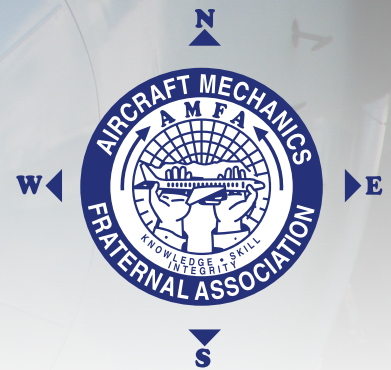


THE GRAPEVINE

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Democracy, Transparency, and Accountability

Over 50 years ago when a group of aircraft maintenance technicians at American Airlines became frustrated trying to make their voices heard in their industrial union, AMFA was born.



By Louie Key, National Director

I have always wanted the best for our profession. That's why I got involved in AMFA. It's important to me to protect and promote the interests of our members and our craft. That's never going to change. Challenges, struggles, and frustrations haven't lessened

my commitment to the union, to our members, and to protecting our craft. And my fellow members of the National Executive

Council (NEC) feel the same: our unwavering promise is that we're in office to serve you, all of you. Don't ever doubt it.

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Setting the Standards: AMFA and the Ideals We Represent



Louie Key, National Director

Over 50 years ago when a group of aircraft maintenance technicians at American Airlines became frustrated trying to make their

voices heard in their industrial union, AMFA was born. They were frustrated by their representation from the Transport Workers Union (TWU), which also represented multiple other classifications at the airline. Our founders led by O.V. Delle-Femine, after realizing that they would forever be a minority, decided to form our union – the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA). Delle-Femine and his fellow technicians decided that AMFA would represent only the “Class and Craft” of technician and related employees, ensuring that they would permanently be the majority.

Our founders crafted the first AMFA Constitution embedding the concepts of democracy, transparency, and accountability to the membership in that document. They placed safeguards in our Constitution so these founding principles could never be diminished.

Over time AMFA, and the ide-

als we represent, became more popular in the airline industry thanks to the vigorous effort of our founders. Through the years, we have represented many different carriers starting with Ozark Airlines in 1964. Mergers, bankruptcies, and representation elections have changed our membership numbers, but never our core principles. We’ve fought bitter battles with other “raiding” unions. We’ve seen members lost to empty promises. But, in that

One core principle stands above all the others:
AMFA is here for you, the individual member.

time, we’ve maintained our integrity and we refuse to make the same empty promises as others.

I still believe, as I’m sure many of our members understand, we are superior to the industrial unions in representing our craft. And the tough lessons we’ve learned over the years have us wholly committed to building on our strengths and working on our weaknesses every day.

One core principle stands above all the others: AMFA is here for you, the individual member. You truly are the strength of AMFA and we want to build a stronger foundation for your future.

The NEC has decided to pursue a few goals at the national level to better our union.

- **Embrace Safety.** We will continue to support and improve the Aviation Safety Action Programs (ASAP), and work to increase industrial safety in our workplace.
- **Cultivate and develop relationships** with other unions, government agencies, and politicians friendly to our profession and goals.
- **Improve our communications.** We’ve already increased our communications but we hope to get better at leveraging rapidly evolving technology.
- **Work with the Locals** to help strengthen solidarity across our Association.
- Most importantly, **maintain our unwavering focus** on the basics of contract negotiations and enforcement.

We currently face a considerable challenge in the SWA Aircraft Maintenance Technician (AMT)/Ground Support Equipment (GSE)/Plant Maintenance Technician contract negotiations. The company has made it abundantly clear there are multiple initiatives that they believe must be achieved in these negotiations. These items rang from attacking our Scope language protections,

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proposing new duty time limitations, moving to a personal time off program with attendance policy modifications, lengthening the pay scale, denying our Facility Maintenance Technicians a place in the AMT's contract, and international field service limitations.

These are contentious items for our members and we need to prepare for a combative process going forward; also we must follow all the processes outlined by the National Mediation Board.

The past has taught us that going on a traditional strike is not the only option, and there are other

strategies that have proven very successful. The Association of Flight Attendants (AFA) was very successful in an alternative strategy called "Create Havoc Around Our System" (CHAOS). This campaign brought a successful conclusion to their long drawn-out negotiations. The NEC is developing a similar strategy that we believe will be equally as effective for our members. If you'd like to learn more about CHAOS just type AFA CHAOS into a search engine such as Google. It's worth the time to watch the video if you do. We will of course work tirelessly to negotiate the best possible outcome for our members, but we will also prepare for alternative actions as necessary.

AMFA is best when the democracy that you enjoy is combined with your engagement. Get involved: volunteer, vote, and participate. Go to the AMFA National Website at www.amfanational.org and register. You can also "like" us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter for the most up-to-date information on your union.

If you ever hear a fellow AMFA member disparage our union, I hope you are quick to help them understand they are already members of the best union in our profession. Explain to them that any issues they may have can be better resolved under our structure. Remind them that they need to be part of the solution, not part of the problem, and AMFA is the only union which provides them the opportunity to do so.

From the Editor

By Justin Madden



Justin Madden,
National Secretary/
Treasurer

As this edition of the Grapevine hits your mailbox, the recent holiday season will have come and gone. Hopefully you were able to

spend quality time with your family and friends and now enter 2014 recharged and ready to take on the new year. I can assure you that your national officers are up to the task at hand.

Even though this year will without question bring challenges to our Association ("We Must Stand United"), the leadership of AMFA is determined towards the future with one eye on the past (National Director's article). We need your help and support to achieve great success and that starts with you volunteering (Region I Director's article), or at the bare minimum support-

**"We are only as strong
as we are united,
as weak as we are
divided."**

ing those that do volunteer on your behalf (Assistant National Director's article). We are earnestly trying to improve communication and protect our profession's interest both at your carrier and abroad (S & S Director's article), and will continue to do so.

The articles mentioned above are well thought out and purposed for the same component the Association is built on — YOU. Please take the time to read each one and let us know your thoughts. As JK Rowling wrote in her book Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, "We are only as strong as we are united, as weak as we are divided." We're asking you to get on-board and increase the solidarity of our Association for the sake of yourself, your family, and your profession. Join us in making AMFA strong!



Photo credit: Dylan Ashe

Be a Shop Representative

By Earl Clark

As union members we are all shop representatives in one way or another. We should all work to ensure justice on the job; however, the official shop representative is often the face of the union to other members and to the company. He is a chief enforcer of the contract and members' representative to management.



Earl Clark,
Region I Director

Most of us in the workplace look at our shop representative as the union person whose main job is to deal with grievances. Although it is the most visible, dramatic, and time consuming aspect of the job, grievance handling is just one of many responsibilities. Shop representatives act as organizers, communicators, leaders, advocates, mentors, counselors, and friends. They are the front line soldiers. They are our foundation.

Shop representatives work side-by-side with us daily. They advocate for our interests, resolve disputes, and monitor the implementation of the

terms of our contracts. It is through the shop representative that we, the members, can exercise our democracy and member control of our union. They are the conduit of information between the area representative, airline representative, and local executive council and us, the members.

As internal organizers and communicators, the shop representatives keep us informed of union meetings, urge us to attend, and engage us in the union process. They gather information and disseminate it to us when issues arise. Everything they do keeps us involved in

our union and spreads the message of unity within our ranks. Without their involvement and unity, the union would have a hard time protecting and serving us.

Without shop representatives strictly enforcing our contracts in the workplace, the contract is just words in a book. Without them looking out for our interests, company abuse and discrimination will happen.

The more of us who get involved, the more effective our union will be. Being a shop representative can be very rewarding. If you work in a station or location and do not have a shop representative, consider stepping up. You can make a difference.

If you are interested in serving your union, contact your area representative, airline representative, or local executive council and start advocating for your fellow workers and the union.

Support Your Local Officers

"Tolerance implies no lack of commitment to one's own beliefs. Rather it condemns the oppression or persecution of others."

— John F. Kennedy

By Aaron Hansen

Local executive officers consistently work hard contributing their own hours as well as utilizing union business time to carry out the goals and objectives of the local as dictated by the membership. Some of this time is spent traveling to various outstations visiting with other members and addressing their concerns. The time accomplishing union business and spent traveling is not only time away from work, but also involves spending time away from their families. This dedication to the membership and to our careers in making sure that the day-to-day activities of the locals are carried out in a precise manner is altruism at its greatest. Each individual officer has their own tasks at hand in making sure that the local's activities are carried out in a precise manner, which includes meeting together on a regular basis to bring the will of the local to action.

Although much of our maintenance is done at night, many times, the local officer's work is accomplished during traditional business hours. Whether it is involves the secretary preparing for an election, maintaining meeting minutes, and handling the communication of the local, or the safety and standards chairman working on a safety violation or standards issue they become aware of not only at their station but perhaps at an outstation, your local executive council is hard at work. The president and vice president attend and coordinate meetings on behalf of the local as well as assist the other officers with clearing roadblocks and diversions that they may incur during their daily activities. The financial side of a local is one of the busiest departments. Not only is the treasurer tasked with overseeing investments and accounts, they deal with many weekly transactions and requests. It is a very time-consuming process to ensure that everything is accurate and involves a keen eye and sharp mind. Of course, there are other officers and representatives who

handle everything from updating the local's website to handling audits and dealing with contractual and professional standards issues.



Aaron Hansen,
Assistant National
Director

Unfortunately, we take our local officers and representatives for granted. Too often they are teased by their peers at work about being gone on union business and even worse, some members may look at it as a "scam" to get off of a specific shift. Management has and will continue to use this to their advantage and try to make your Association representatives look bad. We cannot let that happen! The truth is that AMFA is a self-run organization that is purely controlled by the membership, and those representatives elected by you are tasked with carrying out the objectives of the membership. Don't forget that the time these folks spend away from work is far outweighed by the sacrifice of personal time that is made on your behalf.

Please reflect on what you want for representation...if you insist on having a powerful union that is responsive, then remember not to fall prey to management's "divide and conquer" strategy of berating Association officers and representatives for taking time to handle union business. Correct them and any member who sides with management by providing a reminder that these positions are integral and that you offer your full faith and support to your union leaders. We must persevere through the work that needs to be done and support the people who do the work on a daily basis. And the next time you see your Association officer or representative on the line, in the shop, or on the hangar floor, show your appreciation by giving them a pat on the back — they surely deserve it.

We Must Stand United

In order to understand the process of amending our contract, you must first understand the basics of the Railway Labor Act (RLA).

The RLA, enacted in 1926 and amended in 1936 to include the airline industry, was created to avoid work stoppages that threaten to substantially interrupt interstate commerce or deprive any section of the country essential transportation services.

In the early 1900s labor unrest, including violent and frequent work stoppages pitted federal soldiers against striking railroad workers. In 1924, President Calvin Coolidge urged both railroads and their unions to recommend legislation for better labor/management relations and reduce the threat of railroad shutdowns. The railroads and their unions jointly drafted the legislation.

In 1926, President Coolidge signed the RLA into law, guaranteeing the right of workers to organize and join unions and elect representatives without employer coercion or interference.

The RLA makes it the duty of all carriers and their employees to exert every reasonable effort to voluntarily settle disputes.

Tenets of the RLA:

- To avoid work stoppages or any interruption to commerce

- To ensure the right of employees to join a labor union (1934)
- To assist in the prompt and orderly settlement of disputes covering rates of pay, work rules, or working conditions
- To assist in prompt settlement of grievances, contract disputes, work rules or working conditions
- Collective bargaining under the RLA

When negotiating a collective bargaining agreement under the RLA, representatives for both labor and management must file contract proposals in writing.



Once initial bargaining proposals have been exchanged, the parties must meet and confer in an attempt to reach a voluntary agreement. During the negotiation process if either party believes they have negotiated to an impasse on the open issues, they may request to invoke mediation assistance with the National Mediation Board. Until an agreement is reached or the RLA's dispute resolution processes have been exhausted, each party must maintain the "status quo."

Over the years, both labor and management have criticized the NMB's administration of the mediation process—particularly the timing of the termination of mediation.

Generally, one of the parties to a

labor-management dispute is more interested in changing the current wages and working conditions, while the other party prefers to maintain the existing terms in the collective bargaining agreement. In large part, the parties' preferences depend on the prevailing economic conditions.

Speak with One Voice

At Southwest Airlines (SWA) we started the negotiation process over a year and a half ago; our contract has been amendable since August 16, 2012. We have worked very hard advocating for the membership and it must be recognized that we are in contentious negotiations. SWA has indicated to all of their labor groups that they intend for their newly settled contracts to be cost neutral, so that any pay increases would be funded strictly through work rule changes giving the company greater flexibility, cost savings, or efficiencies. We of course do not buy into their premise that this is necessary.

The Negotiating Committee is doing its very best to negotiate on your behalf, utilizing Association resources and expert opinion and advice. The fact remains that the most powerful tool in their box is an engaged and supportive membership. As more articles are negotiated to impasse — or to put it precisely "tabled" — the road ahead is becoming increasingly difficult and requires your attention. Start attending our "open negotiations" as an observer, read the written update or watch the video update to see where we currently stand. Finally, stand by your Negotiating Committee as they bargain on your behalf. They're doing "Whatever it Takes." Are you?

There Are No Borders in Aviation



Dave Brooks,
National Safety &
Standard Director

By Dave
Brooks

I attended the Aircraft Engineers International (AEI) Congress in Melbourne Australia in November. The conference, held

annually, is an opportunity for all members to meet face-to-face and discuss issues affecting our craft and strategies for the changing governmental agency policies we deal with.

AEI is the sole international body representing the collective interests of over 40,000 licensed aircraft maintenance engineers in more than 30 countries. AEI's mission is to be the global voice of aircraft engineers (AMTs) by providing representation and support in order to promote the highest levels of aviation safety maintenance standards worldwide. Our affiliation with AEI ensures we too have a seat at the table.

AMFA is a member of AEI, and holds a voting position on the Executive Board as Secretary of the Americas. The congress covered typical business such as elections, reports, budgets, housekeeping, and proposals and also had several presentations including one from Skype on FAA FAR regulations vs. European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) regulations. Other topics covered included: current working groups in which AEI is involved, fatigue, public relations, outsourcing,

and the importance of the licensed mechanic and how to protect our craft.

What happens globally affects us locally. Many of the discussions during the congress had to do with the proposed removal of licenses in Europe and the fear that the U.S. would adopt something similar such as having one licensed AMT overseeing several unlicensed mechanics. Currently the movement is to substitute the licensed AMT with a repairman, as it is cheaper. This is happening globally. With the recent mergers of larger airlines and bankruptcy realignments, we can see the trend. We intend to fight to keep this from happening.

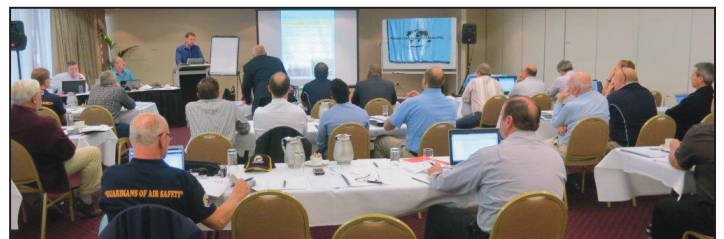
Globally, aviation companies are pushing for easy and cheap maintenance with profit as a priority. Outsourcing is a big issue and is being closely discussed and observed. A recent U.S. Congressional report states that Aeroman mechanics earn a starting wage of just two dollars an hour. Replacing skilled AMTs with these workers is a trend we are fighting.

Regulation is necessary in our industry. We must work with AEI, and other organizations to ensure that strict licensing and regulations stay in place. Forging alliances with the International Civil Aviation Orga-

nization, AEI and other organizations with similar goals, we can ensure that AMFA has a voice to affect change globally. Currently FAA and EASA are working together on regulations that affect us all. Just because we don't fly to Europe does not mean it doesn't affect us.

The message I took from this congress: There are no borders in aviation. It's a small world and the aviation community is even smaller.

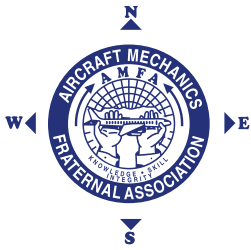
There is a fraternity amongst AMTs and strength in numbers. We are professionals who are loyal to our skilled craft. Our primary duty is to our license first, then the company. When changes are proposed to our craft, especially those that could put our profession at risk, we must do our due diligence to fight back and have our voice heard. If we don't protect the value of our profession, who will? We need AEI and AMFA to accomplish this.



2013 AEI Congress in session



National Director Louie Key and Safety and Standards Director Dave Brooks attend event



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Dues Objector Notification

Federal law requires that the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA) notify all AMFA represented employees annually of its dues objector procedures. These procedures require that you notify AMFA between February 1 and March 15, 2014, if you intend to be a dues objector for that year. Dues objector notices received either before or after these dates will not be accepted and you will not have dues objector status for that year.

Dues objectors are required to pay only the portion of dues that is germane to collective bargaining, including but not limited to, grievance adjustment and contract

administration. The non-germane percentage of dues is set annually by June 1 and is based on an independent CPA's verification of germane/non-germane expenses for the prior year. A compilation of 2012 expenses was conducted and the fees paid by dues objectors in 2013 were 93.39 percent of full membership dues.

If a dues objector disagrees with the calculation of the percentage of the reduction, our policy allows for an appeal before an independent arbitrator. Costs of the arbitrator are paid by the Association. Objectors bear the costs of presenting their appeal.

It is important that if you elect to become a dues objector you will no longer be entitled to the rights and privileges of membership, including but not limited to, the right to hold a National or Local office, vote in National or Local elections, attend union meetings, participate in contract negotiations, or vote on a contract ratification. We suggest you consider these restrictions before deciding whether or you wish to become a dues objector. To receive more information on filing for dues objector status, please call the AMFA National Office at: (303) 752-2632 or write to: AMFA National, 14001 E. Iliff Ave, Suite 217, Aurora, CO 80014.