



THE LEADING EDGE

NEWSLETTER OF MUROC EAA CHAPTER 1000

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

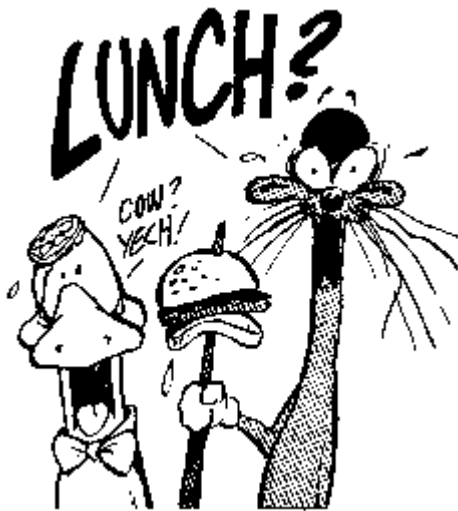
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<http://www.eaa1000.av.org>

June 2008

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:



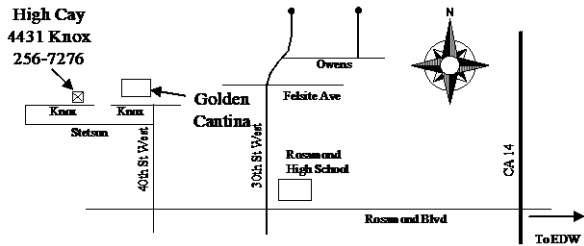
Project Police Fly-In Excess Inventory Reduction Exercises

Tuesday, 17 June 2008
 1700 hrs (5:00 PM Civilian Time)
 High Cay Partyhaus
 Rosamond, CA

The June meeting will involve hangar flying, project reports, and all other sorts of lies. Remember, a well crafted story need include only six percent truth. We will also consume dead cows and coleslaw, so come hungry. Fly in or drive in. We will meet at **High Cay**.

Modified spot landing rules apply. In other words, if you land successfully within the first 2000 feet of the runway, you may taxi to parking. If your landing gear collapses upon landing or after rolling off the departure end, you will be required to walk the remaining distance to the cookout. Just follow the aroma of burnt lighter fluid floating on the (hopefully) gentle breeze. This is a spouse friendly event.

For the one or two *PPOs* out there who can't remember how to get to **High Cay**, the following convenient map is provided:



- Scott "Stormy" Weathers
 Vice Kommandant

7 June Declared "EAA First Flight Day"

First it was D+1 Day (1944). Then it became **Kent and Nina Troxel's** Anniversary (1975). Next it became **Russ and Penny Erb's** Anniversary (1986). This year, in 2008, it became **First Flight Day** for three closely related but geographically separated homebuilts.

First **Eric Newton's Bearhawk Miss'ippi Mudbug** (<http://mybearhawk.com>) flew in Long Beach Mississippi. He had the advantage of being two time zones ahead. While not a card-carrying member of the *Project Police*, he has been in close communication with our own **Erbman** during the construction of their respective projects.

Next, at "mid-morning" EAA Chapter 1000 founding member and first Kommandant **Jim Piavis** had the first flight of his **RV-7** (<http://www.adap.com/rv7/>) in Arlington Washington.

Finally, after much troubleshooting of ignition issues, at 0926 our own **Russ "Erbman" Erb** lifted off in his **Bearhawk Three Sigma** from Rosamond Skypark, only to put it back down three minutes later at 0929, thus barely logging a 0.1.

Keep reading for the exciting initial reports, plus the annual report on the **Seventeenth Annual Scotty Horowitz Going-Away Fly-In!**



Kommandant's Korner

In an unprecedented human-like act **E^2 Zurg** extended the deadline on my monthly load...er, submittal of knowledge and semi-humorous drivel until Sunday morning. Of course, I often procrastinate until then anyway, so it was little change for me. The **PPTAF-SNTK** double-secret no-spouse reason was to allow the Bearcat (did I get that right?) to be kicked out of the nest after about a 12 year gestation...how's that for mixing the metaphors?

After a couple of false starts related to spark plugs that wouldn't ("spark", not "plug"), I'm pleased to report that the dang thing flew...and that, a) nobody was hurt; and b) the airplane can be used again. I'm not going to get into too many details here because you're going to hear them directly from the test pilot...if he can remember them. I will comment on a couple of observations.



Crack Flight Test Team Assembled

The small cadre of cleared individuals that showed up at L00 around 0700-ish had grown even smaller by the time the test director in mission control had consulted with the test conductor and test pilot (all of whom were in the cockpit) and decided to commit aviation. Despite the professed willingness by the test pilot to cancel if everything wasn't kosher and his claimed imperviousness (imperviosity?) to scheduling or other outside pressure some sense of single-minded momentum was detected by this observer. Forecast and actual weather conditions (primarily winds) were deteriorating, resulting in a direct crosswind of about 5-8 knots when the **RB-4** took the active and pushed the power up. Since the wind limits were not clearly defined in the cards or the T-1 brief, it was the pilot's call...and he decided to go. Directional control and acceleration appeared normal through the viewfinder of my camera and the **Hawk** lifted off in a left bank and climbed away.

As luck, or fate would have it the weather would not have a chance to deteriorate much before the test aircrew decided to branch directly to the "safe landing" card,

bypassing all the of the planned maneuvers and practice landings at WJF. An axiom of flight test had been proven once more...you can't plan for everything and you don't know what you don't know. This is why we train testers to be able to react to the "unknown unknowns" in a safe and methodical manner. This is exactly what happened when, shortly after takeoff, the pitch trim tabs apparently began driving the elevator into an oscillation. The alarming low frequency vibration was visible both by ground observers and reportedly manifested by rapid fore and aft movements of the control stick. This phenomenon, known to everyone in the aeronautical world (except the F-16 community) as "flutter" can have catastrophic results and demands a correct and immediate response from the test pilot. In this case **Russ** (correctly and immediately) applied the proper action, namely to slow to an airspeed that stopped the oscillations. Fortunately, the flutter occurred at an airspeed (really a dynamic pressure) comfortably above a safe approach speed.

So, with 0.1 hours of **Bearhawk** PIC time under his seatbelt (well, really my seatbelt, but that's another story) our intrepid test pilot executed a closed pattern and landing that would make any taildragger pilot proud. The "slightly experienced" **RB-4** was taxied back to its hangar and the test crew celebrated with a full-strength **Coke**® and hearty handshakes all-round.



I suspect flight two will be delayed while the engineer(s) noodle on the design of the trim tab mechanization and clear a couple of other squawks. Bottom line: Please join me in congratulating **Erbman** on this important milestone in homebuilding...and on his outstanding airmanship and testmanship in bringing a potentially hazardous situation to a safe conclusion. For 12 years, when asked if he "had an airplane" Russ would answer, "no, but I'm building a **Bearhawk**". Now he has to get used to the much more concise answer to the question: "yes, I have an airplane". Oh, and Happy Anniversary to the **Erbs!**

Fly safe...and "stop fluttering around"

- Gary Aldrich
Kommanding

Jim Piavis' RV-7 Makes First Flight

(This message sent to *Erbman* and various other addressees by *Jim Piavis*)



Mid-Morning on June 7, **RV-7 N303P** finally levitated off the ground, 4 days short of 6 years and 14000 rivets since the empennage kit arrival. This first flight was conducted under 1800 broken/overcast sky at **Arlington, WA (AWO)**. The weather has been exceptionally cruddy recently so I was looking for enough airspace to go out and run circuits around the pattern to get the engine exercised. **Dave Parsons** was standing-by on ground crew this week after we called off the flight last weekend due to low clouds. The RV cranked on the 2nd try (I really need to figure out the best way to start this) and I proceeded to the Three-Four hammerhead for run-up. All systems looked good and I started the data recorder for flight #1. There was a Cessna 140 in the pattern, but aside from that, I had the area to myself which was good. The plan was to remain in a high pattern and just make a couple laps to test the engine systems, slow down, come down to pattern altitude, make one low approach, go-around, then a final full-stop.

I took Runway 34 and slowly advanced the throttle. In what seemed about 100 feet, the RV levitated off the ground. I don't recall having enough time to actually raise the tail and the departure angle seemed ridiculously steep. It really didn't take long and I was at about 1700' by crosswind and I just let it accelerate. The GRT was only seeing about 1800 RPM but the engine sure seemed to be doing its thing so I figured I had an indication problem. I raced around the circuit several times, then pulled the power back a bit to start a decent into the pattern. At that time I started hearing a faint thumping on the fuselage and I wondered what that was. I did see 197 MPH on one downwind, full throttle with no gear fairings or wheel pants, so I'm thinking this airplane is going to match Van's numbers. Very cool.

Well, I managed to get the airplane slowed down and extended the flaps 50% per **Mike Seager's** training. So far no problem, but on base leg that thumping was more pronounced and I decided to put it on the ground. Full flaps, 85 MPH, and I had the runway made. Taxi back was a non-event and I shut it down. Total time was 0.5, just right for the first flight. Time for breakfast at the local airport café, as well as some well-needed time to relax.

On inspection, I found that the left wing root rubber seal had pulled free a bit (it was too long) on the bottom aft end, and was thumping in the wind stream, so it was a good decision to cut it short. **Dave** and I pulled the cowl and found about two drops of oil in the bottom of the cowl which was attributed to a slightly loose #3 cylinder head oil return line at the case. This was tightened. As for the RPM, I dug through the GRT EIS manual and determined that the RPM config setting was incorrect. It was 0 and should have been a 1. I also lowered the idle RPM slightly as I thought it was a bit high (this has a knock-on effect). OK, that's fixed. I cut the wing root seal a bit and got that reinstalled.

Dave had to head for home, but there was time for one more flight. Plan was basically the same but I wanted to validate the RPM fix. Once the engine started, it was evident that the RPM indication was fixed. Taxi and run-up were normal and it was time to fly again. Departure once again was a blast. With ½ tanks and no passenger, this really climbs. I spent about 0.5 running round the pattern again, this time at 2400' as the ceiling had come up a bit. This time I had some time to relax and just watch the airplane and it really seems to fly nice. I thought the right wing was a little heavy, but it trimmed out with the ailerons still in line with the wing tips. I did get back down to pattern altitude and with a nice little cross wind on 34, about 7 kts or so, made a decent 3-point landing.

Remember the bit about adjusting the idle? Well, on rollout, things got quiet, really quiet. And by the time my brain figured out the engine was winding down, it had quit, and I just missed the first turn-off. Bummer. Well, I shut down the avionics (which dumped my flight 2 data) and pushed it off the runway where we finally got it restarted. A couple RV guys from **AWO** helped get it going again.

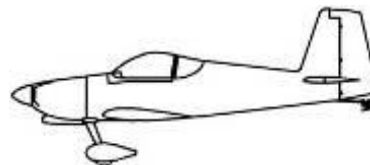
Post flight inspection showed no oil leakage at all this time so I was pretty happy. We did pull the cowl and re-set the idle with the proper instrument indications. Other than the RPM indication and the left wing fairing seal, the flight went really well and I'm happy with the airplane. If the weather holds, I'm back up tomorrow. This is soooooo cool (and so worth it)!

Video to follow as soon as I get this silly grin off my face!

Side note: **Russ "Erbman" Erb**, good friend and fellow founding cohort of **EAA Chapter 1000** at Edwards AFB, CA, spent the last 11+ years building a very nice looking plans-built **Bearhawk** (<http://eaa1000.av.org/pix/erbpic/erbpic.htm>). As luck would have it, we both had DAR inspections on the same date and as if it weren't possible, both of our projects had first flights on the same day! Congrats **Russ**!

See the video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AcmQvlAcyGQ> .

- **Jim Piavis**



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RB-4 Combat Bearhawk First Flight and Limit Cycle Oscillation (LCO) Testing

(This is the initial flight report as sent to the Bearhawk group, shortly after the announcement of a successful first flight of Eric Newton's Miss'ippi Mudbug)



Bearhawk #164 N6786E "Three Sigma" also took to the air today at 0926 PDT. This flight, however, was a little more fast paced and potentially exciting than the **Mudbug's**. Log a 0.1, assuming you can stretch 3 minutes liftoff to touchdown to be a 0.1.

After spending a couple hours troubleshooting a bad EGT probe (not a show stopper) and a bad plug (show stopper) with 3 aborts (you must be spring loaded to abort, flying only if you can't find a reason to abort), I fed in the throttle slowly concentrating on keeping the nose straight and waiting for the tail to come up as it had in the **Citabria**. I was doing so well keeping the nose straight and waiting for the tail to come up (it didn't) that I momentarily forgot about controlling roll. Observers claim the wind shifted to a direct right crosswind just as I was taking off, so the right wing started lifting without the left wing. After a "what the heck" and a "oh krap, a heavy left wing" I suddenly remembered that I could move the stick to the right and fix that little problem.

Climbing out, about the time I sorted out my lateral control issue, I had accelerated to 80 knots when the real fun started. I got the big "F" word -- that's right -- FLUTTER! (There will be a brief pause while **budd davisson** cleans his screen from the coffee he just spit all over it) That's right--I've got a stick in my hand that is oscillating at about 5 Hz with an amplitude of about +/-1 inch. It's strong enough that I can't stop it by holding the stick. Meanwhile, I'm looking at the other stick grip and thinking "Why the h*** is it doing that?" Then exercising the time honored axiom of "If you do something and something goes bad, back up one step to what you were doing before". Standard abort procedure for flutter is to pull power and slow down.

I pulled the throttle and slowed down about 10-15 knots and the flutter went away. At this point I'm about 200 feet AGL thinking that I should probably be higher. To climb I need more throttle, but if I push in the throttle, I'll speed up and the flutter will come back. Then I remember that I can add power AND pitch up to control airspeed, so I did that and started a climb to pattern altitude.

One observer saw the flutter and made a radio call, but his radio call was after I had solved the problem. Another observer (*the Kommandant*) didn't see the flutter but heard the power reduction and thought the engine had failed.

At this point I knew what the problem was and decided that this would be once around the pattern for a full stop. All of those carefully planned test cards for a gentle buildup to the landing task went figuratively out the window. Now it's a risk elevation and just hoping everything works as expected. I put down two notches of flap (the first before checking to see if I was slow enough, but I was) and later remembered the plan was to use three. I don't remember much about the landing other than it bounced once. My instructor/observer (*the Kommandant*) said it looked like a good landing. I guess I fooled him.

I'm saying the flutter problem was brought on by the trim tab pushrod being too flimsy, allowing the tab to easily move up and down, which then drives the elevator up and down, which drives the control stick back and forth, which drives the pilot's excitement level over the limit. My pushrod is built per the plans (#164) from T1 tube (1/4" x 0.035). Before flying again I will replace these with stiffer pushrods. That's also with two full size trim tabs.

Does anyone out there know if the specification for the trim tab push rod was increased to a larger tube in later iterations of the plans? (While proofreading I found on the **Mudbug** site that this was addressed in an Engineering Change in Jan 2004 directing a change of tube size to 5/16 x .028 tube. While the EC says it is non-mandatory, I would consider it mandatory now. You don't want the excitement I had.)

Other issues:

Lateral balance: After the buffooned takeoff and flutter excitement, I wasn't paying too much attention to lateral stick forces. However, I do not remember noticing anything odd about the lateral forces, so my guess is that I don't have a heavy wing.

Engine: I need to replace an EGT probe and possibly another spark plug. I also have oil appearing from unknown locations around the exhaust pipes for cylinders 3 and 4. Not sure why--needs more investigating.

I figured out that the nose didn't come up like the **Citabria** because the **Citabria's** elevator is not balanced, so it flops to the down position, which helps the nose come up. The Bearhawk elevator is balanced, so it tends to the neutral position. Next time I'll think more about lifting the tail.

On a poetic note:

Besides being the first (and possibly last for a long time) time that two **Bearhawks**, especially plans built Bearhawks, have taken to the air for the first time on the same day, there was another interesting twist. Some of you know that my N-number (N6786E) was derived from my wedding date (7 June 1986). Well, look at the date on this message (7 June 2008). Yes, Three Sigma took to the air on the 22nd anniversary of the date that it was intended to honor. Didn't plan it that way. Just worked out that way. Also, I'll always remember the date of the **Miss'ippi Mudbug** first flight.

It might be a few days before I get to flying again. Besides making new parts and parts to order, I've got anniversary duties tonight and an EAA Chapter Newsletter to get out this weekend.

Meanwhile **Eric** needs to get out and fly so that he'll be able to join me at OSH.

- **Russ Erb**

Bearhawk #164 "Three Sigma", Rosamond CA
Bearhawk Reference CD
<http://www.qnet.com/~erbman/bearhawkcd.htm>

Seventeenth Annual Scotty Horowitz Going Away Fly-In Report

or, What If They Gave A Fly-In And Nobody Did?

So what do you do when you schedule a fly-in and most of the usual suspects are unavailable? Obviously you proceed anyway.

It seems that **Gary "Kommandant" Aldrich** was spending the weekend at the Reagan Library in Simi Valley fulfilling his role as "arm candy" for **Mrs. Kommandant's** Rotary Club Convention. On Saturday he drove "**Gretel**" (**Mrs. Kommandant's** BMW 335i Convertible) back up to Rosamond. Apparently after driving that far, it didn't seem reasonable to him to stop short at Fox and fly the **Fightin' Skywagon** all the way to Rosamond.

Dave "Titan" Vanhoy didn't fly in because the **G-202** is in Albuquerque with his partner **Hojo**. **Miles Bowen** didn't fly in from Tehachapi because the C-170 was down with some unspecified ailment. **Bill "Mr. 310" Irvine** didn't taxi his C-310 around the corner since it is still experiencing an elevated state of entropy. The **Minister of Propaganda Kent Troxel** wasn't there because he was somewhere else. Other local flyers seemed to think that going to the Chino air show was a better option, even though the Chino air show is also available on Sunday.



The usual suspects showed up around 0700 to set up the hangar venue.



After a successful setup, **Stormy**, **Tim**, and **Houdu** kick back waiting for the airplanes to arrive.



The first airplane to arrive was **Bearhawk "Three Sigma"**, having been pushed all of the way from the hangar next door. **Erbman** took this opportunity to reprise his highly successful picture from last year, only this time with a more complete airplane.



The one airplane not based at Rosamond Skypark to show up was **Pat Fagan's Smokey Bearhawk**. Unfortunately, Pat was only able to stay for about an hour before returning to his critical job of keeping airliners from smashing into each other, thus preventing noise pollution.

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In the interim, the **Bearhawk** sisters were arranged for a family photo.



Wanting to make sure that **Pat Fagan** didn't win the Spot Landing contest by default, **Houdu** and **Stormy** mounted up the **Strike Mooney** and taxied off for a Combat Air Patrol. Meanwhile, **Jim "JP" Payne** mounted up the Skypark tractor to mow a few swaths by the runway. Later he would take off in the ASH-25 glider behind the C-182 tow plane. According to JP, with the wingspan of the glider wider than the runway, catching a wingtip in the weeds can lead to a really nasty ground loop.



The one other airplane to show up was the **Glasair IIFT**, itself in a heightened state of entropy and having a little trouble aligning the INS.



Grillmeister **George "Knife" Gennuso** points at the squadron of stealth homebuilts that showed up just after

the Spot Landing contest was ended. At least that's when we "think" they landed...



The **Grillmeister's Grill** in position, ready to cook up some tasty sausages.



In Oshkosh, they go to the effort of finding old VW Beetles and cutting the tops off of them to make transportation for VIPs. Here at EAA Chapter 1000, the **Project Police** just take the simple expediency of buying high-end convertibles. This picture also shows one reason why the high-wing aircraft is superior to the low-wing aircraft—portable shade.



As can be seen here, the turnout for the fly-in was actually quite good, in spite of the severe dearth of airplanes. EAA Chapter 1000 breaks new ground, developing the concept of the "Walk-In, Drive-In" Fly-In.



The Board of Directors decided that **Tim Brien** had satisfied the requirements for service to the chapter, primarily through his outstanding hawking of B-17 stuff during the annual visits of the *Aluminum Overcast*. Thus, he was presented with his own personalized "Chapter Bowling Shirt".



In the end, **Pat Fagan** did win the Spot Landing contest, besting the "other" competitor. At least he did it with a respectable showing of 47 feet. Since **Pat** had to leave to keep the skies safe for democracy, he is represented in the silhouetted photograph by **Erbman** receiving his award by proxy.



Almost by default, **Bearhawk Three Sigma** won the **People's Choice** award. After processing a protest from the "other" competitor questioning whether an "airplane" which had not flown and didn't even have an airworthiness certificate was eligible for this award, the plaque was presented by the **Kommandant** to **Erbman**.

Good times were had by all, and the **Kommandant** declared "**Victory!**" The motion passed to schedule the **Eighteenth Annual Scotty Horowitz Going-Away Fly-In**, tentatively scheduled for **16 May 2009**.

- **Erbman**
Substitute Minister of Propaganda

New Chapter Scales Arrive

Acting on your behalf, the EAA Chapter 1000 Board of Directors did something very unusual and decided to spend some of your chapter funds to buy some race car scales for weighing airplanes. Here is the easy-to-interpret display:



The scales in use weighing a leveled **Bearhawk**.



Web Site Update

As of 8 June 2008, the hit counter showed **121735**, for a hit rate of 14 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

Jun 17: EAA Chapter 1000 Monthly Meeting, 5:00 p.m., High Cay, 4431 Knox Ave, Rosamond CA. (661) 609-0942

Jul 1: EAA Chapter 49 Monthly Meeting, 7:00 p.m., General William J. Fox Field, Lancaster, CA. (661) 948-0646

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

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

Jul 28 – Aug 3: EAA AirVenture Oshkosh <http://www.airventure.org>

Aug 5: EAA Chapter 49 Monthly Meeting (?), 7:00 p.m., General William J. Fox Field, Lancaster, CA. (661) 948-0646

Aug 12: EAA Chapter 1000 Board of Directors Meeting, 5:00 p.m., High Cay, 4431 Knox Ave, Rosamond CA. (661) 609-0942

Aug 19: EAA Chapter 1000 Monthly Meeting, 5:00 p.m., Edwards AFB. USAF Test Pilot School, Scobee Auditorium. (661) 609-0942

Sep 2: EAA Chapter 49 Monthly Meeting, 7:00 p.m., General William J. Fox Field, Lancaster, CA. (661) 948-0646

Sep 9: EAA Chapter 1000 Board of Directors Meeting, 5:00 p.m., High Cay, 4431 Knox Ave, Rosamond CA. (661) 609-0942

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

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

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

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

Nov 18: EAA Chapter 1000 Monthly Meeting, 5:00 p.m., Edwards AFB. USAF Test Pilot School, Scobee Auditorium. (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!

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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:

REGULAR MEETING 17 JUN AT HIGH CAY

PIAVIS' RV-7 MAKES FIRST FLIGHT

ERBMAN'S *Bearhawk* MAKES FIRST FLIGHT

HOROWITZ FLY-IN(?) REPORT



The Leader In Recreational Aviation