

The Official Publication of the Association of Professional Flight Attendants

# SKYword

Spring 2009

“We need to level the playing field for workers and the unions that represent their interests, because we know that you cannot have a middle class without a strong labor movement.”

— President Barack Obama

the best ways to create jobs, ensure workplaces are safe and focus on policies that benefit the middle class.

“The strength of our economy can be directly by the strength of the middle class,” Obama said.

January 30, 2009  
Washington D.C.

a bill signing today, President Barack Obama underscored his support for this nation's unions and the labor movement. The Task Force on Middle Working Families, and will be led by President Joe Biden. It's aim is to get Cabinet members to find

7 WILDFIRES |

By  
NEW

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**DENISE POINTER** SECRETARY

**JUAN BARRERA** TREASURER

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

– Joint APFA / TWU Press Release

This round of negotiations is our opportunity to regain our status as members of a strong, viable middle class. If we exercise our strength collectively—if we mobilize for a single purpose—we will no longer have to choose between paying either the rent or the grocery bill.

– APFA President Laura Glading

Once again, the nation has witnessed the difference between life and death that comes from having trained, experienced union members on the job. ... All of the airline and airport workers involved in the Jan. 15 [US Airways ditching] were union members who received extensive training that was provided for and required under their union contracts.

– John Wojcik  
People's Weekly World

Like those on Wall Street, the conduct of [American's] executives is shameful. ... Management believes that they are entitled to the riches with which they reward themselves.

... In these negotiations we are entitled to a contract that replaces the RPA concessions with a middle class standard of living.  
– APFA President Laura Glading

The way to get the economy back on track is to boost the purchasing power of the middle class. One major way to do this is to expand the percentage of working Americans in unions. ... The American middle class isn't looking for a bailout or a handout. Most people just want a chance to share in the success of the companies they help to prosper. – Former Secretary of Labor Robert Reich, LA Times

With a new Administration and Congress friendly to workers taking their seats in Washington, we expect that airline workers can get a fair shake under federal law. ... We look forward to mediation and believe this is an opportunity to revive the middle-class standard that Flight Attendants at American had achieved before the company came to us, hat in hand, asking for relief.  
– APFA President Laura Glading

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# Restoring Our Middle-Class Standards

On January 26, 2009 I stated to the press that APFA is "determined to restore the middle-class standards that Flight Attendants once enjoyed." Four days later, President Barack Obama proclaimed that, "We cannot have a strong middle class without a strong labor movement." For the first time in recent memory we have a Chief Executive who appreciates the decades of organizing and bargaining that created the middle class. Those struggles established a standard of living that allowed millions of Americans to own a home, have adequate medical insurance, pay for their children's college tuition and retire with economic security.

Over the past eight years, a relentless attack on working people, combined with policies that further enriched the wealthy, has decimated the middle class.

Over the past eight years, a relentless attack on working people, combined with policies that further enriched the wealthy, has decimated the middle class. Between 2000 and 2007, the average family spent about \$4600 more for basic expenses: housing, food and healthcare; yet overall productivity increased by twenty percent. As President Obama declared, it will take a revitalized labor movement to rebuild the American dream.

The 18,000 Flight Attendants of American Airlines are on the front lines of this battle. Almost six years ago management evicted us from the middle class. In real dollars, our pay is almost 25% below where it was in 2000. As a result we are working more hours just to stay in the same place we were nine years ago. For some, it is just not enough. They have been relegated to the ranks of the working poor. Too many of us have faced the threat or reality of foreclosure and bankruptcy. While we continue to confront these tough times, American has watched our productivity increase 47%.

This round of negotiations is our opportunity to regain our status as members of a strong, viable middle class.

This round of negotiations is our opportunity to regain our status as members of a strong, viable middle class. If we exercise our strength collectively—if we mobilize for a single purpose—we will no longer have to choose between paying either rent or the grocery bill. Put simply, it will take a labor movement of our own making to achieve a contract that restores what we lost and provides us with a truly decent standard of living.

The day before President Obama delivered his message endorsing organized labor he condemned banking industry executives who absconded with \$18 billion in bonuses after their companies were bailed out by the government. President Obama denounced their conduct as "shameful" and the "height of irresponsibility." Equally appalling is the fact that CEO wages, which in 1980 were 42 times higher than an average worker's pay, are now 344 times higher.

As with his recognition of the vital role of the labor movement, President Obama directly addressed the issue of excessive executive pay. In early February he proposed legislation that would cap the compensation of executives of banks receiving bailout funds at \$500,000 and would require that they not cash-in any stock distributions until the taxpayers' contributions to the bank are paid off.

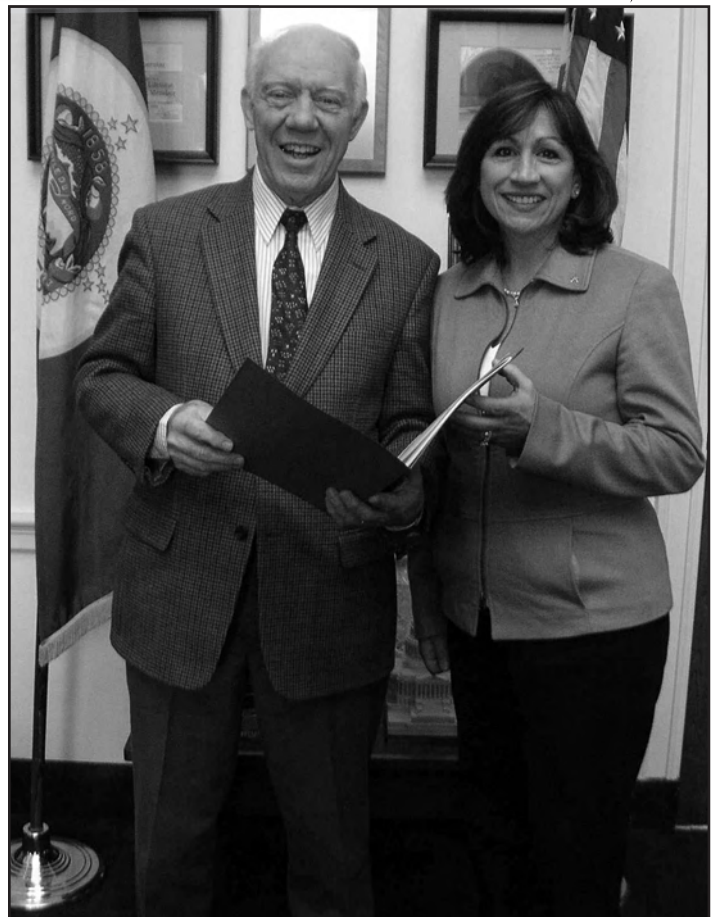
As with rebuilding the middle class, we are at the center of the storm swirling around excessive executive compensation. In 2003, we bailed out American by reducing our wages, working conditions and benefits by \$340 million annually. While these concessions and the hardships they cause continue, management long

ago abandoned its promise of shared sacrifice. Since the RPA was implemented, their compensation has grown exponentially. From 2003 to 2007 the average compensation of the top 53 executives rose 176%. In 2006 and 2007 the pay of just the five most highly compensated executives of American totaled \$48.7 million. This year is apparently no exception. Mr. Arpey, in addition to all his other compensation, will receive a stock bonus now worth approximately \$700,000. Meanwhile management thinks it can fulfill its pledge of shared gain by bestowing on each employee a \$160 AIP payment.

Like those on Wall Street, the conduct of this Company's executives is "shameful." Management has taken these bonuses year after year without consideration of our plight, without regard to the promise that underlies our sacrifices, and without a sense of the impact their conduct has had on the morale of all American's employees. Obviously, management believes that they are entitled to the riches with which they reward themselves. Just as obviously, we must make management understand that in these negotiations we are entitled to a contract that replaces the RPA concessions with a middle class standard of living.



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Congressman James Oberstar (D-MN), Chairman of the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, with APFA President Laura Glading



# APFA NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release  
January 26, 2009

## American Airlines Flight Attendants Expect Mediation to Help Efforts to Restore Middle-Class Standards

### Negotiations Resume Under Federal Auspices

DALLAS – With a federal mediator joining the Association of Professional Flight Attendants (APFA) and American Airlines (AMR) for contract talks in Dallas, APFA said it is determined to restore the middle-class standards that Flight Attendants once enjoyed.

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

APFA has been in negotiations with the carrier since May. While there has been some progress, the Union decided to file for mediation when it was reported the final contract offer on the table from AMR to the Transport Workers Union had no guaranteed structural pay raises, substantial increases for contributions for retiree health benefits and the elimination of virtually all retirement benefits for new hires.

With this mediation, APFA hopes to turn the tide of employer-friendly decisions of the National Mediation Board over the last eight years. The Union is looking to reestablish, in mediation, middle-class standards of pay and benefits.

“Our Flight Attendants are working harder and longer for less. Like many other Americans, we are struggling to make ends meet, even having to choose between filling a car with gas or buying groceries for our families,” said APFA President Laura Glading. “We care about this airline and our customers and want American to be the leader in the industry. But our members have been transformed into the working poor and we deserve better than that.”

The Union is seeking to recoup pay and benefit cuts it agreed to in 2003 to help American stave off bankruptcy. American Flight Attendants’ pay and benefits have been reduced by 25 percent and their workload has increased by 47 percent (the most of any airline), meaning less time with their families.

“We look forward to mediation and believe this is an opportunity to revive the middle-class standard that Flight Attendants at American had achieved before the company came to us, hat in hand, asking for relief,” Glading continued. “We deserve a contract that substantially increases our pay, vacation and sick leave, so that our standing as part of the middle class is restored.”

“We realize the impact of the struggling economy on American Airlines, but many economists are predicting a banner year for airlines in 2009 and oil prices continue to fall,” Glading continued. “We are beginning 2009 with our own Change Agenda, and prepared to take all necessary steps to win a fair agreement.”

*The Association of Professional Flight Attendants (APFA) is the nation's largest independent Flight Attendant union representing the more than 18,000 American Airlines Flight Attendants. More information is available at: [www.apfa.org](http://www.apfa.org)*

# You Be the Judge ... of Turbulence

This **SKYWORD** article is going to be a diversion from the usual "You Be the Judge" column. It has come out of several recent arbitration cases APFA presented during a Quarterly System Board (QSB). My goal is to give each of you the tools and information necessary to best protect yourself or a fellow crewmember injured as a result of turbulence. First I think a little background is in order.

I feel compelled to write this article because over the last several weeks, as APFA's Board Member for QSBs, I've listened to testimony from Flight Attendants injured as a result of turbulence on board one of the company's aircraft. These Flight Attendants suffered severe injuries that resulted in lost pay, lost sick time and, in some cases, extensive medical recoveries and lingering disabilities. Their compelling testimony was, naturally, countered by company witnesses giving a litany of reasons why Flight Attendants should not qualify for turbulence pay continuance (TU). As I listened to the witnesses, it became ever more apparent that the company's goal is to make sure Flight Attendants do not qualify for this contractually negotiated pay.

In our contract, Article 26.E contains language to protect a Flight Attendant should they be injured as a result of "rough air."

Article 26.E.1.a:

*A Flight Attendant, traveling in Company operated aircraft, as a flight crew member or as a passenger on Company business, and only if injuries are sustained as a result of forced landing, rough air, passenger assault, hijacking or sabotage while on duty, will receive full salary less Workers' Compensation benefits for a maximum of six (6) months. No deductions will be made from the Flight Attendant's sick leave account, and scheduled pay increases as provided in Article 3 will be made effective.*

The simplest way to qualify for this pay is for the Captain to submit a report documenting "Severe Turbulence" through the mechanism they use to report such incidences. This report guarantees the Flight Attendant will be provided up to six months of full pay continuance (not necessarily in succession) should they be injured. In most cases, however, the Captain will not submit a "Severe Turbulence" report for a multitude of reasons.

In the current Collective Bargaining Agreement, a Letter of Agreement was negotiated directing Flight Service to do an investigation in the absence of a Captain's Report of Severe Turbulence. Letter IV in Article 26 lists the information and documents that should be collected during an investigation into rough air turbulence.

What I have taken away from these recent arbitrations is that you and your fellow crewmembers are the key to insuring the correct information is conveyed during the investigation process. Flight Service managers conducting these investigations are either poorly trained—or not trained at all—in properly gathering the information necessary to prove an injury was the result of rough air. It is up to you and your fellow crewmembers to protect each other. What has become apparent is that information gathered by Flight Service is stale and collected after memories of the event have faded. It is also common for well-intentioned Flight Attendants to use terminology in their reports that may be used by Flight Service to disqualify one of your co-workers from receiving benefits under Article 26.E.

All turbulence injuries do not rise to the level of the language in Article 26.E.

Article 26.E.1.c:

*"Rough Air" will be defined and identified by the following observable in-flight characteristics: "Large and abrupt changes in altitude and attitude occur. Occupants are forced violently against seatbelts and shoulder straps. Unsecured objects are tossed about. Food service and walking are not possible."*

When a turbulence incident does rise to this level, remember that your Flight Service manager is not your advocate.

We owe a responsibility to each other, and American's management team has clearly demonstrated over the last several years they are not in your corner.

For the last several years American Airlines executives have been raking in millions of dollars in executive bonuses. They have carefully crafted language to ensure it. We have, in Article 26.E of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, negotiated rights for Flight Attendants who are injured in turbulence. It is clearly disingenuous for management to insist on adherence to agreements ensuring their pay—setting aside the disputes we have with them over their inappropriate bonuses—while working to refuse our members our negotiated benefits. Especially when the pay they endeavor to deny is for injury while performing one's duties.

If I seem jaded it is because I am. It's excruciating to sit and listen to one of our fellow Flight Attendants describe in detail what they experienced or witnessed when the aircraft they were working on encountered rough air only to have the company in essence say "yes we know you experienced turbulence and you hit the ceiling but you just didn't hit it hard enough to qualify for the pay continuance." This is reprehensible and is just morally wrong.

The Collective Bargaining Agreement describes the conditions that trigger six months of full pay should a Flight Attendant suffer injuries as a result of "rough air" turbulence.

Should you or a fellow crewmember be injured during turbulence, get names and contact information for anyone that witnessed your injury. This should include fellow crewmembers, non-revenue passengers and full fare passengers that can verify or possibly testify to the conditions on board at the time of the injury. This is very important since it is likely the company will give little weight to your account even though you were the one who was injured and experienced the turbulence.

Please be familiar with the language that defines the different levels of turbulence as defined in the Flight Attendant Manual and the Contract. Please be sure all statements you give use terminology consistent with the Contract. Do not deviate. If the turbulence you experienced rose to the level described in the contract make sure you are consistent in using the terms "rough air and severe turbulence" in all reports. As a side note please remember the Pilot Manual's definition of "severe turbulence" does not correlate with ours. It may be helpful for the Captain to know this before he submits a report.

If you are a member of a crew where someone has had a turbulence injury, do not have any discussion with the Company until you have contacted APFA. If you receive a phone call or email from an FSM asking for information on a specific flight regarding a turbulence incident please contact APFA prior to giving a statement or responding. Remember your statement may impact a crew member's ability to receive pay continuance for turbulence related injuries. ▲



You and your fellow crewmembers are the key to insuring the correct information is conveyed during the investigation process.

**Following is excerpted text from the Letter of Agreement (26-LETTER-IV) dated July 1, 2001 over determination of "rough air" in the absence of a Captain's report of severe turbulence.**

... We agree that in the absence of such a report, Flight Service will investigate and make a determination of the presence or the lack of "rough air" as defined in Article 26.E.1.c. During the investigation, the following considerations will be taken into account, as applicable to each situation:

1. AMR Event Center reports
2. Report(s) by crewmembers assigned to the flight
3. Purser/#1 Flight Attendant Report
4. ATC/Dispatch and/or weather report(s)
5. Reports by any other employee witness on the flight

6. Nature and/or extent of any passenger/crewmember injuries on the flight due to turbulence
7. Nature and/or extent of any aircraft damage as a result of turbulence
8. AA Medical review of any IOD documentation to determine if injury is associated with the reported "air incident".

In those isolated cases where there may be other types of evidence not listed above which Flight Service determines may be helpful in making the determination of "rough air", such evidence may be taken into account as well.

# Some Rest for the Weary

## 757 Rest Arbitration: A Step Forward *by APFA Vice President's Department*

Just when we think management has taken from us all they can, we are proven wrong. Such was the state of affairs that led to the Presidential Grievance on the 757 Crew Rest Seat. The carrier took the position that we should "rest" sitting in the last passenger row in coach.

Battle lines were drawn over American's new plan to fly the 757 on missions of eight hours or more (to Europe and Latin America). APFA completely rejected the standard coach passenger seat disgrace. Even though most other carriers around the country utilize the last row of regular coach seats—we were determined to fight for more.

An arbitration proceeding took place before arbitrator Richard Bloch. The first two days of the hearing took place in DFW. American brought in two surprise witnesses—none other than Jane Allen and Sue Oliver. The two former executives, having just left United Airlines and Walmart respectively, testified on behalf of American. Using a warped interpretation, they argued that we are not entitled to 767-style crew rest seats on the newly configured 757 (eight hours-plus) aircraft.

Our contract is clear: Appendix I, Article 30.L.3 - CREW REST SEAT/CREW REST - Flights Eight (8) to Twelve (12) Hours Scheduled Flying Time, sub-paragraphs a., c. and d. state in part:

- a. *On flights of eight (8) hours or more but not exceeding twelve (12) hours scheduled flying time, Flight Attendants will be permitted to take forty-five (45) minutes of inflight rest in a designated Crew Rest Seat/Bunk.*
- c. *The Company will provide four (4) curtained off "crew rest seats," for Flight Attendants on International flights of eight (8) hours or more scheduled flying time, as follows:*
  - (1) *On 767-300ER aircraft, four (4) crew rest seats, adjustable and reclining, with headrests and footrests, will be located in a closed off area, with a heavy privacy curtain, in a non-smoking area of the passenger cabin. Parameters and guidelines used in the design, location and amenities of the Crew Rest Seats are set out in Appendix ZZ, Letter-IX.*
- d. *On 777 aircraft, in lieu of c. above, the Company will provide four (4) crew bunks.*


Appendix I, Article 30.L.3.6 - CREW REST SEAT/CREW REST - Crew Rest Accommodations, sub-paragraphs b. and c. state:

- b. *The Company and APFA will meet to discuss the design of crew rest accommodation for existing and future aircraft falling within International crew rest parameters.*
- c. *The Company will provide comparable accommodations for any future aircraft brought into the fleet.*

The language mandates that all crew rest facilities on new aircraft must be comparable to either the 767 rest seat or the 777 bunk. Obviously, the re-configured 757 (8 hours-plus) aircraft is new to the International fleet. The Company, not surprisingly, took another position. They argued that since the 757 was on the property before the retrofitting, the aircraft is not technically "new" and as such American could force us to sit in a standard coach seat in the last row.

In the end, the arbitrator reviewed and selected a seat design from specifications proffered by the parties. The use of this process forced American to alter and enhance their proposal to provide the type of recline comparable to the 767.

On the third day of arbitration, now in Washington, D.C., the case was concluded. In his final ruling, the arbitrator adopted a 757 fixture facility which preserves our industry leading crew rest on all international "over 8" aircraft. In the interim, while the planes are being retrofitted, we will have the use of two rows of coach seats (6) with an added curtain and footrests. Second, the new retrofitted system will allow our three rest seats to recline to 70° (greater than the 60° recline guaranteed for the 767 crew rest seats). The seats must have adjustable headrests as well as foot and leg rests. Absent the adversarial proceeding and arbitration order, without a doubt, we would have been resting in standard pitch coach seats.

While this is not identical to the 767, it is much better than the 757 crew rest at any other airline. Additionally, it is far superior to American's original "sit in a coach seat, tough if you can't get any rest" position. My thanks to all those who prepared and presented the case for APFA, as well as numerous union witnesses who testified against American. *Unity pays!* 

# Business As Usual

Since the spring of 2008, the Secretary's department has handled four Executive Committee meetings, two Board of Directors meetings, one Board of Directors Training, revamped the Policy Manual, oversaw the National Ballot Committee in the handling of the recent Base Representational elections and several interim base elections, and reviewed dozens of hardship transfer applications. In addition, the archives of APFA have been expanded and continue to become an incredible, comprehensive, historical collection of APFA (see related article on page 25.)

Sometimes it seems easy to forget that APFA is actually a large business.

Many of you have asked what all these union "meetings" are about so I decided to take this opportunity to talk a little bit about the business of APFA.

Sometimes it seems easy to forget that APFA is actually a large business. The business of APFA could be compared to, or is the equivalent of, running a small city. With 18,000 voting members, your leadership is responsible for all the services provided by APFA as well as the monetary concerns of managing those services within an approved budget.

The day-to-day running of this business is handled here at APFA headquarters by your National Officers. We are entrusted with this organization and are bound by National Labor Laws, the APFA Constitution and the APFA Policy Manual.

We are required by our Constitution and Policy Manual to conduct quarterly meetings of the APFA Executive Committee (EC). In the last issue of **SKYWORD**, I talked about the government structure of APFA. The EC meetings are held in our Unity Pays conference room at headquarters. All members in good standing are not only welcome, but encouraged to attend.

Once a year, the Union comes together for its annual business

meeting, the Board of Directors Annual Convention. This important meeting moves from base city to base city each year, and is typically held in February or March. It is our largest meeting, required by the APFA Constitution.

At these meetings APFA policy is made or changed. Issues affecting our profession are dealt with and plans to ensure our futures are formed by your leadership. It is *our* government in action. Your Union leadership must meet in order to respond to ever-changing policies and procedures placed on us by our employer. We must be flexible enough to respond to these changes. Simply stated, APFA policy is made by the Board of Directors and this happens when the Board of Directors meets as the governing body of APFA.

Once again, all members in good standing are encouraged to come and be a part of the gallery at any meeting and watch the business of your Union being conducted.

By the time this **SKYWORD** goes to print, we will have completed our 2009 Annual Convention which was held in Boston. Minutes of that meeting, as well as all our other meetings, are posted on our website at [www.apfa.org](http://www.apfa.org). Any changes that affect our Policy Manual and consequently, our business, will be incorporated into the Policy Manual. Those updates will also be posted on the website.

Periodically reviewing these documents should become every APFA member's *business as usual*. It is your organization, your dues dollars and your future. ▲



## The 16th Annual APFA Awards and Recognition Banquet

As has been an APFA tradition since 1994, over 150 representatives, members-at-large, vendors, sponsors, honorees and guests—drawn from the broader community which makes up APFA—recently celebrated all things Union in APFA's Annual Awards and Recognition Banquet. This year's was held on the evening of March 5, 2009, in Boston, site of the 2009 Annual Board of Directors' Convention.



Beginning shortly after the close of the first day of Board business, the Banquet this year was as unique as each of the past events, honoring those who have shaped the world of labor, as well as those who have guided and colored our little part of it.

Two newly created APFA awards were presented for the first time this year, the Senator Edward M. Kennedy Award for Public Service on Behalf of the Labor Movement, and the Cindy Horan Humanitarian Award.

The first of the two, presented by APFA President Laura Glading, was awarded to its namesake, Senator Edward M. "Ted" Kennedy, and graciously accepted on his behalf by Joseph Kennedy III (see photo on back cover). A grand-nephew of the Senator, the younger Kennedy read aloud as part of his eloquent acceptance address a thank-you letter sent by the Senator and reprinted in this **SKYWORD**. This was a proud moment for APFA to be able to celebrate Senator Kennedy's accomplishments for all working American's and to honor him that night.



Vic Thuesen and Vice President, Brett Durkin.

APFA was equally proud to honor the first recipient



# The Budget

Times are tough and our Organization has not been immune to the reductions in force and attrition affecting the membership.

My Cuban mother always said to me: "Que poco saben los que no han sufrido." I would know very little in this world if I didn't suffer through any kind of adversity.

Like many of you, adversity has shaped the kind of individual I have become. I grew up pinching pennies and trying always to be fiscally responsible. Adversity came very early in my life by way of how little we had growing up. My mother (single, at the time) often went without food, skipping meals so that she would have the money to send me to a good school for an education. Eventually, I would be the first one in my family to go to college.

One of the proudest moments of my life came on a very cold December day in 1989 (it actually snowed that day, very rare for the locale,) when I got my degree from the University of Florida. The pride came from more than just the degree. It was the culmination of many years of sacrifice and much work. It was a symbol of triumph through adversity.

I would like to explain now, without taking a lot of your time or boring you to pieces, how the budget comes to fruition and how my past experience relates.

In Article IX, Section 7 of our Constitution, it states my responsibility and my duty, along with the Budget Committee, of reviewing the financial status of the APFA. Based on those findings, we prepare the annual budget of the Union.

## ARTICLE IX, SECTION 7. BUDGET COMMITTEE:

*Definition and Duties: The Budget Committee shall, under the authority of the Treasurer, annually review the financial status of the APFA, its goals as established by the Board of Directors, and the projected expenditures for the coming fiscal year. Based on its findings, the Budget Committee shall, with the assistance of the Treasurer, prepare the annual budget pursuant to the Policy Manual of the APFA.*

After collecting all the numbers: monies collected from dues, deducting expenses, fixed costs, and with input from some of our Board members, line Flight Attendants who write or call with suggestions,

of the Cindy Horan Humanitarian Award, to the Flight Attendant after which it is named, Cindy Horan of IMA. The award was introduced by DCA Chairperson Heidi Prayon and presented by then LGA Chairperson Eric Hodgson (see photo on back cover.) Cindy and Eric's moving story of selfless giving was chronicled in the Fall/Winter 2008 edition of **SKYWORD** (available to members online through the Publications menu at APFA.org). Cindy's acceptance of the award was made all the more poignant by the presence of many of her family members, who joined Heidi, Eric and all of APFA in honoring her.



Vicky Barker and Vice President, Brett Durkin.

Two Honorary APFA Memberships were be-

and even our staff, the Budget Committee meets here at headquarters for several days and formulates a budget. Obviously, it is not easy. Respectful disagreements and educated opinions fly around the room for days. At the end, logic and reason prevail and a budget is born.

The goal is to produce a balanced budget that everyone can operate under. Nowhere in our Constitution or in our Policy Manual has it stated that we have to produce a *balanced* budget, but we do. To do otherwise is—in my opinion—irresponsible.

The budget is then mailed to each member of the Board of Directors, which includes the National Officers and Base Chairs, for review and input. The Board reviews the information for approval of the year's operating budget.

This year's budget preparation process has been a tough one. We will all be facing some painful cuts. It is inevitable. When we have lost as many members as we have, we basically have to fall in line with the times. Times are tough and our Organization has not been immune to the reductions in force and attrition affecting the membership. It is my belief that from top to bottom, this institution as a whole must learn to conduct business leaner and more efficiently than ever to accommodate the needs of the membership, the most obvious and precarious need of all being the negotiating of a Collective Bargaining Agreement.

All this brings me to what I was referring to at the beginning of my article: adversity. I have been through adversity many times before and, as uncomfortable and unpleasant the thought of it is, I am neither scared of it, nor do I shy away from it. As it did with me, adversity will once again define this Union. We have been through tumultuous financial situations before and we will be prepared and ready to face them again.

My mother wasn't kidding when she told me that I would know very little if I didn't go through adversity. I draw on the lessons of past adversities to guide my decisions today. ▲



**Juan Barrera**

APFA Treasurer

treasurer@apfa.org

817-540-0108 ext. 8131

stowed upon Vicky Barker and Vic Thuesen for their skill and their commitment toward APFA and its membership through arbitrations and grievances over a span of many years. Vicky and Vic are highly regarded in the labor world and in their local communities. APFA owes a great deal of gratitude to the two and are pleased to consider them as members of our family. APFA Vice President Brett Durkin made the presentations and awards while Division Reps—past and present—who work closely with Vic and Vicky, added their words of thanks to honor these talented and dedicated advocates.

APFA Banquets have traditionally been a pay-as-you-go affair, funded largely by donations solicited from vendors and sponsors along with ticket sales. This one, the 16th annual, was no exception. However, given the ongoing budget constraints detailed elsewhere in this issue, the Board has decided to forgo next year's Banquet in order to widen the choice of suitable Convention locations which can accommodate the needs of the Board Meeting without requiring banquet facilities. We hope to have many opportunities in the future to again celebrate and honor those among us who positively impact our membership and the labor community.

EDWARD M. KENNEDY

March 5, 2009

Laura R. Glading  
President  
Association of Professional Flight Attendants  
1004 West Eules Boulevard  
Eules, Texas 76040

Dear President Glading and Members of the Association of Professional Flight Attendants,

I wish very much that I could be with you in person for this ceremony. One of my highest priorities in the United States Senate has always been to improve the lives of working families across the country, and I'm deeply grateful for your recognition for these efforts in this award.

I commend President Glading for your leadership of this great union, and I thank all the hardworking men and women of the Association of Professional Flight Attendants. With skill, kindness, care, and grace, you serve millions of our citizens who fly on American Airlines, and you serve us well, far above and beyond the call of duty. Your work is difficult and often dangerous, and you make great sacrifices. For all that you do so well, I thank you, and I salute you.

Many years ago, I dedicated my life to public service. But in my family, public service has always meant more than just working in government. Public service is about improving the daily lives of working people. It's about fighting for basic fairness -- decent wages, good health care, safe jobs, and a secure retirement.

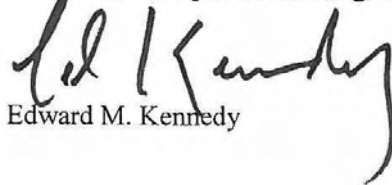
The people of the APFA have always stood with me, shoulder to shoulder, in these battles. We have celebrated many worthwhile victories, and come back strong after every setback. And now we are ready, in this new day for our cause and our country, to meet and master new challenges together.

In the months and years to come, your energy and activism will again be critical to renewing the promise of the American dream and building a strong new middle class. As we work to pass the Employee Free Choice Act, health care reform, and family and medical leave for flight attendants, you will be on the front lines in these all-important battles for workers' rights. Working hand-in-hand, together, we will fight, and we will win.

It's been a great privilege and great honor to work with so many of you through the years, and I look forward very much to the battles still to come. Thank you so much for your indispensable support, and thank you so much for this wonderful award.

With great respect and appreciation,

Your friend and partner in our great cause,



Edward M. Kennedy



**Frank Bastien**  
National Communications Coordinator  
[communications@apfa.org](mailto:communications@apfa.org)  
817-540-0108 ext. 8308

# Keeping Our Eyes on the Prize, and our Pocketbooks

The process of developing, revising and approving a budget for the coming fiscal year (FY 2010) was a particularly difficult task undertaken by the APFA Budget Committee members and the Board of Directors, both prior to and during this year's Annual Convention. (see related article by APFA Treasurer Juan Barrera.)

The combined effect of the changes in our APFA National budgets alone amounts to over a million dollars in reduced expenses, and nearly a million and a half when combined with the Base reductions.

your Chair and Vice Chair contact numbers will always be on your local base briefs. Voice mail and email should be used for non-urgent issues.

-- The Retirement Specialist position has been eliminated (members may contact their local Base Retirement Rep/OCR, or the Contract Department); funding allotted for

Aiming to boost the monies available for our most immediate task at hand, that of negotiating a new Collective Bargaining Agreement, the Board had to simultaneously reconcile:

- our increasing costs incurred during bargaining, especially during this vital phase of mediation;
- our declining dues revenue in light of the company's continued reductions;
- a reluctance to request members to shoulder a dues increase during difficult economic times

Addressing the last of these three points, the Board voted unanimously to rescind Resolution 8 which had been passed in the October 2008 Board of Directors' Meeting and which had called for a dues increase referendum for the spring of 2009.

Facing then the contradictory nature of the first two items: increasing costs during negotiations and declining revenues, the Board undertook a process of line-by-line examination of APFA's expenses to confront the challenge at hand: funding our battle for a new agreement, while staying within the constraints of a reduced membership and the resulting decrease in dues income owing to AA's retrenchment in the current economic environment.

Simply stated: our Flight Attendant corps is shrinking; negotiations are expensive. In the absence of actual growth of the airline, we would hope for—at the very least—the replacement of Flight Attendants departing due to normal attrition. But the past year has seen an overall decline in our workforce, well over a thousand, whether through retirement, through leaves or through furlough. The advent of mediation, though it moves us closer to resolution at the bargaining table, also strains our Union pocketbook.

Our revenue shortfall, in the absence of a dues increase, required cutting our planned expenditures significantly, by way of reducing or eliminating member services, both locally and nationally, and refocusing on providing resources to our members more efficiently and economically wherever possible. Here are some of the specifics on the cutbacks:

-- The headquarters APFA staff budgets were reduced overall, with the specific amounts varying by department. Additional representatives staffed to assist in covering department duties were cut from the Hotel, Health, Safety/Security and Communications departments. Contract, Scheduling and Health will see reduced coverage for the Rep-on-Duty desks—though the headquarters office hours will remain unchanged. The after-hours Rep-on-Duty coverage was eliminated. Members should carry with them the contact numbers for their local Base Representatives: Chair, Vice Chair and OCRs for after-hours, weekend and holiday assistance. An updated, "print, cut and carry" roster will be made available through the APFA website and


our APFA Archives has been reduced and APFA was able to secure a shared funding agreement with the company for our vital EAP services. Reductions were also made in the Arbitration/SBA (System Board of Adjustment) and National Officers' department budgets. When contacting APFA Headquarters, members will need to be patient when waiting for response to phone or email requests.

-- Base budgets: the amount allotted to Chairs, Vice Chairs, OCRs, etc. to serve their local constituents was reduced generally as a reflection of the lower system-wide headcounts compared to past budget years, combined with additional reductions made during the broad reallocation of revenues to our negotiations budget. Your local Base Reps will be serving their bases with fewer dollars overall while shouldering additional duties redirected from the trimmed down headquarters staff. Flight Attendants will, more than ever, need to stay abreast of their contractual rights and obligations, carry their contract or On-Duty Contract Guide and their latest Base Briefs for issues pertinent to their flying. Access the website for resources and be patient when needing to seek a Representative's assistance—whether local or national.

One area where APFA can deliver its services in a more economic fashion is through communications, by relying on increased use of electronic means. The printing and mailing of **SKYWORD** magazine is being eliminated in favor of an online version. The capabilities of our members to access online services continue to grow. Availability and affordability of Internet services is very different today than even just a few years ago. In this environment, we can simply no longer support multiple systems to distribute the same information. We need to concentrate on less expensive alternatives, especially when they prove more efficient and timely.

The changes in our APFA National budgets result in a reduction of over a million dollars in these expenses alone. When combined with the Base reductions, the amount grows to a reduction of almost one and a half million dollars in operating expenses year over year. Nearly half of these savings were reassigned to the negotiations budget.

This is a difficult but necessary restructuring—a reorienting and refocusing of services from the National to the Base level, while realizing the dual goals of (1) increasing our Negotiations funding substantially; and (2) staying within our current revenue forecasts. Undertaking these cuts, which on their face may appear drastic, is nothing more than responding to the immediate need to control our expenses and focus our resources, keeping our eyes on the prize of a new working agreement.

We all hope for, and are working for, a time to come when we as an Organization can again grow in both our sheer numbers and our financial strength and can reexamine our budget with the aim to increase our member services. 

# Why Stronger Unions Can Help Us Out of This Mess

**America, and its faltering economy, need unions to restore prosperity to the middle class.**

*by Robert B. Reich  
Reprinted with permission  
www.robertreich.org*

**W**hy is this recession so deep, and what can be done to reverse it?

Hint: Go back about 50 years, when America's middle class was expanding and the economy was soaring. Paychecks were big enough to allow us to buy all the goods and services we produced. It was a virtuous circle. Good pay meant more purchases, and more purchases meant more jobs.

At the center of this virtuous circle were unions. In 1955, more than a third of working Americans belonged to one. Unions gave them the bargaining leverage they needed to get the paychecks that kept the economy going. So many Americans were unionized that wage agreements spilled over to nonunionized workplaces as well. Employers knew they had to match union wages to compete for workers and to recruit the best ones.

Fast forward to a new century. Now, fewer than 8% of private-sector workers are unionized. Corporate opponents argue that Americans no longer want unions. But public opinion surveys, such as a comprehensive poll that Peter D. Hart Research Associates conducted in 2006, suggest that a majority of workers would like to have a union to bargain for better wages, benefits and working conditions. So there must be some other reason for this dramatic decline.

But put that question aside for a moment. One point is clear: Smaller numbers of unionized workers mean less bargaining power, and less bargaining power results in lower wages.

It's no wonder middle-class incomes were dropping even before the recession. As our economy grew between 2001 and the start of 2007, most Americans didn't share in the prosperity. By the time the recession began last year, according to an Economic Policy Institute study, the median income of households headed by those under age 65 was below what it was in 2000.

Typical families kept buying only by going into debt. This was possible as long as the housing bubble expanded. Home-equity

loans and refinancing made up for declining paychecks. But that's over. American families no longer have the purchasing power to keep the economy going. Lower paychecks, or no paychecks at all, mean fewer purchases, and fewer purchases mean fewer jobs.

The way to get the economy back on track is to boost the purchasing power of the middle class. One major way to do this is to expand the percentage of working Americans in unions.

Tax rebates won't work because they don't permanently raise wages. Most families used the rebate last year to pay off debt—not a bad thing, but it doesn't keep the virtuous circle running.

Bank bailouts won't work either. Businesses won't borrow to expand without consumers to buy their goods and services. And Americans themselves can't borrow when they're losing their jobs and their incomes are dropping.

Tax cuts for working families, as President Obama intends, can do more to help because they extend over time. But only higher wages and benefits for the middle class will have a lasting effect.

Unions matter in this equation. According to the Department of Labor, workers in unions earn 30% higher wages—taking home \$863 a week, compared with \$663 for the typical nonunion worker—and are 59% more likely to have employer-provided health insurance than their nonunion counterparts.

Examples abound. In 2007, nearly 12,000 janitors in Providence, R.I., New Hampshire and Boston, represented by the Service Employees International Union, won a contract that raised their wages to \$16 an hour, guaranteed more work hours and provided family health insurance. In an industry typically staffed by part-time workers with a high turnover rate, a union contract provided janitors with full-time, sustainable jobs that they could count on to raise their families'—and their communities'—standard of living.

In August, 65,000 Verizon workers, represented by the Communications Workers of America, won wage increases totaling nearly 11% and converted temporary jobs to full-time status. Not only did the settlement preserve fully paid healthcare premiums for all active and retired unionized employees, but Verizon also agreed to provide \$2 million a year to fund a collaborative campaign with its unions to achieve meaningful national healthcare reform.

Although America and its economy need unions, it's become nearly impossible for employees to form one. The Hart poll I cited tells us that 57 million workers would want to be in a union if they could have one. But those who try to form a union, according to researchers at MIT, have only about a 1 in 5 chance of successfully doing so.

The reason? Most of the time, employees who want to form a union are threatened and intimidated by their employers. And all too often, if they don't heed the warnings, they're fired, even though that's illegal. I saw this when I was secretary of Labor over a decade ago. We tried to penalize employers that broke the law, but the fines are minuscule. Too many employers consider them a cost of doing business.

This isn't right. The most important feature of the Employee Free Choice Act, which will be considered by the just-seated 111th Congress, toughens penalties against companies that violate their workers' rights. The sooner it's enacted, the better—for U.S. workers and for the U.S. economy.

The American middle class isn't looking for a bailout or a handout. Most people just want a chance to share in the success of the companies they help to prosper. Making it easier for all Americans to form unions would give the middle class the bargaining power it needs for better wages and benefits. And a strong and prosperous middle class is necessary if our economy is to succeed.

*Robert B. Reich is Professor of Public Policy at the Goldman School of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley. He has served in three national administrations, most recently as secretary of labor under President Bill Clinton.*



# A NEW WORLD

by Joan Wages  
APFA Washington Representative

It is a new world in Washington where the word “union” can be used without fear of reprisal and where working people are valued members of our society. Seldom in history has Congress gotten off to such a fast start—in this case, to address concerns about the economy. The history-making inauguration of President Barack Obama turned a page by changing the emphasis of government. This Administration has pledged to support provisions in the best interest of middle-class Americans.

## FAA Reauthorization Bill

Turning to legislation of interest, the FAA Reauthorization bill will be re-introduced. You might remember that this is a must-pass bill every four years that “authorizes” the FAA to work on various programs. It was up last year but the House of Representatives and the Senate Committees with jurisdiction over the bill could not agree on how to proceed in financing renovation of the air traffic control system. Senator Jay Rockefeller (D-WV), Chair of the Senate Aviation Subcommittee, wanted to impose greater fees on private jets. Representative Jim Oberstar (D-MN), Chair of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, opposed that solution. A continuing resolution was passed in the fall that extended the FAA’s authority to operate. The financing issue was unresolved.

So the FAA bill is back. As in the last version, Flight Attendants will have several issues in this year’s bill. We expect that it will extend CAMI’s (Civil Aero Medical Institute) report date to Congress on its Flight Attendant fatigue study. CAMI requested the report date be backed up by six months due to delays it has encountered in collecting data. The Coalition of Flight At-

tendant Unions supports this since this is the first extensive study to be done on Flight Attendant fatigue and we want it done right.

The bill will again have a provision extending OSHA protections to Flight Attendants. It will direct the FAA to implement seven areas of protections to Flight Attendants that were identified in 2000 in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between OSHA and the FAA. The FAA will oversee the implementation to address their long-standing concern that OSHA regulations will interfere with aviation safety.

In addition, the bill will again have requirements for an English language standard for Flight Attendants. This issue goes back more than a decade and remains an important safety issue. In case of an emergency, it is critical that crewmembers can understand each other.

The bill may also provide for a study of cabin temperature—mostly a regional jet issue where the aircraft do not have APUs and cabin temperatures on the ground can exceed 100 degrees in the blistering summer months. Other provisions impacting Flight Attendants may be included in the bill.

The House version of the FAA bill will be introduced and move within the next couple of months. The Senate bill is not expected to move until later in the year. And what about the financing issue that was the problem last year? In this new world, everything has changed. Transportation budgets, bank financing, and airport and municipal projects are all being revisited from a new perspective. This bill is important as part of rebuilding our nation’s infrastructure so it is expected that solutions will be found.

## Family and Medical Leave for Flight Attendants

Legislation clarifying FML for Flight Attendants passed overwhelmingly in the House last session but stalled in the Senate. The bill language is almost identical to the FML policy APFA members already have, but APFA strongly supports this because it is always better to have legislative language when at the bargaining table. The Bush Administration Labor Department opposed any extension of FML and got Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY) to hold up the bill. Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY), the Senate bill sponsor, was somewhat otherwise engaged but her staff did all possible to address the Administration’s objections. This session Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) has agreed to re-introduce the bill. As a member of the Senate Democratic leadership and an appropriations committee chair, she is in a good position to make it happen this session.

## New World

Some may remember the air traffic controllers strike when President Reagan had them fired. That act sent a cold chill down labor’s spine and a message to corporate America that they should do the same. The titans, whether corporate or Wall Street, were placed on a pedestal and the middle class was devalued. Well, we made it through the winter of being frozen out—some worse for the wear—and the pendulum has swung. Congress will reflect this change in bill after bill. Some will directly impact Flight Attendants, others indirectly. Many provisions will go towards helping the middle class make it through these economic hard times and build towards a better future.

# Déjà vu All Over Again

## The Lesson of B-Scale

by the APFA Negotiating Team

One of the most divisive issues we have ever faced as a union was that of B-Scale. In 1981, President Ronald Reagan had fired the striking air traffic controllers and the labor movement was in turmoil. In 1983, while Flight Attendants at other airlines were taking significant pay cuts, Bob Crandall at American Airlines, was offering something different. Current workers would not see their wages cut, but pay for new hires would be dramatically reduced. While the pilots and the ground workers (APA and TWU) had already accepted B-Scale contracts, APFA leaders knew this was a time bomb. They fought hard against it, in fact, and the first Tentative Agreement was overwhelmingly rejected.

APFA's second round of bargaining produced a better overall contract even though B-Scale remained. First-year pay for Flight Attendants went from \$1194 a month to \$972, and incentive rates were reduced from \$20.49 to \$14.40 per hour. A significant difference was that B-Scale in the second Tentative Agreement stopped at five years, thus ensuring that both management and APFA would have to address pay disparity in succeeding contracts. The argument for ratification, that preserving the higher pay rates would ultimately benefit both new and current Flight Attendants, prevailed. In a climate tinged with fear, the B-Scale contract was ratified by a narrow majority.

The economy rebounded and AA Management went on a hiring spree. In the 1987 Contract, the APFA achieved a single pay scale, with a six-year merge. Even though it took the better part of ten years, equality was restored and B-Scale was eliminated. Some called it a C-Scale because the merged scale was made possible by flattening, or pancaking, the wages of the more senior A-Scale Flight Attendants.

Age-old, fear-based tactics like divide and conquer are used time and again because they have proven to be effective. With B-Scale, misunderstandings and misperceptions persist to this day. Senior Flight Attendants (or at least those who had a job at the time) have often been accused of selling out the unborn—the yet-to-be-hired

—for personal gain. The truth is that the Flight Attendants at that time never really accepted B-Scale. **APFA members took what was thrust upon them and spent the next ten years working to repair the damage.**

In order to mitigate the damage of the B-Scale following the rejection of the first TA in 1983, and then to eliminate it in the negotiations in 1987, APFA was forced to expend a large amount of its bargaining capital. In all negotiations the cost of any new agreement is not unlimited. A union and its members have to decide how best to allocate the dollars it can extract from a company.

As the 1987 negotiations approached, an ever increasing number of Flight Attendants hired since the ratification of the second TA in 1983 were approaching five years seniority and ratification of a contract rested on erasing the B-Scale. Dollars that could have been devoted to improving vacation, strengthening retirement benefits and providing higher wage increases for all Flight Attendants were spent instead on ridding our contract of this wage differential.

And so while the effects of the B-Scale may not have been felt by those already employed in 1983, by 1987 those same Flight Attendants had to take less in order for the B-Scalers to get more. We cannot afford to once again experience the imbalance, distortions and divisions that a B-Scale invariably generates in negotiations.

The B-Scale experience was a difficult chapter in our shared history but it was through that struggle that our unity was forged. In 1993, when we again faced an employer determined to undermine our careers, we stood together, shoulder to shoulder and said no. And in the end, that is the lesson of B-Scale: There are no easy answers, our industry is volatile and there are times when we will have to make the best of a bad situation. But we are a young union, a mere thirty-one and a half years, and we are in this for the long run. We know that it is only when we—past, present and future American Airlines Flight Attendants—act together, stand together, support each other and trust ourselves to look out for each other, are we able to truly thrive and prosper.

### B-SCALE Factoids 1983

- Backdrop: Crisis in the Middle East. The Iranian Revolution sharply increased the price of oil around the world in 1979, causing the 1979 energy crisis. This was caused by the new regime in power in Iran, which exported oil at inconsistent intervals and at a lower volume, forcing prices to go up.
- Recession – Tight monetary policy in the United States to control inflation leads to another recession.
- Labor Situation – On August 3, 1981 almost 13,000 air traffic controllers went on strike after months of negotiations with the federal government. 48 hours after the walkout, President Reagan fired the 11,350 ATCs (almost 70% of the workforce) who had not returned to work. In case the message was still unclear, he declared a lifetime ban on the rehiring of the strikers by the FAA.<sup>1</sup>
- Early 1980's – Economic Downturn – AA Flight Attendant furloughs.
- Other airlines: Flight Attendants take pay cuts.
- In negotiations with APA and TWU it is revealed that AA is seeking to introduce significantly lower wages for all new hires (B-Scale).
- The first APFA B-Scale Tentative Agreement was reached in the summer of 1983.
  - Professional Negotiator Nick O'Connell, former President and founder of the APA, led the APFA negotiating team
  - First B-Scale contract had two separate pay scales with the B Scale reaching 20 years
  - First B-Scale Tentative Agreement was overwhelmingly rejected
- Second B-Scale Tentative Agreement became effective November 9, 1983.
  - Introduced Part Time
  - Introduced Optional Exchange
  - Second B-Scale stops at 5 years
  - APFA was the last union on American Airlines property to accept B-Scale

<sup>1</sup> Volume Thirty-Seven, 1995, Essays in History, Published by the Corcoran Department of History at the University of Virginia, "The Pressures of PATCO: Strikes and Stress in the 1980's," by Rebecca Pels.

# Hope for Change? UNITY is the Answer

by Steven Ellis, APFA Negotiator

As I return from attending the inspiring and historic inauguration of President Obama, I am struck by the depth of similarities between our multi-generational struggle for the contract we deserve and the monumental difficulties facing our Nation. Common themes, finding expression in our national discourse about the myriad of problems we must urgently confront, focus my attention on some of the issues your Negotiating Team is addressing in our efforts to deliver you a contract you can be proud of: notably, how fragile our unity can be if we allow unnecessary distractions to undermine our determination to achieve the contract that we desire.

In today's difficult economic environment, our collective expression of hope is perhaps stronger than at any time in our lifetimes. It is what drew millions to DC to bear witness to our new President's inauguration. Drawing parallels to our AA microcosm, I would suggest that hope for a better work-life has never been stronger in the APFA membership. Every one of us, I trust, is absolutely committed to improving our careers through the current round of negotiations. We may have differences in opinion as to how those improvements should be realized; however, none of us aspires to a continued status quo or further degradation of our contract. The broken promises of AA Management have served to strengthen our resolve to do whatever must be done to regain what has been lost.

As we move further along the road to a new contract, we must always remember that our unity can be fractured by our individual failure to keep our attention focused on our ultimate collective goal of an improved contract that benefits us all. We must recall those episodes from our bargaining past where either AA intentionally sowed discord in our ranks or we, through our own internal disputes, lost valuable time in the negotiation process.

Let me illustrate through the difficult lesson of the "B-Scale" experience. As a 1988 hire, I recall vividly the bitterness and division that AA's successful divide and conquer tactics in the 1986 contract engendered in our ranks for many years. Whatever was the rationale at the time that persuaded a majority of us to ratify that contract has clearly been shown through the perfect vision of hindsight to have been misguided. We learned unequivocally that contractual provisions which divide us—those which create proverbial "second-class" citizens—cannot survive the test of time and cannot be allowed to take root in our contemplations as we work for a better future for us all.

The differences amongst us that serve to undermine our unity are potentially many: seniority, age, gender, speaker vs. non-speaker, purser, where we are based, division, proximity to retirement, and the list goes on. However, by succumbing to the belief that our "one big issue" is more important than our collective unity and hope for change, we as individuals have within our control the ability to inflict more damage on the outcome of these negotiations than any outside player could ever hope to achieve.

Your Team believes in you. We believe in your individual hope for change in this round of negotiations. Remember as we proceed through this next phase of mediated talks that our collective unity is the guarantor of our eventual success. Anything that serves to divide us—that distracts us from our collective goal of achieving the best possible contract—will dampen the very real and attainable goals which we all share and which serve to make our unity our greatest strength.

In December of last year, a scenario eerily similar to the old B-Scale played out on our property with another union. The Company tried to get the TWU to agree to a contract that would eliminate the Defined Benefit Plan and Retiree Health Care Benefits for new hires. When those talks broke down, and the terms became known, the APFA Negotiating Committee confronted the Company's negotiating team and asked them for assurances that we would not see those same proposals at some later date in our bargaining. When the Company refused to provide such assurances, the decision was made to file for Federal Mediation. In 2003, with the Restructuring Participation Agreement, we gave up a lot to protect our Retiree Health Care Benefits and our Defined Pension Plan. We sacrificed to preserve these benefits and we will fight to preserve them.

## 2009 Factoids

- Backdrop: Crisis in the Middle East - Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.
- Recession in the United States.
- Labor Situation – In aftermath of 9/11 US airlines file for bankruptcy and/or voluntary restructuring – airline workers lose wages and benefits.
- AA Flight Attendants on furlough.
- Race to the bottom in Flight Attendant wages.
- When negotiations with the TWU break down it is revealed that AA is seeking the elimination of Defined Benefit Plan and retiree health care benefits for new hires. (See box, lower right.)



## An Appeal to Judgment – Active Litigation Update

by Laura Glading, APFA President

On July 22, 2008, Judge Nina Gershon of the United States District Court, Eastern District of New York, handed down a decision in what had been known as the “Marcoux” case (after the first-named plaintiff in the filing.) This was a suit against APFA and other defendants over issues surrounding the Restructuring Participation Agreement. The text of the District Court’s decision, and the details of this suit—as well as others since dismissed or closed—can be found on the Lawsuits page of the APFA website, under the Members’ Resources menu.

APFA was pleased with the decision last July as all the lawsuits—and this one in particular—have proven to be a substantial drain of dues dollars on our Union’s treasury. To date, the cost to APFA for the Marcoux case alone has totaled \$1,205,359. To put that in perspective, this amount is approximately the cost of providing six full-time APFA Reps-on-Duty over a four-year period! Add to this total the over \$750,000 APFA has spent defending other lawsuits, since dismissed, closed or later consolidated into Marcoux, and the total approaches a staggering \$2,000,000. This is money APFA can hardly afford as we find ourselves having to tighten our belts in the face of declining dues, decreased flying and a weak, uncertain economy.

APFA had hoped that with the well-considered and crafted decision of Judge Gershon, the case would be closed, literally—in terms of the plaintiffs, and figuratively—where our treasury is concerned. But

APFA had hoped that with the well-considered and crafted decision of Judge Gershon, the case would be closed.

the remaining plaintiffs (their number dwindling since the initial filing), have appealed the Judge’s ruling and once again, APFA finds itself forced to spend dues dollars to defend itself against a small minority of its own members. This diversion of your dues dollars is particularly unfortunate at this critical time

in negotiations, while our members are facing an uncertain future and the financial well-being of the industry is at stake.

Of the original 27 plaintiffs in the case, only 13 have chosen to appeal the Court’s decision. They are (with base assignments as of March 2009 for those still active):

Jill Lindsay (LAX)  
 Carol Johnson (IOR)  
 Constance LaMattina  
 Daniel Santiago (JFK)  
 Deborah Whittington  
 Dottie Long (LAX)  
 Janet Gold

Judith Alexander (LAX)  
 Karen Rivoira  
 Laurence E. Salomon III (BOS)  
 Patricia Kennedy (JFK)  
 Patty Gentry  
 Rebecca Smith (IMA)

With the original namesake of the lawsuit no longer a plaintiff, the appeal is now referred to as the “Lindsay” case.

Our goal must always be to secure the future of our members. As stated in the APFA Code of Conduct: “Strength and unity within the APFA are fundamental to the successful resolution of any endeavor the Union may undertake.”



**Brent Peterson**  
National Contract Coordinator  
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# Answering Your Calls and Questions



Effective April 1, 2009, many of the budgets at APFA were reduced in order to address the decrease in income as well as to reallocate funds for negotiations. Like all departments, Contract and Scheduling were affected by the budget cuts and, as a result, we will have one fewer representative to respond to your calls and emails. Additionally, our Retirement Department, which was staffed for part of the month, was eliminated altogether. This will require each of our members to become more self-reliant when seeking answers to their questions or resolving problems that may arise.

One of the best resources available to our members is the On-Duty Contract Guide mailed in Fall 2004. This document answers the vast majority of questions that arise while out on the line. If you have misplaced your copy you can download the guide from the APFA website at [www.apfa.org](http://www.apfa.org). An enormous amount of information is available on the website. On the Contract Department page you will find detailed information on a wide range of topics, from Bid Leaves to Commuter Policy. The full Foundation Document can be found under the link for Current Contract. Of course when it comes to *company* policies, Jetnet is the best source for information.

In this article I would like to provide answers to the most commonly asked questions we receive in the Contract Department.

- Q.** How do I bid for vacation to maximize pay and time off?
- A.** Vacation bidding is actually very simple. You will be removed with pay from any trip which touches your vacation. *Sign-in and debrief are included as part of a trip and would trigger paid removals.* For example, if you had VC 05APR – 10APR you would be removed with pay from a 3 day trip on 02APR - 04APR that arrives at 2350 on the 04APR as the debrief (15 minutes for domestic, 30 minutes for international) would cause the trip to touch your vacation on the 05APR. Likewise you would be removed from a trip that departed at 0015 on the 11APR as the sign-in time would actually be on the 10APR and again trigger a paid removal. A reserve day that falls within your vacation period will pay 4:10 in a thirty day month and 3:56 in a thirty-one day month. An available day that falls within your vacation will pay 3:53 per day.
- Q.** I just received a Jury Duty summons. What do I do now?
- A.** Jury Duty is actually part of Company Policy. You can find the policy specific to Flight Service in HIDIR (Hotpath – HIDIR/FA/CODE/JURY). You will be removed with pay from any trips which were on your schedule at the time you received your summons which *directly conflict* with your Jury Duty obligation. The policy states that you should provide the

summons and the envelope to your Flight Service Manager. Jury Duty systems vary extensively throughout the country.

- Q.** When does a sick absence become two points versus one point?
- A.** Assuming the absence is not during the critical period (from 22DEC to 03JAN) a sick absence of six days or fewer will count as one point. If the absence is seven consecutive calendar days or greater it will count as two points. If you have a single sick absence of seven or more days, you can reduce the two points to one point by contacting Call-a-Nurse at 1-800-555-2373 within 10 business days of the end of the absence. If you had maintained 12 or more months with no chargeable absences prior to the occurrence then the seven-day duration parameter will not apply. The absence will be counted as one point.
- Q.** How many hours do I need to be eligible for FMLA?
- A.** As long as you have at least 12 months of service with the Company then you need to have at least 504 paid productive hours at the start of the absence in order to be eligible for FMLA. Paid productive hours consist of the greater of your PPROJ or Guarantee; plus eight hours for each day of training; plus any hours flown on Sick Make-up; minus any time for which you were paid but not productive (e.g. vacation, paid sick, Jury Duty, etc.) You can find your hours for eligibility listed on Jetnet.
- Q.** What is the difference in A1 versus A3 deadhead?
- A.** A1 is for travel to a flight assignment. *A1 travel is a "must ride" status.* Based on company policy you should receive a seat assignment for travel as A1 as long as you have not made a last minute change to your A1 and have checked-in on-time. A3 is for travel from a flight assignment. *A3 travel is not a "must ride" status.* If at the time the A3 is booked, there are no seats left sell in Y inventory then the A3 is not confirmed. When you check-in you will be listed on the priority list as an RID, which is a high priority standby. You do not have to take a jumpseat when traveling A3 even for flights less than 4 hours. But since A3 is not "must ride," you should contact Crew Tracking to have your A3 changed to the next flight.

We absolutely will be here to answer your questions and help solve problems, however we encourage you to do your part and look at the resources provided so that we can respond to questions in a timely manner. ▲

**Mark Beeler**

National Scheduling Coordinator

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# What do I do now?



## Finding answers to your scheduling questions

As Flight Attendants, we live a busy and active life. Taking care of ourselves and our families requires us to fire on all cells at any given moment. Obtaining helpful information is one way we can eliminate undue stress in our lives. We at the Scheduling Department want you to have easy access to topics that may be of assistance to you 24/7.

Scheduling issues, in particular, can be very complicated causing stress when we do not understand what is happening to our schedules.

### What do I do?

- Note the numbers of the Chair, the Vice Chair and the Operation Council Representatives at your base, especially for after-hours questions. Click Base Pages from the Main Menu of the APFA.org home page. Navigate to your base page for the latest contact information.
- You may call a Scheduling Rep-on-Duty at APFA HDQ, Monday through Friday during the hours of 0900 – 1700 central, excluding holidays. (817.540.0108, extension 8161). Program this number into your cell phone!
- Log in to the APFA website and click on Contact at the very top. Use the link “Click here to contact an APFA Headquarters Representative on Duty.” Emails outside of normal office hours will be treated the next business day.
- You may obtain helpful information by referencing the On-Duty Contract Guide. An online version is available. Click on Current Contract from the APFA.org home page.
- You may also reference your spiral bound Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) dated November 1, 1998 to November 30, 2004. The complete CBA with the modifications from 2003 is also online through the Current Contract link. Click on “Foundation Document.”

Most of us today own a home computer and subscribe to an Internet service provider. The Internet is an excellent tool which enables us to search for information that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. The APFA website is a wonderful resource of information available to our membership. You may visit the APFA website to search for important scheduling issues that you may be experiencing.

Let's look at some of the documents on the Scheduling page of the APFA website that may be of interest to you (click on Departments in the main menu, then Scheduling):

- 2009 Bid Calendar
- Deadhead After Substitution of Equipment
- Flight Attendant Obligation with AVBL Days
- FLL Reserve Coverage Test
- High Time Flyer – Recovery of Lost Time
- Monthly Limitations and Guarantees
- OE Flexibility
- PVD Award Summary
- Reserve Preferences
- Short Call Make Up
- Standby Reserve Duty Test

There are many more documents for you to review. The above are only a small sample. They are frequently updated as the need arises. We find that more and more Flight Attendants are using our website to obtain information. The Internet is a quick way for Flight Attendants to communicate with us here at APFA.

For those of you who are not familiar with my department here at APFA Headquarters, two line Flight Attendants are staffed full-time each business day to answer your calls. I am very proud of the Reps that manage the phone lines five days per week. It is a very demanding job, but very rewarding to help our fellow Flight Attendants in need. The phone lines in the scheduling department can sometimes queue up to ten calls at a time. Therefore, the Reps must be proficient and ready for the next caller.

Due to the financial demands of negotiating a contract and budgetary cutbacks at APFA HDQ, the department could lose one Scheduling Rep-on-Duty. We all know how difficult it is to negotiate with AA. Contract talks are historically lengthy and expensive. We must stay the course in order to obtain the contract that we all deserve. Losing a Rep due to cutbacks at APFA would result in a reduction of one-on-one services to you. Fortunately there are resources available to you on the APFA website.

Well, that is it for now. Please remember to carry The On-Duty Contract Guide with you when you fly your trips. ▲

Mark

Following is a frequently asked question from concerned commuters:

**Question:** I checked in for my commuter flight and noticed that an American Eagle Flight Attendant will be getting the CJ before me because that person is listed first on the Priority List. Is this true?

**Answer:** It is not. Per the In-flight Manual, General Policies and Guidelines page 1.6, AE flight attendants are only eligible to take the jump seat on an AA flight for personal (D) travel. AA flight attendants must be accommodated in the jump seat before any AE flight attendant, regardless of pass classification.

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National Health Coordinator

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# Notification of Crewmember Exposure to Infectious Disease

One of the occupational hazards of our “glamorous” career as Flight Attendants is exposure to infectious disease. While the airlines make every effort to avoid boarding passengers who have contracted nasty bugs, there will always be a few who slip through the cracks. This could be a passenger who is quite simply unaware that they have been exposed to an illness, or perhaps someone who feels a little under the weather but doesn’t think it’s any big deal. There are even a few unscrupulous types who travel in spite of the fact that they have been diagnosed with an infectious disease. Maybe they just want to get home as quickly as possible so they can obtain treatment from their own doctor and sleep in their own bed. Possibly, they are blissfully ignorant of the risk of exposure to which they subject the people with whom they come into contact—including their dedicated flight crew. We can only hope that clueless souls such as these are few and far between.

During 2008, passengers on 24 American Airlines flights were later diagnosed with infectious diseases. As a result, 212 Flight Attendants received letters from AA Occupational Health Services notifying them of a possible risk of exposure. Of this total number, 126 notifications were for tuberculosis, 22 were for pertussis (whooping cough), 22 were for meningitis, 11 were for chicken pox, and 9 were for smallpox. This number is actually quite low when you consider the volume of flights operated by American Airlines in the space of a year. Knowing that to be true, however, doesn’t make the situation any less nerve-racking for the Flight Attendants who are in receipt of the dreaded letters.

It is at this point that the phones start ringing at the APFA Health Department and at AA Medical as well. “Why,” demands an outraged Flight Attendant, “am I just now getting this letter? I worked that flight more than a month ago!” Well, this is how the process works: Our passenger, Mr. Clueless, boards one of our flights totally unaware that he was exposed to an infectious disease during the course of his travels. Although he is feeling a bit run down, he interacts pleasantly with the flight crew and his seat mate. After the flight he goes home and puts himself to bed. The next morning he wakes up feeling much, much worse. His wife insists that he go to the doctor, but he can’t get an appointment before the next day. The physician finds his symptoms to be troubling and decides to run a few tests. It takes a few days for the test results to come back showing that Mr. C. has contracted a highly contagious infectious disease. The physician then recommends that Mr. C. stay home for a few more days, and questions him regarding his activities in the time leading up to his diagnosis. He reports his findings to the local public health authority, who in turn report to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). The CDC at this point would contact American Airlines for a copy of the passenger manifest so that they could then send notifications to those passengers on the flight who might be at risk. AA Occupational Health Services then takes responsibility for sending out letters to the flight crew. In some cases phone calls will be made to those crew members thought to be most at risk. If Mr. C. traveled on multiple flights there would be notifications sent out to each flight crew involved. As you can see, this is a somewhat backward process and one which does not occur automatically. This explains why it can often take a month or more before crew members receive the letters notifying them of possible exposure.

Crew members should read the letters carefully in order to determine whether medical testing and follow up are necessary. The APFA Health Department and leadership would like to see AA step up to cover the cost of any necessary testing, however that is not the procedure at this time, and they are not legally obligated to do so. Since CDC reported incidents of exposure to AA crew members are relatively low in number, it would go a long way towards improving employee relations if our company were to cover these costs. If you contract an infectious disease at work you can file a worker’s comp claim, and state workers comp law will be the determining factor in whether your claim is compensable. Please contact the APFA Health Department or AA Medical via Call-A-Nurse if you have any questions.

It is important to remember that exposure to a disease does not always result in a person contracting that particular disease. And, while we can never entirely eliminate the risk of disease exposure, there are some fairly simple actions that can be taken which will greatly reduce that risk.

- Get recommended vaccinations and keep them up to date.
- Check the CDC website regularly for updated health information for travelers.
- If a passenger appears to be seriously ill alert the captain immediately, as well as the agent if the flight has not departed, or the AA Physician-on-Call if in flight.
- The importance of hand washing cannot be over emphasized. Studies show that a thorough wash with warm, soapy water is just as effective as antibacterial hand wash.
- It is a good idea to carry a soap-free antibacterial hand cleaner for those times when we are unable to get into the lav.
- Be considerate of yourself and your co-workers by trying to avoid working when you are sick.
- Pay attention to your personal health and do your best to get adequate water, food, and rest.

Following all of the above recommendations is undeniably difficult under our current stressful work conditions. Making our personal health a priority will contribute to our ability to get through the difficult times which undoubtedly lie ahead. ▲

## Resources

### CDC website:

[www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel)

### American Airlines Occupational Health Services:

1-800-555-2373 or via Call-A-Nurse chat on the AA OHS website

### APFA Health Department:

APFA extension 8301 or: [health1@apfa.org](mailto:health1@apfa.org)

### Article by Patty French on TB Exposure:

*Skyword* Spring 2008

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# Protection from Discipline

## ...the 411 on Cabin ASAP

by **Lonny Glover**  
National Safety/Security Coordinator  
and **Patty Hargrove**  
APFA Cabin ASAP ERT member

As you have read by now, the Cabin Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP) began for AA Flight Attendants on January 15, 2009. Unfortunately there is a lot of misinformation floating around regarding the program. APFA has worked very hard, for many years, to develop this safety program. We encouraged participation and approval by the FAA and AA so you could benefit from this program.

Cabin ASAP is a VOLUNTARY, strictly confidential, self-disclosure program that allows you to self-report inadvertent safety-related violations (both FARs and AA safety policy) without the fear of retribution or discipline from either the FAA or AA management. This program reflects the desire of APFA, FAA and the AA to solve safety-related issues through corrective solutions and education by identifying hazards in order to prevent incidents and accidents, without implicating any individual employee. Cabin ASAP will also allow for data to be collected that can be used to identify safety issues or violations that may be caused by a systemic problem. It will allow for recommendations to be made to possibly change procedures or address training issues. This partnership is designed to open the channels of communication so that Flight Attendants will feel comfortable reporting safety-related incidents.

We know people make mistakes and may drift from trained procedures. The goal of Cabin ASAP is to find out why these things happen. Prior to the implementation of this program, if a company safety policy or FAR was broken, and AA or the FAA found out about it, the Flight Attendant would face possible company discipline and/or a fine by the FAA. What is learned from that? Potentially, the same incident could be occurring around the system. This may indicate a larger problem with policy/procedure. There has never before been a tool to gather, analyze and utilize this kind of information. It's been a missed opportunity to perhaps improve procedures or policy. That is exactly what the Cabin ASAP program is all about! The fact the event happened isn't the focus. The focus has shifted to learning about the contributing factors ... WHY did it happen?

Cabin ASAP is a program that addresses safety issues: specifically the "why" behind a FAR or safety-related company policy which may have been inadvertently broken.

Examples are: exit row briefing not performed, doors not armed/disarmed, emergency equipment not checked, out of jump seat during aircraft movement on the ground surface, crosscheck not completed, blown slide, etc.

Cabin ASAP is not for things such as: OSR not used on cart, reading lights inop, meal service done out of sequence, reporting passenger misconduct, etc.

Cabin ASAP is not a program to report other Flight Attendants or co-workers. Any report of that nature will not be accepted. The reporting Flight Attendant will be contacted by the APFA Cabin ASAP Event Review Team (ERT) member and redirected to APFA Professional Standards.

When reports are submitted to the ASAP program, they will be de-identified (name, employee number and base removed) and forwarded to the ERT. The ERT—consisting of a representative from APFA, FAA and AA—reviews the reports. One type of report is known as a "Sole Source." This is an event in which the only person that knows the event happened is the employee involved. An example would be that you are Flight Attendant #1 on a Super 80 and as the aircraft is climbing after takeoff you look down and see that the entry door isn't armed. You immediately arm it and nobody is the wiser. But why did it happen? Were you distracted by a sick passenger? Did the Captain inform you it was going to be a short taxi and you became focused on the safety briefing?

Are you on your fourth leg of the day coming off of a reduced-rest layover and have not had an opportunity to eat? The information that is gathered from these types of events will be compiled and analyzed. It could very possibly effect a future change in our own policy or procedures.

Another type of report that can be submitted to the Cabin ASAP program is a "Non Sole Source." This is an event that may have been witnessed by another individual (e.g. FAA inspector, an FSM, a passenger) who may inform AA or the FAA about the event. As long as the Flight Attendant submits an ASAP report and the event meets the requirements for acceptance, the employee will be immune from discipline from the company and/or FAA. It is important to note: any report that is submitted into the Cabin ASAP program, or any information gathered by the ERT, will not be shared or turned over to the FAA or AA. These guarantees are put in place specifically to encourage information be provided—information that would otherwise go unreported—without fear of retribution.

\*\* Report Acceptance Requirement: drug or alcohol use was not a contributing factor, there was *not* a reckless disregard for safety, etc \*\*

APFA did not walk into this program lightly. We spent years working, watching and taking advice from others (both on and off the property) who have working, successful ASAP programs. Cabin ASAP programs are in place for Flight Attendants at United Airlines and Alaska Airlines. Southwest and Northwest Flight Attendants are in the planning stages of an ASAP program. AA Mechanics and Dispatchers have ASAP programs. The pilots at American had a successful ASAP program in place for 14 years. Recently the AA Pilot ASAP program was suspended. Many Flight Attendants have questioned why the APFA would enter into an ASAP Program when the pilots have pulled out of theirs. APA and the pilots seek to obtain assurance that their members will not be subjected to discipline if they participate in the new ASAP Programs. As Flight Attendants, we *do* have this assurance tied into our program. APFA has a signed Letter of Agreement (LOA) that guarantees that any Flight Attendant involved in the Cabin ASAP program *will not* receive any discipline from the company. (This LOA is signed by Lauri Curtis, Vice President of In-Flight and APFA President Laura Glading.)

Understandably, this program and concept is new to all of us. It is a dramatic change in the culture at AA, a very different way from how things have been handled in our past. The Cabin ASAP Program is about safety and we are safety professionals. The FAA has stressed the importance of this type of a program. APFA put their support behind it; the FAA and AA embrace the program. The ERT's responsibility is to identify and report changes that stem directly from the reports that are received into the program. We know that this is the way to build trust in the program and keep it moving forward. In just the first few weeks since the start of the program, over 50 reports have been received. Several Flight Attendants have already benefited and were not subjected to company/FAA discipline when they reported: blown slides, out-of-date manuals, minimum crew violations and not briefing exit rows.

So you can see...the program works as it was intended. The galley gossip and misinformation posted on the various blogs about the Cabin ASAP is purely speculative and not factual. We encourage all members to educate themselves by viewing the information posted on APFA website regarding ASAP. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us at: cabinasap@apfa.org or 817.540.0108 ext. 8888.

Since the ASAP program is voluntary, it is strictly your choice: the old way...involving discipline, or the new way...being provided protection. We think the choice is an easy one. ▲



# Accidents and Incidents

## Aircraft Mechanicals

### 09/2008, SEA/JFK/ORD, 757

While flying from SEA to JFK, flight diverted to ORD due to electrical problems. No emergency was declared and the aircraft was not overweight for landing. After landing, the aircraft went off the end of the runway due to multiple blown tires. Passengers and crew deplaned via mobile stairs and no injuries were reported. Once the NTSB cleared the plane, checked baggage was off loaded. The flight changed equipment and crew and departed for JFK.

### 11/2008, SJU/LAX/IAH, 757

Flight diverted to IAH due to an electrical burning odor in the cabin. Declared emergency and the aircraft landed overweight without incident. The aircraft was taken out of service. All Flight Attendants reported having experienced headaches and dizziness but did not seek immediate medical attention. Flight Attendants stayed overnight in IAH due to crew legalities. No passenger injuries were reported. Replacement aircraft and Flight Attendants were sent from DFW, the flight changed equipment and departed for LAX.

### 12/2008, ORD/STL/ORD, S80

Aircraft returned to ORD with reported engine failure. After take-off, while climbing to 3000 feet, the crew heard a loud bang which was initially assumed to be a compressor stall. Engine was shut down with single engine time reported to be five minutes. Emergency was declared. Aircraft landed without incident. After inspection, a small crack was found but no leaks. The turbine of the engine appeared to be coming apart and the aircraft was taken out of service. Passengers reportedly remained calm during the incident. The flight changed equipment and departed for STL.

## Injury/Illness

### 09/2008, JFK/CDG, 767

Paramedics were requested to meet the flight upon arrival due to a very ill, 43-year-old female passenger. There were two doctors onboard assisting the passenger, whose condition became worse during approach and landing. CDG paramedics met the flight and pronounced the passenger deceased. The aircraft was impounded by local authorities for a three-hour period after arrival. Passengers and crew were allowed to deplane. Cause of death determined to be from natural causes.

### 10/2008, EZE/MIA, 777

Emergency was declared for landing and paramedics requested to meet the flight upon arrival in MIA due to multiple crew and passenger injuries resulting from severe turbulence. The turbulence occurred approximately 25 minutes prior to landing. Seat belt sign was turned on when turbulence occurred. Four Flight Attendants and four passengers were treated by paramedics. Aircraft was taken out of service for inspection. Two Flight Attendants were treated and released at the airport by paramedics. Two Flight Attendants and four passengers were transported to a local area hospital for treatment.

### 12/2008, DFW/IND/LIT, S80

Medical emergency was declared and flight diverted to LIT due to an unconscious male passenger. Two nurses onboard assisted Flight Attendants. Oxygen was administered. Paramedics met the flight upon arrival and transported the passenger to a local area hospital. All three Flight Attendants were exposed to bodily fluids and the aircraft was removed from service for hazmat cleanup. The original crew ferried the aircraft back to DFW. A replacement aircraft and crew was sent to LIT. Flight changed equipment and departed for IND.

## Passenger Misconduct

### 09/2008, DFW/SJC, S80

During boarding, a female passenger seated at a bulkhead row became verbally abusive towards a Flight Attendant after being requested to place all carry-on items in the OHB. Passenger refused to place her oversized purse in the OHB and reportedly stuck her finger in the Flight Attendant's face and continued the verbal abuse. The Captain was notified and passenger eventually complied with proper stowage of her carry-on items. Flight Attendant involved refused to fly with passenger onboard. Captain deemed passenger was acceptable for travel and the Flight Attendant did not work the flight.

### 10/2008, MIA/BOS, 757

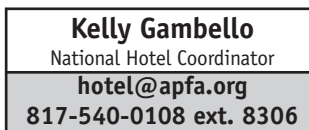
A male passenger was reported to have physically assaulted another passenger during deplaning in BOS. The passenger was reported to have been a problem during the flight. The assaulted passenger was struck in the face and was bleeding from his injuries. LEO and paramedics were requested and responded. The injured passenger was treated and released by paramedics. The two passengers involved in the altercation were questioned and released by the BOS airport police. The police stated since they had not witnessed the altercation could not arrest anyone, even though several passengers and crew members were witnesses and gave statements to the police. AA denied return travel for the passenger accused of the assault.

### 11/2008, EZE/JFK, 777

Male passenger reportedly threatened a Flight Attendant with a knife from the F/C cabin. Passenger apparently had purchased wine in M/C and was owed five dollars change. The Flight Attendant informed the passenger the change would be returned later in flight. The passenger followed the Flight Attendant to the F/C galley area, picked up a knife and threatened the Flight Attendant. The passenger was given the change owed to him and then returned to his seat without further disruption. The Captain was notified of the incident and a report was filed. The passenger involved was denied travel on his return flight.

### 12/2008, PHL/DFW, S80

A male passenger, while deplaning in DFW, was verbally abusive and assaulted a Flight Attendant. Another Flight Attendant as well as a cabin service employee witnessed the assault. Assaulted Flight Attendant filed charges with LEO and passenger denied further travel on AA.



# HOTEL/TRANSPORTATION 101

Since starting this position I've received several inquiries from you asking how hotels are selected, how come we don't have Internet service, what about a food discount, etc. I thought this would be a great time to let you know how my department works and give you a better understanding of the hotel selection process.

First, if you haven't already done so, please read Article 21 - HOTELS AND TRANSPORTATION of your contract. Don't worry; it won't take you long since it is only three pages. This is the guideline for my department and how we operate. We are currently in negotiations and some of this language may, or may not change, but until then this is what we follow.

I work with the American Airlines Hotel Contracts Department Manager, Monica Chamberlain and her Administrators, Sally Kolar, Sydelle Numsen and Patty Taylor. The Hotel Contracts Department is responsible for securing contracts with hotels and transportation companies for our *scheduled* layovers. They are also responsible for insuring that the HIHTL information is up-to-date. They handle relocations with *regularly scheduled* crews should a hotel be in an oversold situation, have plumbing or security issues, etc. I work closely with these AA contacts as they are the ones with whom I address your concerns and complaints about each property. Accordingly, the Hotel/Limo Desk is responsible for *unscheduled* layovers and transportation such as reserve Flight Attendants and OSOs. (See the article in the Summer 2008 **SKYWORD**.)

As the APFA Hotel Coordinator, I meet monthly with the company Hotel representatives, APA Hotel representatives, and some members of Flight Service to discuss ongoing issues with hotels and transportation based on your emails, phone calls and debriefs. We look for solutions to resolve any ongoing problem which can sometimes result in a hotel review.

A hotel review—also referred to as a site inspection—can be called by any party for any reason. The company could call for one because a hotel doesn't want to renew the contract or is asking for a rate increase. We would call for a site inspection of a property because of continuing negative reports without a resolution. In all cases the company representative sends out Requests for Proposal (RFP) to all the hotels in the area to see who might want our business. The hotel management fills in the proposal with information about their hotel and property, any discounts they will offer and their rate. The company may send out 30 RFPs and only get 10 or so back. The hotels that don't want crew business would simply not return the RFP. Of those interested there may be properties that don't meet our criteria for an acceptable crew layover hotel. APFA can also suggest properties that we would like to visit. I have received some emails from you with suggestions in certain cities that I have passed on to the company.

The review/site inspection dates and itinerary are set by the company representative. I, or one of my Hotel Committee Members, will do the site inspection along with a representative from AA and APA.

Current and recent APFA Representatives are: Joel Medford (DFW), Cathy Sharp (IDF), Jessica Washington (JFK), Sally Prater (DFW), Allyson Osean (STL), Jennifer Brissette (DFW), Cherie Fleishman (LGA) and Brenda McKenzie (DFW).

Throughout the review we have a checklist that we follow as we site the property. I developed a new checklist from previous ones being used to incorporate more information and to make it user friendly. The information on the checklist includes:

- the hotel itself and surrounding area
- fire, safety and security
- rooms and amenities in the room
- restaurants in and around the property

During the inspection we dismantle the beds, take pictures of the rooms and hotel, and make notations on the checklist. We refer to the RFP that was completed by the hotel management and confirm some of the information such as the restaurant and/or room service hours and any discounts. This is where the bargaining begins.

When doing a site inspection we *always* ask for complimentary Internet access in the room, a food and beverage discount and bottled water. These items are *not* contractual so we must *always* ask. In most cases the hotel has filled out the RFP with a food and beverage discount listed and that's it. Sometimes, during the inspection, we are able to get them to offer a larger percentage. As for the Internet access it depends on the property itself. Some of the older hotels have a third-party contract that they are paying off by passing that cost on to the guest. If they give it to us complimentary then they would have to absorb that cost. It is usually these hotels that we find won't offer the service as complimentary. The same could be said for the even fewer hotels providing complimentary bottled water. Bottom line, the company only cares about the bottom line cost for the hotel itself and transportation.

Once the review is done, a report is written following which I send APFA's recommendation of our top choices to the company Hotel Representative. Hopefully, and in most cases, all three Representatives (APFA, APA and AA) agree on a property. Article 21.H.2.c. states:

*The Company will consider all recommendations of the APFA and then select the facility to be used from those that are mutually acceptable to the Company and the APFA. It is the intent of the parties that representatives of the Company and the APFA's National Hotel Department reach agreement on the selection of the hotel/motel accommodations. If, however, there are no mutually acceptable facilities, the Company and the President of the APFA (or her/his designee) will meet to attempt to agree on a facility. If the Company and the President of the APFA (or her/his designee) cannot reach agreement, the Company will make the final determination.*

Once the hotel is contracted, the website is updated with the hotel information and the amenities that they will offer. My committee members and I are constantly going through the website to make sure that the information is up to date and accurate. We've also made many corrections based on your feedback after visiting the site. We're trying to make the site user friendly and the information easy to obtain. This is an ongoing project.

On a daily basis we answer your phone calls and emails and forward the information to the company representative for follow up with the hotel. When you contact us regarding a hotel, please make sure to always include the date, name of hotel and city, room number, and the name of anyone that you spoke with. We receive many reports, often only saying: "Marriott" or "Renaissance," with no city name. Also, if you speak with someone at the hotel ask them for

their business card. Having the name of the person you spoke with helps us with the follow up. Your reports are then filed by city and hotel and referred to when issues are not being resolved and we need to call for a site inspection.

As the National Coordinator, I am also responsible for overseeing a monthly budget for my department, reporting to the National Officers, the APFA Board and Executive Committee via quarterly reports and meetings, coordinating my Hotel Committee Members, providing continuing training and writing articles for **SKYWORD**. Most of all, I get to be your voice. A Flight Attendant once said to me, "I feel sorry for you because there will always be someone who is unhappy with your hotel choice." That may be true, but I continue to work diligently to secure the best accommodations I can, always keeping in mind the safety and comfort of each and every crew member. ▲

### GENERAL INFORMATION FORM

Place "X" in Box to the Right Where Applicable or Enter Required Information

<b>AMERICAN AIRLINES, INC.</b>		<b>AMERICAN EAGLE AIRLINES, INC.</b>	
Hotel:	Hotel Transportation:	Distance/Time Hotel to Airport:	Brand:
Phone:	Every 15 Minutes:	miles	Flag:
Fax:	Every 20 Minutes:	minutes	Mgmt. Co.:
E-mail:	Every 30 Minutes:		Contact:
Address:	On Demand:		Phone:
City/State/Zip:	3rd Party Transportation:	Airport Name:	Fax:
	Airport Location:		E-Mail:
	Downtown Location:		
Hotel's 1st Contact:	Contact Title:	Phone:	Fax:
2nd Contact:	Title:	Phone:	Fax:

<b>BID INFORMATION (1st and 2nd Year)</b>			
Year 1 Rate: \$	City Tax: %	VAT Tax	
Year 2 Rate: \$	State Tax: %	IVA Tax	
Day Room Rate: \$	Gov. Tax: %	Other:	
Currency:	Tax Exempt after 30/60/90/180 Days	Initial:	

**Amenities: (Please place "X" in the box to the right of all that apply)**

Room:	Free 1-800	Credit card	Local calls	Local Charges
Internet in Room:	Wireless Internet:	Business Ctr. - Wireless Internet:	High Speed:	Business Ctr. - High Speed:
Clock/Radio	Cable	PayPerView	Coffee Maker	Iron/Ironing Board
Microwave in Room:	Refrigerator in Room	Rm. Safe	Crew Lounge:	Discount:
Hotel-Restaurant Name:	Discount:	%	Hours:	
Room Service:	Discount:	%	Food Available:	
Lounge Name:	Early AM Food Available:			
Outdoor Pool:	Indoor Pool:	Exercise Room:	Outside Health Club Available:	
Other Amenities:	Nearest 24 hr Restaurant:			
Shopping/Recreation - Walking Distance:	Type:	Pick-up Location:		
Public Transportation From Hotel:	Total Crew Rooms:			
Other Airline Crew				

Page 1 of 2

### General Information Form

Place "X" in Box to the Right Where Applicable or Enter Information

Hotel's Name:	City:	Date:
---------------	-------	-------

**Hotel Transportation Information:**

Airport Courtesy Transportation:	Hours of Operation:	Amount of vehicle Liability Insurance:
Number of Vehicles:	Capacity:	
Seat Belts/All Pax	2-Way Communication	

**Hotel Information:**

Year Built:	Hotel In Compliance with ADA (American with Disabilities Act)	Soft Goods	Smoking Rooms:
Recent Renovation: (Year)	Hard Goods	Non-Smoking Rooms:	Twin:
Future Renovation: (Year)	Number of Rooms:	King Beds:	Time to Convert:
Number of Floors:	Room Entrance Outside:	2-Pipe System:	
Room Entrance Inside:	Queen Beds:	Air-Conditioned:	
Double Beds:			

**Security:**

Uniformed	In-House	Contracted	2-Way Communication	Hours:	Peep Hole
Electronic Lock	Manual Lock	Double-Lock	Bar-Lock	Chain	Black-out Drapes
Sliding Glass Drs.	Rm Windows Open	Double Pane	Triple Pane	Sound-Proof	Number of personnel on duty in Hotel after Midnight:
Unopened phone line has immediate and direct emergency access to 911?					

**Fire:**

IN-ROOM - Fire Sprinkler	Smoke Detector	Voice Communication	Heat Detector
PUBLIC - Fire Sprinkler	Smoke Detector	Automatic Hallway Separators	Heat Detector
Alarm System Connected to Fire Department	Fire Hoses in Hall	Fire Extinguishers in Hall	Voice Communication in Elevator
Number of Fire Exits per Floor	Phone in Elevator	Re-Entry Available from Stairwells to all Guest Room Floors	
Number of Elevators			
Ground Floor Fire Exit Door from Stairwell Locked			

Letter Available?  Yes  No

A Familiarization/Welcome Letter will be provided to the crews upon check-in to advise them of hotel amenities, food service hours, available discounts, and local restaurants, recreational facilities, and places of interest within walking distance, as well as places they can get to via hotel shuttle (and information on how to request it), and any special current events or local happenings that may be of interest.

**International Hotels Only:**

Back-up Electric Generator:	Back-up Water Supply:	Water Purification System:
Bottled Water	Size:	Charge to AA:

Page 2 of 2

**Patrick Hancock**

APFA Retirement Specialist

retirement@apfa.org

817-540-0108 ext. 8490

# Dump the Pension ... ???!



## Q. Should we dump our Regular Pension and go with a 401(k) match?

### A. I don't think so.

Some people are very concerned about their pensions. The economy is terrible, the company is crying poverty, and now they just announced that the market melt-down means our Flight Attendant pensions are only 70% funded. With all that risk, people are afraid of ending up with nothing. Some people have argued that trading our traditional pension for a 401(k) match is a way to reduce that risk. I disagree. I think if we were to trade the Defined Benefit Pension Plan (DBP) for just a 401(k), we would be:

1. Taking on the Investment Risk currently borne by the company,
2. Trading into a plan with no insurance component,
3. Trading into a plan with no Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation (PBGC) "guarantee,"
4. Reducing individual diversification, thus *increasing* our risk of ending up with nothing, not *reducing* that risk.

What does all that mean?

### 1. Investment Risk

The money you need in retirement is the same, whether it comes out of your 401(k), or out of our Defined Benefit Plan Pension Fund. If you need \$480,000 to last the rest of your life, that is what you need. The question is: who is on the hook if the Stock Market goes down, or you make some bad investment choices, and your pile of money shrinks?

In a DBP, the company is on the hook. They have to make up the shortfall. In a 401(k), you, your kids and the state welfare agency are on the hook and have to make up the shortfall. That is what is meant by "bearing the investment risk."

### 2. Insurance Pool

Actuaries can tell you that on average you will live a certain number of years after you retire. The number is completely accurate—and absolutely wrong for you, in that half of us will live longer than the average, and half of us will die sooner than the average. In a 401(k), the folks that die sooner, say only two years into retirement, leave a nice sum of money for their heirs. The folks that live longer than average will run out of money. Uh Oh!

In a DBP, the money is all in one big pool. You draw on it as you need it. If you only draw for two years, the part you "don't use" is left for the other people in the pool that live longer than the average. This pooling of money by a large group, for the use of the members when they need it, is generally called an insurance pool. Think of your car insurance as an example of an insurance pool. If we give up our DBP for a 401(k) plan, then we lose this insurance pool component. Great for your heirs if you die young; not so good for you if you live longer than average.

### 3. PBGC

Our DBP is "guaranteed" by the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation (PBGC), a quasi-governmental insurance firm. Almost nothing in life is certain, but this guarantee of some sort of a pension payment is pretty solid for people who retire at normal retirement age. If you retire earlier than normal retirement age you may end up with a lot less than you have been expecting. Higher paid employees, e.g. pilots, are also limited by the insurance maximum to less than expected. Unfortunately, we as flight attendants don't make enough to be impacted very much by the maximum benefit. *401(k) plans do not have any guarantee.*

### 4. Diversification

The best investment solution is to have your nest egg(s) in several baskets. A basic plan should include a little something from your:

- Defined Benefit Plan
- Social Security
- 401(k)
- IRA (Roth and/or regular), and
- Savings—this includes investments such as rental property and the equity in your home

Diversifying like that means that even if one or two drop—or go away entirely—you still have a steady stream of income from the others, which reduces the risk of not having enough to last the rest of your life. Today we have both our DBP, and the option to be in the 401(k). If we trade our DBP for only a 401(k), then you reduce the number of baskets (diversification) which is less safe. While a single individual may be willing to take that additional risk for non-financial reasons, I do not think it would be the wisest course for the vast majority of our members.

In conclusion, let's review the main points which speak to the disadvantages of dropping a Defined Benefit Pension in favor of a 401(k) alone.

If you were to trade the DBP for just a 401(k), you would be:

1. Taking on the Investment Risk currently borne by the company,
2. Trading into a plan with no insurance component,
3. Trading into a plan with no Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation (PBGC) "guarantee,"
4. Reducing individual diversification

Thus, this is not the best solution for our members. But, consider this, the option of a 401(k) match and a DBP are not mutually exclusive.

**Editor's note:** Though Patrick will continue aiding our membership through his participation, where possible, in retirement seminars, his regular duties as Retirement Specialist ended on March 31. Budget constraints led to the elimination of funding for the position. Members should direct their retirement questions to their designated Base Representatives (Chair, Vice Chair and/or OCR) or the Contract Reps-on-Duty.

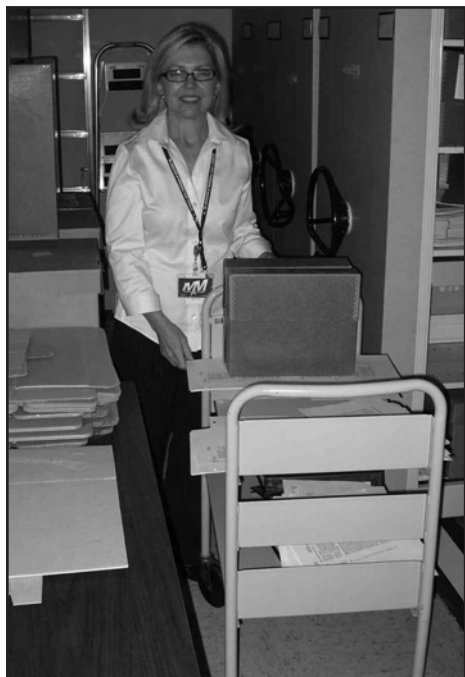


# The Link Between Our Past and Our Future

by Sally Prater, APFA Documents Historian

From time to time the membership hears from the APFA Archives Department and this **SKYWORD** issue brings an update. While clearly aware that APFA serves our membership by protecting and promoting our career, some Flight Attendants may not realize that APFA preserves the history of our Union and profession as well, through the APFA Archives. Created in 1998 to organize and maintain over 30 years (at that time) of Flight Attendant history, the archives still serves our membership today, and on a daily basis.

With the goal of easy access, the archives space at APFA headquarters was designed with mobile shelving units, acid free folders and boxes, and a precise system to log and retrieve thousands of documents. From administrative, legal, and fiscal files to negotiations, contracts, and historical documents, our archives tell the story of not only APFA, but the Flight Attendant as a professional. The contributions of past administrations, photos and media from our triumphs and tribulations, and even uniforms worn many contracts ago, all reside within the walls of our archives.



Sally Prater in on-site archive storage

In 2007, IDF Flight Attendant Cilla Golas retired as the APFA Archivist after contributing many years to the establishment and success of the department. I interviewed for the position after reading her article and of her

search for a replacement in **SKYWORD** that spring. With a degree in English and experience in historic preservation and publication research, I felt I could continue Cilla's work preserving our Union's history.



APFA archive annex and prep room

Eighteen months later, the archives remain busy with the constant influx of materials. Each change of APFA administration brings boxes to be processed. Flight Attendants continue to send personal collections documenting their experiences—some as committee or board members. We receive **SKYWORD** copies, newspaper clippings, various articles of interest from the past and even personal photos. Some of these treasures duplicate items currently held, but often something arrives that fills a void or completes our collection. An exciting donation came last spring when Mr. William Edwards, official photographer for Flagship University, donated his entire collection of negatives from the 1970's through 2001. Though incomplete in some years, it is a wonderful addition to our archives.

From an administrative standpoint, the archives serve APFA and its committees as a source in finding documents that aid in negotiations, arbitrations, and even daily operations, not to mention providing continuity from one administration to the next. AA related documents, including benefit and retirement information, are archived along with contract and scheduling materials. Every APFA department is represented. All documents and items must be cataloged into a location guide to allow for retrieval. Periodic shifting and transferring of materials must be done. As Cilla warned during my transition to the position, we are never "caught up" in the archives.

Through the years, our archives have provided material for researchers and dissertations. It will continue to represent us to future generations. This cause is furthered by our association with The University of Texas Library and Archives in nearby Arlington, Texas. As the UTA Library houses one of the most significant Labor Union Archives in the country, APFA was fortunate in finding such a partner to provide a permanent home for part of our collection. A university archivist works with APFA to ensure that any documents that we choose to send to the impressive, climate-controlled facility are maintained and accessible, yet protected if deemed confidential. For example, if it is no longer feasible to keep Board of Director or Executive Committee materials on site at our archives, they are catalogued and transferred to the UTA Labor Union Archives. More information on the UTA Library and Archives is available at: <http://libraries.uta.edu/SpecColl>



UTA archive storage

Much credit goes to our Officers and previous administrations for recognizing that, as the largest independent Flight Attendant union, we must protect our place in history with our airline and our profession. We can be proud that, in a constant and non-political way, the APFA Archives provides the link between our past and our future! ▲

**Patty French**

EAP Specialist

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# Mediation: Often the Right Approach in Our Personal Lives

**A**PFA has requested a Federal Mediator to assist us with our contract negotiations. The process of mediation is increasingly being utilized to settle corporate, public policy and personal disputes. I often receive calls from distraught Flight Attendants who are in the process of divorce or who are ending a relationship with their partner. While we are all familiar with the process of a traditional, litigated divorce and the emotional strife that can accompany it, no one wants to be remembered in the neighborhood as the couple who had the nasty divorce.

Yet a divorce in the traditional sense can often inflame the conflict and poor communication that already exist in a relationship. Divorce, or the breaking up of an important relationship, is a time of confusion and turmoil. It can make one's life feel out of control. Yet it is a time that requires good decision making so that your life and the life of your family can proceed in a thoughtful way. For this reason, a majority of states now have some form of court-ordered divorce mediation, and many couples seek out private mediators to help them move on with their lives in a constructive way. Mediation is helpful because it helps couples keep focused on the future rather than the past and, if you have children, their needs and feelings are kept in the foreground.

As parents, couples find that they can establish a working relationship during the process of mediation. This important accomplishment has a positive impact on children's adjustment to their parents' separation. It also makes it easier in the future for parents to discuss and come to agreements about the many issues that will arise as children grow.

There are many benefits to mediation. It works because the couple makes decisions together, not attorneys and judges who do not know the couple. There are no delays, or depositions, just the couple and the mediator. The mediator is the key to this process. He or she will assist the couple in making decisions by providing support, clarification and a safe, nonjudgmental atmosphere to discuss the issues. In this setting, the couple can discuss their concerns and make their own decisions. The mediator is a neutral party who knows what decisions must be made and ensures that they are made in an orderly fashion and in an atmosphere where arguments are minimized and cooperation is encouraged. This allows the couple to focus on their future.

Mediation saves a couple time, money and emotional energy. It is cost effective because the couple decides how quickly to proceed. They maintain control of the process and they don't have to wait for space on the court calendar to proceed. It focuses on the future and each person's best interests. It promotes open communication and, when there are children involved, creative parenting arrangements can be drafted to suit individual schedules. This is particularly important for Flight Attendants. The courts tend to craft traditional parenting agreements for those who work 9-5 work schedules. Since we have a varied work schedule, these types of agreements do not serve our families very well and add stress to both our work and family life.

For those who have a relationship that is not recognized in many states, whether it be unmarried, heterosexual couples without a common-law marriage, unmarried couples with children, or same-sex couples, mediation is an effective way to reach a settlement. Couples who have been divorced for a number of years often go to mediation when a change in the parenting schedule is needed and they cannot reach an agreement on their own. Mediation has the added benefit of being private for those who do not want their finances or custody settlement made public. Those who participate in mediation find that it helps to lessen anger and bitterness and assists in the acceptance of closure of the relationship and a sense of a new beginning. There are a few situations in which mediation is not appropriate. These include situations where domestic violence is present in the relationship or if one party is unable to make decisions on her or his own behalf.

The emotional toll that divorce or the ending of an important relationship has on individuals can be enormous. Statistics show that ninety percent of people who go through an acrimonious divorce have major health problems within two years of the divorce. For their children, the statistics are even more troublesome. Seventy percent of kids whose parents go through a high conflict divorce do not want to get married, have children or have a relationship with the opposite sex. The stakes are high when it comes to high conflict divorces. For this reason, many people find that seeking the help of a mental health professional is helpful in maintaining a healthy perspective. Others have found that the following guidelines can be helpful.

## Strategies for Building Resilience and Adapting Well to Divorce

Divorce can leave you feeling emotionally drained and out of control. Yet this time requires you to make your best decisions about your future. The impact on you will be felt at many different levels: emotional, practical, financial, self-esteem, and relationship. The following self-care strategies have been found to be helpful to assist you through this difficult time. They are designed to assist you with gaining deeper understanding of yourself, your assumptions about the world, relationships and personal beliefs. Remember that developing resilience is a personal journey. What works for one person may not work for another. Some of the following ways may be helpful to consider in developing your personal strategy:

- Talking to other divorced men and women who are supportive and understanding.
- Having a job or doing volunteer work.
- Over time, facing then accepting and letting go of negative feelings.
- Focus on what you can control. Develop realistic goals and do something every day to move toward them.
- Seek out resources and education to assist you in making informed decisions.
- Accept circumstances that can't be changed and focus on circumstances that you can change.

- Develop new friends. Strengthen family and social support networks and religious affiliations that do not oppose divorce.
- Seek out ways to have a less contentious divorce such as mediation or collaborative law.
- Engage in activities that you enjoy and find relaxing.
- Avoid casual sex, alcohol and drug use.
- View the divorce as the result of problems in the relationship rather than other things.
- Look for opportunities for self-discovery. Overcoming adversity helps you grow in meaningful ways and gives you a greater sense of personal strength.
- Maintain a hopeful outlook by visualizing what you want and not what you fear.
- Learn about what strategies for building resilience might work for you by discovering how you have effectively responded to challenges in the past.
- While we cannot control many events that take place in our lives, we can use stressful events as an opportunity to become a stronger and more self-assured person.
- Get help when you need it. Counseling focused on coping, goal setting and problem solving will help you move toward the future. A licensed mental health professional can assist you in developing a strategy to help you move forward. ▲

## “Miracle on the Hudson” was Union-Made

by John Wojcik, *People's Weekly World* Reprinted with permission. [www.pww.org](http://www.pww.org)

Once again, the nation has witnessed the difference between life and death that comes from having trained, experienced union members on the job.

Combining quick thinking and sheer bravery with their experience as long-time union members, US Airways Flight 1549 pilot Capt. Chesley Sullenberger and co-pilot Jeffrey Skiles, its crew of flight attendants [Sheila Dail, Doreen Welsh and Donna Dent], and the air traffic controllers teamed up to pull off the “Miracle on the Hudson,” in which 155 people survived an emergency landing in New York’s Hudson River on Jan. 15.

The many stories that have appeared in the mainstream media have praised the event as a “miracle” but have failed to point out that every single one of these heroes involved in pulling it off is a union member. Passengers on many commuter airlines, flown by poorly paid non-union pilots and staffed by non-union crews, might not have been as lucky.

All of the airline and airport workers involved in the Jan. 15 miracle were union members who received extensive training that was provided for and required under their union contracts.

Capt. Sullenberger brought the plane and its passengers to a remarkable safe water landing with no engine power. When his passengers and flight crew were safely evacuated from the plane, Sullenberger, according to reports, walked up and down the aisle twice to make sure the plane was empty.

Sullenberger has 40 years of flight experience. During that time he has served as both an instructor and safety committee chairman for the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA).

Passengers put their heads in their laps and started praying as their plane landed with an enormous splash into the 35-degree waters off Manhattan’s 48th Street. Witnesses on the shore watched in shock as passengers emerged in quick but orderly fashion. It was the three union flight attendants who successfully shepherded them to the temporary safety of the wings and the flotation rescue slides.

The flight attendants are all members of the [Association of] Flight Attendants-CWA.

“Flight attendants are highly trained safety and security professionals. The successful evacuation was an overwhelming example of the need for union flight attendants on aircraft,” declared Patricia Friend, president of the AFA-CWA. Friend said her union provides flight attendants with extensive training on emergency evacuations, and noted that each year union members undergo additional training to ensure proficiency.

The air traffic controllers who routed the plane around Manhattan, after the pilot reported that a bird strike had shut down both engines, are members of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association.

There are fewer controllers working longer hours these days as a result of the Bush-controlled Federal Aviation Administration’s refusal, for three years now, to bargain a contract with the union.

After the splashdown, passengers huddled on the wings of the plane as waves reached the bottom of the plane’s windows. One commuter ferry, the Thomas Jefferson of the company NY Waterway, arrived within minutes of the crash. The ferry crew and passengers grabbed life vests and lines of rope and tossed them to plane passengers struggling in the freezing water as the plane drifted slowly south.

Soon an armada of police boats, fireboats, tugboats and Coast Guard craft converged on the plane and, eventually, all passengers, including a baby, were safely transferred to the rescue boats.

The ferry crews that responded when they saw the plane in the river are Seafarers (SIU) members. The SIU provides extensive safety training for its members.

The pilots of the ferries that responded are members of the Marine Engineers union.

The police and fireboats that came to pull passengers to safety are operated by members of the Fire Fighters and Patrolmen’s Benevolent Association.

Many of the unions involved, observers note, were the same ones that had performed heroically in New York on 9/11.

## What happened to the phone roster and the center section?

As this issue was being finalized for print, there were several simultaneous changes going on in many Base Representative rosters. The 2009 Base Representational Elections saw new Chairs and Vice Chairs seated at a significant number of our bases. These representatives would be taking office on April 1, and would have new phone numbers. The center pages for **SKYWORD** have typically gone to the printer before the remainder of the issue. This, coupled with the targeted mailing date, led us to the decision to delete the section and to focus our attention on getting the new contact information, laid out in a convenient web-ready fashion, as soon as available from the new Base Reps. In all cases, the Headquarters voice mail extensions remain the same for a given position. Additionally, the email addresses follow the normal APFA Chair and Vice Chair convention:

**chxxx@apfa.org** –or– **chxxxx@apfa.org** for Chairs (where the xxx or xxxx represents the base code).

Examples: **chord@...** for Chicago Domestic, **chbosi@...** for Boston International. (Be sure to include the “i” designator if included in your base code.)

For Vice Chairs, simply use: “vc” instead of “ch” in the address.

There are already phone extension rosters online for the other Reps listed in the center pages. These and the Base Chair and Vice Chair phone numbers will be included in new formats for easy printing and carrying.

**Jill Frank Smoak**  
**Former APFA Retirement Specialist**  
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- Claro - portable IPL for acne — coming soon [www.myclaro.com](http://www.myclaro.com)
- Evotence - injectable — \$350.00 [www.evotence.com](http://www.evotence.com)
- Latisse - Rx to grow longer eyelashes — \$110 [www.latisse.com](http://www.latisse.com)
- Nia 24 - combination of 3 products — \$145 [www.nia24.com](http://www.nia24.com)
- Phloretin CF — \$112 [www.skinceuticals.com](http://www.skinceuticals.com)
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- Revalesskin - combination of 3 products — \$150 [www.revalesskin.com](http://www.revalesskin.com)
- Silk'n - portable laser for hair removal — \$675 [www.silkn.com](http://www.silkn.com)
- TNS Recovery Complex — \$135 [www.skinmedica.com](http://www.skinmedica.com)
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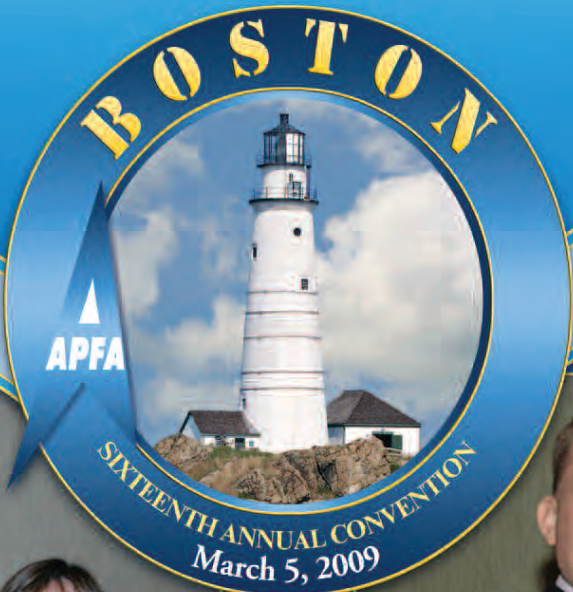
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Joseph Kennedy accepts award from APFA President Laura Glading on behalf of Senator Edward Kennedy

Eric Hodgson (LGA) presents Humanitarian Award to Cindy Horan (IMA)



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**Association of Professional Flight Attendants**

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