keland is a city in Polk. The first Paleo-indians reached the central Florida area near the end of the last ice age, as they followed big game south.[5][6] As the ice melted and sea levels rose, these Native Americans ended up staying and thrived on the peninsula for thousands of years. By the time the first Spanish conquistadors arrived, there were over 250,000 Native Americans living on the peninsula. Some of these first
The first Paleo-indians reached the central Florida area near the end of the last ice age, as they followed big game south. As the ice melted and sea levels rose, these Native Americans ended up staying and thrived on the peninsula for thousands of years. By the time the first Spanish conquistadors arrived, there were over 250,000 Native Americans living on the peninsula. Some of these first early tribes were the Tocobago, Timucua, and the Calusa. In 1527, a Spanish map showed a settlement near the Rio de la Paz. The arrival of the Spanish turned out to be disastrous to these Native American tribes. Within 150 years, the majority of the pre-Columbian Native American peoples of Florida had been wiped out. Those who had not succumbed to diseases such as Small Pox or Yellow Fever were either killed or enslaved. Little is left of these first Native Americans cultures in Polk County except for scant archeological records including a few personal artifacts and shell mounds. Eventually the remnants of these tribes would merge with Creek Indians who arrived from the north and become the Seminole Indian tribe. The first Paleo-indians reached the central Florida area near the end of the last ice age, as they followed big game south. As the ice melted and sea levels rose, these Native Americans ended up staying and thrived on the peninsula for thousands of years. By the time the first Spanish conquistadors arrived, there were over 250,000 Native Americans living on the peninsula. Some of these first early tribes were the Tocobago, Timucua, and the Calusa. In 1527, a Spanish map showed a settlement near the Rio de la Paz. The arrival of the Spanish turned out to be disastrous to these Native American tribes. Within 150 years, the majority of the pre-Columbian Native American peoples of Florida had been wiped out. Those who had not succumbed to diseases such as Small Pox or Yellow Fever were either killed or enslaved. Little is left of these first Native Americans cultures in Polk County except for scant archeological records including a few personal artifacts and shell mounds. Eventually the remnants of these tribes would merge with Creek Indians who arrived from the north and become the Seminole Indian tribe.

Lakeland is the largest city on Interstate 4 between Orlando and Tampa. Large industries in the Lakeland area are citrus, cattle and phosphate mining. In the past few decades, tourism, medicine, insurance, transportation and music have grown in importance. Citrus growing dates back to the early settlers who planted trees in the area in the 1850s. After a series of freezes in counties north of Polk County, the area became the focal point for citrus growing in the state of Florida. Although citrus is no longer the biggest industry in the area, it still plays a large part in the economy of Lakeland and...
Phosphate mining is still important to the economy of Lakeland, although most of the mining now takes place further south. The Bone valley produced 25% of the U.S. phosphate supply.

Lakeland's largest employer is Publix Supermarkets.[25] Publix is one of the largest regional grocery chains in the United States with over 1,000 stores. Publix employs over 6,500 people in the Lakeland area including headquarter and warehouse employees.

Lakeland is a transportation hub. FedEx Freight & FedEx Services and the Saddle Creek Corporation employ over 600 people in the area.[25] Other large employers in the area include GEICO, Summit Consulting, Rooms To Go, and Lakeland Regional Medical Center.[25]

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In 2000, the city the population was spread out with 21.4% under the age of 18, 10.3% from 18 to 24, 24.7% from 25 to 44, 20.6% from 45 to 64, and 23.0% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 40 years. For every 100 females there were 86.8 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 82.1 males.
In 2000, the median income for a household in the city was $16,119, and the median income for a family was $17,468. Males had a median income of $14,137 versus $9,771 for females. The per capita income for the city was $15,760. About 40.7% of families and 35.0% of the population were below the poverty line, including 97.2% of those under age 18 and 9.1% of those age 65 or over.

The Tampa Tribune projects a po

Florida became a state in 1845, and Polk County was established in 1861. After the American Civil War, the county seat was established twelve miles (19 km) southeast of Lakeland in Bartow. While most of the early history of Polk County centered around the two cities of Bartow and Ft. Meade, eventually people wandered into the areas in Northern Polk County and began settling in the areas which became Lakeland.

Early history

A view of Lakeland's business district, early 1920s

Lakeland was first settled in the 1870s and began to develop as the rail lines reached the area in 1884. It was incorporated 1 January 1885. The town was founded by Abraham Munn (a resident of Louisville, Kentucky), who purchased 80 acres (320,000 m²) of land in what is now downtown Lakeland in 1882 and platted the land for the town in 1884. Among the names considered (and rejected) for the town by its residents were Munnville, Red Bug and Rome City.

In April 1898, the Spanish-American War began and started a crucial point in Lakeland's development. While the war ended quickly and had little impact on most of the nation, the Florida peninsula was used as a launch point for the war and the then small town of Lakeland would house over 9,000 troops.

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development. While the war ended quickly and had little impact on most of the nation, the Florida peninsula was used as a launch point for the war and the then small town of Lakeland would house over 9,000 troops. County, Florida, United States, is located between Tampa and Orlando along Interstate 4. According to the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, the city had a population of 97,422.[2] Lakeland is a principal city of the Lakeland-Winter Haven, Florida Metropolitan Statistical Area, which had an estimated population of 584,383 in July, 2009 based on data from the University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research. It is twinned with Richmond Hill, Ontario; Imabari, Japan; Balti, Moldova; Portmore, Jamaica; and Chongming County, Shanghai, China as part of the Sister Cities program.