



Holding Pattern

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I am excited to announce that Council 03 has a new grievance representative! PHL based Brenda Barrall attended Basic Grievance Training in Chicago August 18-20th. Brenda has been a flight attendant with Air Wisconsin since November 2006. Next month Denise Hourigan will be attending AFA's Government Affairs 101 Training in Washington, D.C. September 8-9th. Denise has also been with Air Wisconsin since November 2006. The activities of the Government Affairs Committee members are crucial in the advancement of our profession in Capitol Hill. Committee Members lobby Congress and meet with Senators to gain support for our issues. Denise has been working on this committee for last couple of months and will finally receive the training necessary to continue her work on our behalf.

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Jaime Martinez (PHL Based) will be attending the First Annual *International Airline Flight Attendant Hotel Committee Conference* September 17-19th in Dallas on behalf of Council 03. Over fifty Airline Hotel Committee chairpersons will be attending. For over a year now, Jaime has volunteered his own time to work on the Hotel Committee. Some of Jaime's activities include hotel site inspections, follow-up on flight attendant hotel complaints, and coordination with other Committee Members and ALPA's Hotel Committee to name a few.

Committee members are always available to assist you, and I encourage everyone to use the services of AFA!

As I mentioned in the last issue of *Holding Pattern*, I participated in a conference call sponsored by the AFL-CIO with Barack Obama. The call lasted less than 15 minutes. Sen. Obama stated if he is elected as the next President he will

- Be a champion for working people
- End tax breaks for companies that shift work overseas
- Invest in infrastructure to create over 2 million jobs
- Make College affordable
- Have a Department of Labor that actually believes in Labor

Attached to this newsletter is a laminated Council 03 Contact Card. Please wear this with your company ID. This is a complete revision to the one that was originally issued in November 2006. Please destroy any old contact cards and replace with this one.

With the reduction in flying, a number of you will remain on reserve or return to reserve flying. A copy of *Your Right's While On Reserve* will be placed in all flight attendant's v-files that will be on reserve during the month of September.

In Solidarity,
 Adam Novish, Council 03 President



Update from Council 03 Scheduling Committee

On July 22 I met with the Crew Planning Department to discuss the September lines. For planning purposes lines are constructed two months before the month and the month before bidding opens. We are to have monthly meetings with crew planning to discuss any issues, concerns, or ideas that would be most beneficial to the construction of bid lines. Just prior to the meeting I sent out an email to all Council 03 members asking that if they had anything they would like

me to bring to the table to please email me and let me know. I had a number of replies and was very happy with that as I was only able to send the email out a few days before my meeting. Thank you to all who sent me your thoughts.

The meeting took place in ATW and most of the meeting consisted of developing how the meetings would take place, where, and other organizing details. We did discuss the bid lines for September and changes that we would see. Due to the schedule reduction, there will be longer sits in some outstations as well as the hubs, shorter layovers, and fewer four day trips. The company, as usual, will be trying to

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maximize the flight attendants' usable work time resulting in the possibility of some unpleasant lines. I shared with them your request that PHL would like to see more 4-day trips, and also that there are some people in PHL that would also like to see lines with all 1-day trips. It was asked of me on how flight attendants have liked the lines in LGA, and I responded that people have been somewhat happy in LGA. (Keep in mind I have learned through my years on this committee that if I say you all really like them, then the planning department usually changes things. Pick and choose your words wisely so hopefully nothing changes.) If you would, however, like to see any changes in LGA, please contact me.

Discussion also took place on commutable lines. Some believe that all domiciles should have commutable schedules, while the company has shared with AFA that they can only make two domiciles commutable. This will be a topic that the AFA MEC must discuss though for now it has been considered that most of the commuters system wide come out of PHL and DCA, so that is where they are making the most commutable schedules. I strongly supported this for our members; and until I hear differently, I will continue to do so.

I will be meeting with the Crew Planning Department on a monthly basis every third Tuesday of the month in MKE. When I am unable to attend due to personal reasons, Barb Neisen will be sitting in for Council 03. If anyone would like to be on the scheduling committee, please feel free to contact me as I am more than willing to pass this on or share/assist those who are interested in participating. Please also remember that you may always contact me with any ideas or thoughts regarding bid lines. Your voice is important, and I would love to hear from you.

Fly Safe, Ginger Sterling - Council 03 Scheduling Chair - MEC VP - gsterlingafa@gmail.com



Around Washington

House Panel Supports Blocking Cell Phone Use on Domestic Flights

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee approved a bill that seeks to prevent the use of cell phones on U.S. domestic passenger airliners on July 31, unlike their European competitors who do allow cell phone use in flight. Much of the hour-long debate preceding the vote revolved around whether it was appropriate for Congress to legislate courtesy. The Committee approved a substitute amendment that would exempt law enforcement officers from the ban and provide flexibility with foreign carriers due to Open Sky agreements.

Around AFA

airTran: AirTran management submitted a proposal on July 2, seeking wage concessions from the 2,200 flight attendants. The MEC responded by holding marathon membership meetings in Atlanta, Orlando and Tampa the week of July 7-11. The MEC solicited input from the membership at its meetings and from that input developed a list of approximately 40 issues relevant to flight attendants' terms and conditions of employment. Many of the issues were long-standing, scheduling-related matters. The MEC subsequently presented these issues to management, suggesting that resolution of some or all the issues would be necessary as a part of any potential concessionary agreement. At the bargaining table on July 30, management withdrew its concessionary wage proposal and cancelled further concessionary negotiations. They indicated the issues presented by the MEC were largely responsible for its decision, and further indicated that at least two other work groups' concessionary wage proposals had failed to ratify. Regularly scheduled Section 6 negotiations resumed this week.

AirTran went forward with elimination of approximately 300 flight attendant positions; the reduction in force is to become effective September 1, 2008. Notably, the AFA contract requires offering voluntary leave to flight attendants prior to invoking involuntary leaves; the company is currently accepting applications for voluntary leave to account for the 300 positions eliminated.

Midwest Airlines: Using the rising cost of fuel and the threat of bankruptcy Midwest management tried to force the flight attendants to accept hourly rate cuts between 21 and 34 percent. Management's proposed pay scale was created by consultants at Seabury OCI and was calculated using the hourly pay rates for certain airlines that fly small aircraft and subtracting 12.5 percent from the median of those rates. Management's proposal would have made the Midwest flight attendants almost the lowest paid in the industry.

It became apparent over the last few weeks that the company's financial position was not as dire as management claimed when they repeatedly turned down AFA's offer of an Early Out program. The Early Out, when combined with other monetary changes to the contract, would have saved the company millions of dollars. However, management is not interested in those dollars; they only want the dollars that came from destroying the pay scale. The Negotiating Committee and MEC notified management there will be no concessionary deal that includes the permanent destruction of the pay scale without an Early Out program.

Midwest Airlines is a privately held company, owned by TPG and Northwest Airlines.