



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MACHINISTS AND AEROSPACE WORKERS

VOLUME 56, NUMBER 1



Alaska Airlines ✈ British Airways ✈ Northwest Airlines ✈ Philippine Airlines ✈ Scientific Concepts ✈ United Airlines ✈ USAirways

Local 1781 Election Results!

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Why Mergers? Why Not?

America's popular TV program the "Dating Game" is off prime time but wipe off that frown because it's making a come back. No, not the Hollywood version.

This time it's Wall St. parading well-groomed suitors with deep pockets. The object of their desires — major air carriers.

Personally, this doesn't get my hormones flowing. However, manicured investors are absolutely turned on by the idea.

It's understandable. Airlines promise a good night out and are the cheapest date in town. It is conservatively estimated that major carriers saved \$11 billion in bankruptcy from 2002-2005.

As a result, their waistlines are trimmer and leaner than ever and their wallets full. This makes airlines quite attractive to jet-set investors. Claiming the lowest profit rate among the majors at 2%, UAL still posted a \$334 million 3rd quarter profit — a 76% increase over a record set the previous quarter.

Wall St.'s long-standing advice to reduce airline competition is fueled even more by a phenomenal growth in oil prices.

Thus, squeezing more passengers into smaller aircraft flying less often to cities now served by several carriers is seen as a good fix to keep aircraft full, profits up, and expenses down.

This policy would negatively impact the public.

The last round of significant mergers occurred in 1985 when there were around 20 major airlines in the USA. Two years later, half of them vanished, including brand names like Western Airlines, PSA, Ozark, Republic, AirCal, and Piedmont. ➔



by Carl Finamore

Aided by government deregulation of airlines, carriers reorganized their operations. A significant number of smaller cities in the country lost regular service overnight. Without facing much competition, cramped-cabin commuter carriers moved into regional markets charging dramatically higher ticket prices. The situation remains the same today.

A 45-minute round trip fare from small market Sacramento to San Francisco, listed on UAL's website, costs 25% more than a 3.5 hour San Francisco to Chicago flight.

Now, big-money investors eager for airlines to merge want to also makeover major urban Hub Service to be far less competitive. Of course, this will have the same impact experienced in smaller markets after the last wave of mergers several decades ago - higher ticket prices.

A case can be made for mergers, but not under conditions set by Wall St. when it advocates fewer employees, fewer seats, and fewer routes. We airline workers already know what it means when investors seek to lower costs in their mad dash for profits, completely disregarding our interests.

We advise the public to buckle up and take extreme caution when hearing money managers make their case. **You** may be next. ⚙



Alex Mefford, grandson of retired LL1781 member Jim Touchstone, walks the line. Activists marched November 21, 2007 at SFO — aligned with IAM protests around the country. Northwest failed to honor the IAM's 'Me Too' contract clause that affords the same benefits as other work groups, like the recent Pilot's contract enhancement.

Review Adds Insult to Injury

Joe Bendsteel is working on a high rise. He injures his back just before closing time. **But Joe is tough.** He goes home and returns to work the next day.

That's when he discovers he can't bend over without severe pain that radiates down his leg. He reports the previous day's injury to the supervisor and is told to visit an occupational medical clinic which promises to return injured workers to work before the injury even occurred. He gets two days at modified duty. He gets the drug ibuprofen for treatment.

Mary Hardhead discovers that her head isn't so hard, after all. That's because she was pulling down files from an overhead shelf when the shelf fell onto her head. She was knocked down. Trouble is the headaches she's had since then won't go away. The company refers her to an industrial medical clinic whose motto is return to work or else. She gets two days modified duty and ibuprofen.

TRW EXCLUSIVE by Robert L. Weinmann MD. Dr. Weinmann practices industrial medicine in San Jose, CA and was President of Local 206, AFSCME, AFL-CIO, 1989-2006.

➔ ...continued on Page 2

inside ... this issue

This issue is an experiment as Local Lodges 1781 and sister Local 1782 explore the possibilities of combining both publications into one newspaper. We hope you enjoy reading both.

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Review Adds Insult to Injury

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Subsequently, both injured workers enjoy a parallel course. Their respective doctors refer both patients for physical therapy which is rejected by the utilization review companies, not by coincidence owned or operated by the insurance companies. The injured workers are told that their MRI scans have to be done by specific contractors chosen by the insurance companies and won't be done at all unless pre-determined cookbook criteria are met — the prescribing doctor, whose responsibility for the patient is a matter of law, is undercut.

It turns out that both injured workers have something in common, namely, that the prescriptions for diagnostic testing and treatment prescribed by their California-licensed physicians have been rejected or delayed, sometimes by out-of-state doctors without California licenses who have not interviewed or examined the patients. The Schwarzenegger administration says this practice is legal because the doctors have licenses somewhere and are going by rules and regulations put into effect after passage of SB 899, Poochigian, R-Fresno.

Meanwhile, the injured workers aren't being treated, the real treating doctors are getting frustrated, more doctors are resigning from the workers' comp system, the employers are saving somewhat on premiums and the insurance companies are making millions.

That is why we need to get rid of the current workers' compensation utilization review program in California.

Labor unions should work with legislators to cancel the wrongful use of utilization review that is currently used to delay, deny, or modify treatment to injured workers in California. ⚙️

DO YOU NEED AN ATTORNEY?
 PERSONAL, WORK INJURY, DIVORCE, ETC.
 SPECIAL RATES FOR LL1781 MEMBERS!
650 697-8716 EXT. 28

January 2008

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF LOCAL LODGE 1781, AFFILIATED WITH DISTRICTS 141, 142 & 143 IAMAW.

SUBJECT: CALL FOR NOMINATIONS TO THE 2008 GRAND LODGE CONVENTION

In accordance with the provision of Article II, Section 3, of the Grand Lodge Constitution, this is the official call for nominations to the 2008 Grand Lodge Convention. Grand Lodge delegates shall be elected no later than May 14, 2008.

LOCAL LODGE 1781 NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2008 GRAND LODGE CONVENTION

NOMINATIONS: Nominations will open under the agenda item of New Business at the Regular Membership Meeting beginning at 4pm on Wednesday, April 9, 2008.

THE ELECTION: Polls will open at (0600 hours) Wednesday, May 14, 2008 and will close at the adjournment of the regular business meeting on that day which begins at 4pm.

ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUESTS: Members who reside more than 25 miles from the balloting place, members who are either confined because of verified illness or on leave qualifying under U.S. and Canadian family leave laws, or on vacation, or on official I.A.M. business approved by the L.L. or D.L. or G.L., or on an employer travel assignment, or reserve military leave, as the case may be, shall be furnished absentee ballots, providing that all single requests for same must be made individually in writing by the requesting member who will hand deliver in person or by mail such request no later than 30 days before the election. Such request should be delivered to the Recording Secretary, Air Transport Employees Local Lodge 1781, 1511 Rollins Road, Burlingame, Ca. 94010-2398, stating the reason for requesting an Absentee ballot.

Individual requests for Absentee Ballots hand delivered to the Recording Secretary or postmarked no later than April 15, 2008 will be accepted.

Members of Local Lodge 1781 in good standing, affiliated with District 141, 142 & 143 IAMAW, are eligible and encouraged to participate in this election.

Fraternally Yours,
 Troy Rivera
 Recording Secretary
 Local Lodge 1781
 IAMAW



Election Notice



Absentee Ballot Request

Please complete and return the *Absentee Ballot Request* on Page 3.



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 Visit Our New & Improved Website at:
www.local1781.org



Looking Forward

... a view from The President, Local Lodge 1781

Stepping Aside

This is my last column as your President.

I now expect applause and sarcastic comments from friends and foes alike that the occasion comes none too soon, or worse; we didn't even know you were here.

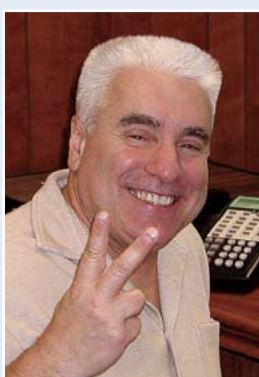
Everyone likes to think they will be remembered but history resoundingly deflates that theory. Only the most important world figures hold our attention long past their years of service. The rest of us have to be content with the satisfaction that we tried to remain true to our values and did the best we could with the opportunities presented to us.

This was certainly true of my generation who became teenagers in the 1960s when the whole world seemed like a very crazy place. Millions of us were not sure we liked what we saw so we figured we would try to change things.

“... we tried to remain true to our values ...”

We were passionate about remaking our world into a better place of justice and fair play. We demonstrated, protested, and picketed. Many were jailed and some of our leaders were assassinated.

Nonetheless, important reforms were achieved. ➡️



by Carl Finamore

The war in Vietnam ended and there were significant advances in civil-rights legislation. A healthy dose of mistrust toward government also developed because of the Watergate scandal. The fact that the President could lie was a major revelation at the time.

The mad pursuit of profits by big business was also increasingly exposed. Auto manufacturers opposing seat belts in cars, tobacco growers denying cigarettes cause cancer and other horrendous examples of corporate America's disregard for safety led to the ground-breaking passage of OSHA (Occupational Safety & Health Act) in 1970.

Yet today we can say that many of the worst features of the past have returned with a vengeance. Corporate and government power now work in tandem to deliver a one-two punch to those of us who work for a living.

I've learned to believe that reforms alone will not endure unless powerful trade union and social movements organize together independently of the business/government alliance. Following the radical influences of my youth, I have always tried to strengthen the voice of unions so that one day they can again return to the powerful force that speaks for the dreams and aspirations of those seeking justice and fair play.

A generation that finally succeeds in building such a powerful social movement will be remembered long into the future and deservedly so. ⚙️

LL1781 Newly Elected!

Vote Results

Many thanks to the record number of Local Lodge 1781 members who turned out to vote on December 12, 2007. Congratulations to our new Executive Board and Auditors serving from January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2010.

Introducing Our New Executive Board:

President: Danny Lebron

Vice-President: Larry Wing

Recording Secretary: Don Hatfield

Secretary Treasurer: Teresa Rhine

Members-at-Large: Troy Rivera, Julia Smith, Debbie Escobosa, Stephen Rice, Tom Burns

Trustees: Mariquita Jones, Roberto Mendez, Robert Huizar

Conductor Sentinel: Jennifer Johnsen

Auditors: Olulade Ajetomobi, Roger Singh, Emma Albert


TRADEWINDS STAFF:

Editor-In-Chief..... **Carl Finamore**
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 Photography..... **TRW Staff**
 Design & Layout..... **Matt Rourke**

TradeWinds is the official quarterly publication of the Air Transport Employees, Local Lodge 1781, IAMAW and notification of any election in this paper shall constitute legal compliance to the laws of the land and the IAM per Article V, Section 9 of the Local Lodge Bylaws.

Views expressed herein are strictly those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor or the officers of the Lodge; nor should they be misconstrued as any bargaining policy of the organization.

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Newspapers, Candy, Chickens and Steel Mills... Mike Mewkalo's Story

Local Lodge 1781 Retiree

It was a tough job for a kid. It still makes me squirm a bit just thinking about it today but you did a lot of things in the depression to feed your family.

Customers came into the store, pointed out healthy, clucking chickens, touched around their flapping wings and above their legs and then watched me go to work. After around 15 minutes, I handed over a fresh, plucked and cleaned chicken ready for the dinner table.

But here I was at the age of 12 behind the counter butchering chickens for 25 cents daily wage. Now that was chicken feed!

Even my Dad's salary of \$15 a week wasn't enough to feed our family of twelve. He worked in the Carnegie-Illinois steel mill outside Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; the same mill I worked at a few years later at the age of 16 after dropping out of school.

But my work life started even earlier.

I sold newspapers at 10 years old and helped a milkman drop off bottles at doorsteps every day before school. At the age of 12, I began opening up a candy store at 6am on weekends for my elderly neighbor Elsie who was too tired to get up that early.

On their way to the mill, steel workers wearing overalls and carrying lunch buckets stopped for a moment to buy sweets, newspapers and cigarettes. When Elsie finally did show up, I would rush off to the grocery store for a full day's work.

Only now, when I look back, do I consider my early life to have been difficult. Back then, it was just something that was needed to be done and you did it.

It actually shaped my whole life; not the hard work particularly but the example of people helping each other.

I gladly ran errands as a kid for our older neighbors because I wanted to do my part, just as I saw my mom and dad working so hard.

January 2008

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF LOCAL LODGE 1781, AFFILIATED WITH DISTRICT 141, IAMAW.
SUBJECT: CALL FOR NOMINATIONS TO THE 2008 DISTRICT 141 CONVENTION

In accordance with the provision of Article V, Section 1, of the District Lodge 141 Bylaws, this is the official call for nominations to the 2008 District 141 Convention. District delegates shall be elected no later than June 11, 2008.

LOCAL LODGE 1781 NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2008 DISTRICT 141 CONVENTION

NOMINATIONS: Nominations will open under the agenda item of New Business at the Regular Membership Meeting beginning at 4pm on Wednesday, May 14, 2008.

THE ELECTION: Polls will open at (0600 hours) Wednesday, June 11, 2008 and will close at the adjournment of the regular business meeting on that day which begins at 4pm.

ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUESTS: Members who reside more than 25 miles from the balloting place, members who are either confined because of verified illness or on leave qualifying under U.S. and Canadian family leave laws, or on vacation, or on official I.A.M. business approved by the L.L. or D.L. or G.L., or on an employer travel assignment, or reserve military leave, as the case may be, shall be furnished absentee ballots, providing that all single requests for same must be made individually in writing by the requesting member who will hand deliver in person or by mail such request no later than 30 days before the election. Such request should be delivered to the Recording Secretary, Air Transport Employees Local Lodge 1781, 1511 Rollins Road, Burlingame, Ca. 94010-2398, stating the reason for requesting an Absentee ballot.

Individual requests for Absentee Ballots hand delivered to the Recording Secretary or postmarked no later than May 13, 2008 will be accepted.

Members of Local Lodge 1781, affiliated with District 141, IAMAW in good standing are eligible and encouraged to participate in this election.

Fraternally Yours,

Troy Rivera
 Recording Secretary
 Local Lodge 1781
 IAMAW



Election Notice

Absentee Ballot Request

CHECK District 141 Convention June 2008 Delegate Election, and/or
CHOICE(S): Grand Lodge Convention May 2008 Delegate Election.

I request an Absentee Ballot because:

- CHECK** I reside more than 25 miles from designated polling place
ONE: I am confined due to verified illness
 I will be on vacation
 I will be on official IAM business
 I will be on an employer travel assignment
 I will be on reserve military leave
 I will be on leave under U.S. and Canadian FMLA laws

Signature _____ Print Name _____ File Number _____

Street Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please check if change of address. Print legibly.

Clip and return to: Recording Secretary, Local Lodge 1781, 1511 Rollins Rd., Burlingame, CA 94010




In those days, when most of us were having a tough time, people seemed to look out for each other. Salvation Army volunteers seemed like 'miracle workers' to me; giving us warm clothes and thick blankets for cold Pennsylvania winters and food for 10 hungry little mouths.

Drafted into the army during WWII at the age of 18, I later served in the Korean and Vietnam conflicts as well; finally retiring from the military in 1968.

I started a new career at United as a mechanic in 1969 and retired in 1988.

I am now 80 years old. Through these many long years, I never forgot the spirit of my youth, in fact, it seemed to follow me

In my 19 years of retirement from UAL, I keep busy at SFO's USO by serving coffee and donuts for traveling GIs and their families; giving a hand to the Local Lodge 1781 retiree club and running errands for older friends Shirley, Verna, Alice and Mickie who cannot drive.

*It doesn't make me anything special;
 it's just what needs to be done when people need help;
 it's that simple.* 

United Airlines Sells-Out Employees?

It's all over the news that UAL is considering selling its Mileage Plus program worth around \$7 million and its Maintenance operation worth millions of dollars more.

I received several emails suggesting we all write the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) requesting they restore our UAL retirement plan.



by Jerry Munkholm

Our Local Lodge 1781 delegates brought this up at the District 141 convention in September 2007. After an exhaustive review by District 141 Legal advisors, they concluded that restoring pensions to UAL was legally prohibited by the terms of the agreement between UAL and the PBGC.

Part of the agreement with UAL contained the extraordinary waiver of the PBGC's powers when it was agreed not to seek to restore the pension plan to UAL — Ever!

District 141 President Randy Canale stated, however, that if any sale of UAL assets occurred the IAM would insist that profits go towards supplementing retiree pension plans.

According to the other unions I talked with representing workers and retirees of UAL, they are of the same opinion — if UAL sells anything, the profits should go towards the retirement plans.

Several of us wrote to the PBGC stating that we felt UAL lied when they grossly undervalued programs such as Mileage Plus that they are now trying to sell for millions (I believe this comes real close to perjury).

Some retirees wrote the PBGC asking them to restore the pension plan to UAL. Others wrote that the PBGC should collect the difference between what UAL turned over to the PBGC and what the stock was really worth. Either way we felt that our terminated pensions should be made whole.

The PBGC's answers were the same in both cases — they would not seek restoration of the terminated pension plan to UAL nor would they pursue further payment from UAL for the plan.

As we all remember, the PBGC attained an extra 2 million shares in newly-issued stock when they emerged from bankruptcy. I can only wonder if the actions of the PBGC was influenced by wanting to keep these valuable shares or was it the millions of dollars still owed the PBGC by UAL or some other reason that we are not privy to?

There are two IAM-supported bills in Congress, one each in the US Senate (S 2092) and the House of Representatives (HR 3652).

Key components in both bills are to make employers pay workers and retirees what they are owed as important as paying banks; to ensure sacrifices are truly shared among CEOs and workers; to protect workers and retirees against abuse and misuse of bankruptcy; and to recommend overturning recent court rulings in airline bankruptcies that have interpreted bankruptcy law to prohibit airline workers from engaging in economic self help (strikes). I highly recommend we all get involved and write our House of Representatives and Senators requesting they vote for these bills.

As always, I end my article with an invitation to the LL1781 Retiree meeting on the second Wednesday every month followed by a social time with a delicious lunch at a very low cost of \$3.00 per person. ⚙️

Letters To The Editor

Hey Editor,

I received my TradeWinds today and I was really impressed!!! It really said it all and was so interesting hearing all the stories that were really so similar for everyone!! Got me all fired-up!!! Where's that next battle...I'm ready!! I hope it would be OK if I drop by and pick-up a few more of those from the Hall?!! I have some friends that would love to see this.

Sally Hanson



Hi Editor,

Just read the latest issue of Trade Winds, (Women's Issue). What great stories, and it was fun to see Natalie, and Doreens' stories. I always liked them, and they were always so nice to me.

Vito Saccheri



Dear Editor,

Georgia Nielsen forwarded to me the Summer 2007 issue of Trade Winds. I was very moved by the stories of the IAM women and their struggle for equality in the workplace. I congratulate you for publishing their stories and for an excellent newsletter.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank you and Local 1781 for your continued support of AFA, both Council 11 and our Retiree Chapter. We all appreciate the solidarity you have offered us over the years.

Pat Friend

International President
Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, AFL-CIO

Dear Editor,

Memories of United of yesteryear, ah I remember them well! I now know that my sisters in other parts of United were victims of the same discrimination. The subject in Tradewinds hit home, I loved it. It's been passed on to other flight attendants. Keep up the great work an a big THANK YOU!

Donna Sesock-Miller

AFA/CWA Representative Council 11 SFO United



Dear Editor,

I just finished reading every last word of Trade Winds and was really moved by it, sometimes moved to tears, sometimes to laughter with lots of "Aha! I remember that!" moments from my various industrial jobs including: outright illegal discrimination by the employers; situations created in hopes that I and other women would quit; hostility from male coworkers that eventually transformed to grudging acceptance and in some cases to respect; unity with Black and Brown coworkers born out of a need to stick together; victories for women on the job; and most important, the backing of the Union.

Kathleen O'Nan, Los Angeles



Dear Editor,

It goes to show that women, in traditional and non-traditional jobs, have to fight so much just to get a little dignity. The Struggle continues.

Shelley Kessler

San Mateo County Central Labor Council

Happy Trails Old Friends!



Sam Bacon shows off his IAM jacket, IAM watch and retiree pin while attending Local Lodge 1781 retiree meeting on Wednesday, October 10, 2007. Sam actually retired from Northwest Airlines in November 2006 after 23 years at SFO working in cargo and ramp.



IAM steward Marilou Mitchell plants a 'big one' on lead UAL storekeeper Ismael Vivar during his October 25, 2007, retirement party. Ismael received an IAM 40-year Certificate, IAM watch, jacket and pin along with a diamond retirement pin from United Airlines.



NWA agent, Tony Soccha had planned to retire six months ago but changed his mind. "This time it's for real, it's time to putz around the house for sure."



Don Last (L) receives his 50-year IAM pin and Certificate and congratulations from Local Lodge 1781 Retiree Association officers (L-R) Silvio Costanzo, Barbara Underhill and John Kensingler.