



August 2008

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Dear June,

Save the Airport - UPDATE

Recent news about the cancellation of all flights by American Airlines and Delta Airlines at the San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport hit our community hard. Cancellation of flights to Las Vegas by U.S. Airways followed. These reductions would have resulted in roughly a 33% reduction in flights overall at the airport. Similar news around the nation has had a similar effect in both small and large communities.

Within days of these announcements, the **EVC** and the **San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce** joined forces to help the airport retain and attract airline service at the county airport by forming the **SLO County Air Transportation Alliance (SLOCATA)**, comprised of a group of business leaders who understand the importance of a vital local airport. The Alliance is also advocating for making certain infrastructure improvements at the airport. "Quality local air service at San Luis Obispo County Airport is critical to businesses throughout the county. SLOCATA has brought together the EVC and area Chambers of Commerce in a powerful alliance to save existing service and expand service in the future.", said Dave Garth, President and CEO of the San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce.

Working closely with airport management, one of the first tasks of the Alliance was to visit American Airlines in Dallas last week to learn more about their reasons for leaving an airport that they have been serving longer than any other airline. The delegation to Dallas knew that the airline would not likely change their minds about leaving, but much was learned about factors that are considered by the airlines when they evaluate which markets to serve or abandon. As we know, the airline industry is experiencing unprecedented economic hardship due to record-breaking fuel costs. The Alliance and airport management are also working together to help expand existing service at the airport, and the EVC is commissioning an air market study to provide information and strategies necessary to create more vitality at the airport.

The other task for the Alliance was to request letters of support and launch a survey of local travelers. In less than a week, the Alliance obtained nearly 135 letters of support and over 1,300 survey responses.

And now the good news. . .

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- **NEW SERVICE:** US Airways recently announced that it will begin adding 80 seats replacing its 50-passenger regional jets with 90-passenger regional jets beginning Fall 2008.
- **NET EFFECT:** The result of reductions followed by new service, the total loss of seat capacity at the airport is 98 (approximately 17%). This has improved from the initial estimate of 33% less flights.
- United Airlines will continue to offer flights to Los Angeles and San Francisco, and U.S. Airways will continue to offer flights to Phoenix
- The results of an air market study that the EVC has commissioned will be available in the coming months.

Airport Facts

- The Airport is a self-sustaining entity (it pays its own way)
- Annual Economic Impact: Over \$176 Million and 1,758 jobs
- Passengers in 2007: 368,000

We need your help. . . Survey & Letters of Support

Please submit letters of support addressed to the Alliance (download talking points) and fill out a quick on-line survey. www.saveSLOairservice.com.

Thank you.

Michael Manchak
President / CEO
Economic Vitality Corporation
mmanchak@sloevc.org

SLO County Air Service

Save SLO County Regional Air Service

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You can still help!

Please submit your letters of support and fill out our electronic survey by visiting www.SaveSLOAirService.com

techVC Roundup



Following the EVC's annual venture capital event, join us for an evening of pitches from selected entrepreneurs seeking capital, a talk from venture capitalist JoAnne Miller, and hear from a panel of venture capital judges.

October 29, 2008

6:00 - 8:30pm

Pelican Point Restaurant, Pismo Beach

Keynote Speaker

Jo Anne Miller

Milk Street Ventures

For more information and to participate, please visit:

www.sloevc.org or www.softec.org

Tickets will be available soon!

EVC's Central Coast Capital Network

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Mission Community Bank**Sponsorship Update*****EVC would like to thank our newest sponsorships to help fund an Airline Market Study:*****County of
San Luis Obispo
\$10,000****Pacific Gas & Electric Company
\$5,000****Client Spotlight****Tina Porter, SLO County Sitters****The EVC is pleased to help the following business expand on the Central Coast:**

"I knew I wanted my daughters to be in their own home environment to nap in their own beds. In the process of figuring out who and what would work best, I also sought someone who would play with my daughters outside instead of perching them in front of the television. From this, the foundation of my mission to change the way San Luis Obispo County views childcare, sprouted" ([more](#))

To learn more about **SLO County Sitters**, please visit their website at www.slocountysitters.com or call Tina at (805) 541-9300.



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Fred Strong
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City of Paso Robles

Tom Sullivan
Board Member

Upcoming Events and Seminars

Starting a New Business Workshop



When

Tuesday September 17th

9:00am - 12:00pm

Location

Creekside Conference Room
4111 Broad Street - San Luis Obispo

Cost

Free

Contact

Bob Mulrooney, (805) 545-8533

- Going into Business Considerations
- Business Plans
- Financial Reports
- Personal Attributes

Followed by a panel discussion with questions and answers.

Central Coast Code Camp



Everyone is welcome to attend the Code Camp. It is 100% free to people that would like to come learn about programming. Another great thing is that it takes place over the weekend, so you don't have to miss work to attend.

Dates and Location:

September 27th and 28th, 2008, at the Embassy Suites in San Luis Obispo

For more information:

[Central Coast Code Camp](#)

Emeritus

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EVC In the News



The Tribune
August 28, 2008

**US Airways will expand service at SLO airport;
other airlines also consider flying into regional hub**

Finally, there's some good news for the San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport.

After two airlines announced this summer they will pull their service from the airport before year's end, US Airways announced this week it will expand service on its Phoenix flights by bringing in larger planes.

Meanwhile, other airlines are looking to establish service at the local flight hub, possibly including companies that don't currently serve the airport, said Mike Manchak, a local business leader and member of the San Luis Obispo County Air Transportation Alliance. [\(more\)](#)

KCOY-TV
August 27, 2008

Airport Alliance Fighting for Flights

The San Luis Obispo County Air Transportation Alliance [is] made up of local business and community leaders who want to see the airport become more vital. They want to retain current carriers and attract new ones.

After some cuts and some new service, the airport stands to lose about 17% of its seats, instead of 33%. [\(more\)](#)

[Watch the Video](#) click on *Local alliance working to keep SLO airport economically strong*

The Tribune

August 23, 2008

Airline Resists Personal Appeal to Stay in SLO

Armed with a recent survey showing how critical air service is to San Luis Obispo County, a delegation of local business and government leaders flew this week to Dallas, where American Airlines is headquartered, to appeal personally to executives with the carrier that they keep the flights coming.

"They told us they assessed the nation systematically, they're losing money in many markets around the country, and it simply wasn't profitable for them to stay here right now," said delegation member [\(more\)](#)

The Tribune

August 17, 2008

Forecast for county: Not grim, not good

A national research firm says the local economy fits the description of a recession, but others disagree [\(more\)](#)

The Tribune

August 1, 2008

Let's not let our airport become a barrier to entry

Regarding "Task force to target exodus at airport" (July 29):

Having no choice but to drive to airports in Southern California or the Bay Area because of reduced airline service in San Luis Obispo makes most citizens in this county shudder at the mere thought.

[\(more\)](#)

The Tribune

July 30, 2008

Editorial: Local economy can't fly without a viable airport

Soaring fuel prices, soaring food prices, soaring home foreclosures - and a bear market on Wall Street.

In a storm, smart people hunker down and ride it out the safest way possible.

So it might seem to be an unwise expenditure of energy to worry today about San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport, especially considering the storm that has engulfed the airport in the past month with the cancellation of flights by US Airways, Delta Connection and American Eagle. [\(more\)](#)

The Tribune

June 26, 2008

American, Delta to drop flights from SLO airport

Four daily flights between San Luis Obispo and Los Angeles by American Eagle will end Nov. 1.

That news came shortly before Delta Connection announced its plans Wednesday afternoon to drop its sole remaining daily flight to Salt Lake City by Sept. 1. [\(more\)](#)

The Tribune
July 23, 2008

County supervisors back airport growth, despite two airlines pulling out

The Board of Supervisors voiced strong support Tuesday for airport expansion, as both it and members of the business community directed angry comments at two airlines for pulling out of the county airport.

"Shame on them!" Supervisor Katcho Achadjian said of Delta Connection and American Eagle, both of which will leave the San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport later this year.

Airlines nationally have been cutting services because of high fuel prices. ([more](#))

Pacific Coast Business Times
August 15, 2008

Economy Softening in SLO

The San Luis Obispo Economic Vitality Corp. has released the results of a recent county business survey, showing that while a majority of companies remain strong, sales, housing and recruitment are small but growing issues. ([more](#))

New Times
August 20, 2008

SLO alliance lobbies American Airlines

San Luis Obispo County is one of only four airports nationwide that will lose its American Eagle flights.

Now many local business and community leaders want to know what went wrong and what, if anything, will convince American Eagle to stay put.

"We really haven't gotten an explanation from the airline as to why they've made this drastic change," Assistant Airports Manager Craig Piper said. ([more](#))

Pacific Coast Business Times
July 3, 2008

High fuel costs prompt airport flight cuts

About a month after American Airlines and its affiliate American Eagle publicized its efforts to compensate for rocketing fuel prices, the company announced June 26 it will discontinue its operations and maintenance facility at the San Luis Obispo Airport. The Santa Barbara Airport also was informed of flight cuts last week, although it will not be losing any airlines. ([more](#))

Atascadero News
July 31, 2008

EVC helps launch infant and toddlers center

The Economic Vitality Corporation of San Luis Obispo County has

announced it has helped start a new company, Tiny Treasures Infant and Toddlers Center, a child development center which is slated to open in mid-September in Atascadero.

In partnership with Coast National Bank, the EVC provided a business start-up loan to owners, Atascadero sisters Erika Schussel and Kate Luera. ([more](#))

If you have any contributions on future newsletters, please contact June Parent at (805) 788-2012.

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