

An Announcement from your Family Awareness Committee

Dear Family Members,

This is the Family Awareness Committee's (FAC) second *Home Front Briefing* publication. What's a *Home Front Briefing*? Since the establishment of the FAC we have received numerous questions from spouses and significant others about the contract process at Flight Options. In fact, the interest we have received has exceeded our expectations ten fold. The *Home Front Briefing* is the FAC's way of answering questions we receive that are of general interest to all Flight Options families. It's important that family members and loved ones have accurate information, as we all hope for the best and prepare for the worst in the final stage of contract negotiations. I have been informed that the Negotiating Committee and IBT Local 1108 Executive Board will continue producing their regular updates and communications to union members. The *Home Front Briefing* provides information that is more specific to what is on the minds of family members. We intend to send you a *Home Front Briefing* on a weekly basis depending upon the volume of questions we receive.

QUESTION:

Dear Donna,

Thanks for your phone call. I am very new to this and trying to understand how the union works. I signed up on the message board and the web site to stay informed! My husband has been furloughed and he has not worked for 5 months. We have many ups and downs and we are anxious. It has been a very stressful time for us. I hope my husband gets back to work soon. I don't have a lot of time to volunteer because we have 3 kids and I had to go back to work when he got laid off. What can I do to help support the union?

Family in Florida

ANSWER:

Dear Family in Florida

Thanks for your question. I enjoyed talking with you the other evening. It is my opinion that the best way we as families can support the union is by supporting our pilots and becoming personally involved the final stages of the bargaining process. IBT Local 1108 has provided spouses and family members with an area on the union's message board for us to discuss issues and ask questions. Feel free to do so. It's a good way to communicate with other spouses with similar questions. I also think it's important that we communicate within our own families. The possibility of a strike can take its toll on relationships with spouses, significant others and children. My husband and I took the time to personally explain to our kids how important unions and contracts are to professional pilots. I was surprised at how much they understood. We made it pretty simple: friends stick by friends, and that's what unions are all about. Should the NMB release the pilot group for self-help, it will be critical that families remain strong. Please stay in touch.

QUESTION:

I don't understand why I should encourage my spouse to pay dues to the union when we are struggling to make ends meet. Flight Options pilots get paid so poorly already. Dues are one more expense out of our budget that's already way too tight. The economy is so bad, but my spouse tells me that paying dues is so important. I'm open minded. Please help me understand why I need to put monthly union dues in our family's budget. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Ohio Family

ANSWER:

Dear Ohio Family,

Like you, I know just how poorly the Flight Options pilots are compensated for their hard work. Even when the economy was good, they were still the lowest paid in the fractional world! Paying union dues is very important for a number of important reasons: First, negotiations cost a lot of money. Lawyers and consultants who work for the union don't come for free. Travel costs and salaries for our Negotiating Team have to be paid for by union dues. Of course negotiations are the only way things are going to get better for Flight Options pilots but negotiations can't happen if our union leaders don't have the economic resources to hang in there. I consider union dues to be an investment in my family's future. Second, my husband has explained to me that only union members-in-good standing get to vote on a proposed contract. You can't be a member-in-good standing if your dues aren't paid up. I want to make sure my husband can exercise his democratic right to vote on his future salary and working conditions. Up until this point, we had to accept what was given to us by management. That's not good enough anymore because we see what it got us (or didn't get us). Finally, my husband explained something to me and my kids that I think is very important: The contract negotiations at Flight Options haven't been easy, but the union never gave up. The pilots who have paid their dues have been an invaluable part of that process. My husband says those who haven't paid their dues will still get the benefits of a contract and are taking advantage of those who have financially supported the union. I try to teach my kids the importance of people working together for positive change. I don't want them to think it's acceptable to stand on the sidelines and exploit the sacrifices and hard work of others without doing their part and contributing their fair share to the cause. Not paying union dues but getting the benefits of those who do is not right in my book. So, I think paying union dues is the obligation of every Flight Options pilot. Let me know if you want to talk some more! Thanks for contacting me, Donna.

FINAL THOUGHTS:

We have been very fortunate to see a large number of spouses, significant others and family members signing up for the message board and the Local 1108 website. If you haven't already done so, please be sure to sign up for both. The message board allows you to post questions or concerns in the "spouses only" section. Please continue to communicate with each other as our Union leaders continue with negotiations. Keep your questions coming in, stay informed and, above all, stick together. Let's continue to be the voice for the families and loved ones of our pilots as September approaches!

Best Regards,
Donna Nedrow

FAC Program Coordinator
family.fo@ibt1108.org