

WHAT'S
HAPPENING
IN
APRIL

4-8

SPRING BREAK for most metro school systems. Metro traffic congestion eases, while the Florida Panhandle finds itself in gridlock.

7-11

Women's and children's fashion and accessories show at **AMERICA'S MART**. Thousands of boutique owners and department store buyers converge on downtown.

8

BRAVES home opener vs. New York Mets.

10-17

The **SPAGHETTI JUNCTION FILM FESTIVAL** at Woodruff Arts Center.

15

TAX DAY

16

EARTH DAY. This is just speculation, but we anticipate an event with an Indigo Girl or two.

19

LANCE ARMSTRONG returns to defend his title in the 2005 Tour de Georgia, starting in Augusta and finishing April 24 in Alpharetta.

20

On this day in 1992, then-Governor Zell Miller signed legislation naming "Pogo 'Possum" the official **STATE OPOSSUM**.

25

CONFEDERATE MEMORIAL DAY State employees have the day off.

27

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, Coretta Scott King!

30

SWAN HOUSE BALL Celebrating the 75th anniversary of Bobby Jones' Grand Slam victory with Atlanta's old money and, more than likely, a few Jones relatives.

OUR★TOWN

CORPORATE ESPIONAGE

CREW CUTS

This month,
Delta axes **FREE**
MEALS for flight
attendants.

By Chandra R. Thomas

DELTA AIRLINES FLIGHT attendants now have to pack more than their roller bags before taking to the friendly skies—they also have to pack a lunch.

As of this month, the Atlanta-based airline will no longer provide courtesy meals to the pilots and flight attendants working most domestic flights. The decision to cut "crew meals" is part of the financially strapped carrier's ongoing effort to cut costs amid a major restructuring plan.

"It basically puts us on par with the passengers," quips part-time flight attendant Hollis Gillespie. "It means we have to pay for our own food. Just like the passengers have to be prepared to bring their own food, now we will too. We'll just need to grab a muffin in between our connecting flights."

If you've ever been forced to endure out-of-control airport food prices, you know that the muffin they'll be grabbing will be pricey. For

example, at most Starbucks in the metro area, a muffin and a tall latte costs about \$4.50. That same snack will set you back \$5 at the Starbucks on the Delta concourse at Hartsfield-Jackson. The same applies for most fast-food chains at the airport.

Axing free meals might be a sore spot for many flight attendants, who often work long hours—sometimes as long as 14 hours straight on back-to-back flights—and are unable to leave the aircraft. But perhaps losing out on a sandwich and cookie isn't so bad when you take into account that thousands of Delta pilots faced salary cuts last year. Seven thousand employees also lost their jobs. This is all tempered with the fact that in January, Delta, which is the third-largest U.S. airline, also implemented a plan to slightly reduce the number of flight attendants on some domestic flights.

"While the safety of our passengers is our top priority, on certain flights and certain aircraft, we will reduce the num-

ber of flight attendants by one, depending on our customers' needs," explains Delta spokesperson Anthony Black. "Even with reductions, we remain staffed well above FAA requirements and our ability to attend to our customers' needs."

So, now that flight attendants are not only famished and working harder to make up for staffing cuts, but also angry about dish-ing out more money for a muffin and coffee, can we still expect these perky "servers in the sky" to offer in-flight pillows and blankets with a smile? Might want to bring along an extra bag of peanuts, just in case. ★

