Local/Regional Press Coverage
Florida state agency Space Florida could be joining the effort to maintain, repair and overhaul operations at the airport. The Charlotte County Airport Authority is in talks to launch MRO operations at the airport through Fort Myers company Intrepid Aerospace, an FAA-approved repair station.

If the partnership is approved on June 30 at the authority meeting, the MRO hangar — to be built at the airport — could bring hundreds to thousands of aerospace industry jobs to the county.

Last week Punta Gorda Counilman John Gammon met with Matt Cameron, president, of Space Florida, and Dave Gammon, interim director of the Charlotte County economic development office, to discuss the state agency’s potential involvement in the project. Space Florida and the MRO program will be big for Charlotte County and Punta Gorda, according to Gammon. We asked him about why that is.

Q: Why is it important to include Space Florida?
A: I felt that it was important to include Space Florida because they are the state agency charged with the promotion of aerospace business development. I believe that aerospace business is one that Charlotte County can be a leader in in the future.

Q: Does MRO help Space Florida?
A: Space Florida can serve as a conduit in financing transactions in situations where loan- ership is not possible, help with equipment financing, incentivize funding for improvements within the Florida Spaceports territory (currently NASA Kennedy Space Center, Cape Canaveral Air Station, and Patrick AFB), and provide access to additional financing, workforce recruiting, and training assistance.

Q: What is the MRO?
A: An aviation MRO is a company that specializes in performing maintenance, repair and overhaul of aircraft and their components. Intrepid is an FAA-approved repair station with limited Airframe and Limited Accessories ratings, specializing in sheet metal, advanced composite, interiors, hydraulics, pneumatics and electronics/chemical components. They provide services to diverse and international operators, FBOs, brokers, and military customers.

Q: What will it provide for Charlotte County with MRO?
A: The state’s facility is being built for the Technical Colleges’ Aviation and PowerPlant省内 programs. The services will be performed in a way that perfectly fits into these developments at the airport, because graduates of this program can be employed right from the airport. What will the MRO be used for?
A: CCAA is working with Intrepid Aerospace on a land lease for a smaller, purposed built existing aviation development on the north runway. This will allow Intrepid to start serving its customers at a smaller facility sooner, while planning for a larger facility on a long-term, parallel track.

The Committee
In the March, the City Council appointed a pickleball committee to research play-game at the park as well as other areas in the city limits to move the game.

Part of the committees fact finding includes conducting a sound study at the park. General Health and Safety will begin the study with Intrepid, today costing the city $850.

The sound study will be conducted by Intrepid and covers the parks (noise abatement) material involved in the study. If the committee finds this is a problem, it will go find a new place or use the court as is. If the committee finds that it is not a problem, it will continue to look into any problems with current park. Please call us at your local office.

Charlotte: 21400-1300 Waterline
941.896.3000
7 a.m. to 9 a.m., Monday through Friday
Ft. Myers: 14660-3000 Waterline
941.386.7000
7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Thursday
Englewood: 14660-3000 Waterline
941.355.3000
7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Thursday
Delray: 814-4100
941.281.5200
8 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., Monday through Friday

The Courts
On Monday, the city closed four of the eight pickleball courts at Gilchrist Park. Back at the city hall, the City Council decided they would close those courts when PicklePlex at Punta Gorda Florida Southwestern state opened, which happened Monday.

“The four courts will now serve as an ex- ception of a brief period of 7 a.m. to 9 a.m.,” Reichert said. “The closing of the courts is a direct step related to PicklePlex operations.”

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The Facts
The reasons for the facts of the study and the committee’s other research will be presented at the July 9 City Council meeting.
Aerospace program at Punta Gorda Airport could bring hundreds of jobs

A new million dollar project could bring more jobs to Southwest Florida. Soon, you could see an aerospace program coming to the Punta Gorda Airport.

“I see wins all over the Place,” said Pamella Seay, chairman at the Charlotte County Airport Authority.

The number of jobs and students at the Punta Gorda Airport may soon soar to new heights.

“We are training people throughout the region,” said Dave Gammon, interim director of economic development for Charlotte County, “and they can stay here in Charlotte County.”

Fort Myers based Intrepid Aerospace wants to lease a piece of land from the Charlotte County Airport Authority.

“It’s not going to look like this at all,” Gammon said. “We are going to have a 60-foot tall hangar.”

A hanger, for aircraft maintenance and repairs, which could create up to 120 higher paying jobs. They hope to have it open within the next eight to nine months.

Intrepid would hire its own mechanics, doing maintenance, repair and operations or MRO. It may not have to look far for future employees.

“The A and P school could be located right here at the Punta Gorda Airport,” Seay said.

Charlotte County’s School Board wants to operate the technical college’s new airframe and powerplant mechanics training program on the property. It aspires to take over Western Michigan University’s Pilot Training classroom and hangar when its lease ends in August.

Also in the works, an Arizona based company training pilots at the airport. All with the potential to bring more jobs, students and revenue into Charlotte County. The airport authority will have a vote on the plans at its June 20 meeting.

“There’s a lot of factors,” Seay said. “We are looking at them all and evaluating them.”

https://www.winknews.com/2019/06/05/aerospace-program-at-punta-gorda-airport-could-bring-hundreds-of-jobs/
Lee County Port Authority's 1,150-acre Skyplex business park is landing major office users.

The hottest Class A office development in Southwest Florida isn’t a well-manicured suburban park or a downtown redevelopment district primed for a gleaming new skyscraper.

Instead, it’s at an airport.

SkyPlex Commercial Park, an 1,150-acre tract adjacent to Southwest Florida International Airport, is fast becoming a magnet for upscale office projects.

In the past two years, owner Lee County Port Authority has landed a pair of multibuilding office deals with major employers that combined could total 680,000 square feet — roughly equivalent to the 42-story Bank of America Plaza in downtown Tampa.

Ben Siegel, the authority’s deputy executive director, notes Skyplex land is strictly for lease — not for sale, the result of Federal Aviation Administration guidelines. The authority has been charging tenants between 15 cents and 25 cents a square foot, or between about $6,500 and $11,000 per acre.

“Like many airports, we’re always looking for opportunities to develop revenue sources,” says Jeff Mulder, the executive director of the Lee County Port Authority.

“And in this case, Skyplex makes a lot of sense because we have a lot of the infrastructure already in place, and the benefit of a commercial acreage of some size.”

Although commercial, non-aviation-related development at airports in Florida (hardly unusual) — Tampa International is in the midst of a $2 billion transformation that will add commercial space including 158,000 square feet of net office space, and Charlotte County’s Punta Gorda Airport sold land to food distributor Cheney Bros. Inc. for a major distribution hub, among others — the Lee Co. example is unique in its structure and offerings.

“The workforce is here, and people want to live nearby to where they work, whether they can,” Mulder says. “And we’re trying to be unique. There’s plenty of retail space around us, and we don’t want to saturate the market by adding to that. We want to develop in a way that’s compatible with the surrounding area, so we’re OK in taking our time with this.”

Even so, the deals have been seemingly fast in coming.

In 2017, event planner and business consultant Gartner Inc. — one of Lee County Port Authority’s airport tenants — sold land to food distributor Cheney Bros. Inc. for a major distribution hub, among others — the Lee Co. example is unique in its structure and offerings.

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And although roughly 280 acres has been set aside for aviation-related uses, such as corporate airplane hangars, freight and cargo shipping operations and airplane maintenance, the authority has consciously decided to go after Class A office users for its park.

“We’ve been very specific in targeting higher-end facilities and users,” Mulder says. “We’re focused on lining up Class A office development and we’re content to let others develop retail and related amenities elsewhere. Skyplex’s advantages are many. In addition to sheer size — Southwest Florida International is the third-largest airport in the U.S. in terms of land mass, at 13,500 acres — and its location within a Foreign Trade Zone, the airport and the business park have direct access to Interstate 75 and a road network that includes Daniels Parkway, Tamiami Trail and the Paul J. Doherty Parkway.

The park also is in close proximity to a thick cluster of residences and retail space nearby in the Gateway area, and near the JetBlue Park at Fenway South, the spring training home of the Boston Red Sox.

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JUNE 14, 2019 - JUNE 20, 2019 I BUSINESS OBSERVER

Countv's largest private employers — agreed to build a trio of office and amenity buildings on Skyplex land totaling 240,000 square feet.

The third and final building is now under construction in the roughly $50 million project by Atlanta-based TPA Group and should be completed later this year.

Siegel says that Gartner’s rocket-like growth from acquisitions could propel further development at Skyplex, too. The company has an option for an additional 12 acres of land — on top of the 15 acres it is now leasing — that could accommodate another 250,000 square feet of office space.

Siegel notes the company first looked at Skyplex to alleviate a crowded parking situation at four buildings it occupies in Gateway nearby.

“They’re a dynamic company,” Siegel says. “We want to see them grow here.”

The project has been significant for Skyplex, as well. With Gartner, the park’s leasing activity has been more than triple that of the second-largest competitor in Fort Myers over the past 12 months, according to data compiled by real estate research firm CoStar Group.

More recently, Alta Resources Corp. last month committed to develop a 90,000-square-foot office project in Skyplex to house as many as 1,000 workers.

The Wisconsin-based outsourcing support company is applying for permits now for its three-story, $21 million building.

Like Gartner, Alta Resources could also expand on the authority’s property. The company maintains an option to lease additional land for a second 90,000-square-foot structure if its growth warrants it.

The activity wasn’t always so frenzied at Skyplex, however.

When the park was christened in 2006, in the wake of the opening of the authority’s new $438 million terminal at the airport and subsequent demolition of the old one, the park drew little attention.

Developers used to buying property balked at the idea of leasing land.

Then the recession hit, and commercial construction in Southwest Florida came to a halt.

Eventually, the authority put in place a policy that pays real estate agents a 5% commission on deals of 10 years and longer, based on rental rates.

Still, the authority’s phone didn’t ring.

“Not selling our land has been a major hurdle to some developers, so especially in the beginning it was a challenge to do deals,” Siegel says.

It wasn’t until 2012, shortly after JetBlue Park opened, that North American Properties approached the authority about developing a Publix Super Markets Inc.-anchored retail center that things began to gel.

Though it wasn’t a corporate office project, Siegel and the authority sensed having a grocery store and other service retail nearby could be a valuable amenity for eventual office users.

Skywalk, a 66,000-square-foot center on 16.4 acres, debuted in 2013.

“We were aware that new homes were, and would be, coming to the surrounding area, and we and the folks at Publix thought that the area needed a shopping center and other services,” says Dale Hafele, North American Properties’ managing partner in Fort Myers.

“The goal was to show the community that the airport and Skyplex were open to, and welcomed, business,” Hafele says. “And the authority was very creative in finding solutions to issues that worked for all of us.”

Siegel says the development “put us on the map.”

Last year, Publix acquired the center from North American Properties.

In August, a new $15 million road bisecting Skyplex will open and open up even more of the park for business.

“Skyplex Boulevard will serve as a grand entrance to the park and support further Class A office development,” Mulder says. “With the momentum we have now, it’ll be completed at a good time.”

Skyplex also should help support the self-sustaining airport’s ambitious development activities, too.

In May 2018, the authority announced plans for a $150 million upgrade to terminal facilities, on top of some $450 million worth of upgrades that will add another runway and air traffic control tower next year.

“The vision is to grow what we have here,” Mulder says of Skyplex. “Developments like Gartner and Alta position the airport well, and we’re taking a longer-term approach.”

— K.L. McQuaid
Before Allegiant Air retired all of its aging MD-80 jets last year, it hung a non-working sign on an automatic reverse thrust system for one plane. That’s what the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration said in a press release Wednesday.

For failing to fix the problem with that plane for another 28 flights in 2018, the FAA has proposed fining the Las Vegas-based airline $715,438. Allegiant is disputing the ruling and has 30 days to respond. Allegiant is Charlotte County’s only commercial airline flying out of Punta Gorda Airport (PGD), and is in the process of building a $420 million resort on Charlotte Harbor.

PGD was the first all-Airbus airport base for Allegiant, according to the airport’s COO, Ron Mallard, and transitioned to the A320s in December 2016. Throughout 2018, MD-80 aircraft would occasionally fly in and out of the airport, but were not part of the fleet based at PGD.

The FAA states that Allegiant contacted it in October 2017, asking if it could deactivate this very system in an MD-88 jet in cases when the engine’s exhaust temperature got too high. The FAA responded it would be improper to deactivate the system unless the temperature problem was caused by the same system. That’s because the FAA wants the airline to figure out the root of the problem. Later, this situation occurred for Allegiant on April 13, 2018, on a flight from Roanoke, Va., to Sanford. Allegiant did not figure out the problem, the FAA alleges.

“Instead, the carrier deactivated the system on April 14, 2018, and installed an inoperative placard on it,” the FAA wrote in its press release. Then, Allegiant continued to operate that same MD-88 on 28 more flights with passengers “without determining the cause of the excessive engine exhaust gas temperature,” the FAA wrote. In response to inquiries from Travel Weekly, Allegiant spokesperson Sonya Padgett said Allegiant followed procedures established by the plane’s manufacturer, McDonnell Douglas, and approved by the FAA.

“Following this procedure we provided the safety of our aircraft and our operations, and we believe the proposed fine is inappropriate and inconsistent with existing FAA policy,” she said.

Allegiant flew its last MD-80 series jet in November of 2018, according to CBS News. The Tampa Bay Times in 2016 and later CBS’s 60 Minutes in 2018 followed Allegiant, finding numerous mechanical problems. The FAA declined to criticize Allegiant at that time, according to CBS, but Allegiant’s safety record began to improve after its report.

Allegiant replaced its MD-80s with jets made by Airbus. Airlines began replacing the MD-80 series — nicknamed Mad Dog — starting more than 10 years ago in favor of more fuel efficient jets, according to the Seattle Post Intelligencer.
Driver in fatal Englewood crash identified

ENGLEWOOD — John Charles Hardy, 75, of Palmetto, was identified Friday as the driver involved in a crash Wednesday, which he did not survive.

Hardy lost control of his 2009 Hyundai Santa Fe UVX on the intersection of DeBarron Street and Stratford Road Wednesday, according to the Florida Highway Patrol.

He was going to make a left turn onto Dearborn Stratford Road Wednesday, but when he entered the intersection, he continued south into a tree.

Hardy was transported to Englewood Community Hospital where he was pronounced dead. The passenger in the vehicle, in the world of low-cost airlines, said PGD’s CEO, Jamie Parlin. “The competition continues to be very positive for our collaborative relationship with Allegiant Air — a premiere ultra-low-cost carrier and a true community partner.”

“Healthy expansion among medium and small airport categories indicates there’s no limit to opportunity for North American airports when they embrace informed, data-driven development decisions,” said John Giannetti, senior analyst with OAG.

PGD also ranked number 6 in best turnaround times in medium airports. The airport has 76.7% flights arrive on time, and 82.6% of flights depart on time, according to OAG.

Meanwhile, the Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport (SRQ) ranked third among the fastest-growing medium airports.

The airport saw its seat capacity grow by 35% since May 2018. “We are extremely grateful to the community for supporting all the new air service we have received over the past year,” said Rick Piccolo, the president and CEO of SRQ. “Our discussions with the airlines continue to be very positive and we are optimistic that the airport will have more new routes announcements in the future.”

Since April 2018, the airport has added two new airlines — Allegiant Air and Frontier Airlines. This has brought 23 new routes and 33 new destinations. SRQ was also ranked sixth in most new routes added, with five new routes since May 2018. There are a total of 83 medium airports included in the study rankings.

Medium air service had grown by 0.05 percent and 0.24 percent of scheduled departing seat capacity in North America.

POLICE BEAT

The information for Police Beat is gathered from police, sheriff’s office, Florida Highway Patrol, jail and fire records. Not every arrest leads to a conviction and guilt or innocence is presumed.

Hardy was transported to Englewood Community Hospital where he was pronounced dead. The passenger in the vehicle, 1102 block of Nova Lane, Punta Gorda. Charge: first degree battery. Bond: 82.6% of flights depart on time, and 82.6% of flights arrive on time, according to OAG. seat capacity grow by 35% since May 2018. “We are extremely grateful to the community for supporting all the new air service we have received over the past year,” said Rick Piccolo, the president and CEO of SRQ. “Our discussions with the airlines continue to be very positive and we are optimistic that the airport will have more new routes announcements in the future.”

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• Jason Ray Bennett, 32, 11400 block of Wenona Dr., North Port. Charges: first degree larceny/petty theft of more than $10,000 but less than $50,000 and grand theft of a motor vehicle. Bond: not listed.

• Anthony Omero Eva, 32, 1200 block of South Placid Rd., North Port. Charges: violation of a controlled substance without a prescription, possession of drug paraphernalia, and resisting an officer with force or violence. Bond: $1,000.


• Zachary Nathaniel Foote, 31, 600 block of Aylesbury Lane, Port Charlotte. Charge: possession of drug paraphernalia. Bond: $6,000.

• Joshua James Jacobs, 37, homeless at the time of arrest. Charge: violation of probation or strike and sexual battery on someone present. Bond: not listed.

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“Luxury appointed, yet welcoming and comfortable.”

This is how Sunseeker Resorts describes their resort king room which will overlook Charlotte Harbor, according to their website. Complete with a 400 square-foot living space, floor-to-ceiling windows, and “state-of-the-art in-room entertainment options … this guest room is the perfect retreat” and starts at $175 a night.

Alegiant’s Sunseeker posted the prices of each room option, complete with virtual tours recently. Prices, however, are subject to change.

Planning a getaway?
Sunseeker announces room prices for planned resort in Charlotte Harbor

A square of comfort
Local woman creates blankets to nurture pets, people

PUNTA GORDA — Not many people would spend over an hour making something just to give it away to a complete stranger.

But that’s who Heather Chandler, or “the blanket lady” as some call her, is. Chandler used to be heavier. She craved the instant gratification she received from food. She couldn’t put on her own shoes because she couldn’t reach her feet.

But in 2012, she had a gastric bypass surgery, shedding 170 pounds. Now, she was cold all the time, she said.

In her doctor’s office, she saw a soft, fleece blanket. It made her feel comfort; nurtured. She then wanted to make others feel as safe.
Did you miss this data breach?

Two medical testing companies — Quest Diagnostics and LabCorp — dominate the $37 billion U.S. independent laboratory market.

If you've received a bill for either of them, your personal information may be compromised. That's because earlier this month, it was revealed that an "unauthorized user" hacked into the internal systems of the third-party billing collection vendor — American Medical Collection Agency (AMCA) — used by both labs. About 12 million Quest and 7.7 million LabCorp patients are potentially affected.

Although no individual results were exposed, the Quest records contained patients' Social Security and full credit or debit account numbers. Those combined factors elevated the Quest portion of the breach to a risk level of 5 out of 10 according to the Identity Theft Resource Center's "Breach Clarity" tool (www.idtheftcenter.org/breachclarity).

This AMCA incident is the latest example of a breach at a little-known company that nevertheless holds vast quantities of sensitive data that was shared or stored in ways that went beyond the control of affected customers," notes Kees van der Ploeg, notes Kees van der Ploeg.

Room prices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Room Type</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resort King Room</td>
<td>$175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resort Queen Room</td>
<td>$129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-Bedroom Sun Suite Residence</td>
<td>$249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-Bedroom Sun Suite Residence</td>
<td>$349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-Bedroom Sun Suite Residence</td>
<td>$499</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Identity Theft Resource Center's "Breach Clarity" tool evaluates breaches based on 10 risk levels, ranging from 1 to 10.

GUEST BENEFITS

Getting the most out of your stay at Sunseeker Resort.

- High-Speed Wi-Fi Through Out the Entire Resort
- Virtual Concierge Services
- Exclusive access to Sunseeker Resort's Kingsway Country Club
- On-Property Rental Cars
- Shuttle Transportation to & from Punta Gorda Airport
- Premium golf courses
- Large selection of restaurants

While the exclusive Sunseeker Resorts Guest Benefits Program is still in its infancy, we hope to continue to evolve this program to bring even more value to our guests.

GETAWAY FROM PAGE 1B

to change, according to Allegiant Travel Company spokesperson Sonya Padgett.

"The prices and amenities listed on the website are meant to give people a general idea of what they can expect when Sunseeker Resort Charlotte Harbor opens," Padgett said.

The cheapest rooms start at $175 a night — for either of the resort king rooms, which has one king-sized bed, or the resort queen room, which has two queen-sized beds.

"The suite residence rooms are most costly, promising to be "your home-away-from-home,"" The 850-square-foot one-bedroom suite starts at $249 a night, complete with a full kitchen, bar seating, and a 100 square-foot balcony.

The two-bedroom, two-bathroom suite, includes a 2,200-square-foot, with a banquet table, two separate living rooms, and a 200-square-foot balcony. This starts at $499 a night.

The three-bedroom, one of the most spacious options, starts at $499 a night. This 1,300-square-foot living space has two bedrooms and one en-suite bathroom.

The four-bedroom, three-bathroom suite was recently added to be slotted into the list by the end of 2023.

To learn more, visit the Resort Premiere Center at 4910 Tamiami Trail in Port Charlotte.

COMFORT FROM PAGE 1B

Seventy percent of most people have the belief that "it can't happen to me," according to the ITRC's annual survey. The rest of us are starting to realize that data breaches are no longer rare events. In fact, they are happening with increased regularity.

"I gave out around 81 blankets that day," she said. "If you do something nice for someone, it will turn back to you ten-fold."

She started giving away the blankets to pet sitting clients, to friends, family, and even accepts custom orders.

Originally from Connecticut, the animal lover would buy large amounts of dog and cat food and donate it to the shelters. Now she gives blankets to local shelters to bundle the animals awaiting forever homes.

"I'm a sucker for animals," she said. "They are accepting of everything and have no boundaries of who they like or don't like."

"I don't have to prove anything."

The scammers are most likely to try to Called the hotel at 941-505-7929.

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Originally from Connecticut, the animal lover would buy large amounts of dog and cat food and donate it to the shelters. Now she gives blankets to local shelters to bundle the animals awaiting forever homes. 

"I'm a sucker for animals," she said. "They are accepting of everything and have no boundaries of who they like or don't like."

"I don't have to prove anything."

The scammers are most likely to try to Called the hotel at 941-505-7929.
CHARLOTTE COUNTY, Fla. -- You'll soon be able to get to a new destination in upper Michigan from Punta Gorda Airport.

Allegiant Airlines says starting on October 17th, you'll be able to hop a non-stop flight to Traverse City, Michigan.

The flights will operate twice a week, and introductory one-way fares will be as low as $69.

It's the airline's 41st route out of Punta Gorda, as well.

According to the company, more than 6,000 people in Michigan have second homes in Charlotte County.

Upcoming festival highlights

One of the world’s elite air-demonstration squadrons is scheduled to perform at the Florida International Air Show on Nov. 2 and Nov. 3 at the Punta Gorda Airport.

Florida International Air Show (Nov. 1-3)
Featuring the United States Air Force Thunderbirds. (The USAF Thunderbirds will perform Nov. 2-3).
Punta Gorda Airport, 28000 Airport Road, Punta Gorda. www.floridaairshow.com.
Allegiant adds Traverse City, Punta Gorda route

Starting Oct. 17, a new seasonal, nonstop route will run from Punta Gorda Airport to Traverse City, Mich.

Allegiant is offering one-way fares on the route starting at $69. To get this deal, flights must be purchased by June 19, with travel by Feb. 11, 2020.

“This is a great opportunity to further improve connections with 6,000-plus property owners who own second homes in Charlotte County,” said James Parish, CEO of PGD.

Seasonal flights will run twice weekly.

— STAFF REPORTS
A shelter pet gets his forever home

A video from our award-
 winning television channel, CC-
TV’s Animal Welfare League Pet of the Month video series recently touched my heart this week. The first pet featured is CC-
TV’s Animal Welfare League Pet of the Month video series was recently adopted and our new television production specialist, Tom Lloyd, was there to capture the moment.

The Animal Welfare League shelters stay pets under contract with the county’s Animal Control Division. To help our League find homes, CC-TV each month showcases the dogs and cats available for adoption. Thousands of people have viewed the videos and the League says the number of shelter visitors rises every time a video debuts on the county’s Facebook page, www.facebook.com/ CharlotteCountyFlorida. You can see the video about Robert Jeffery’s adoption there.

To see other potential pets like Robert Jeffery, visit the Charlotte County Animal Welfare League of Florida’s page, www.Facebook.com/ CharlotteCountyFL.gov. You may not be in the market for a shelter pet, but animal lovers can help in other ways.

Animal Control staff created the Animal Care Trust Fund to help local animals get a second chance at life. All donations are tax-deductible.

For information on how to donate call 941-833-5690 and select option 1.

Top 20 events

The Southeast Tourism Society has named Englewood Beach WaterFest and the Florida International Air Show as two of the STS Top 20 Events in the Southeast for November 2019. This year’s Florida International Air Show is Nov. 1-3 at the Punta Gorda Airport and Englewood Beach WaterFest is Nov. 23-24 in Englewood and Manasota Key. The STS Top 20 Festival and Event Awards have highlighted programs around the Southeast since 1985. Travel industry experts select 20 events per month, and STS publications throughout the United States. The complete list is published on two websites: Southeast Tourism Society and Travel Media Press Room.

Events considered for the STS Top 20 recognition must be at least three years old and have attendance of at least 1,000. STS, founded in 1983 and headquartered in Roswell, Georgia, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting tourism within 21 states — Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

The Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach Visitor & Convention Bureau nominated the events and with assistance from both events, filed the necessary information for STS to consider. This year is expected to bring additional media attention on these events which should result in more attendance.

Derelict vessels

A vessel that sank next to a mangrove island in Chadwick Cove has been removed, and another recently recovered by Gov. Ron DeSantis promises a more robust and streamlined process for removing other vessels abandoned by their owners. Just as importantly, the new law provides for ongoing funding for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission’s Derelict Vessel Removal Grant Program.

Currently, there are 11 derelict vessels in Charlotte County waters, according to the FWC, including two that have been deemed hazards to navigation.

For information about the county’s abandoned vessel program, visit CharlotteCountyFL.gov and click Departments, then Community Services, then Natural Resources or call 941- 833-3823 or 941-613-3220.

Public input

The Community Services Department has scheduled two public meetings to get input on Lake Betty Park improvements. The meetings are scheduled for 5:30 to 7 p.m. today at the Cultural Center of Charlotte County, 2280 Aaron St., Port Charlotte. The meetings will encompass the review of the master plan and gather your thoughts on what you would like to see at the park.

For information, contact Mike Koenig at 941-235- 5001 or Mike.Koenig@ CharlotteCountyFL.gov.

Ray Sandrock is the Charlotte County administrator.

Readers may reach him at Raymond.Sandrock@ CharlotteCountyFL.gov.
ALLEGIAN OFFERS NEW NONSTOP SERVICE
Allegiant will offer service to Southwest Florida via Punta Gorda Airport (PGD) from Traverse City, Michigan, beginning Oct. 17. To celebrate, the company is offering one-way fares on the new route starting at $69. The new seasonal flights will operate twice weekly. With the addition of this new route, Allegiant will now serve 41 cities to Punta Gorda Airport (PGD). Flight days, times and the lowest fares can be found at Allegiant.com.
Punta Gorda Airport finalizing deal with aviation repair company

By Jonah Hinebaugh Staff Writer

Posted Jun 19, 2019 at 4:37 PMUpdated Jun 20, 2019 at 9:36 AM

Intrepid Aerospace Inc. bringing 80 to 120 jobs to Punta Gorda Airport within next six months

Punta Gorda Airport is closing in on a deal as a future site for Intrepid Aerospace Inc.

Between 80 to 120 new jobs are expected, adding to the total employment of more than 12,392 people in the area generated by the airport, according to Dave Gammon, the interim director of economic development for Charlotte County.

In April, Intrepid Aerospace Inc. signed a letter of intent to build a $1.8 million temporary hangar at the airport to work on commercial aircraft. Over the next few years, it’s expected to build a permanent facility there.

The temporary hangar will cover 28,800 square feet and is expected to be operational by the second quarter of 2020. Gammon expects the permanent facility to span 150,000 square feet and add approximately 300 to 350 job opportunities.

“It’s great for the county and the airport,” Gammon said. “It will be mostly local hires, too.”
The Aviation Airframe and Powerplant Mechanics Certification Course, which will soon be offered at Charlotte Technical College, will work in tandem with the company to groom future employees. Students who become certified through the course can then take the FAA mechanic license with airframe and powerplant ratings.

Frank Rodriguez, vice-president of sales and marketing for Intrepid Aerospace, said it will be a mix of current Intrepid Aerospace employees and new hires.

“The maintenance jobs require specialized training and is different than clerical or shipping work,” Rodriguez said. “People who meet certain prerequisites can receive on-the-job training.”

Gammon estimated Intrepid will pay between $40,000 to $42,000 in annual wages for new hires in the area.

The company is certified by the Federal Aviation Administration as a repair station. It specializes in airline maintenance and operation support services to domestic and international operators as well as fixed-base operators.

The deal came through the work of Punta Gorda City Councilman Jaha Cummings, who collaborated with Space Florida — a state organization focused on the growth of aerospace business in Florida.

“I can’t say enough good things about the Charlotte County Airport Authority and Jaha Cummings,” Rodriguez said. “They have been instrumental in getting this thing off the ground by supplying us with all the information we need.”

The airport generates over $1.2 billion in economic impact for commercial services. Passenger numbers have grown each month of 2019 so far, making it appealing to Intrepid Aerospace, which is based out of Fort Myers.

Punta Gorda Airport is the third-fastest growing airport in the country, according to the Florida Department of Transportation.

“PGD’s economic impact increase from 2010 is more than nine-fold,” Punta Gorda Airport CEO James Parish said in a press release. “The airport is a powerful catalyst for our region’s economic growth in industry and tourism.”

A meeting will be held with the Charlotte County Economic Development Partnership on Aug. 15 to reach a mutual agreement and close the deal.

“I’m excited,” Gammon said. “It’s a significant thing to bring to the county.”

Airport CEO gets a raise

Parish’s gets three-year contract renewed for $190K a year

By LIZ HARDAWAY
STAFF WRITER

PUNTA GORDA — Punta Gorda Airport CEO James Parish had his contract renewed for another three years at the monthly Charlotte County Airport Authority meeting Thursday, bringing his total salary to $190,278.

“I’m excited about the opportunity for the next three years,” Parish said.

The original contract was negotiated in 2016 for three years with the option to renew for another three years. Per his contract, he will receive a 2.75 percent raise next fiscal year, according to airport spokesperson Kaley Miller.

This would bring him to roughly $195,500.

Being an independent special district under Florida law, “the airport does not collect taxes from the residents of Charlotte County and pays for all operational expenses from its income from leases and concessions fees, and fuel sales,” Miller said.

His contract also includes contributions of $24,000 per year in deferred compensation to his 457(b) retirement plan, which is the maximum allowed by law, Miller said.

Parish also gets the use of an airport-owned 2017 Ford Explorer.

The current CEO of the Sarasota Bradenton International Airport, Rick Piccolo, makes $306,006 a year, according to the airport’s director of finance and human resources, Anita Eldridge.

Starting off as an engineering consultant, Parish has been an employee of the Airport Authority since October 2005.

Email: Liz.Hardaway@yoursun.com

Florida airport executives’ salaries range from $64,206 to $362,903, according to the Florida Airport Council survey from 2018.

For comparison, here are some other high-earning leadership positions in Charlotte County and Florida:

• County Administrator Ray Sandrock $173,764
• School Superintendent Steve Dionisio, $203,000
• City Manager Howard Kunik, $223,131
• Governor Ron DeSantis, $230,273

How much do others make?
What will replace Western Michigan University?

By LIZ HARDWARY

PUNTA GORDA — “I want to thank WMU for loving,” said board chairman Roger Avison in Thursday’s Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners meeting.

With four entities now vying for the Western Michigan University (WMU) hangar, the airport authority board decided to postpone the decision and will now ask each of the four applicants to fill out a request for proposal (RFP). The board also decided to base their scores on the RFPs and hold a 10th meeting.

“Two criteria will allow us to gain a fair opportunity,” said WMU’s James Parish, who said PGD-James Parish, who said PGD.

And with those RFPs, enough details will be gathered to see if the airport can see if the airport can see if the airport can accommodate everyone.

It would give everyone the opportunity to flush out their proposals and know their exact needs to see what other buildings could accommodate those needs, said board attorney, Darrell Carr.

“I was a bit concerned in times of the meeting, the board will have to meet again to bring all those tenant in,” said Carr. Again, Darrell Gammon, the Charlotte County Economic Development director.

The hangar at Punta Gorda Airport is 6,000 square feet, and, until August 31, 2017, Western Michigan University’s aviation program.

The state’s dispensary market comes from a business that operates on a small scale.

One of the first steps was to secure a master’s degree in Integrated Studies Program with a focus in Aviation from FGCU. The company plans to hire employees, whose employment will eventually grow, and to help them continue their flight training with roughly 10 employees at the airport.

Our main concern now is for the students and the faculty to continue their flight training and at the facility beyond the expiration of the current lease,” said PGD-James Parish.

“Our without ability to have students in place and employees, the potential for any expansion becomes significantly less,” said Davis.

FOR WHAT: Expand to become a Cirrus Vision Jet Center

For What: 10 more hangars

Why: Because we have so much interest in these properties, for Columbia and others, looking to expand their flight training operations by at least 10 more hangars.

Police

The Punta Gorda Police Department reported the following arrests.

22, 21300 block of Coulton Dr., Port Charlotte. Charges: possession of marijuana.
Out-of-Market Press Coverage
GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY, Mich., (WPBN/WGTU) -- Allegiant Air has announced a new service from the Cherry Capital Airport, which includes three destinations in Florida.

The new service from TVC includes:

1. Tampa / St. Pete, Florida via St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport (PIE) – beginning October 16, 2019 with fares as low as $69.*
2. Orlando, Florida via Orlando Sanford International Airport (SFB) – beginning October 17, 2019 with fares as low as $69.*
3. Punta Gorda / Fort Myers, Florida via Punta Gorda Airport (PGD) – beginning October 17, 2019 with fares as low as $69.*

“We're incredibly excited to bring our brand of convenient, friendly service to Traverse City with these three routes,” said Drew Wells, Allegiant vice president of planning and revenue. “We're certain that area travelers will love having an ultra-low-cost, nonstop option to get away to these popular Florida destinations---Orlando /
According to Cherry Capital, the new routes will operate twice weekly.

Flight days, times and the lowest fares can be found only on Allegiant's website.

“Cherry Capital Airport (TVC) is excited to be a partner with Allegiant, the first ultra-low-cost carrier to fly from Northern Michigan!” said Kevin Klein, Airport Director. “These new flights continue to show the growth and development our Pure Michigan region has to offer travelers. Low-cost, high-value vacation packages, nonstop, and lots of fun; it is our opportunity as a community to promote, use, and grow this service. It has been a long-time goal of our region to welcome Allegiant.”

TORONTO, June 21, 2019 /CNW/ - Nerds On Site Inc. ("NERDS" or the "Company") (NERD.CN) (3NS.F) (QTCQB:NOSUF), a mobile IT solutions company servicing the SME marketplace, is providing an update on the progress of its USA expansion strategy, specifically the growth in the Company's market awareness and customer acquisitions in Florida, a key region in the overall expansion plans.

"Florida is continuing to deliver proof that the NERDS model can be rapidly scaled in the USA. The team has followed the plan that has been so essential to our nationwide presence in Canada, generating tremendous market awareness and connecting to SME's through promotions with our NERD parades, direct sales and by embracing community business organizations for promotion to clients such as local banks," said Mr. Charles Regan, Nerds On Site CEO.

"As a result, have added clients including a high school, marina, airport and several real estate companies amongst other small to medium enterprises from the Gulf Coast to the Atlantic Coast in Florida," added Mr. Regan.

Florida Growth Highlights:

- NERDS is now the exclusive IT provider to the Punta Gorda Marina
- Currently upgrading hardware at Punta Gorda Airport
- Doing a full tech assessment and NerdCare proposal for a regional real estate company with offices in Naples, Bonita Springs, and Cape Coral
- Installation and maintenance of the Jumbotron at a high school in Punta Gorda
- Proposal submitted for a full eCommerce site for a client in West Palm Beach

In addition, the Company has just completed its most recent BootUp training program in London, Ontario, graduating seven new NERDS who will now be in market contributing to the overall expansion.

About Nerds On Site:

Nerds on Site, a company founded in 1995, specializes in providing cost effective, leading edge solutions to Small and Medium sized Enterprise (SME), serving as the complete SME IT solution specialists. Nerds on Site was established in London, Ontario with current annual revenues of approximately $10,000,000 with normalized net earnings of about $100,000.00. The company services over 12,000 clients per year with a superb 96.5% customer satisfaction rating. NOS's business model is based on Nerds sub-contracts in Canada and a Franchise model for USA expansion.

Neither the Canadian Securities Exchange nor its Regulation Services Provider (as that term is defined in the policies of the Canadian Securities Exchange) accepts responsibility for the adequacy or accuracy of this release.
Forward Looking Statements - Certain information set forth in this material may contain forward-looking statements that involve substantial known and unknown risks and uncertainties. All statements other than statements of historical fact are forward-looking statements, including, without limitation, statements regarding future financial position, business strategy, use of proceeds, corporate vision, proposed acquisitions, partnerships, joint-ventures and strategic alliances and co-operations, budgets, cost and plans and objectives of or involving the Company. Such forward-looking information reflects management's current beliefs and is based on information currently available to management. Often, but not always, forward-looking statements can be identified by the use of words such as "plans", "expects", "is expected", "budget", "scheduled", "estimates", "forecasts", "predicts", "intends", "targets", "aims", "anticipates" or "believes" or variations (including negative variations) of such words and phrases or may be identified by statements to the effect that certain actions "may", "could", "should", "would", "might" or "will" be taken, occur or be achieved. A number of known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors may cause the actual results or performance to materially differ from any future results or performance expressed or implied by the forward-looking information. These forward-looking statements are subject to numerous risks and uncertainties, certain of which are beyond the control of the Company including, but not limited to, the impact of general economic conditions, industry conditions and dependence upon regulatory approvals. Readers are cautioned that the assumptions used in the preparation of such information, although considered reasonable at the time of preparation, may prove to be imprecise and, as such, undue reliance should not be placed on forward-looking statements. The Company does not assume any obligation to update or revise its forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events, or otherwise, except as required by securities laws.

Allegiant Ventures

Allegiant Air has expanded into some unusual side businesses for an airline

By Eli Segall Las Vegas Review-Journal
June 28, 2019 - 4:37 pm

Allegiant Air boss Maurice “Maury” Gallagher likes to do things differently.

His deep-discount carrier flies from small, underserved cities to warm-weather vacation spots, usually without competition on its routes. It charges $5 to print a boarding pass at airports, parks planes on light travel days, and doesn’t offer coffee on-board.

Allegiant is also the only U.S. airline with side businesses that aren’t directly related to air travel, analysts told the Review-Journal – and its push outside aviation has left plenty of observers scratching their heads.

Las Vegas-based Allegiant Travel Co., the carrier’s parent, is developing a 22-acre resort in Port Charlotte, Florida, a town that, as one local put it, is “nothing really special.” The company has also opened two arcades – one in Utah and another in Michigan – featuring laser tag and bumper cars, and plans more locations; owns a golf-course-management software business; and has talked about managing other hotels in Florida.

In some ways, the expansion isn’t a surprise, given who’s in charge.

Gallagher, chairman and CEO of Allegiant Travel, has a history of personal side ventures. His interests have included a roadside Las Vegas wedding chapel and businesses that inked millions of dollars in deals with his airline, including a race-car team and a television game show filmed on Allegiant flights.

The next two years, Gallagher said this spring, will be “investment years” for the company’s non-airline projects.

“Why are you spending any capital and company focus on golf course software and Dave & Buster’s-like game rooms?” Evercore airline analyst Duane Pfennigwerth asked Allegiant executives during a January earnings call, adding the ventures “might be interesting experiments” but questioned why shareholders are paying for them.

“Well, we look at the synergistic value,” Allegiant President John Redmond replied, though before he finished his thoughts, Pfennigwerth interrupted.
“John, John, I’m sorry. … I’ve covered Allegiant for a long time. There is no synergy between golf-course-management software” and the airline, he said.

“Why are you spending any capital and company focus on golf course software and Dave & Buster’s-like game rooms?”

Duane Pfennigwerth

The airline is a consistent money maker: Allegiant Travel in 2018 booked its 16th straight year of profitability, earning almost $162 million in net income. But investors are concerned “all these other side businesses will take management focus away from the most important part” of the company, Raymond James & Associates airline analyst Savi Syth told the Review-Journal.

Jay Sorensen, founder of airline consulting firm IdeaWorksCompany, said he is an “unapologetic fan” of Allegiant’s expansion.

“Well, we look at the synergistic value.”

Allegiant President John Redmond

He said he does “kind of chuckle” when he sees the software firm, Teesnap, and noted the arcade business, Allegiant Nonstop, is “way out there in terms of being something very different.”

But if the ventures are managed properly, he said, “I see nothing but stuff to like here.”

Micah Richins, chief operating officer of Allegiant’s Sunseeker Resorts division, told the Review-Journal that Gallagher is not afraid to take a risk or move ahead with a plan “whether people think it’s popular or not.”

He also noted Gallagher is Allegiant’s largest shareholder, saying this speaks volumes about the boss’ thoughts on the company’s direction.

“He’s putting his money on the line,” Richins said.

‘A lot of people don’t like this’

More than a few people have questioned Allegiant’s moves, as Stifel Nicolaus analyst Joe DeNardi pointed out during an investor day in September.

“I’m sure you guys are aware that a lot of people don’t like this idea, a lot of your investors and analysts,” he told Allegiant executives during a discussion about the Florida project, Sunseeker Resorts Charlotte Harbor.

“Boy, that’s an understatement,” Gallagher responded.
During the January call, Pfennigwerth asked about the board-level debate when Allegiant looks to spend money, briefly raising his voice as Gallagher tried to interject multiple times.

“Duane, let me tell you what the debate looks like,” Gallagher said. “The person that sits on an airplane, what else do they do besides sit on an airplane? Do they go to a Dave & Buster’s? Yeah. Do they play golf? Absolutely. So you gather information – this is an information-centric era, Duane. … We want more customers, we want bigger wallet share.”

Cowen and Co. airline analyst Helane Becker said big developers ignored the Sunseeker site, and she wondered what Redmond, a former casino executive, saw in it. But the project makes more sense to her than Allegiant’s other ventures.

“I’m not 100 percent certain how the other businesses fit into the plan,” Becker said.

Las Vegas-based Allegiant Travel Co. held a ceremonial groundbreaking in March, seen here, for its Sunseeker Resorts Charlotte Harbor project in Florida.

**‘Dumping a ton of money’**

Allegiant broke ground in March on Sunseeker, which is being built along the Peace River in southwest Florida.

The first phase – featuring some 500 hotel rooms, 180-plus extended-stay units, conference space, restaurants and retail – is expected to cost $470 million, including $50 million that was already spent for the land, Allegiant spokeswoman Hilarie Grey previously told the Review-Journal.

Richins, of Sunseeker, said phase one covers about 7 acres.

Allegiant last year also bought Kingsway Country Club in Lake Suzy, saying the golf course will be “operated in conjunction with the resort.”

Florida hotel operator John Zaccari, who runs a hotel in Port Charlotte and one in nearby Punta Gorda, said it seemed like Allegiant pushed ahead with Sunseeker “before they realized what they were getting themselves into.”

Allegiant announced plans for the resort in summer 2017, saying it would include up to nine condo towers. But last year, Redmond told analysts Allegiant “never moved into a sales mode on the condos,” despite getting “plenty of interest” in them, and switched gears because the company can make more money with a hotel property.

Zaccari, founder of Sarasota-based A2Z Hospitality Management Co., also said the closest beach is 35 to 40 minutes away.

Allegiant offers vacation packages, and Richins indicated it can lose access to hotel rooms when the economy is strong but has “full control” of Sunseeker.

He didn’t rule out selling condos at some point but said that as the project evolved, the company “understood the market better” and backed off the plan.

He also noted Allegiant is building a team of hospitality professionals for the resort, not airline veterans.

Richins, who was hired last year, is the former chief commercial officer at Las Vegas casino operator MGM Resorts International. Allegiant also recently hired MGM alum Paul Berry as vice president of hotel operations for Sunseeker.

Allegiant has a captive audience of sorts. It is the only commercial carrier that serves Punta Gorda Airport and averaged 24 arrivals and 24 departures a day last year, according to airport spokeswoman Kaley Miller.

Punta Gorda is also one of Allegiant’s top airports for passenger growth, Grey said. Allegiant’s tally of departing flights from Punta Gorda has grown an average of 296.5 percent annually over the past 10 years, according to data she provided.

Jared Bohager, manager of the Charlotte Harbor RV Park right near Sunseeker, said there are concerns the resort will spark more traffic, but otherwise locals think the project is great.

“We love that it’s going up,” he said, adding Allegiant is “dumping a ton of money into the area.”
According to Bohager, Port Charlotte doesn’t offer much—“There’s nothing really special about us”—and even though people go on the Peace River for jet-skiing or other activities, the water is practically gray.

“You can’t really see through it at all,” he said.

‘A hit with the neighborhood’

Teesnap offers tee-time scheduling, website management and other services. The business is led by CEO Bryan Lord, who pitched the concept to Gallagher because Allegiant flies to major golf destinations, Grey said.

Teesnap was founded in 2013, and Allegiant has owned it since day one, she said.

Meanwhile, Allegiant opened its first arcade late last year in Clearfield, Utah, and another in April in Warren, Michigan. Allegiant Nonstop features escape rooms, go-karts, bowling and more than 100 arcade games.

“We don’t have anything like that in the area”

Marilyn Zeigler property manager

Marilyn Zeigler, a property manager with Bostick Holdings, Allegiant’s landlord in Warren, said the business has been “a hit with the neighborhood.”

“We don’t have anything like that in the area,” she said.

Regan Heckethorn, vice president of operations for Allegiant Entertainment, said the game centers bring jobs and excitement to a neighborhood, and the company plans to open three to five annually.

It’s also a relatively low-risk venture whose ultimate goal, she agreed, is to get people to buy more plane tickets on Allegiant.

History of side ventures

Gallagher’s personal side businesses have also been varied.

In 2014 Gallagher bought Chapel of the Flowers, a wedding chapel on Las Vegas Boulevard between the Strip and downtown, county records show. That same year, Allegiant bought back 200,000 shares of company stock from Gallagher for more than $25 million, saying he planned to use the proceeds “for other ventures he is pursuing personally.” Chapel of the Flowers, a wedding chapel on Las Vegas Boulevard, is photographed on Thursday, June 20, 2019.

Gallagher’s side projects have also signed lucrative deals with his airline.

Allegiant paid about $1.3 million between 2011 and 2013, as well as $2.5 million in 2015, to sponsor a race-car team controlled by Gallagher, according to filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Gallagher’s son, Spencer, raced for his dad’s team for years and announced his retirement from racing last fall at age 28.
Allegiant, through its subsidiary Game Plane, also paid about $2.8 million in 2014 and $400,000 in 2015 to Alpine Labs to produce and distribute game shows filmed on its flights. Gallagher owned a 25 percent stake in Alpine and was on its managing board, according to SEC filings.

Moreover, between 2014 and 2017, Allegiant paid about $5.6 million to entities owned or controlled by Gallagher for corporate training content, filings show.

Allegiant’s audit committee signs off on these “related party transactions.”

Overall, with Allegiant Travel itself now venturing outside aviation, the company is “trying to do something very different” than other airlines and is the “perfect definition” of a niche carrier, said Sorensen, of IdeaWorksCompany.

“In the entire world, there’s no one like them,” he said.

https://www.reviewjournal.com/business/allegiant-air-has-expanded-into-some-unusual-side-businesses-for-an-airline-1696066/