

# COMMO CHECK!

Volume 13, Issue 4

Dedicated to the proposition that a career in aviation is not something you do, it's something you survive!

1 Sep 2013

## The Official Newsletter of the Professional Helicopter Pilots Association, OPEIU Local 102

### From the President by Ron Arsenault

The Company asked me to put out some information concerning the upcoming annual pay raises in October. Per the CBA, Appendix B, top of page B-2, "Monetary increases affecting wages, health, and pensions will become effective the first full pay period following the date specified (October 1, 2013). The first full pay period begins on 12 October and runs through to 25 October. That pay is deposited for that pay period on 1 November. So don't be surprised when you don't see an increase in pay until 1 November.

In the last day or so Company Management informed me that short term lay-offs may be in the near future. The reason for this is a shortage of students to fill out the last few classes of the current fiscal year. The shortage of students is mainly due to the National Guard running out of funding and not sending those students due to start late in this fiscal year. A second reason is that some countries did not fill their requested seats under the FMS program. These layoffs will roll through the divisions, one division at a time and should be short term in nature.

Membership is still lower than we would like to see, so please get with the new personnel and let them know the benefits of being a Union member. These benefits include the right to vote on Union matters, right to hold office, and access to Union sponsored insurance plans.

While I'm discussing Union membership, I need to make sure that everyone is aware that our monthly General Membership Meetings are open to all members and are scheduled for the second Thursday of each month at 6:30 PM. To encourage meeting attendance we are serving free pizza and soft drinks, and have a ticket raffle at the completion of each meeting. The last 2 meetings the raffle amounts were \$76 and \$83.

Last subject of discussion is Officer Elections. We have three people running for the one contested position of Vice President. The three people are David Oltmans out of the Air Force Division who is our current Vice President, Barry Martin from Primary Division who is currently a Trustee and Bill Haaren also from Primary Division. The position of Vice President is a very important one. The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President in his absence, to sign all orders on the Treasury as required, and in the case of resignation or death of the President, shall assume the position of the President. The Vice President shall also preside when called upon by the President and at times when the President may be temporarily unable to discharge the duties of the Presidency.

These are some very important duties. I am asking every member to make it a point to exercise your most important right of membership on September 12<sup>th</sup> and vote for the candidate of your choice. There will be a ballot box at Cairns

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**President**  
**Ron Arsenault**  
**PHPA Local 102**

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**From the President** (Continued from page 1)

between shifts for the Primary Division and those Advanced Division guys on the flight line, at Shell between shifts and at the PHPA office all day for all other personnel. The results of the election will be tabulated and announced that night at the regularly scheduled General Membership Meeting. Good luck to all three gentlemen.

**Fly Safe**

## **GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

### **August 8, 2013**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by President Ron Arsenault. Advanced Division Trustee Lee Murphy is on Simulator Period 4. There were 20 members present. Recording Secretary: The July meeting minutes were read by Jim Guy and the minutes were approved as read. Secretary-Treasurer: Treasurer Richard White gave the Treasurer's report and the report was approved as read. There are 294 members.

#### **Trustees' Reports:**

Primary Division: Barry Martin had nothing to report.

Advanced Division: Lee Murphy was not present.

BWS Division: Rick Boylston had nothing to report.

Trustee at Large: Rod George had nothing to report.

#### **Vice-Presidents Report**

Dave Oltmans reported that he was 3 weeks post op and was getting better.

#### **Old Business**

FOIA Issue: There is still no movement yet on our request. We have turned in a letter to Martha Roby requesting a Congressional investigation on the issue. We know that the documents are here at Ft. Rucker but the Army will not produce them for us.

Prescriptions: All insurance companies readjust as generic forms of drugs become available. Patents are only for a short time and as soon as they expire generics are usually available for a cheaper price to the carrier. We have been able to get the Tier 1 drugs if we are willing to pay extra for them but some of their policies are changing. The BC/BS website will show you how the Tier system works and there is also a Chat area where you can get everything explained to you. They will also help you find an alternative drug if there is one available. Some members have found this site to be very helpful.

Weight Policy Lawsuit: The paperwork is with the judge. It has been three weeks now and we are still waiting. The Army filed to get it dismissed and we filed for a continuance.

Weight Control Policy Negotiations: We are negotiating a policy to put into the CBA. Until there is a settlement of the lawsuit we have to agree to a policy for the implementation of the weigh-ins. There has to be clear rules governing what an employee's status will be if he becomes "ineligible" due to weight.

Grievance 13-1: We are close to a settlement for the two employees involved. We are trying to get their leave reinstated. The Company wants to settle it also. Remember that our lawsuit about the weight issue is with the Government and the Grievance is with the Company.

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**August Minutes** (Continued from page 2)

**LTD Update:** We are currently in discussions with several parties concerning our plan. We may have to restructure some of it. There is a phone call lined up for Monday to talk to Scott Allison. Steve Rush is working with a guy out of Atlanta for Loss of License Insurance for PHPA and Local 109. We will ask him about LTD insurance also.

**2:1 IP/Student Ratio:** We are still working on a Bridge Agreement that would allow IP's to train students while their students are taking check rides. There are still many details to work out; In turn, the Company will try to fix the "PL" problem that we have been having. There are currently plenty of floats to go around helping with this. Also, the Academics section will not be taking 4-hour lunch breaks like the Company wanted. That is something we will not agree to. There will be an expiration date to the Bridge Agreement of about 15 March, 2014. If it is not working, we will not agree to continue the policy.

**COR Job Description:** We have made a second request to the Army for a copy of the COR's job description with responsibilities and authority. We have not received anything yet. This is not a secret document but they will not produce it for us. We may send a letter to Martha Roby concerning this issue also.

**Advanced Division Issues:** There has been a staffing issue at ARAC due to the sequestration. This has caused serious delays with Advanced Division aircraft. The Brigade Commander brought up the idea of training students in the simulator only. As of Wednesday they are scheduled to spend 6 weeks in the simulator for 45 hours and a check ride and then 2 weeks at the flight line for 10.7-15.7 hours. This is supposed to be temporary in nature. The Post leadership is totally in favor of keeping the students in the aircraft for instrument training. The CG was briefed three times in one day by the BDE CMR as to why he was trying to change the POI. He was informed that he had no authority to do this. As of today, the rumor is that we will go back to the original POI. The sequestration is supposed to end next week.

**Meeting Incentives:** Get the word out that we are still serving soft drinks and pizza and are now doing a raffle in which meeting participants could win a sizable pot.

**Election:** We are still in need of election tellers. If you would like to volunteer, please let us know.

**Sandy Ankrom** had a stroke August 1<sup>st</sup> while at the hospital. He is in Health South Rehab in Dothan.

**New Business**

**Class Sizes:** Low numbers are due to the Reserve Component's turning back slots because they are out of money and the FMS students being oversold. Hopefully after October 1<sup>st</sup> they should start back up at the normal sizes. This will depend on the budget.

**October Pay Increase:** Remind your members that they will not see the pay increase until the first full pay period following the 1<sup>st</sup>. That pay period will be from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 25<sup>th</sup>. The November 1<sup>st</sup> check will be the first one showing the increase.

**V.P. Nominees:** Bill Haaren Barry Martin, and Dave Oltmans each gave a short speech.

**From The Floor**

**The question was asked if the E-board had any plan of attack for the negotiations next year.** Yes, we are constantly taking notes on all the current issues as well as looking at topics we know will be on the agenda. Health Care is an example. We will be talking with the BC/BS rep after the Christmas holidays to discuss our plan. We are not sure how it might be affected by the upcoming changes mandated by the Government. We know that the "Service Contract Act" won't allow the Company to drop our plan.

**The New "Solo Exam" issue was brought up.** IP's are being told that no matter how the student scores on the exam, we must put "Student scored a 90% corrected to 100%" on the IEF-I grade slip in ARTS. IP's are told to coach the student thru the test until they pass it. The E-board will look into the issue.

The winning draw in the raffle took home \$81 at this meeting. Last month's winner received \$72.

Meeting adjourned at 7:38 PM.

## IT IS TIME TO VOTE by Bill Haaren

It is election time again, the position of Vice President is up for vote and I want to be your next Vice President. Our last election approximately one-third of the members voted, for those that voted thanks. Every member should exercise their vote for officers to represent our Union. Given the recent events that have occurred here at Ft. Rucker, the Army and the economy, everyone is looking for ways to reduce costs and increase production. We need strong leadership to ensure changes in our work; modifications to our CBA will not result in a loss of benefits to us.

So what are my qualifications? I have been flying for a living for over the last 30 years; have accumulated hours and hours of flight time. That has little to do with running a Union. However, 7 of those years were spent flying in the Gulf of Mexico, first with PHI, then a Part 91 flight company and then Air Logistics, at a time when there wasn't a Union and the companies were working hard to keep the Unions out. Our living conditions were terrible; no seniority recognition, promotions at the whim of the company and overtime was given only to the employees that the company liked. Anyone who supported the Union, were treated like outcasts and at the first opportunity were laid off and told "it will be a cold day in hell", before they even think about recalling them. I know first hand what it is like working in the civilian sector of aviation without the support of a Union. It was because of the treatment that I began my second career as a Paralegal with training in commercial, civil, insurance and workers compensation litigation.

Lucky for me, I came to work for the LSSI in 2001 and immediately joined the Union; I attended meetings and soon discovered that my flight did not have a Flight Rep, so I volunteered to do the job. As time went by there was a need for members to become involved in committee actions and I volunteered. Eventually there was a need to fill the vacancy of the Primary Trustee I volunteered for the job, and was subsequently placed in the position by a majority vote of the members. I held the position until I went on military leave. During that time I was involved in three grievances, updating the by-laws, contract negotiations, OPIEU seminars and the day-to-day operations of our Union.

As you can see I have been active in our Union and realize that it is only as good as we make it. I take pride in the part I played in seeing our Union grow from that dingy Meeting Hall off of Donnell Blvd to the Meeting Hall **WE BUILT** at our current location. Like most pilots I take pride in completing the mission regardless of the obstacles we face and I apply that drive and ethics to my work, for the Union. My friends and coworkers that work in BWS, Sup-H, Advance and Primary will confirm my strong work ethics.

So why do I want to be your Vice President, like most of you I share your views with the current economy and the looming cutbacks. Recent events in our Company have shown us that it is going to take strong leadership to handle difficult situations with our future. I can and want to be that person for you. I want to protect our workforce and our work and to see our workforce grow and prosper. So I am asking for your support and vote for me to be your next Vice President.

## Candidate for Vice President Barry Martin

I just want to say a few words to reacquaint you with me. I have been a PHPA member since I began working with Pan Am twenty-six years ago. I have been on the Executive Board as a Trustee while at BWS and now the Primary Trustee. I personally have been laid off twice since I have been here. During my time, I had the privilege to represent the PHPA as the head negotiator. Unless you have been at the other end of the table with a corporation's lawyers, it is hard to describe the challenge. They will do all they can to strip away what you have fought so hard to get. I feel I am up to the challenge to do it again.

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**Candidate for VP** (Continued from page 4)

If I am voted in as the PHPA Vice President, I will do all I can to save all that we have fought for and get what we deserve. You can count on me to continue the great things the PHPA is capable of achieving. I thank you now for your vote in advance of the election.

**"To Change, or not to Change,....?" by Vice President Dave Oltmans**

Another year is behind us and another election cycle has arrived. This year, as in 2012, there is only one contested officer position on the Executive Board to be filled, that being the position of Vice President.

As your Vice President this past year many challenges have presented themselves to the Local 102 leadership to be addressed and resolved. High on the list have been the implementation of a new Flight Training Contract requirement of a 250 pound weight limit imposed exclusively on the URS instructor pilot employees. We have challenged the implementation of this arbitrary imposition and are vigorously pursuing legal action against the government for violating the Administrative Services Act. We have been preparing for a court hearing for the judge to hear our side of the issue. On a parallel track, a grievance was filed to make whole two IP's who were forced to use leave during their short period of weight ineligibility. I am happy to report that this grievance has been settled. The two IP's who were declared ineligible will have their leave reinstated.

The future is uncertain. With changes to health care because of the implementation of the Affordable Health Care Act, Local 102 will be faced with many challenges to preserve our quality of our health care. We can expect the Company to approach us next year with changes to the CBA. Changes in the student flow due to government spending cuts will certainly impact our workforce. Next year promises to be a year of transition and Local 102 needs officers who have successfully met the challenges of negotiations in the past as well as being prepared for the one coming next year.

My opponents talk about "fighting for you" and qualifications for the job and those are good things to mention in any campaign. The most important question to ask, however, is simple: "Why change?" Since 2001, the leadership, myself included, has brought us to where we are today. I have been involved in all past negotiations except for the last one, which was wrapped up in a day. We cannot rest on our past laurels, but my history does give a indication of the competence I have brought to the positions I have held. On September 12th you will elect a Vice President. When you cast your ballot next month consider my record. Thanks in advance for your consideration and for your support.



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### CHECKLIST

PH[A General Membership Meeting  
6:30 PM September 12, 2013.

### MEETING AGENDA

1. Meeting called to order.
2. Officer Reports.
3. Old Business.
4. New Business.
5. Discussion.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



## **FOR ALL YOUR AVIATION AND PILOT SUPPLIES**

SEE JOE & MARGARET SMITH AT **V<sup>2</sup>**  
PHPA MEMBERS GET A 10% DISCOUNT

LOCATED INSIDE CHARISMA, WEST GATE CENTER,  
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