

You Won't See This On Deltanet – Marianne Bickler, a former Delta flight attendant supervisor, provided compelling testimony at the recent National Mediation Board hearing of how she was trained to intimidate flight attendants in a previous union organizing drive. “We were given anti-union flyers to ensure they were stocked and present in the lounges. We collected any union information in the lounge area and threw it away. We conducted intimidating one-on-one meetings behind closed doors with flight attendants to tell them not to join the union. We stood near AFA activists when they were speaking to other flight attendants to intimidate them. Delta kept as many flight attendants as they could on the seniority list to manipulate the current voting system. In simple terms: the more “flight attendants” on the list, the greater amount of no votes. After all, under the current rules everyone begins as a no vote.”

Markes Cooper – “Coop” is suffering from total kidney failure. He is awaiting a transplant in ATL where his adult children live. He has no sick time or vacation accruals left. A benefit will be held on his behalf on Friday, December 18 from 8AM to 6PM in the CSA break room below gate F-3. To donate raffle items please see Shawn in the Admin Office or Shop Committee. **Wal-Mart** – According to dailyfinance.com, Wal-Mart has agreed to pay \$40 million to settle a lawsuit that alleged the retailer cheated current and former employees in Massachusetts out of pay and failed to obey work rules. Wal-Mart was accused of altering time cards, refusing to pay overtime and denying workers rest and meal breaks. Wal-Mart paid \$640 million to settle similar suits last year.

This underscores the role that unions can play in the work place. A union acts as a watch dog to enforce work rules, makes sure that workers receive due process and makes sure that labor laws are upheld.

Union Meeting – The late night union meeting has been moved to Thursday, December 17 because of Christmas. The meeting will start at 11:15 at the Bloomington Eagles Club.

NMB Rule Change – Thousands of IAM members from Northwest Airlines, United and US Airways in MSP have signed cards and written letters in support of the rule change. They have now been joined by workers from DGS, ABM custodians, Host-Mariott workers, American Airlines workers and LSG catering truck drivers. We will be expanding these efforts in the coming weeks.

Redtalesonline.com every Thursday

Rebuilding Trust

Nearly a year ago on January 7, 2009 at a Town Hall Meeting in MSP Delta executive, Ed Bastian said **“It is important to keep sight of what our most important assets are. That’s our employees. Trust was broken over the years. We need to acknowledge it. We need to make changes and put our people first. Frankly, employees don’t feel they are the most important asset.”**

Bastian has not done much to further his cause of rebuilding trust over the past year. While there have been many nice sounding catch phrases produced, such as; “it is the right thing to do” and “servant leadership”, reality has looked a little different.

No Raises

When Delta employees were given a 3% raise, the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) refused to extend the same raise to Northwest employees saying they couldn’t because the IAM contract did not permit it. IAM District 143 President, Steve Gordon wrote a letter to Richard Anderson explaining that our contract was not an obstacle to a raise. The CLT then changed arguments and said that they would not “cherry pick” benefits and pay, essentially admitting that the IAM total compensation package was greater than the Delta package. Pay for Northwest employees could not be increased until representation issues were resolved, they said.

Many employees at both Delta and NWA believed that Delta’s action in relation to pay had more to do with political maneuvering for the union election than the stated reasons.

Again this November, when given another opportunity to “do the right thing” Delta refused. Northwest workers were scheduled to get a 1.5% raise in January 2010 if the Company decided to extend the IAM contract by a year. They chose not to extend the contract and chose not to give the raise. Of course, as part of a promise to bring employees up to “industry standard”, they could have given NWA employees and Delta employees a raise.

While Delta was lagging on its promise to bring us to “industry standard”, the CLT had brought itself up to “industry leading” compensation according to a Wall Street investment website, seekingalpha.com. This has not helped to rebuild trust. It is not the mark of “servant leadership”.

CLT Words Don’t Add Up

For months the Delta CLT had complained that the IAM was delaying resolution of representation by not calling for a union vote. Yet when the IAM did file for a vote for fleet service, Delta immediately filed briefs with the National Mediation Board that would have delayed the vote for months. This action left many at Northwest and Delta wondering why the actions of the CLT were not matching up with their words.

Delta has professed to want all employees to have complete access to information about unionization so they can make an informed decision. Again, their actions speak to something different. Deltanet has become an anti union website. Each day, to do our job, we must log into deltanet and get hit with articles and statements attacking unions, the IAM and AFA in particular. Pro union workers at both airlines are being harassed for their views and Delta is not living up to its own Advocacy Policy. This prompted one baggage handler to say, "Why do they hate us so much?" **Ed, please come back to MSP and tell us how 2010 will be different.**