

April-May-June 2009



Civilian Military Support Group NEWSLETTER



While You Were Sleeping

*Commentary by Maj. Gen. David Eichhorn
Commander, Air Force Flight Test Center*

(Reprinted with permission from Maj Gen Eichhorn)

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE

Men and Women of the Air Force Flight Test Center, Actually, it all started while you were probably watching prime time television or perhaps you were having dinner. You may have even been reading your kids a bedtime story. It started for me at the civ-mil dinner at Club Muroc. We had just gotten our food on Thursday night, 28 May when the Test Wing Commander pulled me aside for a word.

The word was that an aircraft that had been flying for hours had a spoiler malfunction. It was Global Hawk and a spoiler problem is a major problem for that aircraft.

So some of you are asking, what are you talking about? Here it is. Spoilers exist on virtually all-modern jet aircraft. Just as the name suggests, they're there to "spoil" the lift of the wings and cause more drag. They're needed so aircraft can slow down and descend efficiently. Modern, very slick aircraft really need spoilers or they will float for a long, long ways just as any glider floats. (Contrast this with the F-4 which "floated" like a brick - now before the Phantom drivers come after me, understand, I loved that aircraft too but engine out, we all agree, it could fly formation with a brick.)



Back to the sick Global Hawk, what to do, what to do? Letting the aircraft land "normally" would result in failure of the landing gear. Why? Because the lack of spoilers would cause the aircraft to touch down too fast and then bounce back into the air. It's the next landing that's extremely nasty.

The aircraft would float up and up and then nose over to come back down. The subsequent landing would be hard enough to fail the gear and crunch some very, very expensive sensors on board.

The team at Edwards worked for hours with company engineers in Rancho Bernardo to find some way to safely recover what had never been safely recovered. They decided a lakebed landing was the better way to go. Now this would not be an option with a manned aircraft since

the lakebed runways are unlit but the unmanned Global Hawk wouldn't know the difference.

About 11:30 o'clock p.m., to get the aircraft to shed the extra airspeed, it was also decided to shut off the engine. So Global Hawk landed the same way the Shuttle landed on Sunday with no go around capability - dead stick. We committed 100% (all in) to landing for good or ill.

It was a daring plan! It worked! The 452 FLTS/UAV CTF did fantastic, as well as the entire 412 OG team! What a scramble in the dark to make this all work!

Kudos!

Only Edwards could have recovered the aircraft safely that night. The aircraft floated (without spoilers remember) far further than anyone expected. Anywhere else and it would have been past any sort of proper landing surface. But not at Edwards and on Rogers Dry Lakebed. It landed about 6 maybe 7 miles down the runway. The right main gear hit an obstacle and was badly damaged, but I must say, I was impressed with how well it withstood the damage. It didn't collapse for several more thousand feet.

This saved the sensors. The most expensive part of the aircraft.

So instead of a multi-million dollar mishap, (no threat to life but a lot of money is a lot of money) we are keeping our fingers crossed that information on how to safely recover this one will be less than a million dollars worth of damage and we gained a wealth of aircraft when this happens again. (should be we are keeping our fingers crossed that this one will be less than a million dollars worth of damage, and we gained a wealth of information on how to safely recover aircraft when this happens again.. Priceless!

And that, ladies and gentlemen, is why Edwards is here -- talent tightly coupled with natural resources.

Civ-Mil BBQ + Membership Drive 7/23/09

The 2010 Civ-Mil Membership Drive kicks off at our 20th Anniversary Civ-Mil Barbeque, at Lane Ranch, Thursday, July 23, 2009. Applications will be accepted for both renewals and new members. Our annual membership fees remain the same as last year: Renewal or New Individual Membership is \$60; Joint Membership (husband-wife membership) is \$100; and Corporate Membership is \$125. Bring your checkbook and renew early, and bring a friend to sponsor as a new member.

Surprise Drawing
Bring a guest and you will be entered
In our Surprise Drawing



SKYBOX NIGHT AT THE JET HAWKS AUG 15TH

Attention all Honorary Commanders. We have scheduled a special evening with the Jet Hawks at Clear Channel Stadium the night of August 15, 2009. Aida O'Connor has graciously donated the use a Sky Box for the evening as a way for all the Honorary Commanders to spend a fun evening with their counterparts from the base. Summer is a transition period at Edwards AFB and this is the perfect opportunity to re-connect with your current Commander or meet your newly arrived Commander. It will be the responsibility of each Honorary Commander to contact their Commander with the invitation. Seating is limited so act now before it is too late! For more details contact either Art Furtado, at 661-965-5452 or Aida O'Conner, 942-1153 no later than August 1st.



Points of Interest

Most of you are aware that Edwards AFB has restrictions in place regarding base access. This does not mean however, that the base is totally off-limits to those without an access pass. The base Public Affairs Office conducts tours on the first and third Fridays of the month which are open to the general public. If you're interested in a tour of Edwards Air Force Base, please use the form found on their website at <http://www.edwards.af.mil/main/contactus.asp> to send your request and Public Affairs will contact you. Be sure to include your telephone number and the dates you are interested in visiting the base.

If the guided tour is not for you, there are several aviation related venues within the A.V. that you might find interesting as well;

Century Circle - A display of the Century Series fighters (F-100, F-101, F-102, F-104, F-105 and F-106) arranged around the old air traffic control tower cab. There is now a YC-15 on display in this area as well. The Century Circle is just outside the Edwards AFB main gate (also known as the West Gate) and is accessible by going through the community of Rosamond off of Highway 14, at Exit 55, 10.5 miles east from the freeway.

Blackbird/Heritage Airpark – Blackbird Airpark and the adjacent Palmdale Plant 42 Heritage Airpark have recently been opened on Plant 42 property along Avenue P (both are free to the public) with displays of the SR-71, U-2, Century Series fighters and other aircraft designed, engineered, manufactured, and flight tested at its facilities. The Blackbird Airpark is an extension of the AFFTC Museum at Edwards AFB, while the Heritage Airpark is operated by the City of Palmdale. Both are manned by retirees and volunteers who had previously worked in the aerospace industry, some actually having worked on the aircraft displayed at the two parks. All of the aircraft have been carefully restored for public display. Operating hours of the airparks are the same - Friday through Sunday (except in inclement weather) from 11:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. Pacific Time. On Federal Government holidays both airparks are closed. The two airparks are located at Avenue P and 25th Street East near Site 9. Source: [Wikipedia - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plant_42](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plant_42)

Aerospace Walk of Honor - The Aerospace Walk of Honor recognizes the heroes that made aerospace his-

tory in the skies above the Antelope Valley. The Walk of Honor is located in Lancaster, along Lancaster Boulevard between Sierra Highway and 10th Street West. More information can be found at:

<http://www.cityoflanasterca.org/Index.aspx?page=98>

NAWS China Lake - North of the A.V. in the community of Ridgecrest is the Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake. NAWS is home to the US Naval Museum of Armament and Technology, <http://www.chinalakemuseum.org/> Their phone number is 760-939-3530.

National Training Center, Ft. Irwin Ca. - Located outside the city of Barstow on the sprawling grounds of Ft. Irwin are both the U.S. Army's National Training Center where the military trains for desert warfare scenarios and NASA's Goldstone Deep Space Communications Complex. For Ft Irwin tours, call their Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation Marketing Office at 760-380-3358, or send an e-mail to jacqueline.hoggins@us.army.mil. For Goldstone tours, contact Karla Warner at 760-255-8688 or by e-mail at Kwarner@jgld.gdsc.nasa.gov.

Submitted by Dennis Shofner

UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual BBQ- Thurs,

July 23, 2009

Andy Shillinglaw will spearhead the event.

Honorary Commanders at Jethawks –

Sat, Aug 15, 2009

Contact Art Furtado or Aida O'Connor

Tinker AFB Civic Leader Tour:

Aug 13, 2009

Contact John Fergione

Annual Civ/Mil Installation Banquet

- Sept 17, 2009

Annual EAFB Open House

Air Show- Oct 17, 2009

EDWARDS RETIREMENT EVENT

The prestige and reputation of Civ Mil was a huge responsibility I carried on my slender shoulders on July 7&8, 2009 at Edwards AFB.

I was a guest (DV) at the retirement events for Mark R Mueller, Col USAF AFMC 412 MXG/CC”.

The Colonel led 1,730 maintenance personnel supporting over 86 highly modified, uniquely configured test and test support aircraft...the most diverse maintenance outfit in the Air Force.

First was the Change of Command ceremony where Colonel Mueller relinquished command of the 412 Maintenance Group to Colonel Mary Ann Behne.

The following day was the official Retirement Ceremony from 27 years of service to the Air Force. Remarks were given by Colonel William J. Thornton, Bridg Gen Pete

Winters ret, Maj Gen David Eichhorn and other officials of EAFB, followed by the Presentation of Medals and honors from colleagues, servicemen , friends and family.

As the Civ/Mil Honorary Commander of Maintenance, I was introduced and included in the festivities. His wife, Diane, three daughters and parents were present. The retired Colonel and his family are moving to Utah immediately.

It is a privilege to have the opportunity to work with Colonel Mark Mueller and develop a personal friendship.

Aircraft in the air...Maintenance put 'em there!

Reporting,

Chris Spicher

Honorary Commander,
412th Maintenance Group, RETIRED
Edwards AFB

MISSION

“The purpose and general nature of this organization is to establish a friendly, benevolent association of civic leaders and military personnel at Edwards Air Force Base (EAFB), to host groups incoming to Edwards, and to consider service projects to benefit EAFB.”

Director Emeritus

Terry Scott, Alis Clausen

Honarary Lifetime Directors

Clyde Bailey, Tom Craft
Roger Persons, Aida O’connor

BOARD DIRECTORS

Aida O’Connor : President
Mike Belzil: Vice President
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