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Are you looking for a way to promote your business? How about displaying your brochure at the Asheville Regional Airport?

With nearly 600,000 passengers per year, AVL is a great place to advertise.

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New Art Exhibit Open at AVL

Friday, July 10, marked the opening of the newest *Art in the Airport* exhibit at Asheville Regional Airport. Visit AVL and check out the new artwork on display. Nine

local artists have loaned their work to AVL until October of this year.

There are more than 30 original pieces of artwork in the gallery and in the bag claim area, near Guest Services, including ceramic sculpture and functional pottery, oil paintings, photography, watercolors and pastels. All of the pieces on display are available for purchase.

If you are an artist, or you know someone who is, visit www.flyavl.com to learn more about getting your work into *Art in the Airport*.

Q&A with New Airport Director Lew Bleiweis

Amidst paperwork and model airplanes sits Lew Bleiweis, the new Director at Asheville Regional Airport. Bleiweis took on the role of Airport Director June 27.

To help Western North Carolina get to know the new leader at AVL a little better, we took some time to learn about his history with aviation, personal goals, and take on the aviation industry.

Question: Congratulations on your promotion to Airport Director – you must be very excited.

Answer: I am. There's a lot of settling in to do, but I'm very appreciative of the Board giving me the opportunity to take leadership and I hope to continue the successes we've seen in the past five years or so.

Q: What was your first experience with aviation?

A: I took my first plane ride when I was eight years old. It was a family vacation to Copenhagen, Denmark, on a DC-8. The three main things I remember about that trip was that we went to a one-ring circus, that people in Denmark have no problem sitting down in empty seats at your table in a restaurant, and our visit to LEGOLand.

Q: When you were young, what did you want to be when you grew up?

A: I knew I wanted to go into aviation – I wanted to be a pilot. I actually went to college at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University to be a pilot, but through a series of events ended up going into airport management instead.

Q: Who do you look up to?

A: Wow. That is a tough question. I'd have to say I look up to my mother and father for all the sacrifices they endured while raising my siblings and me. I admire Mr. Jack Welch, former CEO of GE. His business philosophy and intuition did wonders for the company. I hope I can bring that kind of leadership to my new position.

Q: Have you ever flown a plane?

A: Yes, I have a private pilot license and a couple hundred hours piloting an aircraft.

Q: Is aviation a family interest, or did that start with you?

A: Yes, it's kind of a family thing. My brother attended Embry-Riddle – his last year there was my first year – and became a pilot. He was in the military before that, and now he flies for the Department of Homeland Security.

Q: What else do you enjoy when you're not working?

A: I enjoy woodworking, snow-skiing, tennis, and I like motorcycles, although I don't have one presently. And time with my family is very important to me.

Q: Where did you grow up?

A: I'd be flying into Philadelphia. I spent many years there and it's really my hometown. After Philly I moved around a little bit, went to school in Florida, and before coming here I was in Virginia, Missouri, and lastly, Louisville, Kentucky.

Q: If you could fly anywhere now, where would you go?

A: I'd like to visit Australia, and New Zealand. Africa is on my list too – probably Kenya – for a safari.

Q: What are your essential travel items when you fly?

A: Laptop, a good book – mystery, suspense, or horror – and a bottle of water.

Q: Can you tell us more about your leadership experience?

A: Well, my first real leadership experience was as co-captain of

the snow-ski racing team in high school. But since then I've had a lot of experience in aviation, including being a charter member of the AAAE (American Association of Airport Executives) Academic Chapter at Embry-Riddle, and President of the Southeast Chapter of AAAE.

Q: What are your professional goals?

A: Long-term I think I could see myself as the director of a larger airport. Once you reach that director level, the next step is to move to a bigger airport. At the same time, I love Asheville and I would be very happy if I never left it.

Q: In your opinion, what are some of the best things about AVL?

A: Convenience, the customer service, and the business mindset of a "family-run" type organization.

Q: And what things would you like to see improve?

A: Air service – we need more non-stop destinations.

Q: What is your take on the aviation industry -- where it's at right now, and where it's heading?

A: It is a cyclical industry. Right now we're nearing the bottom, (if we're not there now), of a cycle we've never seen before. I believe airlines need to right-size the market with the appropriate size aircraft, and airports need to design their niche and prove their markets. Aviation is a backbone of the economy and without decent air service for all it would be a travesty.

Q: Is there a bright future for AVL?

A: Oh I think so. We have a lot of challenges ahead of us, but with strong community support, a great Board, and the dedicated staff at AVL, I think we have a great future.



Meet the Public Safety Team!

The Department of Public Safety (DPS) at Asheville Regional Airport provides 24-hour police, aircraft rescue fire-fighting, and emergency medical services to all airport

users.

But it wasn't always called DPS. Since the inception of AVL, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) mandated the airport have a fire department on site. It wasn't until 1974 that another FAA mandate required the employment of police officers at AVL, an initiative that came as a result of hijacking issues in the 1970s.

In 1976 the Department of Public Safety was born when the fire and police departments merged to create a more unified law enforcement and safety team.

Today, the tradition of excellence that began in the 1960s continues.

The department has grown to include a staff of 15 cross-trained Public Safety Officers, four career firefighters who double as telecommunicators, and one Public Safety Coordinator.

DPS personnel tackle a variety of tasks, including responding to emergency medical and police calls on and around airport property, runway checks multiple times a day, daily airport perimeter checks, assisting other law enforcement agencies on calls for service, locksmithing and aiding stranded motorists, and assisting TSA with screening suspicious packages and enforcing TSA policies.

All DPS officers complete annual Part 139 training, which covers communication and firefighting preparedness and is required by the FAA. A live-burn exercise, where trainees take part in a simulated aircraft incident, is included in the training. The exercise allows DPS personnel a true-to-life setting in which to practice the job they've been trained to do.

To learn more about DPS, visit www.flyavl.com.

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