

# SEC JOURNAL

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**Special points of interest:**

- Are you interested in serving on the SEC-AAAE Board of Directors? Will your Municipality, Commission or Authority support your investment of time and travel? If the answer to these questions is, "Yes," you should take time now to write Nominations Committee Chairman Parker W. McClellan, Jr., A.A.E., regarding your interest in serving and include a letter showing the support of your governing body. Chairman McClellan will consider all interested parties and his committee will report their recommendation during the course of the 1995 SEC-AAAE Annual Conference to be held April 10-12, 1995, in Little Rock, Arkansas.

## NEW MANAGER TAKES OVER AT SEARCY, ARKANSAS

New Airport Manager Brett Lund shrugs off any suggestion he may get hung up on internal airport politics. "I'm here to get the job done, and so long as I do my job, I don't expect any problems," he said.

Lund was hired by the City of Searcy recently to fill the shoes of retiring Airport Manager Ken Simmons, who left the job after airport commissioners raised questions about an accounts payable backlog.

Simmons had overseen a \$7 million airport expansion project with no problems, but was criticized for open accounts totaling less than \$10,000. Most of the money owed has been recovered, save a balance of about \$2,200 owed the airport by Tripp Flying Service. "I honestly don't know anything about that," said Lund. "I haven't had a chance to look at the books yet. I expect we'll be able to sit down [with Tripp] and work out some sort of arrangement." As for pleasing the various and competing factions involved in the airport, "that shouldn't be a problem," he said.

A Cabot resident, Lund worked as a flight engineer in the air force, mostly out of the Little Rock Air Force base in Jacksonville, although he also saw service in Okinawa and Tokyo. He received a degree in aviation operations through the air force. He retired from the service in 2000 but continued to work closely with the military, managing a contract for All-Star Services, Inc. of San Diego to operate the Naval Support Activity, Mid-South base in Millington, Tenn. His job was eliminated in June, he said, as part of the continued privatization of military services. Operations in Searcy are simple in comparison, he said.

"In Millington, I had 5,000 inspectors running around, and all eyes were on me. And I had 1,000 acres that had to look like a golf course." In fact, Lund's first order of business in Searcy is getting the airport spiffed up. The grass around the runway doesn't appear to have been cut this year, and Lund is preparing to put the job out to bid.

"We're going to get the field up, and make it as user-friendly as I can," he said. "There are a lot of business-type people coming through here, people furthering the economy of Searcy. The airport is the cover of the book, the first thing that they see. We need to get caught up, put on a fresh coat of paint."

All of the hangars at the airport are currently leased, but the airport took a hit last week when Flight Training Services closed its doors. Tony Palesotti, owner of the flight school, said escalating insurance costs were mostly to blame for the closure, but also criticized the airport for not giving him a price break on fuel purchases.

"We can't get into favoritism," said Lund.

"Sure, he bought 1,000 gallons of fuel a month. But you know, Rideout buys 1,000 gallons a month, and Yarnell's buys 1,000 gallons a month too. If we were private, maybe we could make those kinds of deals, but we're a public airport and have to treat everyone the same."

But such concerns are for the moment not on Lund's mind. This week he's settling in, getting familiar with his new turf and preparing for next week's airport commission meeting.

"I'm looking forward to the challenge," he said.

## 2004 SEC-AAAE MEMBERSHIP SURVEY SUMMARY

The 2004 SEC-AAAE membership survey results are in and based upon input received from survey participants, the programs and services offered by the Chapter meet the needs of the membership.

125 responses were received to the on-line survey representing a 26.8 percent return rate. Approximately 68 percent of those responding are employed by large or medium hub airports in the Southeast. 88 percent are members of AAEE while 46 percent are accredited. In terms of gauging satisfaction with the conferences sponsored by the Chapter (Annual Meeting as well as Finance and

Administration), a majority of survey respondents found them to be valuable and informative; however, time constraints and limited travel budgets preclude participation by a larger segment of the Chapter.

All Chapter communication tools were rated either "Effective" or "Very Effective" by the membership. In terms of accreditation, some level of support seemed to surface for leaving the format of the process unchanged. Approximately 24 percent of survey participants indicated that they would not recommend making additional changes

to the program to enhance its value. Many noted that accreditation has, and will always remain, a personal decision that is internally driven; therefore, beyond some form of developing a mentoring and support network to assist candidates through the process, the Chapter should not offer additional financial incentives.

For a complete summary of the 2004 membership survey, please contact SEC-AAAE President Bryan O. Elliott, A.A.E., at (434) 973-8342.

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## WAYNE SHANK, A.A.E., HONORED BY SEC-AAAE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Southeast Chapter Board of Directors has presented Wayne Shank, A.A.E., our outgoing AAEE Board of Examiners representative, with a Resolution of Appreciation express-

ing the Chapter's gratitude for his 6 years of service on the AAEE Board of Examiners. During Wayne's tenure, a host of candidates achieved their

professional accreditation and the Chapter is indebted for his energy, dedication, and support of our professional development program.

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## RDU SUED BY NEWSPAPERS

The News & Observer and three other newspapers have sued the Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority over a policy that restricts the sale of newspapers at the airport to private gift shops.

The N&O, along with The Durham Herald-Sun, The New York Times and USA Today's parent company, filed a federal lawsuit Thursday alleging that the airport's policy violates the companies' constitutional right to distribute newspapers.

The lawsuit comes after the newspapers' request to install news racks in the passenger terminals and the departure and arrival concourses was denied, according to the lawsuit.

"The four newspapers' publishers bringing this lawsuit have essentially said that the airport authority's ban on the sale of newspapers through news racks in the terminals impermissibly restricts their right to distribute news," said the newspapers' lawyer, John A.

Bussian, III. "That right is guaranteed by the First Amendment."

Bussian explained that the right to freedom of the press includes the right to gather and distribute news.

In the 1990s, the federal appeals court based in Richmond, Va., decided a similar case in favor of the Greenville (S.C.) News and The New York Times in a dispute over newsracks in the Greenville-Spartanburg Airport, Bussian said.

## AAAE NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVES LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

During its October 2, 2004 meeting in Tucson, AZ the National AAAE Board approved a proposal to advance a recommendation to the general membership to amend the AAAE Bylaws related to the composition of the Board. Through this measure, three (3) additional "at-large" national positions would be added to the Board of Directors (BOD), with the policy goal that these seats be used: (1) for "mobile" individuals who may not have spent sufficient time in a single Chapter to command single Chapter support, but who nonetheless have served AAAE in enough capacities to earn leadership consideration and (2) to represent the full diversity of individuals, airport sizes and management positions within the AAAE leadership structure at all levels. These three new "National" BOD positions would be filled by either A.A.E.s or Certified Members (C.M.).

The proposed Bylaws amendment further codifies the intent of the organization to maintain representation on the BOD from all segments of the airport management field by stating that the goal of the organization is to represent "the full diversity of individuals, airport sizes and management positions within AAAE leadership structure at all levels."

This outcome would be achieved by specifically instructing the AAAE Nominating Committee to select nominees to serve on the BOD consistent with this objective.

The final element of the proposed Bylaws amendment involves considering an "at-large" Executive Committee (EC) position not less than every seven (7) years. In order to be considered, "At-large" EC nomi-

nees must be supported by at least three (3) Chapters and must be an A.A.E.

The next step in the process of amending the National Bylaws is for AAAE to seek full membership ratification by mail ballot. The balloting process should occur in the next several months. If approved by the general membership, this amendment would be effective as of the annual AAAE meeting in Seattle.

At the October 3, 2004 meeting of Southeast Chapter-AAAAE Board of Directors a motion was enacted endorsing this amendment and encouraging all qualified voting members of the Southeast Chapter to approve these amendments.

## Newport News/Williamsburg International Airport Considers Options for Parking Garage to Handle Record-Growth Traffic

The Peninsula Airport Commission is weighing options on the design of a proposed parking deck at Newport News/Williamsburg International Airport.

The parking deck, to be built in front of the main terminal on the northeast side, needs to be large enough to allow for future passenger growth at the airport but should not overwhelm the main terminal, said officials at a recent monthly commission meeting.

"First impression and passenger service is your asset, and you don't want

to compromise those," said Wilson Rayfield, of Gresham Smith and Partners, the Richmond-based company in charge of building the parking facility.

The main terminal building needs to remain "prominent" for "people walking to the terminal or riding the shuttle," Rayfield added.

Construction of the deck, the first of several multi-level parking structures planned for the airport, is set to begin in the second quarter of next year.

The parking deck project is in response to the rapid growth in passengers at the airport, which for the first eight months of 2004 jumped 27.7 percent over the same period last year. Airport officials are undecided on which option makes more sense: a three-level parking deck would cost \$7.1 million, add 660 parking spaces and take one year to build; a four-level deck would cost roughly \$9.5 million and add 890 parking spaces.

**Southeast Chapter Journal**

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## In Memoriam

It is with great regret that we inform you of the passing of

Ed Foster

Former President of the Southeastern Airport Managers' Association

## PENNEY-NEW MANAGER AT FT. SMITH

Kent Penney stays put while he sees that other people don't in a safe and timely way.

On Aug. 16, Penney started in his new job, manager of Fort Smith Regional Airport, and he has a lot of things to flight check.

His predecessor, Bob Johnson, was fired late last year under a cloud of controversy.

"To me, it's history, and history is always something you can learn from," Penney said. "As I get in and talk to people, there are folks who have a history with how things were done before. We need to use that to figure out where we go to from here. I don't see it as a negative impact on what we're trying to do today."

As that issue recedes, Penney is beginning to confront more formidable problems — crowded planes, a demand for more commercial flights, a changing general aviation market and the airport's need for a new master plan.

Some of those issues are familiar to Penney. He's run an airport before, albeit one smaller than Fort Smith's. His first was in North Platte, Neb.

Still, coming off his most recent job, a cabinet-level position as director of the Nebraska Department of Aeronautics, Penney hasn't dealt with day-to-day operational issues since 1998.

His first month's experience as a new airport manager and a new resident of Fort Smith has been positive, he said.

Penney and his wife, Julie, and two children have found a home in a neighborhood just north of St. Edward Mercy Medical Center. He's getting accustomed to the city and the airport, achieving a new stability that the airline industry probably would envy.

After suffering from the body blow of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the industry has been hit every year since by some negative event or development. In 2002, commercial aviation suffered the lingering effects of recession and the attacks. In 2003, it was SARS and in 2004, it has been a sharp spike in fuel costs, Penney said.

Those factors have all combined to produce a very cautionary approach on the part of airlines, one that is affecting air travel from Fort Smith.

Following Sept. 11, 2001, the major carriers cut capacity sharply, parking planes and trying hard to reduce the number of empty seats. Demand has recovered some, but the airlines still are afraid of those vacant slots. As a result, Penney said many flights out of Fort Smith are at capacity and sometimes there are more potential passengers than there is room for them. "I think we have some good opportunities to boost our airline service," he said. "I think there is some potential for more flights based on how full we are running. We'll have to keep knocking on doors to see that happen.