

SEC JOURNAL

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TOP THIS!

When it comes to conferences, Nashville knows how to raise the bar. Tommy Bibb and the rest of the Raul Regalado team at BNA put on one outstanding show for the 2006 SEC-AAAE Annual Conference held May 19-23 at the Loews Vanderbilt Plaza Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee.

The speakers were outstanding, the hotel staff exceeded all expectations, the entertainment was first class and the food was great.

Dave Jeffrey did his usual Chapter competitive event just outside the hotel bar on Tuesday where Chapter members broke into teams and competed for \$250 cash in a "brain game" that was much less physical than past events but no less cutthroat. "The Cheaters" (self-imposed team names) were beaten by 1/2 point by the "Lunatic Fringe" lead by chief lunatic Claudia Bower Holliday.

Myrtle Beach or Bust!

That was the sign that flapped from the back of my 1969 Dodge Super Bee when I graduated high school and took off for a week of debauchery at the

After being handed their \$250 in prize money, they immediately donated their ill-gotten gains to the AAAE Foundation. Classy move, folks.

President Timothy M. Doll, AAE, finished out his year with a long list of Chapter accomplishments that included a \$7,500 donation to the Katrina Airport Employee Relief Fund, fifty-four new members added to the Chapter, changing the name of the scholarship foundation back to its original SAMA designation, revising the Chapter bylaws, and naming the Chapter conference sites through the year 2010, just to name a few.

Then came time for the changing of the guard. Incoming President Dave Edwards, not to be undone by the presidential skits of the past, entered the banquet room in full cowboy regalia singing *Save a Horse, Ride a Cowboy* atop a beautiful Appaloosa pony. In what may

heretofore be known as the "Brokeback Mountain Presidential Entrance", he came off the horse halfway through the song and finished in duet and choreographed line dance with his lovely daughter, Jessica.

That was entertaining, but not nearly as entertaining as watching next year's incoming president Lew Bleiweis' jaw drop to the ground as he turned a lighter shade of pale wondering, "How on earth will I top this next year?"

Don't worry, Lew. You have a year to think about it and there are at least a few dozen beach themes we can think of right off the bat!

Thanks again to Tommy Bibb, Raul Regalado and the great staff members at the Metropolitan Nashville Airport Authority for outdoing yourselves. Without question, you gave us one to remember.

Dunes.

We've come a long way since the Lemon Tree Inn back in '71!

Ed.

LAFAYETTE NATIVE DEVELOPS FLIGHT PLAN

Oilfield Executives and employees worn out by the drive from Lafayette, LA, to Houston, TX, may be in for some relief—a shuttle flight to the airport in Sugar Land, TX, home to numerous international oilfield companies and about 20 miles from downtown Houston.

The price—\$50 round trip, less than half the walkup price for a Continental flight to Houston.

Oil executive Keith Mosing of Frank's International in Houston says local demand has to make the project feasible, which is why Mosing is awaiting a market analysis from the Lafayette Airport Commission. Mosing also wants a firm commitment from the airport that an adjacent facility with a hangar big enough to hold the biz jet—and nice enough to accommodate arriving and departing passengers—will be available soon.

Like Mosing, some local business leaders have long argued that the existing facilities are not representa-

tive of what the community has to offer and that they leave a bad first impression on dignitaries and others coming to the city. Mosing believes recent hurricanes have opened new doors for Lafayette businesses and says it's critical that the community put its best foot forward to take advantage of those prospects. "Lafayette has a window of opportunity to move ahead," says Mosing.

Paul Fournet Air Service and Lafayette Aero, the airport's two existing FBOs, are aging facilities in desperate need of upgrades, according to Lafayette Airport Commission Chairman Jim Nunn. Both leases expire at the end of 2007 and the controversial issue of their renewals is on the agenda for the airport commission's meeting slated for June 1, 2006.

In January, Mosing Aviation purchased Western Airways, an on-demand 24-hour charter jet service headquartered at Sugar Land

Regional Airport. The service has 25 aircraft, with a corporate fleet that includes Challengers, a Dornier, Lear Jets, Citations, Super King Air 200s, Westwind IIs and a Piaggio.

Nunn is a major advocate of Mosing's plan and would like the service up and running as soon as possible. The commission chairman says the need is urgent because of I-10 construction currently underway.

UPDATE:

At its meeting of June 1, 2006, the Lafayette Parish Airport Commission approved a proposal to allow Cincinnati-based FBO operator Million Air to build a passenger terminal at the airport to better accommodate passengers using the facility. Million Air has 19 years of experience in the FBO business.

ALLEGIANT AIR INNAUGRATES SERVICE FROM ROA

On a recent sunny afternoon, Allegiant Air took off for the first time from Roanoke Regional Airport (Va.), on Runway 24 with the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains as its backdrop. The airline offers direct service to the Orlando/Sanford Airport and, at least for now, service is offered on Wednesdays and Saturdays. The airline says if the demand is there, service regularity could increase.

Allegiant Air prides itself on cheap tickets that start as low as \$69 one

way. One passenger on the recent inaugural flight said she wouldn't be going to Florida if Allegiant had not begun service to Roanoke. "When we saw the prices we just couldn't have put it off any longer," Cathy Carrico told WDBJ-TV News Channel 7.

The self-proclaimed "Official Airline for Sunshine" launched the new scheduled service with complete vacation packages including roundtrip airfare and a three-night

hotel stay for as little as \$187. The package includes a three night stay at the Rodeway Inn-Maingate with a Wednesday departure and Saturday return. The price is per person and based on double occupancy.

"We are extremely pleased to extend the Allegiant brand of low-fare nonstop jet service to the Roanoke community," Maurice Gallagher, Allegiant Air president

AIRPORT AUTHORITY ACCEPTS \$500,000 GRANT

There are some emergencies you just don't mind.

Such was the case when the Charlotte County Airport Authority (Fla.) held an "emergency meeting" recently to accept a \$500,000 grant from the Florida Department of Transportation for an instrument landing system.

Airport Authority Chairman Pam Seay said the Florida Department of Transportation grant will replace, dollar for dollar, money that was included in the state's general fund budget for 2006-2007. This deal was worked out at the last minute in the anticipation of a veto by Florida Governor Jeb Bush.

Executive Director, and Southeast Chapter member, Gary Quill said he was notified of the change and immediately called the emergency meeting as an add-on to a work session that had already been scheduled to discuss the new Piper Road project at the airport.

So, in accordance with parliamentary procedure, the authority held not one but two meetings, the first to accept the grant at 5:55 p.m., followed by the Piper Road session at 6:00 p.m. Obviously, it doesn't take much time to ac-

cept a half-million dollars.

"Does this mean we have to say the Pledge of Allegiance twice?" asked Seay as she prepared to gavel the first meeting into session.

Commissioner Robert Skidmore replied that twice would be fine with him. "We're not in California," he quipped.

State Representative Michael Grant (R-Port Charlotte)—himself a former airport commissioner—attended the previous regular monthly meeting to report he had managed to get \$500,000 included in the state budget. Grant added that an instrument landing system will be a major asset as the airport continues to recruit a commuter airline.

But at this meeting nobody was complaining about the change in plans. "The money is actually coming from a more appropriate source," said Commissioner Kathleen Coppola.

After saying the Pledge of Allegiance a second time, the commissioners launched into a special meeting about the new Piper Road that will

connect U.S. 17 to the north with James Loop Road to the south. This \$30 million project will mainly run along a new right of way, but will incorporate a small portion of the existing Piper Road.

In past meetings, Seay has expressed misgivings about the design of the highway—particularly that there would be too few median and curb cuts to serve businesses around the airport. Also, Seay said she's concerned about weather the airport would get stuck with residual costs for landscaping, buffers and other miscellaneous items that might not be covered in Charlotte County's road building budget.

Nicole Dozier, county zoning official, explained that most of the cost of landscaping and driveways would be borne by individual developers. The airport could actually save upfront by doing less to prepare its land for eventual tenants. "A lot of developers prefer to work with a blank slate," she said.

Costs Up as Airport Tries to Stay in Compliance

Bringing Middle Georgia Regional Airport into federal compliance this year took a \$94,000 payout to a private company and city employees working more hours and taking on extra duties. Keeping it there will cost even more. The airport will hire two new operations

coordinators to handle safety issues and the new hires and various upgrades will push the city's proposed aviation budget for the 2007 fiscal year up more than \$200,000 compared to this fiscal year.

"I know you have to be frugal, but there's things in this budget we have to do," reported interim airports director Mike Anthony who doubles as the city's parks director.

EVERGREEN INTERNATIONAL SUPERTANKER TOUR

The runway at Tallahassee Regional Airport was the site of a recent demonstration of the latest in fire fighting tools—the 747 supertanker.

The converted 747 cargo plane dropped 20,500 gallons of water while

flying 180 mph at an altitude of 500 feet.

The aircraft flies higher and faster than conventional fire fighting planes and delivers the water volume of seven conventional fire

fighting aircraft. The supertanker is made by Evergreen International who is in negotiations with the United States Forest Service to sell or lease the supertankers. The aircraft will visit 11 states during its month-long nationwide tour.

Southeast Chapter—AAAE

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CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations go out to Southeast Chapter member Nina Demeo, Airport Manager at North Perry Airport, and the Airport Operations and Maintenance Departments with the Broward County Aviation Department. For the 8th consecutive year, North Perry Airport (NPA) passed its annual Florida Department of Transportation inspection without any discrepancies or comments from the state inspector.

During the visit, the inspector positively commented on the condition of the airfield at North Perry Airport despite the damages the airfield incurred during last year's violent hurricanes.

The Broward County Aviation Department holds a similar record for FAR Part 139 inspections at Fort Lauderdale International Airport.

Your success stories would make a great general session at an upcoming SEC-AAAE Annual Conference.

FOLKS AVAILABLE STEVEN E. POERSCHMANN

Perhaps you met Steven Poerschmann at the recent SEC-AAAE Annual Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. He was the very polite, well-dressed young man with a briefcase full of résumés looking for a future in the airport management business.

Steven has some very extensive aviation management and leadership experience around military airports that is transferable to civilian facilities. Call for a résumé, you'll be impressed. You can contact Steven as follows:

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CONCORD AIRPORT GROWS WITH NASCAR RACING

In the coming decade, racing and racing-related companies are projected to invest at least \$80 million in Cabarrus County, North Carolina, in exchange for incentives from tax breaks to free utilities from local counties and cities.

At least five companies in the past few years have built offices, garages and shops in Concord and Cabarrus County, which is home to the Lowes Motor Speedway and the recent Coca-Cola 600 NASCAR race.

Much of the growth centers on the Concord Regional Airport. Race teams, drivers and owners

have boosted business there and a runway extension project is expected to bring more growth as larger jets will be able to land and take off with full fuel tanks, allowing them to go to the West Coast and overseas.

The latest project being courted by Concord is a wind tunnel pitched by Haas CNC Racing. For three years of tax breaks from the county, the company promises to invest \$40 million in the tunnel that would be used to test race cars, aircraft and other vehicles.

As part of the proposed deal, Concord is considering selling about

five acres off Ivey Cline Road near the airport runway for about \$110,000 per acre, City Manager Brian Hiatt says. Rather than a tax incentive, Concord will consider spending \$4 million on an electrical substation to support the wind tunnel.

The project is already in the city's future capital improvement plan, but city council could move it up a year to accommodate the wind tunnel and other future development.

If approved and an agreement is reached with Haas, the wind tunnel could be operational by December 2007.