



At last, some reasons for optimism for ExpressJet Flight Attendants

By Sara Gonzales
General Chair, IAM DL 142

Negotiations for IAM Express-Jet Flight Attendants have been complex and tumultuous, to say the least, but we might be seeing signs of progress on the horizon.

The 2010 merger between Express-Jet and Atlantic Southeast Airlines and our union’s subsequent representational election win allowed us to begin nego-

tiations for a joint collective bargaining agreement for both pre-merger Flight Attendant groups. These negotiations began in October 2012.

It is an extremely daunting undertaking to combine two mature agreements under profitable conditions, but in this case the company was in abysmal financial shape, which resulted in these negotiations stretching out over several years.

Much of the delay was caused by the company’s decision to file for mediation with the National Mediation Board

(NMB). After mediation was filed in accordance with the Railway Labor Act, we were at the mercy of the scheduling and budget needs of the NMB.

On two occasions our union addressed this issue by requesting that the NMB issue a proffer of arbitration, the first step in being released. Our requests went unanswered, so we had no choice but to continue to attempt negotiations at the pace the NMB set.

We spent years fighting the company to maintain and improve our industry-leading status as regional Flight Attendants while bringing the two groups to parity.

This past June, we were able to achieve a tentative agreement that the committee thought met our goals.

As with any agreement that merges two groups, some members of the group benefited more than others, but all were brought to parity by the end of the three-year agreement. In addition, we were able to lower medical costs for a large group and offer more options for medical insurance to the entire group.

Significant increases in vacation pay were also achieved and various quality-of-life improvements were made as well.

The tentative agreement was put out

to ratification in July and subsequently voted down by 62 percent. Among the issues cited in a survey was a lack of time to thoroughly examine the agreement and the significant changes that were made due to the fact that it was a joint agreement.

Since then, the company has furloughed hundreds of flight attendants due to overstaffing, which makes negotiations even more difficult. This overstaffing stems from the extreme pilot shortage being experienced in the regional industry and the ending of the capacity purchase agreement with Delta.

The pilot shortage is preventing growth for ExpressJet, which is not able to fly more block hours and more ERJ 145s for the United operation, which would provide the work necessary to mitigate furloughs for Flight Attendants. However, the company has begun flying 20 CRJ 200s for United out of ORD.

To address the short staffing of pilots and provide growth for the company, ExpressJet reached a tentative agreement with the pilots in September. This agreement provided significant wage increases through a bonus program in order to



Secretary-Treasurer's Report

By Ian Scott-Anderman

America's workers are fighting back

As the Labor Movement confronts the consequences of Brett Kavanaugh's elevation to the Supreme Court, several recent events remind us that working Americans are capable of fighting back — and winning — against the onslaught of anti-union forces.

The first was a successful series of walkouts by teachers in West Virginia, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Arizona and Washington state which forced those states to address their neglect of public education.

Then, this summer, members of United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA), representing educators in the second largest school district in the United States, demonstrated remarkable strength when they voted to authorize a possible strike for decent wages, smaller class sizes and other improvements.

More than 80 percent of the Los Angeles Unified School District's 32,000 union members made their voices heard, and among those who voted, 98 percent supported UTLA's efforts to do whatever is necessary to win a fair contract.

On the national level, American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten reported her union's membership has reached its highest total ever at 1,755,000 members.

Speaking at the AFT's convention in California, Weingarten noted teachers are responding to the

United States Supreme Court's anti-union *Janus v. AFSCME* ruling by reaffirming their union solidarity.

Victory in Missouri

Still more developments show us Americans are rebelling against the anti-union campaign behind "right to work" (for less) laws across the nation.

For example, in August, the people of Missouri voted to overturn such a law, which was passed last year by the state legislature and signed by then-Gov. Eric Greitens. The law was blocked from going into effect after labor unions gathered 300,000 signatures to force the matter to come before the voters.

The issue was decided convincingly when Missouri's voters voted 67 percent to 33 percent to defeat the "right to work" (for less) proposal.

Even voters who didn't belong to a union were able to see through the phony arguments in favor of "right to work" (for less) and recognized its real objective, which is to divide, weaken and harm all working people.

The voters in Missouri considered the evidence and decided their state needs jobs with good wages, benefits and working conditions — in other words, jobs covered by contracts negotiated by strong unions.

More signs of union activism

There are still more stories to tell of working

Americans fighting back with strikes and strike-authorization votes.

For example, hotel strikes in Chicago and Boston are evidence of increasing levels of resolution and solidarity in those cities.

In yet another development, 30,000 steelworkers at Arcelor Mittal and U.S. Steel passed strike authorization votes to press their employers to come to terms.

Winds of change

All of these actions and more are receiving sympathy and support from the public at levels we haven't seen in many years.

A Gallup Poll released just before Labor Day showed support for unions at 62 percent, the highest level in 15 years, with majority backing from every demographic group.

Support is especially high among millennials, who are concerned about stagnant wages and an economic system which appears to be stacked against them.

All of these developments and more help underscore how the winds of positive change are blowing strong in America.

With your united support, we can harness these winds with more worker victories for workers, in the ballot booths and at the bargaining tables.



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Editor-in-Chief
Dave Supplee

Headquarters
400 N. E. 32nd St.
Kansas City, MO 64116

(816) 452-6646
Fax: (816) 455-4793
www.iamdl142.org



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EAP Report

By Paul Shultz, EAP Chair

Alcohol, drugs and your job

We need to talk.

The United States Congress passed the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act in October of 1991. This law and the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 require the properties served by District 142 to have drug and alcohol policies. Drug testing started in 1991 and alcohol testing started in 1994.

Because our District represents several airlines and other companies, we are going to talk about these policies in very general terms. I strongly advise you to read your employer's policies in their entirety and periodically revisit them, as they do get updated from time to time.

If you have questions, contact me (my contact info is at the end of this article) and we can talk about it.

While company policies may vary, for U.S. Department of Transportation-designated "safety sensitive" employees the policy is specific.

FAA safety-sensitive employees include any person "who performs, either directly or by contract, a

safety-sensitive function for an employer." Safety-sensitive employees include Flight Crewmembers, Flight Attendants, Flight Instructors, Aircraft Dispatchers, Aircraft Maintenance or Preventive Maintenance Employees, Ground Security Coordinators, Aviation Screeners, Air Traffic Controllers and Operations Control Specialists.

Our members who perform safety-sensitive duties are subject to pre-employment, reasonable suspicion, random and post-accident testing. Most if not all of the companies we represent also have company policies for post-accident and reasonable-suspicion testing for all employees.

The DOT has a handbook on its website titled "What Employees Need to Know About DOT Drug & Alcohol Testing." I highly recommend that you read it, whether you are safety-sensitive or not, as most employers have modeled their drug and alcohol programs on the DOT's.

Now that we know we are being tested, let's talk about what they are testing for.

As I said earlier, we are going to

talk in general terms as we have SS and non-SS members at many companies. Read and know your companies' policies and any DOT, FAA, FMCSA policies as they pertain to you.

Alcohol

We all know we cannot come to work intoxicated. Where we are having issues is with our members not knowing they will test positive for alcohol.

We all have seen the BAC (blood alcohol content) charts showing impairment after certain numbers of drinks, so what is a drink?

As taken from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, a standard drink is:

- 12 fl. oz. of regular beer, about 5% alcohol
- 8-9 fl. oz. of malt liquor, about 7% alcohol
- 5 fl. oz. of table wine, about 12% alcohol
- 1.5 fl. oz. shot of distilled spirits (gin, rum, tequila, vodka, whiskey, etc.), about 40% alcohol

Some craft beers may contain con-
Please see page 4



President's Report

By Dave Supplee

Be thankful you are part of our union!

During the holiday season, we typically are called to reflect on the things that make us grateful.

Granted, the political and social environments of our time may seem to be more conducive to complaining than expressing thanks, but we can be grateful for being part of a great union, the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, and specifically IAM District Lodge 142.

As I described in my previous column, our union is negotiating contracts for 90% of our members. This is an enormous task that affects the jobs and economic security of approximately 17,000 families. And negotiations at some of our carriers — American, British Airways and ExpressJet immediately come to mind — have been especially challenging and contentious, as articles in this issue of the *Observer* attest.

The good news is District Lodge 142 is up to the task. Our negotiating teams, including committee members employed at all of our affiliated companies, are knowledgeable about the issues and experienced in the ways of collective bargaining. What's more, they are backed by a dedicated and hard-working union membership that knows

the meaning of solidarity.

This solidarity has won us many victories in the past. As a result, our members can be thankful for being covered by a union-negotiated labor agreement with language that guarantees good wages and benefits, as well as hourly guarantees, seniority rights and a grievance procedure that protects them from abusive and arbitrary treatment by management.

Especially in this era of the “gig economy” and the ongoing corporate domination of Congress, many workers in our country are forced to endure life as “at will” employees who serve at the whim and pleasure of their bosses. They can be fired for no valid reason. Fortunately, the members of IAM District Lodge 142 enjoy protections that assure a fair hearing and the respect they deserve.

On top of that, we can appreciate being part of a big union family that cares for its members' safety and welfare in all aspects of life.

When you are called upon at your holiday meals to recount your blessings, don't forget to say you are thankful to be part of a union.

I certainly am.

We can appreciate being part of a big union family that cares for its members' safety and welfare in all aspects of life.

Tensions run high in British Airways negotiations

By Jim Samuel

General Chair, IAM DL 142

There are certain words and phrases every airline employee dreads hearing: fleet reductions, reductions-in-force, layoffs, manpower realignments, furloughs, buy-outs, station closings.

What could be worse?

For our sisters and brothers at British Airways (BA), who have been through all the above and more, it is now hearing from their company over the last year that “we no longer want you.”

In what has been a booming economy (to a large degree) for the airline industry worldwide, these are not words you would expect to be hearing, and certainly not from an airline that made over \$3 billion in profit last year and has one city pair-in to JFK that generates almost a billion dollars in revenue alone.

In July of 2017, District Lodge 142 was notified by BA management it wanted to open negotiations early to address an issue with a sense of urgency.

Grand Lodge Representative Mike Manzo and I met with company representatives in New York City and received a single-page proposal which consisted of the following: “The complete contracting out of all remaining U.S.-based employees in the Customer Service classifications.”

The justification offered was that the costs associated with the CS group were \$10 million over “market” and that this was unsustainable for the company's business model.

For brevity's sake, that is one-third of 1 percent of BA's 2017 profit.

Unsustainable? It makes one wonder how they say these things with a straight face, and even more so, how they sleep at night.

After meeting with BA management for less than one full day, we pretty much explained (and justifiably so) why they were full of it.

They had no replies other than that was their

proposal, and to get an “enhanced” severance package to go along with it the union would have to put it before the membership within a very short time frame.

It is unimaginable how someone in a management position could ever think that any severance package would make up for losing one's job in a group where the average age is 55 and the average seniority is 20 years.

For a younger person this may be somewhat easier to rebound from. For someone age 55 with 10 or so years left to retirement, re-entering the job

market (albeit a good one) is not a welcome proposition. Ever.

Shorty after the single-day meeting in NYC, and without receiving any proposal from the union, the company filed for mediation with the National Mediation Board, thinking that it would help its interests along.

Mediator Gerry McGuckin was assigned and began meetings in December 2017. As of the date of writing this article, the union and company have met a total of 26 days.

Mediation under the Railway Labor Act has often been referred to as an interminable process. There have been instances of carriers and unions being in mediation with the NMB for well over 10 years. The process itself is intended to drive parties to an agreement. This has been explicitly commu-

nicated to members of BA management by representatives from the NMB.

With that said, what does it mean for our members at BA?

District Lodge 142 has not and will not entertain any proposal whose intent is to sub-contract any existing job under the BA Customer Services collective bargaining agreement. What we have engaged in are ways to allow people to exit on their terms and when they are ready to do so.

We will stay engaged in the process until we achieve the goals we have set in these negotiations,



which is simply to look out for the interest of all of our members.

Tensions have run high in the past year and the company has only exacerbated those tensions with its insulting communications as though it is looking out for our members' best interests.

As I ask in all of my bulletins to the membership, please take the time to sign up to receive communications such as the BA negotiations bulletin and others.

Go to www.iamdl142.org and click on the red “Join Our Email List” button in the top left-hand corner.

If you have any questions, please give me a call at (859) 653-4037 or email me at jsamuel@iamdl142.org.

Your continued solidarity is essential in seeing this through to a successful conclusion!



Higher learning

Member Vinny Martinez stands proudly with his daughter Bianca, who was awarded a scholarship from DL 142. She attends the College of Natural Sciences at the University of Texas in Austin. Vinny works as a Quality Assurance Auditor at American Airlines in DFW.



Have you moved?

Keep DL 142 up to date with your current contact information!

www.IAMDL142.org/contact-us/

DL 142 applauds legislation to protect Flight Attendants, improve industry

DL 142 cheered the House of Representatives vote for the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 (H.R. 4) earlier this year because it includes language for equal minimum rest with the flight deck, protections against eroding U.S. aviation jobs and other good provisions.

The legislation is under review in the Senate. Representatives from DL 142 and other unions recently urged U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine (D-Va.) to help pass the legislation at a meeting in August (see story on page 5).

AFA International President Sara Nelson talked about the legislation from the perspective of Flight Attendants.

“Congressional fatigue studies have concluded Flight Attendants don’t get enough rest in our safety sensitive work,” she said. “AFA made 10 hours minimum rest free from duty — equal with the flight deck — our top safety priority in this bill. This is about safety, health and equality,”

The bill includes these safety priorities:

- 10 hours minimum rest and an FRMP for

- Flight Attendants
- Protecting U.S. aviation jobs by preventing approval of any new applications by airlines operating with a flags-of-convenience model
 - Ban of voice calls on planes
 - Emotional support and service animal standards
 - Cabin cyber security vulnerabilities
 - Secondary cockpit barriers
 - Safe transport of lithium batteries
 - Study on cabin evacuation certification
 - Requiring privacy for nursing in the airport
 - Evaluation and update of emergency medical kit contents
 - Required notification of insecticide use
 - Promoting women in aviation
 - Banning electronic cigarette smoking on planes
 - Training on sexual harassment and assault
 - Protect Customer Service Agents from assaults

Optimism for ExpressJet Flight Attendants

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thwart pilot attrition and position the company to attract new-hire pilots.

United committed to adding 175s into the ExpressJet fleet in 2019 if the pilots’ agreement passed, which it did by a high margin.

ExpressJet already has plans to end the American capacity purchase agreement in 2019 and has fully committed to strengthening its relationship with United.

Having a strong relationship with a single carrier has shown to be beneficial for work groups in the regional industry, and that’s especially true when you

have a relationship with a successful company such as United Airlines.

While we are still struggling with more furloughs, we are now looking forward to the future. Now that the pilots have an attractive agreement, we are hopeful that ExpressJet will get the pilot staffing numbers up in order to promote growth with United so our Flight Attendants can benefit.

We are looking to 2019 and taking delivery of new aircraft for the first time in many years to provide some much-needed relief and expansion for our members.

More: Alcohol, drugs and your job

Continued from page 2

siderably more alcohol by volume.

For the average person it takes about one hour per drink for it to leave the body.

Keep in mind that your body eliminates alcohol through perspiration. This means that you may be fine at the beginning of your shift, but you might smell of alcohol by the end of shift if you still have alcohol in your system.

Illegal drugs

The DOT has a five-panel drug test regimen:

- Marijuana (THC)
- Cocaine
- Amphetamines
- Opioids
- Phencyclidine (PCP)

I am not going to spend a lot of time talking about illegal drugs. If you are using illegal drugs, talk to your EAP ASAP! You are putting your job, your health and the safety of your union sisters and brothers in jeopardy.

We do need to specifically discuss marijuana, as there seems to be a lot of confusion arising from different state laws.

The following paragraph is taken directly from the DOT website:

“It is important to note that marijuana remains a drug listed in Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act. It remains unacceptable for any safety-sensitive employee subject to drug testing under the Department of Transportation’s drug testing regulations to use marijuana.”

The bottom line is, safety-sensitive or not, marijuana use is a violation of company and DOT policies at every company our District 142 members work for.

Prescription drugs

In January of 2018, the DOT renamed “opiates” as “opioids” to include testing for the semi-synthetic opioids Hydrocodone, Hydromorphone, Oxycodone and Oxymorphone. Brand names include OxyContin, Percodan, Percocet, Vicodin, Lortab, Norco, Dilaudid, Exalgo and others.

Some guidelines for prescription drug use:

Only use prescriptions that are prescribed to you and are current (pay attention to expiration dates). Use them in the prescribed amount and frequency and for the conditions for which they were prescribed. Follow all warnings and precautions.

In conclusion...

If you are coming to work impaired, please talk to the EAP. The path you are on is not sustainable and will not end well.

If you think there is a possibility that you would test positive for drugs or alcohol, please talk to the EAP.

If you have any questions about the DOT’s and/or your company’s policies, or if you need help with this or any other life issue you or your family may be experiencing, contact me at (704) 907-3563 (cell) or pm.shultz@att.net.

Also, if you are interested in becoming an EAP Coordinator, please contact me.



Sen. Kaine, right, stands with DL 142 General Chair Sean Ryan.



Sen. Kaine, front row, second from left, joins labor representatives at parley.

Machinists share labor issues with Sen. Tim Kaine

Representatives from District Lodge 142 and other unions met with U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine (D-Va.) in August to discuss issues facing Machinists and the entire Labor Movement.

The meeting at the headquarters of Iron Workers Local 79 in Norfolk, Va., included 25 labor represen-

tatives from 19 unions. It covered a wide range of topics, including opposition to Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh based on his anti-worker, anti-labor views and the need for international trade agreements that strengthen labor rules and enforcement.

Specific to the needs of Machinists, DL 142 Gen-

eral Chair Sean Ryan urged the senator to support the FAA bill addressing violence against Customer Service Agents as well as the 10-hour rest rule for Flight Attendants (see story on page 4).

Ryan also emphasized the need for legislation to level the playing field for U.S. union workers competing against foreign repair stations.

Negotiations at American Airlines grind to a halt

By Sean Ryan

General Chair, IAM DL 142

Negotiations at American Airlines have come to a standstill.

On Sept. 12, the company filed "Section 6" notices with the National Mediation Board (NMB) under the Railway Labor Act. All TWU-IAM Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) became amendable on that date. The Section 6 notices officially open negotiations after the amendable date.

The company also requested that mediators be assigned to these negotiations. Subsequently, the NMB assigned two mediators. However, due to ongoing federal budget constraints, the NMB is not operating and its mediators are not available to meet or provide any meaningful assistance until 2019!

The TWU-IAM Association has demanded TWU-IAM meet with our negotiators, with or without mediators, anytime and anywhere in order to conclude bargaining on the major issues that remain. The company has refused our demands, hiding behind a dysfunctional federal government.

TWU-IAM says it wants to get these negotiations done, but its actions do not reconcile with what it says.

The Association has been in negotiations with American for almost three years. Progress has been made in non-economic areas of the CBAs. What remains are the far more contentious large economic items, including scope, health insurance, retirement, wages and profit-sharing.

Scope

"Scope" relates to the article in the CBA that guarantees work that belongs to the membership. Without strong scope language, the company could (and would) vendor out the members' work and their jobs along with it.

The company's proposal on scope would eliminate more than 5,000 jobs across all Association CBAs! That means jobs would be lost in Aircraft Heavy Maintenance, Line Maintenance, Maintenance Control, Maintenance Training Specialists and Stores.

This is completely unacceptable to our negotiators in a time of record profits at American Airlines.

Health insurance

The company has taken the position that all Association members must take the Legacy American Airlines (LAA) health insurance plans. Those plans offer significantly less care and value than the Legacy US Airways (LUS) plans.

If an LUS member with family coverage in the LUS 80/20 plan were to migrate to the comparable LAA Value plan, it would cost that family more than \$6,500 per year with no annual cost increase limits. That equates to a \$3.16 per hour pay cut for that same family!

For the company to provide access for all 30,000 Association members, it would only increase American's costs by one-tenth of one percent (0.1%), which is a miniscule amount compared to the enormous profits (\$2.4 billion in 2017) the company is currently enjoying, thanks in large part to the work of our members.

Retirement

The company proposal is to eliminate the IAM Defined-Benefit Pension Plan and replace it with a 401(k) plan. It claims this is an industry-leading proposal. Needless to say, it is not!

The company proposes a 5% 401(k) contribution with up to an additional 4% — if you put in 4% of your own wages. The American Airlines Pilots receive a 16% 401(k) contribution with no match and the Flight Attendants receive 9.9% contribution with no match. How can that be industry-leading when two work groups at the same company would get more than what they are offering our members?

In addition, what they don't tell you is that everyone with fewer than five years with the company and is not vested in the IAM Pension Plan would lose all contributions to date in the IAM plan and get nothing for those years of service!

Wages

American Airlines CEO Doug Parker has stated publicly on many occasions that he wants American employees to receive the highest compensation in the airline industry. The company's proposal attempts to entice our members with industry-leading rates of pay that will not stay industry-leading once a Joint Collective Bargaining Agreement (JCBA) is ratified. American's industry competitors will continue to receive future wage increases as we fall behind the industry.

In addition, the company wants us to accept concessionary proposals in scope, health care and retirement while it continues to make record profits!

Not only no way, but hell no!

Profit sharing

The company's profit-sharing plan is not currently required by the CBA. With Parker stating he wants his employees to be paid the "highest compensation in the industry," profit sharing is a significant part of compensation.

The current American plan is much less than industry-comparable competitors. In order to level the playing field for profit sharing, it must be in the CBA.

As our members are aware, American did not have a profit-sharing plan when it emerged from bankruptcy in 2012. The company was shamed into creating one by its employees as we watched the rest of the industry share profits with those who created them.

Huge sacrifices made by our members through multiple bankruptcies enabled American Airlines to survive to become the biggest airline in the world making the most money.

Do not believe the spin and half-truths the company spews out in town hall meetings, in its bogus road show and on Jetnet. Our members are certainly too intelligent to fall for that charade.

If you work for American Airlines, tell a member of management every day you just want your fare share. You certainly earned it!



Participants learn about latest developments in air transport safety issues at the Winpisinger Center.



Ground Safety Report

By Brian Szolodko

Smooth sailing at annual Safety Training Conference

A highlight of every year is the Ground Safety Training Conference hosted by the Joint Air Transport Safety Committee at “W3,” the IAM’s William W. Winpisinger Center at Placid Harbor in Maryland.

Safety and health representatives from all three of the IAM’s airline districts — 140, 141 and 142 — came together along with guests from the Transport Workers Union (TWU) and our respective airline managements for three days of safety and health training on Aug. 28, 29 and 30.

The theme for the 2018 conference was: “Safety: Learn It. Live It. Share It.”

This was a great conference for learning, networking and growing safety friendships. Many ideas were shared, problems were solved and new programs were initiated.

In addition, featured experts covered such subjects as:

- Situational Awareness
- Active Listening: Are You a Good Listener?
- Mental Aspects of Safety
- Joint Programs for Safety
- The OSHA VPP Journey
- A.N.S.I.

After studying how to work and communicate as a Joint Safety Committee, we put our knowledge to work as diverse teams were required to complete a team-building project, which was to build a sailboat and then try to sail it farther and faster than the other teams.

Each team had to do this while trading building materials with the other competing teams, the idea being that even when our goals and ideas differ, we can still work together.



The winning team shows off its sailboat.

This was not only a fun exercise, it also highlighted the “communication” component of our conference.

Everyone had a good time and the staff at Placid Harbor came to watch and take pictures.

The next time you visit the Harbor, take a look at one of the display cases, where the winning sailboat is on view.

Don’t miss out on the 2019 Ground Safety Training Conference! Our goal is to have at least one Ground Safety Representative from each local lodge.

Please be sure to register early, because at one point we had several members on the stand-by list. All registrations from your local lodge must be received by the District office no later than Aug. 1.



Group develops safety device prototype

By Ron Miller
District 142 Ground Safety Director

Brian Szolodko
District 142 Safety Representative

A safety issue has arisen involving our brothers and sisters in aircraft maintenance climbing ladders with tools and equipment to service wide-body aircraft engine oils at American Airlines.

A committee was formed with Ground Safety Committee leadership from the IAM, the TWU and American Airlines Corporate Safety. We met, studied the issue and identified what was needed to solve the problem.

What we came up with was a small motorized oiler with an elevated railed platform.

Through consultations with Ground Support Equipment experts and several manufacturers, our committee developed two prototypes that we subsequently checked out at the GSE Expo in Las Vegas in early October. We then recommended some small changes and the manufacturers are implementing them.

Safety notes at Hawaiian Airlines

GSIP: The Ground Safety Improvement Program (GSIP) has released a quarterly newsletter outlining areas of concern as identified through employee reports.

Employee briefings are being conducted to remind everyone about safe driving practices and adherence to company policies and procedures. While compliance with seat belt policy is improving, incidents of non-compliance in use of guide persons when operating equipment to service aircraft seem to be increasing.

An Airport Operations Audit is being conducted and its findings will be shared with the Event Review Committee.

Tow Bar Shear Pin damage: We are hearing more reports of damage to tow bar shear pins during aircraft pushbacks. One possible cause may be excessive strain on tow bars while starting engines during pushback instead of at the conclusion of a push. Suggestions are being proposed to Hawaiian’s Policies and Procedures Department for review and possible implementation. — **Brian Simonson**



Safety Training Conference participants make sailboats in a team-building exercise.

Flight Safety Report

By John Hall, Flight Safety Director



Behind ‘human factors’ are challenging environments

ASAP reports at American Airlines are up from last year and some positive changes have been made.

Still, these ASAP reports indicate that “human factors” continue to plague us.

Why?
A good friend once told me that “you must ask the question ‘why’ five times to get to the root cause of any issue.” This applies to human factors.

It’s not enough to simply say an error was caused by human factors and move on. To be a truly successful program, we have to ask what led that person to commit the reported error.

Dr. Bill Johnson, the FAA’s chief scientific adviser for human factors, developed the PEAR model more than 20 years ago to accompany human-factor training for FAA safety inspectors. PEAR stands for People – Environment – Actions – Resources.

In this column I will address the environmental aspects while working on and around our aircraft.

“Environment” is the context in which aircraft and aviation system resources operate. It includes physical, organizational, economic, regulatory, political and social variables that may affect the worker/operator. Environment also includes work environments like cockpits, cabin areas, ramp areas and maintenance facilities.

Following are some examples gleaned from some of our past ASAP reports that I was able to partially

attribute to workplace confinement and our physical environment.

Workplace confinement

We’ve had reports from around the system over the years of mechanics pulling wrong circuit breakers behind pilots’ seats. These happen at departure time when we are applying a MEL. The MEL may call out to pull circuit breaker Q21. In order to save

We are hurting ourselves by doing dumb things, but that’s why we call them human factors.

time having the captain get out of his or her seat, we’ll just reach in and inadvertently pull circuit breaker R21 and send everyone on their way.

Years ago we had a few reports about leaving rags or tools inside the fuel tanks. Most mechanics have, at one point or another in our careers, gone “tank diving.” It’s dark and with extremely tight confines. I don’t care how well it’s been drained and ventilated, there is still an ever-present aroma of fuel.

When we wear a haz-mat suit, we end up sweating profusely within 10 minutes. So by the time we are

done with the task, we are dehydrated with a massive headache and may inadvertently leave something behind while squirming backward out of the fuel tank.

Recognizing the dangers, we put new processes in place, such as inventorying the number of rags, tools and anything else that is taken in and out of a tank.

Physical environment

We had a misplaced aircraft document on an overcrowded desk. The work was accomplished but not entered into the logbook. It was found the next day and the proper entries were subsequently entered.

We had a report from a Mechanic who had misplaced TR lockout pins in his messy and disorganized toolbox at the end of his shift. He later found them, but it resulted in a paperwork error.

Recognizing some of these “trip hazards” in our workplaces is crucial. When you do, you’ll become more aware of your surroundings and more vigilant when performing tasks. If the problem is your work environment itself, change it. A lot of our errors can be fixed by ourselves, now that we are aware of them.

Keep it simple: organization and housekeeping.

We are hurting ourselves by doing dumb things, but that’s why we call them human factors. If it can be screwed up, we’ll figure out a way to straighten it out.

Carole Creamer, 1936-2018

IAM District Lodge 142 notes with sadness the passing of Carol G. Creamer on Oct. 28.

During her long career, she served as president of Local Lodge 2656 in New York City and was on the first negotiating committee for British Airways.

More about Carole Creamer will appear in the next issue of the *Observer*.



Carole Creamer



Genesis Mani Eugenio, right, holds a certificate proclaiming she is the winner of an IAM DL 142 scholarship. Genesis attends Penn State University. With her is her mother, Ginger Eugenio, a DL 142 member at British Airways.



Freiberger, center, is honored by former DL 142 President Tom Higginbotham and current President Dave Supplee.



William “Bill” Freiberger

William L. ‘Bill’ Freiberger, 1947–2018

William L. “Bill” Freiberger, a retired General Chair of the IAM, died at his home in Washington on Oct. 24. He was 71.

A 1965 graduate of Trinity High School, Freiberger later attended the of Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics and was a veteran of the United States Air Force.

He worked as an Aircraft Technician for American Airlines before becoming a General Chair of IAM District Lodge 141.

Bill Freiberger was an avid Steelers football fan and enjoyed golfing. He is survived by Shirley Gray, his wife of 49 years.

Editor’s note: A feature story on Bill Freiberger will appear in the next issue of the *Observer*.



Machinists reach out to help at-risk children on Labor Day

Article courtesy of District Lodge 141

Nestled about five minutes from Charlotte Douglas International Airport lies Renaissance West STEAM Academy (“Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math”). An unlikely addition to the low-income section of Charlotte where it’s located, Renaissance West Academy seeks to reach some of the most at-risk students in the area – right in the neighborhoods they call home.

For many of the K-6 students, the meals they get at school are the only meals they get all day.

Every student at Renaissance West STEAM Academy qualifies for the school’s free lunch program. Plastic food bins donated by IAM Victory Lodge 1725 in Charlotte are filled throughout the week with donations for families who take them home over the weekend.

Despite the many challenges they face, however, the students at Renaissance Academy are thriving. Much of this success is due to the toughness and resilience of the kids, but the whole community has joined to support the school’s goals. Faith-based networks, city agencies and community groups all play a role, with union activists leading the way.

Upping the ante

When students at Renaissance West STEAM Academy head to class, they carry brand-new book bags, each one emblazoned with the IAM emblem and stuffed with school supplies. The bright-red drawstring bags and supplies were gifted to the kids thanks to an ambitious donation drive spearheaded by community activist and Charlotte’s Victory Lodge 1725 Recording Secretary Helena Thornton.

A long-time supporter of the students at Renais-

sance West, Helena knew first-hand how great the need for school supplies was.

She first got involved at Renaissance West when the president of Victory Lodge 1725 Mike Jones encouraged her and others to volunteer. The young students nicknamed her “Miss Lady.”

Helena teamed up with Renae Miller, chair of the Women’s and Human Rights Committee at Victory Lodge 1725. The two of them came up with a plan to make sure that the students would start off the school year well prepared, with the confidence and dignity that comes with having everything they need for class.

But which students would get the bags and supplies? It didn’t seem fair to set up some kids with new bags and leave others out, since every student at Renaissance West faces hardships.

For Helena, the answer was clear: Everyone would get a bag. And while it didn’t seem possible for her small local lodge to buy the more than 500 book bags they would need, she upped the ante and also planned to stuff them with enough supplies to get each student outfitted for the classroom.

Helena has been employed at American Airlines for 12 years, and for nine of those years she has been a union activist. After becoming a shop steward, and later Women’s Committee chair, she became Local 1725’s recording secretary back in May 2015 and was elected to her first full term this year. She knows how to take on a project, even one as big as this one.

The first calls Helena and Renae made were to District 141. After that, things began falling into place. Donations from the District, combined with contributions from the Obie O’Brien Local Lodge 1776 in Philadelphia and even more donations from members, covered the cost of having the bags made.

Faith-based networks, city agencies and community groups all play a role, with union activists leading the way.

A huge help

Getting the school supplies, however, was proving to be tougher than expected. It was at that point that Helena got a phone call from IAM Transportation General Vice President Sito Pantoja.

“He was very thoughtful and he asked me what we needed, and he told me that he would help. And he sure did!”

A few days after his phone call, Helena got six heavy boxes full of supplies, many of them displaying the IAM emblem just as the bags were.

“We got pencils, rulers... more than 400 packs of index cards.”

Helena struggled to recall everything that the students reaped from that single donation. “It was a huge help. Without his donations, I’m not sure how we would have reached our goal.”

After finally collecting everything needed, Helena rounded up volunteers, friends and family to help pack the bags.

“We started bagging, bag after bag. We had entire families packing bags for three straight days. After the first day, we packed about 250 bags. We had 700 notebooks, plus pencils, crayons, wipes, napkins, hand sanitizers. We made sure that the little kids had the sanitizers. For the older kids we focused more on the notebooks, the pencils, the markers.”

“After I finished, I was exhausted. I had never seen so many pencils. We had 4,000 pencils!”

When it was all done, all 550 students at Renaissance West STEAM Academy had the supplies they needed to start the school year, all packed into a brand-new, bright red book bag proudly emblazoned with the IAM logo.

Not only that, but all of the school’s 27 teachers had book bags as well, stuffed with extra supplies for the kids.

It was then that the magnitude of the job became apparent.

“I didn’t realize what we had done until I saw kid after kid with the red bags. I was in tears,” Helena said.

Steward training at Local Lodge 1759



Members at Local Lodge 1759 in Washington, D.C., and Dulles, participated in Shop Steward training.

