

## Danger Ahead for Northwest-Delta



Minneapolis Local 1833 members Thomas DeJesus, left, and Jessie Anhalt, were among many who traveled to New York City to join a large rally on the day of the shareholders vote on the proposed merger of Northwest Airlines and Delta Air Lines.

Shareholders at Northwest Airlines may have said "I do" to a shotgun marriage with Atlanta-based Delta Air Lines, but IAM members at Northwest are warning of major problems if the merger is consummated as planned.

"The same lack of regulation that unhinged our financial markets has created havoc in the airline industry for the past 30 years," said Transportation GVP Robert Roach, Jr. "Mergers alone will not help troubled airlines; only sane federal regulation of the industry will."

The proposed merger, which would create the world's largest airline, with more than \$28.8 billion in debt and \$15.6 billion in pension liabilities, now faces a Justice Department antitrust review.

## Freight Rail Contract Approved

Under the terms of a newly ratified agreement covering nearly 8,000 Machinists on the Nation's Class I Freight Rail Carriers, base pay will increase nearly 14 percent in addition to cost-of-living adjustments and other improvements.

Unlike the financial problems plaguing the nation's airlines, freight rail operators have enjoyed record profits. Despite the success, the negotiations for a new agreement were hindered by the narrow interpretations of the Railway Labor Act by the National

Mediation Board.

"Despite delays and difficulties, we extracted everything we could in the latest round of negotiations and our membership acknowledged this accomplishment with a strong ratification vote," said District 19 President Joe Duncan.

## Arbitrator Rules for IAM at Alaska Airlines

In a landmark decision, a federal arbitrator ruled that Alaska Airlines violated its contract with Airline District 143 when it furloughed 500 Seattle ramp workers in 2005 and hired an outside contractor to perform the same work.

"The decision is a huge legal victory but comes more

than three years after Alaska Airlines subcontracted its entire Seattle ground handling operation to Menzies Aviation," said District 143 President Stephen Gordon. "The ruling sends a clear message that airlines must respect their workers and their union contracts."



Local 2202 members Dan Selig, left, and Larry Tinney, load freight containers aboard an Alaska Airlines flight in Seattle, WA, where an arbitrator rebuked the airline for outsourcing ramp work.