

# Florida Flyer

[www.fdot.gov/aviation](http://www.fdot.gov/aviation)

Special Edition 2018

## 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Sun 'n Fun

**6** Days  
**500+** Exhibitors  
**10,000+** Aircraft movements  
**Busiest** Airport in the world (for that week)  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Largest** Annual Fly-In Convention in the world



A dramatic display of 10 planes in formation at the Sun 'n Fun International Fly-In and Expo

Photos by Michael McDougall

This special edition of the Florida Flyer showcases how the 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Sun 'n Fun event continues to enhance the growth of Lakeland Linder Regional Airport and the Aerospace Center for Excellence.

[www.flysnf.org](http://www.flysnf.org)

**NEXT SUN n' FUN April 2-7, 2019**



By Michael McDougall  
Aviation  
Communications  
Manager

This year's 44<sup>th</sup> annual Sun 'n Fun International Fly-in and Expo attracted thousands of aircraft, pilots, vendors, and people with a fascination for aviation to Lakeland Linder Regional Airport (LAL).

The event lasted over six days, bringing over \$160 million of impact to the local economy. As the years have progressed, Sun 'n Fun has grown substantially larger in attendance, vendors, and aircraft. This expansion has driven the growth of

the Polk County facility by improving opportunities to continuously learn about aviation at the Florida Air Museum and Aerospace Center for Excellence. Over 500 vendors and exhibitors shared their knowledge on the grounds while dozens of aerial shows stretched the imagination of what was possible in the air. During the week of April 10, 2018, more than 10,000 aircraft movements made LAL the busiest airport in the world, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest annual fly-in convention, with EAA AirVenture Oshkosh the only Fly-In in the world larger than Sun 'n Fun. Find out more at [www.FlyLakeland.com](http://www.FlyLakeland.com).

# SUN n FUN<sup>®</sup>

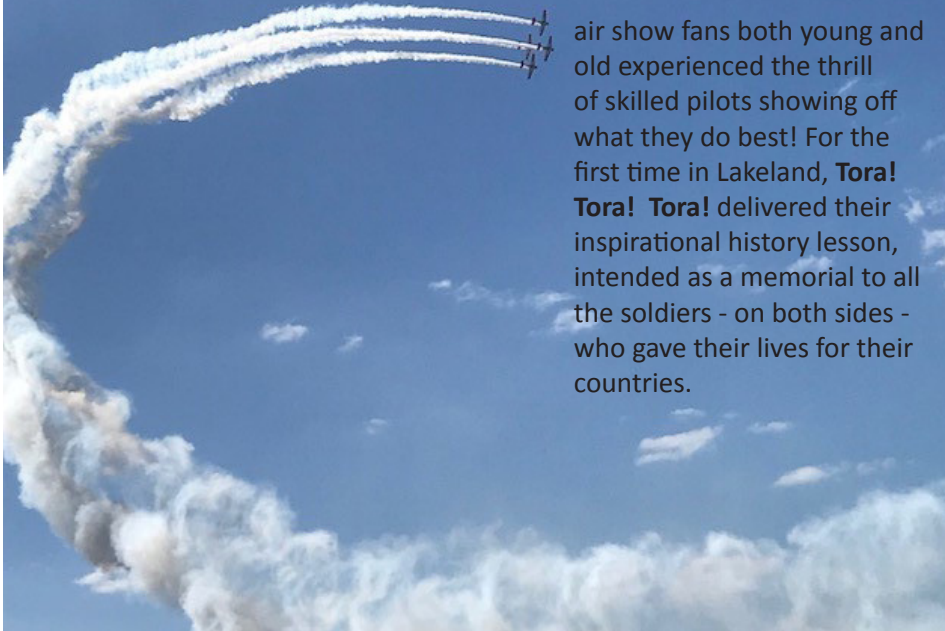
A BRIGHTER FUTURE THROUGH AVIATION

# Aerial Showcase Wows Crowd

Dozens of air shows filled the skies with acrobatic routines, precision drills, and dramatic displays of aerial entertainment. From historic planes to cutting edge technology, ultralights to heavy bombers, world title holders to perennial favorites,



Photo credit toratorator.com



air show fans both young and old experienced the thrill of skilled pilots showing off what they do best! For the first time in Lakeland, **Tora! Tora! Tora!** delivered their inspirational history lesson, intended as a memorial to all the soldiers - on both sides - who gave their lives for their countries.



Walkabout Tiger



Douglas SBD



DHS Black Hawk



DC-3



B-17 Flying Fortress



Seaplane A-Palooza

## Douglas DC-3

The DC-3 revolutionized air transport in the 1930s and 1940s. One of the most significant transport aircraft ever made, it was the first airliner that could make money by carrying passengers alone.

## B-17 Flying Fortress

Developed in the 1930s, this fabled bomber is still flying, showing its toughness and proudly showing its age to the delight of the many fans who came to touch history.

## Walkabout Tigers

Tiger Yak 55's displayed an aerial demonstration of precision flying and spectacular formation aerobatics. They are a crowd favorite, especially with their no child left behind autograph session.

## Douglas SBD Dauntless

Scout Bomber Douglas was the United States Navy's main carrier-borne scout plane and dive bomber. It earned its nickname "Slow But Deadly" (with the SBD initials).

## Black Hawk Helicopter

The Department of Homeland Security displayed their Sikorsky UH-60 Black Hawk, used around the world since its introduction in 1979, and named after the Native American war leader.

## Seaplane A-Palooza contestant

This red beauty competed at Seaplane A-Palooza beauty contest. The Grand Champion Seaplane was a 1950 Grumman Mallard G-73T, owned by Vincent Sosa.



# Lakeland Linder Regional Airport

## Opportunities

Lakeland Linder Regional Airport (LAL) is ideally located in the center of one of the most dynamic growth corridors in the Southeast. Situated in the heart of Florida along the I-4 corridor, LAL is midway between Tampa and Orlando. It is situated on over 1,700 acres and has over 1 million square feet of leasable space. Over the past 5 years alone more than 100 million dollars have been invested into infrastructure at LAL, including a new state-of-the-art Control Tower, Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) Station, Taxiways, Ramps, and Runway Rehabilitation. The FAA has approved LAL to move forward with construction on new Air Cargo Facilities. A 79 room Staybridge Suites was opened before Christmas as LAL's second hotel to serve patrons at the airport.

## Education

Flight training comprises approximately 20% of the airport's flight operations. Educational facilities on the airport include the Central Florida Aerospace Academy (CFAA), which provides a high school level education with an aerospace engineering and avionics technology focus; Travis Technical Institute, which provides post-secondary avionics training; and Polk State College, which is the only Florida public institution to offer a Bachelors Degree in Aerospace Sciences. LAL is also home to the Florida Air Museum, which features a dynamic display of one-of-a-kind designs, classics, ultra-lights, antiques and warbirds. SUN 'n FUN's core commitment to education through the pursuit of aviation is ever more visible on the 30 acre Aerospace Center for Excellence

(ACE) educational corridor. ACE is the home of 14 buildings dedicated towards year-round educational programming. The Piedmont Aerospace Experience is a fully functional Boeing 727 Classroom. The CFAA is a public high school with aerospace focused curriculum and 100% graduation rate. It provides 100% paid scholarships to anyone who attends the CFAA or lives in the county to get their private pilot's license. CFAA, along with Travis Career Center, has a FAA certified Airframe and/or Powerplant (A&P) program. Lakeland AeroClub is the largest high school flying club in the world. In 2016, seven Lakeland Aero Club members piloted two Piper Cubs and a Piper Pacer 1,100 miles cross country from Lakeland to Airventure in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.



Home of the  
**NOAA Hurricane Hunters**

Home to **DRAKEN International**  
the largest privately owned military fleet in the world

Over **100,000** Aircraft Operations a year

**1 Million** square feet of facilities

**1700** Acres   **75** Businesses



**Fly Lakeland**  
Lakeland Linder Regional Airport



**SUN 'n FUN**  
A BRIGHTER FUTURE THROUGH AVIATION



**CFAA**  
Central Florida Aerospace Academy

Central Florida Aerospace Academy  
a public high school  
with over **400** students  
*Flight, Engineering, Avionics, A&P*



**AEROSPACE**  
Center For Excellence



**POLK STATE COLLEGE**

Provides flight training and is the only  
Florida public institution to offer  
a Bachelors Degree in  
**Aerospace Sciences**  
*Learn to fly, manage,  
& maintain airplanes*



**Piedmont Aerospace Experience**

*A unique classroom in a Boeing 727*



**LAKELAND AERO-CLUB**  
KLAL

the **largest** high school  
flying club in the nation  
*Restored 2 planes and flew to Wisconsin*

**SUN 'n FUN and the Florida Air Museum support year round educational programs.**

# A little history about Lakeland Linder

## Project Scope

- 40,000 sf Cargo Building
- 49,300 sf B737 Hangar
- 149,500 sf B777 Hangar
- GA Hangar
- Access Roadways
- Clearing and Grubbing
- Stormwater
- Utilities
- Misc. Infrastructure
- +/- 42 acres



*Our future plans include establishing commercial service and a 42 acre MRO/Air Cargo Development, as shown in this conceptual drawing.*

## History

The Lakeland Linder Regional Airport (LAL), originally known as Drane Field, was founded in 1940. In 1942, the City of Lakeland turned the airport over to the federal government, which used the facilities to train aviation cadets. After World War II, control over the airport was returned to the City. The airport was operated on a contract basis and used for flight training. In

1958, the facility was converted into a full-time municipal airport. In October 1972, Piper Aircraft Corporation began manufacturing general aviation aircraft at the airport and continued until the plant closed in November 1985. The Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) conducted its first annual Sun 'n Fun in 1975. Lakeland Municipal Airport was renamed Lakeland Regional Airport in May 1989, and again renamed Lakeland Linder Regional Airport (LAL) in January 1991 for local businessman Paul Scott Linder. In 2012 it flipped the switch to activate over 18,000 solar panels to become the first solar farm at an airport in the southern Region, nearly eliminating electricity costs and reducing carbon emissions. In 2016, LAL opened a new U.S. Customs and Border Protection facility, permitting international aircraft with up to 20 passengers to land.

## Future Plans

Building on its success as a “one stop shop” for aviation services, the airport would like to expand its flight training, charter operations and air carrier service. Lakeland Linder Regional serves as a reliever airport for Orlando and Tampa International Airport’s corporate aircraft. Given the location and high tourism, there is strong potential for expanding air carrier service. To meet the demand of major distribution centers along the 1-4 corridor, the airport is developing 60 acres for large air cargo operations and maintenance hangars. Working with organizations such as SUN 'n FUN, the Polk Aviation Alliance, and JetBlue, Lakeland Linder Regional Airport is Florida’s hub for aerospace education producing tomorrow’s aviators, engineers, administrators, and enthusiasts to meet this growing demand.

Learn more: [www.FlyLakeland.com](http://www.FlyLakeland.com)

*Michael McDougall*  
*Aviation Communications Manager*

FDOT participated in Sun 'n Fun by setting up a booth inside the Lakeland Linder Regional Airport’s Hangar B. Many people stopped by to speak with our department team members, giving us both positive accolades and areas where we can improve. FDOT Aviation is always interested and committed to the feedback of the Florida aviation community.



The Florida Flyer is a non-profit newsletter published quarterly by the Aviation and Spaceports Office of the Florida Department of Transportation. To subscribe to the Florida Flyer, contact Michael McDougall, Editor, FDOT Aviation and Spaceports Office, 605 Suwannee Street, MS-46, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450, phone (850) 414-4512, fax (850) 414-4508, email [Michael.Mcdougall@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:Michael.Mcdougall@dot.state.fl.us)