

REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

**HENDERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

MEETING DATE: August 6, 2018
SUBJECT: Asheville Airport Update
PRESENTER: Lew Bleiweis
ATTACHMENTS: Yes
1) January – December 2017 Highlights

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

Lew Bleiweis, Airport Director at the Asheville Regional Airport, will provide an update to the Board of Commissioners on the Asheville Airport.

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

No action is requested. The presentation is for information purposes.

Suggested Motion:

No motion suggested.



#flylocal

Greater Asheville Regional Airport Authority
61 Terminal Drive, Suite 1,
Fletcher, NC 28732
828.684.2226

flyavl.com |     



#ourstory

A letter from Lew Bleiweis, A.A.E.,
Executive Director

What is the mission of an airport? Is it to focus on safety? Perhaps ease and efficiency rise to the top of your mind. Maybe airports should provide amenities and services that passengers need. Or should the mission of an airport focus on the needs of its tenants – the airlines, rental car companies, concessionaires, general aviators and others? How about contributing to the region's economic strength?

The answer to these questions is "yes." Airports should focus on all of the above – and more.

At Asheville Regional Airport, our mission is to provide an exceptional airport experience, with a focus on people, service, commercial and general aviation, and to contribute to the regional economy.

2017 was an exceptional year, in many ways. We kept our sights on our mission, and strived for improvements each and every day in order to serve our community and passengers.



#growth

JANUARY 2017

United Airlines announced expanded service from AVL to Newark, New Jersey/ the New York City area. Already serving this route seasonally, United decided to fly year-round, daily service to Newark on larger jets. This move increased available seats offered by United by more than 87%.



This report is a series of highlights of the ways we fulfilled our mission, during each month of the year – a journey through our annual calendar. January started with the great news that we had just completed our third record year of passenger growth (2016), setting the stage for month-after-month of positive stories to tell.

And, yes, we shattered records.
No, let me rephrase –

YOU shattered records.

More of you than ever before – by far – flew from AVL in 2017. And we thank you.

My promise to you – our neighbors and friends – is that the team at Asheville Regional Airport will continue to focus on our mission, and make our region's airport the very best it can be so your experience with us is truly exceptional.

Lew Bleiweis, A.A.E.
Executive Director



Asheville Regional Airport
STUDENT
artwork
showcase

Second Annual Student Artwork Showcase
Ten western North Carolina schools participated in the exhibit, with artists ranging from 5 to 18 years old.

#community



#growth

FEBRUARY 2017

Parking Garage

construction leaped forward, and took shape this month. A crane was in full-time use, installing the prefabricated concrete walls and floors of our new five-story parking garage.

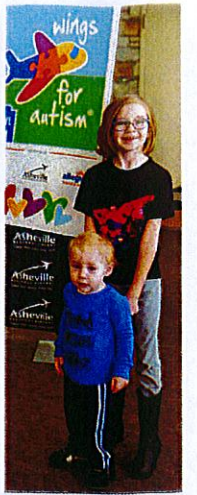


#welcome

MARCH 2017

Asheville Helicopter Tours

— a new airport-based business — opened this month, providing locals and visitors the opportunity to soar over some of our area's most beloved places.

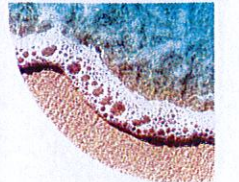


Second Annual Wings for Autism®

The airport, in partnership with The Arc of Buncombe County, Allegiant, Worldwide Flight Services and the Transportation Security Administration, welcomed our special neighbors on the autism spectrum to the airport. We provided an "imaginary trip," which simulated a real airport and airplane boarding experience, to help familiarize these families with the process.



#airportlove



Elite Airways

— a brand new airline to AVL — announced seasonal, twice-weekly service to Vero Beach, Florida, the "gold coast" along the eastern shore.

#helloVRB

HELLO VERO BEACH!
 NEW nonstop to VRB
 Elite Airways
 starting May 23

BOOK TICKETS TODAY
 eliteairways.com





#lead

APRIL 2017

Lew Bleiweis, A.A.E., Executive Director, was named Airport Professional of the Year at the Southeast Chapter of the American Association of Airport Executives at their annual conference in Knoxville, TN. The award is presented each year to an outstanding airport professional — based on the nominee's professionalism, knowledge and integrity in dealing with airport issues and the community.



#projectSOAR

MAY 2017

The airport was awarded an \$18.2 million discretionary grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation for use toward the airfield redevelopment project, titled

Project SOAR

Project SOAR: Significant Opportunity for Aviation & the Region. The project is targeted for completion in winter 2018, resulting in a new runway, new west-side taxiway, and additional acres prepared for aeronautical development.



Lew Bleiweis, A.A.E.,
Executive Director

Vice Chair, Airports Council International –
North America Board

Member, Airports Council
International World Board

Michael Reisman, A.A.E.,
Deputy Executive Director

Secretary/Treasurer, Southeast Chapter of the
American Association of Airport Executives

Tina Kinsey, A.A.E., Director
of Marketing, PR & Air
Service Development

Vice President, North Carolina Airports Association

Member, Marketing & Communications
Steering Committee, Airports Council
International – North America

Executive Committee Member, Henderson
County Chamber of Commerce

Kevan Smith, Chief of Public Safety

Member, Blue Ridge Honor Flight Board

David King, Guest Services
& Sales Supervisor

Member, Ambassador Committees – Asheville
and Henderson County Chambers of Commerce



We celebrated the inaugural
flight to Vero Beach on
Elite Airways
with a ribbon cutting ceremony and a
traditional water arch (we love these!).

#celebrate





#community

JUNE 2017

The busy summer season kicked off with some great community connections. For the first time, we sponsored the **Images of Western North Carolina Photo Contest** — a region-wide photography contest in partnership with WNC Magazine. Professionals and amateurs alike submitted more than 800 photographs for consideration for the grand prizes, which included a special exhibit of winning photographs in the airport's art gallery.



#recordbreaking

JULY 2017

July 2017 was the first-ever **100,000 passenger month** at AVL in the airport's 56-year history! Specifically, 100,998 passengers were served by five airlines: **American, Allegiant, Delta, Elite and United**. This was an 11.6% increase compared to July 2016.



In partnership with Ashvegas.com, we continued our award-winning **Music on the Fly** pop-up music concerts, performed by our region's talented pool of professional musicians. In 2017, we hosted twelve pop-up concerts at the airport, delighting passengers with a slice of western North Carolina's culture.

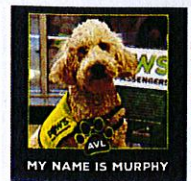
#flylocal



MY NAME IS BABY



MY NAME IS JELLY



MY NAME IS MURPHY



We are guided by our mission to provide an exceptional airport experience. In June 2017, we started a program designed to do just that. **Paws for Passengers**

kicked off, with ten new volunteer teams. These special ambassadors — specially trained pups and their owners — visit the airport almost daily during busy times. They bring some cheer, a special welcome, and sometimes help calm nerves for travelers. The program grew significantly in just a few months, with teams now on a waiting list to volunteer.

#exceptionalexperience





#aviationhistory

AUGUST 2017

AVL partnered with the Experimental Aircraft Association to promote an upcoming visit of the Ford Tri-Motor to our airport. Known as the first luxury airliner, the Ford Tri-Motor redefined world travel and marked the beginning of commercial flight. They were manufactured from 1926-1933.



#honor

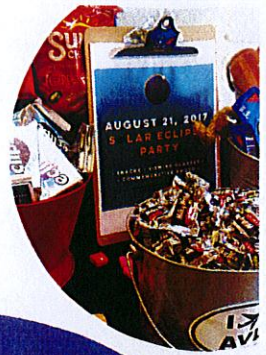
SEPTEMBER 2017

It is always a humbling and moving day when we welcome the **Blue Ridge Honor Flight** veterans to the airport for their special flight to D.C. to view their memorials. It is equally wonderful to welcome them home again after an amazing trip!



Total Solar Eclipse
It's important to pause and spend time together as a team. What better way for a group of aviation professionals to take a break than to look to the skies for joy and wonder! August 2017 was historic – the month of the total solar eclipse. The AVL team had a front-row view above the airfield.

#focuspeople



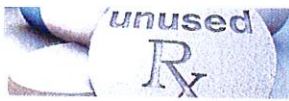
OCTOBER 2017

A negative event happened this month: an explosive device was placed outside of baggage claim along the curb of the airport terminal. We included this information in our annual report because this very real occurrence highlights the importance of continual diligence and focus on **public safety – a top priority** at AVL. This event ended quickly and without incident. Once the suspicious item was reported, our team responded decisively and effectively. We are grateful to our community law enforcement partners, who were also swift and professional with their responses.

No security program is perfect, and this incident helped us critically review our emergency plans and procedures to enhance and strengthen our security and preparedness. We will continue to examine, enhance, learn and improve – a never-ending quest.

#focussafety





#community

OCTOBER 2017

Once again, our **Department of Public Safety** gave back to the community by volunteering to be a drop-off location for Operation Medicine Drop, organized by the Partnership for Substance Free Youth in Buncombe County. Unused medications were dropped off by community members for safe disposal.



As part of a comprehensive **United Way** campaign at AVL, our team volunteered in the community for the United Way Day of Impact, spending time at local elementary schools to provide man power for needed projects.

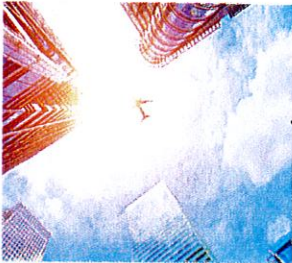
#community



#recordbreaking

OCTOBER 2017

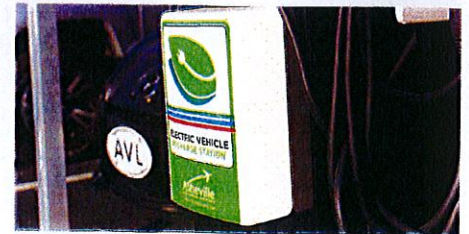
Remember that record that was smashed in July 2017 (just two months ago)? Well, we broke it again! October 2017 was the **busiest month on record** at AVL, with 102,095 passengers using the airport – and the second-ever month of 100,000+ passengers – a 17% increase compared to October 2016.



We installed two new **Electric Vehicle Charging Stations**

in our surface lot – one more way to provide customer service at AVL.

#flylocal





#service

NOVEMBER 2017

Air service news was very good this month. American Airlines announced new, seasonal nonstop service to Dallas/Ft. Worth starting summer 2018. It was also welcome news when Allegiant released their summer 2018 schedule, showing a large increase in the number of flights offered to several of their Florida destinations.



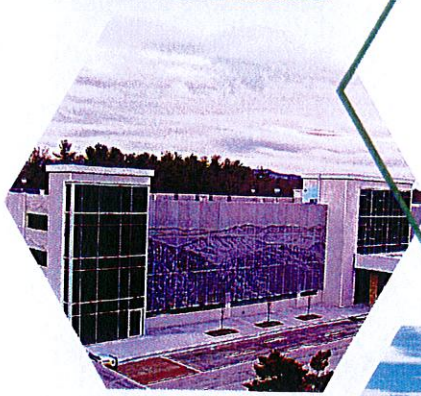
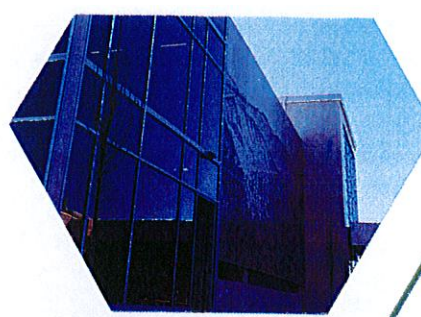
#recordshattered

DECEMBER 2017

It became official: 2017 was the **fourth record year** of passenger utilization. Up more than 15% compared to the previous year, we served 956,634 annual passengers. Compared to just five years prior, passenger numbers were up by more than 50%. This growth is due in large part to regional travelers who continued to "fly local," and also to the commitment of new service, more frequencies and additional seats in the market provided by our airline partners.

Thank you, WNC.

And thank you Allegiant, American, Delta, Elite and United for your commitment in our community!



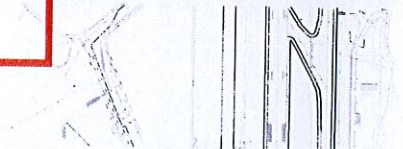
To accommodate the significant growth in passenger use, we opened our new five-level parking garage this month! Quick, easy, covered and steps away from the terminal, this amenity is one the community has requested for many years. We received excellent feedback about the aesthetics of the garage, especially the three-story high metal, perforated screens that depict nearly photographic images of the Blue Ridge Mountains along the east and west sides of the garage.

#exceptionalexperience



The growth was phenomenal in 2017, which lead the organization to plan for an official terminal assessment study. This study – scheduled for completion in 2018 – will help the airport develop a **growth plan** that will meet the needs of our passengers and airport partners moving forward.

#futureplanning

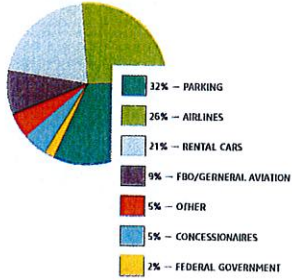




#numbers

The Authority's assets exceeded liabilities by \$128,928,585 at June 30, 2017. That is an increase of more than \$14.3 million from 2016, and an increase of more than \$30.7 million from 2015.

SOURCES OF REVENUE



GREATER ASHEVILLE REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY BOARD



Bob Roberts — CHAIR
Appointed by the City of Asheville



Matthew Burrill — VICE CHAIR
Appointed by Buncombe County



K. Ray Bailey — MEMBER
Appointed by the GARAA Board



Stephanie Pace Brown — MEMBER
Appointed by the City of Asheville



George Erwin, Jr. — MEMBER
Appointed by Henderson County



David Gantt — MEMBER
Appointed by Buncombe County



William Moyer — MEMBER
Appointed by Henderson County



OUR VISION
To be a champion for exceptional customer experiences and economic vitality

OUR MISSION
To provide an exceptional airport experience with a focus on people, service, commercial and general aviation, and to contribute to the regional economy

OUR CORE VALUES
People | Caring | Excellence | Integrity | Respect | Service | Adaptability



#flyAVL

JANUARY — DECEMBER 2017

HIGHLIGHTS

