

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>

February 2021

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 Zoom Meeting:



What Were They Thinking?

Russ Erb

Tuesday, 16 February 2021
1700 hrs (5:00 PM Civilian Time)
Your COVID-19 Defense Bunker
Undisclosed Location, USA

Ever notice how all airliners look pretty much alike nowadays? That's mostly because after decades of optimization, designers have pretty much settled on a design that works best. However, it hasn't always been that way.

In the early 1940s, Edward F. Burton began to investigate ways to simplify bomber aircraft. Burton was the Chief of Engineering at the Douglas Aircraft Company (Douglas), and he had noted that each subsequent generation of bomber aircraft was substantially larger, more complex, and more expensive than the preceding generation. Burton and his team started with a clean sheet of paper and designed what would become the XB-42.

As often happens when a designer tries a "new approach" to a problem with a "clean sheet design", we end up with a completely different set of tradeoffs and compromises to achieve a solution, which may or may not be any better. In this presentation, first in a possible series, we'll take a look at an aircraft design that never made it into production, which was overcome either by a bad



Your dues
are due now!
\$20 to Knife
See back of
newsletter
for address

If you prefer,
PayPal® at

you can pay online by
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

choice of tradeoffs or by other events unrelated to the design.

In keeping with our Zoom protocol, this presentation will come to you straight from Erbman's computer via Zoom. However, you will not be able to just doze off as Erbman drones on and on. Like we did with *PPO Machat's* presentation several month ago, there will be quizzes in the form of Zoom polls for you to take your best guess on "What Were They Thinking?" We hope that our favorite aviation historian **Mike Machat** will also be able to add some historical insights, such as on the illustration to the left.

Once again, we will meet in Zoomland, hosted by the Bearhawk Manor Zoom account. We can meet around 1700 hours for **schmooze** time, though you will have to provide your own schmooze snacks. The **Kommandant** will show us a video of his new airplane tug in slow motion.

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."

Libations are allowed, as currently the Peoples' Republik of Kalifornia has not identified ZUI (Zooming Under the Influence) as a chargeable offense.

Members of the Dets: We're on Zoom again, so you get to participate too. We'll see how good the Internet throughput is in **Kanard's** new temporary digs.

When **Erbman** is done, you may visit the drive-through of your favorite quick-service restaurant.

Details and links to join the Zoom meeting will be sent by e-mail to the same distribution list no later than Monday, 15 Feburary. If you've never Zoomed before, you have some time to figure it out. You'll need at minimum a smartphone or a computer with speakers and a webcam. Contact **Erbman** or your local teenager if you need help, but don't wait until the day of the meeting to start.

Once again, you don't need to worry about contacting **Erbman** to arrange base access because you can't get on the base anyway.

- **Erbman**

Subbing for the **Vice Kommandant**

Last Month's Meeting

EAA Chapter 1000

Your COVID-19 Defense Bunker

Last Year, Apparently

You, Presiding

Do you people even read the newsletter? **Evil Editor Zurg** slipped in an obvious mistake in last month's newsletter, and none of you even bit. You just read that we weren't holding a Zoom meeting and you were supposed to watch a webinar on Engine Oil on your own. None of you noticed that you were supposed to do this at 1700 on **16 June 2020!** Then again, you're probably not reading this either.

Since you're not reading this anyway, I won't tell you about what you didn't do. Tune in to the Zoom meeting this month so you can actually do something.

- **Russ "Erbman" Erb**

Emergency Backup Minister of Propaganda

Chapter 1000 of the Experimental Aircraft Association of these United States of America and Occupied Territories

"We have more zeroes in our chapter than any other!"

Kommandant's Korner

Gather 'round
Project Police

Troopers and I will regale you with a wondrous tale of conspicuous consumption and unimpeachable justification skills. Over the years of my association with



the Chapter with the Most Zeroes I have used these pages in a cathartic attempt to assuage my addiction to all things cool, complicated, and costly. Chapter Old-Timers will remember March of 1996 when I published my first review in the 'Edge of a neat aviation-related gadget called the "Blackout Light" (*reprinted in this newsletter so you don't have to dig through your old stacks of newsletters*). This jewel was an over-engineered flashlight that mounted to your headset, Borg-like, to make night flying much safer. This must-have flying tool cost...wait for it...**\$39.95!!!** This was a princely sum, even on a Lt Colonel's salary and required my legendary skill at "selling the sizzle" to keep from having my allowance cut off by the Aldrich Family Minister of Finance. The article was, perhaps, the first documented reference to "**Gadgetosis Nervosa**" in the Chapter. The disease, which seems to run rampant in the sport aviation community, was first identified by **PPO Norman Howell** who suffers from it even today.

I have continued to review pricey gee-gaws and shiny objects of the flying persuasion on an irregular basis ever since. An offshoot, or perhaps coping mechanism associated with the disease was the invention of a new form of currency called the "**Aviation Money Unit**" or **AMU**, for short. AMUs have become a standard tactic used when she says, "...And how much did you spend on THAT thing?" This is usually followed by, "You know, the kids need new shoes and I haven't had a new frock since the Carter administration." The exchange rate for AMUs can vary but is also highly classified as "**PPSNTK**" information. If you don't know the acronym, we can't tell you or, you know, we'd have to kill you.

That brings us to my latest flare-up of Gadegetosis, the "**Best Tug**". The story of this acquisition has its roots in another medical issue I experienced in June of 2019. The doctor who performed robotic surgery on my abdomen had cautioned me not to exercise muscles in that part of my body for 8 to 10 weeks. Unfortunately, **AirVenture 2019** was on the schedule with **PPO Doolittle** and I slated to depart in late July for the Badger State. Now, the *Fightin' Skywagon* tips the scales at a gross weight of 3190 pounds, fully fueled and loaded with Doolittle's luggage. Moving the behemoth in and out of the hangar or parking spaces, even without surgical complications had become more and more difficult and often resulted in the need for **Tylenol/Scotch** therapy. This got me thinking that I should use the Oshkosh pilgrimage to survey the available aircraft movement devices on display at the massive vendor area. Thus, **JD3** and I found ourselves at the "Best Tug" booth on the receiving end of an enthusiastic sales pitch by none other than **Mike Patey**, founder of the company (along with many other super-profitable endeavors).

I was very impressed at the design and construction details. I think **Jimmy**, being a mechanical engineer nodded in approval as well but the most impressive, "take-your-breath-away" feature was the price. It was pretty obvious what engendered the name of the company. We wandered away to visit the other tugs on display but none of them had nearly the cool factor, triggering the **Gadgetosis Nervosa** flare-up.



As an aside, you may recognize the Patey name as associated with the outrageous “Draco” bush plane he and his brother built and campaigned around the STOL competition circuit a few years back. Draco was on display at OSH as well and showed a similar level of engineering and construction excellence, reflecting where the Best Tug got its engineering “genes”. His current project is called “Scrappy” and is another outrageous monster bush plane he has documented on his YouTube channel. It’s worth a look.

And then THE PANDEMIC HAPPENED!!! The VC-180 flying was drastically reduced, largely because there were very limited places to fly that didn’t present draconian anti-COVID restrictions. What flying has occurred has been solo, which meant exercising those pushing-muscles without assistance to coax the air machine out of its hangar. The result of the decreased fly-rate was that resources that normally would flow from the cavernous fuel tanks of the Skywagon to the carburetor for propulsion purposes began to “back-up” in the aviation budget. When these surplus funds were combined with the “COVID-relief and stimulus” checks from our government the premium price of the Best Tug began to appear more reasonable...and the rationalization began!



After a pleasant couple of conversations with **Kyle Patey** (obviously, a family business), I placed an order for

the A3 version of the Best Tug at the end of August 2020. Dealing with Kyle was delightful as he and the whole Patey clan are pleasant, aviation-minded folks...just like us! He offered me the “AirVenture” discount and, said that since I was the first customer at KWJF he would throw in the nifty LED “headlight” option (visible in the pictures below).

About a month later a large truck showed up from Spanish Fork, UT bearing a nicely engineered (naturally) crate. JD3 and Fox Airfield Manager Steve Irving were on hand for the un-boxing. The first thing we noticed was a partially-deflated mylar “Thank You!” balloon tethered to a large bag of Skittles candy...nice touch. After releasing the tie-downs on the tug assembly consisted of merely installing the tug attachment arms (no tools required) and plugging in the battery charger.



The length of those arms was a topic of concern before I placed the order due to my desire to leave the tug attached to the tail wheel of the VC-180 when in the hangar. With the shortest available arms a gap about the size of your fist remained between the Skywagon’s spinner and the frame of the hangar door.” This would not have been an issue if I had more space to maneuver the tug behind the airplane...or if the airplane was to be towed from a “nose wheel” (🍷 EWWWWW....) which would allow unlimited maneuvering to hook up. Kyle and the staff were very accommodating about providing measurements of their various arm options to find a configuration that would work.



So, how does it work? In a word...”AWESOME”! Moving the Fightin’ Skywagon out of its lair is as easy as unplugging the tug’s battery charger/maintainer, pulling the chocks and gently pressing the “go” button on the tug’s handle. No wrestling with a heavy machine or struggling to get a recalcitrant gasoline-powered tug to fire up. The tires of the tug have an impressive grip, but overcoming the inertia of the C-180K can cause some tire spinning. To minimize that minor problem I obtained some self-adhesive “no-slip” material from McMaster-Carr to give the wheels enough purchase to get the airplane moving.



No-slip material installed. Note headlight (very helpful in a sun-lit hangar)

Once under way it is very smooth and controllable. There are some “techniques” to learn in pushing a taildragger with the tug...similar to learning the skills of backing up a trailer with your car but description of that issue is probably best done in a demo at the hangar if anyone is interested. Pulling the airplane back into the hangar is much more straightforward. The company website, www.BestTugs.com has videos depicting operations in several inches of snow! Overall, I am very pleased with the unit and wish I could have afforded it earlier in my airplane-ownership tenure. I’m sure the Best Tug will make the remainder of my flying career more pleasurable and less strenuous. I definitely recommend the unit...and the company.



As a final note relating to the level of customer service an unsolicited parcel from Spanish Fork showed up in my mailbox just a day or so ago. It contained a neat “brick-style” rechargeable battery pack with a big thank you card for becoming a “member of the Best Tugs family”...very classy and reminiscent of high-end retailers like Breitling. By the way...There are numerous other custom options available to personalize your Tug to include attachments for towing other items or perhaps a paint job to match your airplane?

Hopefully the trends in the pandemic have taken a turn for the better and we can soon meet in person. Until then, see you on the ZOOM!

Fly Safe and Check 6!

- Gary Aldrich
Kommanding

A Letter from The Texas Barnstorming Museum

(Oddly enough, at no place in this letter did Jim Baker tell us where the Texas Barnstorming Museum is located. Another quick Google search shows it on Hallettsville TX Municipal Airfield (34R), pretty much at the midpoint between San Antonio and Houston. Their web site is <http://www.whereolddogsfly.org/> which shows this wonderful picture.)



Where Old Dogs Fly (and teach young pups)

Dear Mr. Aldrich,

I hope this finds you well!

I’m reaching out to EAA Chapter Presidents in the hope that you might help us spread the word on our Vans RV-12 raffle with the proceeds benefitting our scholarships drive.

We are a small Aviation museum in South Central Texas, and a 501(c)3 non profit organization, and utilize antique aircraft to teach kids any of the aviation trades, from becoming a Pilot, Engineer, or A&P Mechanic. The museum arose from the realization that kids in our area had little or no exposure to Aviation, and a grass roots effort arose to create the museum, which morphed into the

non-profit organization. At no expense to them, the kids learn in a J-3 Cub, and after soloing that, transition into a Grumman Traveler for their PPL. So far, we've been pleased with our graduates, at present we have 5 kids in various Aviation Colleges (not too bad for a town of 2600 population) who will hopefully continue on into various aviation fields. In addition to their flight training, most kids here have flown the Stearman, TravelAir, etc. If they are so motivated, we teach them welding, woodwork, and the other skill sets that go into restoration and maintenance.



The RV12 we are raffling was built by a friend and supporter of the museum, Milton Weikel, who was a lifetime member of the EAA and hadn't missed the annual EAA Fly In in Oshkosh, and before, when it first began in Rockford, IL, ever... not one. Milton built the airplane to completion, flew it about 5 hours, and then began building a "Legal Eagle" when he was stricken with a rare form of cancer and passed. He had a passion for aviation that was just boundless, and was always eager to help the kids. He was a powerful motivating force here, and missed. We painted the aircraft and are at present finishing the certification flights. We will send the aircraft to a Vans specialist to have all the Service Letters complied with immediately prior to the drawing. The airplane is essentially a brand new aircraft, and beautifully constructed (Milton was an engineer by profession and education, and the craftsmanship is just beautiful) We are going to use the proceeds of the raffle to benefit our ongoing "Kids in Aviation" scholarships and allow us to begin a new crop of young pilots and mechanics, and will bear the name "The Weikel Scholarship in ...", and will be offered in Engineering, Aviation and A&P Mechanics. In addition to the airplane, several more prizes are offered and have been sponsored by some great aviation companies like David Clark, Sporty's, Aircraft Tool and Supply, and Garmin. I'm continuing to add prizes as the raffle continues.

There is much more information about us on our website (www.whereolddogsfly.org), Facebook (Texas Barnstorming Museum) and in past and upcoming articles in General Aviation News.

If not too much trouble, would it be possible for you to share my letter with the members of your EAA Chapter?

The link to the raffle is-

<https://rafflecreator.com/pages/41866/vans-rv-12>

Thank you so much for your time and consideration, and if you or your members are in South Central Texas, please stop by! We have 2 yearly fly-ins with about 300 in attendance.

Thanks So Much,

Tailwinds,

Jim Baker

President, Texas Barnstorming Museum

[\(361\)772-6434](tel:3617726434)

Ed Bradfield's Grumman Cheetah For Sale

Local pilot and former Edwards AFB engineer **Ed Bradfield** passed away recently from COVID-19. His Grumman Cheetah is located on Rosamond Skypark and is now for sale. The person in charge of the sale is Gary McIntyre. His email is garymacrealtor@gmail.com. His phone number is 661-418-8159.

N9652U Aircraft Registration

Aircraft Summary

Summary

1975 GRUMMAN AMERICAN AVN. CORP. AA-5A

Fixed wing single engine

(4 seats / 1 engine)

Owner

BRADFIELD EDWARD N

ROSAMOND , CA, US

(Individual)

Airworthiness Class

Standard/Normal

Serial Number

AA5A-0018

Engine

LYCOMING 0-320 SERIES (Reciprocating)

Horsepower: 180

Weight

Less than 12,500lbs

Speed

105mph

Mode S Code

053270552 / AD716A

Registration Details

Status

Assigned

Certificate Issue Date

2018-01-11

Airworthiness Date

1975-09-17

Last Action Date

2020-08-27

Expiration

2024-01-31

Registry Source

FAA



Tips from the ToyMaster

(Originally published March 1996. This article reprinted for historical interests. Don't try to buy one of these.)

Gadgetosis Nervosa...If your name is neatly printed on the address label of this newsletter, you; or someone you know suffers from this insidious killer of bank accounts. In its most advanced state, it can contribute to a full-blown case of the dreaded AIDS (Aviation Induced Divorce

Syndrome). This month's tip deals with a related strain of the disease known by the initials HIV.

HIV, or Hysterical Illuminodeficiency Virus, is caused by that innocuous little device floating around the bottom of your flight bag...the flashlight. We've all been there; no moon, black as the inside of a cow, so dark that the wingtip strobe flashes are swallowed up as if by some diabolical wormhole. You get the picture. You're on the NDB to Fox, deep in the soup, those 50-cent post lights you picked up at the swap meet are proving they aren't worth even that, so your trusty Mini-Maglite is firmly clamped in your teeth. As you approach minimums Joshua Approach calls for a radio check, and as you key the mic and start to talk your AA-cell cigar departs to live among the Snickers wrappers and 5-year old sectionals in the bowels of the airplane. No sweat, right? Grab your backup light. . .you know, the one with the batteries stolen from the kid's walkman...etc., etc.



"YOU PAID \$40 FOR A FLASHLIGHT?!?!?!?" (\$66.92 in 2021) If you hold the page up to your ear, you can still hear my wife shrieking those words as she methodically reduces my MasterCard to shreds of plastic. "Au contraire, my love" I say soothingly. "This is no mere flashlight, it's 'a unique lighting instrument', and 'one of the best cockpit safety enhancement devices ever'." I gently open the elegant leatherette case to reveal the "Blackout Light" manufactured by NavAire Instrument Corporation of Akron, Ohio. Let me tell you about this little beauty while she is off searching for my backup charge cards....

To call this just another flashlight is to call the Mustang just another airplane. Neatly encased in the aforementioned leatherette box is a true example of elegance in engineering. Measuring 3.5 by 1.0 inches in length and height and weighing in at 2 ounces, the Blackout Light is well constructed from space age high-impact ABS plastic and anodized aluminum. It is powered by two AAA cells (included) and has both clear and blue-green lenses. What sets this instrument apart from the average flashlight is the included mounting system which allows you to fasten the light to virtually any headset (or anything else, for that matter) for true hands (and teeth) free operation. The Blackout Light uses a clever mounting scheme comprised of a disk-shaped, self-adhesive bracket sporting a quarter-inch "nipple". With minor pressure, this

nipple engages a suitably sized receptacle in the body of the light. The fit is such that the light can be adjusted through 360 degrees of pitch and about 20 degrees of yaw and roll. This movement allows illumination of the charts in your lap as well as the instruments on the panel and there is enough friction in the system to hold the adjustment until you change it. The light weight and small size combine to make the installation virtually transparent on most general aviation noise reducing headsets. Three different brackets are included to fit any headset contour as well as a strip of the ubiquitous Velcro to cover the other one percent of mounting problems. A simple quarter-turn of the aluminum head, in either direction, turns the light on and there is no focusing required to obtain an optimum lighting pattern. The blue-green filter is touted as "the new standard for cockpit lighting" and "military style". Even though I have a passing acquaintance with military technology through my day job, I can't vouch for this claim of "unsurpassed night vision performance". However, in scientific trials while piloting my Jeep through the Antelope Valley night, I can say that the illumination provided by the light made reading even the fine print of the instruction brochure easy and my night vision did not seem affected. I suspect that performance in the air will be at least as satisfactory. The blue-green light has the appearance of being brighter than the typical red lens while not producing glare. I also suspect the color is night-vision-goggle (NVG) compatible, but I'll let the more well-heeled among you test that theory out. Other features of the light include a high intensity grain-of-wheat sized bulb common to most modern mini lights, as well as a matte-finished reflector which gives an even light pattern free of hot/dark spots. Too cool, you say? Well, in the fine tradition of the Ginzu knives, that's not all! The tailcap of the light contains a handy compass that (when separated from the batteries) reliably points out the North magnetic pole! Now you see how they come to call this thing a "safety enhancement" system.

OK, so I've got you all lathered up and ready to spend...how do you get yours? I got mine from the ~~JetStream aviation catalog (1 800 470 2FLY) for \$39.95. You can also contact the light's maker, Navaire, at 1 800-603-6014.~~ (Some quick Google searching seems to strongly indicate that this product and company are no longer available) Their brochure lists a full complement of replacement parts and additional brackets to ensure years of trouble-free aviating. Oh yeah, the "piece d'resistance"? It comes in two colors...black for the Bose crowd, and David Clark green to match the discriminating aviator's ensemble. If you aren't dialing one of those numbers right now, you're not infected with Gadgetosis Nervosa....yet! (P.S. Admitted G.N. carrier **Norm Howell** bought his after deliberating for nearly a micro-second. Ask this noted flight test legend for his personal assessment.)

- Gary Aldrich

Opie Confirmed as Chapter Camping Czar for EAA Chapter 1000

Yup, already that time of year! Assuming it doesn't get cancelled, I would once again ask to be crowned as Chapter Camping Czar for EAA 1000. As usual, please put a notice in the newsletter to contact me ASAP for a spot with the group. I'll need a name and EAA number to hold each site.

--

Doug Dodson

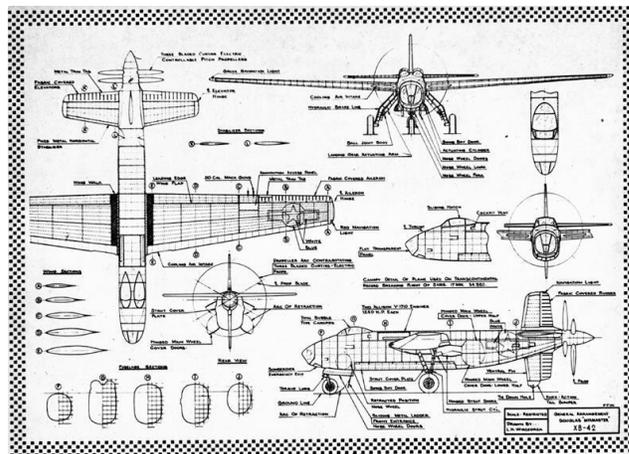
694opie@gmail.com 210-343-2992

Glasair II-S FT, RV-8, PA-32R-301

Flight Test Engineer, CFI-A/S&MEL/Glider, A&P/IA

EAA 1000 Chapter Camping Czar

More Pictures You'll See At This Month's Zoom Meeting



Web Site Update



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

EAA Chapter 1000 Board of Directors Meetings are now held on an unscheduled, as needed basis. If you need to know when, you're already on the e-mail notification list. (661) 609-0942

Feb 16: EAA Chapter 1000 Monthly Meeting, 5:00 p.m., Your COVID-19 Defense Bunker, Undisclosed Location. (661) 609-0942

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

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

May 15: EAA Chapter 1000 Annual Aviation Event, currently accepting ideas for activities. (661) 609-0942

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

Jul 20: CNX EAA Chapter 1000 Monthly Meeting, Cancelled in lieu of AirVenture (we hope). (661) 609-0942

Aug TBD: EAA Chapter 1000 Baseball Meeting, 6:00 p.m., The Hangar, Lancaster CA. (661) 609-0942.

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

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

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

Dec 21: EAA Chapter 1000 Festivus Etc Celebration, 6:00 p.m., Kommandant's Kwarters, 42370 61st Street West, Quartz Hill CA. (661) 609-0942

Jan 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, George Gennuso, 3119 Lennox Ct, Palmdale CA 93551. 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, 661-754-0524, 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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<http://www.eaa1000.av.org>

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

THIS MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS:

ZOOM MEETING 16 FEBRUARY @ YOUR PLACE

'WHAT WERE THEY THINKING?' PRESENTATION

KOMMANDANT GETS BEST TUG

CELEBRATING GADGETOSIS NERVOSA

