

Our success will depend on our unity

First of all, I want to say how honored I am to serve as your President. This is a sacred trust that members of APFA have bestowed on me, and I am determined not to let you down.

Since my election in February, I have been carrying your issues and concerns to American Airlines management, and I can report that our employer has been less than helpful. We have our work cut out for us to win a good contract.

Fortunately, I have the expertise and commitment of the APFA Negotiating Team. They've been hard at work for months gathering information and preparing our contract demands. Negotiations officially open in early September.

Decline!/Resign!

We've been taking on the Company on many issues, beginning with an aggressive response to the obscene bonuses collected by AA's top corporate executives. Here we are struggling to survive after taking massive cuts five years ago, and AA executives are patting themselves on their backs while padding their bank accounts.

We were all angry and disappointed; and we showed our disapproval with our "Decline!/Resign!" campaign, which clearly shook up the Company. AA management dislikes having their noses rubbed in their own messes, and that's exactly what we did.

We also joined with AA pilots, represented by the Allied Pilots Association, in the first-ever joint picketing event outside the AMR Stockholders' meeting. That event was very well attended and a tremendous success. We hope to duplicate that labor solidarity as we move forward. We showed the Company – and the public – that AA Crew Members are solidly united on this issue.

APA/TWU Meetings

We are continuing to meet and communicate with both the APA and the TWU. We are all engaged in contract negotiations. Although we have different issues, and approaches to resolving them, we are committed to not allowing any differences to divide or distract us. *It has long been a Company strategy to pit the work groups against each other to weaken us and protect themselves.* All of the work groups made tremendous sacrifices five years ago, and we should support each other during our fight to restore what we've lost.



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MD-80 – Trip Pay Protection

In April, we achieved trip pay protection for Flight Attendants whose schedules were decimated by the five-day grounding of the MD-80 fleet. Trip pay protection is one of the items that the Negotiating Team is focusing on as we prepare for negotiations. In March, the Company required the use of vacation days to recoup time lost due to similar cancellations. *That was simply outrageous.*

Perishable Food

In May, I signed an agreement that permitted Flight Attendants to take perishable food off the airplane if they have been scheduled to lay over. This is a quality-of-life issue that was long overdue. Far too many Flight Attendants lost their jobs in the past for removing items such as fruit and yogurt that would have otherwise been discarded.

Immediate Relief Negotiations

In June, the Negotiating Team entered into an intense three-week negotiating session with the Company in hopes that we could emerge with an immediate relief package for Flight Attendants. Your Negotiating Team was ingenious in proposing different options for efficiencies in scheduling that could win short-term relief, but AA executives rejected these proposals. *The Company continues to refuse to recognize our valuable contribution to the airline.* While I was disappointed that we did not reach an agreement, I was not discouraged. I look forward to the continuation of our negotiations.

Voluntary Bridge to Retirement

In July, during the Immediate Relief Negotiations, I signed the Voluntary Bridge to Retirement Agreement. As a result of this Agreement, 368 Flight Attendants were able to retire early. This helped to move the seniority list and, along with our Leave of Absence proffer, prevented threatened furloughs.

Flight Attendant Union Coalition

At the end of July, I met with the Coalition of Flight Attendant Unions in Memphis. It was the second Coalition meeting I have attended and the list of union leaders participating continues to grow. We now have the leaders of all major air carriers, as well as regional carriers, for a total representation of approaching 100,000 unionized Flight Attendants. We will be participating in lobbying and any other activity that advances the interests and stability of the Flight Attendant career.

Web Site – Communications

Our Communications Department has taken on a redesign of the APFA website to modernize it and make it more user-friendly. We encourage you to visit www.apfa.org often to stay abreast of top issues at our Union and to get up-to-date information from your Negotiating Team, plus the latest on legislative issues, Hotline messages, surveys, InfoRep activities and all the ways you can participate in our effort to **Mobilize to Maximize**.

Road Shows

We conducted road shows throughout July to launch our **Mobilize to Maximize** campaign, report on the Immediate Relief Negotiations, give an overview of the bargaining environment, communicate our direction with regard to negotiations and, most importantly, to hear from you, the membership.

We need your guidance and support or nothing will be achieved. *My key message to Flight Attendants is to have hope, stay unified and get involved.* If we do not believe that we can be successful, we have no chance of succeeding. While I am fortunate to have dedicated and talented people serving with me, even the most skilled and experienced team cannot achieve a contract without membership support.

The Company is not going to simply hand us a fair agreement. We need your help. We are going to have to work hard and we are going to have to work together. It does not matter whom you voted for, whether you are domestic or international, junior or senior, or what airline you began with. There are many things that can divide us, but so much more that should bring us together.

We have been overcoming obstacles and challenges since the birth of our career by recognizing the importance of standing together. We have proved that we are both courageous and tenacious. Please get involved. Sign on to be an InfoRep and encourage your fellow crewmembers to stay informed.

Our success will depend on our unity.

- Launch of Decline!/Resign! (turn-it-around ID hang tag) campaign
- MD-80 pay protection agreement
- Strategy meetings with APA and TWU
- Picketing at AMR Shareholders' Meeting along with APA
- Agreement reached on removing perishable food from aircraft
- Opening of Contract talks with AA
- Immediate Relief bargaining period
- Mobilize to Maximize brought to the bases in road shows
- Agreement on Voluntary Bridge to Retirement to help mitigate overages
- Meeting with Flight Attendant Union Coalition

The Bargaining Landscape

by Rob Clayman, Attorney

Editor's note: Participants of the **Mobilize to Maximize** road shows in July were receptive to the message delivered by Rob Clayman, APFA's legal counsel during these negotiations. Rob has served as an advisor to APFA for many years and through several negotiations. Frequent comments from those attending the road shows and hearing his presentation were that his words were frank and upfront, if sometimes gloomy. Rob touches upon the major points of his talk in this article.

Bargaining does not occur in a vacuum – it takes place in a particular environment defined by the financial condition of the Company, the industry, and the country as a whole. Equally important, how negotiations proceed and ultimately conclude depend upon the members and the degree to which they are *mobilized to maximize* gains to our Collective Bargaining Agreement.

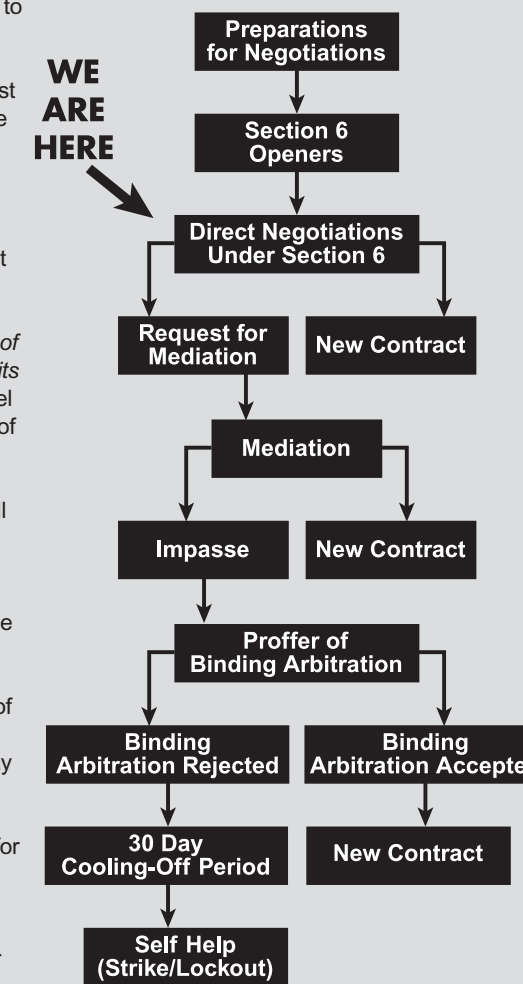
While each individual can set the level of her or his involvement and commitment, the economic circumstances surrounding bargaining are subject in large part to factors beyond our control. Most notably, the price of jet fuel stands apart from, and is unaffected by, our solidarity.

In the past year the cost of a barrel of oil has skyrocketed, from under \$80/bbl in late spring 2007 to over \$147/bbl this past July. (It had dropped to under \$120/bbl by mid August. – Ed.) The direct impact on American Airlines is significant. For each dollar increase in a barrel of oil, American's annual costs go up by \$80 million. Of course, American, like other airlines, has not stood still and merely accepted the brunt of this additional cost. It has responded by hedging fuel, increasing fares, retiring inefficient aircraft and eliminating unprofitable routes.

For example, during the second quarter of 2008 when fuel rose by 20%, American covered approximately 56% of that cost by increasing fares. In fact, in the first six months of 2008 the six largest airlines raised fares on 15 occasions compared with 17 increases for *all of 2007*. The extent to which airlines can continue to absorb the effect of higher fuel prices remains to be seen. In addition, the extreme volatility of the oil market further complicates the situation. In the past month alone fuel has fallen by more than twenty-five dollars and American's stock price, in turn, has more than doubled.

While the price of fuel has no doubt affected American's bottom line, it has in other ways dramatically changed negotiations. *The mantra of airline management – that labor is its highest cost – is no longer true.* Fuel alone now represents almost 40% of the Company's expenses. More specifically, this single item overwhelms the \$800 million payroll of American's Flight Attendants. To increase our wages by 10% would cost the Company \$80 million - the same as a one dollar increase in the price of a barrel of oil.

In sum, we do not control the cost of fuel or the health of the airline industry, but we can change the way management of American Airlines treats labor. To do so we must recognize that we are responsible for the one constant in these negotiations that can make the difference – our collective will to obtain all that we are owed and our ability to **Mobilize to Maximize**.



APFA's Division Representatives A Long Tradition of Union Advocacy

APFA's Constitution states that the primary responsibility of the Vice President is to oversee the grievance and arbitration process under federal law and the APFA/AAL Collective Bargaining Agreement. The Vice President also serves as APFA's permanent Chairperson of the Flight Attendant System Board of Adjustment (SBA). Along with the Vice President, the Division Representatives, certain members of APFA's internal staff, labor attorneys retained by APFA, and other SBA advocates (often former officers and/or Division Representatives) comprise the SBA Department.

Under the APFA Constitution, the Vice President nominates active members in good standing to serve as Division Representatives. The nominations are then confirmed or rejected by APFA's Executive Committee.

The duties of a Division Representative include coordination with the Base Chairs within their division, providing assistance with interpretation of the contract, grievance procedures, and local policies for base operations. Division Representatives also are responsible for representing terminated Flight Attendants at First Level Hearings, preparation and presentation of grievances at Quarterly System Board (QSB) hearings, and involvement at various levels of Presidential Grievance processing.

Along with assisting the Vice President in formulating and presenting training programs for other APFA representatives, Division Representatives are responsible for certain technical procedures, such as filing Article 20 grievances, which address clearance disputes between individual Flight Attendants and AA Medical. In recent years, as a result of Presidential Grievance awards, Division Representatives have also assumed the responsibility of filing Family Leave (FML) disputes for individual APFA members.

Division Representatives have also historically worked closely with APFA's Health Department, EAP, HR and Flight Service in the coordination of Conditional Reinstatements for members who have been terminated for positive DOT random drug tests.



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We are very fortunate indeed to have Kim and Barb returning to the department, with all of their experience and dedication. We are also very fortunate to have three long-time, experienced APFA Representatives coming into our department, collectively bringing decades of representational experience along with them.

LAX-I-based Tony Leonhardt is the new Division Representative for Division One (LAX, LAX-I, SFO, SFO-I), IOR-based Liz Mallon is the new Division Representative for Division Three (BOS, BOS-I, IOR, ORD), and JFK-based Suzanne Edwards is the new Division Representative for Division Five (JFK, LGA).

The newly appointed Division Representatives have completed the most comprehensive training program in the history of our department. The professor that conducted this program has stated that our SBA representatives are some of the brightest, most capable and dedicated union advocates that he has ever encountered in his many years of labor advocacy training. We can all be very proud of the fact that we have a union with the resources and talent available to provide the very best representation for our members.

Tony Leonhardt (DR 1)

Tony began his career with American in 1984. Spurred on by the glaring disparity between his B-Scale salary and benefits and those of his A-Scale counterparts, he quickly became a vocal critic of B-Scale and began volunteering at APFA headquarters in 1987, assisting with the preparations for a possible strike. Currently based at LAX-I, he has also been based at LAX, DFW and IDF.

Tony worked as a political consultant in Los Angeles and, in 1992, he took a leave to work full time for the Clinton/Gore Presidential campaign, scheduling campaign events for the candidates and their wives. He later served as Deputy Director of the Los Angeles County Democratic

Campaign Headquarters. Following the Clinton/Gore victory, Tony assisted with strike preparations for the APFA's 1993 strike against American. Now an experienced organizer and member of the LAX Base Council, Tony was appointed in 2001 to Strike and InfoRep Captain for LAX and its satellite bases, coordinating volunteers, phone trees and pre-strike activities.

After serving as Vice Chairperson for LAX-I, Tony brings his Union activism and zeal to the SBA department. He assisted the Vice President's office gathering data and preparing arbitrations for Family Leave, 777, 757 and 737 staffing. Meantime, Tony co-edits the "FA News," a daily on-line digest of union and industry news for APFA Flight Attendants. An outspoken union advocate with exceptional communication skills, Tony is an invaluable addition to the SBA team. As Division Rep 1, he represents Flight Attendants based in LAX, LAX-I, SFO and SFO-I.

Finally, the Division Representatives, along with the Vice President, comprise the APFA's Grievance Review Committee, which is charged with evaluating every grievance that comes before the SBA Department, and determining the viability of such cases.

Division Representatives must be based within their Division, as mandated by the Constitution. Under the Constitutional formula for determining the number of APFA Divisions, we currently have five Division Representatives. They have recently been appointed and confirmed for the 2-year term from May 2008 through April 2010. Two incumbent Division Representatives are returning for another term: DFW-based Kim Boyett returns for Division Two (DFW, IDF, STL), and IMA-based Barbara Rives for Division Four (DCA, DCA-I, IMA, MIA, RDU-I).

Kim Boyett (DR 2)

Prior to becoming an American Airlines Flight Attendant in 1987, Kim worked for Delta Airlines as a Reservation Agent in her home state of Florida. Three years as part of an unrepresented work force convinced Kim that, given the opportunity, she would become an informed and involved union member and activist. Once hired by American she quickly began learning about APFA, attending base meetings, board meetings and volunteering whenever possible. Kim joined the APFA (DFW) Speaker Task Force in 1988 and later the Info Rep program as one of the first members.

Kim worked in the DFW Base Office as an OCR and Notice of Dispute Representative and served as the DFW Vice Chair, DFW Base Chair and Ad Hoc Member of the APFA Executive Committee. Learning from and building on the work of her predecessors, Kim is passionate and meticulous at representing Flight Attendants in need. Kim has represented terminated Flight Attendants at First Level hearings, been a witness in arbitrations, and a co-advocate for Termination and System Board cases. She has facilitated the return to work of Flight Attendants and, along with Barbara Rives in 2005, created SBA training for APFA Advocates and Base Representatives.

Kim has been a Division Representative for four years, representing IOR, BOS, BOS-I and currently STL, IDF and DFW, where she is now based. Kim lives in the DFW area and keeps regular hours at APFA headquarters.

Liz Mallon (DR 3)

Since beginning her flying career in 1972, Liz has seen more changes in our profession than most – largely changes for the better, Liz would contend. From her initial interest in the areas of Safety and Health, Liz moved on to IOD and Scheduling. Encouraged by the 1979 Agreement which brought us some of the strongest scheduling language ever achieved, Liz became "hooked" on this aspect of our work lives and has championed scheduling issues ever since.

As ORD Base Chair for well over a decade, Liz filed countless Base Grievances over scheduling issues. Most were successful at the Arbitration level, chiefly due to the experience of those like her who know the intent of the language written. Preserving and protecting the hard fought language of our Agreement remains paramount to Liz.

Attendance is another arena where Liz's experience has served not just her base but APFA members system wide. She has testified in arbitrations regarding many issues related to attendance, including the Blanket Medical Certificate Case from IMA which proved victorious for the Union.

After 36 years in the Domestic Division, Liz has transferred to International and is now based at IOR. She is eager to continue her work for all Flight Attendants and is grateful to have the opportunity to serve the membership in the capacity of Division Representative. As Division Rep 3, Liz will represent the Flight Attendants at ORD, IOR, BOS and BOS-I.

Our three most recent Division Representatives that have left their positions will be greatly missed. They are Mario St. Michel, who has stepped into the role of APFA Negotiator; Cindi Simpson, who continues to provide valuable assistance within the SBA Department; and Jeff Crecelius, who has transferred out of his former Division. We hope that these very experienced individuals will still be available in future SBA endeavors.

Barbara Rives (DR 4)

Barbara began her career as a Flight Attendant in 1987. Now based in IMA, she has previously been based in LGA, RDU-I and MIA, as well as SJU where she first began her union work. After serving six years as a Scheduling Rep on Duty, it was her work as Interim National Scheduling Coordinator which inspired Barbara to become involved in case work, and her goal to become a Division Representative.

Vice Chair at RDU-I from 1989-1995, Barbara was force-transferred to MIA when RDU closed, after which she took a hiatus from union work to spend time with her newborn daughter. She returned to active union work as the elected MIA Vice Chair from 2000-2004. In May of 2004 she assumed the position of Division Representative for Division Four, representing Flight Attendants based at MIA, IMA, DCA, DCA-I and RDU-I.

Since that time, Barbara has facilitated numerous return-to-work settlements, served as co-advocate on termination arbitrations and was co-advocate on the FML 2 and FML (Remedy) Presidential grievances. Barbara has developed and taught SBA training for new Chairs, Vice Chairs and Base Representatives, has served as a Union Board Member and has presented cases for the Quarterly System Board. Barbara shows exceptional organizational skills and brings with her a fierce tenacity for representing Flight Attendants. She lives in Ft. Lauderdale with her daughter.

Suzanne Edwards (DR 5)

After 16 years working for Eastern Airlines, Suzanne signed on with American Airlines in 1991. Eastern's demise was the life-altering experience driving Suzanne to work for her new Union, and to being an advocate for others like herself who love this profession. Whether helping colleagues grieving actions of the Company, building consensus for our future, working to solve issues at local bases or serving on national committees, Suzanne finds great reward in her union work and she encourages more people to get involved.

An advocate for Flight Attendants' rights since 1993, Suzanne started with APFA as an InfoRep. Committee and Rep work followed: Strike Phone Tree Committee in 1993, LGA Council Scheduling Rep in 1994. After training in Dispute and Conflict Resolution, Suzanne worked the Contract and Scheduling desks at APFA HDQ and served as Operational, Grievance Rep. From 1996 -2004 she held the elected positions of Vice Chair and Base Chair at LGA.

In 2004, Suzanne became the Vice Chair at JFK followed by two terms as Base Chair. Though her entire career has been spent working at the New York bases, Suzanne's labor relations experience has served both her local base constituents and the greater APFA membership equally. In October 2007, Suzanne was appointed to fill the vacated Division Rep 5 position. Since then she has successfully negotiated the return to work for several Flight Attendants. Suzanne's knowledge and experience are great assets to the Division Rep team as she continues to represent Flight Attendants at JFK and LGA.

Another landmark change has recently occurred within the SBA Department.

Susie Johnson, long-time Executive Secretary and SBA Administrator to the Vice President, has recently retired after 27 years of service to APFA. Susie saw more APFA history on a daily basis than anyone else, working tirelessly for every Vice President since 1981. We will truly miss Susie's expertise, perspective, and smile around APFA Headquarters, and we wish her all the best in her new life as a retiree!

Transferred to Euleless

The night of February 26, 2008, at the conclusion of the National Officer runoff ballot count, a friend of mine whispered in my ear, "You just held the proffer to Euleless... with a four-year lock-in!" And with that comment began for me this new journey as APFA Secretary.

"Journey" sounds too serene a word. It belies the rapid-fire pace of events over the past several months, involving the Secretary's office in union activities on a very intense national level.

- Only two hours into my new job, APFA President Laura Glading, held a press conference launching the "Decline! / Resign!" campaign aimed squarely at what's become an annual AMR Spring Event – the awarding of Executive Bonuses.
- Not even two weeks later, our first Executive Committee meeting was held.
- A few weeks after that, AA's entire MD-80 fleet was grounded.
- One month later, our contract became amendable.
- Shortly thereafter, a picketing event was held at the AMR Shareholders, meeting at the same time AA was announcing system-wide capacity reductions.
- Contract openers were held ten days into June, and almost immediately President Glading and our Negotiating Team immersed themselves into three weeks of intense talks with AA.
- Meantime, preparations began for the **Mobilize to Maximize** road shows scheduled nearly the entire month of July.

As I write this article, I am preparing for another Executive Committee meeting along with a Fall Board Meeting, and am overseeing the National Ballot Committee as they conduct elections at JFK, LGA, ORD, DCA-I and SFO-I. My first four months in office have literally flown by at the speed of a 777.



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A domestic, DFW-based Flight Attendant, I am the most senior of the four APFA National Officers chronologically (no comment), while at the same time the most junior in seniority. Prior to my career as an AA Flight Attendant, I worked in the legal profession in the field of litigation. As an aviation paralegal, I was accustomed to spending my days working in stressful and challenging situations. Today, I use those same words – stressful and challenging – to describe working as a Flight Attendant.

As Flight Attendants, we are well-trained and prepared for many emergencies. It's what we do. We work daily under ever-changing, difficult conditions. We are a resilient group of professionals, skilled at making the most out of the worst of situations.

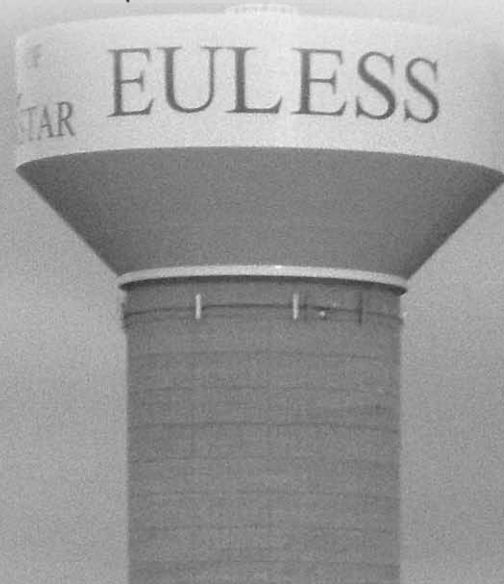
As APFA members, we will call upon those skills as we move forward, unified, into arguably one of the most difficult periods in the history of APFA and the entire airline industry. We all must remain as determined and as focused as our APFA leadership and Negotiating Team. The nearly 2000 participants in the July **Mobilize to Maximize** Road Shows can attest first-hand to this determination and this focus.

In the throes of an industry in crisis, it is easy to mentally stray off course and to feel like there is no hope. *But our Union is strong.* Our Leadership and our Negotiating Team maintain hope – real hope founded on a real plan.

That plan must involve each and every one of us. History has shown what the Flight Attendants of American Airlines are capable of achieving. There is no time like the present to prove the theory that history repeats itself.

If you are ever considering proffering to Euleless, come by 1004 West Euleless Boulevard located ten minutes from DFW. The door to the Secretary's office is always open. ▲

Denise



Bottom of the ninth...

There are no outs yet, but we're coming up to bat next...

Our game is negotiations. We have an entire world of airline labor anxiously awaiting the results. The outcome will have huge ramifications for our industry and, like baseball's World Series, everyone will be watching.

Just like in a season of baseball, the success of our negotiations "season" will be contingent largely on the amount of money that has been allocated to these purposes. As one of the coaches of this team, I have a responsibility to make sure that we manage our resources as best we know how under these very challenging times.

It is no secret that we are facing one of the toughest, arguably *the* toughest, economic crisis our nation and industry has ever experienced. In the economy at large we confront a mortgage and credit crisis, inflation, and recession (economists say "no" but our bills say otherwise). At the workplace we suffer the effects of skyrocketing jet fuel costs, the parking of aircraft and the cutback of routes.

Our Union has not been immune to this. We are experiencing dwindling numbers among our membership ranks – translating into fewer dues dollars collected -- and a Headquarters building that is aging and facing mounting repair and utility bills. Our "ballpark" needs renovating.

No matter how adequate the bank account balance, the march of time is unstoppable, demanding attention and dollars be paid to some of the structural elements – internal and external – of our largest real asset. This, combined with the looming expense of perhaps this Organization's most difficult and intense negotiations to date, results in a veritable financial "perfect storm."

There are no "rainouts" allowed, and rain checks can't be given for this very intense game we are in. We must manage with what we have. Change during these tough times is rarely pleasant or painless. With the direction, guidance and wisdom of our Budget Committee and our Board of Directors, we'll find a way to manage through all this. Our future depends upon it.

Now, let's get in a couple of practice swings. Let's step up to the plate. The announcer is calling our name. ▲



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