

SUN 'n FUN Announces Holiday Flying Festival and Car Show

For Immediate Release

Lakeland, FL - Organizers announced today that SUN 'n FUN will be hosting a **Holiday Flying Festival and Car Show on December 4th and 5th, 2020**. The two-day **fly-in / drive in event** will include numerous aircraft displays, a large airplane and car show, plus food vendors, live music, and many other activities, held on the SUN 'n FUN Expo Campus at the Lakeland Linder International Airport. Admission is free, parking is only \$20 per vehicle, and proceeds will benefit SUN 'n FUN's Aerospace Center for Excellence STEM education programs, which have been deeply affected by the loss of the annual SUN 'n FUN Aerospace Expo due to COVID-19. Details can be found at www.flysnf.org.

"We are extremely excited to bring this unique event to the people of Polk County and our flying community," said Greg Gibson, CMO and Air Operations Director for SUN 'n FUN. "In cooperation with the Lakeland Linder International Airport and the City of Lakeland, we have crafted the weekend's activity in total compliance with all local, state, and federal health guidelines to ensure that anyone attending can feel very comfortable that they and their families are safe while still having a fantastic show." Gibson mentioned that sanitizing stations would be available throughout the event and described the cleaning prep and maintenance for the event as "extensive".

Gibson says the event is exclusively outdoors, with over 300 acres of available area for attendees to spread out. "We have a huge footprint here on the airport. It makes sense to use it for an outdoor community function like this, especially with December's nice Florida weather!"

Headlining the event will be a **Short Takeoff and Landing (STOL) competition**, put on by **National STOL** in partnership with SUN 'n FUN. This exciting flying has its roots all the way back to WWI but is most associated with back country flying in mountainous regions. Over 100 participants are expected to compete in this SUN 'n FUN first, vying to see who can take off and land in the shortest distance for a cash prize. The contest will be live streamed online by **Live Airshow TV**.

Attending pilots will have a rare opportunity to meet and interact with some notable industry leaders. On Saturday, December 4th at 10AM the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) will be sponsoring a **General Aviation Town Hall**, where pilots can submit questions and get live answers on the state of GA in the COVID era. Scheduled panelists include SUN 'n FUN / ACE President and CEO **John Leenhouts**, AOPA President and CEO **Mark Baker**, and Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) President, CEO and Board Chairman **Jack Pelton**. **Aircraft parking is free**, with donations gladly accepted.

In addition to the airplane show and STOL competition, planned flying activities include a Friday evening **Hot Air Balloon Glow, night airshow** featuring the **Aeroshell Aerobatic Team** and **Wild Blue Rodeo**. On Saturday, a balloon launch is planned, plus flybys and sky typing on Saturday from The GEICO Skytypers. Airplane rides will also be available for purchase from local air ride professionals.

The car show will have numerous categories including muscle cars, antique/classic, and exotic, and should be a welcome addition for those who have missed car gatherings. The Lakeland Corvette Club is helping to organize. The airplane show will have similar categories; Warbird, Vintage, Homebuilt, Aerobatic, and LSA.

Food vendors will be onsite both days, and there will be **numerous exhibitors** from both aviation organizations and local businesses showcasing a variety of products and services. On Saturday, the Lakeland Linder International Airport is sponsoring the **SUN 'n RUN 5k**, with proceeds benefitting

Women in Aviation and the **Lakeland Aero Club**. A children's area is planned, with play areas and First Responder displays of fire trucks and law enforcement equipment. **Live music** will be provided from local headliners **The Cliff Brown Band** and up and coming Nashville country music star **Eli Mosley**.

Contact: Greg Gibson – ggibson@flysnf.org (863) 904-4041 www.flysnf.org

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About SUN 'n FUN / Aerospace Center for Excellence, Inc.:

The Aerospace Center for Excellence (ACE), a 501(c)(3) non-profit, has emerged as a nationally recognized leader in STEM-related and aerospace education through its various learning centers, outreach programs, summer camps and scholarships aimed at preparing students for tomorrow's aerospace challenges. Located on the SUN 'n FUN Expo Campus in Lakeland, Florida, the organization is known for its annual SUN 'n FUN Aerospace Expo fundraising event as well as the Florida Air Museum, which is Florida's Official Aviation Museum and Education Center. ACE is the world's leader in producing licensed teenage private pilots and delivers youth programs that engage over 50,000 students a year. For more information, www.ACEdu.aero .