

# Triple Nickel



**Editors**

Bryan Gaulle (BNA)  
Jason Sonnabaum (SAN)

**Design**

Jason Sonnabaum (SAN)

**Website**

[www.twu555.org](http://www.twu555.org)

**Email**

[twu555editor@gmail.com](mailto:twu555editor@gmail.com)

**LEB**

Greg Puriski (SAN)  
Cort Heywood (RNO)  
Jessica Hayes (MDW)  
Angela Kasse (IAD)  
Morial Hayes (BWI)  
Phil McNally (MCO)  
Randy Barnes (CLE)  
Tony Slavings (MCI)  
John Spencer (AUS)  
Tyler Cluff (PHX)  
Mike Roach (LAS)  
Abilio Villaverde (DEN)

**Cover: LUVsuit**

While the Company attempts to masquerade under the facade of the good ole' Southwest Airlines by posting SWAG points of dubious worth in everyone's accounts in addition to distracting members with a partial cash payment of profit sharing, they have filed a lawsuit against all of us.

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## TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION LOCAL 555

REPRESENTING THE RAMP, OPERATIONS, PROVISIONING, AND FREIGHT AGENTS OF SOUTHWEST AIRLINES  
TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA • AFL-CIO • AIR TRANSPORT DIVISION • TWU555.ORG  
ESTABLISHED IN 1996 • 2608 INWOOD RD. SUITE 150. DALLAS. TX 75235 • 1.800.595.7672

# BITING THE HAND THAT FEEDS

BY EDITOR Bryan Gaulle • BNA

**A**T WHAT POINT WILL THE COMPANY STOP their obviously hostile actions towards their own employees? I fail to understand how the company expects to maintain a respectable working relationship with their employees, when they are filing frivolous lawsuits against us. Understand that while these insolent lawsuits are directed at our Local, they are aimed at us all individually. These are our dues that are at risk with this petulant act, and the company's goal is to take our earned job duties away. Job duties that the company agreed to allow us to have when we signed our contract.

Earlier this year, Southwest held their annual "rallies" where they traveled to multiple stations and held extravagant parties designed to praise their employees. What they, the Company, failed to mention was that during all of these festivities, they were filing yet another lawsuit against their own employees. This time the target of their tantrum were our brothers and sisters over at AMFA, who are overworked, understaffed, and without contract. Hypocrisy and deceit ran rampant at these events, attempting to shroud the abstruse truth of how this company operates this day and age.

The obvious conclusion that one can ascertain from the actions that Southwest has taken, is that they honestly believe that they are above everything. We are all familiar with the idioms

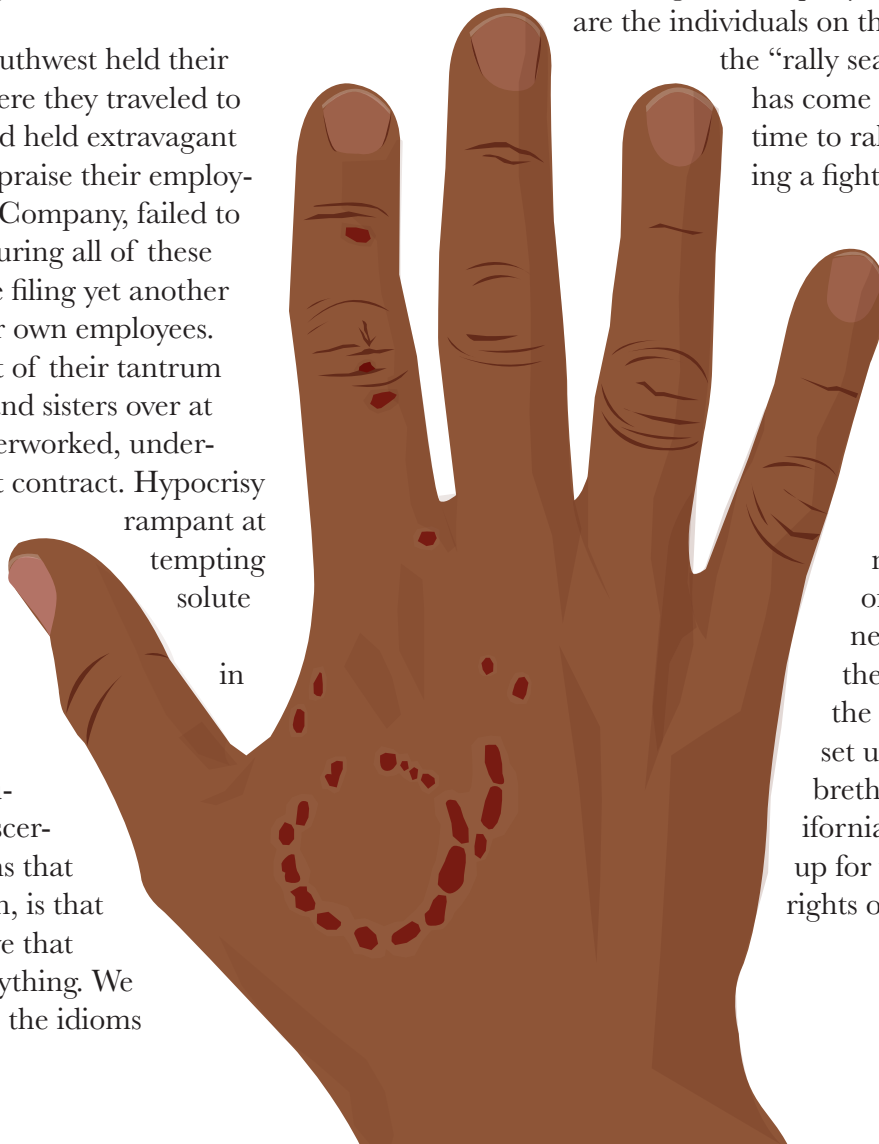
*"The obvious conclusion that one can ascertain from the actions that the Company has taken, is that they honestly believe that they are above everything."*

"don't bite the hand that feeds you" and "cutting off the nose to spite the face"; statements which will never be more true than they are today. The company has the financial backing to file these lawsuits because we generated billions in revenue for them. We were the ones who had to adapt to a changing environment

riddled with low-cost competitors, emerging markets, and uncharted territory. We became the hand that fed the company billions upon billions, and now all they want to do is divide us. The actions

that they have taken could forever "spite the face" of this once great company, because those affected are the individuals on the front lines. While

the "rally season" for Southwest has come and gone, the true time to rally is now. We are facing a fight against a growing machine that disregards common decency and is apathetic towards its own foundation. Rally with your brothers and sisters to stand up and fight these disgraceful acts. Stand next to the members of AMFA; they stood next to us by becoming the largest contributors to the GoFundMe account set up for our suspended brethren in Southern California and Orlando. Stand up for your rights, and the rights of all members.



# JUST LEAVE US ALONE!

BY EDITOR Jason Sonnabaum • SAN

**Y**OU MAY HAVE HEARD THAT WE HAD a union meeting last month in El Segundo. No, no one was suspended this time and we weren't in danger of violating capacity restrictions for the hall this time either. No "station emergencies" declared by the Company. No "real estate agents" with telephoto lenses outside the hall. While that will be the first of many regional Union meetings, this venue was probably the wrong place to start. The November 2015 meeting that resulted in suspensions, and even led to a termination or two was too fresh in many of the minds of those southern California members who had packed the very same hall over a year ago.

The meeting featured representatives of TWU International and our own LEB members discussing topics such as the Company's misapplication of CA Kin Care (Labor Code 233) and Return to Work abuses, the finances, future meetings, events, and information on the Company's lawsuit that was filed in fear of being forced to abide by the agreed upon plane cleaning language after the time frame arbitration ruling was decided in our favor. These meetings are the member's opportunity to gather information and to speak directly to our elected leaders. To ask questions, provide feedback and share ideas. To call them out when necessary. The lack of involvement isn't surprising, but it is disappointing. I've often felt that our Local and its issues are a microcosm of the issues and political landscape in our country. Many complain and are dissatisfied, but that dissatisfaction rarely makes its way past an individual's Facebook wall. We choose convenience over action. We choose comfort over involvement. I'm reminded of a still relevant film, *Network* (well worth watching if you haven't), where an irate Peter Finch, playing a network news broadcaster mocks his audience saying, *"Please, at least leave us alone in our living rooms. Let me have my*

*"Let me have my SWAG points, and my part time shift with 5 different start times, and my final letter for grazing a baggage cart and I won't say anything. Just leave us alone."*

*toaster and my TV, and my steel-belted radials and I won't say anything. Just leave us alone."* He responds to this perceived request with, *"Well, I'm not gonna leave you alone. I want you to get MAD! I don't want you to protest. I don't want you to riot. I don't want you to write to your congressman, because I wouldn't know what to tell you to write. I don't know what to do about the depression and the inflation and the Russians and the crime in the street. All I know is that first you've got to get mad. You've got to say: 'I'm a human being, god-dammit! My life has value!'"*

He then implores the audience to go to their windows and yell, *"I'M MAD AS HELL AND I'M NOT GOING TO TAKE THIS ANYMORE!"* Which they do. Our moment to yell from our comfortable windows from our climate controlled abodes is fast arriving. When the Company doesn't even respect the decisions of Arbitrators, what is left? Arbitration is where we are supposed to get the answers. A BINDING decision. The Company thinks it's ok to throw some more money at their problem. That

is not acceptable and we can not allow them to do that unchecked. Ask your District Representative, "What are we going to do about the Company's lawsuit?" Although,

the Company loves cutesy nonsense, so let us rename it. We'll call it a LUVsuit. That sounds fitting.

Ultimately, it is our choice whether we are to be taken advantage of and "Please, at least leave us alone in our poorly accommodated break rooms. Let me have my SWAG points, and my part time shift with 5 different start times, and my final letter of warning for grazing a baggage cart and I won't say anything. Just leave us alone." isn't going to cut it.

Unfortunately, there isn't an option to avoid getting in the ring with the Company. Once there, you have the option to drop your gloves, just understand what that decision means and try not to be too surprised when you get socked in the nose.

# ARE WE THE ENEMY?

BY PRESIDENT Greg Puriski

I GUESS HAVING HD CAMERAS EVERYWHERE to record our every move is not good enough. The Company has now hired an outside company to watch us where the cameras cannot. To some of you, this may sound eerily familiar to when the company hired The McKenzie Group during the “Redefining Excellence” era. I was informed of a new “Hospitality Flier Program” on February 28th, mere hours before it was going to be implemented. As I was being told of how great the program was going to be, I had to interrupt the pitch to ask if this new program could result in possible discipline to our members. The Company responded by stating that discipline could be a possibility, but that it was “unlikely”. I’m sure that you all know how to read in between those lines. The program is being described in a way that recognizes and rewards our members for all of the great things that we do. My personal opinion (and I hope that I’m wrong) is that more discipline letters will be issued than swag points. As a 21 year employee, I cannot figure out why the

*“This once great company that always ‘had your back’, is now stabbing you in the back!”*



environment has changed to “The Company” versus us. What I see is a company that will take advantage of every opportunity to remove benefits, just to help the bottom dollar. I see a company that is solely focused on putting us in fear of losing our jobs, every single day that we swipe in at the time clock. When is enough, enough? The company makes billions every quarter, off of the hard work and dedication of its employees, and then chooses to nickel and dime those same employees with underhanded policies.

This once great company that always “had your back”, is now stabbing you in the back! A prime example of this would be the new policy regarding State Leave laws. The Company has made a policy change that puts more emphasis on their own bottom line, as opposed to the well-being of their own employees (their greatest asset).

Currently, there are four states that have leave laws which affect our members (California, Maryland, Oregon, and Washington). In general, the state leave laws allow agents to use their accrued sick time to care

for ill family members, or yourself, without being disciplined or losing pay. Anyone who has children, or is a caregiver for a

family member, knows just how valuable such a law can be. Personally, I can attest to how important state leave laws are. Three years ago, Kin Care (California State Leave Law) allowed me to be by my mother’s side when she passed away. The benefit of that law is priceless, in that I was able to be there for her without having to worry about losing pay, or receiving a point on my attendance record. The company views the time I spent with my dying mother as a liability to their bottom line. The new strategy that they are using forces the employee to use their protective care as fast as possible, whether the employee likes it or not. This means that when the employee really needs to use it, it may not be available.

The California Kin Care law was originally enacted in 1999, and it allowed the employee to use half of their annual accrued sick time for Kin Care. The way this worked is that when the employee called in because they were caring for a family member, the employee would state that they were using a Kin Care day. Simple, right? In 2015, the law was changed to actually enhance the benefits of Kin Care, and give the employee more benefits by adding more family members to the list of covered individuals. Additionally, the changes added the employee to be able to use the benefit for themselves for



scheduled medical appointments. It is at this point when the company saw an opportunity to bastardize the new language and use it to their advantage. When California enhanced the law to include the employee, Southwest attorneys saw the opportunity to force the employee to use their Kin Care automatically whenever they called in sick. The company removed the employee's choice to use their protected care days, and forced them to use these protected days whenever the employee called in sick.

The following is a true life example of how the Company's policy screwed the employee. An employee was having personal surgery, and was going to miss 2 weeks of work because of the procedure. The employee was on an approved medical leave, complete with a doctor's note. The employee did not need to use their Kin Care because they used the doctor's note for an excused absence, which is their contractual right. The greedy multi-billion dollar company decided to misapply the law, which forced the employee to automatically use their Kin Care days even though the employee had never requested to.

The employee had a doctor's note for the excused absence, and did not need to use their Kin Care at that time. The Company seized the opportunity to wipe out the employee's Kin Care allotment for the rest of the year, by applying the Kin Care days to their medical leave without the employee's consent. Two weeks later the employee's child caught the flu, and the employee did not have any Kin Care time left to care for their sick child. The mother had to sacrifice 2 days of pay to care for her sick child, while the Company did not lose one single penny to what they refer to as "unproductive time". The true intent of the law provides a manner in which an employee can effectively care for their family without being penalized or disciplined, a right which was taken away by Southwest Airlines.

Here is another example of corporate greed in action. An employee comes back from an extended medical leave. After working for ten days, payday comes around and the employee gets a check for less than \$100.00. Southwest had deducted all of the money that the employee owed for insurance premiums that the company had paid while the employee was on leave. This left the employee with less than \$100.00 to feed his family and pay his rent until the next payday. In the past, the company would work out a payment plan with the employee, so that they did not have to carry the burden of the entire financial shortcoming all at once. This was a prime example of how well the company used to care for their own employees. The new Southwest (which generates more revenue now than they ever had in their entire history), has

***“The Company seized the opportunity to wipe out the employee's Kin Care allotment for the rest of the year, by applying the Kin Care days to their medical leave without the employee's consent.”***

decided that they now require that money back as soon as possible. Southwest would rather stab their employees in the back and pad their coffers with a few hundred dollars than maintain a healthy and under-

standing relationship with the same agents who made them their billions upon billions.

Brothers and Sisters, we must stand up and fight for our rights, or we will be devoured by the corporate greed that currently drives this once great company. I use the term "once great" because this company used to be one that took care of their agents and celebrated them as their largest strength. The Company used to actively ask their employees what improvements could be made and put the needs of their employees before anything else. That same company has now taken their largest asset, and turned it into a liability. They have taken their backbone that made them great, and turned it into a risk which affects their bottom line.

They have taken us all, and turned us into the enemy.

**Greg Puriski**  
**President**

# THE INFAMOUS AIRCRAFT CLEANING GRIEVANCE

BY VICE PRESIDENT Cort Heywood

## Part 1: The Status of the Aircraft Cleaning Grievance.

IN THE SECOND HALF OF 2015, while mired in an overly drawn out negotiations process with the Company, your local executive board filed a group grievance over the Company's contracting of third party vendors to perform cleaning on remote overnight aircraft. The parties were at a stand-still and had not met to discuss the contract negotiations in some time. Upon receiving the grievance, the Company's labor relations personnel and negotiations team were livid. Vice President of Labor Relations, and lead Company negotiator, Mike Ryan informed the Union that negotiations would not resume as long as that grievance was active. Not long after that conversation, TWU 555 President Greg Puriski had another conversation with Southwest Airlines CEO Gary Kelly who reiterated Mr. Ryan's position. The message to Puriski was clear. Pull the grievance, or permanently suspend negotiations. In order to force the Company back to the table, the Union withdrew the grievance "without prejudice". The term "without prejudice" is used to indicate that the withdrawal of the grievance is not based on the merit of the grievance and indicates that the party reserves the right to pursue the grievance at a later date.

Following a return to negotiations, Puriski was told that the Company no longer cared about the aircraft cleaning issue. Just to cover the Union's bases, the Union once again filed a group grievance over aircraft cleaning and saw it through to Arbitration in January of 2016. The grievance was to be heard first on a time frame debate before Arbitrator Elizabeth Neumeier. The parties presented their arguments, with the Company asserting that the Union had given up aircraft cleaning decades ago. The Union, for our part, argued that the covered work was a continuing violation and that the Union was free to grieve or not grieve each time that it occurred.

A few weeks after the presentation of the aircraft cleaning arbitration, on February 19th, 2016, the membership of 555 voted to ratify the contract. The Union waited until the execution and signing date

of March 16th, 2016, to see if the Company would return the work of cleaning remote overnight aircraft to the membership. When the work was not returned, the Union filed yet another group grievance over aircraft cleaning. The argument this time was that the Company was well aware, during negotiations, of the Union's intent to halt any past practice of allowing contractors to perform that work and to return the work to our membership. Because the Company was made aware of this position, and made no effort to negotiate the work away from the membership, they should have returned the work as requested.

The 2016 aircraft cleaning grievance was voted to go to arbitration (by the executive board) and was assigned to Arbitrator Daniel Jennings. The parties met before Arbitrator Jennings on July 7th, 2016, to present arguments on the 2016 case. Unfortunately, before any arguments could be made, before any witnesses could testify and before any evidence would be introduced, the Company began begging to postpone the hearing until after a decision was rendered from Arbitrator Neumeier on the 2015 grievance.

In August of 2016, Arbitrator Neumeier ruled in favor of the Company's argument (on the 2015 grievance) that the Union had missed the window for the grievance by a matter of decades. Southwest Airlines Counsel then submitted a motion to dismiss our 2016 grievance under a notion of Res Judicata (a legal term to convey that a case is identical in nature to a previous case for which there is already ruling authority) because of its similarities to the 2015 grievance. They further argued that even if that was not the case, the Union was out of



time frames because the grievance would have needed to be filed following the February ratification and not the March execution and signing. While he did not award their motion, Arbitrator Jennings agreed to hold a hearing over the timeliness and arbitrability of the 2016 grievance. I presented the case on your behalf, and was assisted by District Representatives John Spencer and Mike Roach. We argued that the new version of the CBA was not active until the date of “execution” (as featured on page 89 of your CBA under “execution page”) and that the Company claim of Res Judicata was without merit because the new grievance leaned on the implementation of a new contract. This concept is relatively simple. In order for Res Judicata to apply, the grievances must be nearly identical and feature arguments that could have been presented in the first version. Because the 2016 grievance leaned on the March 2016 implementation of the new contract, it could not be the same as a 2015 grievance that was filed before the new contract was in place.

In December of 2016, Arbitrator Jennings issued a decision stating that the 2016 grievance could not be dismissed via Res Judicata and that the grievance was timely filed. The Union immediately sent a request to Arbitrator Jennings for dates of availability to hear the merits of the grievance. Arbitrator Jennings provided the parties with a series of dates, but the Company chose not to respond and filed a lawsuit seeking to have the decision set aside. Their initial argument was that Mr. Jennings included a phrase which said that the grievance was sustained. Normally, such a statement is reserved for the merits of the case and the merits were not yet before Mr. Jennings. The Company has also alleged that Arbitrator Jennings is biased against them and that he exceeded his authority in deciding that the time frames for a new grievance started upon the execution of the new contract. The Union could not disagree with these assertions any more. While there was a one line statement of the grievance being sustained, the decision clearly references only time frames and arbitrability issues. Mr. Jennings showed no bias towards one side or the other and the question of when the time frames started for filing a 2016 grievance was specifically before him. Never

the less, a lawsuit had been filed. So, what now? Ed Cloutman, the attorney on retainer for TWU 555 filed the Union’s response to the Company complaint in Federal Court. A judge will now read over the complaint and the response and decide whether a trial is warranted. If it is, the Union will work with Mr. Cloutman to prevail over the Company complaint. If the Company motion is awarded, this will all be over. If the complaint is denied, it should be sent back to the grievance process to have the merits heard by Arbitrator Jennings. I have also added correspondence with the Company attorneys informing them that they erred in not proceeding to Arbitration and that we will be pushing for entire make whole remedy (back pay, bypasses, etc.) when we return to hear the merits.

Please continue to be patient. We will inform you all when there is a decision from the courts. In the meantime, we are discussing ideas for an internal campaign which will allow any of you that want to participate to make a statement of support for the 2016 grievance. We want the Company to understand in no uncertain terms that the cleaning is our work. This is the king of all covered work issues at the moment.

## Part II: Covered Work

Why should you care about covered work? I get that question a lot. Not long ago I was approached by a rep and his district rep about a question from a member. The question: Why should I care about covered work? I don’t

care who helps me. I just want help. It’s not like I see anything from the grievance. I get no extra pay. Why should I do anything? I will share with you my response; my vision of why covered work is important. Covered work grievances very rarely benefit the member filing the grievance in the immediate. Instead, they are a way that we can police management taking money out of our collective pockets. The person in the OT book isn’t there to know that the covered work is performed. They’re relying on their Union brothers and sisters to watch out for them. By filing that grievance you’re putting management on notice that we

***“The Company has also alleged that Arbitrator Jennings is biased against them.”***



look out for each other. You're increasing the odds of someone else catching it when you're not there and don't know that you're being bypassed. It is a microcosm of the Union essence. We work together, UNITED, to stand up for our collectively bargained rights. Other work groups on Company property have seen directly negotiated assaults on their work. AMFA is currently fighting attempts to cut 80% and have that rerouted into outsourcing and contracting services. Aircraft Appearance Techs also had certain job duties negotiated out on a year by year reduction. We've all seen the automation that has come to the ticket counter. How much longer do you think that the executives envision staffing large numbers of CSAs when the kiosks can absorb so much of that work?

There are plenty of job duties within our work groups. There are going to be jobs you enjoy and others you detest. If you don't protect them, they won't be around much longer and there won't be a need for as many of us. We have to protect the work that we have. That protection begins with grievances.

### **Part III: Covered Work Grievances**

When you write up a covered work grievance, please do your reps a favor. Give us details of what the violation was. We need the who, what, when, where, etc. We've all seen the Company respond generically to our grievances by saying, "respectfully denied." There's little more frustrating than to get a covered work grievance which simply states "covered work" and the Company responds "respectfully denied". When I look at a document like that I have no idea what to do with it. Your reps need documentation from you as to what transpired. We need this information so that we can fight the grievances on our level.

Example: "Ramp Supervisor Donald Trump violated the contract by performing covered work, outlined in articles 2 and 5, through the act of loading the front belt loaders unassisted for the entire upload."

When it comes to writing your requested remedy, I recommend the following:

"Payment of 4 hours of overtime to next available agent in the overtime book or, if none available, double time to the next agent who would have been required to work. Not limited to this. Make whole in every way."

For the articles involved, please cite "Articles 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 18 & 20. Not limited to these."

When you send the grievances to the Union, please also include any backup documents needed. If you require additional time off the line to investigate and document, management should accommodate your request. When your step one decision comes from a manager who says, "respectfully denied", press them on it. Why? Are you saying that it is ok for your

supervisors to replace an agent at the belt loader for an entire flight? Are you not allowed to make

decisions? Don't be disrespectful, but urge them to discuss the case. If it's cut and dry it shouldn't have to leave the station. And the more information you can get out of your managers and supervisors, the more information your district reps and officers will have to utilize if it has to leave the station.

**Cort Heywood**  
**Vice President**

# ORANGE IS THE NEW

BY VICE PRESIDENT Cort Heywood

AS YOU ARE ALL WELL AWARE, our uniforms are changing. The Company is opting to impose the biggest change to our uniforms in our Company history. When I started on the ramp, in 1999, I was given a handful of blue hand-me-down shorts (well before cargo pockets) and some Southwest Airlines Visa promotional t-shirts as my uniform for probation. Not long afterwards, I ordered a few speed suits, some blue shirts, some grey shirts, some blue pants and blue shorts. This was my introduction to Southwest Airlines' ramp uniform. My supervisors told me that no matter how the uniforms changed I would always be able to wear the old stuff, so long as it had been Company issued.

On the ramp in RNO we have a few senior agents, two I believe are 1st pagers, that were hired in the early 80's. Every once in a while one of them will break out a piece of their original Southwest ramp uniform, and while I probably scoffed the first

time I saw some of these, I grew to respect them over the years. Unfortunately, it wasn't until the loss of a dear friend, Barry Wagner, that I truly started to understand what those orange

uniforms meant to the old guard. Barry had transferred from RNO to HOU and subsequently went on a trip to SDF where he was tragically killed in an accident. Barry started a couple of years after I did, but he was a damn hard worker and quickly earned everyone's respect. For his funeral, a number of ramp agents from RNO & HOU went to Barry's family home in Northern California. During the service, Michael Davis, who was one of those senior agents I had referred to, stood up to speak about Barry. With a heavy heart, Mike spoke

about his history with SWA. He spoke about the awful old uniforms and what they stood for to the people he came up with. He, and others he knew, would judge a new hire by whether they worked hard enough; whether they could have made it during their time coming up. Whether they could have "worn orange". Barry, Mike would declare, definitely could have worn orange.

And for present day? I'm sure there could be some sort of orange shirt in the new line up, but it's not the same. Our old guard, our Union brothers and sisters that started this thing, can't break out their old gear anymore. Any old uniforms are forbidden by the Company now. You must wear their new uniforms or be sent home and disciplined. This might seem like a small thing to many of you newer agents, but reach out to the most senior agents you work

***"And for present day? I'm sure there could be some sort of orange shirt in the new line up, but it's not the same."***

with. They wore those uniforms with a sense of pride in our Company history. For all the talk out of headquarters about continuing Herb's legacy, this action (of banning

old uniforms) tells me how much they really want to preserve things. They don't. As for your Union, we have filed a group grievance over the new Uniform policy and will keep you informed throughout the process. While the old shirts being banned may not be a contractual violation, you better believe they're going to get an earful about it at every opportunity. The Company may want to erase your past, but your Union doesn't.

# COMPANY TAKES BALL AND BAT AND GOES HOME...

BY DISTRICT 1 REPRESENTATIVE Morial Hayes

**P**LAYING FAIR?! That is something the company isn't doing! Sore losers! Bitter over an arbitration decision, so the Company decides to take our local to court! Unbelievable! Nonetheless, you have to assess your situation before



you act. I've had a number of termination cases throughout District 1 and it's because we have agents challenging these so called "Leaders". Don't argue or go back and forth with these folks in the lime green vests.

Management will always take their word over yours. There are no qualifications to become a supervisor [Kanye shrug]. The summer season is upon us and we must all ensure that we are hydrated.

Let's work smart and not hard because the company couldn't care less if you're injured or not! Planes will still take off whether you're here or not. Members in District 1 should know my favorite saying is "EVERYONE IS REPLACEABLE". The Company has continued to show us that your tenure means nothing. You can be a 20+ year employee with a spotless record and they'll still terminate you. So much for that heart! I can't stress safety enough, because we have agents getting injured trying to push planes on time when they should be working at a safe pace.

OUR RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM IS GARBAGE. So let's keep our focus on safety, because it's imperative that we all go home to our families. Our aim should be to unite all of our brothers and sisters in our local, but that's easier said than done.



I would like to thank all the reps in district 1 for their continued hard work, it doesn't go unnoticed. They are as follows: Shawn Breeden, Paul Simon, Haydar Hussin, Ahmad Syed, Tavon Morgan, April West, Lauren Clear, Michael Church, Ryan Sousa, Akkeem Moore, Larry Hughes, Emory Marshall, Mark Sterrett, Nijui Truesdale, Basheen Harris, Shandar Mariner, Mike Martinez, Terrence McCray, Pam Michaelopoulos, George Davis, Bill Kelley, Tony Larson, Chris Haynes, Chris Singleton, Tiffany Plummer and Brandon Jolley.

**PVD**

***"OUR RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM IS GARBAGE..."***

"Humor is laughing at what you haven't got when you ought to have it."- Langston Hughes



**MHT**

# STATUS REPORT

BY DISTRICT 3 REPRESENTATIVE Randy Barnes

OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS, we as a Local have encountered a great number of challenges. We have been confronted by issues ranging from the removal of one Financial Secretary-Treasurer and the election of another, to addressing concerns with the expenses of the Local and implementing an internal review. In addition to these concerns we have been actively fighting the actions of a company that appears to be *Hell Bent* on dismantling our Local and the collective voice of every member we represent. The unfortunate removal of the previous Financial Secretary-Treasurer compelled the Local to take a long and hard look at how business has been conducted over the years. This has offered a unique opportunity to identify areas prime for improvement and/or enhancement within our Local's structure. We have been able to conduct a detailed review of all financial policies and procedures and make the necessary changes that has enabled us to ensure the secure and prudent use of the assets and finances of the Local. The new Treasurer has been working diligently to upgrade and update the Office of Treasurer by offering fresh and innovative ideas designed to improve our financial position.

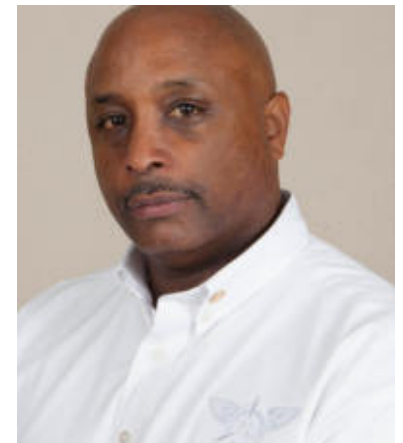
There has been concern expressed by some of our members that may be born from a certain level of misinformation and misunderstanding. Some have called for more information to be disseminated to the membership which

I believe is necessary to a degree, but we must be careful with how and what we publish. As elected representatives of this Local we are tasked with the responsibility of not only

safeguarding the Local's financial assets but its Intellectual assets as well. We must try to ensure that we are in the strongest position that will enable us to meet and defeat the onslaught of violations and attacks committed by the company. We cannot and should

not lay our weapons at our feet in plain view of the ones that oppose the Local's very existence. This only serves to embolden them and weaken us. Ultimately, there is a fundamental difference between concealing information and protecting the intellectual property of the Local. It is our responsibility as leaders of this Local to protect the assets of the Local in order to protect the membership.

On top of this, we have found time to fight the many attacks launched by the company in the form of discipline ranging from Final Letters of Warning issued for alleged seat belt violations to a rash of terminations for various things. The company appears to be cracking down on anything and everything including practices and procedures that have been historically utilized for several years that they now feel are unacceptable. Many if not all of these things seem to represent a shift being made by the company. This shift is one towards blatant disrespect and abusive behavior that succeeds in demonstrating the advancement of a philosophy and practice of devaluing all of us and



what we bring to this Airline. This is an obvious carry-over from recent contract negotiations and a dramatic change in how they plan to conduct business throughout the life of this Collective

***“The new Treasurer has been working diligently to upgrade and update the Office of Treasurer by offering fresh and innovative ideas designed to improve our financial position.”***

Bargaining Agreement. We must recognize what type of world we currently are working in. We no longer work for a company that “LUVs” us or simply values us. We work for a company that views us simply as a number that represents a line-item liability on



its vast balance sheet. This is in part our own fault, because for the last couple of years we have succeeded in displaying the lowest level of unity and solidarity ever by the members of this local. We have spent a great deal of time the past two years infighting and

***“What we have learned throughout the last negotiations is that we cannot wait until it’s time for negotiations to begin preparing.”***

back-biting that has served to only widen the division that we have. This is in addition to the obvious division caused by the contract ratification vote. All of this has created an enormous opportunity for the company to exploit in their favor. With that said, we must be wise and move forward from our differences in an effort to prepare for what lies in front of us. We have a choice, we can continue to categorize ourselves as Yes Voters or No Voters, Black, White, Mexican or Asian. Ramp, Ops, Provo or Cargo. Junior or Senior, even Hillary or Trump, or we can find a way to come together as 555 members in an effort to better our working conditions. Now I know that you all have heard this throughout contract negotiations, but this is more important now than ever. Like it or not the contract we have is it, it’s what we have to work with. We must make the best of it until we have the chance to change what needs to be changed. We must learn from the mistakes of our past to ensure that we do not repeat them in the future. What we have learned throughout the last negotiations is that we cannot wait until it’s time for negotiations to begin preparing. We must begin preparing now by formulating a strategic plan consisting of clearly defined steps that enable us to reach identified goals and objectives designed to give us the best opportunity to obtain an industry leading, job protecting, wage increasing contract. Together we can do it, now who’s with me?

UNITED...INVINCIBLE...

**Randy Barnes**

**District 3 Representative**

## MEMBERSHIP INVOLVEMENT/EVENTS

**A**S MOST OF YOU KNOW, we held the Local’s first membership meeting this year in El Segundo, CA near LAX. The LEB is planning on conducting several more meetings and events this year. We were in ATL on April 19th. These meetings are your chance to speak to most or all of your Union Officers face to face. The agenda is posted in advance on our website and there is plenty of time for members to ask questions or speak their minds. Additionally, there was a membership meeting held in DAL on May 12th to celebrate the Local’s 20th anniversary. Food and refreshments were provided. We are planning some other fun events such as a softball tournament in STL (spring/summer), PDX (fall), and a cookout in BWI. Your LEB is also trying very hard to visit every station, big or small. J-line meetings were requested at all stations to inform you about the Return To Work rules and your rights throughout the process. With only four more years until our next contract negotiations, we need to work on ways to build our solidarity. J-line meetings are important, and show the company that we are united. We will also be hosting a safety awareness day in honor of our brother Jared Dodson that was killed on the job at IAD. This will be on October 2nd, and more details will be released shortly. Other stations such as DEN have their own annual picnics which are funded using innovative methods, such as pancakes cooked by the District Representative and purchased by the members, with all proceeds going towards the picnic. This year’s DEN picnic is on July 8th and SFO will have one on July 25th. I would appreciate any ideas for future functions and events. Please reach out to me and I will share your ideas with the board.



In Solidarity,

**Angela Kasse • IAD**

**Recording Secretary**

# \* PERFECT ATTENDANCE

BY VETERANS COMMITTEE CHAIR

Charlana Bilodeau • MHT

**T**HANK YOU TO THOSE WHOM HAVE SERVED or are currently serving. I would like to point out the company's change in the Perfect Attendance/SWAG Program. The company has changed the policy, effective 2017, and are now following the federal USERRA law which gives military members the most gracious form of fringe benefit. If you read the policy, you will learn that military leave is now one of the types of leaves that is acceptable to qualify for perfect attendance.



This is a huge step in the right direction and now allows those members of our active military to participate in their weekend drills and their yearly two week drill without being punished for not having perfect attendance. We have been in talks with the company over military remains and have requested a designation code to be given for this purpose to help the lines of communication going forward. We have also requested that the company have an American Flag sticker (or other designation sticker) to place on the container of the military remains to assist us with loading procedures and proper handling.

We can then ensure that the military remains are not placed behind bags in the case of an escort or ceremony along their journey.

I would like to recognize the amazing job PHX has done with one of their human remain carts. Will Hansen had a vision to designate a cart specifically for military remains. Though Will Hansen no longer

works with us, his vision continues to grow through the hard work and dedication of Ron Hansen, Chris Hansen, and Joe Garner. The cart now is wrapped with many tributes to our fallen soldiers complete with chrome rims. Image 360\* donated the wraps. They are a company comprised of veteran employees and they took time out of their schedules to install these wraps, making this cart one of the best dressed carts in our system and just a small tribute to honor our fallen soldiers and their families to show just how much we care about the person inside. The team in PHX has also gone above and beyond in preparing its members on how to handle military remains, their families, escorts, ceremonies, etc.

We are very proud of what has been accomplished by designating this military remain cart and the education being passed on to the members.

On March 30th, 2017, our Veterans Committee, with the support of the board and its members, came together for a Veterans Appreciation Day event in Las Vegas. The event was well received and long overdue. We were able to meet and personally thank our military members past and present. We also were able to bring our veterans together to support each



other. The event featured speeches from President Greg Puriski, Vice President Cort Heywood (read by myself), International Veterans Committee Co-Chair Brendon Remezas, and International Veterans Committee Liaison Jose Galarza. There was much praise and support given to our guests. The board and guest speakers also promised to continue with the much deserving support going

forward. We then presented to our military guests a unique challenge coin. If you are unfamiliar with this tradition, google it, and you will soon realize the significance of these coins to our military. The night was truly designed to show our military members how much we appreciate them and what they've done for us and beyond. If you see a veteran at your station, take a moment to say thank you. Thank you for providing my freedom and my safety. We know an event such as this doesn't even come close to showing how much we truly appreciate the service to our country but we are beyond grateful for all they have done. We need to get more people registered so we know who our veterans are and how we can help them. We challenge those who would like to help the Veterans Committee to get your veteran members to register. When they do, they will receive a TWU Veteran pin. We will work with the company and the stations on the military remains carts and

***“If you see a veteran at your station, take a moment to say, ‘Thank you’.”***

procedures, we will work with the company with military dependents being treated the same as college dependents, we will work with the company on a military themed plane, and any other suggestion brought forward to the committee.

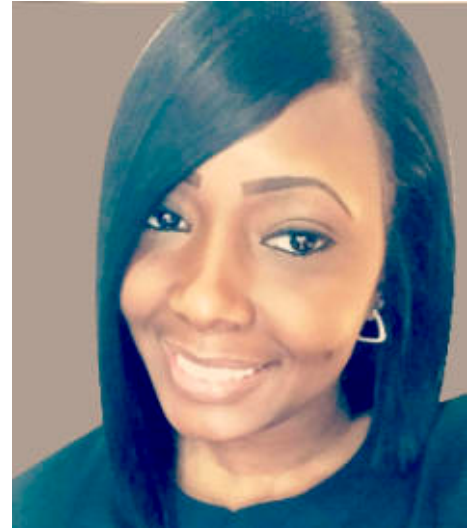
Don't forget to wear your red on RED (Remember Everyone Deployed) Fridays. Thank you for your support. We are veterans helping veterans. We are always here to help or listen if you ever need us.

Thank you for your service or your support,  
**Charlana Bilodeau**  
**Veterans Committee Chairperson**

\*(<http://www.image360.com/scottsdaleaz>)

## GIVING THANKS

**D**ISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF LOCAL 555, I want to thank God and all the members, especially the ones that took the time to vote in the special election for the office of the Financial Secretary-Treasurer. In the last few months that I've held the position, we've accomplished a great deal. I am happy to report that the local's finances are finally in order, all the bills and notes are current, as well as the reports and filings being up to date. Although we still face several challenges, we are now in a position to successfully deal with them.



A special thanks to our Local's Administrative Secretary, Ms. Shirley Duff, for the tireless effort in assisting this office in getting our finances back in order. We still have a long road ahead, but I definitely see light at the end of the tunnel. Again, I truly thank you for the opportunity to serve as your treasurer. I am fully dedicated in helping to ensure the success of our local.

“Alone we can do so little; Together we can do so much.” -Helen Keller

Standing in Solidarity,  
**Jessica Hayes**  
**Financial-Secretary Treasurer**

# LAWSUITS AND LUV: HOW TO BE A SORE LOSER

BY DISTRICT 4 REPRESENTATIVE Tony Slavings

**I**F YOU HAVEN'T BEEN PAYING ATTENTION to the happenings at our company lately, you really should. No, I'm not talking about the feel-good stories on SWALife. You know, the ones that they censor and won't allow you to post actual opinions on if yours happens to differ from theirs? Not any of those. I'm talking about the ones within our Local and other Locals.

For example, the company that LUV's their employees so much is starting to sue their employees. Just like they did to us at the end of 2015. AMFA is the Union that represents our mechanics. They are the last remaining work group that is still in negotiations. The Company has decided to sue them. They are suing them because they believe that they, also, had a "work action". I'm not sure of all the ins and outs of it but it's interesting when you combine it with the other lawsuit they have filed.

That's right, there's another one. The one that they have filed for us and our Local. You see, the Company doesn't like the fact that they lost an arbitration ruling. It's a big one. It's the A/C cleaning grievance. They lost the time frame decision. So, since we won that, they decided to act like babies about it and just throw more money at it. The same money they would be spending if they were just to allow us to work the work that we bargained for. They figure that they can just spend more and more money, prolong things for a long time, and everything will be ok. No telling how much money this is going to cost. The same money you hear about every day at work. The same people that are telling you that you need to do a better job at work so that they can make more money...is spending it just to make sure you are not allowed to do the work, that they agreed to in our contract. They knew before negotiations was over, that we wanted that work. They didn't

attempt to change it. They still agreed to it. There is no telling how much money our company spends every day just trying to show how much "LUV" they have for their employees. That "LUV" is shown by Final Letters of Warning and suspension days. Then, with all the attorneys that they have in the building, they hire outside attorneys to come in and fight against you in arbitration. Meanwhile, here we are, agents just like you, sitting opposite the table and fighting against them. This company goes out of its way and hires lawyers to fight against us. Not the lawyers they already have on staff. Those are probably too busy fighting with other work groups. I can't imagine how it feels to know you spent tens of thousands of dollars to fight the little guys, and lose. I can't wait till the dust settles on this one and they have spent HUNDREDS of thousands of dollars, and still lose. I wish I could be a fly on the wall that day.



***"You see, the Company doesn't like the fact that they lost an arbitration ruling. It's a big one. It's the A/C cleaning grievance. They lost the time frame decision. So, since we won that, they decided to act like babies about it..."***

This is the "new" Southwest Airlines that Gary keeps talking about. Must be nice to

make billions of dollars a year and turn around and use it to sue the very people who made it for you. I'm not sure what we are supposed to do with all of this "LUV", but one thing is for sure, we have over 12,000 people in the Local, and if we all come together on the same page, they will eventually see the real Southwest that we all built and loved to work for.



# MAKING UP THE RULES

BY DISTRICT 5 REPRESENTATIVE

John Spencer

I'M WRITING TO INFORM THE MEMBERSHIP of the company's latest tactics. The company is continuing to try to take what is not theirs. The first blatant disregard for our CBA that I want to bring to your attention today refers to bypass overtime. If an employee is bypassed for overtime and the company agrees the employee was bypassed, the company is trying to get away with only paying the employee overtime as opposed to the double-time the employee is entitled to receive.

Now let's think about this for a minute. If the company screws up by bypassing you, you are punished by not getting the rate of pay that you would have received had the company not made a mistake. Not fair, I know. We took this issue to Arbitration on February 3. We will update everyone once we receive the ruling.

Another issue we are currently fighting is the time frame the company has to issue discipline letters. Our CBA clearly states that letters of discipline are to be issued within 5 working days. For example, if you call in sick and do not bring a doctor's note and that occurrence triggers a point, as outlined in Art. 23 Section 2 paragraph B, each time you reach a new level of discipline, the company has 5 working days (Mon-Fri) to issue

*"...the Company is trying to get away with only paying the employee overtime as opposed to the double-time the employee is entitled to receive..."*

you a discipline letter. The company has now decided that your first day back to work does not count, so in essence, they have 6 working days to issue the discipline letter. Hmmmmmmmm.

Can you please show me where in the contract it says the company gets 5 working days plus 1 extra day?? Yeah, it's not in there. An arbitration on this

issue was held on March 8th.

We recently saw the company disregard the 12-day rule that

is also outlined in our CBA. If you work 12 days in a row, whether it be through overtime or shift trades, YOU CANNOT be manditoried on the 13th day. For those that don't know, we also took that to Arbitration and won that ruling.



## AWARD

The grievance is sustained. The Company is to revise and reissue the May 17<sup>th</sup> memo to accurately reflect the 12-day rule as set forth in the 2010 Interpretations.

Elizabeth Neumeier, Arbitrator

February 21, 2017



I can assure you that our union will stand and defend the contract as it is written and was negotiated. If the company wants to change the language they'll have to attempt to do that during negotiations.

# THEY'RE STILL WATCHING YOU

BY DISTRICT 6 REPRESENTATIVE Tyler Cluff

IT SEEMS LIKE THE SAME DRUM IS BEING BEAT AGAIN and again. My last article, I talked about the importance of being truthful when dealing with management on issues, mostly because with all the technology that is around, (cameras, SIDA swipe reports, parking lot swipes, time clock punches, and so forth) the Company in many instances already knows what happened, they just want to find out if you are telling the truth or not. If you are not, they will immediately say you are not being truthful and that is grounds for immediate termination, no matter what is in your file.

Now we find ourselves with even more eyes watching everything we do as the Company is sending our surveys to their customers to fill out and grade us on our "hospitality." The Company claims this is all to



"reward" our employees who give our customers great hospitality, but I think we all know the real motivation behind all of this. Just like the cameras are to help us be more "safe" and teach our employees how to do their job better.

How much discipline has been issued due to the review of the cameras? I have a feeling our reward for these hospitality surveys will most undoubtedly be more discipline. I recently did a System Board where the Company representative was very adamant about how Southwest Airlines trusts their employees.

The exact quote was, "We trust what our employees tell us." I certainly wish that was true when it came to customer complaints. I have been dealing with more and more customer complaint discipline grievances, and the bottom line to all of these grievances is that the Company does not trust what their employees say. In this day and age of technology where it is so easy to post, tweet, text, blog, instagram, email, and whatever

*"If you are not provided one, your response should be, 'I will answer your questions as soon as I have my Union Representative with me.'"*

else someone can do with a smart phone, the complaint can come in so easily, and the customer can make up just about anything they want. The Company will believe the customer over

the employee. Are we at the point where we need to wear our own body cameras so that we can always have our own proof as to what actually happened? We may be coming to that if the Company continues to "trust" their employees the way they currently do. Above all, whenever the Company wants to talk to you about your job performance, you have a contractual and legal right to have a Union Representative present. You have a right to consult with your Union Representative. Don't ever go into a meeting with management without your Union Representative. If you are told you don't need a representative, then absolutely insist on one. If you are not provided one, your response should be, "I will answer your questions as soon as I have my Union Representative with me."

To all the Local Reps out there. Thank you for all you do. Yours is truly a thankless job. Yours is an absolutely necessary job to help preserve the rights of our contract. Throughout the many years of my employment, I have had several great Local Reps, and I know there are many out there all over our System that continue to fight the good fight and stand up for our members. Remember, the Union is not there to help you get out of your work. The Union is there to help you get the most out of your work.

# DISCIPLINE ON THE RISE

BY DISTRICT 7 REPRESENTATIVE Mike Roach

**M**OST OF YOU KNOW FROM YOUR OWN experience or from a co-worker that the level of discipline issued to our members is on the rise. There are more members being disciplined than ever before. The discipline ranges from Letters of Instruction to termination. Letters of Instruction have become the exception as of late, rather than the norm. It is not uncommon in today's Southwest world to receive a Final Letter of Warning and an unpaid suspension for a minor incident that used to be handled with maybe a verbal counsel, or at most, a Letter of Instruction.

The company has chosen to ignore the language of "was the discipline appropriate to the infraction." They also have disregarded the standards of Just Cause and do not believe that discipline needs to be progressive.

Management no longer considers an employee's tenure with the company, what the employee has or doesn't have in their file, etc. when issuing discipline.

At the time I am writing this, LAS alone has 34 active grievances, and only 2 of them are not for discipline. We have 7 Letters of Instruction, 18 Letters of Warning, and 3 Final Letters of Warning currently in the grievance process.

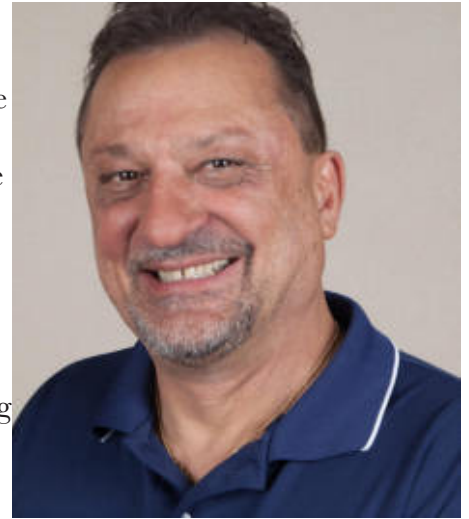
We also have 4 terminations that are going through the grievance process where members were terminated without just cause. LAS management is not considering tenure as

the members with these grievances have up to 26 years with the company. The accused violations range from not wearing a seatbelt to accusations

*"At the time I am writing this, LAS alone has 34 active grievances, and only 2 of them are not for discipline. We have 7 Letters of Instruction, 18 Letters of Warning, and 3 Final Letters of Warning currently in the grievance process."*

of threats with no witnesses. I have 1 grievance for a seatbelt violation that 3 managers felt the need to write statements that they witnessed this member driving a tug from gate 12 to 14 without a seatbelt. That's when you know you have too many managers. I will update the membership in District 7 of the status of the grievances as they are resolved. The arbitration decisions are also available on the TWU 555 website.

I would also like to mention the Bay Area 555 membership picnic that we will be holding on July 25th at Coyote Point Park in San Mateo, CA. More information will be available on our website and facebook page as the event nears and we hope to see many of you there. As we head into the busy spring season, please work safe and watch out for one another.



TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION LOCAL 555  
BAY AREA MEMBERSHIP PICNIC  
TUESDAY, JULY 25TH. 2017  
PLAYGROUND • FOOD • TRAILS

**COYOTE POINT PARK**  
1701 Coyote Point Dr, San Mateo, CA 94401

# DUTY TO ENFORCE

BY DISTRICT 8 REPRESENTATIVE

Abilio Villaverde

SO FAR, THIS YEAR HAS BEEN VERY UNPREDICTABLE. We have won some very important and vital arbitrations and yet the company chooses not to accept a long-standing practice of honoring the awards of those arbitrations. The Aircraft Cleaning grievance was hugely important to our Local in protecting the jobs and duties of our members. We should never relinquish anything that we have negotiated, especially job duties. We as a board remain committed to protecting those duties. The support of the membership is needed greatly, now more than ever.

In the meantime, we need to work on grieving the violations that occur daily at the stations. I hear all the time about what the company is doing wrong and they wish it would stop, but it will not, unless we put things on paper just like they do and go through the grievance process. Your local representatives can only do so much. They need you to write the grievances up so they can fight for your rights and stop these continuing violations. The perception that the union can just tell the company to stop and they will is outdated such as (state leave laws in California, Washington and Maryland). We have to push these things forward through our process and other means if necessary.

We should never give up and we need to continue to fight. Just because we aren't voting on a contract doesn't mean we don't have reasons to unite and stand together. This fight is a daily one, and not once the contract becomes amendable. I implore you to keep the faith and to keep fighting. Each of us pay union dues and have a vested interest in the success of this Local, so let's all play our part and contribute when we can.

Spring and summer are upon us and you will see events popping up union-wise that I encourage all to attend. In our District, there will be a union picnic in Denver and Oakland as well as Portland. For the

smaller cities in our district, I will be doing something at the station for the members. We need to do more together with our families, and get them involved in what we go through each day. I will hope to see people from each station at each of these as we are all one big family. There was also a 20th anniversary celebration for our local on May 12th at TWU Local 513 in Southlake, TX. It doesn't matter which station you are from, please make an effort to attend these events.

In closing, let us put aside the station and the seniority differences and support each other.

Senior agent or junior agent, we are all in this together and we have the numbers to fight anything that comes our way. We should never give up what is ours. We stand tall and we stand proud and we support each other. We are 555!



***“This fight is a daily one, and not once the contract becomes amendable.”***





# SAVE A BACK AND SHORT STACK

BY SAFETY & HEALTH COMMITTEE CHAIR Karl Mager • TPA

WHO HAS EVER BEEN IN A BIN and said, “Why the \*\*\*\* did they bulkhead these bags?” It has happened to us all, I’m sure. When I am not conducting Safety & Health business of our Local, I work on the Ramp in TPA, and work the bins quite a bit. Over the years, bags against the bulkhead has become the norm and not the exception. Let’s change this!

If I may digress a moment, Unions are an organization of workers joined to protect their common interests and improve their working conditions. Back in the late 19th and early 20th century, workers were forced to work long hours in unsafe conditions. Since that time, much has changed and we continue the fight each and every day, trying to improve our working conditions and to negotiate better contracts.

Putting all of this into perspective, we too have a responsibility to our Union’s brothers and sisters. Just as our Union leaders have a responsibility to us, we all are responsible to each other, because WE are the Union, not just the 12 members of the LEB.

Now back to saving each other’s backs. If we know that the flight we are loading is only going to SEA, why not short stack the load and help our Union brother or sister in SEA? If the flight is heavy, then there is nothing we can do to prevent the bulk headed load, but there are many times that we can. Southwest used to promote “down line friendly” and for some reason they just don’t anymore. I am not one to presume to know why, but everyone can make their own mind on that. We, on the other hand, can do something for our union brother or sister down line! Another method of saving each other’s backs is to utilize bin F when loading the rear of the aircraft. Getting forty bags from D and 15 from F is easier than reaching 3 rows deep in D. We have so many ways to help each other out. All it takes is a little thinking ahead and care for our fellow union brother or sister. If we don’t

take care of each other, no one else will.

There are also times where you must look out for yourself. Ever been in the bin alone and there are 80 bags in D? When this happens, we can start unloading, but there comes a point where we must stop and request help. Throwing bags is not good for anyone. We don’t want to damage baggage, nor do we want to hurt ourselves. When this happens, request the help and wait for it to arrive.

Your own personal safety is something you should never give away. By doing a job carelessly, in a hurry, or the job of two people, you are giving away your safety. If you are injured doing the job of two people, the inevitable question will be: “Why didn’t you call

for help?” So again, NEVER, EVER give away your safety. Ask questions. If something seems unsafe,

ask for help. If the task requires 2 people, look out for each other. All we have out there is each other.

Remember the 5 principles of SAFETY:

1. PROTECT YOURSELF
2. PROTECT EACH OTHER
3. PROTECT OUR CUSTOMERS
4. PROTECT OUR AIRCRAFT
5. PROTECT OUR EQUIPMENT

Keeping these 5 principles in mind always, will give us a better chance of going home the same way we came in. Stay involved, stay informed, and stay safe.

*“Just as our Union leaders have a responsibility to us, we all are responsible to each other, because WE are the Union, not just the 12 members of the LEB.”*

# STATION REPRESENTATIVE OF THE QUARTER

3RD QUARTER 2016: Chris Lampe - STL



L to R: Brandon Hughes, Brian Murphy, Paul Davis, Chris Lampe, Brent Curtis and Lavelle Williams.

*“STL had been going through a pretty rough patch the last couple years. Short staffing and problems with management were horrible. Chris stepped in earlier this year and I’ve never seen our TWU brothers and sisters in STL more united. Chris constantly goes above and beyond to help people no matter his days off, vacation, getting calls from people at odd hours to ask him questions, you name it. Chris has helped develop a good working relationship with our managers and supervisors to help everyone enjoy the work environment more. Please consider Chris for Rep Of The Quarter, he is someone all other local reps should strive to be like.” - STL Member*

# THE MANY MASKS OF MANAGEMENT

BY EDITOR Jason Sonnabaum - SAN

**L**AST ISSUE, THE “DIGITAL ONLY” ONE, what’s that? You missed it? I wrote an article in that widely read edition regarding the importance of requesting representation before any meeting with management. Some time after that was published, I attended a TWU CA State Conference meeting in San Francisco, hosted by TWU Local 250-A. They represent Municipal Transit Operators in addition to other work groups. While there, I was given a business card that now hangs in our SAN Union Office with the contact information facing the wall. It is what their Local printed on the back side that was so intriguing to me and is something that I would like to propose we as a membership begin to utilize. The back side of the business card reads as follows:

*“...they are quite adept at being absolutely filthy when it comes to creating a friendly facade while ulterior motives lurk beneath the surface.”*

## **“IF BEING QUESTIONED BY MANAGEMENT, READ THE FOLLOWING BEFORE THE INTERVIEW STARTS:**

**If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my union representative, officer or steward be present at this meeting. Without representation present, I choose not to participate in this discussion.”**

These are the things that we can learn from our fellow Locals that can assist everyone. My first thought when I turned the card over in my hand was, “Why don’t we have these, and why doesn’t every member have one?” In the meantime, feel free to snap a photo with your phone to use with your next management experience.

Just when I thought that the Company and the Union had reached an understanding of sorts at my station, in obnoxiously sunny San Diego, they pull deep from the well of dirty management tricks. This time it is attempting to settle grievances directly with the members bypassing the Union and its representatives. How do they benefit from such tactics? Let us examine the

ways. First, the Company likes to settle grievances “non/non” which means the settlement is non precedent setting and non referable. You see, they know that they don’t have a strong case in these instances, but they don’t want us to use the settlement against them in future cases. Second, is that they like to pretend they’re the good guys, even though they gave the agent excessive discipline in the first place, they try to save face by attempting to show the agent how “rea-

sonable” they are by reducing it. Third, is that they think if they offer the agent what seems like a good settlement and we don’t accept it due to the “non/non” language, that we, as Union representatives, will look like the bad guys. “I tried to offer a reduction in discipline, but YOUR Union wouldn’t accept it, you should speak with them about why they wouldn’t want your discipline reduced.” Like I mentioned, dirty. If the Company doesn’t have a good case, we don’t need to accept non/non. We are better off going to the next level and acquiring a settlement that can not only benefit the grievant, but potentially countless brothers and sisters in future cases that have been ill treated by the Company. If you are an especially astute member or rep, you might ask, “Why is the Company trying to write ‘non precedent’ on local grievances when the CBA clearly states that ‘These representatives shall be empowered to settle all local grievances without setting precedent of any kind.’?” To which I can only reply that reading comprehension may not be a strong suit of management. Regardless of their possible lack of comprehension prowess, they are quite adept at being absolutely filthy when it comes to creating a friendly facade while ulterior motives lurk beneath the surface. Remember that short bit of text above your signature on every grievance that reads, “I hereby authorize TWU to act in my behalf in the disposition and settlement of this grievance.” It is the Representative’s job to deal with management in the settlement of grievances and management knows this. If they come to you, the grievant, with a settlement, kindly point them in the direction of your local representative.

# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION LOCAL 555 4TH ANNUAL DEN MEMBERSHIP PICNIC SATURDAY JULY 8TH, 2017

FREE FOR 555 AND THEIR FAMILIES. STREET TACOS. PULLED PORK  
AND SHREDDED BRISKET SANDWICHES. FRUIT, BEANS, AND SLAW.  
PLAYGROUND, WATER PARK, SOFTBALL FIELD & BASKETBALL COURT

A white silhouette of a city skyline with various skyscrapers and buildings, set against a background of stylized blue mountains.

## GREAT PLAINS PARK

20100 E. JEWELL AVENUE, AURORA, CO 80013