

# The WEST WING



*The news magazine of the  
Association of Flight Attendants-CWA Council 66*

## The Brewing Storm

Stop  
Corporate  
Greed

SLOW  
DOWN

← Negotiations



*First Quarter 2007*



# The Age of Bankruptcy and Corporate Predation - An Evolutionary Process

Commentary by MEC President Gary Richardson

**T**he restructuring of the aviation industry in the new millennium can be arguably traced back to the aftermath of the horrific events of 9/11. Between January 2002 and February 2006, twenty-one airlines including US Airways, United, Delta, Northwest, Mesaba, Aloha, and Hawaiian Airlines sought bankruptcy court protection.

The sacrifices that labor made industry wide during this *Age of Bankruptcy* have been agonizingly painful. Thousands of airline employees were furloughed or lost their jobs. Wages, pensions, and benefits were drastically cut or eliminated. Union contracts have been threatened and or abrogated through the court system, and the list goes on.

Now, as the industry recovers and returns to profitability labor, once again, faces unique challenges associated with bankruptcy; that of corporate predation of those carriers still in the process of reorganizing. To be predator or prey, to eat or be eaten are the options in this New Age of Consolidations and Mergers.

You need look no further than our own back door to recognize the inherent danger to collective bargaining, not to mention maintaining and improving upon hard earned labor contracts during a merger. The short history-to-date of the America West/US Airways merger is a clear enough example.

On September 27, 2005, America West /US Airways management led the pack in utilizing the bankruptcy process to find the so called "synergies" needed to reorganize the "Old" US Airways and merge into the "New" US Airways. Fourteen months later, management made an unsolicited offer in an attempt to acquire Delta

Airlines. The predator is on the attack.

From the early threat of unilaterally rolling America West Flight Attendants into the concessionary agreement of US Airways, to months of hollow sounding rhetoric of a cost-neutral single agreement, management has failed to realize that no merger can be, nor will be, ultimately successful until they treat employees as assets instead of as liabilities and recognize labor as equal partners at the table.

Congress must also act and provide federal oversight of airline mergers to diminish their impact on airline employees and the aviation industry.

In written testimony before the U.S. Senate Commerce Committee, which recently held Congressional hearings on airline mergers and consolidations, AFA International President Patricia Friend stated: "Congress must write new and clear legislation to protect airline workers when mergers occur."

"Employees with a voice in their workplace and legally binding contracts are engaged in their future and the future of the company. Legal protections for collective bargaining work for everyone and should be preserved when mergers occur. Flight attendants have played by the rules and followed the law to secure a legally binding voice on the job. Do not silence that voice and those rights."

No longer should the failures of airline managements be the burden on the backs of employees. There is a growing need to reverse these trends through our contract negotiations and through legislation in Congress. Congress needs to ensure that legally binding contracts are not made prey to cor-

porate predation through bankruptcy backdoors and loopholes any longer.

Labor should consider more types of "poison pills" that trigger certain expensive and restrictive provisions when a merger or bankruptcy occurs. It is time for labor to consider a carnivore diet in this new Age of Consolidations and Mergers. It is time for labor to become the predator and to avoid being the grazing victims to this type of corporate plundering.

You can be sure that this negotiating committee will continue to work toward securing continued improvements and toward implementing new protections against corporate predation for flight attendants in this era of industry evolution.➔

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## Negotiations Schedule

Single contract negotiations between the AFA Merger Negotiations Committee (MNC) and US Airways Management are scheduled as follows:

March 7-9	CLT	March 21-23	PHX
April 11-13	PHX	April 25-27	CLT
May 16-18	PHX	May 31-June 2	CLT
June 13-15	PHX	June 27-29	CLT
July 18-20	CLT	August 15-17	PHX

## MEC-LEC News

Monthly LEC Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month, at 2 pm, at the Council 66 office Conference Room. All members in good standing are encouraged to attend these meetings.

### Merger Negotiations Committees (MNC)

US Airways West (America West)

Gary Richardson, MEC President (PHX)

Nicki Kirkeby, Merger Committee (PHX)

Joe Burns, AFA Staff Negotiator

### US Airways East

Mike Flores, MEC President (CLT)

Carol Austin, Merger Committee (PHL)

Clare Burt, AFA Bargaining Dept.



## Council 66 Contact List

AFA Council 66 Office: 480-966-1231

MEC/LEC President Gary Richardson ext. 11  
MEC/LEC Vice President position is currently vacant  
MEC/LEC Secretary-Treasurer Mary Cost ext. 13

Air Safety, Health and Security	ext. 26
Communications	ext. 35
Employee Assist. & Prof. Standards	ext. 27
Government Affairs	ext. 24
Grievance	ext. 25
Grievance Hotline	ext. 32
Hotel Committee	ext. 18
Membership & Support	ext. 31
Reserve	ext. 23
Retirement & Insurance	ext. 19
Scheduling/Bid Review	ext. 20
Scheduling/Irregular Ops	ext. 29
Seniority	ext. 34
Uniforms	ext. 28
Webmaster	ext. 30

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# Negotiation Focus Returns; No Delta Distraction

by Former MEC/LEC Vice President Bill McGlashen

Despite non-stop news coverage of the now-failed Delta bid, negotiations for a single contract continued to be a primary focus for AFA and negotiations had gathered some speed in December and January.

Three hotlines from MEC President Gary Richardson in December and January highlighted sections traded and progress – or lack of – on those sections. Those hotlines covered weeks of negotiations from November through late January and focused primarily on five sections: Uniforms, Language of Destination/Origin (LODO), Training, Furloughs or Reduction in Force and Filling of Vacancies.

These sections, while not major economic sections, are highly detailed and provide procedures and protections for flight attendants in many areas. They are not the back bone of the contract, but they are important foundational sections none the less.

The complete hotlines can be found on your AFA website at [www.afa66.org](http://www.afa66.org). Click on the "Hotlines" link on the left side of the front page under the "Communication" column. There you will find specific information about each of the sections traded. A healthy schedule of negotiations sessions is planned through the summer.

## Contract Economics, or When "Cost Neutral" Retreats!

At some point in every process of negotiations, accountants and financial analysts enter the picture with spread sheets filled with costing calculations. When negotiations began last year,

management touted that merging both contracts could not raise costs in any way. They labeled their position as "cost neutral."

AFA never agreed to that definition, concept or rhetoric.

MEC President Gary Richardson told the company since day one that we will negotiate a contract that our members need and that would be ratified.

That has been our position all along and will continue to be our position until the end.

During the year however, management seemed to tinker with their definition of cost neutral, so in November and December AFA requested the company to provide us with costing models for each contract. In mid-January management responded with a costing exercise that placed east Flight Attendants under our west contract and vice versa, then attempted to price each contract. We reviewed that data and our position remains unchanged and is, in fact, strengthened.

First, America West Flight Attendants did not receive raises during our pre-merger negotiations and raises will have to occur. Second, our vacation section is non-negotiable. We are not giving up one day or credit.

East Flight Attendants want improvements as well to honor and recognize the sacrifices they made to save the company and make this merger possible.

AFA negotiators, east and west, sent a clear and strong message to management in January and in numerous previous messages. We will negotiate a contract that provides works for all Flight Attendants and the company has to put the resources into our agreement to make that happen.

It does not matter which contract costs more than the other or which sections on the west cost more than on the east and vice versa.

The AFA Joint Merger Negotiations Committee stayed strong on this important economic piece. Flight attendants rallied across the nation on October 31, 2006 and your help in supporting that message proved positive.

Your solidarity with the negotiations committee must remain steadfast. Continue to respond to calls for picketing, leafleting and rallies and attend any meetings that may be scheduled.➔

*MEC President Gary Richardson told the company since day one that we will negotiate a contract that our members need and that would be ratified. That has been our position all along and will continue to be our position until the end.*

# Signing Off - In Gratitude

by Bill McGlashen, AFA International Executive Assistant

Bill McGlashen's Council 66 Contributions:

1994 Joined AFA Organizing Committee at America West Airlines

September 1994 - February 1995 Temporary Secretary-Treasurer

1995-2005 Government Affairs Chair for Council 66

1996-2007 AFA International Political/Legislative Policy Committee; Lobbied congress on behalf of AFA issues.

1996-1998 MEC/LEC Vice President

1998-1999 Negotiations Committee for first contract

1998-2005 MEC/LEC President

2002-current Arizona AFL-CIO Executive Vice President

2003 AFA Merger Committee

2004-2005 Negotiations Committee for Second contract

December 2005-February 2007 MEC/LEC Vice President

2005-2007 Negotiations Committee for Single Contact with US Airways

2006-2007 AFA International Negotiations Policy Committee

February 2007 New position as Executive Assistant to AFA International President

This will be my last West Wing article as I've accepted a position as Assistant to the International President at AFA in Washington, DC which began February 5, 2007. It's a union leave of absence and a commitment for at least four years.

I am thankful, beyond words, that you allowed me to serve in union positions since 1994 at America West and during the US Airways merger. I met a young firebrand and dynamic union leader, Deborah Volpe, in 1994 and she convinced this lifelong republican that a union was the best way to go. She was right, as Deb usually is, and I thank her for giving me the opportunity to serve at AFA.

As distant geographically as Washington DC is to Phoenix, I won't forget where I came from and those who allowed me for many years to do this work. I'll continue in the privilege of being a dues paying member of Council 66 and will attend meetings from time to time in Phoenix.

You should know that Gary Richardson has been, and will be, an outstanding president and leader of our council. He stepped into a leadership role at one of the most challenging times in the history of our airline and has more than lived up to the task. He is a better decision maker than I ever was. Gary has negotiated return-to-work agreements for more flight attendants over a shorter period of time in the history of our council. He negotiated first flight attendant pay, ensured that we were part of the new profit sharing plan, protected training pay for our transition training classes and most importantly is an effective voice for interests in contract negotiations.

Gary is supported by one of the most experienced officers in our union, Mary Cost. Mary ensures that the council operates within budget, respecting your dues dollars and that our union operates to serve you, our members.

Gary and Mary are supported by some of the most talented committee chairs I had the privilege of serving with. Grievance, Air Safety and Health, Hotel, Uniform, Scheduling, Reserve, Communications, Retirement and Insurance, System Board, EAP and Membership committees are chaired by dedicated and well trained fellow flight attendants.

Nicki Kirkeby now serves on the Merger Negotiations Committee and her commitment and service for so many years makes her qualified to represent our interests at the bargaining table. Nicki and Gary will need our endless support and solidarity as they negotiate a new single contract.

It's hard to leave with unfinished business at hand. The efforts of the pre-merger Council 66 Negotiations Team were outstanding and I wish we would have implemented many of the improvements they secured for our second contract. The merger put a deep freeze on those talks. Their achievements will be put to use in single contract talks, but I would be remiss in not mentioning this talented committee. The chair of that committee, Lewis Brent is one of the most remarkable people I have met.

In closing, we have been through a lot together. In 1999, thousands of you marched in support of our first contract. We pulled together during 9/11 in unshakable unity. Again, America West flight attendants were leaders in putting our airline back in the air and ensuring its ultimate survival.

Thousands of you contacted members of congress to secure a much needed airline industry relief package providing our company with a desperate and immediately needed cash infusion and setting the stage for securing a federal loan to keep us aloft.

We are here today because of what you did then and you have the right to demand a contract that meets your needs. You responded to a call for action then and I'm confident Gary and the Negotiations Team can count on you again in the future.

I had the title of president, but it was just that, a title. Nothing could have been accomplished without your support and I'm grateful. ➔



# Frequently Asked Scheduling Questions

By Jane Flinn, Bid Review Committee Chairperson

**Q:** With a single operating certificate scheduled to be completed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2007, can we expect to see service to new cities from Phoenix?

**A:** Starting with the February 2007 bid, we saw additional service into some existing markets. We are flying non-stop PHL-SFO and PHL-SAN. This service was flown on East equipment in the past. If we do fly to new cities, it will still be on our existing "West" equipment with pilots that are formerly America West pilots. We can not achieve complete crew integration until we are under one Labor agreement, and this will take some time. Until

we are under this one agreement, we will not be able to fly on East equipment.

US Airways East does have A320/A319 aircraft that are over-water equipped and fly to such locations as Bermuda and the Bahamas. This doesn't mean that as West Flight Attendants we will never fly to such exotic locals until we have a single flight attendant contract. It just means that we would have to fly there on our ETOP's (over water equipped) 757's. These aircraft are designated to fly to Hawaii

We can be certain that change is on the horizon. As much as some of us might not want to admit it, we must realize that two airlines are about to become

one. We will have to abandon the notion that certain routes are designated "West" or "East", and belong solely to these former entities. Future routes that will be flown out of the Phoenix base will largely be determined by aircraft utilization.

**Q:** Don't you think that we are too over-staffed? Why aren't we offering any VLOA's?

**A:** We are overstaffed, and this is due to our workforce having to attend the Integration Training. These training dates create conflict on the line that the Flight Attendant is awarded. The current line average is approximately 80 hours each month. If a Flight Attendant drops a 2-day trip due to conflict, and the line value is still above 70 hours, they do not have to recover any of this lost time in Low Time Self Adjust (LTSA). Basically, it is assumed that most Flight Attendants will be in conflict, thus leaving additional hours that must be assigned during Relief or to a Reserve.

There are no Voluntary Leaves of Absence (VLOA) planned for the next six months. This could change, but please

don't plan on any VLOA's being awarded any time soon. As the summer approaches, we can anticipate that the staffing numbers will not be as liberal and critical staffing will once again be the norm.

The decision to offer VLOA's, and the number that could be awarded, is mutually agreed upon between AFA and the Scheduling Management. Most of us agree that offering VLOA's is a good thing. However, it is typical for AFA to receive several e-mails that express concern when we do offer VLOA's. These e-mails typically state that those who are not fortunate enough to be awarded a VLOA will have to deal with critical staffing for the majority of the month and their schedule flexibility is being compromised.

**Q:** If I'm flying to Hawaii, and my flight is delayed, at what point can I refuse this assignment? If we are on a major mechanical, can I just opt not to go?

**A:** Our contract designates our flights to and from Hawaii to be "International", even if US Customs and Immigration do not require a passport to travel to Hawaii. Duty Time Limitations for International flights are addressed under Scheduling-Irregular Operations Section 7.D.4.a.c. and Section 34-International. Most of us are under the impression that we can deny the trip if a delay would take us past 14 hours

and 30 minutes. In the International section, our Duty Limitations are as follows: 14 hours scheduled (this applies to the original pairing), and 16 hours actual (this applies to an Irregular Operation). Basically, you can be required to remain on duty until the point where you are scheduled/projected to work more than 16 hours.

If a FA chooses to remain on duty and volunteers to work the 16 hour or more duty day, they would get paid 1 minute for every 2 minutes for the entire duty day. If a FA chooses not to remain on duty over the 16 hours they have the option to get off the airplane in Hawaii. If a crew is in PHX or LAS and are projected to go over 16 hours on duty the FA has the option to continue the trip and get the extra pay, or go home and be paid for your originally scheduled trip. A scheduler can however, reroute you on a different trip that would prevent you from going over your projected duty day whether in Hawaii, PHX or LAS.

These situations do occur. Sometimes crewmembers are bringing along family members or plan on visiting friends and they realize they will have limited time on the islands. Please understand, even after a lengthy delay, the decision is yours only after your duty day is projected to go over 16 hours. Mahalo! ➔



## Edgy Graphics plus Cool Podcast Technology: The West Wing Video Podcast

**K**ick back and watch a cool video while getting updated on the latest information that impacts your career and profession by logging on to the Council 66 website and catching the latest West Wing Video Podcast.

Shot on locations in Phoenix, at solidarity events, at the airport, at the AFA Board of Directors and anywhere else that events occur which impact the flight attendants of America West and US Airways, is where you will find the West Wing Podcast cameras.

Since its inception in July 2006, the West Wing podcast cameras have covered the Labor Day solidarity event interviewing Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano; the system-wide Flight Attendant informational picketing on Halloween; the AFA Board of Directors in Portland, Oregon and MEC Presidents Gary Richard-

son and Mike Flores capturing their initial reactions to the news of the Delta deal.

Developed with cutting-edge video technology by Council 66, the West Wing Video Podcast is the first of its kind from any AFA Council in the airline industry. Each monthly episode features the latest America West MEC updates concerning the merger, single-contract negotiations, uniforms, training, grievance and other Flight Attendant information. The video podcast provides information in a news-room style format complete with edgy graphics, hip music and cool journalistic reporting.

So the next time you have a few free minutes, grab a cool drink and sit back for a cool video and some great information on the number one website of choice for America West/US Airways West flight attendants [www.afa66.org](http://www.afa66.org) ➔



## Dollars & \$ense: In Good Standing

**F**light attendants at US Airways have three methods of paying their dues or union service charge. First, there is payroll deduction. This is accomplished by submitting a Dues Check-Off (DCO) form to the US Airways payroll department. The majority of flight attendants chooses this method and have their \$39.00 monthly dues payroll deducted at \$19.50 per paycheck. Next, when a Flight Attendant does not fill out a DCO form, AFA-CWA monthly billing automatically kicks in. Finally, a Flight Attendant can choose to pay their dues in a lump sum annual payment and take advantage of a 10% discount. This method must be completed by February 1 of each year.

Members and Service Charge Payers are all responsible for paying dues. A Service Charge Payer is a Flight Attendant who has not filled out a membership application and is not considered an AFA member. However, according to our contract, they owe a service charge equal to the regular dues amount each month.

A Flight Attendant can fall into "Bad Standing" status when dues or service charge billings are over 90 days old and remain unpaid. Two common reasons for payment delinquency are an incorrect mailing address and a leave of absence. If AFA does not have your correct address on file, efficient communication cannot take place.

Continued on next page...



Mary Cost MEC Secretary-Treasurer; Acting MEC Vice President



VOLUNTEERING JUST FOUR HOURS A MONTH IN THE UNION OFFICE GOES A LONG WAY TOWARD SUPPORTING THE MEC AND THEIR EFFORTS ON YOUR BEHALF. FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES AND TIMES ARE AVAILABLE. OFFICE HOURS ARE MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY FROM 9:30 AM TO 5:30 PM. LUNCH IS PROVIDED.



**VOLUNTEER TODAY!**  
SUPPORT COMMITTEE  
CHAIR CAROL EARLY  
480-966-1231 EXT. 31  
OR EMAIL:  
LIZ\_E29@COX.NET

# Members Helping Members - You're not Alone

By Karen Richardson and Rita Nicksic, EAP Co-Chairs

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) of the Association of Flight Attendants acts as a confidential "self-help" aid for Flight Attendants. It provides members with the necessary resources to help them manage whatever difficulties they may be facing. The AFA EAP program serves the union in three distinct areas.

First, EAP services provides emotional support and assistance to the Flight Attendant (and their families), whether the issues are personal or professional. Trained Flight Attendant peer counselors can offer short-term counseling, as well as assessment and referral services when needed.

Next, the Critical incident Response Program responds on a mental health level in the aftermath of a critical incident or workplace trauma.

Finally, Professional Standards offers conflict resolution strategies in an effort to encourage flying crews to settle disputes among themselves rather than requesting action from management. We also work with the ALPA Professional Standards Committee (pilots) to assist in resolving issues between cabin flight crews and flight deck crews. AFA EAP is supported by your union dues and has provided free services to thousands of flight attendants, their families and partners. Here are some reasons why EAP works for our members:

- Up to 30% of workers will suffer an episode of serious depression during their lifetime.

- Nearly 40 million Americans – one in five - suffer from some sort of major mental illness.

- 76 million people, about 43% of US adults, have had exposure to alcoholism.

- One out of four Americans could benefit from the services of a professional counselor.

- One out of every 100 American men is afflicted with schizophrenia.

- 80% of working adults say balancing work, life, relationships and family is their most pressing challenge.

- Work place assaults caused half a million employees to miss an average of 3.5 days of work.

- Domestic violence occurs every 15 seconds in the US.

More than 200 Flight Attendant volunteers, in more than fifty states across the US and overseas, coordinate program activities for their respective airlines, supported by the EAP Department at AFA's international headquarters in Washington DC.

As soon as you, your partner or family feel that a problem is getting too difficult to handle alone, contact an EAP representative from anywhere in the country, 24 hours a day:

- AFA Local Council 66 Office 480-966-1231 ext. 27 These council representatives are also full-time flight attendants so please allow at least 48 hours for a call back.

- EAP Pager 1-800-372-8673 Utilize this pager when involved in an emergency situation needing immediate assistance.

- International Office 1-800-424-2406

EAP provides counseling, assessment and referral for a multitude of problems. Since the programs' inception, approximately 5% of AFA members, system wide, and their families, have utilized the EAP each year.

EAP committee members, who are at the heart of the program, are committed to the health, safety and well being of all its members. All have been carefully chosen because they are respected and trusted by their peers. The most important cornerstone of the program is confidentiality. Each representative is held to a strict code of ethics and is held accountable for any breach of confidentiality or misconduct with a client.

AFA EAP sincerely hopes that you will take advantage of the services available to you through this invaluable program. For further information visit the EAP Committee on the Council 66 website at [www.afa66.org](http://www.afa66.org)

that because they are on DCO they are not responsible for paying the bill received by mail from AFA International. However, US Airways payroll department is only authorized to take out \$19.50 per pay check. If you fall behind in your dues payments the company does not have authorization to go back and take out additional monies.

Do not ignore bills sent from AFA International regarding dues discrepancies. Call Mary Cost, your local Council Secretary/Treasurer at 480-966-1231 ext 13, or AFA International at 800-424-2401 ext 265 for research and error resolution. Communication with AFA regarding dues discrepancies will help you stay in Good Standing.➔

Dollars \$ Sense continued.....

During any leave of absence (except military) flight attendants are responsible for the first three months of dues payments. When taking a leave of absence or dropping to 40 hours or below, the amount of those pay checks do not allow for payroll deductions to take place. AFA International will send out bills for dues that were not payroll deducted. Flight attendants may think

# Grievance Review for 2006

By Linda Campagna, Grievance Chairperson

The Grievance Committee is currently comprised of 12 members who volunteer their time and effort to assist flight attendants in contractual interpretation, grievance filings, and to provide union representation in mandatory meetings with the Company. Many times the Grievance Committee or an AFA officer is able to resolve issues with the company prior to filing a formal grievance, however it is important to notify the union of a potential dispute as soon as possible to allow the union the best possible assistance.

To arrange for union representation at a mandatory meeting, please call the grievance hotline at 480-966-1231 ext. 32. Leave a message with your name, employee number, and contact phone number, as well as the date and time of your meeting. Normally a Grievance Representative will return your call within 48 hours.

### MEC Grievance Committee:

Linda Campagna C6919-MEC Grievance Chairperson 480-966-1231 Ext. 25

Jeff Albers C6565-Lead Grievance Representative 480-966-1231 Ext. 36

Committee Members: Gene Labat C0020, Monica Wilfong C2569, John Conner C7952, Lori Neer C0256, Ralph Huerta C2735, William London C8712, Ann Schulte C0711, Mimi Rodriguez C6072, Michael Cooper C8908, Lewis Brent C2210, and Deb Landsberger C6902.

### Interested in Joining?

The Grievance Committee is always looking for new members. If you are interested in joining, please contact Linda Campagna at the office. Training classes are offered at various times throughout the year.

### 2006 Grievance Filing Status (updated as of February 9, 2007)

Last year AFA filed 74 grievances on behalf of members who believed that the company misapplied or misinterpreted various sections of our agreement or disciplined a flight attendant without just cause. Following is an explanation of the grievance chart.

**Case Number:** A grievance case number is broken down with several groupings of numbers. All grievances start with 24-66 which identifies AFA and our council as the filer of a grievance. The next number is the type of grievance being filed, with (1) being a discipline grievance and (2) being a contractual grievance. The next number is the sequential order of the grievance and the last number is the year in which the grievance was filed.

**Type/Section Reference:** This column identifies whether the case is a discipline case or contractual case and gives the primary contract section referenced in the grievance.

**Step/Status:** The grievance process follows a series of steps that ultimately lead to resolution or arbitration. Following is the step process.

- Step 1-Presented to the Manager of Inflight Services

- Step 2-Presented to the Director of Inflight Services

- System Board/ Grievance Settlement Conference (GSC)-An alternate dispute resolution process where officials of AFA and the Company meet and attempt to resolve outstanding grievances.

- System Board/Arbitration- The final step of the grievance process. A neutral member or arbitrator joins the System Board panel and makes a final and binding determination of the grievance.

- Closed/Upheld = AFA resolved

2006 Case #  
Type/Section Reference  
Status

**24-66-2-01-06  
Contract/7.E.1,7.D.4  
System Board/GSC 2/14/07**

**24-66-1-02-06  
Discipline  
System Board/GSC/2/14/07**

24-66-2-03-06  
Contract/7.K.4  
Closed/Withdrawn

24-66-2-04-06  
Contract/12.B.1  
Closed/Upheld

24-66-2-05-06  
Contract/3.L  
Closed/Upheld

24-66-1-06-06  
Discipline  
Closed/Upheld

24-66-2-07-06  
Contract/18.A.1  
Closed/Upheld

**24-66-1-08-06  
Discipline  
System Board/GSC 2/14/07**

**24-66-1-09-06  
Discipline  
System Board/GSC 2/14/07**

**24-66-1-10-06  
Discipline  
System Board/GSC 2/14/07**

24-66-2-11-06  
Contract/7.J  
Closed/Upheld

24-66-2-12-06  
Contract/9.G.1  
Pending

**24-66-2-13-06  
Contract/9.D.5 & 6  
System Board/GSC 2/14/07**

**24-66-1-14-06  
Contract/27.Q.2  
System Board/GSC 2/14/07**

24-66-1-15-06  
Discipline  
Closed/Upheld

24-66-1-16-06  
Discipline  
Closed

**24-66-2-17-06  
Contract/9.G.e  
System Board/GSC 2/14/07**

Continued page 22...

# Status of Negotiations Update

By Joe Burns, AFA Staff Negotiator, America West

## The Basic Process of Section 6 Negotiations

Under the Railway Labor Act (RLA), the first step in contract negotiations is for the parties to engage in direct negotiations pursuant to Section 6 of the RLA until one or both parties requests the assistance of the National Mediation Board (NMB).

Once a request for mediation is filed, the NMB docket the case and assigns a federal mediator. The mediator has no power to dictate either side agree to specific terms, but will offer suggestions for possible resolution of issues to the parties. The mediator also has the ability to control the timing of the negotiations, including scheduling meetings and the location of such meetings, as well as recessing the negotiations for lengthy periods of time. A recess means that all formal talks cease for some period of time, and the status quo (current contract) is in effect until the NMB reconvenes the talks.

If parties are unable to reach an agreement in mediation, then either party can request to be released from further negotiations. The NMB will consider the request and has the discretion to order more negotiations efforts, put the negotiations in recess, or grant the request for release by issuing a proffer of Binding Arbitration.

Once the proffer of arbitration is declined by either side – which it normally is – the parties are released into a thirty-day cooling off period in which neither party can engage in self help (the Union cannot strike, nor can the Company lockout workers or implement its own proposals) until the end of the thirty-day cooling off period.

## America West Airlines AMW Section 6 Negotiations

MEC Council 66 began negotiations with America West management in February 2004. During the regular Section 6 negotiations, your negotiating committee was able to achieve improvements in many areas of the contract that were to

be part of a final tentative agreement presented to the membership for ratification.

However, these negotiations were disrupted in spring of 2005 with the announcement by America West management of a proposed merger with US Airways. Your negotiating committee continued to meet with management and demand improvements to the agreement. Management began refusing to put any money into the agreement, saying those issues would have to be resolved as part of single contract talks. AFA filed for mediation in September 2005. The mediator held one session in December 2005 before placing the talks in recess so the parties could focus on merged contract talks. That recess continues.

## Single Contract Talks

In February, 2006, AFA and US Airways began talks on a merged agreement. These talks are very different than the normal Section 6 negotiations that were outlined above. Pursuant to the AFA Constitution and Bylaws, AFA is represented at the table by a joint negotiating committee consisting of two Flight Attendant AFA members from America West Airlines and two Flight Attendant AFA members from US Airways.

AFA's position to management has consistently been that in order to merge the operations, management will need to conclude negotiations on a single agreement. The only way to do that is to agree to terms that are acceptable to the merged Flight Attendant group. Should they fail to do so, AFA holds that both agreements would continue in full force and effect.

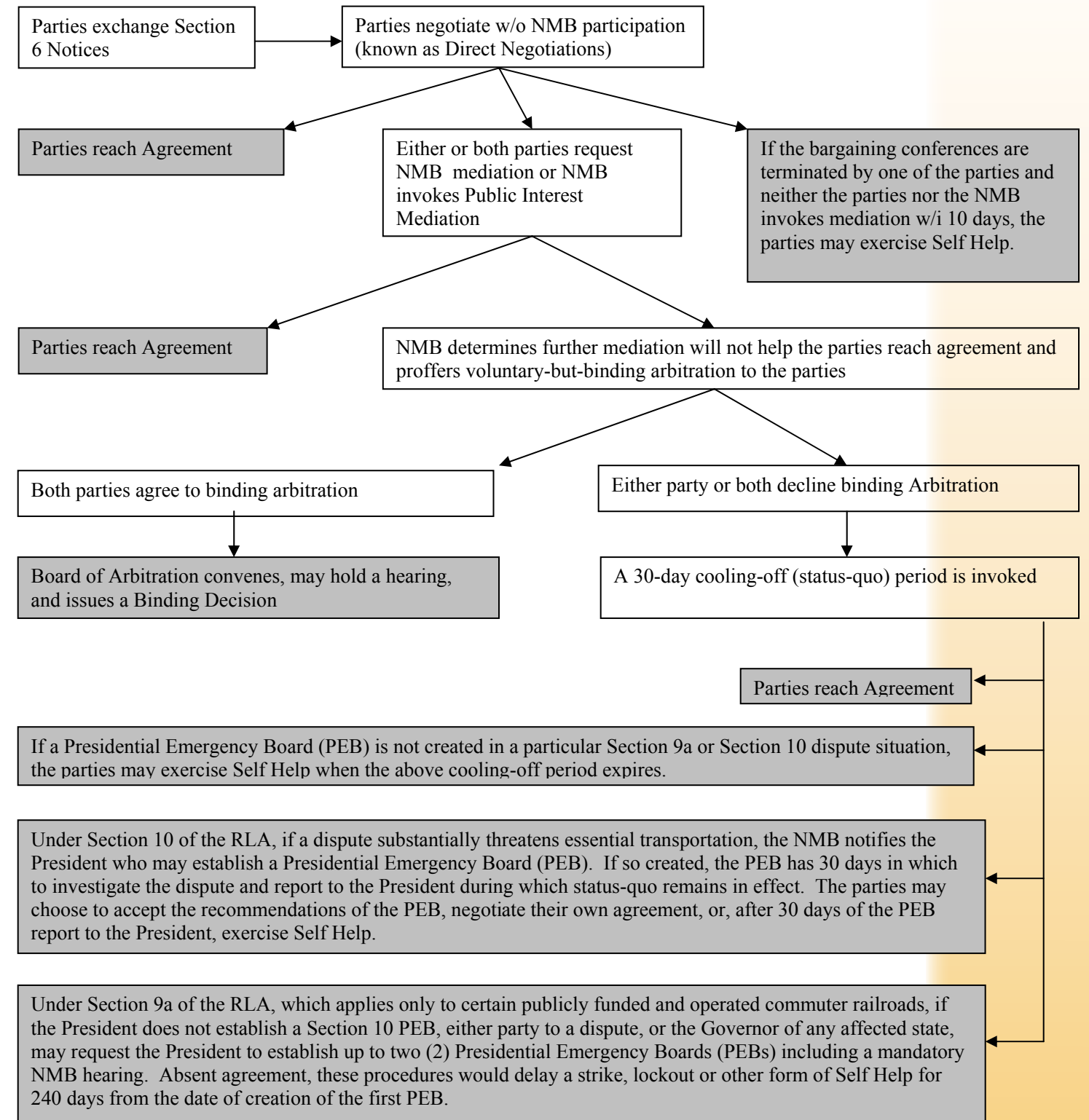
Management initially took the position that they had the legal right to unilaterally place AMW Flight Attendants under the East contract if we did not reach an agreement. That position is clearly incorrect. The most similar Federal Court decision on the question involved AFA and US Airways in the early 1990s. That decision, *AFA v. US Airways*, clearly states that even when two airlines become a single carrier, Flight Attendants in one group do not get automatically placed under the other contract.

AFA has put US Airways management on notice that we would take all available legal measures if management attempted that course of action.

In the meantime, negotiations for a single contract continue. While many sections have been tentatively resolved, and parts of other sections as well, there remain important issues before us.➔



## Collective Bargaining Process under the Railway Labor Act (RLA)



Note: this is a synopsis of the applicable procedures; refer to the RLA itself for exact guidance.

Chart courtesy of the National Mediation Board

# Pay & Benefits



**Gary Richardson**

Gary Richardson hails from South Dakota where he pursued a pre-professional degree in Theatric Design at the University of South Dakota. Gary worked for various regional theatres in South Dakota and Arizona before being hired at America West Airlines in 1986. Serving the membership of AFA Council 66 in many roles over the years, Gary has held the positions of Lead Grievance Representative, Liaison to the EAP and Air Safety Committee, MEC Grievance Chairperson, member of the System Board of Adjustment, LEC/MEC Vice President, and currently serves as the LEC/MEC President for Council 66.

Gary's position on negotiations is straightforward, "Being a part of this group of flight attendants who have had to sacrifice industry standards for company survival has left an indelible mark on my vision for our future. Our goal is to provide improvements in this contract and to secure a contract that reflects Flight Attendant's value to the success of this airline merger. Our membership has made it clear that we will take no steps backward in these negotiations."

## Joe Burns

Joe Burns was born in Minneapolis, MN and received his undergraduate degree at the University of Minnesota. After graduation he became a hospital worker and was elected President of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 1164 at the University of Minnesota Hospital. In that capacity, Joe chaired the negotiations team for three rounds of contract negotiations. He went on to attend New York University School of Law and graduated in 1999. While in law school he worked for various Teamster and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Locals assisting with grievances and negotiations. After earning his law degree he worked for the Illinois Nurses Association as an attorney negotiating major contracts with private and public sector employers. In addition, Joe has been active in the labor movement organizing strike support for various worker struggles over the years. Since 2001, Joe has been employed as a staff negotiator and attorney with AFA-CWA.



**M**et the key players in talks to reach a single flight attendant contract. These 6 people have extensive union backgrounds and sit across the table from management crafting a combined agreement for both America West and US Airways flight attendants.

## Nicki Kirkeby

Since 1986 Nicki has worked as a professional flight attendant for America West Airlines. In May of 1999 she was elected to the position of Secretary Treasurer (ST) for the Association of Flight Attendants Council 66. During her term as ST she became involved in supporting The Pegasus Project. Nicki devoted countless hours during her term to Pegasus Project fundraisers which include giving through the United Way Campaign and the implementation of an AWA aluminum recycling program. Nicki served on the AFA Finance Committee beginning in 2000. In May of 2001 she was elected to The Pegasus Project Board of Directors. Her financial and organizational skills have added great depth to the Pegasus Board.

In 2004 she began work in the AFA Legislative Affairs Committee and became involved in political activism. She currently chairs the Council 66 Legislative Affairs Committee in addition to her work for Pegasus. With the promotion of former Council 66 MEC Vice President Bill McGlashen in January 2007, Nicki was appointed to the Merger Negotiations Committee.



# Railway Labor Act



**Mike Flores**

Mike was born in Albuquerque, NM in 1957. His father worked for the Associated Press and their family spent almost ten years overseas (Lisbon, Madrid and Rio de Janeiro). He returned to the U.S. for High School and then attended the University of Florida. Mike graduated in 1979 with degrees in Economics and Political Science. He went to work for US Airways in 1982. Originally based in Boston, he was transferred to PIT in 1984 and then to CLT after the Piedmont merger in 1989. During this time, he met his wife Cathy who is also a US Airways Flight Attendant. After 9/11, Mike said "Cathy and I found ourselves constantly talking about how bad things were getting and after so much talk I decided to step up and run for office." Mike was elected President of Council 89 (CLT) in July 2004. "That changed my life for good. While the Union will never get everything we want, serving in an elected office does give you a place to effect change."

In 2004, when US Airways filed for bankruptcy a second time, Mike said "This time they were out for blood-ours. The airline was ruthless in their attack on our contract and livelihood. The USA MEC and negotiating committee achieved the best possible deal in the face of contract abrogation and potential liquidation of the airline. While there is no doubt the 2004 agreement was a concessionary agreement and contained drastic cuts in wages and benefits, those cuts pale in comparison to the imposed terms on the Flight Attendants at Northwest and Delta. In short, we lived to fight another day and that day has come."

When asked what he hopes to achieve with this contract Mike replied, "For the last few years my youngest daughter has expressed interest in becoming a Flight Attendant. After going through the last few years of sacrifices, her mother and I were reluctant to encourage her in that endeavor. I realized that is the wrong approach. The better approach is to help restore our profession to one to which she can aspire."

## Clare Burt

After graduation from Georgetown University, Clare went to work for Overseas National Airways(ONA), a small airline which specialized in international charters and military flying. As interesting as the flying was, the long duty hours and difficult working conditions roused her interest in finding ways to improve those conditions through union work. After serving as System Board Chairperson and ONA MEC President, she came to work for AFA International.

For over 20 years as a staff negotiator, she has worked on contracts from the largest to the smallest airlines. Working out of AFA's Washington DC office, Clare currently supervises six to eight negotiators at a time as the Manager of Collective Bargaining in the AFA Legal Department. On any given day she may be coordinating up to 12 different negotiations as well as actively participating as she does with the US Airways-America West merger. Clare's skill is exemplary as evidenced by her featured work in the book "Done Deal: Insights from Interviews with the World's Best Negotiators" by Michael Benoiel.



# Hashing it Out Vacation

## Carol Austin

Carol Austin is a Philadelphia-based US Airways Flight Attendant who started work with PSA in 1964. She began work as the PSA Scheduling and Reserve Chairperson in 1979 and has been heavily involved in union work, scheduling and contract negotiations since that time. Her union experience includes holding the LEC President position in San Diego with PSA and MEC President at US Airways.

Her vast contract negotiations experience began during the PSA-US Airways Transition Agreement in 1988, continued through the Piedmont-US Airways Transition Agreement in 1989, the US Airways Collective Bargaining Agreement of 1993 and then the bankruptcy agreement in 2004. Coincidentally, Carol worked for PSA/USA Council 66 until May of 1991 when the base was closed and she transferred to Los Angeles. The AFA Council 66 number was later passed on to the new AFA members at America West Airlines in 1994.



# Cost Neutral No Option

# Talks

At the Table  
Economics

# Negotiations

S i n g l e c o n t r a c t

"Cost Neutral"

# The Brewing Storm

By Lisa LeCarre

An exclusive West Wing interview with US Airways CEO Doug Parker



The West Wing interviewed US Airways CEO Doug Parker on November 1, 2006. Fourteen days later, the Delta deal was announced and the interview accordingly was pulled from the December issue. With that failed buyout behind him, Parker must resume focus on the America West/US Airways merger and the Flight Attendant single-contract negotiations. Parker's words are as pertinent today as they were prior to the Delta deal. Following are excerpts from that interview.

West Wing - You've put in place a management team that you believed could execute and complete the merger between US Airways and America West Airlines. You have offered that team of executives hundreds of thousands of dollars in stock option incentives that were paid out in the fall (2006), for that team to do that job and to produce a successful merger. You gave managers 3% raises. Yet to the flight attendants, you have repeatedly said that while "US Airways wants to recruit and retain the best flight attendants in the industry", you maintain a "cost-neutral" negotiating stance and offer no incentive for them to do their jobs, let alone do it successfully. Flight attendants recognize this inconsistency and hypocrisy in your managing philosophy. Explain why you hold separate management philosophies with respect to your "merger team" and your rank and file employees and explain to flight attendants why receiving raises would not be a rational expectation for performing a job that helps produce a successful merger.

Doug Parker - I think they are completely consistent. The consistency in-

volves one: we want to have pay plans in place for all of our employees, management and everyone in the company, that allows us to do what you said, attract and retain the best possible people, the best in the business. I believe we have that in both cases. As to management compensation, we pay salaries that are by and large below what they would be for managers at other airlines and other companies our size. What we do is to try to motivate people so that when things go well they get a share of the upside. Primarily through at-risk compensation: bonuses when we actually do make a profit and

*"AFA is doing what AFA is supposed to do and that is to try and make sure that they are looking out for their constituents and trying to get them higher. That is what we are negotiating."*

when we are more profitable than we thought we were going to be; when we do better than our budget; stock options that pay zero if the stock goes down, but can be worth a good bit when the stock

goes up. That, by the way, is how the market compensates management. That's the way I think it should be.

As it relates to your statement that there are no incentives for flight attendants to do a better job, I'd like to point out three. First, we have accrued nearly \$50 million dollars in profit sharing in which our flight attendants are going to share. I don't know the amounts, exactly, but it is going to be a nice number for our flight attendants. Very few other airlines are going to pay to the extent that we are. So that's helpful.

Second, anytime that we are in the top three for on-time performance and, of the ten largest airlines, the lowest complaints, we pay \$50 a month. When we are running a good airline, which our flight attendants have a lot to do with particularly on the complaint side, if that pays out every month, than that's \$600. It

gets to be reasonable money over time.

Finally, we have drawings for A&B cards in which we give out \$10,000 awards, most of which go to our flight attendants because they are the ones that are primarily in front of customers. Now, it is not going to be the same sort of incentives that we give to our management who we have working and trying to get the stock price up and things like that. It's just the way that we do it.

**Flight attendants do not begrudge the incentives that you receive. It is the fact that you made \$9 million but insist that the flight attendants can make nothing. It doesn't matter if it is \$9 million, \$90 million or \$900 million. It is this "cost-neutral" stance that offends flight attendants and other labor groups.**

This "cost-neutral" thing. Okay, let's get to that. We're not saying that you get nothing. This cost neutral thing...which is, it's...

**Yes, this "cost-neutral" thing.**

It's not, at least what I think, when I talk to employees, they think it means. First of all I don't think I ever said it, but who knows. It doesn't matter. What I know and what I have said from the start is we want to put the two contracts together and have them not cost more than what they would have cost us independently

**How is that possible?**

Well, costs were going to go up before. The cost of the America West Flight attendant's in 2007, was going to be higher than 2006, because we are going to have people stepping through seniority scales and we know that. We're not trying to keep people exactly where they are. We are trying to put them together and not have them cost more than they would have before

How is that possible? It seems rational to us because we have two contracts that have essentially the exact same costs to start with. Our goal is to put them together and not have the costs go up as we put them together. Our ongoing premise is we aren't trying to get anyone to take concessions or anything like that. We aren't trying to stop anyone and freeze anyone at where they are. We expect that the costs will keep going up from where they are. There is nothing with the merger itself that says costs should have them go

up more than they were going to go up.

We're in negotiations and AFA is saying they are going to put them together and they are going to cost more together than they would have otherwise. We're saying we're going to keep them where they are. That's why we are still in negotiations. There probably won't be any negotiations for a little while on that until we figure out how to resolve that difference.

**So you can solidly say that you will not be able to give back the concessions that the east lost in the bankruptcy?**

I can absolutely say that. The total amount of concessions that the east employees gave up over the course of two bankruptcies is \$1.5 billion a year. We're not going to make anything close to that. Everybody's saying how great we're doing, but we've made \$400 million so far. Maybe we'll make \$500 million this year. We can't go give back. Our east employees, certainly no time soon and probably never, are going to be back to that world. We all have to come to grips with that. What we're going to do is have contracts in place that allow us to retain and attract the best in the business and allow us to all share in the upside through profit sharing.

**You can't argue that the resulting \$3-4 billion surplus that is in the bank now, that the company says is needed to maintain industry viability, came about because of the concessions. East Flight attendants and pilots particularly, feel that they are stakeholders in the company and that those concessions were investments in the company's future. How would you address that issue of investment with those flight attendants and pilots?**

First off, I would never call it a surplus. While we have \$3 billion in cash, we have a lot more debt than that. Our total debt, if you capitalize our aircraft rental, is about \$10 billion. So, we owe more than we have. But that is true of a lot of companies - that's not alarming. We need enough cash to allow us to feel comfortable that we can withstand the next downturn. There will be one. What we end up doing in this business, too often, is building companies that just squeak by in the good times and when hit by the bad times, everyone goes to pleading poverty and we go through concessionary contracts, bankruptcies and all that.



Now with 3 billion relative to our size, that is better than other airlines. As a flight attendant at America West, we can all look out and say we're going to be around and we don't have to look out and wonder about survivability over the next few years. It is the first time that people at US Airways have been able to feel that way. We need it to make sure we can survive.

But getting to your fundamental question, which is that we have that cash because people gave up concessions and they expect some return on that. I appreciate that, to which I say, one – I agree. None of us would have been here if it weren't for the concessions that the US Airways team gave up. America West Airlines would be here, but we certainly wouldn't be here as the merged US Airways. Without the merger the US Airways employees certainly wouldn't be here. That airline was going to liquidate. But what they did is they reacted to the market and the world has changed. What you see is that other airlines have done the same thing. Delta, Northwest, United all have gone through similar circumstances and have made themselves competitive just as we have. How do we share in that? Again: profit sharing. Profit share was actually agreed upon for that reason. I wasn't there, but my guess is that those employees who gave huge concessions do not want to see management making a bunch of profits and not sharing it. That's why the profit sharing plan was negotiated.

It is the exact same formula in which management bonuses are paid. Management bonuses can't pay unless profit sharing pays. But, profit sharing checks are not going to be anything close to what people gave up in concessions.

**In July you exercised your options for 270,000 shares of stock and pocketed the pretax profit of more than \$9 million. At that time you asked employees not to take this exercising of options as an indication that US Airways is topping out but "to the contrary, I think we are just getting started. I believe the value of our company will continue to increase." Moving forward USA expects to post a profit this quarter despite seasonal difficulties and**

**bring the year-end profit to around \$500 million as you said earlier. An article in US News and World Report stated, "By cutting unprofitable flying the airline raised its revenue per seat mile by 24% and that the private lenders that invested in the two weak carriers have seen returns approaching 400%." In addition, the combined company's annual revenues went up from the original estimate of 10 billion dollars in revenue per-year to 11.5 billion per year.**

**With those kinds of financial forecasts and figures being paraded before the public and the media, why do you continue to insist to flight attendants that the carrier is not in a position to raise both pay and benefits and remain competitive in the current airline industry? Why do you expect flight attendants to believe that position?**

I am very careful not to say that we can't afford it. "Not in a position to" sounds like we are saying we need to recognize that the company has to be profitable and we can't go give it all back to our employees. We wouldn't have investors if we did that. It is our job to make sure that we are able to track capital in the future. We are going to need investment in order to grow. That is the limiting constraint on wherever we are going to be with the contracts. The constraint on how much can you afford to pay is not going to be how much money you made. It is going to be how that compares to other competing airlines.

The difference we are having in negotiations is that I know we are there now. I don't know if it can keep us there, three years from now, but I know we are there now. I know that we are not having any trouble attracting people right now.

I fly around our system. Unfortunately, I end up on other airlines because I have to get to some other city that we don't fly to. I get on an American flight or a Delta flight and its, its...its palpable, it is notable how much better our flight attendants are from those at other airlines. We hear from our customers that we have these flight attendants here that are doing a really good job.

In regards to negotiations, we think we can do with what we have. We know that those contracts are competitive with other airlines like Northwest and Delta and United that have gone through similar things that US Airways has done. America West was already there. AFA is doing what AFA is supposed to do and that is to try and make sure that they are looking out for their constituents and trying to get them higher. That is what we are negotiating.

**In a Flight Attendant Compensation Ranking report compiled by the AFA Communications and Research Department earlier this year, six-year America West flight attendants ranked 36 out of 38 airlines below Comair, Sun Country, Piedmont, Chautauqua, Mesa Air – we aren't just talking about the majors. The most senior America West flight attendants ranked 15 out of 38 airlines below Hawaiian, Comair, Midwest, Frontier and ATA, again, not to mention the majors. America West flight attendants are not paid anywhere near "industry standard" or market rates. What do you mean when you say that our flight attendants are paid at "market rates" and how do you determine the figures that you use to define "market rates"?**

We go through all of our own analysis to make sure we are competitive with other airlines in total compensation. One thing that I think, it is interesting the numbers that you gave. I haven't seen that analysis and it is a little surprising to me frankly. I'm not saying that it is wrong. It sounds lower than what I thought it was.

**Yes, I have with me the analysis from AFA that I am using for this comparison.**

Okay, that's fine. What I know is, the pay scales themselves versus other airlines are,...I'm going to be careful with my words here,...there are a number of airlines above us and there are a number of airlines below us. I don't think we are at the far tail end of the scale, but this is the kind of stuff that we will talk about as we are going through negotiations. I fully acknowledge that we need to be competitive with other

airlines as part of market. But what I know is there are a number of airlines as big as or bigger than us that have total wages, total compensation that is very near or below us. We are trying to do what we need to be competitive.

**In October, 100 flight attendants picketed in Phoenix and across the system protesting against management's cost-neutral negotiating stance, stalled contract talks and the rising perception that management treats labor like a liability and not as a partner in this merger. At a recent town hall meeting with employees in Charlotte, a Charlotte-based pilot came out with a stiff warning to management to pay attention to their direction with negotiations and the treatment of employees in this merger.**

**From these employee comments and the actions of the flight attendants it appears that the labor issue is an ugly storm brewing on the horizon. According to a recent airline integration report the number one factor in delaying or destroying the benefits of a merger is the combined company management's disregard of the enormous complexities surrounding the whole labor dimension. Even the Arizona Republic published an article reporting that one of the biggest challenges ahead for executives at US Airways is the labor unrest citing that US Airways can ill afford unhappy workers; that there were problems with on-time arrivals, customer complaints and pilots making noises.**

**How far into the company's bottom line, in terms of declining ticket sales and loss of previously loyal business travelers and customer complaints, does employee dissatisfaction have to go and have to reach before management is willing to honestly address the issue and halt the growing animosity between management and labor groups?**

Again, all I'd say to that is we are in negotiations with labor groups. I expect that while it feels like we're not making any progress, we are relatively early in the process. It has been a year, but we couldn't have integrated the workforces anyway. I think we are start-

ing to make progress at the table. I'm highly optimistic that we will end up with contracts in place with all of our labor groups. I'm actually quite optimistic that we will have all of this resolved.

What you have just described is something that I wish I could help everyone to understand better and understand that what we need to do right now, is to be working together instead of against each other. What we need to be doing is running an airline as good as we can so we can improve profit sharing. But people will act as people want to act and as they choose to act. The management team is going to keep focused on negotiations. We are not in agreement and that's a lot different than saying we are stalling. We are not stalling. We have not come to agreement yet because we are a ways apart. But no amount of threats on either party's part is going to help anything.

**First, in June a Pittsburgh post reporter asked if your long-term goal was to create the nation's largest airline. You responded by saying, "We want to be the nation's best air carrier and that doesn't necessarily mean the biggest."**

**Second, some parts of your stock option grant do not vest until the two airline's operations are completely merged under one FAA certificate. Once the companies are fully merged you will be making a huge amount of money. In addition, as part of your compensation package, you received 505,375 stock options and stock-appreciation rights that are tied not only to the merger, but also to an agreement to give up a severance package should you leave the airline voluntarily in the first two years after the merger. Therefore, after next summer you could walk away from the company leaving the entire management/employee/labor/merger mess behind.**

**Do you intend to stay with the company long-term? If so, explain what you meant when you said, "We want to be the nation's best air carrier and that doesn't necessarily mean the biggest."**

Yes, first let's get the facts straight. Per the terms of the contract I have

with America West, the America West merger actually triggered an ability of mine to walk away and actually do pretty well because of all the stock I had and I would get a severance payment. I didn't want to do that. Instead we agreed to waive that. In exchange I was given some options in the new company. I don't have the ability now, to walk away on my own and make a bunch of money. I exchanged that ability for options in the new company, which I believe in very strongly.

Having said that, what do I want to do? I want to stay here and run this company. I want to build the best airline in the United States, in the world, actually. That is what I want to do. That is what I plan on doing. What does "the best airline" mean to me? In broad terms, it is an airline that customers like to fly; it is an airline where people like to work; and it is an airline where investors like to invest because they know it is a solid company that will do well over time.

We're not there yet, but we have the foundations in place to get there. We have now built an airline with a very solid route network that does allow us to attract industry level unit revenues. As for our customers, we have to do a better job of running the airline, but because of our great group of employees I think as long as management does its job and gives the employees the tools they need to do their job, we'll provide a customer service level that is as good or better than anybody's. That's why the cultural integration is so important. That is why it is so important to get to one contract. We need to be working together, as one team, to go build one airline instead of having two airlines.

**Thank you very much for taking the time today for this interview.**

Thanks, Lisa. It is always a pleasure.➔



Super Suppers owner Monica Wilfong, founder Judie Byrd, winner Ellen Lauterbach and owner Carrie Grief

## Winning the Perfect Meal

By Lisa LeCarre, Communications Committee

The answer to the question "What's for dinner?" has been answered for Flight Attendant Ellen Lauterbach for an entire year. Ellen was the Grand Prize Winner in Super Suppers *Supper's On Us* nationwide sweepstakes. She won a year's worth of monthly Super Supper meals for a total value of over \$2600. The sweepstakes was part of a promotion with Campbell Soup Company. During the month of October, Super Suppers featured Campbell's Cheesy Chicken & Rice Casserole on its menu along with the national sweepstakes in partnership with "Campbell's" soups.

Ellen was awarded the prize when the Super Suppers founder, Judie Byrd, flew in for a special reception and meal presentation at the Mesa Red Mountain Super Supper store in January. Ellen was amazed when she received a call from the franchises' America West Flight Attendant owners, Monica Wilfong and Carrie Grief. Although they had flown together in the past, Ellen had no idea that Monica owned the Super Supper store on Power Road. Ellen had never been into a store prior to winning the Grand Prize. "As you can imagine," said Ellen, "that has definitely changed and I tell everyone I meet that they should try the wonderful meals at Super Suppers."

Ellen admitted that she is "not a good cook" and enjoys the fact that she can share her win not only with her family

but with friends as well. She has brought meals from the store for fun evenings with friends. "Sometimes people win things that have limited use, but these meals are great and everyone needs to eat!", she admitted. In addition, she says they are perfect for bringing on her trips and because they can be frozen and they travel well. For more information about the Mesa Red Mountain Super Supper store visit the website at [www.ssmesaredmountainaz.com](http://www.ssmesaredmountainaz.com) →

Monica Wilfong with founder Judie Byrd, hosts the Grand Prize winner at her store.



## Dear Madge

Listen, my name is Madge, and I may be new to you, but I ain't new to the company. I've been here longer than...oh hell I don't know, doesn't matter. What matters is I am here to answer your questions, as long as they aren't stupid and you actually ask them. Feel free to ask me anything, say from how to you kick your brother-in-law out of your guest house or what to do the next time some hunk asks for your phone number while you're cleaning up vomit from the drunk guy in the last row.

You may want to know what qualifies me to be the one to answer your questions and I'd tell you, but at the moment I can't remember. But right now I'm all you've got and that'll have to do. I can tell you I've had plenty of experiences that did not turn out the way I wanted, so you can feel confident I've learned enough to give you advice.

Let me give you some before I officially get started. First, if you are pregnant, and your happily eager husband can't wait for your new baby, don't let him say to friends and family that "we're pregnant." That just ain't possible; let me ask you, does he have ovaries? No. Does he get the stretch marks when your boobs start heading for the floor? No. Do his feet swell to the size of sausages when he stands all day on them? No. So "we're pregnant" is something you and the new father must learn to quit saying. I'll save my opinion on a few other "buggy" things for the next edition.

Send me your questions for the next issue of the West Wing, and I'll let you know what the right answer is. Just remember I ain't no Dear Abby, so don't expect me to hold your hand when I tell you what to do.

Thanks and don't drop your cell phone in the airplane toilet. → ~ Madge

Send your questions to [AirNews66@cox.net](mailto:AirNews66@cox.net)



Carol Early, aka the Lunch Box Magician, and Support Committee Chairperson

Flaxseed Muffin Recipe (Makes 12)

1 and ¾ C + 1 Tbs whole wheat flour

1 and ¾ C + 1 Tbs freshly ground flaxseed (use coffee grinder or blender)

¾ C + 2 Tbs. brown sugar

1 and ¾ tsp baking powder

1 and ¾ tsp cinnamon

½ tsp salt

2/3 C raisins

2 and ½ C skim milk or EdenSoy Carob Soy Milk

## Chocolate! Its Not just for Breakfast Anymore!

By Carol Early, Lunch Box Magician

You're on a minimum rest nine hour layover (which translates into a 5 hour nap) and every second your head is on the pillow will make the following twelve and a half hour duty day a little bit easier to take. So what's a flight attendant to do about breakfast? You can run down stairs to catch the van with a cup of coffee in your hand, but that's not the most nutritious or lasting breakfast.

My first choice is a chocolate protein powder shake that I can either drink in the van or put aside in the ice bucket until I have completed my pre-flight checks. An 8 oz. carton of EdenSoy Carob Soy Milk, a scoop of Designer Whey Chocolate Protein, and a Tupperware glass with a lid is all that is required for this delicious beverage.

Another quick option is a bottle of organic apple juice from Whole Foods and a flaxseed muffin from home (see recipe left). If you have a microwave in your hotel room or a simple immersion heater and a coffee cup, boil some water for instant oatmeal and throw in a handful of raisins. If you know you will be serving a hot break-

fast on the airbus, save a tinfoil tray. When you have a moment, slice a hard boiled egg; add a slice of ham and a slice of whole wheat bread from your lunch box and, voila! Breakfast at its best! Small jelly packets, found in many restaurants work great on the toast and do not need refrigeration.

Remember, two packs of Blue Ice in your lunch box will keep most foods chilled for 24 hours, especially in the winter months. After thawing Blue Ice can be re-frozen with dry ice from pilot meals or overnight in your hotel room refrigerator/freezer. If using dry ice, also use the small sheet of foam that comes with the ice to protect your hands and your lunch box. Always place the dry ice *behind* the Blue Ice so as not to freeze your food.

Mix with electric mixer. Bake in greased muffin tin @ 350 degrees for 30 min. Yummy! Muffins can be kept in the freezer until needed, then popped in a sandwich bag to preserve freshness while traveling - Bon Appetite! For grocery lists, recipes, comments or suggestions email The Lunch Box Magician at [liz\\_e29@cox.net](mailto:liz_e29@cox.net) →

## A Simple Weight Loss Plan By B.J. Walker, Staff Writer

There are many ways to lose weight, but keeping it off is the real test. The best way to maintain weight loss is to change your eating habits - permanently. Which "diet" do you chose to start? I don't suggest you chose a diet; I suggest you find what works for you. Now you may be thinking, "If I knew what worked for me, I wouldn't need to be on a diet," and that's exactly it. You don't need to be on a diet, but rather a way of living. It's not something you go "on" and "off". Yo-yo dieting never really provides people with the permanent results they seek.

To successfully keep weight off and stay healthy, you have to change your way of thinking. When people are on a diet, they usually say they can't have certain foods, which only sets them up for failure. Eventually you will reintroduce those "restricted" foods back into your life, and before you know it, those pounds creep back on. Rather than avoid certain foods,

learn how to handle them. If cookies are your weakness, then don't have them in the house, but do occasionally buy a small package and *really* enjoy them. Then, don't allow yourself to feel guilty about it.

Next you'll want to figure out what type of eating works for you. Are you a grazer or a three-squares a day sort? Do you prefer to eat on the fly or are you a "foodie" who loves to cook? Whatever your style, stick with it. Don't try to strap yourself to the kitchen with the famous "South Beach" diet if you hate to cook. Instead look for places to make changes that work into your life. If you are a fast food fan, try reducing the amount of what you eat by half. I read somewhere, years ago, that Dolly Parton lost all her weight just by cutting everything she ate in half.

Make other small changes by educating yourself on what is truly healthy and incorporating those foods that are into your life or deleting those that are not. Dietician

Kelly Jackson M.S., R.D. of University of Arizona's Dept. of Nutritional Sciences offers these tips - Avoid: trans fat (yes I know they are in fast foods, but you gotta start somewhere!) it's known to increase coronary disease; nitrites, used to cure meats, is a carcinogen; high fructose corn syrup (in all sugared sodas and in almost ALL breads!) has been known to decrease the brain's ability to recognize when the stomach is full; and finally, speaking of full stomachs, stop eating *before* you are full. This is probably the most effective way to keep your weight down. By stopping before you are full, you keep from over eating, and you give your brain a chance to recognize that the stomach is full, thus taking in fewer calories.

If you just do these things over the next few months, along with exercise, you will be on the road to a new and healthier you by the time our next issue comes out. So keep up the good work and be patient and kind to yourself - you're the best friend you've got. →

# Taking It to the Streets

Editorial pages by flight attendants, for flight attendants. If you have something on your mind - put it on paper. Got a complaint? Got an opinion? Got a thought for the day? Send it to [AirNews66@cox.net](mailto:AirNews66@cox.net) and share it with the rest of us in the next edition of the West Wing.

## Shoes On a Freeway

By Susan Rivera, Flight Attendant

**U**NIFORM 1.n. matching clothes worn by all the members of a group of people, such as a school or an army. 2. adj. unvarying, constant; to one standard;

My mother once told me you could tell a lot about a person just by looking at their shoes. Interestingly enough, I didn't reflect much on this comment until many years later. It was circa 1989, my husband had picked me up from work, and we were headed home. Most of those who know me, know that I am married to a career military man. As we were driving on the freeway, he looked down at my feet, stared at me for a brief moment, and asked if I would take off my shoe and show it to him.

I looked a bit confused, so he asked me again, and I did. Something told me I was in for a lecture since truth be told my shoes hadn't seen polish in months and buying new ones had been low on my priority list. Imagine my surprise when he threw my

shoe out the window and followed it with, "You know, you can tell a lot about a person just by looking at their shoes!" After my initial shock wore off, he motioned to the back seat, and there, my friends, were a brand new pair of uniform shoes waiting for me. He then explained the statement and opened my eyes to what a uniform should represent.

The statement is not intended as a judgment of people on the shoes they wear, but rather an assessment of how they wear them. What exactly does that mean, and how does that apply to us? Simply said, when you put on the uniform, you become our company's personal representative. Therefore, it is important that you strive to look your best. From your hair down to the shine on your shoes, appearance should rank as a number one priority. First impressions are lasting impressions, and it is a reality of life in our business that every day we are observed and reviewed by the public.

I asked many flight attendants what a uniform meant to them. The responses

were many; among them pride, professionalism, respect, authority. Some commented that when you feel good about your appearance it shows, from the manner in which you conduct your business, to the respect you receive from your passengers and co-workers alike. Your appearance speaks volumes about you, and as I look around me while walking through the terminal, I can easily tell who takes pride in what they do. Therefore, don't you think our customers look at that as well? Webster's dictionary keeps it simple, "to one standard." As time passes at US Airways, we will see many uniforms come and go. Wearing them as a group is the standard for us. Having a personal and professional regard for the wear of the uniform is up to you!

I consider myself twice blessed; because I take pride in being a representative of US Airways, but just as importantly because I take pride in myself and the image I portray. When I put on my uniform, I make sure my shoes are shined, my shirt is neatly pressed and my uniform is spotless. So, when asked what the uniform means to me, I simply answer **Respect** for the company I represent, as well as a personal sense of **Respect** for who I am.➔

## Root Canals by Seniority

By Linda Rowland, Flight Attendant

**I** am writing this in response to our new rules of non-rev travel. I thought that since this airline believes so strongly in seniority ruling EVERYTHING, then hey, why not? Why not use seniority when we go to the doctor and there happens to be another US Airways employee or family member at the same dentist? The senior employee gets the root canal first. Or when we are waiting in line at the pass bureau? The senior employee, even though a junior employee has waited for a while, gets served first. How about when we are standing in line at the employee ticket counter or for that matter even security check points? The senior employees go first. While we are at it, how about letting senior employee's go first no matter where we are at on our own time off including the grocery store, fast food restaurant, the doctor, the gym, the

list can go on and on.

What do you all think? Doesn't this sound absolutely ridiculous? That's because it is AB-SO-LUTE-LY RIDICULOUS. But that is what it has come to. At this point, seniority doesn't just rule at work, it infiltrates our time off and non-work related issues.

The last I knew, non-rev'ing was a benefit - something we did on our own time. I understand seniority ruling when it comes to WORK but I don't understand how it came about during our time off? I am a twenty year employee and I do not feel that my vacation is any more important than any employee junior to me.

I remember the company saying they came to this conclusion because that is the way the "east" has always done things.

God forbid, we do the right thing and affect the "east's" way of thinking. If they were worried about commuters, why didn't they just come up with a different type of listing for commuters while they were changing all the sa-ps? They could have implemented an "sa-p" designation for the commuters, going to and from work ONLY, allowing the ability to bump the non-revers traveling on their time off.

Ok, I just had to get it out there. You never know what's next. All I wanted is fairness, but I know the saying "life isn't fair" and our way of doing things just hasn't been done long enough. You never know, people, what's next. Maybe it will be the security lines. We all have our IDs on, it would be really easy to implement "check-point by seniority" rules there too. Good luck to all of you, and I am sorry that the non-rev life will not be fair.➔

# DUI is not a City Code

By Lisa LeCarre, Editor

**L**et's get it straight right away that I am not judging Mr. Parker for his actions. I have neither the power nor the intent. I'm simply questioning the use of double standards in the workplace. After reading all of the information about his DUI arrest last January, I could not help but bump into the double-standard like an unexpectedly rearranged piece of furniture. I stubbed my toe and it brings me great pain; so much that it is hard to ignore.

Why is management treated differently than employees in so many aspects of our jobs? With clarity we see that the ethics and standards outlined in the Code of Business Conduct and Ethics handbook are written differently for management than for the rank and file employee. The handbook states, "For officers, directors and employees of US Airways Group and its subsidiaries", on the front cover. The last time I looked, CEO stood for Chief Executive Officer but I'm guessing that this code does not apply to the CEO?

A letter by Mr. Parker that accompanied the Code of Business Conduct and Ethics stated that employees should "ask questions whenever applications of the Code are not clear." In an attempt at fairness, I placed a couple of phone calls to the number listed in the handbook. My messages for the US Airways' General Council's office were rerouted to Andrea Rader, Director of Corporate Communications, who sent me this email response, "The Code of Ethics does apply to Doug as an officer just as it applies to every employee of the company." Can you hear the roar of employees who would beg to differ with that response?

Off duty conduct is obviously viewed differently than conduct on the job, but does have consequences. Any pilots out there with three or four DUIs who are still working? Not likely. In fact, their Motor Vehicle records are routinely reviewed by the FAA. As a pilot, you can run, but you can not hide. Wouldn't that be an interesting concept to have CEOs routinely reviewed for motor vehicle violations as part of their work performance?

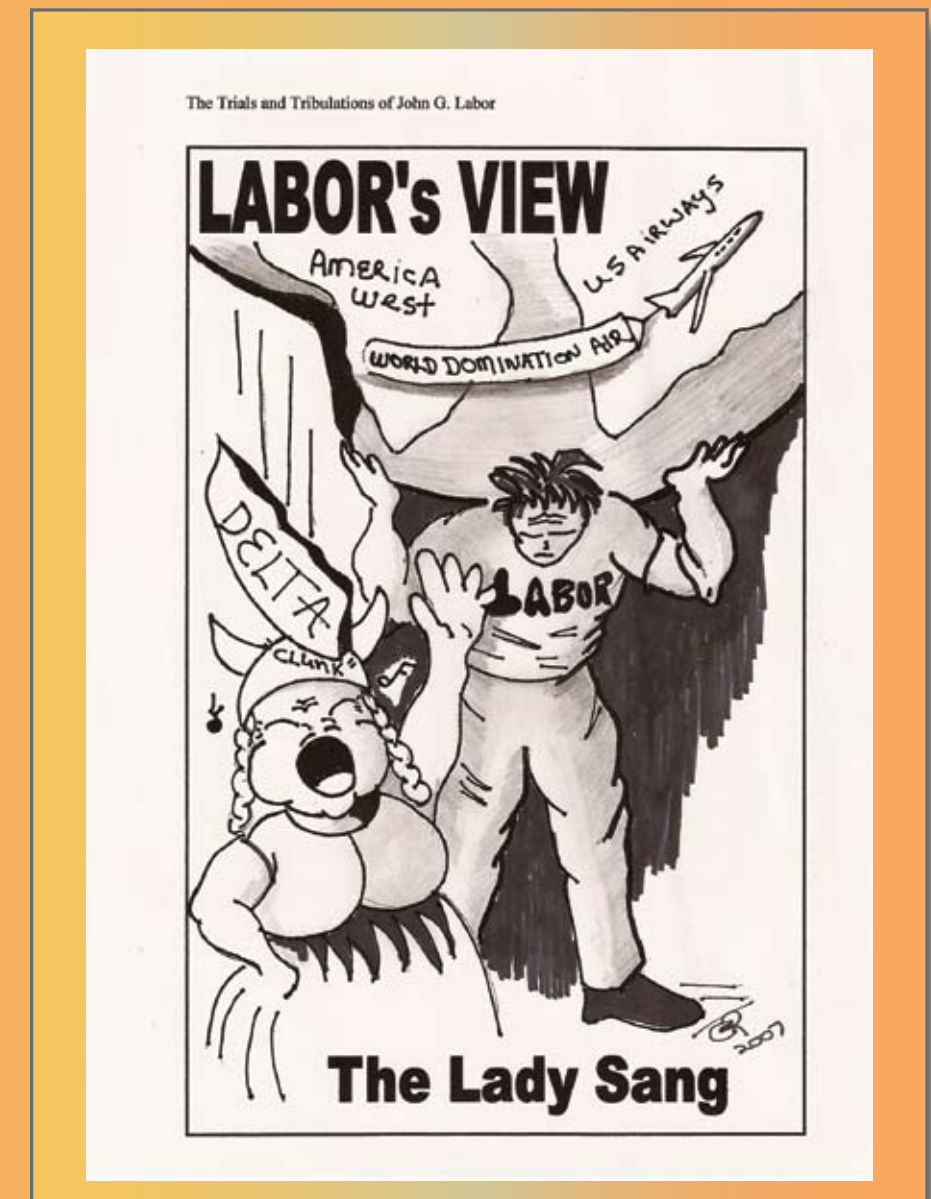
According to Rader, "We interpret the alcohol policy to mean drinking "on the job," (either on duty or, for uniformed employees, in uniform). Employees are not

fired for consuming alcohol off duty or for a DUI unless they show up impaired at work or if their DUI interferes with their ability to be at work." Meaning as long as Scheduling is happy, the month is not critically staffed, and your supervisor gives you Personal Leave without question, you can get time off to do your DUI "time", and all is well. I hear that roar again.

Not withstanding the substance aspect of the issue, if an employee ended up in the newspaper or media for a DUI arrest it would be considered a negative reflection upon the company. In many instances the company doesn't want to take the risk of retaining that employee. According to the handbook "The consumption of alcohol in

any situation that might reflect adversely on the Company...is strictly prohibited". Rader replied, "As to the reputation issue - as you can imagine, that's a judgment call for both "regular" employees and Doug. The flight attendant's record would be taken into account as well as circumstances of the incident i.e. in uniform (or not), and (in) accordance with any Department of Transportation (DOT) issues." Not only has Parker admitted to many past DUI arrests, but he has embarrassed every employee at this company with his actions. If that isn't adverse reflection, I don't know what is. Yet has he suffered the same consequences that I would face? That's the double-standard that every employee should question.

Continued on page 23



Grievance continued 24-66-2-18-06 Contract/25 Closed/Upheld	<b>24-66-1-32-06 Discipline System Board</b>	24-66-2-45-06 Contract/9.C.1 Closed/Upheld	24-66-1-58-06 Discipline Closed/Upheld	24-66-2-71-06 Contract/15.C.7 Step 2
24-66-2-19-06 Contract/22.B.2 & 3 Closed/Upheld	<b>24-66-1-33-06 Discipline System Board</b>	24-66-2-46-06 Contract/9.D.7 Closed/Upheld	24-66-1-59-06 Discipline Closed/Upheld	24-66-1-72-06 Discipline Step 1
<b>24-66-2-20-06 Contract/7.D.3 System Board/ GSC 2/14/07</b>	24-66-2-34-06 Discipline Closed/Upheld	<b>24-66-2-47-06 Contract/7.J System Board</b>	24-66-1-60-06 Discipline Closed/Upheld	24-66-2-73-06 Contract/9 Step 1
<b>24-66-2-21-06 Contract 7.D.2 System Board</b>	<b>24-66-1-35-06 Discipline System Board</b>	24-66-1-48-06 Discipline Pending	24-66-1-61-06 Discipline Closed/Upheld	24-66-2-74-06 Contract/7.D.3 Step 1 →
<b>24-66-2-22-06 Contract/Hotel System Board</b>	24-66-1-36-06 Discipline Closed/Upheld	24-66-2-49-06 Contract/27.J.3.c Closed/Upheld	<b>24-66-2-62-06 Contract/9.A.1 System Board</b>	
24-66-1-23-06 Discipline Closed/Upheld	<b>24-66-2-37-06 Contract/7.D.4.b System Board</b>	<b>24-66-1-50-06 Discipline System Board</b>	24-66-2-63-06 Contract/19.A.1 Step 2	
24-66-2-24-06 Contract/3.L.1 & 2 Closed/Upheld	24-66-1-38-06 Discipline Closed/Upheld	24-66-2-51-06 Contract/5.A Closed/Upheld	24-66-1-64-06 Discipline Step 2	
24-66-1-25-06 Discipline Closed/Upheld	24-66-1-39-06 Discipline Closed/Upheld	24-66-2-52-06 Contract/9.D.3.a Closed/withdrawn	24-66-2-65-06 Contract/6.F.1.a Step 2	
<b>24-66-2-26-06 Contract/3.B.2, 7.D.3 System Board</b>	24-66-1-40-06 Discipline Closed/Upheld	24-66-1-53-06 Discipline Closed/Upheld	24-66-1-66-06 Discipline Step 2	
<b>24-66-2-27-06 Contract/27.G.3 System Board</b>	24-66-1-41-06 Discipline Closed/Upheld	<b>24-66-2-54-06 Contract/14.F.2 Step 2</b>	24-66-1-67-06 Discipline Step 2	
24-66-1-28-06 Discipline Closed	<b>24-66-2-42-06 Contract/7.D.4 Step Two</b>	24-66-1-55-06 Discipline Closed/Upheld	24-66-1-68-06 Discipline Pending	
<b>24-66-2-29-06 Contract/7.E.1 System Board</b>	<b>24-66-2-43-06 Contract/14.B System Board</b>	24-66-1-56-06 Discipline Closed/Upheld	24-66-2-69-06 Contract/3.C Step 2	
24-66-2-30-06 Contract/3.B.2.d Closed/Upheld	24-66-2-44-06 Contract/3.C Closed/Upheld	24-66-1-57-06 Discipline Closed/Upheld	24-66-2-70-06 Contract/10.D Step 2	
<b>24-66-1-31-06 Discipline System Board</b>				

### New Travel Information

#### New US Airways Non-Rev Travel Pass Line

**1-800-325-9999**

Effective March 4, 2007 the current West Pass Line telephone number will no longer be available. Most Non-Rev listing is available on ETC through awa. Compass and theHub. Guest pass and SA1P travel can only be accessed through ETC and not the Pass Line. To list for Non-Rev Travel, please call the New Travel Pass Line number.

#### Emergency Travel

**1-888-260-7169**

If you experience an emergency that requires travel (death in the family, etc) effective February 14, 2007 all emergency travel requests will be handled by US Airways Inventory Services.

This office is open 24/7 and will be handling emergency travel requests from active and retired employees for emergency travel regarding death or critical illness of an immediate family member. Please contact your immediate supervisor or manager to request your travel.

#### DUI Continued...

Since he has admitted his "mistakes" will he have to enter an alcohol rehabilitation program and endure alcohol testing for the next few years of his career in order to continue his work? It would be a little tricky for Parker to avoid that person with the clipboard standing right outside the boardroom door as he exits yet another airline merger/acquisition meeting.

Most America West flight attendants are familiar with the term "pattern." We all have no idea how Inflight supervisors define the term, but with regard to our sick policy any occurrence is part of the "pattern" that is used to judge our availability for work. Basically, every time we call in sick it is part of a "pattern" of being sick that seems to be viewed as a negative trend in our lives and our careers. We just can't seem to shake those "patterns" of being sick when the ticker is an indefinitely revolving yearly period. According to the Inflight department calling in sick three days before and after a holiday again constitutes a very unhealthy "pattern" of not being available for work. For some reason germs just aren't respecting the US Airways imposed *Germ Embargo Days* and are facilitating "patterns" for flight attendants. Yet Mr. Parker wants us to understand that his three previous DUIs are merely a "part of a youthful life and in no way indicate a pattern or trend."

If you believe that, then you probably **do** think that DUI is a new city that US Airways serves.

Which brings us to the issue of being held accountable for your actions and the double standard. This monstrous pink elephant in the room grew even larger for flight attendants with this event. Daily, the operation of on-time flights, customer service and public perception (positive reflection) is the burden of flight crews who are constantly held to a level of accountability higher than that required even from management. This is the flaw in the foundation that will bring down the house. Management must account for their cement, their nails and hold their "builders of a winning airline" to higher standards if they expect that standard from flight attendants and other employees.

The bottom line here is if "great companies require great leadership" then Management should follow the same guidelines

that every other employee has to follow. In fact, Management should be better than the average and reflect leadership qualities that set examples for the rest of us. The double standard can exist only to separate and alienate employees from management and according to his interview (see page 12) Mr. Parker wants to "work through that and get employees to work together instead of against each other." Meanwhile, employees learn, through example, the skills of denial, insincere public apology, insult to the intelligence of a workforce, lack of accountability, and the existence of the double-standard. I feel as enlightened as a Flight Attendant after a day of Merger Integration training.

Call me a skeptic, but am I the only employee here who can not accept not one, or two, but three (3) contrite apology letters from Mr. Parker.? The first letter of February 9, was sent to employees apologizing for getting stopped for DUI but promising he wasn't really inebriated at the time and that it would not happen again. The second letter, published shortly after the first, apologized for the first letter's mistake about the blood alcohol test that did come back showing legal intoxication but reiterated his commitment to not letting employees down in the future. And the third letter apologized for the first and second letters and was meant to circumvent the expected public scrutiny of his driving record to reveal, before the media did, that this "mistake" was actually his fourth DUI "mistake" and all a part of a "youthful life."

After reading these woeful attempts at sincerity I went straight to my Inflight copy machine and rolled off a couple of "Get out of Jail Free" letters that I intend to present the next time I get called in for my "pattern" of career illness. I will simply whip out a copy of the afore mentioned apology and read it (verbatim, as directed in my IOM). I'll then produce a sheepish, girlish grin that I am sure will be so reminiscent of Mr. Parker that the entire incidence will be swept under the carpet and off my record for good. Too bad life doesn't work that way for anyone other than management. By why shouldn't it if I am following by example? If the double standard exists and I end up getting terminated for my "pattern," I guess I can always leave this city and use my training to compose apology letters for corporate executives in DUI.→

### Henry Arrives!



Congratulations go out to our West Wing Staff Writer and flight attendant, Barbi Walker and her husband Paul, on the birth of their first baby.

Henry Knight Walker was born on December 23, 2006 at 7 lbs, 20 oz, 20 inches. Baby and mother are doing well. As evidenced by Barbi's nutrition column, the girl is already back in action. Happy birth-day, Henry!

*Editor's note: At deadline, the Arizona Republic reported that Parker "pleaded guilty to a DUI charge" and that his "sentence includes 24 hours in the Scottsdale jail beginning on March 15,...and a fine of \$1645.24." In addition, the charge for having a blood-alcohol content over the legal limit and a speeding charge were dismissed. Finally, he is "scheduled for an appointment...to be screened for any alcohol problems that might need treatment."*

Complacency or a false sense of security should not be allowed to develop as a result of long periods without an accident or serious incident. An organization with a good safety record is not necessarily a safe organization." ~ International Civil Aviation Organization, 'Accident Prevention Manual, 1984.

If it is not in writing, it did not happen! One of the results of the US Airways-America West Airlines merger/integration regarding safety is the reality of management movement toward "bean counting" and "data thresholds" as determining factors in defining a "problem" and developing a subsequent "fix". In the good old days, AFA Air Safety would place a phone call or set up a meeting, regardless of the issue, to seek remedy. In the good old days, either an attempt at or an actual remedy was achieved. Today, this process does not work.

AFA hears your issues loud and clear. We meet with the company, and guess what? They have no data in their Safety Reporting System (SRS), which is where your Safety Event Reports (SER's) end up. On the other hand the company does have data to support our claims (sic) but the corresponding cost to fix the problem is not acceptable. If the issue has data support with relatively little or no cost to fix, then it may become an agenda item to fix at some time in the future. The result of current integration safety inefficiency is a developing list of unacceptable safety issues.

Let's discuss the reporting. We all know that Alcohol, Smoking, and Passenger Misconduct (Level 1 thru 4) have their own Passenger Misconduct Report. This form is mandatory for any onboard incident where these issues are involved and a full explanation may be found in your FAEM/IOM.

The Safety Event Report should be used for any and all issues that are listed on the form or that are safety related. When you review the incident for a written report, please take the time to determine if you think there are any safety related issues. For example, Catering is stowing heavy water bottles in the aft galley in the metal STD containers. When opening the container during flight a bottle fell out and injured your person. This is not only a catering issue; it is also a safety issue. Actually, the safety aspect is more critical in this example as it could cause injury. This report would go into the SRS data base. So, when the ASHS committee meets with the company to request that they interface with the catering department to prevent this, there is firm data supporting our request.

The SER reports submitted in the SER drop boxes or submitted on-line electronically DO NOT GO TO INFLIGHT

SERVICES FOR REVIEW. These reports go directly to the SRS reporting area and are entered into the SRS database.

The Inflight Irregularity Report is a form that should be used for any NON-SAFETY event. Essentially, this report documents a flight attendants involvement in passenger issues or customer service issues. A recent personal example involved a First Class passenger who became irate about the annoying advertising over the PA system in the Level Off video. After performing LAST (sic) with this passenger the crew submitted an Inflight Irregularity Report. It did not escalate past an annoying passenger issue for the crew, yet it had to be documented in the event of any future contact from the company regarding this passengers actions.

The electronic reporting system found on [www.awa-safety.com](http://www.awa-safety.com) is really slick and highly recommended. This system allows you to send your reports to anyone you wish by simply adding their email address. It is quick, easy, inputs valuable data for use, and stores your reports for you. Check it out!!

This abbreviated overview is not intended to replace the FAEM, but is rather a request for your help in getting Inflight data to the correct location to ultimately help other flight attendants and your union representatives in discussing important issues with management. Always remember, "IF IT IS NOT IN WRITING, IT DID NOT HAPPEN."

By Dorene Fredette  
Air Safety, Health and  
Security Committee Chairperson

# Put it in Writing

**Aviation Safety Reporting System**  
2006 Program Enhancements

**The ASRS Database is Now Searchable Online!**

We are pleased to announce that the ASRS database search capability is now available on the ASRS website. Researchers, pilots, controllers, dispatchers, cabin crew, mechanics, government agencies, and others who want to access data from the world's leading repository of aviation safety information now have an invaluable resource.

The ASRS database search is accessible through the ASRS web site at <http://asrs.arc.nasa.gov>. Users logging on to the ASRS web site should click on the ASRS Database Online link. Users can download the de-identified incident reports in a MS word format.

The "engine" for the ASRS Online Database is a browser-based, cross-platform "Web Query" enhancement developed by ASRS. Users retrieve reports by searching on specified fields including incident date (month/year), environmental conditions, aircraft operator and type, incident location, reporter affiliation, event assessments, and text fields. ASRS's database includes the de-identified narratives submitted by reporters.

The ASRS Online Database makes it easier than ever for users to independently explore ASRS data for themes, patterns, and issues of interest. We would appreciate any feedback about this new tool. Planned future enhancements include the ability to download the data in other useful formats.

Database Online is available at: <http://asrs.arc.nasa.gov/search.htm>

**Aviation Safety Reporting System**  
2006 Program Enhancements

**Submit your ASRS Form Electronically!**

Electronic Report Submission (ERS) – the capability to fill out an ASRS report on a computer and send it to ASRS via a secure Internet connection – is now operational. All ASRS Reporting Forms (General Pilot, Air Traffic Control, Maintenance, and Cabin) can now be sent electronically via the ASRS website at: <http://asrs.arc.nasa.gov>.

ASRS has fully explored privacy protection and confidentiality concerns for secure Electronic Report Submission. Of the 715,000+ reports received to date, ASRS values reporter confidentiality above all other considerations. ASRS has worked with NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratories (JPL) to apply sophisticated new technology to ERS that will ensure your identity remains protected. Currently, ASRS receives over 40,000 reports annually from pilots, air traffic controllers, cabin crew, mechanics, and others involved in aviation operations. ASRS encourages members of the aviation community to take advantage of this new technology!

Electronic Report Submission is available at: <http://asrs.arc.nasa.gov/>



# GLOBE POD Ireland

A Traveler's Blog by  
Flight Attendant Michael Flake

Ireland, the land is emerald green and breathtakingly beautiful. October is a rainy season so many towns and accommodations close down until Easter, but I booked a hostel in advance to avoid getting stranded.

Ireland is expensive, but my travel philosophy is to find cheap accommodation, eat on a budget, but splurge on the sightseeing tours! Unlike the hotels that flight attendants are used to, hostels are basically shared rooms with bunk beds catering mainly to backpackers and students. Citi-hostel was located near Grafton Street, the fashionable 'village quarter' in the heart of the city. It is close to the Temple bar and within walking distance of numerous cultural, historical and entertainment attractions. The hostel is contained in a set of old Georgian buildings with no elevators and a slightly claustrophobic feel. However, it is safe enough to keep the crazy leprechauns outside. There are also inexpensive restaurants and coffee shops next door and an Internet cafe around the corner to keep me connected.

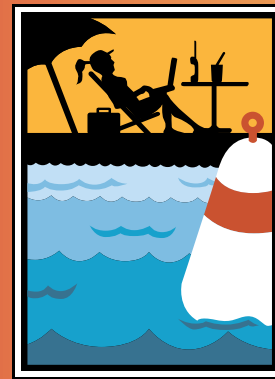
Dublin is a very compact capital and you can see more than enough to keep you entertained. Driving is hellacious because the streets are narrow and they don't follow any grid, and in the country there are many confusing street signs. I felt that the best way to see Ireland was to book a tour. I kick started my day by having a cup of tea on Grafton Street and a stroll around the Temple bar area. Here you'll find the street performers, little eclectic shops, cafes, restaurants and pubs, including Nude Cafe, a nice little coffee shop owned by Irish recording artist Bono's brother.

Some organized tours don't give you much freedom to explore the sites, but the Celtic tour was very good. Our tour guide, Paul was a very funny Irish man who seemed to have that Irish gift of gab and entertained us with many interesting tales, legends, superstitions and folklore all the while playing U2 and other Irish music as he drove us around the ancient and mystical monuments.

Our first stop was a trio of Stone Age mounds 4000 to 5000 years old. The green covered mounds look like hobbit homes with a short passage leading into a chamber then three smaller offset rooms covered with stone carvings. The three mounds represent the underworld, the present world and Fourknocks, which represents the next world. Legends says that if you go around the mound clockwise, you could get a free pass to the next world. It may not necessarily be heaven, but it could be the next dimension.

It is said that the Celts believed in reincarnation and the journeying through the experiences of life, death and rebirth in the directional flow of the spiral. In addition, the Celts created and believed in herbal medicines. One of the tourists joked that maybe their consumption of magic mushrooms and hallucinogenic herbs gave them the inspiration to carve all those spirals and create such wild stories. The most famous tomb or Dolmen in Ireland is New grange, which is older than the great pyramids of Egypt. It is now the oldest astronomical observatory in Europe. Every winter solstice, the light from the rising sun, shines through the slit above the entrance, creeps slowly down the passage way and illuminates the tomb chambers for 17 minutes. Anyone wishing to experience this mystical annual event simply has to add their name to the 15-year waiting list.

Back in Dublin my days were spent exploring Dublin castle, Trinity College, museums and gothic cathedrals. It is an easy city to see on foot, very safe, and the museums



## Greetings! from Retirement Corner

Submitted by Toni Bishop,  
Retirement Committee

If you have recently joined the ranks of the US Airways West retirees and are interested in "keeping in touch", there are several retirement clubs available to you. This quarter we highlight one: the US Airways Retirement Club, Phoenix Chapter (formerly the AWARE club), created for all eligible former America West (US Airways West) employees.

In 1997, several retired America West Airline employees got together and organized a group which allowed them to maintain contact with other retirees, share travel tips and reminisce about "their" airline. Since then the group has successfully expanded its focus to promote communications between the airline and its retirees and to pursue a "help when and where needed" program within the company. Currently, retired volunteers are spending time at Terminal 4 assisting with crowd control on days with high load factors and helping with the interview process at Reservations, as well as with other projects at Corporate Headquarters.

General membership meetings are held at Corporate Headquarters in Tempe in January, April and October, usually on the third Thursday of the month. The next meeting will be April 19, 2007 at 7:00 pm. Speakers are recruited from US Airways management and are always entertaining, candid in their remarks about the state of the airline and most amenable to answering our many questions.

Because our retirees are spread across the country, we are researching the formation of chapters in other cities as well. Yearly dues are \$15 and include quarterly newsletters containing company information and travel tips, other mailings of interest and dinner at the annual meeting in October. If you know someone who might be interested in joining our group or starting a chapter in your area, contact the club's President, Don Honeycutt at: [retirees@usairways.com](mailto:retirees@usairways.com) or 480-332-2447.

*Editor's note: Information about the US Airways Retirement Club provided by Cheryl Coleman, Treasurer. ➔*

### Ireland continued...

are mostly free. One of the cheapest and easiest ways to visit is to purchase a Dublin bus pass, hopping on and off around the city.

Kilmainham Gaol prison played a large part in Ireland's independence. The rebels and leaders of the Easter uprising were held and executed here. At the time, criminal offences ranged from high crimes like murder to the stealing of bread, a turnip or a coat. Children as young as 6 or 7 years were held in the same cells as adults. During the famine and mass starvation, life in prison may have been better than life outside and often minor misdemeanors were committed to get into jail where you were guaranteed a roof and a small amount of food everyday. There is a room displaying heart-breaking letters from prisoners, children's writings, poetry and a video presentation. The tour was well worth the visit.

I spent my last day in Belfast, Northern Ireland. I was a total tourist ditz and booked

the wrong tour, only to realize the black taxicabs were taking us on a tour of the volatile areas of their political war. There are omnipresent monitoring cameras all over the Belfast streets, fences and walls that separate Catholics from Protestants and an uncomfortable feeling that lingers in the air.

The black taxi drove us to view some of the most provocative and controversial murals, painted on homes, commemorating the hunger strikers, religious prejudice and various terrorist groups. It was quite sad and I couldn't understand the artists' motivation but the tour was both a moving and a disturbing experience. Moving because I felt the murals were a vivid expression of people's emotions; disturbing because many seemed to glorify the horror of those events.

Afterward, we drove to the Peace Line, a wall similar to the Berlin wall, designed to protect neighborhoods from sporadic attacks and give a sense of peace

and protection. Visitors are encouraged to write their thoughts of peace on the walls. I grabbed a marker and wrote the words "Be the change you want to see".

After the tour, we drove back to Dublin for some good positive energy. I invited a couple of savvy travelers from my group to go out that night and we had a lovely evening at a pub called George. Discussing our experience in Belfast, we all agreed and hope that someday the people in the north of Ireland can heal their wounds and replace their murals with more peaceful and progressive paintings. ➔

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