-Task forces formed for Attendance, Buy on Board and Legislative Action*

**16th** • Joint financial review meeting (APFA, TWU, APA – AA CFO James Beer & senior staff)

**21st** • Joint labor leader's meeting hosted by APFA

**22nd** • RPA review with AA management

**24th** • Agreement between President Hutto-Blake and Flight Service for Management to provide negotiated APFA workspace in all F/A base operations areas

**29th** • Joint Leaders' Team (JLT) meeting (APFA/APA/TWU Officers, CEO Arpey & senior management at AMR)

## OCTOBER

Survey team formed, development of member survey with Univ. North Texas

Year-old Contract with APFA's staff (represented by UAW) signed-off

Membership action alert letter-writing campaign for escalating fuel prices

Legislative Task Force lobbies key Congressional leaders to sponsor fatigue letter

*-Membership action alert letter-writing campaign via web site*

Third Quarter **Skyword** published, first issue for this administration

*-Special pull-out Retirement Made Easy booklet included*

**4th** • APFA Officers attend AMR Fall Leadership Conference

**12-13th** • APFA Board of Directors Annual Training

*-Focus on Board governance & parliamentary procedure*

*-AMR financial review by CFO Beers*

**21st** • Labor leaders' meeting hosted by TWU

Joint financial review meeting (APFA/APA/TWU & AA CFO Beer)

## NOVEMBER

Seniority Integration Agreement lawsuit dismissed in Federal District Court

APFA procures first-ever commission to be paid to Flight Attendants for duty free sales

APFA procures 6% F/A commission for Personal Entertainment Devices

**3-4th** • Contract/Scheduling training at HDQ open to all members

**8th** • JLT meeting (APFA/APA/TWU & CEO Arpey, CFO Beer at AMR)

**12-13th** • First of 10 APFA presidential base visits, DFW/IDF

**15-16th** • APFA presidential base visit, STL

**18th** • Statement to press supporting AFA-CWA efforts on 11th anniversary of APFA Strike

Joint financial review meeting (APFA/APA/TWU & AA CFO Beer)

Labor leaders' meeting hosted by APA

## DECEMBER

Fourth Quarter *Skyword* published  
*-Special pull-out On-Duty Contract Guide included*

**1st** • TWU-Local 556 (SWA) President Thom McDaniel tours APFA Headquarters  
*-Lunch meeting with Tommie Hutto-Blake*  
*-Initial discussions, reciprocal travel & FA Fatigue Summit*

**6-7th** • APFA Quarterly Executive Committee meeting in Chicago

**14th** • APFA members join Union officers and leaders at AFA-CWA rally in DC

**20th** • Labor leaders' meeting hosted by APFA

Labor/Management meeting hosted by APFA  
*-establishment of Joint Steering Committee (JSC) for future business/communication strategies*

**22-23rd** • APFA presidential base visits, LGA, JFK, EWR

**28-29th** • APFA presidential base visits, BOS

## JANUARY

Voluntary Service/Equipment training program begins  
*-Space available by seniority system wide*  
*-Flexibility for transfers needing reciprocal qualifications*

Reciprocal Flight Attendant travel announced, Skywest and Frontier Airlines  
InfoRep Program revitalization begins

Vice President's office conducted 31R Company investigation training open to all members

**4th** • Contract/Scheduling training at HDQ open to all members

**11th** • APFA's first Leadership Summit, with current and former APFA National Officers and candidates from most recent National Officer election

**12th** • JSC meeting

**12-13th** • APFA presidential base visits, SJC and SFO

**14th** • Part I, National Officer/National Coordinator Training (team building)

**18th** • APFA Member Opinion Survey opens (web-based)

**19th** • JSC meeting

**20th** • Labor leaders' meeting hosted by TWU

Joint Labor Team (JLT) (APFA/APA/TWU Presidents, AMR CEO, CFO & senior staff at AMR)

**24-25th** • APFA presidential base visits, LAX, LAXI

**26th** • JSC meeting

**27th** • Increased utilization range buffer for reserve preferences

**31st** • MSP satellite base test begins

## FEBRUARY

APFA procures commission for on-board food sales  
Time study test for on-board sales program begins

**1st** • APFA presidential base visits, ORD and IOR

**2nd** • Reserves gained ability to train on duty-free periods

**4th** • JSC meeting

APFA/APA/TWU joint review of collaborative pension efforts

**8-9th** • Quarterly Executive Committee meeting, Washington, D.C.

**11th** • Part II, National Officer/National Coordinator training (team building)

**14-15th** • APFA presidential base visits, MIA, IMA

**17th** • Meeting with TWU-Local 556, National Fatigue Summit planning

**18th** • APFA Member Opinion Survey final day for submission

**22nd** • APFA members assist in AA being awarded 2006 Chicago-Shanghai

**24th** • Labor leaders' meeting hosted by APA

Joint finance review meeting

**25th** • JLT meeting at APA HDQ

## MARCH

Spring '05 *Skyword* published

**3rd** • APFA presidential base visit, RDU

**7-8th** • APFA presidential base visits, DCA, DCAI

**14-18th** • APFA Annual Convention, Chicago

*-Interactive events provided for members: contract-scheduling, retirement*

*-Awards banquet*

*-AA Senior Management addresses Board*

**24th** • Joint financial review meeting

Labor leader's meeting hosted by APFA

**29-30th** • APFA & TWU-Local 556 host Flight Attendant Fatigue Summit

*-Leaders from all U.S. Flight Attendant labor groups invited*

*-Welcome dinner hosted by TWU-Local 556*

*-Meeting at APFA Headquarters*

**31st** • JLT meeting at APFA HDQ





**Brett Durkin**  
APFA Vice President

## Back by Popular Demand... **YOU BE THE JUDGE**

**The following is based on an actual termination case** APFA processed through arbitration. The Arbitration Board consisted of five members: two Union members, two Company members and a mutually agreed upon Arbitrator. A decision was reached by majority rule. Names, places and dates have been changed to protect the participants.

### **BACKGROUND PERTAINING TO THE TERMINATION**

Flight Attendant Larry Smore was terminated on June 18, 2001, because the Company claimed he violated Rule 32 of American Airlines' Rules and Regulations, which states:

*Threatening, intimidating or otherwise interfering with other employees at any time is prohibited. This includes off-duty periods.*

Smore had been a domestic Flight Attendant for approximately ten years. It is undisputed that Smore was on the Career Decision Day

step of the Company's Peak Performance through Commitment (PPC) program when he was terminated. Smore was on this disciplinary step for prior Rule 12 [*Cooperate with other employees, thus avoiding delays in flights and poor service to the public*] and Rule 20 [*Be courteous and helpful to our patrons, passengers and visitors*] violations. Smore had previously been supervised by a male FSM, Joe Mikey, but in early 2001, Mikey left to become a station manager and Juane Sweat became Smore's FSM. The Company hired Sweat in 2000 from another airline and she was promoted to the FSM position in January 2001. Smore was the first Flight Attendant Sweat had ever terminated.

### **UNDERLYING FACTS FROM THE ARBITRATION**

The arbitration was conducted over two different time periods due to a suspension of the hearing ordered by the Board immediately following the testimony of Smore.

On June 1, 2001, Smore was assigned a VMC position only to learn when he boarded his flight that he had been reassigned to work a different position because one of the other Flight Attendants had called in sick. Smore did not like the position he was reassigned to work and he disputed his assignment, creating a disturbance on the aircraft. FSM Laura Tattle was sent to the aircraft to resolve the dispute. Upon her arrival she learned that another Flight Attendant assigned to the flight had acquiesced to Smore's continued complaining and agreed to work the position that Smore didn't like. There were no delays and the passengers were not on board during the dispute. FSM Tattle, who interacted with Smore regarding the assignment, followed up by sending an e-mail to Sweat stating, "You need to talk to this guy. He was unprofessional and rude."

Sweat contacted Smore via voice mail at his home on Monday, June 3, and left him the following mes-

sage: "Please call me regarding an incident over the weekend. I'll be in the office the rest of the day today or call me on the fifth and we can arrange a time to meet." Sweat did not leave her home phone number on the message. She went home that evening and at approximately 2045 heard her call waiting click during a long distance telephone conversation with a friend. When she answered the waiting call she didn't at first recognize the caller who identified himself as "Hal." Sweat finally determined that Hal was in fact Smore. Sweat testified, "I was shocked that he was calling me at home because I had not left my home phone number and I don't have employees call me at home." She said he wanted to talk to Sweat about the message that she had left for him. Sweat went on to testify, "I said, 'This can wait until Wednesday,' and that I didn't have any of the documentation at home to discuss it with Smore in any event. He said that I called him at home, so he could call me at home. And, I said once again, 'It can wait until Wednesday.' He wanted me to call him back and I wrote his phone number down because I didn't have it at home with me. And, I told him that I

**The Company's burden in this case is to demonstrate, with clear and convincing evidence, that the events, considered in their entirety, should reasonably have been regarded as threatening or intimidating.**



would call him back as soon as I finished my conversation with my girlfriend."

Sweat continued her telephone call with her friend and testified that the phone constantly clicked indicating an incoming call. This happened several times, she said. On the third or fourth interruption Sweat answered and testified that it was Smore and that he sounded agitated, saying, "Stop gabbing with your girlfriend and take my call." Sweat testified further that Smore's tone of voice was aggressive and loud, that he said that he wanted to discuss the issue with her right then and said finally, "You will F---ing discuss this with me now or I'm going to come over there." Sweat then testified that when he said he might come to her house she was frightened and shocked and told Smore that she would not discuss the issue until Wednesday. She said when he continued talking she told him she would issue a directive if he didn't stop because the conversation was getting out of control. Sweat testified that after getting off the call she immediately notified her boss, her boyfriend and her neighbors about the call and her fears that Smore would come to her house.

Sweat is a single parent and her 3-year-old daughter was at home. Sweat was advised by her boss to call the police if Smore called back or showed up at her home. Sweat also contacted the MOD office to see if anyone had given out her telephone number. The MOD said that a male Flight Attendant called at 2040 for her telephone number but that it was not given out. The MOD did not get the name of the male caller.

On June 5, Sweat discussed the incident with her boss, two other male FSM's and the Human Resource department for the Company. A decision was made to withhold Smore from service with pay pending investigation. Sweat advised the local APFA representative that when Smore arrived at his co-terminal airport that day she was going to withhold him from service pending an investigation. That airport did not have flight service offices and a small office belonging to the general manager was used for the meeting. Sweat was accompanied by Chuck Burly, a male FSM. Burly and Sweat advised the local airport police of the meeting, indicating it was with an employee who might become aggressive,

and asked that the police be available near the office.

Smore was met at the aircraft door and escorted across the tarmac to the office for the withhold meeting. Sweat was in the office and Burly stood in the doorway. Sweat asked Smore if he wanted Union representation and testified that he laughed. According to Sweat he stated that the only reason that he would have the Union present would be to sue them if he lost his job. Sweat advised Smore that he was being withheld pending a 31R investigation. Sweat testified that Smore made the following statement during the withhold meeting: "I bet you want to know how I got your phone number." She said he proceeded to rattle off her home address as well. Sweat stated that she was again so shocked and frightened that she began to cry. The withhold meeting ended up lasting two hours. No Union representative was called to this meeting. Burly stood in the doorway during the entire two hours. Written statements were prepared. Sweat testified that Smore made additional threats and was upset about having his I.D. taken for security reasons and asked, "Why, are you taking it -

because you think I'm going to shoot up the office?" She said he also referred to several military terms and called himself "the enemy under siege." Sweat testified that the two FSM's let Smore say whatever he wanted and when the meeting finally ended, she was even more fearful of Smore than before. Other Company witness testimony supported Sweat's version of the events.

After the meeting, Sweat said she called the Union representative to schedule a 31R investigative meeting and testified that she told the APFA representative about the threats. She stated that the APFA representative said, "You had better take his threats seriously." Following the withhold meeting several 31R meetings were scheduled and canceled. A meeting ultimately took place on June 18. Smore was accompanied by two APFA representatives. The Company advised one of the representatives before the meeting that Smore was going to be terminated, stating they hoped he wouldn't get violent. Smore was terminated during this 31R meeting.

Joey Medic, a friend of Smore, testified for the Union the first

day of the hearing. According to Medic, Smore called him the night of the conversation with Sweat and asked that Medic be included in the call to Sweat without her knowledge. Medic was at work in another state, but agreed to be included. Medic testified that Smore sounded agitated and wanted someone to be on the call when he talked to Sweat. Medic testified that Smore stated that he was constantly harassed by the Company and his co-workers and that he had felt abandoned by the Company since the Strike. Medic testified that during the call between Smore and Sweat voices were raised and the conversation got heated. But Medic denied that Smore made threats or used profanity during the call. Medic said he recorded the conversation on his message machine tape and sent it to Smore. According to Medic, Smore told him that he destroyed the tape because he thought it was illegal to tape a telephone conversation. Medic admitted during his testimony that Smore had a temper and used profanity a lot when they were in the military together.

On the second day of the hearing, Smore testified. He denied all of

the allegations made against him. He stated that he had gotten Sweat's telephone number and home address from the telephone company. Smore testified that he was sure he had been unjustly accused of bad conduct because of his position in '93. Smore stated during the hearing that he couldn't trust his co-workers, he couldn't count on his Union and felt betrayed by the Company. Smore stated in his testimony that he played the tape for one of the APFA representatives but later recorded over the tape. According to Smore, he also played the tape for his treating physicians because of his job-related stress claims against the Company. Smore never played the tape for anyone in the Company. Smore's demeanor and conduct became rather bizarre during his direct and cross-examination. At the conclusion of Smore's testimony, the Board recessed and returned with a recommendation to suspend the hearing until another date. The Union requested that Smore be allowed to complete a medical evaluation before the Board heard any further evidence in his case.

Approximately six months later the hearing resumed and the Union produced the results of the medical evaluation in a closed session to the Board. Following that presentation, the Board determined that the hearing would proceed with testimony from the APFA representative regarding flaws in the investigatory procedures used in Smore's termination. The APFA representative refuted Sweat's claim that the representative had made a statement about taking any threats from Smore seriously. The representative further testified that documents were not exchanged with the Union in advance and that APFA had never been advised that the initial meeting with Smore would turn into an investigatory meeting with two members of management present. The APFA representative testified that she would have attended the meeting

had she been advised of this fact and believed the Company deliberately violated the Contract by not having a Union representative present.

#### **THE COMPANY'S POSITION**

The Company claims that Smore has a proven track record of behavioral issues throughout his career. He has threatened other employees, is disruptive and very unprofessional. The Company contends the grievant's actions on the day in question were intolerable and a clear violation of applica-

ble work rules. Considering, as well, that Smore was at the time on the Career Decision Day step of the Company's PPC program, he had little or no margin for error and as such, the discharge is appropriate.

#### **THE UNION'S POSITION**

The grievant denies making the threats in question. He acknowl-

edges contacting Sweat at her home on the night of June 3, but denies using any profanity or, contrary to Sweat's contention, threatening to come over to her home. Additionally, the APFA maintains the Company erred by failing to turn over necessary documents concerning the case and by conducting a 31R investigative session without appropriate notice to the Union and without Union representation for the grievant. It requests that the grievance be granted and that Smore be returned to work with full seniority and full back pay.

#### **WEIGHING THE FACTS**

Without question, threats can be insidious and constitute a profound challenge to the employment relationship. They are also difficult misconduct issues from the standpoint of proof. Because threats are often made privately, without witnesses, the fact-finding process can be markedly demanding. Often, the question of whether a threat existed can be a matter of two people's varying assertions as to an incident. The resolution rests, therefore, on potentially elusive credibility

issues. The fact-finding aspect rises to prominence in virtually every case, because context is critical. Words exchanged in a jocular manner among friends, however obscene or literally offensive, may be cause for nothing more than laughter. On the other hand, calculated statements of fact ("I know where you live..." to use an example not present in this case) may, in the appropriate surroundings, be cause for considerable concern. And, overhanging all such exchanges is the reality that words or actions may be reasonably perceived as threats even when they are not so intended. The Company's burden in this case is to demonstrate, with clear and convincing evidence, that the events, considered in their entirety, should reasonably have been regarded as threatening or intimidating.

*Please turn to page 37 to read the Arbitrator's Decision*





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## THE APFA Annual Board (and Members!) Convention

**My fellow National Officers and** I attended many meetings in 2004 in an effort to make your issues known to American Airlines Management on a regular basis. Although a lot of time is spent preparing for and attending these meetings, it is worth the effort when through this venue we can voice our concerns. You, the membership, deserve to have your concerns heard by management. This Flight Attendant voice must be proactive. In addition to meetings with the Company, there are other meetings my department must plan. Your National Officers have developed a rhythm and now meet on a weekly basis to keep each other apprised of the many facets of APFA. We also have regular meetings with the National Coordinators and APFA Staff to make sure information is available to each of the Departments.

My Department is also responsible for planning Board Meetings, Executive Committee Meetings and Training. Currently, we are

planning the 12th Annual APEA Convention. Article III, Section 3. D of the APEA Constitution outlines when the Annual Convention must be held. The Constitution also requires that the President select the location of the Annual Convention each year. The rest is up to me. My department actually begins planning the next Annual Convention the year before it's to take place. Once advised of the location, my department begins researching cost-effective ways to conduct business. Local hotels submit bids, from which an actual meeting location is chosen. I then look at public transportation, proximity of the hotel from the airport, cost of sleeping rooms and meeting rooms, etc.

At this point, potential sponsors and advertisers are contacted. We provide an opportunity for all the vendors APFA uses throughout the year to make a donation and sponsor part of the Convention. Sponsorship levels start at \$100 and go up from there. Many of our vendors (individuals, groups

and companies) participate yearly in this event and

help APFA further our goals. Many APFA Representatives also contribute. By pooling their money, reps can collectively sponsor a higher level on behalf of a committee, base, position, etc.

Every year we try to rotate the location in an effort to give all members the opportunity to attend. This year, the 12th Annual Convention will be held in Chicago from March 14th through the 18th. Chicago is centrally located and, therefore, easy access for those who must attend and for those who would like to see their Union at work.

At the Annual Awards Banquet, which will be held on the evening of March 14th, there will be three award recipients. Sherri Cappello, former APFA Vice President, and Emily Carter, former APFA Health Coordinator will each receive the APFA Distinguished Service Award. Nancy Rivard, President of Airline Ambassadors, will receive the first Award of Merit ever issued by APFA. It is also our privilege this year to have the Honorable Claire McCaskill, State Auditor of Missouri, as our keynote speaker at the Awards

Banquet. Hon. McCaskill recently ran on the Democratic ticket for Governor of Missouri and is a long-time labor supporter and union advocate. In addition to her resume as a political leader, she is also the sister of former APFA Secretary/Treasurer, Anne Moroh. Anne is one of the founding members of APFA, now retired, and the recipient of the "Martha W. Griffiths Award," APFA's highest honor. Bradley Belt, Director of the PBGC (Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation) has also been invited and will be addressing the Board of Directors during the Convention.

We hope this year's Convention will be attended by many of our members as we have made every effort to make this convention member-friendly. We've included three workshops covering contract and scheduling, retirement and legislation. APFA is YOUR Union and by attending the Annual Convention, you can see first hand your Union at work. I hope to meet many of you there.

**"Nancy Rivard, President of Airline Ambassadors, will receive the first Award of Merit ever issued by APFA."**



**Cathy Lukensmeyer**  
APFA Treasurer

**apfa-treasurer@apfa.org**  
**817-540-0108, ext. 8131**

## \$tate of the Treasury

**April 2005 marks one year that** I have been working as your Treasurer. I would like to show you how far the APFA Treasurer's Department has come in that time. As Treasurer, I am charged by the APFA Constitution with the responsibility of "...the care and custody of the funds and securities of the APFA..." That is a duty I take very seriously. The financial workings of the Union now must be handled within the confines of a greatly-reduced budget and believe me, that takes some doing.

As I mentioned in my last article, we are aggressively going after free riders, those who enjoy the benefits of union membership without paying their fair share of the cost. We're also pursuing the collection of back dues owed. However, fiscal responsibility requires more than just bringing in dollars. It also calls for conservative practices in the distribution of funds. Since last April I've had to address necessary repairs, maintenance and upgrades to the APFA building and some of the

equipment. It's a delicate balance between efficiency and cost-effectiveness and we've managed to accomplish my goal of building our assets without incurring a lot of new debt.

Speaking of building, many of you may recall that the APFA Headquarters building was purchased almost 25 years ago. That in and of itself was a controversial decision, but inevitably a good one. It's usually better to own than to rent and APFA now has capital that would never have been realized under a lease. The building was refurbished in 1997, another controversial, but sound, decision. It's kind of like regularly changing the oil in your car - if you don't do it, the car will eventually lose its usefulness and you'll end up paying even more down the road to repair it or buy a new one. Upkeep is essential on many different levels.

We've grown since the building was redesigned and must now ser-

**"It's usually better to own than to rent and APFA now has capital that would never have been realized under a lease."**

vice approximately 24,000 Flight Attendants, even though 4,268 of them are currently on furlough. One suggestion to address our space problem was to just buy a new building. But I didn't think that was the fiscally responsible solution; space management seemed like a much better answer. Over the past few years, many of the representatives' offices at headquarters were shuffled about for one reason or another - so much so that efficient utilization of the space was lost. So, after I took office, we dusted off the blueprints from 1997 and have now returned to that original plan, which had a very specific design. The National Coordinators have once again been grouped together in their own space; the Ballot Committee's office is back where it belongs; IDF once again has its own office in the building; and we've recaptured our Special Projects and Negotiations areas.

Other necessary building improvements include replacing our malfunctioning magnetic door locking system and re-marking the parking lot to conform to Eules Fire Department codes.

**MANAGING YOUR MONEY**  
There is no doubt that the Treasury of the Union must be financially strong in order to represent your interests at the bargaining table. Saving and investing is one way to establish financial security. To that end, a negotiations fund was established over a decade ago in accordance with our Constitution. A percentage of every dues dollar has been going into that fund for years. Those monies have been invested wisely and in a manner consistent with sound fiscal policy. As a result, growth has been steady for the APFA negotiations fund and is anticipated to continue this rise in the months and years ahead.



Because of that, when the time comes to return to negotiations, we will have the financial resources necessary to tackle the job.

Another way to get the most out of our dues money is to pay down debt, especially if we foresee interest rates increasing. This was just the case last June. When I took office, APFA had a favorable rate on our outstanding line of credit - 4 percentage points. As the months progressed, however, the rate began creeping up 1/4 percentage point almost every month. I saw no reason for the Union to be saddled with that debt. In June, I recommended to the Executive Committee that we double-up on our payments so that the line of credit would be paid off by Fiscal Year 2005, ending on March 31, 2005. The proposal was approved and this debt will, in fact, be paid off with no prepayment penalty by the time you read this. By the way, the interest rate had increased by 31% to 5 points as of December 2004. At this rate it will be 6 points, or

an increase of 50%, by March 2005. Our projected savings by doubling up on payments is almost \$5,000.

#### **LM-2's**

As members, you have access to a great deal of APFA-related information, much of which is posted on the APFA website. One such item is the annual LM-2, a government reporting record required to be filed by every labor union in the United States. Starting this year, the U.S. Department of Labor will have its own website with LM-2 postings for public access. Some members are quite shocked when they first see the numbers shown on the APFA LM-2. But it's important to understand how those numbers are determined. First, there is the cost of all trip removals that a union rep incurs since APFA reimburses the Company for a representative's time lost due to union business. Then, on top of that, all reimbursable expenses (such as long distance phone calls to members) are also included in the

LM-2 and appear as income. For example, occasionally APFA Division Representatives use their personal credit cards for a grievant's hotel room during first-level termination hearings. It would be like including the cost of your lay-over hotels and limos while you are on a trip as part of your salary. Those costs can be extensive at times and will show up as income for that rep on an LM-2. So, you can see that the totals on the LM-2 cannot simply be taken at face value.

As a member in good standing, you have access to the APFA Financials per the APFA Policy Manual. They may be reviewed by setting up an appointment with your local Base Chair or through the Treasurer's office. And again, I urge you to visit the APFA website and check out my page at [www.apfa.org](http://www.apfa.org).



#### **And finally, for those of you wondering exactly what a National Officer makes per year, these are the current salaries as established via Board resolution #3a on July 28, 2003:**

- The President makes the equivalent of 110 hours of International 15-year Purser pay per month at the 2003 concessionary rates - \$68,412 per year.
- The Vice President makes 105 hours of International 15-year Purser pay per month at the 2003 concessionary rates - \$65,037 per year.
- And, the Secretary and Treasurer make 100 hours of International 15-year Purser pay per month at the 2003 concessionary rates - \$61,662 per year.



**Leslie Mayo**  
APFA Communications  
Coordinator

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# not interested.

**So, I'm sitting in my office at** Headquarters sending out the third reminder email in a month to every F/A who is registered on the APFA website AND who elected to receive informational messages from their Union when they first registered AND who hadn't yet filled out the membership survey. After all, this is our opportunity to weigh in with our two cents because heaven knows we've all got an opinion on how things are going, right?

After a few days time, I found myself staring at one particular reply from a Flight Attendant who

actually took the time to send the following two words:  
**not interested.**

Ok. These weren't small little words meant to get lost on the page by their author. These were mammoth letters - Times Roman 34 font or something - that used up a line per word. And with a very predominant period at the end - just like the one in the middle of this page. Seriously, it was that big.

I didn't quite know whether to respond to it, disregard it, or try to get to the bottom of it. But in the end, I decided to write an article about it because I'm guess-

ing s/he isn't alone. The last time I sat in the

Communications chair was in 2002, a term that encompassed the previous two years when we fought for and won our '01 contract, dealt with the death of JFK-based Flight Attendant Jose Chiu who opened an Airbus door during an evacuation while the cabin was still pressurized, suffered when the crewmembers of flights 11 and 77 changed the world the moment they died, and cried all over again after the crash of flight 587 that took seven more away from us two months later. Basically, my last go around in this office involved extraordinary ups and downs, but all of us felt

the support of each other, and that made coming to work a little bit easier, despite the immeasurable losses we had undergone. For me, that support made my job a little bit easier because we all knew we were in this together.

These days, however, I spend a good amount of time at Headquarters wondering how to motivate a terribly fractured group filled with some very angry Flight Attendants. Things have gotten so messed up.

While doing the research for this year's convention booklet, I came across the '97 Convention program. I had reviewed all of the booklets from conventions past but this one really struck me. 1997 was the year APFA celebrated its 20th anniversary and with that came a larger-than-normal guide for the attendees. What I liked was that it contained short blurbs on our Union's history - a lot of which I was unaware. This may seem like a goofy thing to get excited about, but it really made me think. While this may quite possibly be the most difficult time our work group has seen, the great effort that began 28 years ago to create this Union was not without its struggles either. Then - and today - we're fighting to survive. What some of us take for granted today took

**"We didn't come this far by being mediocre and indifferent."**

tremendous efforts to establish 'back then' - Our Union pin, our first Contract, the Constitution, and of course establishing the Union itself. To fight the uphill battles against management, naysayers and other external forces, and most importantly the human rights factors: the 'rules' that said you couldn't fly if you were over 32-years of age, married, pregnant, male or if you exceeded AA's extreme weight standards.


APFA has endured an awful lot. Our little Union - the largest independent Flight Attendant Union in the nation - has passed countless tests and its evolution is captivating. We have overcome every hurdle put before us. And somehow, we will endure this.  
**That is the state of our Union.**

So if you're NOT INTERESTED in your future, maybe our history will get your attention. We didn't come this far by being mediocre and indifferent.

I hope these pieces of history help you realize what your Union has sustained. Without it, I can't imagine where we'd be today.

And I've got two words for the author of that email:

**GET INTERESTED**

... before it's too late. 



## THE ALSSA PIN

As an entity, The Airline Steward and Stewardess Association (ALSSA) dates back to the '40s when it was affiliated with the pilot's union, Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA). In 1961-62, there were political differences between the ALSSA/ALPA union leaders. These differences focused primarily on voting rights and money. The result was that a part of what was ALSSA stayed with the pilots (today's AFA) and part broke away from the pilots' union and affiliated with the Transport Worker's Union (TWU). ALSSA became Local 550 representing almost 15,000 stewards and stewardesses from several different airlines, including American. Local 550 was headquartered in Chicago and had retained its pre-existing organizational and financial structure, which included the sharing of monies, power and resources with all the represented groups. It was the financial structure, the sharing and decision making on how union money was spent that led to the eventual formation of autonomous Locals. What was once ALSSA became Local 551, representing the flight attendants at TWA, Local 552, representing the flight attendants at American, and Local 553, representing the flight attendants at Eastern. For a time the three Locals shared offices together at 747 Third Avenue in New York City.





### THE LOCAL 552 PIN

Local 552 of the Transport Worker's Union (TWU), AFL-CIO, was APEA's immediate predecessor union. The representation election of 1976-77 was quite divisive. The wounds were deep for both sides. The overall debate was whether to leave an AFL-CIO affiliated union, but as you can see, a dedication to union ideals resulted in a joining of forces that continues 28 years later in 2005, including Tommie Hutto-Blake who was President of Local 552 at the time.



### THE FIRST APEA PIN

The original APEA pin was actually a button. During the representation election of 1976-77, there were "button wars" between three groups: flight attendants claiming the right to wear the red button with the white APEA letters because it was their "union pin," flight attendants who supported the predecessor union, Local 552, claiming theirs was the only legitimate "union pin," and company supervisors claiming that the button was non-regulation and could not be worn with the uniform. In the end, the courts determined that the APEA button was recognized as the first official APEA pin.

## Let's Get It Started

By Denise Pointer, DFW InfoRep

**Beginning with the first week** of the New Year, the APEA InfoRep program was off to a new start. APEA has been working hard to revitalize this invaluable communication tool. The InfoRep program is a critical link between line Flight Attendants and the APEA leadership, providing essential information to you and important feedback from you.

The InfoRep program began in the early 1990's and has been a consistent and proven tool in disseminating factual information to our members via the thousands of InfoReps system wide. It was utilized most recently in obtaining our 2001 Contract and made the difference between our members earning an industry-standard Contract and an industry-leading Contract. Though the program has not been used to its capacity since then, there is no better time than the present to refocus our efforts and revitalize this program. Even though we are not involved in Contract negotiations, we are very involved in other major issues that may have far-reaching effects on this membership and our profession.

Now, more than ever, the propagation of the facts is critical to

our collective strength. We have a diverse work group with differing opinions and beliefs, but we share one goal - to preserve and protect our profession. We won't agree on every issue but we can try to embrace our differences and present a unified front. Spreading false information for the sake of dividing and conquering only hurts our workforce. Gossip weakens and divides us and in the long run will only serve to fracture this membership further. We can't afford any more broken bones.

So, you asked for the truth, you asked for answers to your questions and you asked to be informed in a timely manner. The InfoRep program will provide all that and more.

It's possible that, at times, you won't like what you hear from us. In fact, there may be times when the truth will be painful, uncomfortable and unwelcome. And, there may be times when the truth will pleasantly surprise you. Again, remember, it is the duty of the InfoRep program and those who choose to become a part of this program to disseminate

factual information only. Having said all that, what is the plan to get that factual and timely information out to our members? One way will be to communicate with all InfoReps via the InfoRep

hotline at least twice a month - more if events warrant. Additionally, InfoReps can sign up to receive a special InfoRep

Hotline via email at [www.apfa.org](http://www.apfa.org). Each hotline will be posted on the website in a secured area specifically for InfoReps. Hotlines will contain factual, timely and "spinless" information. Questions on all subjects will be addressed and answered. Each InfoRep will be charged with the responsibility to carry the facts back to the line.

If you are not already an InfoRep, consider becoming one. No prior official union experience is necessary - just the desire to know the truth and the ability to share it with your co-workers. If this interests you and you would like to get involved, please either email us at [infoforepprogram@unity.apfa.org](mailto:infoforepprogram@unity.apfa.org) or contact your APEA Base Chairperson directly. The InfoRep program needs you, the membership needs you and your Union needs you.

**Each InfoRep will be charged with the responsibility to carry the facts back to the line.**



### THE INFOREP PIN

Originally known as "Information Representatives," APEA launched its very successful InfoRep program in 1990. InfoReps played a crucial role in the Union's success during the 1992-95 Contract negotiations including the 1993 Strike and the 2001 industry-leading Contract.



### THE ORIGINAL APEA SEAL

The original APEA Constitution first distributed in the Spring of 1977 during the representation election but prior to APEA's certification as the recognized bargaining agent for the Flight Attendants in the employ of AA contained a depiction of the official seal of APEA. The official seal was designed by Patt Gibbs and was intended to show members that APEA was a forward-thinking Union that envisioned what air travel would become. The seal was part of APEA's Constitution until 1991 when references to a seal were replaced with the recognition of the Unity Pin as the official insignia of APEA.

# Talk of Pensions in Washington - January 11, 2005

By Jill Frank, IMA  
APFA Retirement Specialist

**“...I find it ironic that we are fighting to retire at 60 while the pilots are being forced to; exactly what the logic is here is difficult to reconcile.”**

You may remember in the last issue of *Skyword* I reported on our attendance at a Senate Committee Hearing on October 7, 2004, in Washington, DC. It was apparent after that Hearing that Congress was reviewing the financial situation of the network carriers in general and the stability of their defined benefit plans in particular. When the government becomes involved in a national subject like this, the method of effecting change is through legislation. Prior to introducing specific bills, there is a process of fact- and opinion-finding by all interested parties to determine the type of legislation that will be sponsored. This often takes the form of a somewhat unstructured series of conversations between interested parties. The question arises: What do WE (APFA, obviously an interested party) want to see our representatives do concerning defined benefit plans?

The obvious answer is that we want an improved status quo - that is, the continuation of our defined benefit plan being 100% funded by the Company. We also want to be in a profitable industry and, while we're at it, we'd like our Company to be the leader in profitability!

Unfortunately, that scenario cannot be obtained through legislation. So, the next question is, "What if...?" What if there is legislation - what would APFA be able to support? During December and continuing through early '05, there has been an undercurrent of conversation going on within the industry and on Capitol Hill. Hardly a day goes by that one headline or another doesn't deal with the airline business, the bankruptcy courts, Social Security or the PBGC (Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation). It seemed like a good time to learn as much as we can about the thoughts that are swirling

around in the heads of those members of Congress (both Senate and House) who are on the committees most likely to sponsor legislation having the greatest impact on defined benefit plans.

Legislation can originate with any member, but to get attention, momentum and support, it is most likely to originate from members of specific committees. Often the White House will be in touch with key members and there is sharing of political agendas.

In our case, there are a variety of committees that seem to be showing interest in the current situation. Any one of them may introduce legislation at any time, although at the year's end they seemed to still be researching the situation and considering many actions.

On December 13, 2004, I traveled to Washington with the

dual purpose of participating in the AFA Rally (see page 18) and doing a little sleuthing on the Hill with Joan Wages, APFA's Washington Representative. It was the week after the 108th Congress had closed its final session and all was relatively quiet. On the 14th and 15th we visited various offices and spoke with a number of staff people.

The committees that seem most likely to participate in pension legislation are the House Committee on Education and the Workforce and its Sub Committee on Employer/Employee Relations as well as the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. Congressional committees consist of a number of members from each party, with the chairman being from the majority party (in the case of both the 108th and 109th Congress, that means Republican). The chair has a great deal of control over the actions of the committee by deciding which bills will come to the committee's attention, determining when the committee will meet and giving open-

ing statements which become part of the record of the committee's activities. There are websites for all of this information, and on these websites are statements from the chairs which indicate their current attitudes.

Representative John Boehner (R-OH) was the Chair of the Committee on Education and the Workforce during the 108th Congress. On September 14th, he addressed a hearing with a speech on *"Airline Pension Troubles; Six Principles to Reform and Strengthen the Defined Benefit Pension System."* In a nutshell, his six principles are:

1. Congress should implement a permanent interest rate to accurately calculate employers' funding promises.
2. Congress should require companies to fully fund their plans.
3. Congress should reduce funding volatility in pension plans to ensure employers make adequate and consistent payments to their plans.
4. Employers and unions should not make promises to their workers that can't be kept.

5. Congress should provide more accurate and meaningful disclosure to workers about the status of their plans.
6. Congress should ensure that "hybrid" plans (such as cash balance) remain part of the defined benefit system.

These comments indicate the attitude of the majority party. In fact, since our visit to the Hill, the Bush White House has indicated that it is "close to unveiling a rescue plan" (NY Times January 7, 2005). In early January, the PBGC took the nearly unprecedented step of attempting to take over the United pilots' plan prior to the date to which the pilots and United had agreed. In addition to that, a Federal bankruptcy judge rejected the agreement between the pilots and UAL because it would have "unfairly tilted the bankruptcy process." By the time this article is printed, there will be more news. Our best hope is to influence that which will impact us in a way that will be positive for us.

The staff members with whom we spoke with were very interested in hearing about us (Flight Attendants in general and at

American in particular). We have the unique characteristic of having entered into a collaborative effort with our employer to avoid the bankruptcy process and it affords us a modicum of respect and credibility! The more the staff members understand our situation, the better they can help address our concerns.

These staff people deal with a wide array of workers and are not necessarily familiar with the peculiarities of the airline industry, much less those of the Flight Attendant position. Our job is to help them understand.

Joan and I had prepared a hand-out that showed the demographics of our group. This reference can be reviewed on the APEA website. One of the questions I was asked repeatedly was the age at which Flight Attendants retire. From September 12, 2001, through November 30, 2004, the average age at which an American Airlines Flight Attendant retired was 59.04.

It seems to be a widely-held attitude in Washington that retirement age is 65 and older and there is not much sympathy for the "full retirement at 60" provisions of our Collective Bargaining Agreement. We had many opportunities to discuss the physical aspects of our job and the fact

that at 60, one may have had 40 years of pressurization and jet lag. We hope that pointing out the rigors of the Flight Attendant job will help to educate and influence leg-

islators that, in fact, our job has more physical demands than the average career and needs an earlier retirement age than 65. I find it ironic that we are fighting to retire at 60 while the pilots are being forced to; exactly what the logic is here is difficult to reconcile.

Although there is a widespread commitment to produce legislation to correct the problems inherent in defined benefit plans, one of the major caveats is that Congress must also consider the responsibilities of the PBGC. It behooves the government to sup-

**"...pointing out the rigors of the Flight Attendant job will help to educate and influence legislators..."**

port legislation that will not hurt a government agency already pressed to the extreme. APEA is in touch with the PBGC and we have invited the Executive Director to address the APEA Annual Convention this March with an audience that includes leaders from all three unions on the property AND AA Senior Management.

What is certain is that each member of Congress answers to many interests. Obviously, the people who elect him or her are the primary responsibility of each member. In addition, each represents the interests of the respective party, and the party has a position on industry and workers. Then, to make it even more interesting, all members share the responsibility not to bankrupt the government. And, somewhere in this mix is the individual member's own imagination and thought process. No wonder it takes awhile for each member to formulate a position. The final opinion is a complex work in progress. Eventually, all of the various works in progress come together in a committee where they go through the entire process again. This should, with

any luck, result in legislation that makes everyone happy (not likely!). After my recent visit to Washington I am no longer amazed at how long it takes to complete this process. I am more amazed that it ever actually gets completed.

Perhaps the most frustrating part of the current situation is that it is OUR benefits that are being discussed and perhaps changed. APEA is following the process closely. We are participating everywhere we can. At some point, there will be a day when someone puts something specific out there and we will probably want your help. When that time comes, we will have to use the same described process within our own structure (our Board of Directors) to put forth our opinions and make sure that our constituents (YOU, the members of APEA) make their opinions heard.

Stay tuned as this unfolds - we can, and on this issue, we must - make a difference!







APFA President Hutto-Blake addressing airline workers at D.C. Rally  
AFA President Pat Friend, left



from l. to r. Mario St. Michel, Steven Ellis and Brett Durkin

# December 2004's DC Fly-In

By Anne Loew and Donna Gesparo, *JFK*

Donna and I have been reading the papers and watching the news with increasing alarm lately. What we have been observing is the crisis that is unfolding for employees at US Airways and United Airlines. In January the bankruptcy judge for US Airways ruled to eliminate US Airways' contract with its machinists and to terminate the current and future pensions of Flight Attendants and machinists. United Flight Attendants aren't faring much

better. Management is attempting to eliminate their pensions through the bankruptcy courts as well. This frightening trend is being repeated throughout the airline industry and is something we all need to be concerned about. It's not overdramatic to say that what is now occurring in our industry is the undoing of decades of labor successes. These achievements helped create the middle class in our country and they are essentially being dismantled, in favor of big business, on the eve of retirement for the baby boom generation. We can no longer afford to stand by and watch; we need to fight back! The opportunity for the two of us to become directly involved

presented itself in December. The Association of Flight Attendants, Communication Workers of America (AFA-CWA), representing US Airways and United Flight Attendants, organized a candlelight vigil to bring attention to the fact that their hard-earned pensions, which had been negotiated and promised to sustain them in retirement, were deliberately and methodically being taken from them. The idea was to get the attention of legislators in Congress and emphasize the disproportionate contribution union members and lower-paid workers are making to the survival of our respective companies.

On December 14th, union

leaders and supporters from AFA, CWA, TWU, IAM and APFA, among other airline unions, gathered at Lafayette Park in Washington, D.C. We listened to speeches given by many of labor's important leaders. John Sweeney, President of the AFL-CIO; Robert Roach, Transportation Department General Vice-President of the International Association of Machinists (IAM); CWA Vice President Larry Cohen; Pat Friend, President of AFA; and our own



from l. to r. Nancy Moel  
Mallon and

Rick Musica and Tommie Hutto-Blake with co-workers

Cindy Horan, Ted Bedwell and Margaret Stewart

CWA Vice President Larry Cohen addressing workers





APFA Flight Attendants march en masse



Cathy Lukensmeyer, Jeff Bott and Brett Durkin

Nancy Moerhing and Cathy Lukensmeyer

APFA President, Tommie Hutto-Blake were among the labor leaders who spoke eloquently on behalf of all airline workers. The speakers highlighted the disparity in the sacrifice between upper level managers who have done a miserable job in guiding their respective companies



Moerhing, Mario St. Michel, Liz Mallon and Steven Ellis

through these difficult economic times, and line workers whose contributions to date have kept their companies afloat. The speakers also

demanded that Congress grant some relief from the exorbitant fuel prices that have had an enormous negative impact on the airline industry's ability to become profitable. The issue of fuel prices is not within the power of the airline industry itself but is one that must be addressed through Congressional action. Following the speeches, we marched past the White House, chanting to make ourselves heard and bring the nation's attention to these disturbing developments.

We were inspired to see Flight Attendants who had flown in from all over the country to participate in this important event. The feelings of cama-

derie and mutual concern for the future were evident whether you were a mechanic, cabin service worker, agent or Flight Attendant.

As APFA members we were proud and heartened by the involvement of our union leaders who were in attendance. It is reassuring to know that APFA is preparing to fight this battle in the event that we, too, are confronted with these issues. Joan Wages, our legislative representative in Washington, keeps abreast of pending legislation that could have an impact on our industry, generally, and on Flight Attendants, specifically.

Witnessing and participating in

this event has awakened the feeling of empowerment we experienced during our 1993 strike. The time has come again when we must collectively take responsibility for our future. While our leadership is addressing this new reality, it is time for each of us to be willing to do our part, starting today. You can begin by getting involved - with awareness comes change. Contribute to the APFA's Political Action Committee (PAC). This fund supports the APFA's legislative efforts in Washington, D.C. (see last quarter's *Skyword* article by IMA Vice-Chair Rick Musica). The money you contribute now to support our fight is like an insurance policy against some of the hardships

President of AFL-CIO, John Sweeney

Anne Loew, Steven Ellis and Mario St. Michel with fellow F/As

from l. to r. Greg Hildreth, Liz Mallon and co-worker





## Washington, D.C., Rally Highlighting Industry Problems

By Joan Wages, APFA's Lobbyist on the Hill

we may face in the future. Go to [www.congress.org](http://www.congress.org) and find out who your U.S. Senators and Representatives are, write to them about these issues, or go to the APFA website and use CapWiz to send your letters. Make this subject a topic of conversation in the galley and encourage your co-workers to participate. Stay informed and active!

In these treacherous times we can't afford to be complacent. When APFA calls for a show of support, be ready to contribute your time, be proactive and be a part of the solution! Just like in '93, when we stand together we are heard. We look forward to

seeing YOU at the next rally!

***Editor's Note: There will be two APFA Legislative Action sessions on March 14th hosted by Rick Musica, IMA Vice Chair and Joan Wages, APFA's Lobbyist on the Hill.***

***Please join us at the APFA Annual Convention in Chicago beginning at 9:00 a.m. All members in good standing are welcome to attend. The Convention will be held at the Embassy Suites Lakefront in downtown Chicago just a few blocks from the long-layover hotel.***

On December 14, 2004, APFA participated in a rally to support the United and U.S. Airways Flight Attendants who are facing radical reductions in their contracts and retirement benefits. An estimated 700 Flight Attendants and other labor supporters gathered in Lafayette Park across the street from the White House. Some traveled from across the country to attend.

Both United and U.S. Airways are in bankruptcy. Both carriers have threatened to abrogate their labor contracts and dissolve employee pension plans. APFA President Tommie Hutto-Blake joined other union leadership in calling for Flight Attendants to fight back. "It took Flight Attendant activists more than 30 years to turn a once-mandated short-term job into a career with a respectable retirement. Standing together we must stop this backward slide!" President Hutto-Blake said.

The rally was organized by the Association of Flight Attendants. AFA President Patricia Friend launched the event and was joined by AFL-CIO President John Sweeney, AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department Director Ed Wytkind and Communications Workers of America Vice President Larry Cohen.

In addition to these two carriers being in bankruptcy, other problems face the aviation industry. Dramatically high jet fuel prices con-

tinue to burden the carriers with millions in additional expenses. But for the increased fuel costs, American would have made a profit in 2004. For carriers already in bankruptcy, the additional burden makes matters worse.

APFA empathizes with the United and U.S. Airways Flight Attendants who have worked many years toward enhancing the Flight Attendant profession, fighting for ever-better work rules and salaries. Now they find their jobs and pensions in jeopardy. The airline industry is so inter-related that the actions of one carrier eventually have some impact on the others. We strongly support their efforts to maintain their 50-year old contracts. When the wages, work rules and benefits of other Flight Attendant contracts are impacted, it impacts the entire industry.

After the rally, the group marched to Freedom Square carrying lights and chanting in order to draw attention to Flight Attendant issues. The enthusiastic group demonstrated solidarity and sent a message to the industry and to the government that we will not be silenced. We will fight all efforts to turn back the clock on the Flight Attendant profession.



Lenny Aurigemma, Liz Mallon and Jamie Bunn



# Ready to Retire?

## You Have an Important Choice to Make

**Editor's Note:**

*The following article was compiled by APFA's outside consultant Robin Dusang of the Segal Benefits Group.*

Among the many things to consider as you plan your retirement is the healthcare coverage available to you as a retired APFA member. If you are under age 65 and retiring, you face an important decision—choosing between the pre-funded Retiree Standard Medical Plan (RSMP) or the Retiree Point of Service Plan (RPOSP), the plan recently made available to pre-age 65 retirees.

Many APFA members—both actives and retirees alike—have raised questions about the benefits provided through both plans and their costs. And with the introduction of the RPOSP, the APFA felt it important to analyze and compare how a member's total healthcare costs might be paid throughout his/her retirement under both plans. To do this, APFA retained an outside consulting firm to compare the relative value of the RSMP to the RPOSP. This article is a result of that study, pointing out the factors you might consider to make an informed retiree medical decision. We recommend using this article as a supplement to the information already provided to you by the Company.

**A look at each plan's covered benefits**

The RSMP and RPOSP are different plans that cover healthcare services in different ways. As you review each plan's materials before electing a plan, consider the healthcare services you need and use during the year; and then compare how the following plan design features might impact your wallet as you access the care you require:

**THE SUPPLEMENTAL MEDICAL PLAN**

Enrollees in the Supplemental Medical Plan are eligible for an additional lifetime benefit maximum of \$500,000. Access to the Supplemental Medical Plan's additional coverage during retirement may play an important role in making your retiree medical plan decision.

If you elected Supplemental Medical Plan coverage as an active employee, this coverage continues to be available to you as a retiree, as long as you continue to pay the plan's monthly premiums

- The copayments and/or coinsurance you'll pay
- The services subject to an annual deductible under each plan
- The expenses that are excluded from your annual out-of-pocket maximum
- The coverage levels provided for in-network versus out-of-network services under each plan

Also, be aware of a key difference between the plans—the lifetime benefit maximum. The RPOSP's lifetime maximum is \$1,000,000, while the RSMP's is \$300,000. This is the amount the plan will pay during your lifetime—it is reduced by the benefits paid on your behalf as an active employee and a retiree.

Here's why this is important. If you are chronically or catastrophically ill and have had high healthcare costs reimbursed as an active employee, or anticipate high healthcare costs between your retirement date and age 65, the RPOSP—with its higher lifetime benefit maximum—might be the better plan for you. On the other hand, if you are in good health and have not previously had high healthcare costs as an active employee, or don't anticipate high healthcare costs up to age 65, the RSMP might be more appropriate.

Comprehensive plan resources are available on request through Human Resources Services or via Jetnet. It's up to you to understand the differences between the plans and decide which plan makes sense for your personal healthcare situation.

A look at each plan's costs  
It's important to consider each plan's costs from three perspectives:

- What you may be required to contribute toward retiree medical premium costs if you retire before age 65
- What the costs may be after reaching age 65
- How your total retiree healthcare costs might "add up" through your retirement

Retiring before age 65  
Here's what you will contribute under each plan:

<b>Retiree Standard Medical Plan Costs Before Age 65</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your RSMP premium share is drawn from your pre-funded retiree medical account in equal installments until exhausted. At that point, you are not required to make further contributions (meaning your monthly contributions for coverage will be \$0).</li> <li>• Your eligible dependents are covered under this plan at no additional cost to you.</li> </ul>
<b>Retiree Point of Service Plan Costs Before Age 65</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount you've contributed to pre-fund your retiree medical benefits is refunded to you in one payment. You are then responsible for paying your monthly retiree medical premiums for the RPOSP, based on the coverage you elect.</li> <li>• Monthly premium costs for 2005 are \$50 per person, with a maximum of \$150 for you and two or more eligible dependents. (These costs are expected to increase in the future.)</li> </ul>

Note: Prior to reaching age 65, you may elect to switch plans during each year's October Benefits Enrollment. You are also allowed to change your election if you relocate to an area where the RPOSP is—or is not—available. It's important to understand that if you elect the RPOSP and later decide to return to the RSMP, **you will be required to pay the applicable monthly premium**, which for 2005 ranges from **\$85 per person up to \$255 for you and two or more eligible dependents**. (These costs are expected to increase in the future.)

### When you reach age 65

At age 65, Medicare will become your primary coverage, and regardless of your retiree medical plan election, the RSMP will serve as your secondary coverage. If you've elected to participate in the RPOSP at any point, **you will be required to pay the applicable monthly premium to continue RSMP coverage when you are automatically returned to that plan at age 65**.

Retiring before the age 65

Here's a summary and comparison of what happens under both plans:

#### If you remain in the RSMP from your retirement date to age 65

- Medicare becomes your primary plan and the RSMP provides secondary coverage.
- The lifetime maximum RSMP plan benefit is reduced.\*
- Your participation in the RSMP continues at no cost to you and your spouse/domestic partner (if applicable).

#### If you elect the RPOSP at your retirement date or at any point before age 65

- Medicare becomes your primary plan and you automatically move back to the RSMP, which provides secondary coverage.
- The lifetime maximum RSMP plan benefit is reduced.\*
- You are required to pay the applicable monthly premium for post-age 65 RSMP coverage for you and your spouse/domestic partner (if applicable).
- Costs for 2005 are \$57 per person per month. (These costs are expected to increase in the future)

\*At age 65, your RSMP lifetime maximum benefit is reduced to the lesser of \$50,000 or the amount remaining under your lifetime benefit maximum, whichever is less.

### Important Reminder

Enrollees in the Supplemental Medical Plan are eligible for an additional lifetime benefit maximum of \$500,000. If you elected Supplemental Medical Plan coverage as an active employee, this coverage continues to be available to you as a retiree, as long as you continue to pay the plan's monthly premiums. Supplemental Medical Premium Plan premium costs are not included in the costs noted in the previous charts.

### How each plan's total costs are paid

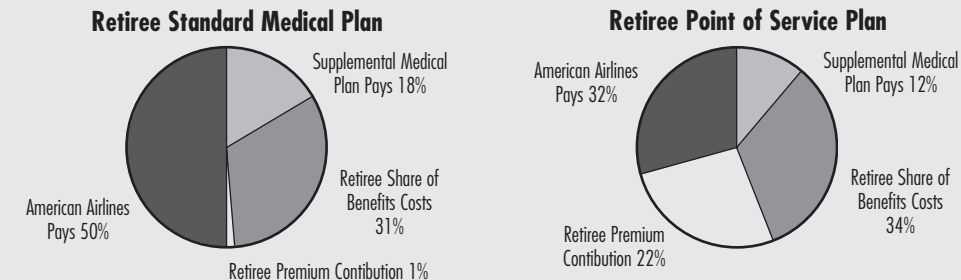
As mentioned previously, APFA retained an outside consulting firm to compare the relative value of the RSMP to the RPOSP, using standard benefit valuation models. By incorporating a range of factors—such as a member's age at retirement; gender and dependent status; the amount a member pre-funded towards retiree medical coverage; anticipated cost trends; and each plan's design features—we found in most cases, **members retiring as of January 1, 2005 who elect the RPOSP will pay a much larger portion of the cost for their healthcare than members who remain covered under the RSMP.**

Based on this analysis, here's how a retiree's estimated total healthcare costs may be paid under two scenarios:

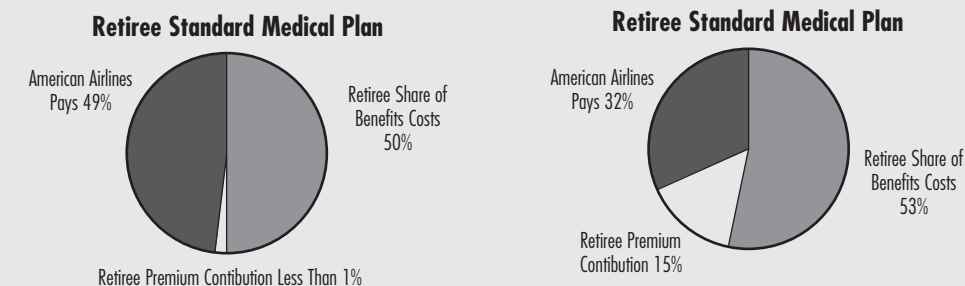
The charts below illustrate three important points:

1. On average retirees may pay similar amounts (in the form of deductibles, copays and coinsurance) when using their benefits through either plan. (Compare the "Retiree Share of Benefits Costs" segment of the pie charts.)
2. However, retirees electing the RPOSP plan will pay significantly more for their retiree medical benefits—in the form of higher monthly premium contributions before reaching age 65, and at age 65 and beyond. (Compare the "Retiree Premium Contribution" segment of the pie charts.)
3. And finally, enrollment in the Supplemental Medical Plan can help to significantly reduce a retiree's out-of-pocket expense—because the plan increases the maximum lifetime benefit available through retirement. (Compare Example A to Example B, paying attention to the "Retiree Share of Benefits Costs" and "Supplemental Medical Plan Pays" segments of the pie charts.)

#### Example A: Single female employee, age 58, retiring January 1, 2005 with Supplemental Medical Plan coverage



#### Example B: Single female employee, age 58, retiring January 1, 2005 with no Supplemental Medical Plan coverage



Comparisons in these exhibits are based on broad averages and various assumptions. Comparative results for any particular Flight Attendant are likely to vary from these results. You'll find charts comparing several other retiree healthcare cost scenarios under the retiree link at the APFA's website.

Retiree premium contributions under the RSMP are the pre-funded contributions made as an active employee. In Example A, premium contributions also include the monthly premiums paid toward the Supplemental Medical Plan as an active employee and retired member.

## Making your choice

Read through all the plan resources available before making your retiree medical plan decision. There are pros and cons to electing either plan, which will vary based on your plan design preferences and your personal healthcare and financial situation. Make sure you understand how your healthcare needs are covered under each plan, as well as the impact your plan choice may have on your wallet—what you'll pay out-of-pocket for healthcare services and the contributions you will need to make before and after you reach age 65.

## Important information regarding your benefits

American Airlines has the right to modify, amend and/or terminate any or all of the benefits offered under the Retiree Point of Service Medical Plan, at any time. However, the Retiree Standard Medical Plan is subject to the collective bargaining agreement and therefore cannot be changed without bargaining with APEA.

## Questions?

This benefits material is provided to you as a summary of plan information only. It is neither as comprehensive nor as detailed as the plan documents on Jetnet. In the event of any particular welfare, benefit plan or policy, such plan or policy will govern. At a later date you will receive an updated and restated summary plan description for retiree benefits, which will include the terms and provisions of the Retiree Standard Medical Plan and the Retiree Point of Service Plan.



### THE UNITY PIN

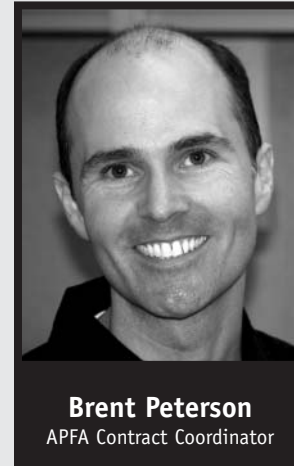
In April of 1978, the APEA newsletter announced the "Design the Unity Pin" contest. All members were encouraged to send in designs for what would become the first official union pin for APEA. The September 1978 newsletter announced that the APEA Board of Directors had chosen the pin designed by LAX Flight Attendants Jean Judy and that the pin was to be worn by all APEA members to symbolize unity. Twenty-seven years later, the "Unity Pin" is still the official union pin for APEA and since 1991, it has been recognized as the official insignia of APEA.



### SKYWORD LOGO

The name *Skyword* was first used as the name of the official APEA newsletter in February 1984. Twenty-one years later it is copyrighted and owned solely by APEA. There have been eight *Skyword* Editors; Alan Fahringer who is credited with the name, Tamara Utens, George Price, Randy Edwards, Cliff O'Neal, Frank Buddes, Leslie Mayo and Liz Geiss.

## Contract



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## Bidding For Relief

**The On-Duty Contract Guide included** in the last *Skyword* is intended to be a resource to help you understand the work rules that affect you on a daily basis. The booklet is the first step toward this Administration's commitment to provide you with an up-to-date copy of your work rules. While efforts are still in progress on the printing of the entire Collective Bargaining Agreement, this small guide will be a convenient way for members to carry the contractual information most often needed while flying a trip. You should

think of it as a "no-go item." Former APEA Scheduling Coordinators Jena Hopkins and Becky Kroll headed up this project for the Union. We thank them again for this wonderful new resource.

In this article I'm going to review the procedures for vacation relief bidding. This topic generates frequent questions to our Department. I hope this article helps to eliminate some of the confusion surrounding this process.

The vacation relief bidding procedure implemented in 2002 as a result of the 2001 Collective Bargaining Agreement (Art.9. Letter III), eliminated our previous blind bidding system for vacation relief. The procedure allows us to tie a relief line bid to specific selections. The use of the "Selected Relief" option on the bid ballot and relief codes can eliminate most of the guesswork when bidding a vacation relief.

**Selected Reliefs** - A relief selection number will be assigned to each Flight Attendant who is scheduled for ten or more days of vacation and who is not on reserve. Relief selection numbers can be entered in the "Selected Reliefs" - Option 12 of the main menu of the bid ballot. It is only necessary to enter these selected reliefs if you are planning to use the R2 relief code. While these selected relief numbers refer to particular Flight Attendants, what you really should be looking at is not the name but the length or specific days of the particular vacation for anyone who



**Chart A**

Rlf	Sen	Emp	Name	Start	End
3300	1234	56789	JONES	03/02/05	03/22/05
3301	2345	67890	SMITH	03/16/05	03/30/05
3302	3456	78901	JOHNSON	03/02/05	03/12/05

is senior to you. If you are willing to be awarded only ten days of a bid line you want, then you should enter numbers for all Flight Attendants senior to you whose names are posted. If you want as much as possible of a line you bid, enter only those who have the highest number of vacation days indicated. More on this later.

**Relief Codes** – R1, R2 and R3 are relief codes. They are entered on the bid ballot after a selection or series of selections. Specifically, a relief code is entered after you enter the position, e.g., 5100 P124 R1. If you have not held a selection on your own seniority in the bid award process, the R1 and R2 relief codes direct the computer to recheck your ballot to see if you can hold a portion of a selection

you bid as relief. The relief codes allow you to determine how restrictive you wish your bid to be. Where and how often you place the relief code(s) in your ballot determine how your ballot is read in the bid award process.

**-R1** will award any length relief for the selection(s) bid. If you have not been awarded a bid on your own seniority when an R1 is encountered, the computer will go back to the beginning of your ballot or the previous R1. The bid ballot will then be checked, in preference order, to determine if you can hold one of the selections as a relief. R1 is the least restrictive code as it is not tied to a particular selected relief. If the selection were bid by someone with only ten days of vacation, your relief could contain very little flying from the original selec-

tion. Basically, what you're telling the system with an R1 designator is that you really want to fly the selections you've bid to that point and are willing to fly any portion of those lines that are to be covered by a relief line.

**-R2** will award a relief for a selection you bid only if that selection is held by someone you indicated in the Selected Reliefs (Option 12) portion of your bid ballot. If you have not held a selection on your own seniority, when an R2 is encountered, the computer will go back to the beginning of the ballot or to a previous R1 or R2. The bid ballot will then be checked, in order, to determine whether one of the selections you bid was held by someone in your Selected Reliefs. If so, you will be awarded that line, for the period indicated as that person's vacation, as a relief line. R2 is the more restrictive code, as it is tied to specific relief selection numbers. This allows you to select only those relief selections that are of longer duration or for specific days.

**-R2** indicates you do not wish an individual selection to be awarded as a relief. It does not prevent the actual line from being awarded

based on your own seniority. Remember the codes are read only if you have not held the selection on your own seniority first.

Now let's look at an example that incorporates all of the vacation relief bidding options.

The bidsheet for this particular month shows the Vacation Reliefs referenced in Chart A on this page. You begin your bidding by entering Option 12 on the bid ballot. Once there, you enter the relief selections you want. Since 3300 and 3301 encompass 20 and 19 vacation days respectively, you know that if you hold one of those reliefs, you will have almost a full month of a trip you bid. You also know that if you bid relief line 3302, you will get only ten days of a line you would like to have. That may translate to only one or two trips and you decide you would rather go on to your next bid than to hold only half of a schedule you bid higher. Therefore, you enter only 3300 and 3301 under Option 12:

**RELIEF SELECTIONS  
3300 3301**

Then you enter your selections, putting the proper R designator after the selections on which you

wish to hold a relief (Chart B). This ballot will be read as follows:

1. Selection 100 position 4.
2. Selection 101 position 4.
3. Selection 100 position 4 only if a part of relief 3300 or 3301.
4. Selection 101 position 4 only if a part of relief 3300 or 3301.
5. Selection 102 position 4.
6. Selection 103 position 4.
7. Selection 100 position 4 if in any relief.
8. Selection 101 position 4 if in any relief.
9. Selection 103 position 4 if in any relief.
10. Selection 105 position 4.
11. Selection 105 position only if part of relief 3300 or 3301.

Notice that although the R2 was entered after selection 101, the R2 checked the relief of selection 100 first. This is because R2's cause the computer to go back to the beginning of the ballot (or the previous R1 or R2) when it begins checking for vacation relief. If you had preferred the relief of selection 100 be awarded prior to being awarded selection 101, you would have simply entered the R2 code immediately after selection 100. Similarly, notice that although the R1 was entered after selection 103, the computer began checking the bal-

**Chart B**

SELECTIONS			SELECTIONS		
SEL	POSITION	R	SEL	POSITION	R
100	4		101	4	2
102	4	3	103	4	1
105	4	2			

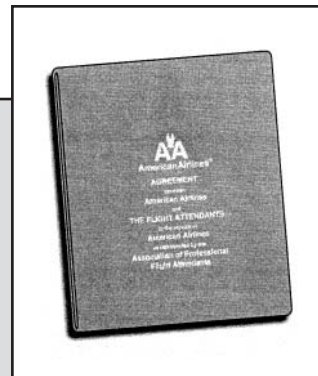
lot for any relief at selection 100. Again, this is because the R1 tells the computer to go back to the beginning of the ballot (or to the previous R1) before beginning to check for any relief on any earlier selection. Also note that selection 102 was checked to see if it could be held on your own seniority. The R3 only caused it to be excluded when checking for relief.

Let's say that there were no relief lines in any of the selections you bid until selection 105. You couldn't hold 105 on your own seniority but the R2 indication caused the computer to go back to the selection when you didn't hold it and check to see if the Flight Attendant on relief 3300 or 3301 (which you entered in your Selected Reliefs) held that line. Fortunately, Flight Attendant Jones (3300) held the trip you wanted. At this point, your seniority buys you her relief line. Your award now consists of the trips and duty free periods contained during her vacation – from 03/02 through 03/22. You are fortunate that you are now going to fly all of selection 105, a line you bid near the top, since the last trip of that selection goes out on the 22nd and is encompassed in Flight Attendant Jones' vacation.

If you are awarded a relief that is not a complete month, the Company will fill-in other trips and/or AVBL days. Planning may use the DO's during the vacation period to plot trips or AVBL days. You may enter codes in the Remarks section of your bid ballot to indicate your preferences for these trips. The specific codes may be found in HIDIIR. Requests for "no pre-plot" or specific duty free periods will not be honored if you are awarded a vacation relief. The bid award process tries to complete the relief lines with trips. If there aren't any available then AVBL days will be plotted. Vacation relief selections are considered Regular Replacement and, as such, are not subject to Open Replacement requirements for release or pre-plotting if they contain available days.

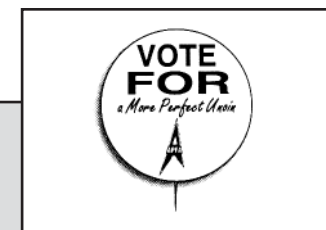
I hope this article takes some of the mystery out of vacation relief bidding. Once you get the hang of it, it's an excellent way to hold some, if not all, of a trip your seniority alone won't buy you!

Until next time, stay safe and be sure to pack your On-Duty Contract Guide before flying your next trip. ▲



### APFA'S FIRST CONTRACT

In 1978, APFA began its first contract negotiations. Then-President Kathy Knoop chaired a diverse team. Permanent members were: Rebecca Beam BOS-I, Joann Donovan BUF, Frankie Garraton SJN, Becky Kroll DFW, Betty Metrick JFK, Ross Montgomery SAN, Pete Rivera SJU, Tamara Utens LGA and Brooke Biedermann JFK. Vice President Tommie Hutto-Blake served as the chairperson for the alternative team members that included Joetta Cunningham ORD, Leslie Egan Hoskins SFO, Joanie Derig McShane SFO, Bunny Young BOS, Meg Powers BOS, Michelle Chaisson BOS-I, Denise Hedges JFK and Carol Bunderla JFK. The APFA's Negotiations Counsel was Abe Levy. While the first attempt to ratify failed, ultimately the continued efforts of the Negotiating Team resulted in a history-changing agreement with the 1979 Contract.



### THE NEW CONSTITUTION

On September 11, 1991, the members of the APFA ratified a new constitution – the first comprehensive change since APFA's certification. The APFA Board of Directors appointed a diverse group of union representatives to serve as the Constitution Committee. The members of that committee were jokingly referred to as the "Committee From Hell" because of their storied and often combative political differences. The committee members were Tim Burns, Patt Gibbs, Randy Edwards, Kip Fry, Michael Kelliher, Becky Kroll and Deborah Murphy. The passage of the 1992 Constitution played a major role in setting the stage for APFA's success during the 1992-95 negotiations.



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## Chicago Hijacking Drill

### Recently a mock hijacking

exercise was conducted by the FBI and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) in Chicago. APFA Safety Representatives Mike Hendricks (ORD), Tim Lessa (LGA) and I participated in the drill along with representatives from United Airlines, AA Flight, APA and Nanette Terbush, Manager AA Flight Service Operations Security.

### Background

The exercise was conducted on a United Airlines 777 aircraft crewed by United Pilots and Flight Attendants. An actual ORD runway was closed to facilitate the drill and create a realistic atmosphere. Lead FBI Agent Chuck Miller briefed all participants. Agent Miller advised that the "hijackers" would play their roles very seriously. Agent Miller explained that any participants who became adversely affected at any time during the exercise could "opt out" by using the code term "red, red, red." United Airlines EAP representatives also advised that EAP personnel

would be available if needed. Additionally, airport EMT personnel were on hand to assist in the event of a medical emergency.

### The Drill

All participants were issued boarding passes for a simulated flight from ORD to LHR. United Flight Attendants performed all required boarding duties and the aircraft departed the gate. During taxi, the Captain made a P.A. informing passengers that a mechanical problem had arisen. The aircraft then stopped on the taxiway.

A few minutes later, the Captain opened the cockpit door to converse with the cabin crew. A man from the main cabin overpowered a Flight Attendant with a hand grenade and forced his way into the cockpit while the door was still open. A short time later, two other male hijackers emerged and began to bark orders at the passengers. One of the hijackers grabbed a young teenage boy, placed a gun to his head and paraded him up and down the aisle of the aircraft.

Male passengers were moved from the forward cabin and female passengers were moved into first class. During the first part of the situation, the hijackers would not let passengers get comfortable and continually changed demands. A short time later, FBI SWAT team members could be seen assembling outside the aircraft on the tarmac. Authorities on the ground moved large vehicles like catering trucks in front of and behind the aircraft to keep it from being moved. Passengers were ordered to lower window shades to prevent outside authorities from observing actions in the cabin.

The situation felt very real. The hijackers were aggressive and demanding. They demanded that everyone continue to look forward and not make eye contact with them. At one point, APFA Safety Rep. Mike Hendricks was just sitting in his seat with his headphones on, staring forward when a hijacker approached him. The hijacker got in Mike's face and held a hand gun to his head. The hijacker began yelling and screaming at Mike for merely having his headphones on. Passengers were not allowed to

move about the cabin or go alone to the lavatories. Anyone needing to use the lavatory had to get permission from the hijackers. He or she was escorted to the restroom and had to leave the door unlocked.

The UAL crew did an excellent job of communicating with each other about the actions, whereabouts, number and physical description of the hijackers. Several of the crew members were forced to take passenger seats. From those seats they utilized their personal cell phones and the plane's earphones to contact UAL Operations to relay important information. The Flight Attendants worked together coordinating phone calls, sharing critical information, covering for each other and alerting one another when they were in the clear or when the terrorists were nearby. However, when the hijackers caught Flight Attendants disobeying their instructions, they were taken to the forward cabin and "killed."

About four hours into the exercise, a female passenger who had been sitting quietly in her seat turned out to be a "sleeper." She

**"...a female passenger who had been sitting quietly in her seat turned out to be a "sleeper."**



was greeted by one of the male hijackers and provided with a hand gun. She was told to stand guard and watch over a particular section of the aircraft.

During the ordeal negotiations between the hijackers and authorities took place. Some passengers were released and some were "killed." Hostages who were released were told to exit the aircraft. The FBI Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team in full gear was positioned under the aircraft and behind a catering truck. Their assault weapons were pointed at the hostages. One at a time, each hostage was taken to the back of the catering truck and searched. They were then driven to an aircraft hangar. Inside the hangar the hostages were questioned by the FBI. Several of the Flight Attendants who had been previously released were asked to look at the hostages. Authorities were trying to determine if any of the hijackers had exited the aircraft with the hostages.

The exercise went for a full six hours until 2:00 a.m. The drill culminated with a dramatic intervention by the SWAT team and it was very impressive to witness their coordination and effective-

ness. Their presence was commanding and authoritative. Yet, while they brought a sense of relief to the hostages, they treated all individuals as potential suspects. The team made their way through the cabin. They demanded that all passengers place their hands on top of the seatbacks in front of them and keep their heads down. Passengers who did not obey this command were promptly and harshly reminded. This requirement proved its importance when it was revealed that there was another female "sleeper" who managed to gain access to the cockpit when the SWAT team boarded.

All passengers were commanded to deplane via airstairs and assemble on the tarmac. One hijacker was "killed" and the remaining hijackers were quickly identified due to the effective descriptions provided by the crewmembers and released hostages. After the "good guy" and "bad guy" determinations were made, passengers were allowed to re-enter the aircraft and the drill ended.

The exercise was a valuable one for all involved and will enable both the FBI and the TSA to be

better prepared if and when this type of terrorist event occurs.

## ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

### BACK by POPULAR DEMAND

Flight Attendants have expressed to the Safety Department how much they enjoyed this section. Just like at EPT's incidents and accidents seems to captivate everyone. Here are a few we wanted to share.

#### 11/2004, MIA/LAX, B767-300ER

72-year old male with Parkinsons "woke up" in flight feeling confused and attempted to leave the aircraft. Flight Attendants restrained passenger by wrapping a blanket around his chest. Being frail, they feared flex cuffs could injure him. A Flight Attendant sat in seat directly behind passenger for remainder of flight continuing to restrain man. A strong passenger restrained man for landing. Paramedics and man's son met the flight.

#### 12/2004, SJU/JFK, A300-600R

Passenger brought a dog on board leaving kennel open allowing the dog to escape. Flight Attendant requested passenger place animal back into kennel. Passenger complained about procedure. Dog bit Flight Attendant on back of hand six times. Flight Attendant was bleeding. Nurse on board recommended paramedics meet flight to administer antibiotics. Flight was also met by Passenger Service Mgr questioning how passenger was able to board animal without paperwork.

#### 12/2004, JFK/SDQ, A300-600R

Unexpected turbulence. Captain made PA for Flight Attendants to take jumpseats immediately. Five seconds after announcement, aircraft jolted up & down and lost altitude quickly. Three Flight Attendants experienced serious injuries to chest, shoulders, legs, knees, back, and neck.

#### 12/2004, ORD/IND, S80

During taxi-out, passenger found a security threat written on a briefing card. Aircraft was taken to remote area off runway where all passengers deplaned without carry-ons and were bussed to terminal. X-ray machine was taken

to aircraft and all passengers' bags were removed from aircraft and re-scanned. Aircraft searched by canines and passengers re-screened as well. Flight was cancelled and all passengers were accommodated on next available flights.

#### 12/2004, JFK/LAX, B767-200ER

Passenger acting strangely and taking pictures with digital camera inside of cabin. Later in the flight, passenger continued taking pictures. Failed to comply with crew member instructions. Was downloading pictures onto laptop computer. Purser spoke with passenger and was asked to hand over equipment voluntarily. Did not comply and stated, "You are just a stewardess and cannot do a damn thing about it." Flight Attendants communicated with cockpit. Law enforcement officers were requested to meet flight. Flight was met by 8 airport police, 1 TSA rep., and LAX Flight Service. Passenger was detained and denied further travel.



**Patty French**  
APFA Health Coordinator

## Making a Difference

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If you could make a difference would you try? If you had the skills and opportunity to motivate others to make a difference, would you be inspired to do so?

There are nine Flight Attendants who work intermittently in the Health Department at APFA Headquarters. Each domicile also has local APFA Representatives who serve the health needs of their respective bases. These Flight Attendant volunteers know the challenges of the job and the needs of their co-workers. They

**“The Flight Attendants at American have a greater risk of getting injured at work than someone who works as a lumberjack or coalminer.”**

enjoy solving problems and have a passion for improving things. They help make our job a career and our career a safe and healthy one.

In concert with their work is a program that is currently being developed with the intent of making our workplace safer. It is a collaborative effort between management and all three unions on the property designed to develop a positive safety culture that will reduce work-related injuries. This program is called Partnership for Safety.

We, as Flight Attendants, don't normally think of ourselves as being in a job that has a high risk of personal injury at work. However, Flight Attendants at American have a greater risk of getting injured at work than someone who works as a lumberjack or a coal miner. In 2004, Chicago-based Flight Attendants averaged a serious work-related injury every other day. The three most common types were turbulence-related injuries, cart-related injuries and blocked ears. The physical, emotional and financial

impact of these injuries is often devastating.

We all have the right to a safe work environment. For this reason, the Partnership for Safety program's goal is to create a safety culture that will reduce work injuries. This program is already in progress in Chicago and will be coming soon to every base. If you have the desire to make a contribution toward improving the safety of our work environment, this is the opportunity for you. Flight Attendant participation will be essential to developing this program and reducing safety hazards at work. When the Partnership for Safety arrives at your base it will be well publicized. Step up and volunteer to participate in making our job better.

While the Partnership for Safety program is being developed, the representatives who work the IOD desk would like you to keep the following things in mind:

- Get a turbulence briefing for every leg. If it gets too bumpy, sit down and buckle up! We are all seasoned professionals who

shouldn't wait for someone else to tell us the obvious.

- Label and report broken carts. More importantly, know your limits. Use of a broken cart to accomplish a service isn't worth you getting hurt.

- If you see unsafe conditions, report them so that they can be fixed. Your report may prevent a co-worker's injury. We are in this together and, remember, there is no job worth getting injured for.

Until the Partnership for Safety program is fully developed at all bases, our hope is that by raising the awareness of the high incidence and common types of injuries, we can help ourselves to be safer and avoid injury. Unfortunately, some injuries are unavoidable. Should you become injured at work, here are some guidelines to follow:

1. If necessary, seek medical treatment.
2. Report the injury to American Airlines via your Service Manager, MOD, or anyone in Flight Service management who will complete and submit the Automated Accident Report (AAR). Be sure to ask for a

copy for yourself. Document everything and request a report from your co-workers as well.

3. Call Crew Schedule if you are going to lose time.
4. Arm yourself with a thorough knowledge of your rights by downloading the APFA IOD packet off the APFA website. It can be found under the health department. If you have questions, call the APFA IOD desk, ext. 8303.
5. Become familiar with your state's requirements relating to visiting a doctor within the Company's Preferred Provider Network.
6. Keep an IOD journal, phone log and pain diary in case it takes a long time to settle your case.
7. If your IOD becomes protracted, go to the Social Security website at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) for eligibility and filing instructions. Remember that in most states you have a year from the time of injury to file for Social Security Disability.

If you are injured in turbulence and the IOD is denied, seek help

from your Base Chairperson or Vice Chairperson. Our Collective Bargaining Agreement contains a Letter of Agreement (page 255) regarding rough air. This letter gives us contractual rights that are specific to rough air and investigations by Flight Service.

You can access American's policy on employee injuries through Jetnet in the Employee Policy Guide. The APFA website at [www.apfa.org](http://www.apfa.org) can also provide valuable information concerning injuries on the job. Becoming familiar with IOD rules and guidelines now and learning how you can help yourself if you get hurt at work will likely make any injury less stressful and financially damaging.

Remember, you can make a difference. Help us help ourselves by learning more about and participating in the Partnership for Safety program when it is implemented at your base.

### Trauma Response

As Safety Professionals, Flight Attendants are typically at greater risk of experiencing traumatic events such as serious injuries or life-threatening situations, than the general public. Such events, whether actual or threatened, can produce a traumatic stress reaction. Exposure to multiple traumatic events may reawaken the feelings and thoughts of prior inci-

dents. Sometimes, such events occur without warning or in ways that leave one with no escape from a threatening situation, thus increasing stress. It is not uncommon for a Flight Attendant who has had an injury at work to physically recover from the injury, clear medical and return to work only to find that she or he experiences a traumatic stress reaction resulting from the injury.

At the IOD desk, we often hear from Flight Attendants who say something like, "I've been through a lot with this injury and I thought that I was doing pretty well. I was really looking forward to returning to work until we hit turbulence on my first trip back. Now I don't know if I can even put on my uniform again."

Normal reactions to a traumatic event can include:

- numbness or feelings of disbelief;
- a "roller coaster" of emotions, including sadness, anger, fear and helplessness;
- difficulty remembering or concentrating;
- physical symptoms of fatigue or nausea; and/or
- a change in sleep or eating patterns.

People react to traumatic events in many different ways and at different times. Certain cues or

reminders such as smells or sounds associated with the trauma may prompt you to re-experience the stress of a prior event. When this happens, it's normal to react to the cue even if you are not fully aware of the connection. Common cues for Flight Attendants injured at work include flying the same trip, position or type of airplane, turbulence, or the use of the same emergency equipment. Sometimes even putting on the uniform or driving to the airport can trigger a response to the initial trauma. Even though the reaction may be different, there are some common patterns. Fortunately, there are also some effective ways to accelerate recovery.

- Acknowledge that you are having a traumatic reaction.
- Give yourself permission and time to grieve.
- Talk about your feelings with someone you trust and know will be supportive.
- Allow yourself to be emotional and trust that you can pull yourself together later.
- Avoid isolating yourself.
- Get proper rest and nutrition.
- Avoid alcohol and other mood-changing substances.

In some cases, stress-related symptoms may seem to linger for a long time or even become more intense with time. There is no set time frame for recovery; it varies from person to person and with

different events. However, if you notice that your stress symptoms have not improved or are getting worse after several weeks you may want to seek professional assistance. With the help of a professional you will be able to get relief from feelings of anxiety, resume your daily life and develop ways to keep your symptoms from returning. American's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is an excellent resource to help you find a mental health professional in your area. You can reach an EAP Representative at 1-800-555-8810.

Taking action and asking for help is a sign of strength. Remember, there are no magic formulas for working through a traumatic event. Although the event will pass, the memory of the experience will remain with you. Recognizing and integrating that memory as a part of who you are now is an important aspect of the healing process.

In the spirit of helping each other, I would like to close by making you aware of a program that was created by JFK Flight Attendant and former APFA Health Coordinator Susie Wallace. She developed and introduced the Peer Support program at the east coast bases in response to 9/11. It is a program designed to support you when a "category four" incident occurs. Susie has now trained Flight Attendants on this program

at almost every base. The Peer Support roster is posted on the APFA Health Department website and I encourage anyone interested in becoming involved with this valuable program to contact the Peer Support leader at their base and inquire about training and participation.

Have a safe trip and let's do our best to keep each other safe out there!



### UNITY PAYS LOGO

The "Unity Pays" logo was adopted for the 1992-95 APFA Negotiating Committee including Denise Hedges, Eric Bergman, Dano Bosch, Kat Clements, Alan Fahringer, Linda Fincher, Donna Forloine, Brian Hagerty, Patrick Hancock, Becky Kroll, Deborah Murphy, Suzie (Spurlock) Thorley, Emily Whelpley and APFA Negotiations Counsel and Honorary Member, Rob Clayman. Rob is credited with the actual slogan itself and design credit goes to graphic artist Renata McClung. The Unity Pays logo is a trademark of APFA.





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*I hope you have enjoyed the On-Duty Contract Guide that was inserted in the last issue of Skyword. It is an excellent tool meant to supplement our Contract, and it should make our current work rules much more accessible. Please carry it with you on your trips and refer to it often. Remember, a complete Contract is in the works and will be finished and distributed soon!*

**I recently received a question** regarding the ability to pre-plot in addition to make-up when you have had a Misconnection, Illegality or Cancellation (MIC) mid-sequence. After you have fulfilled your obligation as outlined on page 22 in the On-Duty Guide, your guarantee is protected, not the actual value of the

## Scheduling Q & A's

trip. Consequently, some of you may prefer to make-up additional time somewhere else in the month. This can be accomplished through pre-plotting open time by contacting Crew Schedule. If you haven't voluntarily reduced your guarantee prior to the MIC, you may pre-plot up to the limit of your applicable monthly No Option or Option 1 maximum.

APFA will be offering membership training at our 12th Annual Convention, to be held March 14-18, 2005, in Chicago. We will be offering a class based on the On-Duty Contract Guide and we encourage you to attend. The classes begin at 9:00 a.m. on March 14th with several sessions held throughout the day. The Convention will take place at the Embassy Suites Downtown Lakefront Hotel

Here are the answers to a few questions we regularly receive at APFA Headquarters:

**Q:** How do I do my vacation bidding now that everything has changed?

**A:** Actually, the answer is very simple. The confusion arises from the way we used to bid, so that when the pre-vacation 48 touched

**"APFA will be offering membership training at our 12th Annual Convention, to be held March 14-18, 2005, in Chicago."**

trips it created the maximum number of days off. Since we no longer have a pre-vacation 48, every day of vacation functions the same way. If a vacation day touches a trip, we do not fly it. If the debrief time following arrival touches our vacation, we also do not fly the trip. Don't forget that if you are off a trip for vacation, it can still create paper legalities, even though you did not fly it. You will be legal and available for a trip following vacation as long as you have applicable debrief time (15/30 minutes) plus one hour prior to departure of the next trip. Example: the last vacation trip of the sequence you bid arrives at 1200 on the 2nd. You are legal to work a 1315 departure domestically and a 1330 departure internationally, on the 2nd.

**Q:** What is short call make-up?

**A:** You may designate yourself as desiring short call make-up on a daily basis. This allows you to be called for trips departing in three hours or fewer for Today's Operation. It is not a violation of the Order of Open Time for other Flight Attendants on the Make-up list, since these trips would have

gone to reserve Flight Attendants. You must place your name on the regular make-up list, as well as entering: HISC/M/BASE/DATE/A to add your name to the list; HISC/M/BASE/DATE/D to delete your name from the list. The computer will accept only the current day's date, in order to keep the list as current as possible, and an "A" will appear next to your name on the NNI/NND/Base/Date/MU list. As with the regular make-up list, if you do not plan to fly, do not put yourself on the list.

**Q:** What is the M2 on my reserve schedule and how do I move it?

**A:** A Flight Attendant does not have the option of moving an M2 day. The M2 may only be moved by Crew Schedule, and it may be moved to alleviate an illegality, such as 24 in 7 or 30 in 7. The contract requires that the M2 be attached to other duty-free periods when it is bid, but it may become a stand-alone duty-free period. Crew Schedule must notify you at least 12 hours prior to the start of the duty-free period to move it. An M2 can be moved to a date earlier or later in the month. Once moved, the M2 will

show as an X2 on your schedule and it cannot be moved a second time. The X2 will then be treated as any other duty-free period for purposes of duty-free period move-up.

**Q:** I was on reserve the last day of the month and they flew me into my line month. That's illegal, right?

**A:** No, it was not illegal. The current month's operation will always take precedent and you may be flown in to a line month. If you had duty-free periods the first days of the next month, they will be rescheduled to later in the month. The carry-over trip will use D.O.'s remaining in the month, and you will not be entitled to "replacement" days off.

Please forward any questions you would like to see addressed in future articles to the Scheduling Department via our website. I hope you will consider attending our training in March at the APFA Annual Convention. An educated membership makes for a stronger union.





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### Reminders

- Please review Article 21 regarding late transportation. If transportation is late by more than 30 minutes on Domestic or on International by more than 45 minutes from scheduled or actual landing time, whichever is later, you may take a taxi and expense it. You will need to turn in a receipt.
- Please use the online hotel review survey form to better assist us with upcoming reviews.
- In the next issue I plan to do a section entitled, "Your Questions Answered." Please send any questions you may have for the hotel department to hotel-dept@apfa.org and use **Keyword** as the subject line.

## Helpful Hotel Hints

The Hotel Department has received a noted increase in the number of Hotel safety related debriefs, emails and phone calls during the past three months. I hope you find the following reminders helpful during your layovers. Most, if not all of these rules can be found on the entry door or in the bedside table at many hotels.

1. Never answer your hotel door without verifying who is knocking. This rule applies in all cases of a knock at your door. If you have not specifically requested anything of the hotel, i.e. room service, maintenance or housekeeping, keep the door closed and ask the person's name. If he or she is with the hotel, ask which department. Once you have obtained this information, tell the person to wait a moment while you call the front desk to verify the person's credentials. The time this takes may be the moment or two that saves you undue harm.
2. Whenever you are in your room close the door securely and use all available locking devices. Often we forget to use the safety chain or bar in our rooms and simply rely upon

**"If transportation is late by more than 30 minutes on Domestic or on International by more than 45 minutes ... you may take a taxi and expense it."**

the primary lock of the closed door. Most hotels have shifted to using card-style locks and, in most cases, the magnetized key code is reset for each new guest. I cannot stress enough that the codes are not always automatically changed and, if not, could result in a former hotel guest reentering the room. Once you've entered the room and checked to be sure it is empty and safe, secure all the locks.

3. When in public, do not needlessly display your room key or leave it unattended. Publicly displaying your key with a hotel logo on it is as good as standing on a table in a crowded room and shouting, "I'm staying at the Sheraton hotel!" Keep it secure.
4. Don't draw attention to yourself by wearing expensive jewelry or displaying large amounts of money.
5. Don't invite strangers to your room.
6. Be observant and use caution when out and when returning

to your hotel. Never go out alone without someone knowing both where you are going and when you plan to return. Check in with that person upon your return. If at all possible, don't go out alone at all; go in groups of three or four. There really is "safety in numbers." As you walk, be aware of what's going on around you. Consistently scan the area to make sure you are not being followed. Walk only in well-lit areas. It's always a wise idea to use the front entrance of the hotel when you return. Although the side entrance with a key lock may be a lot closer to your room, these entrances are generally darker and are certainly less populated.

7. Use the hotel or room safe to store your valuables. As referenced earlier, the codes on room keys are not always changed. Further, any number of people on the hotel staff could have access to your room.
8. Ensure that all windows and doors (including connecting ones) are locked. Although the

AA hotel contracts require rooms above the ground floor in an effort to prevent intruders from gaining access, some people can do amazing Spiderman imitations. Of course, if the connecting door is unlocked, it would only take putting one foot in front of the other.

9. Don't ever leave luggage unattended in a hotel lobby or airport. Enough said.
10. Report it to management. If you see anything suspicious, report it to the hotel's management. Once you return to base please follow it up with a pink APFA hotel debrief sheet so that the Hotel Department can keep an eye on any developing situations.

Make layover safety your personal responsibility. If you don't take a care of yourself, no one else will.



# San Diego Satellite; One Year Later... by Ann Clark-Durkin, LAX

## Editor's Note:

Satellite bases are referenced in Attachment N of the '03 Concessionary Agreement. San Diego was the first satellite test base chosen. As you will clearly see, a great deal of work goes into starting up a satellite base, which is work done primarily by the Flight Attendants interested in flying out of the satellite city. Please note that while it can be advantageous to those who live in the cities for which we have satellite bases, it can also create problems for those covering the trips in the satellite. This occurs when Reserves, Make-Up, Availability Flight Attendants or even Flight Attendants on reassignment are forced to fly satellite trips to cover PVD's, sick calls, training, etc. incurred by the satellite Flight Attendants.

As set forth in Attachment N, the Company and APFA retain the right to cancel the satellite test at any time. In order for the satellite to be considered a success, the satellite cannot generate any extra expenses for AA, and the Company must be able to substantiate operational viability.

It is also important to note that the Company reduces its costs from satellite bases because it can alleviate unnecessary deadheading, layover hotels and ground transportation. Therefore, these tests will be included in our "credit column."

I cannot thank Annie enough for the time she has put into recording her experience as the first Satellite Coordinator.

It hardly seems like a year has passed since San Diego was chosen as the test site for a satellite base. I have been asked to share with the membership what went into the start up and what has happened in our first year. I hope this will benefit all our members and provide some insight for Flight Attendants at the new satellite base in MSP and other potential future test sites.

In early January 2004 we received the word that SAN was chosen to be the first satellite "test" as outlined in attachment N of the Restructuring Agreement. LAX Chairperson John Nikides assisted in setting up a meeting in San Diego for January 13th so that we could get make the LAX Flight Attendants aware of the fact that, in less than two weeks, people could be bidding lines out of San Diego. We prodded management to get an HI6 message out with the meeting date, then basically called everyone we knew and had them call everyone they knew to get the word out about this meeting. Incredibly, with only one week's notice, 36 people showed up at the airport that day to learn about the satellite flying!

Key people in APFA and AA management made time to come down for that meeting - John Nikides, Jena Hopkins, former APFA Contract and Scheduling

Coordinator, Sean Lynch, LAX Base Manager and Kel Graves, Manager Training AA.

This was a very spirited meeting. The Company representatives told us the satellite itself must be cost-neutral or we could lose the flying. There were many questions posed, most of which dealt with planned or unplanned absences and reserve. We figured out pretty quickly that it would be beneficial for F/A's to trade their SAN satellite trips for LAX sequences, if possible, before their absence, but that was about it. To be perfectly honest no one had a clue what was going to happen next.

At some point it was decided that there should be a coordinator in San Diego - someone who would be the liaison between the Flight Attendants and management. Everyone looked at me and shouted, "Annie, you do it!" (Probably has something to do with my decisive, resolute and strong-willed attitude, I guess.) So, thinking I'd only be making a few calls and sending some emails from time to time, I said yes. We passed around a piece of paper and people wrote down their name, address, email address and phone number and I

promised I would let people know what I learned.

When the meeting adjourned I met my soon-to-be co-coordinator, Keri Sartell, who volunteered to help me do whatever it took to get the satellite up and running smoothly. I gave her a copy of the sign in sheet and within 48 hours she had set up an Excel spreadsheet (which we now call "The Roster").

Bidsheets were coming out in less than four days and we had 36 names and a Q & A letter on the Flight Service website. We had nothing else to work with, period.

Our first major hurdle was that we had no way to communicate. We didn't know how many people knew about the satellite start-up. We asked management for a list of Flight Attendants living in the San Diego area, but that took six weeks to obtain. We couldn't get an HI6 message approved to ask for information from Flight Attendants, and we didn't have the resources to do it ourselves. So we learned as we went along. We didn't realize what PVD's, Jury Duty, IOD's, etc., would cost the satellite to cover. We didn't know that if our trips ended up in open time for any reason and

were not covered by make up it was a mark against the satellite.

The first 14 days of flying were very expensive for the Company. PVD's were granted daily. F/As had Jury Duty and were on the sick list - and reserves were dead-headed down to cover all of that. Neither Keri nor I could do anything about it. The flying was almost yanked in the first month.

This brought us to the second major hurdle and the one that almost did us in. We kept trying to get someone to listen to us. We were the ones in the trenches. We saw what was happening and we found solutions, but our suggestions and requests were not being dealt with. We crunched numbers. Keri contacted Sean Lynch and APFA the first week of February and requested a conference call mid-February so that we could address the biggest issue (reserve coverage for SAN trips). We desperately needed flexibility with reserves to originate/terminate their trips from SAN regardless of the fact that we did not have bid reserve selections. This issue was crucial to the survival of the satellite and was not addressed in the Restructuring Agreement in any way. We were flying blind, literally.

We told everyone who would listen what wasn't working and how to change it. We had a crew

**"We told everyone who would listen what wasn't working and how to change it."**



scheduler who worked with us, giving us the “heads up” when trips needed coverage, thus averting costly deadheading of F/A’s. We spent countless hours on the phone and emailing every one we could think of - from scheduling to management, Employee Relations and APFA - to find a way to communicate with one another, and to stress the need for reserves to be able to originate their trips from the satellite. That would allow the San Diego satellite to function as it was envisioned. Keri and I are the lead coordinators for over 195 flight attendants. We didn’t want to let those satellite F/A’s down. As a result of our efforts, ER and APFA signed a side letter of agreement that allowed F/A’s on reserve living in the vicinity of the satellite to originate their flying at the satellite if they so chose. This involved software upgrades to TARS plus additional new software specifically designed to identify F/A’s on reserve in the satellite area. This was a HUGE accomplishment not just for us, but for all future satellite bases. We did all this while working our full schedules each month.

We developed and constantly revised the “Tools and Rules” for Satellite flying. We are still fine tuning it today. We tried to keep information simple and easy to understand. We put in entries for F/A’s to use to find trips that were open out of SAN (the N4D entry). We explained how to deal

with a sick call. We educated reserve Flight Attendants on the proper computer entries to volunteer for SAN trips.

All of the above accomplishments evolved over the course of many, many months and with constant communication by Keri and me with both the Company and the Union. We constantly revised both the Roster and the Tools and Rules as needed. Initially we spent a huge amount of time getting problem after problem solved but now it’s manageable. Here’s what we do each month:

- \* Put Company-required information in a filing cabinet in the operations area
- \* Find a F/A to bring bidsheets down from LAX for us
- \* Check bid results and verify the line holders are ACTIVE or new to satellite flying then get them up to speed about the satellite flying
- \* Verify vacations, relief and pre-plotted AVBL schedules
- \* Look for direct conflicts, legal rest break issues, 30/7 conflicts with the new month’s flying
- \* Educate San Diego reserves about the computer entries to volunteer for SAN flying
- \* Watch open time and HIBOARD for SAN trips

\* Serve as a liaison for people who want to drop/pick up SAN flying

\* Help F/A’s trade SAN trips for LAX trips if possible before they call in sick, then help them give a firm clear date with scheduling so we can cover any other SAN trips

\* Send out roster emails when scheduling issues happen like weather delays causing illegalities, etc., so that other SAN

**“...we cannot let our guard down and be inattentive to our satellite obligations, or at any time the satellite flying could go away.”**

F/A’s can go on make up and get the flying covered

In August we held a follow-up meeting where representatives of APFA, LAX management, Crew Scheduling and Employee Relations reviewed the six month “test” period. Another 30 Flight Attendants came in on a day off to hear what was being said. Keri and I showed them the stats (that we had diligently compiled on our own) and presented some of the most pressing questions to them regarding issues that still had not been solved. We “passed” the test, and flying has continued, but the rules for satellite flying still apply.

Our satellite operation was severely tested again in December, when there were a large number of senior F/A’s on vacation who bid other LAX lines for better days off. Also, the San Diego trips, to put it bluntly, were really lousy and many other SAN F/A’s also decided to bid lines at one of the five co-terminals. SAN Relief lines were incorrectly assigned to LAX F/A’s, in violation of attachment N, and had to be adjusted before bids were finalized. Also, trips were paired in such a way that legal rest break issues became a problem if a flight into San Diego was delayed more than one hour. Again we scrambled to cover trips and emailed and talked to everyone we knew to try and get a more logical trip pairing to avoid these problems.

The ongoing or everlasting hurdle will always be the politics and red tape that slow our progress. We are in uncharted waters here and each new “solution” to a problem takes time and creative ingenuity to become the accepted norm. Our roster group stands at 195 F/A’s and growing. Our entire unified group has shown management that we will, indeed, do whatever it takes to make this work. They need to do the same.

It may look like a great deal of work, but for the most part the Flight Attendants who live in San Diego now know that each person flying out of the satellite basically “owns” their own schedule

and should do whatever it takes to make sure that the flying gets covered. We have accepted the responsibility and conditions of satellite flying and work within those parameters. However, we cannot let our guard down and be inattentive to our satellite obligations, or at any time the satellite flying could go away. We’re essentially ALWAYS in the “test” phase.

Keri and I also realized from the beginning of the satellite that this test base would set the standards for future satellite bases. We have attempted to “do it right,” right from the start. We have created a package of information that can be adapted as necessary for any city that is given the chance to do what we have done. APFA has all of this information. We have kept good records and are willing and eager to share that information with any potential satellite base. No city needs to re-invent the wheel, just refine it to suit their circumstances.

It has not been easy but the personal rewards continue to be worth it for both of us. In this day of ever increasing requests to give back something, the satellite base agreement has provided a small glimmer of light. We’ve been able to fly out of the city where we live. We hope to continue flying out of SAN for years to come and we offer our assistance to all potentially new satellite bases.



# What's An Ad Hoc?

By **Steven Ellis**, *Executive Committee Member*

This article is part of a continuing series intended to educate the membership about the governance of APEA.

What exactly is an "Ad Hoc" and what is his or her role in the structure of APEA? If you have ever found yourself asking this question, then you are in good company as most Flight Attendants I come in contact with have a very limited understanding of the national structure of APEA. Sure, many of us vote in the National Officer and Base Chair elections - although an alarmingly large percentage of us fail to participate at all - yet my impression is that few Flight Attendants understand the basic structure of our Union. As the newest Ad Hoc Member of the Executive Committee, it is my hope that I can provide some perspective on how this committee and the Ad Hocs function in the overall governmental structure of APEA.

A bit of history is in order. In accordance with Federal law, every labor union in the United States must be a democratic organization with a recognized Constitution. When APEA was formed in 1977, the adopted Constitution placed the responsi-

bility for governing the Union solely with the Board of Directors, which at that time included the National Officers and three Division Representatives. The size of the Board fluctuated with each base opening or closing and by the early '90's had reached a total of 29 members. The Board was required to meet quarterly to conduct the day-to day business of APEA. At that time the Union was spending over \$200,000 annually on Board meetings. Needless to say, this had become an extremely cumbersome and expensive way of doing business and in 1990 a bipartisan committee was formed to revamp the structure of the Union.

In September 1991, an innovative Constitution was ratified by the APEA membership. The framers of the new Constitution devised a less-costly method of conducting the routine business of the Union by creating an Executive Committee (EC) as an adjunct to the Board. A more cost-effective way of operating was desirable then and, given the current state of our industry, is even more imperative today. It is important to note that currently each Board meeting costs the APEA approximately \$50,000, considerably

higher than the \$20,000 cost of an EC meeting. Over the course of a year, this is a huge savings that can be directed back to providing other member services.

The EC is comprised of the four APEA National Officers and five Ad Hoc Members elected by the voting Board of Directors, acting as delegates, at the APEA Annual Convention. Many of you who participated in the recent base elections may have noticed that you were voting for an individual to be both Base Chair and "Delegate." By electing a Base Chair/Delegate, the members at a base specifically authorize that individual to vote for them in the election of Ad Hoc Members of the Executive

Committee. Conceptually, Ad Hocs were envisioned as highly-qualified and experienced individuals who could provide a reasoned sounding board for the Union leadership. However, because the position of Ad Hoc is an elected position, Federal law requires that there be no require-

ments placed on candidates for the position. Any member in good standing can submit a Willingness to Serve for an open Ad Hoc position and be considered as a candidate.

Ad Hoc Members of the EC serve staggered three-year terms. While serving as an Ad Hoc, they are prohibited by the Constitution from holding any full-time Union office, although they may participate in special projects or negotiations. The process of nominating and electing individuals to fill these important positions was formulated to facilitate consensus building

**"A more cost-effective way of operating was desirable ... and, given the current state of our industry, is even more imperative today."**

amongst voting Board members (the National Officers do not have a vote on the Board or serve as delegates), as a two-thirds majority is required in order for a nominee to be elected. The Constitution mandates that nominations for an open position(s) of Ad Hoc Member of the Executive Committee take place on the first day of the Annual Convention and that voting begin on the second day. Additionally,

a convention may not adjourn with a vacancy in an Ad Hoc position. Like politics in any democracy, the process can get a bit challenging at times but it is almost always fascinating. Any member in good standing can attend the Annual Convention and observe the Ad Hoc election first hand. This year's Annual Convention is being held March 14 through 18 in Chicago at the Embassy Suites Downtown Lakefront. Two Ad Hoc positions are coming open and nominations for those Ad Hocs will take place on March 14.

Once in place, Ad Hocs, as a group, represent the interests of the Voting Board of Directors on the Executive Committee. Individually, each Ad Hoc serves as a conduit to the APEA Base Chairs assigned to him or her. Each is responsible for communicating with and updating specific Board members on the EC's activities. It is an ingenious design because an Ad Hoc is not beholden to any one base's issues or concerns. The structure allows the EC to maintain a truly system-wide perspective on the Union's activities.

The EC was originally created

and currently operates as the agent of the Board of Directors. In short, the EC is responsible for the routine operational issues of the Union and it meets quarterly to conduct necessary business. However, perhaps the most advantageous aspect of the structure put into place by the 1991 Constitution is the ability of the EC to spring into action at a moment's notice in the event of a crisis needing the Union's immediate attention. This smaller body can definitely be more hastily convened than the larger Board with its current 22 members. Furthermore, there is no doubt that consensus can be built more quickly in a body of nine than in a group of 22.

The five Ad Hoc members of the Executive Committee also have a judicial responsibility within our Union. These five individuals, acting autonomously, serve as the APFA Grievance Appeal Panel. In the event that a grievant's case is rejected by the Grievance Review Committee, he or she may file an appeal to the Grievance Appeal Panel as provided in the APFA Constitution Article III, Section 4.J.11. This is the only situation in which the Ad Hocs act as a body outside of the EC. The advantage of this process, in my opinion, is that it allows a grievant the opportunity to have her or his case independently

reviewed by a body completely removed from the facts of the case.

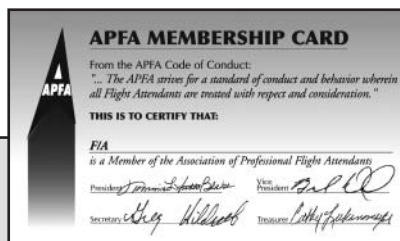
In many ways the current structure of APFA mirrors the U.S. Government's division of powers. The Board is the legislative branch, the National Officers are the executive branch and the Ad Hocs the judicial branch. As in any well-designed democratic system, there are checks and balances. The Board can overturn most Executive Committee actions with a few exceptions. The Executive Committee, on the other hand, is empowered to hear and resolve those issues that arise that are likely to be the most politically charged, such as election complaints, Article VII charges, and crucially, sending out a newly-negotiated Contract for ratification.

Although there are those who would like to return to the old system of running APFA, the value of the Executive Committee and its Ad Hoc Members should be fully appreciated for the financial savings realized for the membership as well as for the checks and balances that the system incorporates into our national Union leadership.



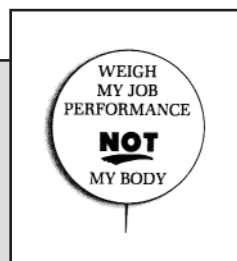
## THE STRIKE

In the early morning hours of Thursday, November 18, 1993, APFA President Denise Hedges, flanked by her negotiators, walked out to speak with the press and publicly called for an 11-day strike against American Airlines to begin at 0500 Central Standard Time. The brief announcement she made that morning in New Orleans took our Union into the history books. The Strike lasted five days and was ended when President Bill Clinton used the power of his office to broker an agreement between APFA and AAL to submit unresolved issues to binding interest arbitration.



## THE APFA MEMBERSHIP CARD

The APFA Membership Card is required-issue by the APFA Constitution, which states: "Every member of the APFA shall be provided a membership card and pin. The card shall contain space for the name of the member; shall carry the signature of an officer of officers; and shall bear the official insignia of APFA."



## THE WEIGHT AND SMOKING ISSUES

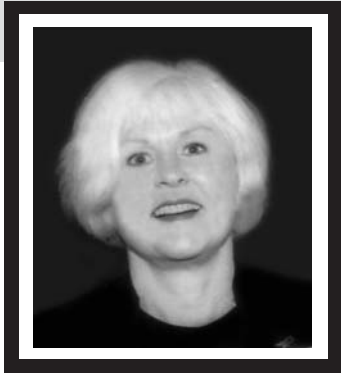
Our collective heritage is one of breaking the barriers of discrimination. Stewardesses played a significant role in establishing case law under the Civil Rights Act to eliminate discrimination on the basis of age, sex, marriage and pregnancy. APFA Flight Attendants have continued the legacy by successfully attacking smoking on the aircraft and weight and "appearance standards" discrimination. The beginning of the end to the weight issue started with the "constructive discharge" of Sherri Cappello. Additionally, a class action EEOC complaint was filed by Patt Gibbs, Sherri Cappello, Linda Prosser and Kitty Solder - all former APFA officers. The EEOC and the Company eventually agreed to modify AA's appearance standards, however, this was not the ultimate resolution. It was not until 1995 that final "appearance rules" conformed to Bonafide Occupational Qualifications (BFOQ) standards in accordance with federal guidelines. It took an act of Congress to ban smoking on board US commercial aircraft in 1990.



# Catherine

By Mario St. Michel, JFK

T. Shea



1946 - 2004

**Cathy was an inspiration for many of us at JFK, especially the APFA representatives.** She inspired a new generation of union reps who served in her shadow. Cathy passed on her vast knowledge to her successors and inspired us with her infectious passion, candor and honesty. Those of us who knew her became better people and better union reps as a result.

In early 1988, JFK was in quite a state. After very difficult negotiations, imposed work rules and a narrowly-averted strike, a tentative agreement was finally reached but, subsequently, both the APFA Chair and Vice Chair at JFK resigned. Cathy, who had served as a grievance rep in the 70's, eventually stepped forward and took on the challenge of representing the base of JFK. With the help of Betty Metrick-Alfaro as Vice Chair, Cathy became the Chair in April 1988.

The task she undertook was intimidating and got bigger as time went on. APFA had been fraught with internal strife and the membership sadly divided. A

new administration had just been elected, a new contract was taking effect with its ensuing complications and management was regularly suspending and terminating Flight Attendants for weight. She tackled her new job with vigor, working tirelessly for those she represented at the Kennedy base. Cathy became a passionate labor leader who believed in being honest and direct. She always called it like she saw it. She didn't mince words or waste time and she believed in telling the truth, even when it might not be what someone wanted to hear. She also told me never to compromise my principles - advice I've never forgotten.

By the time Cathy completed her second term in 1991, she had handled numerous grievances and assisted in resolving problems associated with the Foreign National Agreement. She also participated in creating the bi-par-

tisan committee that was dedicated to drafting a new APFA Constitution to provide much-needed stability for the Union. Cathy also witnessed and guided the transformation of JFK from a base of 400 Flight Attendants, flying mostly Caribbean turnarounds into the largest international base in the system.

**“She ... was dedicated to drafting a new APFA Constitution to provide much-needed stability for the Union.”**

When Betty Metrick-Alfaro was unable to continue as Vice Chair, Cathy took on the challenge of training the next generation of union reps beginning with Karen Johnson. When Karen resigned in order to go to law school I became Vice Chair. Cathy taught each of us skills we needed to become effective union advocates and a way of doing business that remains with me to this day. I, in turn, passed on these skills to my successors and they to theirs. Jeff Bott, Michelle Nasca, Jessica Washington and many others who passed through JFK learned Cathy's business style

and ethics and were inspired by her dedication and determination.

Cathy was one of the strongest women I have ever met and, in this union I have met many, many very strong women. She raised her son, Spencer, as a single mother with all the challenges inherent in that effort. She was justifiably proud when her bright and capable son joined the financial community in Manhattan.

Cathy fought her disease with the same determination and humor that she brought to everything in life. Right to the end she tried to cheer her friends and make them laugh while she fought to live every day to its fullest extent.

Cathy, you were an incredible inspiration for us all - a loyal friend, affable co-worker, devoted parent and dedicated union activist. You will be greatly missed, fondly remembered and forever in our hearts.





### APFA HEADQUARTERS

During its 28 years, APFA has established permanent headquarters offices in four locations:

7604 Baker Boulevard, Suite B  
Ft. Worth, TX

2715 Avenue E. East, Suite 609  
Arlington, TX

2008 East Randol Mill Road, Suite  
102  
Arlington, TX

1004 West Euless Blvd.  
Euless, TX

APFA purchased the property on Euless Blvd. In 1981, when Patt Gibbs was President and Marti O'Rourke was Vice President and the "Little Union That Could" had a membership of about 6,000. At the time of purchase, APFA shared the building with other tenants. As the years went by, and APFA grew to 8, 10, 12, 15 and finally over 20,000 Flight Attendants, the Union needed more and more space in order to provide its members with the services they needed and came to expect.

In 1996 under President Denise Hedges, the Union paid off the remaining mortgage on the building and paid for renovations the following year using funds accumulated as a direct result of Treasurer Jack Barnett's successful campaign to collect previously uncollected back dues. In 1997, the building was renovated under the direction of former Treasurer Michael Parker and expertise of Tim Trochelman, IDF.

## THE DECISION:

"For the reasons that follow, Mr. Smore's actions were sufficiently intimidating to have warranted, at a minimum, a first-level advisory for violating AA Rule 32. Considered in the context of the grievant's record, which included an existing Career Decision Day that was then in effect, his conduct was sufficient to result in his termination.

"There is ample reason to find that Mr. Smore was speaking to Ms. Sweat that night in a bullying and intimidating manner. While he denies inappropriate behavior in his dealings with Sweat, his claims are belied by his past record, the reaction of Sweat that evening and by his testimony and his demeanor at the arbitration hearing. This would not have been the first occasion of intemperate remarks or behavior by the grievant. Indeed, Mr. Smore has a checkered history in that regard. Three months after joining the Company he encountered performance issues. His substandard interaction with passengers and co-workers continued throughout his career. In 1994, he received a First Step Advisory, then a Second Step Advisory in June 1997. He offered a written commitment to better his behavior. As a general matter, by the time of this most recent incident, Mr. Smore had been coached and counseled on several occasions for performance problems regarding the way he behaved with crew members and passengers...the Board is convinced that, whatever the exact content of the conversation (with Sweat), there is no question he was angry and there is no question from the record that, in that state, he was fully capable of making remarks that were both intemperate and of a nature that he himself would later regret.

"The Board is persuaded, moreover, that Sweat was seriously concerned by the verbal interchange, enough so to warn friends and neighbors...Based, as well, on the observation of Mr. Smore's demeanor at the hearing and a careful consideration of the evidence of this matter, we find that his behavior constituted misconduct that would have warranted, at the very least, a first-level advisory...It suffices, we believe, to find that the contents of the June 3 phone call were grounds for discipline. That said, we cannot ignore what we believe to be valid concerns about the handling of the disciplinary process.

"The collective bargaining agreement between these parties establishes several important requirements. In the interest of promoting full discussion and potential resolution of grievances

at the earliest step possible, the parties have agreed to full disclosure of materials relevant to the disciplinary process. Appendix A, Letter 3, of the collective bargaining agreement states, in broad terms:

Whenever a meeting is significant enough that two supervisors are present with a Flight Attendant, all relevant documents must be exchanged prior to the start of the meeting.

"...Company representatives must remember the purpose of the above-stated agreement: Protection of the employee. Thus, the presumption should be that any and all materials that would reasonably inform the grievant as to what he or she is up against should be shared. Moreover, in this particular case, the handling of the 'withhold' meeting was such as to reasonably raise questions as to whether appropriate procedures were honored. While the Company denies the June 5 meeting was intended as a 31R investigatory interview, the meeting was considerably longer and substantially more detailed than if the grievant were simply advised he was to be withheld from service. The Company says this happened on the grievant's own initiative. But unscrambling the facts surrounding that kind of encounter can be as difficult as getting to the heart of an alleged threat. For the protection of all concerned, the Company is well advised to confine such meetings to the simple notification and withholding action. Further excursions into facts, relevant or not, may inevitably raise questions as to whether the investigative process has commenced prematurely. Where, as here, the Union was specifically advised that the purpose of the meeting was for a 'withhold' only, the potential for misunderstanding and distrust is immeasurably enhanced by an extended conference.

"As indicated above, the Board here concludes that the facts surrounding the encounter of June 3 are sufficiently serious to have supported the Company's determination that Mr. Smore had failed to correct his performance problem. The failure constituted a direct violation of his Commitment Letter and the discharge, therefore, must be found to have been for just cause."

### THE AWARD

"The grievance is denied" 

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