

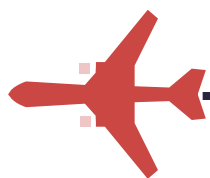
# AMFA

## *The Grapevine*

Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association

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

### Mesaba is Taking on a New Look



*"Safety in the Air Begins with*

*Quality Maintenance on the Ground"*

**2009 Issue 2**

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**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Louie Key	National Director
Timothy Cullen	Interim Assistant National Director
Steven Nowak	National Secretary/Treasurer
Fred Digne	National Safety and Standards Director
Earl Clark	Region I Director
Jack Coonrod	Region II Director

**MISSION STATEMENT**

*Disseminate news in any manner to keep the membership alert and well informed.*” - an Association Objective, AMFA Constitution.

**AMFA National produces this publication because it is our firm belief that an informed union membership creates a strong union. AMFA inalterably places the control of the Association with the membership. Every member has a responsibility to stay informed and involved.**



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**Printing:**  
 Online Version

**Closing date:** 6/15/09

*The Grapevine's* editorial content must be generally consistent with Association policies. The guiding principle governing all submissions is respect for one's fellow member and for the Association. Submitted articles should address issues pertinent to the Association and its members, and must avoid references of a personal nature.

All articles, including guest editorials, should conform with policy positions of the Association as established by the AMFA National Executive Council, AMFA Constitution, and National Policy Manual. The responsibility for monitoring editorial consistency is shared by National Officers. !

# National Director Update



**By: Louie Key, National Director**

Dear AMFA Members:

In November of 2008, the participants of the Joint Advisory Council (JAC) meeting, which is comprised of all Local Presidents, an Airline Representative from each carrier, and the NEC, determined that we needed to hold a special convention to address the dues split between the Local and the National administrative branches of the Association. Accordingly, in May 2009 we held a Special Convention where delegates from all of the AMFA locals participated in crafting, and unanimously endorsing, a proposed amendment to the Constitution.

The effect of the proposal will be to re-establish population triggers that will fairly adjust the dues split between the two administrative branches of the union proportionately as the membership population changes. Prior to the Special Convention of 2001, population triggers were in the AMFA Constitution, but were removed when the delegates neglected to take into careful consideration the consequences of membership fluctuations.

In order to maintain being a viable and effective force against the present challenges our industry and our craft face, our union must have both – strong local and national leadership support. By appropriately allocating our resources, we will all ensure the union is properly positioned to respond to these challenges as well as run an effective organization and to provide the exceptional personal representation our members have come to expect. It is important to note that the proposal will **not** change the amount of monthly dues each member pays, but rather an adjustment to how current dues are divided.

The benefits of supporting this proposal will: show your serious commitment to the solidarity of AMFA, an organization that is intensely committed to its cause; increase the availability and accountability of National; and secure the current level of local support services.

All of AMFA's Local Presidents and Treasurers have been consulted and they collectively support this proposal. And, as stated above, the delegates at the Special Convention unanimously support the proposal and invite you to contact them with questions.

The AMFA Constitution is unique in that it ensures that you, the member, have the ultimate say in any changes. Therefore, it is now up to you to participate in your union. Our most determined efforts will not succeed without your continued support. With your participation we will jointly craft our collective future. Please look for your voting package to arrive soon.

# AMFA and Alaska Negotiations Update



From left to right: Airline Rep Tim Cullen, Region I Director Earl Clark, National Director Louie Key, and AMFA member Keith Jenkins

AMFA and Alaska Airlines Representatives participated in open, formal negotiations on a possible extension to the current agreement in Seattle on June 2, 2009, at the Alaska Gold Coast Building room 109B. The Negotiating Committee is providing this update to the AMFA Membership at Alaska Airlines. This is the only official authorized source of negotiating communications by the Committee.

The day started off the same as the last session in April ended, with our Committee explaining the two short falls of the Company's last proposal: job protection for all and pay increases. The Company then proposed we work on alternate work schedule language that could provide a better quality of life for our members and help to protect current AMFA positions. For the Company, this could give them the flexibility to staff more small stations and use manpower more productively at current stations.

The committees then discussed a Letter of Agreement on a fully electronic preference bidding system; this will simplify the whole bidding process. The AMFA Committee then asked to discuss down year pay increases. We gave the Company ideas on creating triggers for pay raises above the 1½ percent in out years. The Company responded as they have the last two sessions, stating there is no more money.

AMFA then proposed that the Company consider expanding the Leave of Absence language to allow for members to take voluntary leaves in lieu of furlough. AMFA has gotten requests from members that would like to take a leave of absence during furloughs, which would save some of our lower seniority members from furlough.

After a full day of negotiating and after a month of our members expressing to our Committee and the Company their concern to vote on the last offer, the committees have reached a Tentative Agreement (TA). While this agreement is not all that we want, we believe it requires membership consideration in response to the above. All members in good standing will have the option to vote on this TA which consists of four separate Letters of Agreement (LOAs). Here are the details:

(continued next page)



# AMFA and Alaska Negotiations Update

## (Continued)

### **Part 1: Contract Extension Letter of Agreement**

- a) A two year extension of the current Agreement which would start October 17, 2009, and end October 17, 2011.
- b) Two 1½ % pay increases, one on October 17, 2009 and one on October 17, 2010, with an external review of our pay compared to our peers in the industry. This is to prevent our members from falling below the mid point or average of our peers.
- c) Removal, due to Company's insistence, of the internal review currently in the Agreement.
- d) Renewal of the job protection LOA #11. This letter again would have an expiration date that would be one day before the amendable date which would be October 16, 2011.
- e) Medical Insurance caps reset from our current premiums with no more than a 15% increase per year. 2011 rates will remain in effect until renegotiated.
- f) Replace the current Variable Pay Plan (VPP) with the Performance Based Pay (PBP), and pay a retroactive lump sum PBP payout upon ratification for 2008. This would average approximately \$2000.00 dollars per technician.

### **Part 2: Alternate Work Schedules Letter of Agreement**

This LOA will provide for flexible schedules, which will allow the implementation of schedules that will help protect current positions and foster future job growth by opening new stations. All flexible schedules must be mutually agreed upon by the Union and the Company.

### **Part 3: Electronic Bidding System Letter of Agreement**

This LOA that will implement a fully electronic preference bidding system.

### **Part 4: Leaves of Absence in Lieu of Furlough Letter of Agreement**

This LOA will expand the current qualifying leaves of absences language. This will allow for a leave of up to two years without a loss of seniority if done in lieu of a layoff.

This is the general overview of the offer. AMFA will be scheduling crew briefings in the near future and provide the final language of the Letters of Agreement. Additionally, each of the four LOAs listed above will be voted on separately on the ballot. Each one will pass or fail on its own merits.

**The Referendum vote on all four (4) parts of this agreement are being prepared and will be presented to the AMFA / Alaska Membership for ratification. Ballot packages will be mailed to all Alaska members in good standing. Further details will be posted to the AMFA National Web site as they become available.**

# SWA Appearance Technicians Negotiations Update

The Negotiating Committee is providing this update to the AMFA Membership at Southwest Airlines. This is the only official, authorized source of negotiating communications by the Committee. The AMFA and Southwest Airlines Representatives participated in open, formal negotiations seeking contract changes in Section VI negotiations.

The negotiations in Dallas on Thursday, May 14th and Friday, May 15th were cancelled at the request of the Company.

Your Negotiating Committee and the Company exchanged proposals on Articles 2 & 5. AMFA presented our proposal for Article 3.

In Article 2, the Company proposed outsourcing any and all work if they were able to obtain a lower bid from an outside vendor. AMFA rejected this proposal and countered with increased protections of covered work in the event of affiliations, acquiring, or joint ventures in other maintenance operations. And, increased protections concerning blending of the workforce, and/or moving any work to an international location. AMFA also proposed an expedited arbitration process for perceived violations of this Article.

In Article 3, AMFA proposed changes that would make the Appearance Technicians' contract more closely mirror the Mechanics' contract.

In Article 5, the Company formally proposed changing shift start times: day shift to between 3:30am and 10:30am; midday shift to between 8:30am and 1:00pm; afternoon shift to between 1:00pm and 7:00pm; and graveyard to between 6:00pm and midnight. In addition, the Company's formal proposal eliminated all but one bid location in Dallas (Hangar Utility Support) and all but two in Chicago, Houston, and Phoenix (Hangar Utility Support & Line Utility Support). They also formally proposed changes to the bidding process. AMFA rejected the proposals to all shift start times and the elimination of any bid locations. AMFA countered the proposal on the bidding process to make it closely mirror the Mechanics' bidding process.

During this negotiating session the Company informally (not in writing) proposed an approximate 54% reduction in the Appearance Technician headcount. Informally, they also proposed to outsource all of the RON cleaning in Dallas and 75% of the current RON cleaning in Chicago, Houston, and Phoenix. We countered these proposals with the 100% elimination of the Appearance Technician bureaucracy by eliminating all positions in this department above the Lead position level, utilizing the Mechanic's supervision and management. AMFA feels this would solve a great deal of the problems the Company associates with this department, create synergy, and a considerable cost savings.

The Company at this point requested a hiatus in our negotiations to consider our proposals, and to attempt to find some way to entice 50% plus one of our members to vote "yes" to eliminating approximately 54% of its members. We agreed to meet on Tuesday September 15th, in Dallas to review the Company's progress. Future dates to continue discussions will be secured at that time.

The Negotiation Committee would like to thank our observers who participated this last negotiating session: Edward A. Wilturner and Kenneth Dawson from Houston; Darlene D. Warren from Dallas; and Dave Widerski from Phoenix. Their input in caucus was very helpful and welcomed. We know that they will communicate with other members from their locals on how the Union is working to protect their jobs and contract language.

Sincerely,  
Your Negotiating Committee

# Special Convention 2009

**By: Steven Nowak, National Secretary/Treasurer**

## **Special Convention – 2009**

Why the need for a special Convention? Why now? How will it help? All good questions, and to answer them we must first look back at the history of the AMFA Constitution.

Prior to the National Convention in 2000 and the Special Convention in 2001, the language in the AMFA Constitution explicitly stated a membership number that would determine the amount of dues that stayed at the Local and how much went to the National. It read as follows:

### **Article VI, Section 3 (OLD)**

A per capita tax on all active members shall be due to the National Treasurer before the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) of each month. The amount of the per capita tax shall be 50% of 2 times the base hourly wage of all active members. 50% of 2 times the base hourly wage of all active members shall be retained by the Local as Local dues. **Active membership over 3,500 members, the 50% will revert back to 66 2/3%...(Bold added for emphasis).**

At that time the active membership at AMFA was over 10,000 and growing, and there arose some dispute over the 3,500 member language and questions were raised regarding whether or not it applied to the whole Association or to individual Locals. To resolve this dispute, the delegates chose to remove this language altogether and the AMFA Constitution now reads as follows:

### **Article IV, Section 1 (CURRENT)**

A) A per capita tax on all active members shall be due to the National Treasury before the tenth (10th) of each month. The amount of per capita tax shall be two times the base hourly wage of all active members.

B) National shall retain 40% of dues collected from all active members and 60% shall be retained by the Locals as Local dues. In Locals where active membership is under 700 members, such Locals will retain 66 2/3% as Local dues.

Today, the Association as a whole is in solid financial condition, and when we had over 10,000 active members the dues split worked just fine; however, with the current membership numbers, the allocation of dues between the National and Locals has become disproportionate.

On May 13, 2009, your elected Local Delegates from all of the AMFA Locals convened at the Special Convention. After careful review and consideration of the current situation, they unanimously endorsed a proposed amendment to the Constitution that is now up for your consideration.

**Regardless of the National/Local dues split, your dues rate will not change.**

Ballots for this referendum were mailed to AMFA members on June 17, 2009. Any eligible member who has not received a ballot, please contact AMFA National 720-744-6629.

# Safety and Standards Director Visits MDW

**By: Fred Digne, National Safety and Standards Director**

While I am looking forward to visiting all of AMFA's locals, the station at Midway ranked high on my list. As a mechanic, this visit provided me the opportunity to see some of the differences but mostly the similarities of how things are done at other maintenance bases and from one carrier to the next.

My first day in Chicago I was met with pouring rain but luckily the remaining two days were absolutely beautiful sunny weather and friendly faces. Although my short time in Chicago did not permit me the luxury of visiting the sites, my gracious host, Local 18 ALR Jim Kinnerk, would take the time to point out some of the historical landmarks of his beloved Chicago while driving to and from the hanger. I couldn't help but think that Jim's pride and knowledge of Chicago mirrors his work and commitment to AMFA.



AMFA Safety Representative Alan Janowiak (left) meets with Safety & Standards Director Fred Digne during his visit to MDW.

Jim took me around to meet with the various work groups that make up Local 18 in MDW. This included GSE, Cleaners, Inspection, Line Maintenance, C Check, and RON. I also had the pleasure of meeting several safety representatives and recognized the need for Local 18 to appoint a Safety Coordinator. While all of the mechanics I met seemed content, and that might have been due to the pizza we fed them, some thought I had come to perform a safety inspection (some concerns of safety were addressed and will be followed up on). The purpose of my visit was solely one of interest and necessity as I reminded them that the NEC recognized the need and the significance of going out to the various locals to meet the membership.

And, that one of the goals that the NEC has committed to is to do face-to-face visits and walk the floor, to make the NEC available to the members so that they may not only ask questions one on one, but just as importantly the opportunity to place a face with a name.

I look forward to returning to Chicago and I am hoping to squeeze in some time to visit some of her museums, landmarks, and of course world famous deep dish pizza at Gino's East. If you decide to visit Chicago, I know this great tour guide – He doesn't charge anything but maybe you can treat him to dinner.





# From the Digital Wrench



To the left a Southwest Airlines 737-700 undergoing a "C" Check at the Maintenance Hangar in MDW



To the right a Mesaba Airlines SAAB 340 is being worked (backset) during a RON visit at the DTW Maintenance Hangar. Pictured in the front is the empennage of a CRJ-900 with the Delta Connection livery

## Special Convention 2009

Delegates from the four AMFA Locals convened in the AMFA National Office on May 13, 2009, for the Special Convention. They unanimously endorsed the proposal that would change the dues split between the Locals and National and placed a membership number that would change the split back.



Please email interesting photos of members on the job to: [Admin@amfanatl.org](mailto:Admin@amfanatl.org)