

Bill Grubbs (left) presented Kim Koster of Orange Park, FL—the millionth passenger to take advantage of The Piedmont Shuttle—with a model F28 and a complimentary round-trip ticket for two anywhere Piedmont flies during ceremonies at JAX August 28. Grubbs is district sales manager in Jacksonville.

Also on hand for the presentation were (l to r) Barry Lyle, JAX customer service manager; Bob Ball, director of aviation; MIA-based flight attendants JoAnn Archer and Dottie Garrison; and Captain John Herrick and First Officer Jay Sparkman, both based at MIA. The Piedmont Shuttle started on October 1, 1985 with 68 daily intrastate departures between 10 Florida destinations. It was the largest single influx of new jet service into a state in the nation's history. Today, we have 123 daily flights between 12 Florida destinations plus 44 daily departures from Florida to cities outside the state, making us one of the largest jet carriers in Florida.



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PI, TPA, CLT link London requests

Piedmont, the City of Charlotte, and civic parties of the Tampa Bay area filed a joint petition with the Department of Transportation on September 11 asking that DOT shift the dormant Tampa gateway designation for London nonstop flights to Charlotte and that Piedmont be selected to fly the route. If granted, all Charlotte-London service will originate and terminate at Tampa.

Tampa was designated as a United States-London gateway in 1982. Arrow Air served the route until October 1984, when it suspended service. In recognition of the gateway's dormant status, DOT issued in late August an order to show cause why the Tampa authority should not be moved to another city, and why the

designation of Arrow Air should not be withdrawn. In response, the Tampa Bay parties pointed out that if their gateway had to be shifted, the public interest would best be served if it were shifted to Charlotte with Piedmont providing the service.

The joint petition also asked that DOT institute two separate proceedings. One would determine whether the Tampa gateway should be shifted to Charlotte and whether Piedmont should be selected to serve that route. The second proceeding

would determine the city and carrier which would receive the final remaining gateway designation. Applications for that gateway have been filed by Delta/Cincinnati, American/Raleigh-Durham, Pan Am/Pittsburgh, and, of course, Piedmont/Charlotte.

DOT is expected to issue an order by early October explaining how it will proceed with gateway selections, and we have urged that proceedings involving Charlotte be concluded no later than the first of the year.

Support has been overwhelming

In August, the call went out: help us get the Charlotte-London route. Within a few days, copies of letters—representing an eight-state area—to the Department of Transportation and members of Congress began pouring in to the home office.

U.S. senators and representatives, chambers of commerce, mayors, city and state officials, leaders of major corporations, and numerous individuals alike have joined us in lobbying for the right to provide non-stop service between Charlotte and London.

Robert Glover, district sales manager, CLT, is one of the many people in sales who has called on people in the Charlotte area seeking support for the proposed service.

"The response has been marvelous," Glover said. "Wherever I go, people ask me, 'What do you hear about London?'. We've received editorials from major television stations, newspapers, and radio stations, and the travel agents are backing us in our efforts.

"And the support from employees has been overwhelming. Jane Garrison and Carolyn Miller—both agents in the Presidential Suite—volunteered to help us make calls, and they, along with many others, have been a big help in getting our message out in the community."

One might expect people in the Charlotte area to

rally around Piedmont, but what about Eastern North Carolina, and more particularly Raleigh/Durham where American has put in a bid for the transatlantic service?

"The response has been incredible," Eddie Albertson, district sales manager, RDU, said.

"Except for RDU, every airport authority in Eastern North Carolina that is served by Piedmont or our commuter has given us its support. In most cases, we've also received the full support of the mayor, chamber of commerce, and development group in each of these communities.

"In Raleigh, the director of the N.C. Travel and Tourism, a division of the Department of Commerce, sent a letter to the Travel Council's 500 members asking them to support Piedmont. And eighty percent of the travel agents we called on are supporting us."

Albertson added: "Our sales staff and people in the stations did a great job. As for me, it was the most rewarding work I've ever done for the company."

DOT is expected to issue an order by early October explaining how it will proceed with gateway selections, with the final decision possible by year's end. Will the support we've received make a difference?

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Who's supporting our bid for London services? See page 5 for a list of U.S. and state senators and representatives who have rallied to our cause.