Website Year in Review: 2017

As we head into 2018 I thought it might be fun to look back on 2017 from the perspective of our lodge website. 2017 was a year of much needed changes, additions and “tweaking” of the new website which was launched on July 13th, 2016. As a web developer I can truthfully say that the hardest part of designing and maintaining a website is keeping the content fresh, up to date and most of all useful and relevant. When I set out to launch the new site in 2016 I asked myself (as well quite a few of my coworkers), “what is the number one thing our members need from a lodge website?” The answer I came up with (and heard from others) was: **Information**. Time and time again I heard that flashy graphics and bold colors are nice, but our members want most of all to be informed. So that’s exactly what I set out to do.

It’s no small feat keeping up with the information that is of interest and use to our members. We come from four different airlines: American, PSA, Southwest and Alaska; and two major geographical areas: Charlotte, NC and Charleston, SC. Our membership is also split between two different district lodges: DL141 and DL142. I found myself checking the two district lodge websites as well as the grand lodge site and even our local news sites on almost a daily basis. Factor in the continuing news releases from the Association Negotiating Committee and well, I stayed plenty busy!

Here’s an overview of the things we accomplished with our website just in 2017:

January: Updated the Flight Safety Committee page with a Contact Sheet of committee members and a tutorial on finding and using ASAP.

February: Added the IAM Educator Archives page featuring links to digital versions of the IAM Educator newsletter, a valuable resource for our Shop Stewards (and members in general).

March: Added the Veterans Committee page with information on how to contact committee chair John Hurst and links to resources of special interest to all veterans. This is a resource I am especially proud of!

April: In April we added our first photo galleries featuring the previous year's AA/IAM Car Show, the NC State AFL-CIO Southern Piedmont Labor Council Legislative Breakfast, and our Union Golf Tournament from Larkhaven Golf Course.

May: Another much needed page which we added in May was the Furloughed Employee Information – Mechanic & Related. This page contains information on retirement options, benefits and other resources to help furloughed employees make important decisions pertaining to their recall status.

June: In June we added a photo gallery featuring Heavy Maintenance Lead Mechanic Jack Zeock's Charles Taylor Master Mechanic Award from the FAA.

September: After hearing from several coworkers about the many great things our members do in service to the community, we added the Spotlight on Service page. Our first feature was Heavy Maintenance Utilityman J.D. Peace and his roll as the president of the Archdale/Trinity Serco Club. Stay tuned as there are more members who will be featured soon!

October: Another Heavy Maintenance Lead Mechanic, Roger Thompson, was awarded the Charles Taylor Master Mechanic Certification. We showcased Roger and his family in a photo gallery this month!

November: The last major additions to the website for 2017 were the photo gallery from the 2017 AA/IAM Car Show and the Flight Safety Committee Survey. We'll have the results of that survey soon. We also revealed the results of the 2017 IAM Website and Newsletter Contest. Your website won Honorable Mention in Best Website Layout and Design and General Excellence for Websites. Your Newsletter (and editor Gary Winchester) won First Place in Best Newsletter Layout and Design.

And that doesn't include the many breaking news posts, negotiations updates, coverage on Hurricanes Harvey and Irma relief efforts, Bylaw votes, special elections… It has truly been a busy year for our lodge and your website has done its best to keep you informed all along the way.

So what's coming up in 2018? You'll just have to come along for the ride and find out! We promise you that your lodge website will only get better and better and continue to provide you with news, information and resources that you need.

Thanks for all your support!!!

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