

Greetings From Retired Seattle Flight Attendant Litsa Mizelle



I was born in the Sudan to Greek parents, went to the Greek Community School in Khartoum and have been in uniform since I was 5. We used Greek, English and Arabic on a daily basis and I picked up some French and German along the way. I entered the University of Khartoum at age 17 for civil engineering studies, but my heart wanted to fly so (at age 18) I joined Sudan Airways. I soon decided that I really wanted to be an independent American woman, so I

immigrated by myself to the USA at age 19 and went to the McConnell Airline School in Minneapolis.

I joined Northwest Orient Airlines in 1966 and was based in D.C., but went back to MSP in a few months. I transferred to Seattle in 1968 and fell in love with the Pacific Northwest and Hawaii.

When I started flying, we had to look like Barbie dolls, stay thin, could not be married, could not be pursers and had to quit at age 32. Girdles and high heels were mandatory. Oh joy! As laws changed, flight attendant Mary Pat Laffey and a small group of other brave union flight attendants started a class action discrimination lawsuit, and soon many of us joined in. After many years in the courts and many appeals of the verdict by NWA, we finally won. We could now get married, have children, be pursers, wear glasses and no more weight check. We could fly as long as we wanted, and flying became a career we love instead of a temporary job.

In the early 70s, I was elected TWU-SEA Council Union President. During my term, ALPA Stewards and Stewardesses division won a representation vote. I became the Transition President and then was elected SEA Council President again. When my term was over, I wanted time for a social life and did not run for office. It was hard flying my schedule and representing flight attendants at the same time (before cell phones and emails), but I loved protecting our rights.

After 43 years of flying for NWA (system number 14), I retired in 2009, but my heart still flies with you. I wanted to stay longer so I could give you one more Union-Yes vote in the representation election, but my body was finding it hard to fly (damaged knees), so I accepted the last buy-out offer from Delta.

Northwest Airlines has been my home and extended family all these years, and I welcome my new Delta extended family. I have loved my job, my company, my co-workers and my passengers and have a large stack of commendations to prove it. I hope you will join us in voting YES for AFA.

I retired as the SEA AFA-CWA Council 96 Secretary. I feel so strongly that we need a voice and vote in our future that I continue to volunteer my services for my council until they have a new elected secretary. I still write the Council 96 union meeting minutes, also provide and pay (with the help of donations) for lunch for our union meetings. I help during benefits enrollment and still answer calls and questions on pensions and benefits from many bases. Luckily, my husband understands how much this means to me.

During the bankruptcy, we fought for our contract Scope Clause and preserved it. The Court decided the dollar amount of cuts we HAD to take, but WE had a say and voted on WHAT to cut. We, the flight attendants, CHOSE to cut senior vacations in half and cut many pay items to protect our Scope Clause and prevent the permanent loss of jobs for our junior people. The company really fought hard and wanted to get rid of our Scope, so they could hire low cost foreign flight attendants—for “cultural reasons,” they said.

I am reading a lot of B.S. against AFA, which is emailed to you on almost a daily basis, from someone who still holds a grudge over the election against our previous union. I have seen the appearances in company propaganda videos. I used to admire him for helping create an independent union, but I am ashamed of his current anti-union behavior. I can understand why for him and some others this is a personal war, but I see them as angry people making bad and irrational decisions.

Please do not let some people’s revenge rants and meaningless \$ comparisons cheat you out of this chance to give yourselves union representation, a voice and vote in decisions about your future and a legally binding contract. Delta gave its pre-merger flight attendants a few extra hourly dollars to keep unions out so they could maintain TOTAL control of all work rules (like the social security offset on Delta’s frozen pensions), where the real savings are.

Our frozen contract pension gives me \$2,456.14 per month, before taxes and insurance. This includes a survivor pension benefit for my husband in the event of my death. I started my Social Security at age 63 and receive \$1576.00 per month WITHOUT offsets—ever. Until age 65, we have 50% company subsidized medical insurance premiums (currently \$194/month), which depends on the existence of our contract. This is something you can also get with a contract.

Without a contract, whatever Delta gives, Delta CAN take away. Ask your pilots why they want and always have a union and a contract.

Love you all and wish you safe skies, happy landings and a contract that all of you together will help create. **Please Vote Yes for AFA.**



Aloha,
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