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Troutman rocking chairs find niche in major airports

By **Bethany Fuller**

Weary travelers who relax in the rocking chairs at airports in Charlotte, Philadelphia and Jacksonville, Fla., have Champ Land and the employees at Troutman Chair Co. to thank for the moments of comfort they find there.

Carolina Rockers can be found in the airport's atrium and on concourses D and E.

“The addition of the rockers give passengers a memorable sense of place and a comfortable place to relax,” said Lee Davis, spokeswoman for the airport, which is operated by the city of Charlotte. “ We like to look at the Atrium as the front porch of the airport with a view to the airfield.”

The rockers were added to the airport in 1997 during a photography exhibit at CLT entitled, “Porch-sitting: A Charlotte Regional Family Album.” Customers enjoyed them so much, officials decided to keep them permanently.

“Our customers love them and they are very seldom empty,” Davis said.

Charlotte was just the first of Troutman Chair’s airport customers. Land said Jacksonville International Airport in Jacksonville, Fla., and Philadelphia International Airport now have Troutman Chairs as well.

Land said people find the chairs made at his plant comfortable because they have designed the seat and the backs to fit the human body.

Science holds the seats together, Land said, using swelled joint construction and interlocking joinery. Land explained that since the larger posts in the front and the back have a higher moisture content, the small posts swell as they absorb the moisture and the larger posts shrink over them.

The small plant is always looking for ways to improve the product and the manufacturing process, he said.

“If you haven’t made changes you still wouldn’t be in business,” Land said. “You’ve got to look out for your customers and make your customers feel important.”