



(far left) Paul Wyatt, manager of the Nashville office, and Sue Jessup, reservations agent; (above left) Agent Elain Dalton; (at left) Kenny Scarboro, supervisor of reservations agents.

Nashville celebrates 1st anniversary

At 6 a.m., April 1, 1980, Nashville for business. Ten people on the first shift sat nervously at their stations, each awaiting that first phone call, wondering if he or she was prepared to handle the job.

This month Nashville is celebrating its first anniversary and its agents aren't nervous any more. With over two million calls behind them (an average of one every twelve seconds), the 135 people in reservations are an experienced group, handling 25 percent of the reservation calls Piedmont receives.

"One of the main reasons Piedmont opened a second reservations office is the savings in telephone line costs that can be realized," Paul Wyatt, manager of the new facility, said.

"A thorough study, headed by Don Shanks (Customer Relations), was made of several cities and Nashville was chosen because of its central location in the western part of our system. We looked at other factors such as the grade of service we could receive from the telephone company, the cost of leasing the building, and other overhead that by 1985 our Nashville office would save Piedmont \$800,000 in telephone line costs alone and at the rate we're going,

we may even exceed that."

The Nashville office is located at 322 Knapp Boulevard near the airport and only 10 miles from Opryland and recording studios known world-wide. Telephones are manned seven days a week from 6 a.m. to midnight. After midnight, calls are diverted to CRO in Winston-Salem. Nashville handles general sales calls from 11 cities — Louisville, Lexington, Cincinnati, Chicago, Knoxville, Dallas, Memphis, Houston, Denver, Nashville, and Dayton. They also answer all general sales calls, except from North Carolina, on Piedmont's WATTS line, which covers the entire Continental United States.

"Normally, we receive about 6,500 to 7,000 calls a day," Wyatt said. "March 9 was our peak day when we exceeded all expectations by answering 8,071 calls. July was the highest month of our first year with over 175,000 calls."

employees transferred

Wyatt also celebrates his 20th anniversary with Piedmont this month. He joined the Company on April 1, 1961, in Norfolk where "I did everything. Those were the days when you would sell a ticket, then run out and load the bags, and finally signal the pilot to takeoff." He transferred to Winston-Salem in 1970 and worked in the old reservations center which was located above what is now the General Aviation hangar.

Wyatt, along with 25 other employees from the CRO in Winston-

Salem, transferred to Nashville in early 1980 to set up the new office. Two people who came with him are Carolyn Matthews, assistant manager of reservation sales, and John Elrod, assistant manager of reservations, administration and staff services. In May, Matthews will mark her 15th year with Piedmont and Elrod, his eighth.

success due to many

"Everyone got into the act," Wyatt explained. "Keith Douglass, Nashville station manager, provided us with ground transportation and information on flights. Bill Hanson (CRO/INT) designed the facility, and Don Tedder (CRO/INT) handled much of the paperwork. Grant Clark (CRO/INT) put us on computer. Ray Welch and Nancy Green (Personnel, INT) handled the hiring, and Lew Horn and Janice Foster (CRO/INT), training. And, of course, people from Winston-Salem like Walt Ryzcek (CRO) and Don Shanks (Customer Relations) helped get things off the ground.

"Everything went like clockwork. Things seemed to mesh for our April 1 target date."

Others who helped NRO get started are Peg Baltes (CRO) and Freida Whitley, Gary Blackburn, Helen Temples, Gail Jones, and Elaine Dalton, all transfers to NRO.

Now the Nashville office is preparing for its first spurt of growth. Twenty-nine more people are being trained as reservations agents, and additional equipment is being installed for their use.

"Soon we hope to put in 10 to 13 new WATTS lines plus publicize those lines in more cities," Wyatt said. "For example, we're listed in only two phone directories in Kentucky now. By the end of the year, we'll be in 40."

Nashville is also finding that January and February, just as busy for them as other months of the year, "partly due to Hopscotch, our hottest item," Elrod said. "Our

boardings are up considerably and the phones are constantly ringing."

By taking Piedmont's Hopscotch Fare, passengers can save up to 50 percent on a round-trip ticket by making one or more stops or a connection in selected markets.

"We've had Hopscotch for a long time but no one took notice," said Mary Kost, Nashville's city sales manager. "Convenience and speed took precedence over cost. Now, with the economy like it is and the increases that have had to be made in tickets because of the cost of fuel, Hopscotch has really become attractive to business travelers and vacationers alike."

Wyatt attributes much of the Nashville office's success to its small size. "We've been able to deal with problems face to face. We've met the challenges put before us from the very beginning," he said.

For brand new people, our employees have done very well. In fact, we think we're right in there with CRO in Winston-Salem and we're not going to lag behind."



Careline is alive and well in Nashville.

When a call or complimentary letter is received about an agent, it doesn't go unnoticed. The person's supervisor writes the agent a note, then presents the note and a flag bearing the words "I'm a people pleaser" to the agent at his/her desk. The flag is flown for a month.

"We can't keep enough flags in stock," said Carolyn Matthews, assistant manager of reservations sales. "We average about 10 each month and can't manufacture them fast enough."

Last summer, Careline sponsored a picnic for the office personnel. More recently, Careline conducted a general survey to find out how employees feel about the Company. The results have been good.



John Elrod, assistant manager of reservations, administration and staff services



Mary Stegall, reservations agent