

THE LEADING EDGE

NEWSLETTER OF MUROC EAA CHAPTER 1000

Voted to Top Ten Newsletters, 1997, 1998 McKillop Award Competition

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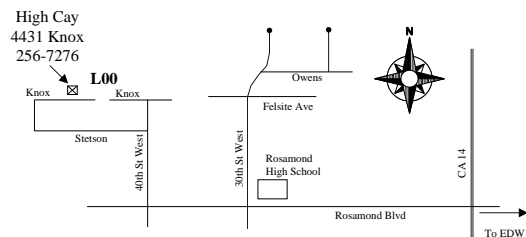
Chapter 1000 meets monthly on the third Tuesday of the month in the USAF Test Pilot School Scobee Auditorium, Edwards AFB, CA at 1700 or 5:00 PM, whichever you prefer. Any changes of meeting venue will be announced in the newsletter. Offer void where prohibited. Your mileage may vary. Open to military and civilian alike.



This Month's Meeting: Semi-Annual Cookout with Cadets Tuesday, 15 November 2011 1830 hrs (6:30 PM Civilian Time) High Cay Partyhaus Rosamond, CA

It's November in Chapter 1000. That means our opportunity to host the USAFA cadets who are coming to the Air Force Flight Test Center to collect data for their class project in Aeronautical Engineering 456. Before you yawn and say "oh, that again..." please consider this. How long have you lived and worked in the Antelope Valley? At Edwards? In the same job? With the same circle of friends? Have you reached that awkward point where you start to tell a joke and your friends/colleagues/coworkers interrupt you to tell you they've already heard it? Worse yet, do they tell you that YOU'VE already told it? I'm not saying how I know about any of these phenomena, but if this describes you, you might want to get yourself to the November meeting at High Cay. We will have 16 cadets who weren't even alive when you told that joke about Santa's annual check ride. Heck, their handler probably doesn't know the one about the Snickers bar on the glare shield. So, don't miss this opportunity. Dust off your repertoire of jokes and good ol' aviation stories that always begin, "There I was..." and bring them out to inoculate a

brand new unsuspecting class of cadets. It's not just a party, it's a tradition.



- Scott "Stormy" Weathers
Vice Kommandant

Last Month's Meeting

EAA Chapter 1000
USAF Test Pilot School, Scobee Auditorium
Edwards AFB, CA
18 October 2011
Gary Aldrich, Presiding

The October meeting was held in the Scobee Auditorium at the Edwards AFB Test Pilot School, featuring world-reknown aviation artist, author, editor, publisher and all-round cool guy **Mike Machat**. Now, if this sounds familiar, it's because I copied it from the March meeting. Being the good guy he is, Mike agreed to visit us again (a twofer!). Perhaps it's the supersize meals at the BK he gets from us. No matter. To business. Sixteen people in attendance.

The arrival of the **Vice Kommandant** (and refreshments) initiated the "social hour". Chips (sans salsa-something about a trip tomorrow and unable to properly provision) and C3's were promptly consumed and the "entertainment" portion of the program commenced.

Mike's presentation was on "**The Republic Aviation Corporation- the Edwards Connection**".

The slide show opened with a photo of the Republic F-105 prototype on Rogers Dry Lake bed, followed by a brief history of Republic, which started as Seversky Aviation. Republic produced over 16,000 aircraft in WW Dos, including the P-47 Thunderbolt (or Jug). Post war models included the Thunderbolt Amphibian (later known as the SeaBee), the F-84 Thunder Jet and Thunder Streak, the XF-91 Thunderceptor (first aircraft to reach 1,000 mph



The Kommandant tries to dispose of some excess paperwork



Want a free Wicks catalog? The Kommandant still has a whole bunch



The F-105 Guy ("Little Chief")

in level flight and featured an inverse tapered wing), the F-105 Thunder Chief (Thud), the A-10 Thunderbolt II (Warthog), and the T-46 Thunder Trainer (not really, I made that up). The more keenly observant amongst us might have detected a pattern in the aircraft names (OK, it's "Thunder"!). All of these aircraft were shown at Edwards in the slides. Interesting side note: following the crash of the Hughes XF-11 in a residential area (featured in the film "The Aviator"), all prototype testing was shifted to sites like Edwards away from populated areas.

Mike had plenty of other interesting side notes. Unfortunately, I couldn't scribble fast enough, so I'll hit the ones I did capture. Mike's uncle **George Hildebrand**, an automotive designer, joined Republic during the war to work on rear visibility improvement for the P-47 which had the razorback cockpit at the time. Capitalizing on recent technology improvements by Plexiglas, George came up with the famous bubble canopy featured on later model P-47Ds (for which he held a patent), and later the P-51s.

Here's another good one. Mike's father was a fire chief in New York. Together, they were known as **Big Chief** and **Little Chief** (Mike was really in to fire engines as a lad, before shifting his focus to aviation). It was his uncle George who submitted the name "Thunder Chief" in their honor in a contest for Republic executives to name the F-105. The Thunder Chief carried the bulk of the early Viet Nam air war. Of the 833 produced, over 400 were lost in the war.

Republic was subsequently sold to Fairchild Hiller, and they built the vertical stabilizer and split rudder for the Space Shuttle. Unfortunately, FH eventually became disenchanted with aviation. In the 60's and 70's, they were involved in automotive safety research (Uncle George came full circle), producing several prototype cars with radical (at the time) safety features. Their efforts produced 135 innovations featured in today's cars.

After the **Kommandant** declared that "**Victory!**" had been secured, we adjourned to the Burger King Dead Cow Emporium for dinner and further discussion on the state of aviation. This yielded the best quote of the evening: **Mike** was commenting on the prop era as a more civil time when passengers "dressed" for a flight. The **Kommandant** ruminated on having to wear a "coat and tie", to which **Mike** replied "I'd rather do that than take off my shoes!"

Yeah. Good times.

Most of this is true.

- **Kent "Cobra" Troxel**
Minister of Propaganda

Kommandant's Korner

I'm sitting here at my desk, gazing at the leaden overcast skies out my window and reflecting on how the summer flying season has, once again, faded into Fall with its wind and clouds. I can't really complain, though, as we have



experienced quite a long run of calm winds and clear skies here in the AV while pilots in lots of other locales are filing IFR and fretting over ice and other nasty natural phenomenon. After a very busy summer of flying the **VC-180** all over central and western America, the airplane has spent the last couple of months languishing (relaxing?) in hangar 703. I have spent some quality time with her on several occasions...just not in the air. This doesn't count, of course, the mass aerial assault staged by elements of the **PPTAF Taildragger Squadron** on Chiriaco Summit (L77) a couple of weeks ago. I'll refer you to the Mission Commander for that report.

So, what do you do with an airplane when you're not flying it? Well, as I've told many of you in the past, working on and around the airplane is almost as much fun as flying it. This last month I removed the antique, outdated, moldy old Dorne and Margolin ELT that was delivered with N2705K in 1979. As most everyone knows, the frequency we all memorized in pilot training for emergency use, 121.5 MHz, is no longer in favor. Thus, tens of thousands of ELTs, which airplane owners were forced to buy, starting in the mid-1960s, are now obsolete. What is somewhat amazing is that the Feds (at least the FAA) did not immediately mandate a replacement of every 121.5 MHz ELT in the fleet. Rather, they allowed market pressure to bring the costs down to a more reasonable level and marketers to "encourage" owners to upgrade to the "new, improved" 406 MHz digital ELT. Now, lest we congratulate the FAA on their inspired thinking, I suspect there was significant pressure from the aviation "alphabet" organizations not to mandate anything that would greatly increase the cost of general aviation. Our neighbors to the north and south were not so inspired and quickly announced that it was "406 or nothing" for airplanes within their borders. Fortunately, even they have bowed to pressures from American pilot groups and have at least extended the deadlines for compliance with the new standard.

Having watched the manufacturers' competition to field fancier and cheaper units, I finally pulled the trigger when the price point vs. feature-set met my criteria. Thus, I ordered an ACK Technologies E-04 unit and installed it in the Fightin' Skywagon over a couple of days. This unit is very popular, as I mentioned in a previous column, and required some clever procurement skill on the part of **Bill Irvine** to get one for me. The install was quite straightforward, using the existing mounting bracketry and location for the ELT and the new multi-frequency antenna. Of course, all new ELTs for some time have required a remote indicator/control panel that is connected to the ELT through the use of common modular telephone cable. This made for some panel-diving and cable-fishing exercises to run the specified cable under the Skywagon's floor panels; but this step was done during the recent annual inspection so, with the exception of some skinned knuckles and gouged forearms, all went smoothly.

Did I really "need" a new ELT. Well, not legally, but my **Gadgetosis Nervosa** was acting up and I needed a topic for this column and...well, it was cool. Does everyone need to upgrade? In my opinion, yes...but we're fortunate in this country that upgrading is still a personal decision. For me, should I ever need to be found after

some unfortunate ground impact I feel better (for myself and my pax) having taken advantage of the new technology. Other reasons to upgrade? The batteries last 5 or 6 years (depending on the unit) though they are more expensive. The new units have a "test" feature that allows periodic confirmation of the unit's health rather than waiting for the once-a-year "g-shock" test...which is still required by the new ELTs. The remote control panel allows manual activation from the cockpit. This could mean more success in a search and rescue scenario. The unit is lighter (due to the Lithium batteries, no doubt) for those concerned with payload. Finally, the new antenna is raked back about 30 degrees which results in a drag decrease from the older straight antenna. I expect at least 10 knots more cruise speed...not!

I wish to thank all the folks that responded to my "want ad" in last month's newsletter. I'm currently wading through the pile of highly qualified applicants and will soon forward them to the nomination committee for action. Until then, **Stormy** is still firmly in office as **Vice Kommandant**. Please take every opportunity to thank him for his years of faithful service. (Also, if you're willing to head up the "gala Stormy departure banquet" and shop for the obscenely expensive going-away gift, please drop me a line.)

See you at High Cay! Fly Safe and Check 6,

- **Gary Aldrich**
Kommanding

General George S. Patton Museum Flyout 15 October 2011

As threatened, on 15 October 2011 five hearty **PPOs** of the **PPTAF Taildragger Squadron** executed a benevolent raid on the Chiriaco Summit airport (L77) and the General George S. Patton Museum.



The parking ramp at L77. Arriving first in the Cessna 170 were Miles and Karen Bowen. Next was Kommandant Aldrich in the Fightin' Skywagon, followed shortly thereafter by Erbman and Tuki in the Combat Bearhawk. The remainder of the Taildragger Squadron (G-202 and T-6) were tied up with Association Football duties.



A short walk away from the parking ramp was the entrance to the museum. General Patton and his Executive Officer dog stand watch.

Even though we planned this flyout in mid-October to try to escape higher temperatures, arriving at the museum around 1000 it was already clear that the alcohol in the thermometer was going to continue rising above generally accepted comfortable temperatures. Therefore we decided to visit the outdoor armor (or armour) petting zoo first.



Even though we generally think of WWII when we think of Patton, the petting zoo was mostly littered with M-60 tanks of the Vietnam era. Presumably they were more available.



Kommandant Aldrich was surprised to see a DUKW in the yard, questioning whether they were actually used in combat. From his time living in Europe he figured that they were just used to give tourists excursions around European cities.



DUKW showing boarding ladder



Perhaps not visible in the picture, but buried in the center tunnel is a large screw propeller for propulsion in the water



Another M-60 on display. The Kommandant was heard to say "Sure looks like a horrible way to die." Apparently he's thinking of a tank in the sights of an A-10.



Yet another M-60, this one with the flash suppressor on the end of the barrel



The Kommandant is puzzled by this M-60 which has apparently gone through a weight reduction program. It must certainly be lighter not having to carry that heavy gun barrel around, but combat effectiveness of this modification is questionable.



We couldn't find identifying information on this vehicle, but it appeared to be some sort of tracked fire fighting vehicle.



Tuki executes the *Project Police Point* for the blade on the front of the fire fighting tank



The Kommandant discovers a true find—the Homebuilder's Tank! Constructed of welded steel tube and covered with fabric (Poly-Fiber is well known for its armor capabilities), this tank is much cheaper to operate than solid steel covered tanks. For mobility, just place your tank on a jeep. The wooden gun barrel will fool the recce photos, but won't accidentally hurt anyone. Note the sign on the front saying "Keep Off"



In case you missed the "Keep Off" sign on the outside, on the inside is the complementary "Keep Out" sign



After much searching, the Kommandant finally found an M4 Sherman tank. We didn't check to see if the Continental R975 air-cooled radial engine was still installed.



This trackless wonder seems to have sunk into the dirt until the hull is floating. At the near end the drive shaft and gear seems to be missing.



At the other end we found what appears to be the track tensioning mechanism



This outdoor chapel was on the grounds. It appears to be a reproduction of a chapel that was built for the Desert Training Center



This trailer was special (sic) built for General Patton as a darkroom for developing photographs. That might explain the curious lack of picture windows.



The Kommandant noticed this plywood cutout of a tank commander and insisted that Tuki pose in it. Interesting is that her omnipresent Japanese peace sign is faithfully reproduced.



Returning inside we found this very large 3-D representation of Southern California, produced in the 1920s. This view is looking from Los Angeles up toward Las Vegas. The map was made up of many stacked layers, each layer the shape of one contour line on a topographic chart.



Same map, looking from Lake Mead (which didn't exist in the 1920s, perhaps a modification) and Las Vegas back toward Los Angeles



A classic WWII Jeep towing a classic WWII Jeep trailer



The very simple panel of a WWII Jeep, barely even Day VFR instrumentation. I doubt those seats were upholstered by Oregon Aero.



Apparently the problem of building a flying car was solved during WWII, but lost after V-E and V-J Day. Every poster that ever showed a Jeep seemed to have it flying through the air. I've asked many veterans about how this was done, but nobody's talkin'.

- Russ "Erbman" Erb
Mission Commander

Web Site Update

As of 10 October 2011, the hit counter showed 139821, for a hit rate of 11 hits/day for the last month.

Just a reminder that the EAA Chapter 1000 Web Site is hosted courtesy of Quantum Networking Solutions, Inc. You can find out more about Qnet at <http://www.qnet.com> or at 661-538-2028.

Chapter 1000 Calendar

Nov 12: Operation Rubidoux Sundown XIX, Flabob International Airport (KRIR). (661) 256-3806

Nov 15: EAA Chapter 1000 Monthly Meeting, 5:00 p.m., Edwards AFB. USAF Test Pilot School, Scobee Auditorium. (661) 609-0942

Dec 6: EAA Chapter 49 Monthly Meeting, 7:00 p.m., General William J. Fox Field, Lancaster, CA. (661) 948-0646

Dec 13: EAA Chapter 1000 Festivus Etc Celebration, 6:00 p.m., Kommandant's Quarters. Quartz Hill CA. (661) 609-0942

Jan 3: EAA Chapter 49 Monthly Meeting, 7:00 p.m., General William J. Fox Field, Lancaster, CA. (661) 948-0646

Jan 10: EAA Chapter 1000 Board of Directors Meeting, 5:00 p.m., High Cay, 4431 Knox Ave, Rosamond CA. (661) 609-0942

Jan 17: EAA Chapter 1000 Monthly Meeting, 5:00 p.m., Edwards AFB. USAF Test Pilot School, Scobee Auditorium. (661) 609-0942

Feb 7: EAA Chapter 49 Monthly Meeting, 7:00 p.m., General William J. Fox Field, Lancaster, CA. (661) 948-0646

Feb 14: EAA Chapter 1000 Board of Directors Meeting, 5:00 p.m., High Cay, 4431 Knox Ave, Rosamond CA. (661) 609-0942

Feb 21: EAA Chapter 1000 Monthly Meeting, 5:00 p.m., Edwards AFB. USAF Test Pilot School, Scobee Auditorium. (661) 609-0942

Mar 6: EAA Chapter 49 Monthly Meeting, 7:00 p.m., General William J. Fox Field, Lancaster, CA. (661) 948-0646

Mar 13: EAA Chapter 1000 Board of Directors Meeting, 5:00 p.m., High Cay, 4431 Knox Ave, Rosamond CA. (661) 609-0942

Mar 20: EAA Chapter 1000 Monthly Meeting, 5:00 p.m., Edwards AFB. USAF Test Pilot School, Scobee Auditorium. (661) 609-0942

Apr 17: EAA Chapter 1000 Monthly Meeting, 6:30 p.m., High Cay, 4431 Knox Ave, Rosamond CA (661) 609-0942

To join Chapter 1000, send your name, address, EAA number, and \$20 dues to: EAA Chapter 1000, Doug Dodson, 4431 Knox Ave, Rosamond CA 93560-6428. Membership in National EAA (\$40, 1-800-843-3612) is required.

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Inputs for the newsletter or any comments can be sent to Russ Erb, 661-256-3806, by e-mail to erbman@pobox.com

From the **Project Police** legal section: As you probably suspected, contents of The Leading Edge are the viewpoints of the authors. No claim is made and no liability is assumed, expressed or implied as to the technical accuracy or safety of the material presented. The viewpoints expressed are not necessarily those of Chapter 1000 or the Experimental Aircraft Association. **Project Police** reports are printed as they are received, with no attempt made to determine if they contain the minimum daily allowance of truth. So there!

THE LEADING EDGE**MUROC EAA CHAPTER 1000 NEWSLETTER****C/O Russ Erb****3435 Desert Cloud Ave****Rosamond CA 93560-7692****<http://www.eaa1000.av.org>****ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED****THIS MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS:****MONTHLY MEETING 15 NOV @ HIGH CAY****REPUBLIC/EDW CONNECTION****KOMMANDANT'S ELT****TAILDRAGGERS VS. GEN PATTON**