



We welcome letters to the Editor from pilots in good standing. We will edit them if necessary, but we will make every effort to preserve the author's meaning. Letters must include the writer's name and phone number. We will publish only letters that have not been sent to other persons or posted publicly – e.g., in crew rooms. Please keep your letters to 200 words or less.

ADDITIONAL CREW COST

Regarding the "Corporate Culture" article in the August 2000 *US AIRWAVES*, it seems to me that the gate supervisor who would not board must-ride "non-revs" ahead of paying passengers is actually costing the Company money in crew costs. Consider a middle-of-the-road example.

A CLT-based B-737-300 Captain and First Officer have a deadhead home on the last flight of the night to finish their trip. By denying them seats, the supervisor is forcing them to go to a hotel and return in the morning to go to CLT. The original flight was to arrive in CLT at 23:15. The next flight to CLT they could legally take would get them into CLT at 10:05 the next morning. This adds about 10 hours and 45 minutes to the trip rigs. That comes to about \$485 extra for the Captain and \$330 for the F/O. Add about \$42 extra for expense money plus \$100 for the hotel rooms, and the agent cost US Airways an extra \$957!

I hope he doesn't get the chance to "save" the Company money very often.

Bob Everley
(medical leave)

RETIREMENT TRIP

On September 4, 2000, Captain Thomas F. Somerville flew his last trip on a B-767 from Munich, Germany, to Philadelphia. After almost four decades of a great career, which began at Mohawk, one of US Airways' finest pilots retired. I was honored when he asked me to fly with him. He did almost everything. He plotted both Atlantic charts, made one of the smoothest landings I have ever witnessed, and said, "yikes," 54 times.

In Munich, the entire crew joined Tom and his wife Barbara at a very fine restaurant, which was beautifully decorated for the occasion by Ellie Zalesky and Connie Salter. The dinner, the dessert, and the company were superb. His birthday gift from his wife was a gold Rolex watch. Ellie dedicated a beautiful poem, which she tastefully presented with pictures and his old airlines' memorabilia. The rest of us . . . well, we just gave him passionate speeches.

On the return flight home, our flight attendants decorated his airplane with ribbons and signs. We celebrated his birthday over the Atlantic Ocean with a delicious cake, which was specially ordered by our flight attendants. He received cards, gifts, and a huge "Happy Retirement" banner.

ment” banner that was signed by all the passengers. From clearance delivery in Munich to European, Canadian and U.S. controllers, all wished him the best on his retirement, thanks to our international dispatchers. After landing, we were met by fire trucks for the farewell water halo, courtesy of the Philadelphia Airport Authority and our ALPA Membership Services Committee. At the gate, passengers shook his hand, took pictures, and said kind words as they disembarked. And last but not least, we were greeted by ALPA Membership Services representative, Lou Conover, who had arranged a great party in the crew room, and presented him with the special retirement wings . . . a great ending to a perfect retirement trip.

The spirit of unity and cooperation demonstrated by the flight crew, other US Airways employees, ALPA, and the FAA was truly impressive. To all of you, I wish to extend my sincere appreciation for making this a remarkable experience. It is a privilege to be a member of this outstanding group, and I hope to see you on my retirement flight.

To Captain Somerville, this is what I was trying to tell you: Well Tom, on behalf of all of us, I thank you again for all those years, and wish you many happy and healthy retirement years.

Majid Afkhami (PHL)
B-767I



(l-r) Thomas Mikolaycik, Thomas Somerville, Majid Afkhami