

Kissimmee Gateway Airport “A Strategic Regional Asset – Open for Business”

by Tasha Cunningham, *Managing Partner*

As a business owner or developer, you want the perfect combination of opportunity, convenience, and location. Plant your roots at Kissimmee Gateway Airport, one of the premier general aviation airports in the United States, where 160 acres of prime aviation and industrial property are ready for long-term lease in a booming aerospace corridor. Kissimmee Gateway Airport is the airport of choice for thousands of business and corporate jet travelers who come to the Orlando area each year for events at the Orlando/Orange County Convention Center; to visit Central Florida’s world-famous attractions like SeaWorld and Epcot; and to do business with major corporations like Lockheed Martin, Tupperware Brands, Darden Restaurants, and Siemens to name just a few. The airport offers innovative incentive programs and other amenities for businesses interested in relocating to Kissimmee.



Photo Courtesy: Kissimmee Gateway Airport

Driving the Regional Economy, Supporting Tourism and Creating New Jobs

The airport continues to drive the regional economy with an annual economic impact of over \$190 million. According to Enterprise Florida, the state’s economic development organization, Florida is a leading aerospace location and a top state for aerospace manufacturing. Over 470 aerospace companies are in the state serving the needs of sectors from aircraft parts and assembly, to intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and missiles. Enterprise Florida reports that nearly 100,000 Floridians work in Florida’s aviation and aerospace industries with large numbers of rocket scientists, machinists, pilots, engineers, and other flexible, highly-skilled workers. “It’s exciting to see how much the airport has grown over the last 80 years, particularly when it comes to serving the aerospace industry,” said Belinda Kirkegard, the City of Kissimmee’s Director of Economic Development. “Our City Commission recently rezoned over 160 acres of previous

Airport passive land to an airport industrial designation, which can easily accommodate relocating businesses of any size and is complemented by the innovative Aerospace Advancement Initiative. This aggressive economic incentive program was designed to spur investments at the airport.”

The airport plays a key role in the region’s tourism industry. According to Experience Kissimmee, over 8.6 million people visit the area each year resulting in an annual economic impact of

\$6.6 billion. “Tourism is the largest industry in Osceola County and Kissimmee Airport is a vital part of it,” said D.T. Minich, President and CEO of Experience Kissimmee. “The airport provides business and leisure travelers a direct connection to Kissimmee and we are thrilled to join the community in celebrating this amazing milestone.”

Innovative Incentives for Relocating and Expanding Businesses

Few small cities can match Kissimmee’s pro-business attitude, especially when it comes to aviation. In early 2018, the City created the Aerospace Advancement Initiative

(AAI), to assist with growing aerospace high value and high wage jobs, especially at or around the Kissimmee Gateway Airport. To encourage and promote additional growth at the Kissimmee Gateway Airport, the City of Kissimmee’s Economic Development Office announced the launch of the Aerospace Advancement Initiative (AAI). This incentives package for aerospace businesses was unveiled at Kissimmee Gateway Airport in 2018. These initiatives position the Kissimmee Gateway Airport in a more competitive manner, encouraging investors to locate at or near the Airport. All the growing aviation academic tracks located at Kissimmee Gateway Airport are resulting in the airport becoming the premier aviation workforce hub in the region. These new aerospace economic development incentives, along with the growing local aviation workforce, and its strategic location within Florida, make Kissimmee Gateway Airport an incredible site for aerospace industries. For more information, visit www.flykissimmee.com/develop.

Outstanding Aviation and Aerospace Education

One of the unsung strengths of our airport is our cluster of aviation career training schools on the airport. In addition to our two major flight schools, we have eight training and educational centers, an avionics technician training program, and an aircraft Airframe and Powerplant school in full operation. Whether you are training to pilot an aircraft or repair and maintain one, Kissimmee Gateway Airport will help you launch a new career in aviation or aerospace.

Proximity to Technology and Innovation Hubs

Given how close we are to NeoCity, the I-4 High Tech Corridor and Florida's Space Coast, Kissimmee Gateway Airport is the ideal place to land your business in Central Florida. When location and resources matter, count on Kissimmee. For more information, please visit us at www.flykissimmee.com.



Photo Courtesy: Kissimmee Gateway Airport

Celebrating 80 Years of Flight

In 2020, Kissimmee Gateway Airport announced the kickoff of its 80th Anniversary celebration, showcasing the key role the airport has played in transforming aviation and aerospace in the Central Florida region over the last eight decades. The airport got its start when the Army Air Corps requested an airfield for pilot training prior to World War II. Today the airport is home to a historic warbird museum, premier Fixed-Based Operators (FBO), and companies on the cutting edge in the aerospace and aeronautical industries. The 80th Anniversary celebration will continue through 2020. The public can take part

in exciting planned events like a virtual exhibition of the airport's rich history, hosted by the Osceola Historical Society, or take flight in a historic World War II aircraft like a P-51 Mustang at the airport's warbird museum. Visit www.flykissimmee.com/celebrate80 to learn more.

Real Time-Real Life Upset Prevention and Recovery Training Company Offers IFR Unusual Attitude Training

by KT Budde-Jones, *Promotions Coordinator*

Kissimmee Gateway Airport, Florida-based flight training organization, Stallion 51, offers real-time, real-life Upset Prevention and Recovery Training in specially equipped L-39 turbojets. This comprehensive and innovative upset prevention and recovery training is identified by the unique graphic "UT" and is the next evolution in Stallion 51's over 30 year heritage of offering training in high performance aircraft. "Our Upset Prevention and Recovery Training Program definitely raises the bar even higher for pilots who fly for a living and under all types of conditions," said Lee Lauderback, Stallion 51's president. The former chief pilot for golf legend Arnold Palmer noted that the unique curriculum has taken several years to develop. "We now have a comprehensive program that covers all areas of prevention, recognition and recovery from unusual attitudes of flying."



Photo Courtesy: Stallion 51 Corporation

"Every pilot's definition of an unusual attitude is a little different,"

Lauderback continued. "The FAA defines them as a position in excess of 25 degrees nose up, 10 degrees nose down and 45 degrees of bank angle. However, the real life definition is pilot-specific and is based on variations of experience. Addressing those variations is what sets this program apart from simulation or other training. "We tailor our instruction specifically to the individual." The UAT Company is located within Stallion 51's facility at the Kissimmee Gateway Airport and is a division of Stallion 51. Its purpose is to train pilots to recognize and respond accurately

and quickly before the situation progresses into one from which they may be unable to recover. This type of comprehensive training, with syllabi in both aero-medical and aerodynamics subjects, has not been readily available to civilian pilots until the inception of this program. At AvDoc 51, the medical division of Stallion 51, Flight Surgeon (AME) Dr. William Busch, also a UAT ground instructor, teaches the physiology and aero-medical

aspects of spatial disorientation that can cause the onset of unusual attitudes.

“Our curriculum offers pilots insight into when and why physiological sensations are experienced in the upset environment, how to overcome them, and then safely respond. Flight simulators are very limited in reproducing those disorienting sensations. That is why our program is a safe way to fully realize those sensations and train for appropriate responses.” The UAT L-39s are outfitted with a state-of-the-art Electronic Flight Instrument System with the design capability to withstand extreme flight attitudes. The EFIS equipment closely simulates current corporate and executive aircraft cockpit layouts. The UAT L-39s are also equipped with specially designed onboard cameras that allow for accurate visual and audio debriefs of the training from both inside the cockpit and outside the airplane. The NTSB strongly recommends that flight departments provide



Photo Courtesy: Stallion 51 Corporation

training in the recognition and recovery from unusual attitude and aircraft upset situations. The UAT program does just that in a manner that has not been done before. This FAA-approved program teaches techniques that will not only create safer pilots, but will hopefully lower insurance rates for aircraft owners as well.

Kissimmee Gateway Airport Celebrates Storied Aviation History

by **Terry Lloyd A.A.E.**, *former Airport Director*



You simply cannot write about the history of aviation in Florida without including Kissimmee, located in the heart of Central Florida. World famous for its proximity to Walt Disney World, Kissimmee and its airport boast a storied history. In 1912 an early biplane, believed to be a Curtis Pusher, struck a cow within the city limits. As a result, the City of Kissimmee is believed to be the first government in the world to propose a law regarding the regulation of aircraft operations. Given that the city seal prominently features a Brahma bull, and Kissimmee is the site of the largest annual rodeo east of the Mississippi River, you can bet the ordinance did not favor aviation over livestock. While this incident did not occur at the location of the current Kissimmee Gateway Airport (ISM), aircraft operated out of several locations in the city up until World War Two. The Kissimmee Gateway Airport (KISM) is the closest General Aviation airport to the Orlando/Orange County Convention Center, the concentration of convention hotel properties in the Southwest Orlando metro area, and the world's famous attractions.

In 1940, the War Department began purchasing property from owners on the west side of town and along the banks of Shingle Creek for construction of an Army Air Force training base. By the time of the Pearl Harbor attack, three runways had been completed and were immediately utilized by aircraft patrolling the Florida coasts for Nazi submarines, which were routinely torpedoing allied shipping within sight of Florida's beaches. In late 1942, operating as a satellite base of the Orlando Army Air Base, Kissimmee hosted B-25 and B-26 medium bomber training. In 1943, the base's mission changed to night fighter training, initially using the A-20 Havoc aircraft until replaced by the ultra-secret P-61 Black Widow. The P-61 was the first U.S. aircraft specifically designed as a night fighter, using an on-board radar. A total of seven night fighter squadrons utilized Kissimmee Gateway Airport. Several of the squadrons managed

to have their squadron insignia drawn up by none other than Walt Disney, who some thirty years later, chose a location a mere ten miles from the WWII base for Walt Disney World. At the end of the war, the base was turned over to the City of Kissimmee, and the Kissimmee Municipal Airport began operations.

Aviation activity was quiet at the airport up until the 1980s when growth associated with the theme parks and Orlando began to ramp up. The main runway, 15/33, was extended by 1000 feet to 6001 feet to accommodate corporate jet traffic. Aircraft parking aprons and various other airfield infrastructure projects were completed, including 90 T-hangar units, and the Control Tower opened in 1998. The cumulative improvements on the airfield positioned the airport for the boom in corporate traffic in the early 2000s, propelled by additional theme park construction, expansion of the Orange County Convention Center, and the opening of the Gaylord Palms and Champions Gate convention hotels. In 2007 an FAA Instrument Landing System was commissioned to give the airport a precision, all-weather approach capability to Runway 15.

Kissimmee Gateway Airport continues to make history. In 2019, the airport celebrated achieving three million flights. The 3 millionth flight arrived at Odyssey Aviation in November, marking another milestone for the Kissimmee Gateway Airport's tower, which was first staffed 22 years ago.

SAFETY AND INSPECTIONS

by David Smith, ACE, CPM, Airport Inspection and Safety Manager

In this edition of the Florida Flyer, I would like to highlight an airfield standard that is an important aspect of Florida's airport licensing program. That standard is the non-paved runway marking requirements set forth in Florida Administrative Code 14-60.007.

Pursuant to 14-60.007, FAC, markers shall be installed on both sides of a non-paved runway at 200-foot intervals along the edge of the usable runway width. The sponsor of the airport can choose a variety of options on what these markers are. Markers that are popular are PVC pipes, concrete pavers, and cones.

The end of the non-paved runway should be marked with similar markings to the edges. There should be six total end markers (three per side) with one in each corner of the runway and the other two extending toward the runway centerline at 10-foot intervals. Marked displaced thresholds have a similar configuration, in that, the same number of markers and spacing is used. The only difference is that displaced threshold markings would start at the edge of the runway and extend away from the centerline to be clear of the runway.

Whatever markings are chosen, you want to make sure that they are clearly visible to the flying public both on the ground and in the air. White markings are commonly used because of the contrast with the grass. When setting up the edge markings, it is recommended to start at each end, working

your way toward the center of the runway at the 200-foot interval, and make up any difference in spacing in the middle. Having consistent spacing will help to provide pilots a better sight picture when on approach.



Photo Courtesy: David Smith

If you would like to know more concerning the state requirements for airport safety at your facility, please refer to Chapter 14-60, Florida Administrative Code and, as always, if corrective measures are undertaken, please ensure they comply. Chapter 14-60 is available on the Florida Aviation website at <https://www.fdot.gov/aviation/flpub.shtm>.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding changes at your facility or if you have questions concerning Florida's airport licensure program.

Please feel free to contact me at: DavidP.Smith@dot.state.fl.us if you require further assistance with this matter or have questions concerning Florida's airport licensure program.

2020 in Review—with 2021 in Full View

by Mike McClure, CM, FCCM, Aviation System Manager

2020 was a busy year for everyone and listed below are some of the key statewide projects completed by the FDOT Aviation Office team.

1.) Wildlife Hazard Program Assessment for Non-Part 139 Airports

This project resulted in a matrix provided to the District Aviation Coordinators that identified the wildlife management status for each responsive General Aviation (GA) airport in their District. Matrix information collected from the airports will assist in identifying and addressing wildlife hazard priorities and mitigation projects. A Wildlife Hazard Resource Information Sheet was also produced and distributed to the participating airports. The Information Sheet is available for download here: www.fdot.gov/aviation/flpub.shtm/planning

2.) Florida Aviation Project Handbook 2020-2021

Provides an overview of a variety of state and other funding sources for Florida's commercial service and General Aviation airports. The Handbook is updated annually and describes funding sources and how the process works for each of the following categories: the Florida Aviation Grant Program, the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS), and other funding mechanisms. The Handbook is available for download here: www.fdot.gov/aviation/flpub.shtm/aviation-grant-program

3.) Guidebook for Airport Master Planning 2020-2021

Provides essential guidance to assists airport owners/sponsors, operators, and consultants in developing effective and obtainable Airport Master Plans. The Guidebook is updated

annually and is used to help the state meet its airport improvement needs in a logical and cohesive manner. The Guidebook and Brochure are available for download here: www.fdot.gov/aviation/flpub.shtm/planning

4.) 2020 Airport Airspace and Land Use Guidebook

Provides local government planners with the information necessary to adopt airport zoning regulations compliant with state law and federal regulations that aim to protect people on the ground and in the air. The Guidebook addresses the importance of protecting airspace and the land surrounding civil and military airports; the roles for federal, state, and local government in providing a safe aviation environment; characteristics of incompatible development; and how to draft regulations. The Guidebook and Primer are available for download here:

5.) Florida Flyer www.fdot.gov/aviation/newsletters.shtm

Five (5) editions of the Florida Flyer newsletter were produced in 2020, including:

- Special Edition 2020. Allegiant's History in Florida, Punta Gorda Airport, St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport, Business Aviation's Top 40 under 40 (Florida Recipients), and more.
- Winter Edition 2020. Featuring the Flagler Executive Airport, Airport Zoning Regulations, Lakeland Linder International Airport, Florida Airports Council (FAC) Updates, district highlights, and more.
- Spring Edition 2020. Overview of the Cares Act Funding, updates from Jacksonville's Craig Airport and Herlong Recreational Airport, the Airglades Airport's new U.S. Customs and Border Protection Facility, Florida's CFASPP Recap, FAPA, and more.
- Summer Edition 2020. Featuring the Orlando Sanford International Airport and "Why Travelers Should Trust Them", Safety and Inspections, Tampa International Airport and its fight against COVID-19, the Carabelle-Thompson Airport, and more.
- Fall Edition 2020. Featuring the Collier County Airports "A Gateway to Florida's Paradise Coast", Introduction of the InteractiveWeb Application Using Geographic Information System, overviews of the Ferguson and Winter Haven Regional Airports, the FDOT Aviation Awards Winners (2020), and more.

6.) 2021 Florida Airport Directory

A guide to Florida's public and private airports, the Directory

includes airport data obtained from annual public airport inspection and licensing records, private airport registration, and data provided by airport owners and managers. The Directory is available: <https://www.fdot.gov/aviation/flpub.shtm/electronic-copies>

7.) FASP Performance Monitoring – 2020 Annual Report

This report updates the key measures used to evaluate the aviation system's performance in order to understand how the system has progressed since the Florida Aviation System Plan 2035 Update was completed in 2017. An aviation-specific extension of the Florida Transportation Plan (FTP), the FASP 2035 is the long-term strategic plan guiding Florida's aviation future over the 20-year planning horizon. The 2020 report and poster are available for download here: <https://www.fdot.gov/aviation/FASP2035>

8.) Florida Aviation Professionals Academy (FAPA)

FAPA is a 1 ½ day in-person course that provides relevant academic and technical knowledge to airports, FDOT, and other professionals regarding FDOT Aviation processes, procedures, policies, and operations. Two FAPA courses were conducted in 2020 and the next course is scheduled for April 27-28, 2021, at the Tallahassee International Airport. For more information and to register for the FAPA Spring 2021 course, contact the FDOT Airport Planning Manager, Nick Harwell, at (850) 414-4510 or Nick.harwell@dot.state.fl.us.

9.) Statewide Airfield Pavement Management Program (SAPMP)

The SAPMP is a 3-year project that enables the FDOT AO and the FAA to monitor the condition of the pavement infrastructure at the airports in the Florida Airports System (FAS). The pavement inspections and individual Airport Pavement Evaluation Reports provide airports, FDOT Districts, FDOT AO, and the FAA Airports District Office (ADO) with long-term planning-level forecast of pavement performance and rehabilitation budgetary needs (maintenance, repair, and major reconstruction). A new feature available in the current SAPMP is an Interactive Web Application in GIS format. A total of 49 general aviation airport inspections were completed in 2020 and the evaluation reports for these airports will be released by June 2021. For more information on the SAPMP, contact FDOT Airport Engineering Manager, Abdul Hatim, at (850) 414-4504 or Abdul.hatim@dot.state.fl.us.

Manager's Corner

by Aaron Smith, State Aviation Manager



In February, Governor Ron DeSantis announced plans to invest \$331 million in the Aviation Program during fiscal year 2022. This includes around \$76 million for spaceport infrastructure related improvements. In addition, the Governor announced signing of Florida's \$90 million Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grant. The grant will be used to improve the connectivity and mobility of Florida's Space Coast to include the NASA Causeway Bridge and Space Commerce Way.

On February 12, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announced the Airport Coronavirus Response Grant Program allocations. The total allocation for Florida airports was \$209M (approximately 10 percent of the total). Florida is ranked #2 behind California at \$247 million, followed by Texas at \$196 million. The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation Act (CRRSAA) (Public Law 116-260), signed into law by former President Trump on December 27, 2020, includes nearly \$2 billion in funds to be awarded as economic relief to

eligible U.S. airports and eligible concessions at those airports to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.¹ I would like to thank the fine folks at our Orlando FAA Airport District Office for their outstanding hard work and dedication to Florida’s airports as they juggle numerous programs and deadlines.

We are pleased to welcome Kenyatta Lee to FDOT and the Strategic Development team as the Chief of Modal Development. This position oversees the Offices of Aviation, Freight and Multimodal Operations, Seaports, Spaceports and Transit. Increasingly, our transportation network demands choices and connectivity between modes to grow our economy and enhance our communities. The Chief of Modal Development is essential in building partnerships and ensuring the mobility of people and goods. Kenyatta has held senior and executive leadership roles throughout her career at Port of Palm Beach, Jaxport, Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA), and Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART) where she served as the Chief Administrative Officer. Please join me in welcoming Kenyatta to FDOT.

Lastly, it is with a heavy heart that I share the passing of James “Jim” Kuzma, Space Florida. I’ve had the honor of

working with Jim over the past ten-years as we, FDOT and Space Florida, worked in partnership to enhance Florida’s spaceport infrastructure. Let’s just say, he’s one of a kind and will be greatly missed. The following is an excerpt from Space Florida’s announcement.

“Space Florida is deeply saddened to share news of the passing of James “Jim” Kuzma, USN (Retired) a dear friend and respected colleague. In his role as Senior Vice President and General Manager, he was responsible for handling industry and spaceport development for the Cape Canaveral Spaceport. But more than that, he was a friend, colleague and mentor who poured his heart and selfless style into the Space Florida team and its vision. Jim was a proud sailor, having served more than 20 years in the United States Navy, finishing his career as the commanding officer of the Naval Ordnance Test Unit (NOTU) based in Cape Canaveral, Florida. He also served as a division chief for the U.S. Strategic Command in Washington D.C., and as a deputy director for Submarine Forces in Norfolk, Virginia. Jim’s decorations from his naval service include a Bronze Star, Legion of Merit, Defense Meritorious Service Medals and various unit and service awards. He never talked about them. He didn’t need to.”

www.spaceflorida.gov/news/jimkuzma/

¹ Federal Aviation Administration. (2020). Available online at: www.faa.gov/airports/crrsaa/ (Accessed February 2020)

Honoring the Past and Embracing the Future: “An Inside Look at Keystone Heights Airport”

by Maria Hitt, Airport Manager

Keystone Heights Airport is located approximately 50 miles Southwest of Jacksonville, and 3 miles north of the city of Keystone Heights, in the southwestern corner of Clay County. It straddles both Bradford and Clay Counties and is the only Public-Use Airport in both counties. At any given time, there are approximately 75 aircraft permanently based on the field stored in either T- hangars, bulk hangars, or on open ramp areas. The airport has two, five thousand foot runways capable of accommodating aircraft as large as a C-130 and aircraft weighing up to 150,000 lbs. It sits on 2,482 acres with designated areas delineated as Airport Commercial, Business Park, Light Industry, and Timber.

Aviation Commercial / Operating Area	691 acres
Business Park Area	297 acres
Natural Park Area	241 acres
Timber / Wildlife Area	1253 acres

The Keystone Heights Airport Authority (KHAA) is comprised of seven members, (4 City of Keystone Heights seats, 1 Bradford County Seat, 1 Clay County Seat, and an Officer from Camp Blanding), who are appointed by the City of Keystone Heights City Council and govern all activities associated with Aviation activities, compliance with FDOT, Federal Aviation

Administration standards, tenant leases, timber sales, and all other activities within the Airport property. The City Manager is the appointed liaison from the city and participates at monthly board meetings but has no voting privileges. While the Airport is city property it does not adjoin the city limits. The KHAA office staff manages the day to day operations including lease payments, aircraft fuel sales, airfield maintenance, tenants, and a myriad of other duties.

Brief History

The airport was constructed by the United States Army Air Forces in 1942 and was originally named as Crystal Lake Army Airfield (due to its proximity to Crystal Lake). When commissioned in December of that same year, it became known as Keystone Army Airfield. The Airfield was built on the southwest perimeter of Camp Blanding. During World War II, the field was the home of the Air Force Security Assistance Training (AFSAT) Strategic Reconnaissance School. The A20 Havoc, P39D (variant) Air Cobra, and L-2 and L-3 Grasshopper Light Observation Aircraft (similar to J-3 Piper Cub) were some of the aircraft training occurred in. In November 1943, the 313th Fighter Squadron was moved from Alachua and employed P40 Warhawks for training. Later, the P40s were replaced with P47 Thunderbolts. In January 1945, the AFSAT



Photo Courtesy: Keystone Airport

sent down orders for closure and on February 1st, 1945 the field was placed on inactive status. The City of Keystone Heights acquired the property from the Federal Government in 1947. From its inception to the present, various branches of the military continue to utilize the Keystone Heights Airport for various training exercises throughout the year. Sharing the north border of the Airport is Camp Blanding's Joint Training Center, the primary military reservation and training base for the Florida National Guard.

The airport accommodates both the Direct TV and Goodyear Blimps throughout the year as well as host aerobatic contests each year with Eagle Sport Aviation. The facility also was utilized as the main training base for the 2013 U.S. Aerobatic Team and continues to support aerobatic pilots from all over the world. Keystone Heights Airport and its tenants pride themselves in giving back to the community by hosting and volunteering annual fundraising events such as Air-Ops, a hunting event for wounded veterans, 5K run for Bradford County Communities in Schools, as well as Crawlin' for the Fallen Jeep event, a weekend event raising money for surviving family members of fallen military and first responders. The airport is also utilized by both Bradford and Clay County Emergency Management and Sheriff's Department for annual awareness training and has hosted several events for City of Keystone Heights, including the Mayor's Ball and the Northeast Florida League of Cities Dinner. The community airport takes pride in supporting community events.



Photo Courtesy: Keystone Airport

The Keystone Heights Airport has approximately 70 tenants and has just completed building the new 4,000 square foot Administrative/ Fixed Based Operator (FBO) building (\$1.3 million, 100% funded by FDOT). In addition to the new FBO, the Airport managed 3 other large projects in the 2019/20 years consisting of a rehabilitation of the main taxiway (\$3.2 million), upgrade of all access gates including cameras and electronic access (\$200K, 100% funded by FDOT) as well as a new 80 x 80 corporate hangar (\$573K, also 100% funded by FDOT). Ninety-nine percent of major improvement projects that occur at the airport are funded through the FDOT Aviation Office and/or FAA grant money.

The new Admin/FBO building has replaced an outdated facility that was too small to house their staff and to provide services to the tenants, guests and prospective tenants. The new FBO is a welcomed site for local and transient pilots. A designated "Pilots Lounge and Planning Area" enhances pilot safety and training and plays an even larger role as the command center for airport development. A larger work area for present and future staff results in greater productivity plus the larger



Photo Courtesy: Keystone Airport

conference room is beneficial to the KHAA board as well as others who occasionally rent for meetings and events. The building was completed and occupied in March 2020. The airport welcomes visitors to come by and visit the new facility & enjoy a cup of coffee on the back porch!

Keystone Heights Airport Team

- Maria Hitt—Airport Manager
- Lani Florence—Accountant
- Mike Brackenbury—Airfield Manager
- Luke Fore—Airfield Specialist
- Preston Denmark—Airfield Specialist
- Morgan Bradley—Office Assistant

The other part of the airports successful team are the members of the Keystone Heights Airport Authority. The following board members have played a vital role to the overall success of the airport and the Keystone Airport would not be where it is today without their contributions:

- Chairman of the Board David Kirkland (2009)
- Airport Facilities Chairman Wayne Wynn (2012)

- Security & Vice Chairman Scott Fryar (2011)
- Security & Aviation Chairman David Nickels (2015)
- Business Development and Intergovernmental Relations Chairman Scott Kornegay (2009)
- Camp Blanding Rep. CPT Brian McDowell (2020)
- Natural Resource Conservation Chairman Chad Rischar (2016)



Photo Courtesy: Keystone Airport

natural disaster, he and his staff will manage state response efforts from the back-up EOC in Camp Blanding. When forest fires were prominent in North Florida during the 1990s as well as 2006, FEMA and the U.S. Forestry Department used KHA as the Operations center for North Florida with helicopters flying in and out for fuel, air/field crew support, and strategic management during that disaster. The Airport is committed to being a good neighbor, despite the occasional noise complaint. The airport staff members are very excited about the recent improvement projects and look

Aviation's Gift

The airport provides direct access to Camp Blanding where the back-up Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for the State of Florida is located. Governor Ron DeSantis utilizes the Keystone Heights Airport for attending local events and if there is a

forward to the growth in opportunities in the near future. We continue to create milestones for the Keystone Heights Airport as they continue to live by the phrase "Honoring the Past and Embracing the Future." Please come visit your community airport and see what great things are happening.

An enriched History of the Vero Beach Regional Airport

by **Eric Menger**, *former Airport Director*

Vero Beach Regional Airport (KVRB) is located just a few miles from the center of Vero Beach, on Florida's Treasure Coast. The Vero Beach/Indian River County area offers residents and visitors alike a wide variety of attractions, including beautiful beaches, boating and fishing, renowned Indian River citrus, "Old Florida" walking trails, and relaxing ocean and riverfront communities. Major League Baseball still has a significant presence with the new Jackie Robinson Training Facility in the former spring training camp for the L.A. Dodgers. In addition, visitors and residents enjoy Disney's Vero Beach Resort, Riverside Theatre, Vero Beach Museum of Art, the Environmental Learning Center, and McKee Botanical Gardens in addition to a great selection of beautiful parks, golf clubs, restaurants, craft breweries, live music, a local comedy club, and shopping.



Photo Courtesy: Vero Beach Regional Airport

Airport History

Dedicated to the community in March of 1930, Vero Beach Regional Airport is rich in aviation heritage. In 1935, Vero Beach was the smallest airport in the country to have scheduled passenger, cargo, and air mail service provided by a major airline. Eastern Air Transport, which later became Eastern Airlines, served the airport from about 1932 until 1973. During World War II, the airport became Naval Air Station Vero Beach, a venue for training Navy and Marine pilots and other personnel in dive bombing and night fighting techniques. The Navy expanded and improved the Airport significantly, before returning it to the ownership of the city in 1947. Piper Aircraft established their research and development center there in 1956, and brand new aircraft have been rolling off of the Piper assembly line since 1960. Flight Safety International has operated their Academy flight school there since 1966, and today their fleet numbers about 100 aircraft.

Airport Highlights

With 3 runways, including 2 parallel runways, 6 instrument approaches, and an FAA Air Traffic Control tower, KVRB handles approximately 204,000 flight operations each year, which includes a mix of airline, flight training, corporate and charter, military, law enforcement, recreational, and manufacturer test and delivery flights. Fixed Base Operators offer complete ground support to based and visiting pilots alike, and charter operators offer on-demand air travel with aircraft ranging from single-engines to mid-size jets. Approximately 200 based aircraft call KVRB home, and the Piper Aircraft factory keeps a continuous stream of new aircraft flowing onto the field. Over the past few years, two of KVRB's runways have been resurfaced and equipped with LED edge lighting, and all taxiway edge lighting has been replaced with LED lights as well. Brand new Taxiway E was completed in

2019, opening the airport's midfield to new hangar development. Runway 4 is equipped with one of the first FAA-certified LED PAPI systems. Runway 12R-30L, the main runway, will soon be under design for a total rehabilitation in 2021/22, and the airport will update its master plan during the same timeframe. C. J. Cannon's Restaurant, located within the Airport Terminal Building, is a popular destination for locals who enjoy the aviation atmosphere, as well as visiting pilots from all over Florida searching for the "\$300 hamburger." Operating under COVID-19 pandemic safety directives, Cannons is again open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner Monday through Saturday, with breakfast and lunch only on Sundays.

Economic Impact

In 2019, FDOT released an economic impact study for the Vero Beach Regional Airport. Thanks in large part to a major aircraft manufacturing plant being located here, plus numerous aviation and non-aviation businesses that thrive at the airport location, the direct, indirect, and induced business sales created an impact to the community of over \$1.3 billion. Post-pandemic impacts



Photo Courtesy: Vero Beach Regional Airport

public awareness, and a myriad of other responsibilities needed to ensure the airport meets the need of the flying public. Total employment dependent on the airport and its businesses totals over 5,500 as determined by the 2019 FDOT's economic impact study.



Photo Courtesy: Vero Beach Regional Airport

are yet to be studied, but due to the diverse and stable businesses located at KVRB, it is anticipated that a quick recovery will ensue in 2020/2021. The airport also hosts a bi-annual Vero Beach Air Show, which increases aviation education and promotes the community's relationship with its public airport. For the last several shows, the airport has hosted the U.S. Navy Blue Angels, which is appropriate since KVRB was once a Naval Air Station. Over 50,000 people show up for the show. Airport staff consists of 12 full-time plus 2 part-time employees that are responsible for the day-to-day safe operation of the airport, as well as leasing and business functions, grant administration,

A Community—Minded Airport

The mission of the airport is to provide safe and efficient aviation facilities and associated services to both commercial and non-commercial users, while operating in harmony with the community's quality of life goals. In keeping with that mission, KVRB has established voluntary noise abatement procedures, which can be found on the Airport's website www.verobeachairport.org. The airport also hosts public events on an annual basis, ranging from EAA Aviation Day open house type events, to the bi-annual Vero Beach Air Shows which feature the U.S. Navy Blue Angels and typically draws



Photo Courtesy: Vero Beach Regional Airport

Dates to Remember...

EVENT	LOCATION	DATE	TIME
NAS Jacksonville Airshow	Jacksonville Naval Air Station	April 10-11	All Day
CFASPP Meeting: Statewide Steering Committee	Lakeland Linder International Airport	April 14th	10:30a (EST)
SUN 'n FUN Aerospace Expo	Lakeland Linder International Airport	April 13-18	All Day
Space Coast Warbird Airshow	Titusville	April 17-18	All Day
Cocoa Beach Airshow	Cocoa Beach	April 17-18	All Day

Fort Lauderdale Airshow	Fort Lauderdale	May 8-9	All Day
The Great Florida Air Show	Melbourne	May 15-16	All Day
Miami Beach Air & Sea Show	South Beach	May 29-30	All Day

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

DISTRICT 1

- The Punta Gorda Airport has a new 13,000 square foot GA Terminal facility in the mobilization phase, construction is scheduled to begin early March (2021) and is expected to be completed later this year. This project will allow continued growth in commercial air service by relocating existing General Aviation and FBO activities to the north side of the airport. The cost of construction is \$6,367,229.
- Southwest Florida International Airport, the Tower and TRACON construction is progressing.
- Venice Municipal Airport, the Drainage Improvement construction phase underway.
- Lakeland Linder International Airport is upgrading their Instrument Landing System (ILS) to Category III.

DISTRICT 2

- Cross City Airport has recently completed installation of new fencing for a newly acquired piece of property and has also just completed a tree removal project, which enhances safety in the runway protection zones.
- Perry-Foley Airport just completed an obstacle removal project which will enhance safety by removal of trees in the runway protection zones.
- Suwannee County Airport recently completed an upgrade to their fuel farm which included a new 12,000-gallon Jet A Fuel Tank addition.

DISTRICT 3

- Marianna Municipal Airport recently completed the relocation and upgrade of the fuel farm as well as the installation of the backup generator.

DISTRICT 4

- Vero Beach Regional Airport is reconstructing the center apron project and is creating approximately 100,000 square feet of concrete apron space. Project is set for completion in June 2021.
- The North Perry Airport has new development on the Southeast side of the airport. Diversified T-hangars expected to be completed by the end of summer.
- At Boca Raton Airport, the projects are currently underway including the Airport Road Improvements Project, aimed at improving safety of vehicular and pedestrian access. The project includes pavement rehabilitation, construction of new medians, turn lanes, new sidewalks, enhanced signage and lighting, and undergrounding of powerlines.

DISTRICT 5

- The Leesburg International Airport, recently completed construction of two 5 unit box hangar buildings sized to accommodate larger piston aircraft based at LEE with funding assistance from FDOT. The identical hangar units have hydraulic doors.
- Avidyne Corporation recently celebrated opening its new Aircraft Integration and Flight Test Center at Melbourne International Airport with 10,000 sq. ft. of hangar space plus 2,000 sq. ft. of flight operations office space. Additionally, the U.S. Navy Blue Angels announced the addition of MLB to its 2021 schedule on May 15 and 16 for the Great Florida Air Show. To learn more, visit www.GreatFloridaAirShow.com.

DISTRICT 6

- Miami International Airport is the first Florida airport to join the Department of Homeland Security campaign against human trafficking.
- Easter Airlines puts Asuncion on MIA's route map
MIA named TSA Airport of the Year.
- Allegiant Air to launch nonstop service to Key West from Nashville in June.
- JetBlue to launch service into Key West from New York City and Boston in February.
- Florida Keys Tourism Council launches online contest to name Coronavirus fighting robot at Key West International Airport.

DISTRICT 7

- St Pete-Clearwater International Airport's primary runway was successfully reopened on December 18th after resurfacing. PIE's secondary runway was used temporarily during the project. The project includes the asphalt pavement rehabilitation and new edge lighting expected completion by Spring 2021.
- Frontier Airlines plans to establish a new crew base at Tampa International Airport this year with nearly 400 team members. The Denver-based carrier's crew base at TPA will initially be home to 250 flight attendants and 140 pilots when it opens in May. The jobs will be a combination of new hires and existing employees who are currently based in other locations but want to move to Tampa. The airline anticipates nearly 400 Frontier crew members will be based in Tampa by the end of 2021.

UNITED WE STAND SPECIALTY LICENSE PLATE

by Aviation Office

As you drive around Florida you will notice a variety of Florida license plate designs. In addition to the most common standard state license plate, Florida allows drivers to select from more than 120 unique license plates. Florida has license plates for a variety of family, environmental, charitable, and other causes. If you work in the aviation industry, enjoy recreational flying, or are concerned about our national security, you may want to consider purchasing the United We Stand specialty plate. (Created by an Act of the Florida Legislature in 2002 to support Secure Airports for Florida's Economy.) Revenue goes to FDOT to fund security-related aviation projects pursuant to Chapter 332, Florida Statutes and to provide training related to airport security and management. In 2018, security assessments were conducted at 84 airports and specific projects were funded at 25 airports as a result.



License Plate	United We Stand
Statutory Authority	320.08058
Date Enacted	July 1, 2002
Special Fee	\$25.00 annual fee (plus registration fees)
Distribution of Specialty Fee	Secure Airports for Florida's Economy

For more information about how you can purchase this specialty license plate, please visit www.flhsmv.gov/

Airports Awarded SAFE Funding—\$3,850,577 Total to Date

Apalachicola Regional Airport-Cleve Randolph Field	\$67,270	Northeast Florida Regional Airport	\$125,000
Boca Raton Airport	\$305,780	Palm Beach County Park Airport	\$1,709
Carrabelle—Thompson Airport	\$17,000	Pensacola International Airport	\$104,500
Dade-Collier Training and Transition Airport	\$108,000	Perry-Foley Airport	\$22,451
Fernandina Beach Municipal Airport	\$150,000	Pompano Beach Airpark	\$135,200
Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport	\$122,800	Punta Gorda Airport	\$100,000
Gainesville Regional Airport	\$58,591	Quincy Municipal Airport	\$65,000
Key West International Airport	\$415,240	Sebastian Municipal Airport	\$6,084
Keystone Heights Airport	\$401,735	Suwannee County Airport	\$25,190
Lakeland Linder International Airport	\$288,000	The Florida Keys Marathon International Airport	\$52,896
Marianna Municipal Airport	\$402,332	Treasure Coast International Airport	\$80,204
Miami Executive Airport	\$48,000	Williston Municipal Airport	\$559,628
Miami Homestead General Aviation Airport	\$187,967		



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