

NATIONAL BRIEF

AIRCRAFT MECHANICS FRATERNAL ASSOCIATION

"AN INFORMED UNION MEMBER IS A STRONG UNION MEMBER"

August 7, 2007

Volume I, Issue 4

A Lifetime of Service is Recognized



Harry Kelber has served the labor movement for more than seven decades as a journalist, organizer, educator, pamphleteer, Internet columnist, and tough fighter for union democracy and worker rights. Currently, he posts two columns a week on the Internet for a labor audience.

His Web site is: <http://www.laboreducator.org/>

On behalf of AMFA, National Director O.V. Delle-Femine presents an award to Harry in recognition of his 70 plus years of dedicated service to workers the world over.

Harry is still optimistic:

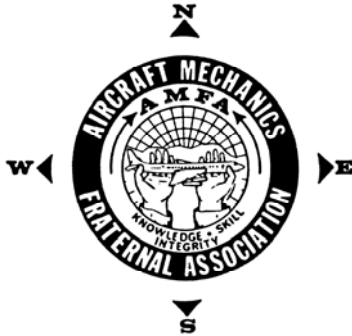
"These are tough times for working people and their unions. Yet, based on my personal experience in the 1930s, I am hopeful. At the start of that decade, 25% of the working population was unemployed. Another 25% were working part-time and workers had no legal protections."

"But at the end of that decade, hundreds of thousands, including women and minorities, had joined unions, and we had won Social Security, unemployment insurance, and the wages and hours law."

"If we cling to our faith in unionism and continue our struggles, labor can rise again!"

Horizon Air Accepts Aviation Safety Action Program

On June 28th Mike Ayala, National Safety & Standards Director; Louie Key, Region I Director; Walt Nelsen, Local 14 Safety & Standards Chairman; Dave Johnson, Local 14 Horizon Air Safety & Standards Coordinator; and Tom Imlah, Local 14 Horizon Air Airline Representative; attended a signing ceremony at the Horizon Air hanger in Portland for the Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Letter of Agreement (LOA). As Mike stated at the event, "we'd like to thank the Horizon membership for approving and embracing this safety program which will benefit all parties involved and increase the level of safety at the carrier." With the passing of the ASAP LOA, we are now in the process of holding an election for the Primary and Alternate AMFA ASAP Event Review Committee (ERC) Representatives.



Knowledge

Skill

Integrity

Important Dates:

- JAC meeting Aug 14-15
LaGuardia Sheraton
- NWA Strikers Ball
Aug 18

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AMFA and FAA Prevail in Effort to Prevent Repair Stations from Evading Drug and Alcohol Rules

Vendors will be held to the same standards as technicians at the carriers.

On July 17, 2007, the D.C. Circuit Court rejected a legal challenge by the Aeronautical Repair Station Association (ARSA) to an FAA Final Rule clarifying that air carriers must require drug and alcohol tests of all employees of its contractors – including employees of subcontractors at any tier – who perform safety-related functions such as aircraft maintenance. AMFA obtained official intervener status in the litigation in order to present its position; AMFA’s stance is that by exempting repair station employees from testing requirements not only undermined safety, but also created an improper economic incentive for air carriers to outsource their maintenance work in an effort to avoid the costs associated with drug and alcohol testing. AMFA was the only labor organization to intervene in this litigation. AMFA also intervened because the Association has the political tenacity to present arguments that the FAA would find too embarrassing to make. As AMFA stated in its Summary Argument, there has been a seismic change in airline maintenance practices. Five years ago, the major airlines directly performed the greater part of their maintenance and preventive maintenance - they do not anymore. This disturbing revolution does not present a “potential” threat only to safety. The quality of maintenance has already precipitously declined and passengers have already died.

ARSA’s argument that it would be unfair to test subcontractor employees who are performing safety-sensitive maintenance on aircraft components when the employee has “no idea that he or she is doing so,” was exposed by AMFA and received appropriate ridicule. [ARSA] confirms that the safety sensitive work that used to be concentrated under the direct control of the carriers themselves is now scattered to the winds – landing in obscure shops where the employees have no appreciation for the fact that people’s lives depend on their sobriety. This condition undoubtedly makes the FAA’s task more daunting. It is no excuse, however, for aggravating the situation by eliminating a fundamental safety precaution.

The D.C. Circuit Court’s decision will have the effect of enhancing safety and neutralizing an artificial cost advantage that has perversely promoted air carriers’ abandonment of their in-house maintenance operations. AMFA’s intervention in this litigation is part of an ongoing effort to forcefully present these issues to the judiciary, legislature, federal agencies, and the traveling public.

UAL MPA Letter of Agreement to Go Into Effect

The Letter of Agreement (LOA) to accrete the United Airlines Maintenance Planning Analysts (MPAs) into the Mechanic’s Agreement passed by almost 60% on July 30th. This LOA will provide contractual structure and protections for the MPA classification. The Negotiating Committee, chaired by Region I Director Louie Key, will sign the LOA into effect in early August.

Additionally, the UAL Maintenance Control, or SAMC, negotiations started on July 17th in San Francisco and are scheduled to resume on August 8th and 9th.