

CLT spells relief: E-x-p-a-n-s-i-o-n

Beginning next month, construction will begin at the Charlotte/Douglas International Airport to double the size of Piedmont's present concourse and provide us with four additional gates. The \$6.2 million expansion, financed by the City of Charlotte with a commitment from Piedmont to lease, is scheduled for completion by the end of the year.

"We're expanding our gates from 12 to 16 but certainly not anywhere comparable to the square footage we're adding," Leonard Martin, vice president-passenger services, said.

"Our intent is to increase the comfort level of our passengers."

Piedmont's facilities at the new Charlotte terminal — viewed less than two years ago as the remedy for the many problems brought on by our rapid growth — have been outgrown by our massive operations. When we moved to the new terminal in May 1982, we had 86 flights a day and boarded 145,000 passengers a month from our 12 gates. By April 1 of this year, we'll have 140 daily departures and estimated monthly boardings in excess of 270,000.

"We've known for over a year that

we needed more space but finding that space hasn't been easy," Martin said.

"Several options have been considered including moving to an entirely new concourse, but we didn't want to give up our present location. We decided the best solution is to expand out beyond the end of our concourse even though it requires a great deal of site preparation."

Beginning in March, the City of Charlotte will bring in tons of fill to build up the area at the end of our concourse, after which the City will grade, pave, and prepare the ramp and taxiway for service. Actual construction will not start until August.

"This way we can have all the building materials ready and on site by the end of the summer," Martin said. "When construction begins, it will look like an erector set going up."

Filling in the area at the end of our concourse is no small task. It will take a half million cubic yards of fill — a large dump truck carries only 10 cubic yards — and 200 trucks have been committed to the project. The work will be done at

night so as not to interfere with our flight operations.

The building will be constructed in two phases. During the months of August, September, and October, one of our present gates, Gate C-14, will be closed while the new building and a connector between the present building and the new structure are constructed.

In early November, the second phase will commence. At that time, Piedmont will begin operations from the new building's four gates. Gates C-12 and C-17 on the present concourse will be closed so that construction can take place on both sides of the connector. That construction is scheduled to be completed by January 1 when all 16 gates will be ready for use.

"We think there's a real possibility that construction will be completed by mid-December, in time for the holiday rush," Martin said.

The addition will give Piedmont 30,000 more square feet of space on each level. The length of the present concourse will be extended 295 feet. The first half of the new area will be 90 feet wide and the second half, 115 feet wide. The

existing concourse is only 80 feet wide.

"The wider concourse will allow for a full service area where shops can locate," Martin said, "and more restroom facilities will be added."

The Piedmont Presidential Suite will be moved, tripling the amount of space we currently have for our members.

By the time construction is completed, all gates will be equipped with preconditioned air and ground power. The lower level will be dedicated primarily to a new adequately sized baggage and mail transfer area, and the present baggage area will be renovated for crew rooms and support areas as well as a large breakroom for agents.

"We are going to great lengths to keep our down time to a minimum during construction," Martin said. "We're also working on other ways to handle traffic during the three months when we'll have only 11 gates."

"After a year of study, we are convinced this is the best way to insure our future at Charlotte."



continued from page 1

LA's the Place

Coast. Pam Horton (ORF), Brenda Lilly (ORF), Tiara Roberts (GSO), Barbara Graham (ROA), and Judy Littrell (ILM) spent several days working with VanDuser to plan flight service.

"Once we've finalized all the procedures, we'll go out to our bases and help train our flight attendants," Horton said.

"By April 1, all 1,300 flight attendants will have gone through a two-hour training course for the long range 727s."

Flight attendants will rotate between coach and first class so that everyone will stay current on all aspects of service.

"The first flight might be a high seniority trip," Lilly said, "but if someone gets sick, a reserve could be called, so everyone has to be ready for the start-up April 1."

Our Systems and Programming Department, which collects data such as our daily traffic statistics on tapes and disks, has also been faced with major changes due to first class service.

"We're making approximately 150 changes in our computer programs to allow for the new services," Norm McAllister, projects manager, said.

Normally when Piedmont adds a new destination, Systems and Programming makes 20 to 30 changes. But Los Angeles posed some new challenges. First, we're entering another time zone and that requires a new routine. Secondly, the long-range 727-200s and the new



Flight attendants (l to r) Judy Littrell, ILM, Tiara Roberts, GSO, Pam Horton, ORF, and (far right) Brenda Lilly, ORF, discuss our

new first-class service with Pete VanDuser, director-food services. The long-range 727-200s which will be used on our California

routes will have first-class as well as coach sections.

seating chart demand new procedures.

"But adding first-class service has required the most work," McAllister said.

"Now we have two sets of statistics to record, one for first class and one for coach. That means we have to keep track of twice as much information as before."

McAllister estimates that it will take 10 people working two months to make all the program changes.

Employees in many other areas at Piedmont are feeling the effects of transcontinental service. Agents at stations are being trained to

handle the new aircraft, and agents in our reservations offices are now selling the new services. A new marketing strategy, including an advertising campaign, is being developed for California, and new fares are being calculated.

"We also need to remember that at the same time we're adding non-stop flights to California, we're going to begin flying the smallest jets we've ever operated into the smallest markets on our system," Bill Howard, president and chief executive officer, said.

"Certainly, California is important to us, and represents great

opportunity. But the places where Piedmont began are equally important to us, and represent proven profitability and loyal customers. We don't intend to be so mesmerized by the glitter of California that we forget the people and places who brought us where we are today."

