

'Coffee, tea or me' image bugs flight attendant

Editor's note: Joyce Baker of Farmington Hills is a flight attendant with Northwest Airlines.
By Joyce E. Baker
special writer

Love to work with people of every conceivable nature? Despite routine? Love to travel and wake in hotel rooms not knowing what city you're in or even what day it is? Then I've got just the job for you... Flight attendant!

I've been one for 9 1/2 years, based in the Detroit area. Since I've met so many local travelers who are curious about the job, I thought I'd write about it from an insider's perspective.

Although several people tell me the word stewardess, flight attendant is preferred by those of us in the field. There are a lot of male flight attendants and the word connotes professionalism more than the "coffee, tea or me" image that lingers in the public mind thanks to a lack of the same name.

reader's report

One thing we are not is a waitress/waiter with wings! We serve food and beverages at 35,000 feet, but our primary reason for being on the aircraft is safety. Service, although a major and necessary feature of our job, is secondary.

Fortunately, the public is rarely witness to our safety training, so they see service as our only function.

There is no typical profile of a flight attendant. Our backgrounds are varied: from entrepreneurs to realtors and attorneys.

Our reasons for wanting the job may differ, but the reasons for remaining in it are similar. We enjoy the freedom to pursue outside interests thanks to the generous

time off, and the benefit of low-cost standby travel.

Having to travel for work as well as pleasure can be tiring, and many times the latter is pushed aside. I jokingly say that I'll have to quit flying in order to enjoy traveling again!

Living out of a suitcase has its limitations, and no matter how much fun it can be to go someplace new, packing and unpacking does not get more fun with practice.

I am often asked the same questions about the job, so I'd like to answer those I most frequently hear.

1. Aren't you afraid of flying? At first I was, but once I developed a basic knowledge of aviation and a familiarity with specific aircraft, my fear dissipated.

When I'm working, I'm too busy to think about it, although I may have skeptical moments during a bad thunderstorm.

2. What's your route? One flight to one city in one day is the norm for international flying, but for domestic flying it is not unusual to fly to five different cities on the

same day.

Routes are subject to change monthly, but the more senior you are, the more consistently you can hold the same route. My routes have taken me all around the U.S., to Europe and Japan.

3. How much time do you get off? The physical demands of coping with an extremely erratic schedule are justified by the amount of time off we get. An average of 15-20 days off a month, usually not consecutive, is typical.

4. Don't you get tired of being gone all the time? YES! I'm single and not from this area. It is difficult to establish and maintain a personal life when the majority of my time is spent away from home.

In the past four weeks, I've been home three days. I have had to cancel plans at the last minute because I was stuck in some city due to bad weather, a mechanical failure or flight cancellation.

It's a struggle to develop a sense of consistency within this unstructured lifestyle, but it can be done, partly by holding for the

same days off every week.

This job is ideal for married flight attendants because they can maintain a family life at home and time for themselves on the road. For a single person with no family in their base area, the job can foster loneliness.

To counteract this, I spend time off visiting friends and relatives out of state. The rest of my free time is spent in town participating in volunteer activities, pursuing hobbies and socializing with friends.

The travel bug bit me at a very early age. My father used to take my sisters and me to the National Geographic series every Friday night at our hometown auditorium.

My job has since taken me to a lot of those places I used to dream about, but I've barely scratched the surface. Being a flight attendant is... glamorous? No. Adventurous? Yes. When I accepted the job, glamour was not what I expected. I viewed it as a way to help cure my insatiable curiosity about the world and its people, and to that end, I have been satisfied.

Engler's cuts are big topic at annual state travel conference

Continued from Page 6

The communities and associations are screaming about all this, of course, but Travel Bureau director John Savich thinks that it has been a fairly smooth transition as political transitions go. A little restructuring of old habits is not necessarily bad.

Our state travel industry is diverse. We have large business hotels and big cities in the industrial corridor between Detroit and Chicago, resorts with major ski and golf facilities, outstate communities that try to attract a share of the 30 million people who travel in Michigan each year, and hundreds of small businesses tucked into bays and along Great Lakes coastlines up the lower and across the Upper Peninsula.

All those diverse segments were represented at the conference. Dan Smith of the Upper Peninsula Travel and Recreation Association was there, as were the Stabile family members who run Mackinac Island Lodge near Marquette and Cedar Lodge in Paradise.

Tourism is a \$20-billion industry, creating 340,000 jobs and producing state tax revenues of \$750,000.

The Mackinac Island contingent was there. Dan Musser from the Grand Hotel, Todd Callawaert of the Island House, Armand "Sm" Horn of Mackinac Island Carriage Tours. You could work your way south from there. Walter North of the Mackinac Bridge Authority, Stafford Smith of the Bayview Inn, Peter Fitzsimons of Boyne Country, several reps from Grand Traverse Resort, city convention bureau people from Bay City and Saginaw and Kalamazoo.

And, of course, the Frankenmuth contingent was there, led by Wally Bronner of Bronner's Christmas Decorations and Ruth Ann McMahon

of Circle Michigan.

Engler talked about tourism as "an engine of economic growth." He squeezed the stories about closing state parks. He said the core of the "Travel Bureau" budget won't be touched because tourism creates jobs.

I asked Savich what these new directions mean. He had lost his outreach programs and 10 percent of his other programs, a total of \$6 million, but still has the resources to beat the bushes in places like London and Chicago for potential Michigan tourists.

Savich thinks this will be a great year for Michigan travelers to stay in Michigan, which has expanded its hotel, golf and other facilities dramatically in recent years and is still a bargain compared to other states.

"When people from Detroit are told the cost of something in Michigan, they say, 'Is it that much?'" Savich said. "When Chicagoans are given the same price, they say, 'Is that all?'"

Weekend travelers find suitable vacation spots close to home

Continued from Page 6

General Butler State Park near the northern border of Kentucky is much closer, but it's still a six-hour drive. Too far unless you use one of those \$50 weekend coupons and rent a car.

The obvious choice in state parks was Potawatomi Inn in Pokagon State Park, Angola, Ind. That's a 50-minute drive across the border south of Marshall and Coldwater. A rustic lodge and cabins. Unbelievably low rates. Very popular. So popular that no rooms were available on that particular Friday night.

"Too bad," I said. "You could have spent Saturday in Shipshewana, enjoying the Amish museum and the farm. In fact, there are nice bed-and-breakfast places in Shipshewana."

Shipshewana only lasted a few minutes, long enough for us to get into Ontario. "Ever been to Wharfedale in Chatham, Ontario?" I asked. She hadn't. "It's a great place, but you'd better like sports and kids." Dee was a little nervous about entering another country, but I convinced her she would be safe and comfortable in herself in Ontario, even if she had car trouble or a minor mishap.

"Take the ViaRail train to London, Ontario. Try one of the great Ontario Inns, although they are fairly expensive. Go up the St. Clair River on either the Canadian or the U.S. side. Stay at the St. Clair Inn and watch the boats go by."

That did it. St. Clair. Close to home. Lots of places to mosey and poke in the small towns beside the river. Take a ferry across to Canada. Visit the oil museum at Petrolia or Uncle Tom's Cabin in Dresden. Drive down the Canadian side to Windsor and come home through the tunnel or over the Ambassador Bridge.

I rambled on about weekend driving along the north shore of Lake Erie to Leamington or Point Pelee Provincial Park, or going south into Ontario to Put-in-Bay.

Dee listened politely while I got myself all worked up about a weekend in all those fabulous little places along Lake Michigan, or north toward Traverse City.

I was talking her through Dusty's English Inn, 13 miles south of Lansing and four miles north of Eaton Rapids, when I realized I had lost her. "It's a fabulous old brick mansion and the rooms start at \$65 a night," I said, but her eyes had glazed over.

My friends quickly learn that it is unwise to ask my advice about travel. I give them too much of it. She had already made up her mind to go to St. Clair.

We started by calling the River Crab, a motel and restaurant owned by Chuck Muir in St. Clair. Each room is different. Each has a view of the river from its front door. The dining room is good and has a fine view of the boats sailing up and down the St. Clair River and the boats easing in and out of the marina.

"That'll cost me \$75 a night including a continental breakfast in my room," Dee said.

Next she called the St. Clair Inn, a lovely historic gravel of red brick beside the river, and asked for their most expensive room. "That's \$65 a night, street-side," I said, probably in an annex, I said, "which has simple rooms a few hundred yards down the street from the inn, but great views of the river."

The last time I saw Dee, she was hurrying out of the office toward her car. We had traveled across my desk and through my files, to other states, in the direction of the southern sun, but she picked a place in Michigan, a short drive from home. Not bad.

If you get desperate on Friday mornings in spring, you may have found some getaways of your own. Send me a reader report, maximum two or three pages, and let us know what you recommend for people who want to get away for a couple days during the next few months.

Send it to me at 22000 Springbrook, Suite 208 C, Farmington Hills, 48335.

Waiting for Engler at travel conference

Continued from Page 6

And eventually he'll get his marketing and these community awards.

"Citizens of Michigan should remove trash and litter from the

Huron River Valley... items removed ranged in size from tin cans to major appliances... all supported by contributions of cash and in-kind services... more than 200 volunteers. Accepting today are the two

co-chairs of the Friends of the Huron-Oakland, Lucille Mosher and Joan Horvath," he said.

Lots of other things happened at the conference, but that was enough for Lucille and Joan. As they went out the door, Joan said, "Tell your readers to call the township office at 685-8731, ask for Colleen and sign up for the river cleanup August 17. And if you've got any good ideas for getting corporate funding for this project, pass the word."

Detroit River cruises start in May

The Detroit public boat, formerly The Detroit River Cruises, has been purchased by way Cruises and is now offering riverfront excitement and dining will be permanently located at the foot of Joseph Campau.

River Place Complex.

The Detroit will offer a variety of river cruises starting in early May and running until mid-October for both individual and group dining. Contact Steven Williamson at (313) 967-1400 for more information.

Thank You O&E CARMEN

DISCOVERY
SCOTLAND
The Western Isles
YORKSHIRE
Dales, Moors
Two medieval
ruins at an...
SMALL, FINE...
WITH PERSONA...
For...
313-429-0574

NEW YORK
Crown Prince
The...
London...
Call
Only
By Sea
645-9900

ALASKA CRUISE
Sailing on the
CRYSTAL HARBOR
July 6 & 16
San Francisco - Seattle
Round Trip
20% Discount...
CALL NOW
travel
max
851-7760

ITALY
From **\$712**...
18 Day From
1-13 Weeks
DIRECTLY FROM DETROIT:
ROME - VENICE - PALERMO
For information or reservations
Call:
TRAVEL & C. INC.
29225 W 7 Mile Rd
Livonia, MI 48150
521-8665

NEW PACKAGE TOURS
VISIT
"Venice of America"
San Antonio, Texas
... a truly unique city!
• 4 nights hotel
(next to Alamo)
• Dinners • Sightseeing
• Transfers • Escorted
Including Roundtrip Airfare
NOW ONLY \$669
Call (313) 645-5050
or (800) 336-1490
Chuck Randolph
Travel & Tours
3160 W. Maple, Ferndale, MI 48015

BE A BETTER BOATER
Take a Safe Boating Course
It's Free!
Everyone can benefit from a safe boating class. Upon completion, you'll be a better, more confident boater. Plus, you'll receive a certificate of completion and a life preserver. Sign up now for the free 2-day BOAT SAFETY CLASS. This introductory class, taught by the Michigan State Police, covers the basics of boating and safety.
DETROIT
Michigan State Police Training Center, 1400 W. Warren, Detroit, MI 48208
Boating with Kids, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Boating with Kids, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Boating with Kids, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Boating with Kids, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Boating with Kids, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Boating with Kids, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
WARRREN
Michigan State Police Training Center, 1400 W. Warren, Warren, MI 48090
Boating with Kids, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Boating with Kids, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Boating with Kids, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
WEST BLOOMFIELD
Michigan State Police Training Center, 1400 W. Warren, West Bloomfield, MI 48395
Boating with Kids, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Boating with Kids, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Boating with Kids, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

THE PLAYS, THE PLAYERS, THE PLACE, THE PLAYS, THE PLAYERS, THE PLACE

STRATFORD FESTIVAL

THE 1991 SEASON

from Shakespeare:
HAMLET,
PRINCE OF DENMARK
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING
from the USA:
OUR TOWN
LOVE LETTERS
CAROUSEL
from the Young Company:
THE KNIGHT OF THE BURNING PESTLE

from Europe:
THE RULES OF THE GAME
THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES
AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE
from the decks of the Hispaniola:
TREASURE ISLAND
from Canada:
HOMEWARD BOUND
LES BELLES SOEURS
OPERA DOUBLE BILL

For Tickets call:
(313) 964-4668
or long distance (519) 273-1600
Promotional support provided by **WJR** **HomeTown** **Osceola & Esplanade**

FOR BROCHURES AND INFORMATION CALL 1-800-561-SWAN (7926)

39TH SEASON 1 APRIL 29 to NOVEMBER 10, 1991 1 STRATFORD, CANADA