

# SEC JOURNAL

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## GULFPORT-BILOXI INTERNATIONAL MAKING A BIG COMEBACK

Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport continues on its road to recovery following hurricane Katrina with exciting announcements of new airline service.

American Eagle, the regional affiliate of American Airlines, will add a daily nonstop flight between Chicago O'Hare International Airport and Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport beginning December 13.

American Eagle will operate the service with 44-seat Embraer ERJ-140 jets. American Eagle currently has three daily round trips between Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport and Gulfport-Biloxi.

"We are pleased to provide direct access to the beautiful city of Chicago from the Mississippi Gulf Coast,"

said Peter Bowler, President and CEO of American Eagle Airlines. "This new route will also be popular with Chicagoans in the winter to give quick and easy access to a nice, warm destination like Gulfport-Biloxi, Mississippi."

Skybus, the new \$10-a-seat airline, has also announced direct service to the Greensboro/Winston Salem/High Point areas of North Carolina beginning January 17 when the airline launches service from its newly-announced base at Piedmont Triad International Airport.

"The addition of another new city into Gulfport-Biloxi shows the enormous support of Skybus Airlines and the Mississippi Gulf Coast community. The Carolinas are a strong market for our tourism industry and

we are proud to continue to grow our partnership with Skybus," said Frank Genzer, Chairman of the Gulfport Biloxi Airport Authority.

To complete the trifecta, Myrtle Beach Direct Air, an air service based in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, announced new non-stop jet service between St. Petersburg-Clearwater Airport to Gulfport-Biloxi every Friday, Sunday and Wednesday beginning January 4, 2008.

"We are confident we can rebuild the once popular non-stop service from St. Petersburg-Clearwater Airport to Gulfport-Biloxi," said Judy Tull, CEO of Myrtle Beach Air. "We believe our three weekly non-stop flights will appeal to the local community." Fares begin at \$99 each way for the trips.

## GREENVILLE-SPARTANBURG AIRPORT CELEBRATES 45 YEARS IN FLIGHT

It has been 45 years since the first flight arrived at what is now the Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport. In a brief program and book signing held Monday evening at the airport's Windows Restaurant, Greer Mayor Rick Danner addressed a crowd of dignitaries, political leaders and esteemed citizens.

"Greenville-Spartanburg Airport has shaped our cities and our region," Mayor Danner said. "There is no city, no region that will emerge as having significance in the 21st Century without having a regional airport."

Since the initial proposal for a \$5.5 million airport facility was made in 1958, with the help of leaders like GSP Airport Commission Chairman Roger Milliken, the service provided to passengers has taken a steady climb to become a go-to destination for vacationers and

business travelers alike.

With large local corporations like BMW and Michelin having planted themselves within the I-85 corridor, the draw of the now international airport is undeniable.

In his book *Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport: Upstate South Carolina's Gateway to The World*, author Dave Partridge chronicles the history and making of what is now the main aerial thoroughfare for travelers, college students and business professionals.

"Consider this region without this airport," said Spartanburg Mayor Bill Barnet. "Would our businesses be growing? Would our colleges be thriving? I think not."

When its first flight landed in

1962, the airport was the first non-military airport to have a runway centerline lighting system which was considered an advanced technology for that time. A master plan for the next 45 years of service projects that passenger loads moving through the airport annually will climb from 1.6 million people to 8 million people. Cargo loads are projected to increase from 27 million tons per year to 100 million tons per year.

"For the next 45 years of this airport, take a look at our master plan," said GSP Commissioner Hank Ramella. "It is going to be a reality, there is no question about it."

Long-time SEC-AAAE executive member J. Garrett Jackson is the Executive Director at Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport.

## September Traffic Sets New Records at Southwest Florida Int'l

During the month of September, 2007, over 387,000 passengers traveled through the Southeast Florida International Airport, an increase of 5.2 percent compared to September 2006. Year-to-date, passenger traffic is up 7.5 percent over the same period last year.

"More than 6.1 million passengers have used our airport this year,"

said Robert Ball, A.A.E., executive director of the Lee County Port Authority. "We are particularly pleased that September, historically a slow month for travel, was no exception to record-breaking passenger traffic at Southwest Florida International Airport." The traffic leader for the month was Delta Air Lines with 59,176 passengers

traveling to and from Fort Myers. Rounding out the top five airlines were Southwest Airlines (49,828), Air Tran (39,170), Jet Blue (37,298) and US Airways (34,444).

There were 5,179 aircraft operations recorded, an increase of 2.3 percent over September 2006.

## City of Monroe Takes Steps to Improve Airport

The City of Monroe, North Carolina, is taking steps to borrow \$43 million for assorted capital improvements, including improvements to the city's regional airport.

The City Council recently adopted a resolution to ask the North Carolina Local Government Commission to allow Monroe to issue bonds.

The city plans \$25 million in improvements to Monroe Regional Airport, including a dozen new hangars, and expanding the 5,500-foot runway up to 7,500-feet. The city would realign a roadway adjacent to the airport and expand the airport's terminal building. According to the plan, work would be completed in the summer of 2009.

The city expects the state will reimburse about \$17 million of the airport project, including most of the \$11 million in bor-

rowed bond money, leaving the City of Monroe with a share of approximately \$3.4 million. The remainder, about \$5 million, would come from airport fees such as hangar leases, according to Assistant City Manager Mark Donham.

At the council meeting, member Billy Jordan said he was concerned the state reimbursement might not come through.

"I would hate for us to take on the money in anticipation of the grant, and if that does not come through we dip into our (cash reserves)," Jordan said.

Officials with the North Carolina Department of Transportation's Aviation Division have agreed to funding arrangements, Donham said. The state's contribution would come from a federal block grant for such transportation improvements.

City Manager Craig Meadows said the state typically does not commit in advance to a specific dollar amount.

"We're confident based on past history with that program" that the state will reimburse the city, Meadows added.

In addition to \$11 million for the airport, the \$43 million bond issue includes \$23 million for improvements to the city's electric and natural gas services and \$5 million for water system upgrades. An additional \$4 million would be set aside for cost overruns.

Included in the water improvement plan is a water tower to serve the western outskirts of the City of Monroe.

## Parking Garage Opens At Savannah

After more than a year of taking the shuttle from the airport's economy parking lot or arranging for friends or family to drop them off at the airport, passengers are primed to take full advantage of Savannah International Airport's new parking garage.

Passenger Mary Burk recently said, "It will be so much more convenient now." It will save her at least 20 minutes off each trip

by not having to ride the shuttle.

The Johnson family didn't know it was opened so they had friends give them a ride to the airport. "My goodness, it's open and we're not even using it. I'd like to say we're using it on the first day, but fortunately we have such good friends we didn't need to." The Johnson family said they would use the

garage to pick up friends and family, especially since the first 30 minutes are free.

The garage completes a number of recent improvements at the airport including a terminal expansion, terminal renovation and a new maintenance facility to serve the airport.

## Southeast Chapter—AAAE

Robert C. Brammer, Editor  
SEC-AAAE  
8712 Caspiana Lane  
North Charleston, SC 29420

Phone: (843) 425-3878  
Fax: (843) 225-1799  
Email: [secaaae@aol.com](mailto:secaaae@aol.com)

**We're on the Web at**  
[www.secaaae.org](http://www.secaaae.org)

### Jackson-Madison County Airport Receives Grant to Promote Passenger Service

The Jackson-Madison County Airport Authority has received a \$50,000 federal grant to help promote the area's new commercial passenger service.

The grant, known as the Small Community Air Service Development Grant, is from the U.S. Department of Transportation and required a local match of \$10,000. "That makes the total future marketing investment \$60,000," said Rodney Hendrix, executive director of the airport authority.

The money will be used to promote Big Sky Airlines' November 18 arrival at Jackson's McKellar-Sipes Regional Airport. Big Sky is replacing RegionsAir which was grounded by the Federal Aviation Administration in March.

## Tri-Cities Regional Hung Up On FAA Snags

Uncle Sam's way of helping Tri-Cities Regional Airport with future capital improvements is "stuck in the mud politically," according to Executive Director Patrick Wilson.

The Tri-Cities Regional Airport has a lot riding on Congress' pending reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration and the FAA's Airport Improvement Program which provides discretionary grants to local airports for projects to enhance capacity and safety.

At stake is the continued development of TCRA's south side and its wide open acreage primed for economic development.

Without AIP grants, major jobs like runway extensions and new taxiways don't happen unless a windfall of local funds lands in the airport's lap. TCRA competes for those grants with other airports across the nation.

TCRA is currently attempting to move forward with south side airfield projects not knowing if enough AIP money will be in the FAA's reauthorization. A reauthorization bill passed the House in September but still awaits Senate action.

U.S. Rep. David Davis, R-1st, voted against reauthorization. "I support the modernization of our aging air traffic control infrastructure, but I could not support this version of the FAA reauthorization due to additional sections of the legislation which inappropriately requires express carriers to be governed under the National Labor Relations Act," Davis said of his vote. "This would adversely impact thousands of jobs in the First District of Tennessee and our nation."

## GOLDEN TRIANGLE GETS GRANT

The Golden Triangle Regional Airport recently received a long-sought federal grant and GTRA Executive Director Mike Hainsey says it will come in handy as the small airport courts additional airlines.

The U.S. Department of Transportation awarded grant funds totaling almost \$1 million to GTRA and Mid-Delta Regional Airport in Greenville.

Mississippi Sen. Trent Lott recently stated, "As a ranking member of the United States Senate's Aviation Subcommittee, I was most pleased to work with administrators of both of these facilities to secure this funding."

Trent added, "This is part of a flexible federal initiative we specifically designed to maintain and increase commercial passenger service at small community

airports like Mid-Delta and Golden Triangle. It can be used for a variety of purposes related to promoting regional airport connections and ensuring competitive ticket prices."

GTRA's cut of the awarded funds was a \$500,000 revenue guarantee grant, which Hainsey explained would help cover financial losses by an airline choosing to fly out of the airport.

The American Association of Airport Executives and the Southeast Chapter AAAE present the



# 19th Annual Airport Finance and Administration Conference

January 27-30, 2008 • Melbourne, Florida • Mtg. #080104



AAAE and the Southeast Chapter AAAE are joining together again to host the 19th Annual Airport Finance and Administration Conference, January 27-30, 2008, in Melbourne, Florida. This is the one conference of the year that is entirely focused on finance and administration issues. If you are responsible for this area at your airport, this is the conference to attend. The 2008 conference will have a new format with two full days of sessions!

Topics to be covered at the conference will include airport fraud, airport finance, audits, diversity and many more. This conference will address all the subjects that those working in the finance and administration fields need to know to manage today's airports.

In addition, Sam Hoerter, A.A.E., former director of airports, Charleston County Airport Authority, will give a presentation Monday morning on "The Ten Most Important Questions in Aviation Today." Those who have heard Sam speak know he is not to be missed.

Other topics scheduled to be discussed and debated are:

- General Aviation Airport Challenges
- Coordinating Airport Planning with Financing
- The Effect of a Wellness Program on Absenteeism and Healthcare Costs
- Airport Bonds
- Avoiding the Pitfalls of AIP Grant Funding

This meeting draws airport finance and administration officials from across the country. You will have opportunities to network with those in your field, as well as meet vendors with new and improved products. Plus, if you are a CPA, earn CPE credits for attending the sessions.

All sessions will take place at the Crowne Plaza Melbourne Oceanfront Hotel. The meeting will begin with a reception at 6 p.m. Sunday, January 27, and will end with an airport tour on Wednesday, January 30. The Southeast Chapter AAAE will have a board meeting at 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, January 27.

Registration fees include a welcome reception, a Monday evening event, two continental breakfasts, two lunches, breaks and all handout materials. Dress for the meeting is business casual (no ties!). Confirmation letters will be e-mailed to all conference attendees. **For further program or sponsorship information, contact Sean Broderick, AAAE, at (703) 824-0500, Ext. 126, or e-mail [sean.broderick@aaae.org](mailto:sean.broderick@aaae.org). For registration information, contact Michelle Randall, AAAE, Ext. 185, e-mail [michelle.randall@aaae.org](mailto:michelle.randall@aaae.org).**

## DRAFT AGENDA (subject to change)

### Sunday, January 27

- 3:30-5 p.m. Southeast Chapter AAAE Board Meeting
- 5-6 p.m. Registration
- 6-7 p.m. Welcome Reception

### Monday, January 28

- 7:30-8:30 a.m. Registration and Continental Breakfast
- 8:30-9 a.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks
- 9 a.m.-Noon General Session I — The Ten Most Important Questions in Aviation Today, Sam Hoerter, A.A.E.
- Noon-1 p.m. Lunch
- 1:15-2:15 p.m. General Session II — General Aviation Issues for Financial Professionals
- 2:15-3:15 p.m. General Session III — Coordinating Airport Planning with Airport Financing Break
- 3:15-3:45 p.m. General Session IV — Airport Bond Issues
- 3:45-5 p.m. General Session IV — Airport Bond Issues
- 6-8 p.m. Evening Event (Hosted by Melbourne International Airport)

### Tuesday, January 29

- 7:45-9 a.m. Registration and Continental Breakfast
- 8-8:45 a.m. AAAE Finance & Admin Committee Mtg.
- 9-10:15 a.m. General Session V — Fraud Awareness Break
- 10:15-10:45 a.m. General Session VI — The Effect of a Wellness Program on Absenteeism and Healthcare Costs
- 10:45 a.m.-Noon General Session VI — The Effect of a Wellness Program on Absenteeism and Healthcare Costs
- Noon-1 p.m. Lunch
- 1-2 p.m. Concurrent Sessions
  - Diversity in the Workplace
  - ACRP
- 2-3 p.m. Concurrent Sessions
  - Audit Update
  - The Microjet Explosion
- 3-3:15 p.m. Break
- 3:15-4:15 p.m. Concurrent Sessions
  - Avoiding the Pitfalls of AIP Grant Funding
  - Successful Interviewing
- 5-6 p.m. Closing Reception

### Wednesday, January 30

- 9 a.m.-Noon Tour of the Melbourne International Airport and Industrial Park

The delivery method is group-live and the program level is intermediate. No prerequisites and/or advance preparation is required. This course provides 15 hours of CPE credits and is worth 12 credits in the AAAE Continuing Airport Management Education Unit (CEU) program.

**REGISTER ON-LINE!**

[www.aaae.org/meetings](http://www.aaae.org/meetings)



The American Association of Airport Executives and the Southeast Chapter AAEE present the

# 19th Annual Airport Finance and Administration Conference

January 27-30, 2008 • Melbourne, Florida • Mtg. #080104



**Hotel reservations**—Rooms are being held at the Crowne Plaza Melbourne Oceanfront Hotel, 2605 North A1A, Indialantic, FL 32903, phone (321) 777-4100, fax (321) 773-6132. All attendees will receive a special rate of \$149/\$159, depending on view. **Reservations must be made by Friday, January 4, 2008, in order to guarantee this rate.** Reservations made after this date can only be honored on a space available basis. To make your hotel reservations, call the hotel directly at (321) 777-4100 or (800) 227-6963 and identify yourself as part of the AAEE group.

**Airline reservations**—American Airlines has been selected as the official air carrier for this meeting. Attendees can receive 10% off American's full coach fares or 5% off all other published fares. Rules and restrictions apply. To take advantage of American's special fares, call American Airlines directly at (800) 433-1790 from 6 a.m.-1 a.m. eastern time daily and refer to star file #A1818SS.

**Ground Transportation**—The Crowne Plaza Melbourne Oceanfront Hotel is located approximately 15 miles from Melbourne International Airport and approximately 50 miles from Orlando International Airport. Executive Shuttle Service provides transportation from Orlando International Airport for approximately \$55 one way. Make your reservation by calling (888) 303-4044. Avis Budget Group, Inc. is the official rental car company for this meeting. To make reservations or for further information, please call Avis Budget Group, Inc. at (800) 331-1600 and reference J097316.

NOTE: AAEE reserves the right to cancel this program if the number of registrants is insufficient. In this event, we will notify all registrants and refund the registration fee in full. **However, any costs incurred by the registrant, such as hotel cancellation or airline penalties, are the responsibility of the registrant.** Confirmation letters will be faxed to attendees. If you have not received a confirmation letter via fax two business days prior to the meeting, and you enrolled at least 15 days prior to the meeting, please contact the AAEE Meetings Department at (703) 824-0504. Non-receipt of the confirmation letter before the meeting is not justification for seeking a refund.

I would like to be contacted about upcoming meetings/promotions by fax  e-mail . Future correspondence will be sent to the address, fax number and/or e-mail address below.  Check here if new contact information has been provided.

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Please indicate any special needs to participate and attach a description of your needs.

*Registrations and cancellations must be submitted in writing. Refund requests received before 1/11/2008 are subject to a \$125 processing fee. There will be no refunds after this date. Substitutions will be accepted without penalties and no-shows will be billed. For all inquiries regarding complaints, cancellations and refunds, please contact the AAEE Meetings Department at (703) 824-0504.*

## REGISTRATION FEE (in U.S. funds drawn on a U.S. bank)

(includes one reception, two continental breakfasts, two lunches, breaks and all handouts)

1.  AAEE/Southeast Chapter Member ..... \$405    2.  Non-Member ..... \$545



Accredited Airport Executives®

This course provides 15 hours of CPE credit and is worth 12 credits in the AAEE Continuing Airport Management Education Unit (CEU) program. (The delivery method is group-live and the program level is intermediate. No prerequisites and/or preparation required.)

## PAYMENT METHOD

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Upon receipt of this form, please charge my (circle one):    American Express    MasterCard    Visa

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