

# Sunbird to fly Piedmont colors

Beginning May 1, another airline will be flying Piedmont colors.

We have signed a 10-year agreement with Sunbird Airlines, based in Charlotte, which makes Sunbird the first commuter carrier in the Piedmont commuter system. The new joint program will give passengers on Sunbird fast connecting flights to major destinations at our hub in Charlotte.

Henson Airlines, which also flies our colors, is a subsidiary of Piedmont and as such is Piedmont's Regional Airline. Sunbird remains a separate entity. The airline is the first carrier to be part of Piedmont's commuter system which will include similar contracts with other commuter airlines in the future.

"The agreement benefits both Piedmont and Sunbird," Sherl Folger, vice president-commuter and interline development, said.

"For us, it's a way to increase our load factor at our largest hub, a way to gain more passenger loyalty, and a way to expand our services. Such agreements also help protect us from competition," he said.

For Sunbird, the contract means greater recognition.

"Our two-letter designation is very powerful," Folger said. "For example, this guarantees swifter

connections, better baggage connections and more competitive fares to the community presently receiving only Sunbird service by opening up all of Piedmont's system to their timetable," Folger explained.

"There are also other advantages for Sunbird," he said. "The agreement will discourage competitors from taking on Sunbird in its existing markets because Sunbird now has the umbrella of Piedmont's system strength over them."

Setting up the program with Sunbird has required support from people in many areas of the Company. Before Piedmont could begin taking reservations for Sunbird on March 30, computer hardware had to be installed and telephone lines readied. Our reservations agents have been alerted to the new services, and arrangements have been made for passenger services and ground operations.

Our Scheduling Department took care of coordinating Piedmont's and Sunbird's flights, and reservations personnel made sure the OAG and city and system timetables listed the services. Joint fare programs have been coordinated as have mail and cargo rates.

Our people in sales have conducted sales blitzes, held travel agent and civic receptions, and

promoted the new program through joint advertising. They are also promoting our Frequent Flyer program, available to passengers flying Sunbird as well as Piedmont.

Joint identity boards with the wording "Piedmont Commuter" are going up at the 10 stations where Sunbird provides service, and advertising and joint promotions have begun. New forms have been issued, and training has been provided for employees in passenger service, reservations, accounting, and baggage service.

Sunbird operates a fleet of six aircraft — five Beechcraft C99's that seat 15 passengers each, and one Short Brothers 330 that seats 30 passengers. Besides Charlotte, Sunbird will operate flights to Asheville, Greenville, Hickory, Raleigh/Durham and Winston-Salem, NC; Anderson and Greenville/Spartanburg, SC; and Athens and Atlanta, GA.

Although most of Sunbird's flights will stop in Charlotte, the airline will offer nonstop service between Atlanta and Athens, Asheville and Raleigh/Durham, and Raleigh/Durham and Greenville, NC.

Piedmont will handle all Sunbird operations at AVL, GSP, RDU, and ATL. At CLT, we will be responsible for the ticket counter, but Sunbird

will handle gate and ground operations. Sunbird will be responsible for all operations at Athens, Anderson, Hickory, Greenville, NC, and Winston-Salem.

And on May 1, Sunbird will add "Piedmont Commuter Airline" as the logo on its aircraft.

"We expect to develop similar arrangements with other commuter carriers at our Dayton hub. At BWI, of course, we already have a commuter system with Henson, our Regional Airline," Folger said.

"Most other major carriers are going to similar programs as a way to feed their hubs, and I think our joint marketing program with Sunbird will provide a good foundation for a Piedmont commuter network."



*Piedmont employees and members of their families are eligible to receive space available passes on Sunbird. In addition, each employee may request one 75% space available pass each year for parents. Sunbird employees will have priority in seating.*

*The same regulations are in effect for Sunbird employees flying Piedmont. They are eligible for space available passes, but Piedmont employees will be seated first.*

*Passes can be obtained through regular pass procedures.*

## Follow guidelines For quick results

Have you had difficulty in getting claims processed, especially for prescription drugs?

The holdup may stem from the fact that Aetna does not have adequate information to process the claim.

To make sure all your claims are processed quickly and correctly, follow these guidelines:

- Each time you submit a claim on you or your family member, include a benefits request form with a list of all claims that have been made for you or that family member during the year. Aetna now requires this form once each calendar year for each person covered under the Plan.

- You can also alleviate requests for more information from Aetna by submitting a completed benefits request form for your initial claim or by including with the bill the physician's diagnosis and whether or not the bill is for an accident.

- When filing a claim brought on by an accident, give Aetna information about the accident, including the date and details of the accident. Itemized bills often do not tell whether or not a charge is for an accident. If you or a covered dependent has a nonoccupational accident, Aetna will pay 100 per-

cent of the first \$300 of charges incurred the day of or day following the accident and 80 percent thereafter subject to the deductible.

- If you have a claim to file for prescription drugs, hold on to your receipts. Mark each receipt with the name of the drug, the dose per day, the illness for which the drug is prescribed, and the name of the physician who prescribed the drug. This information is usually on the drug's bottle or package but seldom on the receipt. Aetna does not require that you send the receipts unless the expense is unusually high, only that you provide the preceding information on the drug. But it is suggested that you retain your receipts for 12 months from the date of filing. Do not send

receipts unless requested by Aetna.

- File claims on a timely basis, for example, every quarter. Aetna will process claims which are no older than 24 months from their date of receipt.

Benefit request forms are available from your supervisor or by contacting the Employee Benefits Department, A255, Extension 5524.

### Just a reminder

The deadline for filing your 1984 taxes has just passed unless you have applied for an extension. During the last several weeks, the Payroll Department has received a number of requests from

employees who are income averaging for copies of their previous years' W-2 forms. Information needed for income averaging must come from previous years' tax returns. The Payroll Department cannot provide this information.

If you find that after filing your tax return you need to adjust the amount being withheld, simply complete a new W-4 exemption form and send it to the Payroll Department, A-254. These forms are available from your supervisor or the Payroll Department.



## Scheduling highlights

Piedmont's first 737-300 will go into service May 1, and six Piedmont destinations will be in the initial routing. The new aircraft will provide service at GSO, CLT, DFW, ORF, and EWR. Our second and third 737-300s will be delivered in May.

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On May 1, Henson Airlines, our regional carrier, will have 11 nonstop, round-trip flights daily at CLT. Henson will have six flights to Florence, three to Lynchburg, and

two to Lewisburg. Piedmont is handling all of Henson's operations at CLT. Sunbird, Piedmont's new commuter, will have 23 daily flights at CLT, and we will handle the airline's ticket counter operations. Including Henson and Sunbird, Piedmont will have 198 daily departures at CLT on May 1.

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On May 1, Piedmont will have 879 daily departures. We will fly 315,119 miles a day and our available seat miles will grow to 38,999,042. The average length of each flight will be 358 miles, and

our aircraft will fly 976 hours each day.

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On June 1, our operations at BWI will grow to 76 flights daily for a total of 8,328 available seats at our second largest hub. Two new nonstop, round-trip flights to IAH and one nonstop, round-trip to BNA will be on the new schedule, giving IAH seven daily departures and BNA, nine. We'll also add two more nonstop, round-trip flights to BOS from BWI and one more to BDL.

