

# Florida Flyer

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David serves as Airport Inspection and Safety Manager



Courtesy of Punta Gorda Airport

*Aerial view of Punta Gorda Airport.*

## Punta Gorda Airport

Punta Gorda Airport (PGD) is located along Interstate 75 in Charlotte County between Sarasota and Fort Myers in central Florida.

The airport lies just east of Punta Gorda's central business district where visitors and residents enjoy numerous waterfront parks, pathways for walking and bicycling, and a variety of shops and restaurants. Tourism and health care are major industries here, and the area is also known for excellent boating and fishing opportunities.

Originally constructed in 1942 for pilot training during World War II, Punta Gorda Airport is owned by the Charlotte County Airport Authority. The airport is self-sufficient, receiving

revenues from fuel sales, hangar rents, rental car revenue, parking fees, and land and building leases.

### Three runways

Three intersecting runways serve the airport: Runway 4/22 at 7,193 feet long, Runway 15/33 at 5,688 feet, and Runway 9/27 at 2,636 feet. The airport operates the FBO and leases 216 T-hangar units. A 135-foot air traffic control tower and many aviation and non-aviation related businesses are located on the property.

For a number of years in the 1970s and 1980s, the airport had airline

**See Punta Gorda, page 4**



Aaron N. Smith  
State Aviation Manager

*“Each district office works diligently with our airport partners to develop and program five years’ worth of projects in the FDOT Work Program, which will account for one billion dollars over the next five years.”*

# MANAGER’S CORNER

I am pleased to announce the appointment of David Smith as the Airport Inspection and Safety Manager for the FDOT Aviation and Spaceports Office (ASO). I am confident David will make an excellent addition to our office of outstanding aviation professionals. See our article about David Smith on page 7 of this issue.

**District Offices—A Job Well Done!** I would like to thank our capable and dedicated FDOT district office aviation staff for an outstanding job! These are the FDOT folks that are responsible for implementing the aviation program, managing hundreds of airport contracts and tens of millions of dollars, while juggling other duties and responsibilities. Each district office works diligently with our airport partners to develop and program five years’ worth of projects in the FDOT Work Program, which will account for one billion dollars over the next five years. Each one of them is an expert at negotiating through FDOT’s elaborate Work Program processes to deliver the most effective aviation program in the country.

FDOT’s Work Program, which is essentially FDOT’s list of planned projects (roadway, seaport, airport, rail, transit, and so on) and associated cost estimates, should remain stable through a five-year period (that is, no substantial changes to any project). As some of you may know, making changes to the first couple years can be problematic, though not impossible, especially in the current fiscal year. Plan accordingly to limit the number of project changes, additions, or deletions, as your district representative is measured on the stability of their program. Projects should be requested in the fiscal year you expect expenditures, not sitting in reserve years in advance. Project expenditures are monitored regularly by FDOT financial staff. Projects which show signs of stagnation are flagged and your aviation representative must then defend the legitimacy of your project. Maintain an open dialogue with your FDOT aviation representative(s), as there are a number of deadlines they must adhere to. Missing a key deadline could mean waiting months for an opportunity to make changes to the Work Program, could cause significant delays, and so on.

To learn more about the FDOT Aviation Program and processes, I recommend review of the 2016 Florida Aviation Project Handbook available at [www.dot.state.fl.us/aviation/flpub.shtm](http://www.dot.state.fl.us/aviation/flpub.shtm).

**FAA Florida Metroplex.** In the coming months FDOT will be participating in FAA Florida Metroplex meetings. As some of you may know, along with the FAA’s NextGen efforts, shifting to satellite-based air navigation and the addition of thousands of new approach and departure procedures, there are a number of additional en route (approximately 3,000 feet and above) efficiencies the FAA has identified which will save time, increase capacity, and set the airspace stage for decades to come. These changes are coming to Florida in a manner much different than the rest of the country. Florida is the only state in the nation to have four large-hub airports with each moving more than one percent of the nation’s traveling air passengers annually. In addition to the commercial service airports, Florida has over 100 general aviation airports, over 600 private airports and heliports, and 11 major military airfields with 15 supporting facilities. And, about 20 percent of the world’s pilots train in Florida. Not to mention, we also have rockets launching into space from the east coast . . . and now they’re coming back from space and landing at the Cape or out at sea on an autonomous barge. So, yes we’re a busy aviation/aerospace state and we all need to get this one right . . . the first time.

The FAA will be addressing these changes from a regional perspective, starting in Tampa and moving east to Orlando, then south. To learn more about the FAA Florida Metroplex please go to [www.faa.gov/nextgen/snapshots/metroplexes/?locationid=19](http://www.faa.gov/nextgen/snapshots/metroplexes/?locationid=19).



# The Many Facets of Skydiving

by Jim Halley, A.A.E., ACE

The beginning of human flight can be traced back to Icarus and Daedalus as they escaped King Minos' labyrinth. Utilizing wings fashioned from wax and feathers, the pair took off and became the first two humans to engage in flight of any kind. While this initial milestone in manned flight was remarkable, Icarus actually was responsible for another aviation first on that day: when he flew too close to the sun, the wax holding his wings together melted and Icarus quickly became history's first skydiver.

The first successful parachute-assisted descent occurred in 1797 in Paris, France, though modern "skydiving"—intentional freefall jumping with parachute deployment by ripcord—was born in 1919 in Ohio.

## Skydiving in Florida

Florida is a national leader in skydiving. In the United States today, there are over 200 Group Member drop zones (DZs) under the United States Parachute Association (USPA, [www.uspa.org](http://www.uspa.org)), the professional organization that disseminates industry safety standards and licenses skydivers. Nineteen of those DZs are located within Florida, the second most of any state. Five of Florida's DZs are "Trusted Centers" that provide instruction to become a licensed skydiver—no state has more than Florida! There are currently 3,099 active USPA members in Florida, which is about 8 percent of USPA's total membership. In 2015, 7.3 percent (557) of USPA's new licenses were issued in Florida.

Not only is Florida well-represented in USPA's membership and license issuance, we also lead the way when it comes to organized skydiving events. USPA held both their biannual Drop Zone Operators' Conference and their biannual Parachute Industry Association Symposium in Daytona Beach in 2015.



Courtesy of Skydive Panama City, [www.xtremeskydivers.com](http://www.xtremeskydivers.com)

Above: FDOT's Aviation System Manager Jim Halley in freefall over Calhoun County Airport at Skydive Panama City.

Right: Dan Flynn (red shirt), Airport Director at Pensacola International Airport, in freefall over Alabama.



Photograph by Jake Muehls

On April 6-8 of this year, Skydive City at Zephyrhills Municipal Airport hosted the Canopy Piloting National Championships, and from May 27 to June 2, Florida Skydiving Center at Lake Wales Municipal Airport hosted the Canopy Formation and Style and Accuracy National Championships. Lake Wales was also the site when 100 skydivers broke the world canopy formation record in 2007. If that wasn't enough, every January the Skydive Ultramarathon takes place at Skydive Spaceland at Airglades Airport in Clewiston. Runners begin their race with a skydive; then, immediately upon landing, they begin running races of various distances, from 10 kilometers to 200 miles.

## Home of NPTC

Marion County Airport in Dunnellon is home to the National Parachute

Test Center (NPTC). While the majority of what the NPTC does revolves around parachute development and testing, they also hold classes throughout the year to train jumpers to perform airborne operations using military-style parachutes from the Tico Belle, a vintage World War II C-47. These students then go on to participate in World War II celebrations and demonstrations around the world, from here in the U.S. to Germany, England, and Normandy, France, where over 13,000 paratroopers dropped in 1944 as part of the allied invasion in World War II.

While many of Florida's airports have important ties to skydiving, none are more important than that of Sebastian Municipal Airport: my personal skydiving career began at Skydive Sebastian

**See Skydiving, page 8**





# Punta Gorda Airport

From page 1

service with Provincetown-Boston Airlines (PBA). Airline service returned to Punta Gorda in December 2007 with the short-lived Skybus Airlines. Allegiant Airlines now provides commercial service and serves 30 cities from Punta Gorda.

This year the airport will exceed one million passengers for the first time. The Bailey Terminal, named after the Bailey brothers who were from Punta Gorda and served in the military during World War II and the Korean War, will soon be expanded to accommodate the growing number of passengers traveling in and out of the airport.

## Serving the community

The airport also serves the general aviation community and has worked hard to make flying affordable by establishing a self-service fuel facility and keeping hangar rents at bay.

An Experimental Aircraft Association chapter and a Civil Air Patrol unit at the airport have been active in involving young people in aviation.

Approximately 1,000 people are employed by the 38 businesses located on airport property. Tenants include Air Ambulance by Air Trek, Inc.; APG

*Above:  
Allegiant  
Airlines had  
6,108 total  
operations in  
2015.  
Right: Airport  
entrance sign.*



Photographs courtesy of Punta Gorda Airport

Avionics and Sarasota Avionics and Maintenance; Arcadia Aerospace Industries, which is doing computer mapping of the fuselages of the new Honda Jet; five flight schools; several companies providing aircraft parts or aircraft maintenance and repair; the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office Aviation Department; and a number of other businesses and agencies. Worldwide Flight Services provides ground handling services for Allegiant Air.

In addition to supporting commercial airline activity, the airport regularly supports corporate and business activity, flight training, emergency medical aircraft operations, law enforcement flights, general aviation charter flights, Civil Air Patrol activity, and recreational flying.

## Explosive growth

As a result of explosive growth over the past few years, Punta Gorda Airport has completed a number of construction

## Points of Interest

- Punta Gorda Airport has more than 300 based aircraft.
- The airport has approximately 80,000 operations per year.
- Airport traffic increased 88 percent in 2014 and 58 percent in 2015.
- The airport is situated on more than 1,800 acres.

projects. Taxiways A and C were resurfaced and widened to 60 feet, and the entire main ramp, which consisted of pavement from World War II, has been replaced.

The airport recently completed expansion of the terminal at a cost of \$8 million. This expansion to 56,000 square feet will enable handling up to





Above: Aircraft rescue and firefighting truck at Punta Gorda Airport.  
Right: New airport terminal.



Photographs courtesy of Punta Gorda Airport

three million passengers per year (currently at about one million passengers per year). This year the airport is completing a parallel taxiway for Runway 4/22 at a cost of \$2.2 million, and will also be adding 500 parking spaces due to passenger growth.

The airport has completed many safety enhancements, including installing an instrument landing system (ILS) precision approach, creating a wildlife hazard management plan, installing a camera looking out over the entire airfield, enhancing the weather alerting system, and much more.

Recently, Punta Gorda Airport received the 2016 Commercial Service Airport of the Year Award presented at the Florida Airports Council Conference in Bonita Springs. The airport was recognized for its self-sufficiency and completion of many projects improving safety and other aspects of the airport during this time of tremendous growth.

To learn more about Punta Gorda Airport and its mission to provide aviation access to the community and region, see the airport's website at [www.flypgd.com](http://www.flypgd.com). ♦

## Economic Impact

The total annual economic impact of Punta Gorda Airport follows:

- **Total employment: 1,971**
- **Direct impacts: \$71,540,000**  
(from the tenants/businesses at the airport and construction projects undertaken by the airport or by on-site businesses)
- **Indirect impacts: \$55,077,000**  
(associated with spending from visitors who arrive in the area by way of general aviation aircraft)
- **Multiplier (additional) impacts: \$93,358,000**
- **Total payroll: \$59,038,000**
- **Total output: \$219,975,000**

—from the *Florida Statewide Aviation Economic Impact Study Update, August 2014*

## Airport Leadership

**James W. Parish, P.E.**, will be taking over as Airport Director of Punta Gorda Airport on October 1. He has served as Assistant Executive Director of the airport and has managed all areas of an airport from facilities to operations.

In 2004, James was the lead engineer and construction manager in the reconstruction of the airport (named Charlotte County Airport at that time). The airport was in the path of Hurricane Charley and sustained extensive damage. After the initial recovery, James managed a team of designers and contractors during the nearly three-year rebuilding process. The project consisted of rebuilding 18 buildings ranging from a 5,000-square-foot office/flex space to the complete reconstruction of the passenger terminal facility destroyed by the storm. In 2007, he worked with airlines and the FAA to return commercial airline service to Punta Gorda Airport.

James is a veteran of the U.S. Navy and a graduate of the University of Florida with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering. He is a licensed Professional Engineer in Florida and Georgia.

James Parish succeeds **Gary Quill** who recently retired after serving as Executive Director of Punta Gorda Airport for a number of years. Gary helped restore airline service to the airport and led a number of projects to improve and develop the airport's industrial park, including purchasing additional property, completing internal roads in the industrial park, and completing the construction of the master drainage system. Gary carried out all of these tasks while also eliminating all of the airport's debt. For his many accomplishments, he was awarded FDOT's Aviation Professional of the Year Award in 2013.

# 2016 Florida Aviation Awards

Aaron Smith, State Aviation Manager, and Jim Halley, Aviation System Manager, announced the winners of the 2016 Florida Aviation Awards at the Florida Airports Council Conference in July in Bonita Springs.

## Aviation Professional

### Chris Curry, C.M.

Thomas Chris Curry, C.M., was appointed Director of Aviation for Tallahassee International Airport (formerly Tallahassee Regional Airport) in January 2014. Previously, he served as Executive Director of the Collier County Airport Authority; Executive Director of Gary/Chicago International Airport; Airspace, Procedure Design Project Manager for the Boeing Company; and Air Traffic Controller in the U.S. Air Force. He also sits on the board of directors for the Florida Airports Council.

He earned a bachelor's degree from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in professional aeronautics.

Under Chris Curry's leadership, the airport has completed numerous improvements, and was designated an international airport in June 2015.

Chris Curry's passion, innovation, and focus on customer service set him apart from other aviation professionals. His visionary and strategic approach to building the future of the airport will benefit Tallahassee for years to come.

## Distinguished Service

### Ted Soliday, C.M.

Until his retirement in April 2016, Ted Soliday served as executive director of Naples Airport Authority, a position he held since 1994. As executive director, Ted managed Naples Municipal Airport, one of the busiest general aviation airports in the country. He oversaw daily operations, up to 80 employees, and an annual budget of \$20.2 million.

Ted's aviation background and experience spans nearly 50 years as a pilot, air traffic controller, educator, planner, and manager. The impact of his work has been far-reaching in the aviation industry as well as in his community.



Courtesy of Tallahassee International Airport



Left: Chris Curry, C.M., received the Aviation Professional Award; Chris Curry is Director of Aviation for Tallahassee International Airport.

Right: Aaron Smith presents Distinguished Aviation Service Award to Ted Soliday, Executive Director, Naples Airport Authority (retired).

Ted has received many honors and awards during his career. Under his leadership, Naples Municipal Airport has also received numerous awards.

Recently retired, Ted Soliday leaves behind a successful heritage that remains widespread and influential and will continue to impact the aviation industry for years to come.

## Distinguished Service

### Lauren Stover

Lauren Stover, former Miami-Dade Aviation Department Assistant Director in charge of Public Safety and Security for Miami International Airport (MIA) and the county's general aviation airports, retired in May 2016, after 33 years of service to Miami-Dade County.

Lauren was appointed Assistant Aviation Director in 2006, becoming the first woman in the history of MIA to direct the department's day-to-day security, police, and fire/rescue operations. She has worked with virtually all key law enforcement agencies as the head of homeland and aviation security events and issues at the second-busiest airport in the U.S. for international travelers and the busiest for international freight.

Lauren was recruited in 2003 by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to build the first comprehensive public affairs operation within the TSA for the southeastern United States and to serve as chief media spokesperson for more than 60 airports.

## General Aviation Airport

### Page Field Airport

Page Field is a thriving general aviation airport located in Fort Myers in southwest Florida. Owned and operated by the Lee County Port Authority, it is a designated reliever to Southwest Florida International Airport.

Page Field has worked diligently to maintain strict safety and security standards, and the airport remains committed to providing the general aviation community and business travelers with safe and efficient operations, convenience, and unparalleled service.

Page Field Airport focuses on maximizing service to customers, financial stability and optimum use of resources, compliance with state and federal rules and regulations, compliance with the master plan, and completeness and financial feasibility of Joint Automated





*Kelly Dollarhide (left), Cecil Airport Manager, and Jaime Eaton (right), Senior Engineer, RS&H, receive the General Aviation Airport Project Award for East Development Improvements at Cecil Airport.*

Capital Improvement Program data.

We congratulate Barry Bratton, A.A.E., and the staff of Page Field and the Lee County Port Authority.

### **Commercial Service Airport Punta Gorda Airport**

Punta Gorda Airport has made many significant safety enhancements over the past year.

With the rapidly increasing flight operations at the Punta Gorda Airport by Allegiant Airlines and the general aviation community, Punta Gorda Airport has continued its commitment to safety and has demonstrated in its actions by instituting new programs and upgrading facilities.

With the airline's expanding presence at the airport, direct flights are now available to more than 30 different destinations. Punta Gorda Airport is currently on track to exceed one million total passengers to fly in and out of the airport in 2016.

We congratulate Gary Quill, James Parish, and the staff of Punta Gorda Airport and the Charlotte County Airport Authority.

### **General Aviation Airport Project**

#### **Approach Road and Taxiway E/E1 Cecil Airport**

Prior to 2015, all of the existing facilities or available parcels were located in the northwest quadrant of Cecil Airport. In an effort to increase available aviation development sites, stimulate the economy and create jobs, the Jacksonville Aviation Authority invested in the development of the northeast quadrant.

The goal was to provide new airside/landside access and utility infrastructure to the site in order to attract potential developers/tenants by minimizing costs and reducing design and permitting schedules. The 150-acre parcel has been designated for facilities providing air cargo or MRO services. The project provides landside and airside access to an area located immediately northeast of the Runway 18L end. The stormwater and utilities infrastructure were also designed to accommodate development.

We congratulate Cecil Airport, the Jacksonville Airport Authority, RS&H Inc., and BGCO Inc.

### **Commercial Service Airport Project**

#### **Runway 7/25 Rehabilitation Gainesville Regional Airport**

Runway 7/25 at Gainesville Regional Airport is a secondary runway used by general aviation and corporate aircraft. The original construction was performed by the U.S. Army in the 1940s. Prior to this rehabilitation project, the asphalt was in poor condition. The runway was last rehabilitated approximately 40 years ago. Traditional rehabilitation by removing all of the asphalt pavement was beyond the project budget and would have significantly diminished the pavement section strength. Full-depth reconstruction was too costly, and the project was not eligible for AIP funding. Preserving the runway's weight-bearing capacity was important because of a possible future extension of the runway.

We congratulate Gainesville Regional Airport, the Gainesville-Alachua County Regional Airport Authority, AECOM Technical Services, Inc., and V.E. Whitehurst & Sons, Inc. ♦

## **David Smith Joins ASO**

**D**avid Smith recently joined the FDOT Aviation and Spaceports Office (ASO) as the Airport Inspection and Safety Manager.

David received his bachelor's degree in professional aeronautics from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. David then worked in line service at the fixed base operator in Tallahassee. From there he advanced into airport operations at Tallahassee International Airport. During his four years of service as an airport operations agent, David was responsible for the quarterly fuel facility inspections that are required at FAA Part 139 airports, among other duties.

As the Airport Inspection and Safety Manager, David will manage the public airport site approval process, airport inspection and licensing program, Federal Aviation Administration airport master records, and consultant contracts.

Please join us in welcoming David Smith to his new position. ♦

## *Calendar*

*Please contact event organizers before attending in case of cancellation due to weather or other factors.*

### **October 26, 2016**

CFASPP Statewide Steering Committee Meeting, World Golf Village Renaissance St. Augustine Resort. For more information, see the website of the Continuing Florida Aviation System Planning Process at [www.cfaspp.com](http://www.cfaspp.com).

### **October 26–28, 2016**

FAC Specialty Conference, St. Augustine. For more information, see [www.floridaairports.org](http://www.floridaairports.org), or call the Florida Airports Council at (850) 224-2964.

# Skydiving, from page 3

when I was just 18 years old, clearly the most important event in skydiving history! For a list of all USPA member DZs in Florida, visit [www.uspa.org/Drop-Zone-Locator/region/FL](http://www.uspa.org/Drop-Zone-Locator/region/FL).

## Regulated by the FAA

While USPA serves as the industry organization for the sport and is the body that issues licenses and ratings, skydiving is regulated by the FAA. DOT/FAA/AR-11-30, "Development of Criteria for Parachute Landing Areas on Airports," and FAA Advisory Circular (AC) 105-2E, "Sport Parachuting," provide federal guidance related to parachute operations, including requirements for airports to consider when integrating skydiving at an airport. 14 CFR Part 105, "Parachute Operations," contains the rules that govern parachuting operations. Other items airport operators should consider related to skydiving include AC 150/5190-6, "Exclusive Rights at Federally Obligated Airports"; AC 150/5190-7, "Minimum Standards for Commercial Aeronautical Activities"; Florida and FAA grant

*Training for D-Day re-creation out of a C-47 at Marion County Airport in Dunnellon.*



Courtesy of the Dunnellon Airport Authority

assurances; FAA Form 7711-2, "Certificate of Waiver of Authorization" (for parachuting operations over congested areas or into aviation events); and FAA Order 5190.6b, *Airport Compliance Manual*. Additionally, USPA has staff dedicated to government relations, including coordinating with and educating airports to improve the safe integration of skydiving at airports.

As always, if you have questions related to skydiving at your airport, reach out to the Orlando FAA Airports District Office, your local Flight Standards District Office (FSDO), and your designated FDOT aviation coordinator to assist you in safely integrating parachuting

operations at your airport.

So, the next time you're pondering Newton's law of universal gravitation, think about skydiving—from regulations to airport revenue, from world records to the wow factor, there are multiple sides to skydiving. Many airports enjoy a skydiving operator as a major tenant, bringing in visitors from around the world and hosting numerous events throughout the year. ♦

*Jim Halley, A.A.E., ACE, is the Aviation System Manager for the FDOT Aviation and Spaceports Office. Contact him at (850) 414-4505 or [Jim.Halley@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:Jim.Halley@dot.state.fl.us).*

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