

THE LEADING EDGE

NEWSLETTER OF MUROC EAA CHAPTER 1000

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

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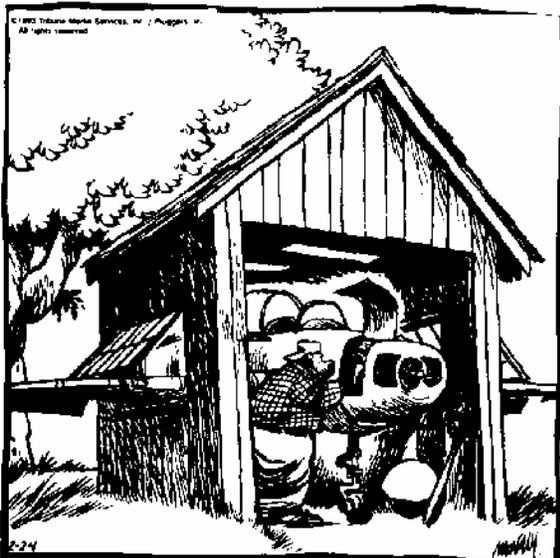
<http://www.eaa1000.av.org>

January 2007

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:

PLUGGERS



You're a pluggers if you've built an airplane from the runway up

PROJECT POLICE PROJECT PROGRESS PRONOUNCEMENTS

Tuesday, 16 January 2007
1700 hrs (5:00 PM Civilian Time)
USAF Test Pilot School Auditorium
Edwards AFB, CA

(or A funny thing happened on the way to tonight's meeting)

I know you're not going to believe this, but I've got to tell you anyway. Ya see, I had it all figured out, the January meeting that is, all I had to do was call and confirm that the arrangements that I had made well in advance of this month's meeting were set to go, and then write it up for that buffoon Zurg, and we would be all set. So I call for confirmation and get the answering machine. The answering machine tells me that they will be back on Monday, but it's already Wednesday. So I call again the next day and get the same message. And I call again the next day and get the same message, and so it goes. Then I



\$20 to Opie – See back of newsletter for address

If you prefer, you can pay online by **PayPal**® at the Join/Pay Dues link on the [EAA Chapter 1000 web site](#).

You may also qualify for the government sponsored EAA Chapter 1000 “Free Dues” program.¹

get Zurg ragging on me to get the program in, time is running out.

So, over to plan “B”. I call one of my favorite guys over at Scaled and ask if he can come over and give us a little talk. He'd love to ‘but’ he's all tied up with a team of

¹ Simply write your name on a government printed “Free Dues” coupon and hand it to any chapter officer. “Free Dues” coupons are available at any bank, ATM, and many businesses. Ask for it by the secret code name “Twenty Dollar Bill.”

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high school kids building competition robots for the next 8 weeks. Last resort, you guessed it, I call Vegas and..... seems that **Elvis** can't make it either.

Well you know what they say, when you get lemons, make lemonade, so that's what we're going to do. It's an open forum, project reports, cool tools, new ways to build, construct, paint or whatever. The floor's open to any good jokes, recipes or tid bits of knowledge that you want to pass on. It should be an interesting evening. As always, there will be chips, salsa, chocolate chip cookies and beverages for your snacking enjoyment with the usual solutions to the world's problems at the BK Lounge afterwards.

- George "Knife" Gennuso
Vice Kommandant

Last Month's Meeting

EAA Chapter 1000
Kommandant's Kwarters
Quartz Hill CA
19 December 2006
Gary Aldrich, Presiding

The final Chapter 1000 meeting of 2006, highlight of the Antelope Valley social season, was held at the **Kommandant's Kwarters** in Quartz Hill. Hosted by **Kommandant** Gary and **Mrs. Kommandant** Anne Aldrich, the 22 chapter members and guests in attendance were treated to much beerge and wineage prior to a sumptuous meal of lasagna, followed by cheesecake and "death by chocolate" cake dessert.

As is our custom, the chapter observed the traditional "**Festivus**" holiday theme. The event marked the unveiling of the official chapter Festivus pole, designed and fabbed by **Frosty Wyatt**. Everyone paid due tribute with the mandatory comment, "**Real nice pole, Frosty**".



Frosty Wyatt with the Chapter 1000 Festivus Pole and Kent Troxel with the yellow-tagged portable version

Following dinner, an exchange of gifts was conducted in adherence with the Festivus credo, that being "give a gift you don't want, and are pretty certain the receiver won't want either". Gifts included a gyro compass (old enough to be used by Wrongway Corrigan), wheel chocks allegedly used on "Symmetry", several grade B aviation CD's, old bicycle lights, a "disco" vase (pronounced *vauze*), wine, an onion holder (don't ask), a candle warmer (or this either), and the grand prize, a portable Festivus pole.



The assembled throng intently watch the unveiling of the "Kommandant's Krap"



Jan Fischer opens a package with great fear and trembling, or at least concern

There was a brief "Airing of Grievances" which was cut short by the announcement of dessert, after which came the "Awarding of Cheesy Chapter Certificates" (technically C³'s, but not to be confused with Chocolate Chip Cookies, the snack of choice of the Project Police). The certificates are suitable for framing or wrapping fish at the discretion of the awardee. The award also included an equally cheesy pin for chapter bowling shirt flair.

The evening concluded with the telling of the annual Festivus joke by the **Minister of Propoganda**. The "Feats of Strength" and "Wrestling the host to the ground" were dispensed with by direction of the host/Kommandant. This in itself was a serious breach of Festivus protocol, but the

Kommandant had provided the food and beer. It would have been “bad form” to insist on strict observance of the rules.



The Kommandant shows mock excitement upon opening a “Candle Warmer” while the rest of us try to figure out why anyone would want to warm something that is already on fire

The highlight of the evening occurred when the **Kommandant** fed beer to **First Dog “Pixel”** who subsequently escaped through the open front door and proceeded to run wildly about the neighborhood. All hands turned to in an effort to corral the crafty canine, but it was like trying to catch a greased pig. Exhaustion of both man and beast forced the employment of our superior intellect to eventually steer her back to the house.

Having restored order in the cosmos, the **Kommandant** declared “Victory” and wished everyone a Happy Festivus and New Year.

- **Kent “Cobra” Troxel**
Minister of Propaganda

Kommandant’s Korner

(The Project Police extend our individual and corporate condolences to Mrs. Kommandant and the Kommandant.



Mrs. Kommandant’s mother passed away on 2 January 2007 after a short hospitalization for her cancer and other related ills. As the Kommandant is out attending to his proper spousal duties at Evil Editor Zurg’s deadline, he was graciously granted a “bye” from his usual duties of exhorting us to the greater good and “Tips from the curmudgeonly flight instructor (CFI)”. Had he been writing he probably would have said something like “Now is the time to ask your boss for some time off on 17-18 April 2007 so that you can help the chapter support the Aluminum Overcast visit at Fox Field.” He would then drivel on to say something like

“Go flying or get back to building and don’t do nuttin’ dumb!”

- (as not written by) **Gary Aldrich**
Kommanding

99s Death Valley Brunch Flyout

The Antelope Valley 99s will be holding their annual fly-out for brunch at Furnace Creek Inn (in Death Valley) on 21 Jan 07 and you are cordially invited to join us. The brunch is fabulous; the weather in Death Valley is usually gorgeous; and it's always a fun trip. We have reserved half of the main dinning room so we all eat together at 11:00. (Sunday brunch is served between 11:00 and 2:00.) In order to get the discount, we will all be on one check, so if you participate on our reservation, please bring cash to make this expedient. (Someone will go around mid-brunch and collect each person’s money table by table, checking off names against the reservation list .

WHAT: Brunch

WHEN: Sunday, January 21, at 11:00 o’clock

WHERE: Furnace Creek Inn and Ranch Resort, Death Valley, Inn Dinning Room

COST: \$31 per person (including 10% discount, tax and tip), please bring cash because we will all be on one bill

Cost Breakdown:

The standard price is \$28, with 10% discount = 25.20

\$25.20 + 15% tip = 3.78 tip

\$25.20 + 7.75 tax = 1.95 tax

Total = \$30.93 (rounded up to \$31 per person to make things easier)

You should arrive before 10:30 to allow time to get to the inn from the airport. Shuttle service is provided. (When you arrive, go to the shack next to the parking area and use the courtesy phone to call for the shuttle.)

PLEASE NOTE: YOU SHOULD BRING YOUR OWN TIE-DOWN ROPES BECAUSE THERE ARE NONE PROVIDED IN THE PARKING AREA. There are, however, cables to tie them to.

Please RSVP to **Michelle Davis** if you plan to attend. In order to include as many people as possible, let Michelle know if you would like to share a ride (either offering or needing one) so that she can help people without aircraft find rides.

IMPORTANT REQUEST: If your plans change (go, or no go) on the day of the fly-out, please inform Michelle. (Note that there is no cellular phone coverage in Death Valley, so if you need to contact her after we can reasonably be expected to be in the air or in Death Valley, please leave a message with Mr. David Woodruff, the dining room manager, at 760-786-2345, x.150.

Email: michelle.r.davis@nasa.gov

Mobile: 505-280-0015 Home: 505-833-2504

For more information on Death Valley, check out...

<http://www.airnav.com/airport/L06>

<http://www.besthotelsresorts.com/furnacecreek.htm>

<http://www.100dollarhamburger.com/106.html>

THE LEADING EDGE

Project Police's Lead Bomber Pilot Responds to the Aluminum Overcast

(For reasons unknown to us hear at PPHQ, PPO Shawn "Wisk" Fleming, who left the Antelope Valley to start EAA Chapter 1000 Det 15 in Minot ND, has been deployed to Anderson AFB on a scenic South Pacific rock known to us as "Guam". The "AMI jets" he refers to are the Avionics Mid-Life Improvement upgrade that he tested while here with AFOTEC at Edwards. Don't ask how a 50+ year old jet can have a "mid-life" upgrade.)

Erbman

Great newsletter (again)! Looks like your Bearhawk is really coming along great. Operation **Deny-Christmas** in the land of two seasons (wet or dry - and changes daily) is still ongoing - since the end of Aug and until beginning of Feb. Your Fortress article is still relevant today, in fact, just yesterday (or tomorrow since this is once again coming to you from the future) I got to rearrange some coral for fun.

Takeoff shot is from a couple weeks ago with the same load out (we just can't seem to make that island go away). Maybe next time we're out here we'll be using AMI jets!!! Eat some C3's for me!

Cheers!

Wisk



BUFF takeoff from scenic Guam



Infidel infested hunk of coral bombing target—note the clever naturally occurring smoke screens

Project Police Fly The B-17 "Aluminum Overcast"

(Our Magnum Opus on "Flying The Fortress" continues. If you really like what you read, start saving your dimes and nickels—for just \$359 you will be able to "Fly The Fortress" yourself on 17-18 Apr 2007 right here at Fox Field. Better yet, donate your time to assist with the operation and get selected for one of the coveted "free" spots!)

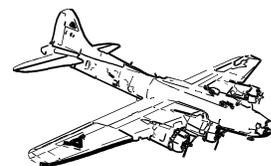
Nose section

For the takeoff, I was seated on the not-terribly-comfortable troop seats in the waist gunners' compartment. Immediately after takeoff, I released my belt, walked forward, stepped up to the left onto a platform that lets you step around the ball turret, and through a door into the radio room. Weaving my way around TPS students who were standing there trying to figure out what to do next, I stepped through the door at the front of the radio room into the bomb bay. Getting through the bomb bay involves shimmying across a catwalk no wider than your typical house cat. Stepping up through another door lead into the cockpit.



Bomb bay catwalk—suitable width for cats

Walking directly through the non-existent top turret guts, I found myself right behind the pilots. The pilot seats are separated by about 18 inches with a big hole in the floor between them. Through this hole was about a two foot drop to the bottom of the fuselage, which was shortened slightly by a non-standard footstool kept there to make it easier to get up and down.





Step-down footstool—wood in keeping with the theme

This is the nether region of the B-17, where there's not really a whole lot of stuff other than the bottom of the flight deck floor. This is also the location of what the crew refers to as the "General Savage Door". This is the door just behind the #2 prop and left of the bottom of the fuselage where Gregory Peck as General Savage in "Twelve O'Clock High" throws his parachute in over his head, reaches up, grabs the door and throws his feet in followed by the rest of his body. I've seen other references to aircrew boarding the airplane this way, and supposedly one of the *Aluminum Overcast* crew can actually do it, but we never saw him try. The rest of the crew didn't even claim to be able to. I wonder if that has anything to do with the typical age of the *Aluminum Overcast's* crew being two to three times that of the typical WWII B-17 crew?



General Savage door with non-standard ladder



Gregory Peck as General Savage demonstrates the entry technique in *Twelve O'Clock High*. Grab the top of the door and jump...



...do a pull-up while simultaneously pulling your legs to your chest...



...stuff your legs into the door and slide your butt and body in. Bonus points if the crew chief is watching.



CO₂ fire extinguisher bottles and a sea of control cables and control tubes directly under the cockpit (looking up through General Savage door)

Interestingly, there is a very large guard that must be moved out of the way to open this door from the inside, which is a good thing considering this door makes a nice bailout (or in our case, fall-out) door shouldst it happen to get opened in flight. I felt better knowing that even if it was to suddenly open as I was going past, the guard would keep me from falling out.



Ladder type guard that swings down over door

I continued shuffling forward and finally found myself in the nose compartment. I immediately stepped forward and plopped myself down on the bombardier's chair. Of course, now there was nothing between me and the 150 mph wind but a large Plexiglas bubble. It's one thing to be able to see out of an airplane from a bubble canopy, but even quite another to be able to see literally everything in front of you—full up, down, and to either side. Quite an experience that can't be duplicated in many other aircraft.



Bombardier station, with Norden bombsight. Note feed belt for left side flexible gun running across the floor in front of the bombardier's chair



Erbman the bombardier checks six



Non-bombing the evil hordes of Cal City

Under my feet was the feed belt for the left side 50 caliber machine gun, feeding from the wooden ammo box on the right. You could tell that the bombardier's chair was sitting on top of the chin turret. Of course, between my legs was the infamous Norden bombsight. It was festooned with knobs and dials, and moving some of the knobs would make some of the indicators change, but nothing I could do would change the out-of-focus picture through the sight. As I bent over to look through the

bombsight, we hit some light turbulence, and it became immediately obvious why the sight was surrounded by that large padded ring. If it wasn't for that pad, bombardiers would be getting smacked in the face with metal bombsight every time the air was anything but absolutely still. I suspect that flak bursts didn't exactly help with keeping the air nice and smooth. While the bombsight was in place, unfortunately I didn't see any evidence of the controls that would be used to couple it to the aircraft's autopilot for the bombing run. Later research showed that most of the controls on the bombardier's control panel are not installed. For that matter, I don't know that *Aluminum Overcast* even has a functioning autopilot installed. I've always been curious about that autopilot and how capable it was, since this was the time when automatic control systems were still in their infancy.

On either side of the bombardier was a flexible gun. Neither of these were equipped with any type of sight, and there really wasn't much of a field of view in any direction for sighting those guns. It seems like the chin turret would be more effective most of the time.



Right side flexible gun, with ammo boxes for both sides. In front of the ammo boxes are the controls for the chin turret.

To the right of the bombardier were the controls for the chin turret on a strut. These controls could be moved to directly in front of the bombardier for use when he wasn't busy trying to figure out where to dump some "ballast" to reduce the aircraft's gross weight. The controls were like two pistol grips about six inches apart, similar in feel to the grips on the flexible guns. I couldn't find any method of sighting the guns, and there was no indication of what type of sight should be there.

Behind the bombardier on the left side of the aircraft is the navigator's desk. The desk is down low, as is the seat, feeling something like visiting a kindergarten classroom. The desk was as large as the space would allow, but still was too small to spread a full sectional chart out.

Presumably the navigators learned to compensate for the small desk through clever folding of charts.

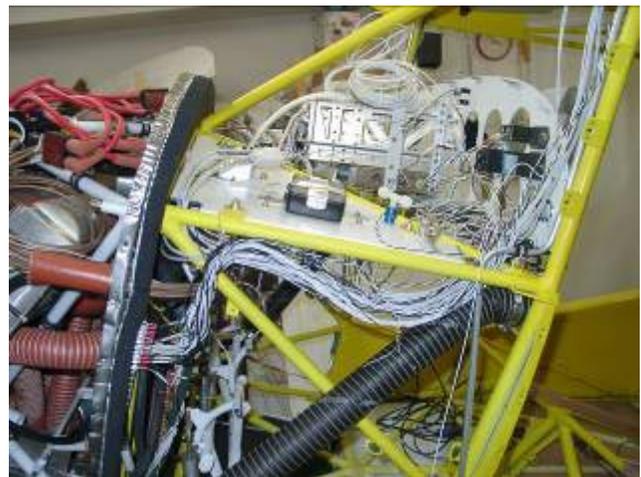


Navigator's desk with bombardier control panel to right

Turning to look at the aft wall of the nose section, you find a piece of fabric hanging on clips. This fabric is covering the back side of the instrument panel and various flight control linkages that the pilots prefer you keep your fingers out of.

- Russ Erb
Project Police Qualitative Evaluator

Cheesy Bearhawk Filler Pic



The Bearhawk has been gaining copper and teflon

Web Site Update

As of 6 Jan 2007, the hit counter stood at **112714**, for a hit rate of about 18 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

Jan 16: EAA Chapter 1000 Monthly Meeting, 5:00 p.m., Edwards AFB. USAF Test Pilot School, Scobee Auditorium. (661) 609-0942

Feb 6: EAA Chapter 49 Monthly Meeting, 7:30 p.m., General William J. Fox Field, Lancaster, CA. (661) 948-0646

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

Feb 20: 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, 7:30 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 3: EAA Chapter 49 Monthly Meeting, 7:30 p.m., General William J. Fox Field, Lancaster, CA. (661) 948-0646

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

Apr 17-18: B-17 *Aluminum Overcast* hosted by EAA Chapter 1000, General William J. Fox Field, Lancaster, CA. (661) 609-0942

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

May 1: EAA Chapter 49 Monthly Meeting, 7:30 p.m., General William J. Fox Field, Lancaster, CA. (661) 948-0646

May 8: EAA Chapter 1000 Board of Directors Meeting, 5:00 p.m., High Cay, 4431 Knox Ave, Rosamond CA. (661) 609-0942

May 15: No meeting. Go to Fly-In instead

May 19: Sixteenth Annual Scotty Horowitz Going Away Fly-In, Rosamond Skypark (L00), Rosamond CA. (661) 256-3806

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.

Contact our officers by e-mail:

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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
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Rosamond CA 93560-7692
<http://www.eaa1000.av.org>**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**THIS MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS:
PROJECT SHOW AND TELL 16 JAN AT TPS
FESTIVUS RETELLING
99S DEATH VALLEY FLY OUT
MORE B-17 FLIGHT REPORT**



The Leader In Recreational Aviation