



# 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>

October 2002

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:



## A BOOGER RETURNS

**Earl Fisher**

**Tuesday, 15 October 2002**

**1700 hrs (5:00 PM Civilian Time)**

**USAF Test Pilot School Auditorium**

**Edwards AFB, CA**

Well, Space Cadets, what haven't we done this year? I could go through and do a recap of the all the meetings and make you guess, but I won't, we'd be here forever. Anyway...**History!** Yes, you heard me right, History. Now I'm not talking about all of those long boring classes that you sat through in high school. I'm talking about the history of Muroc and the Air Force Base that was once Muroc and is now Edwards. A lot of history happened there before many of us arrived on the scene.

Through the magic of the Internet and our stellar web site, one of the folks who was here in the early days has contacted me and agreed to hold a little question and answer session. Who is this ghost from the past you ask? That would be **Earl Fisher**, and I'll let him tell you in his own words how he comes by this knowledge.

"In 1942 when **Bell Aircraft** and **General Electric** were at "North Base" with the **XP-59** flight test project and the crew were fighting the scorpions, tumble weeds and boredom, the resident "Desert Rats" adopted a nom de guerre they felt was descriptive of their plight. Test pilot **Jack Woolams** kept the herd together with endless antics (you've all heard of the 'cigar smoking gorilla' in the propless aircraft that pulled alongside the fighters from **George AFB**) and felt "Desert Rat" was too easily associated with a certain vermin excretion some of the

locals tagged them with. The mysterious **Boogieman** aircraft made him, **Tex Johnston** and **Frank Kelley** the **Boogers** and everyone picked it up. When they got together for any reason at all, they wore their trademark of a big black handlebar mustache and black derby hats, including the women, and sang their rendition of "Roll Me Over In the Clover". **Pop Fisher** was one of the pack and as his progeny I inherited the title.

Over the years from '42 to '62 Pop and I were in and out of Muroc on various flight test programs and since leaving there I've never felt far very away. I took care of and soloed from **Pancho Barnes'** airport when there was flight training there as a kid so there are many memories in the valley for me.

Sincerely

**Earl Fisher"**

I'm sure that Earl was just scratching the surface of some of the stuff that he will share with us next meeting. I don't know if you've noticed or not, but when pilots get together one story usually leads to another. Sounds like this is going to be a lot of fun, so come on out and enjoy some chips and dip, the old chocolate chip cookies and a night out with your friends.

- **George "Knife" Gennuso**

Vice Kommandant

## Operation Rubidoux X After Action Report

21 Sep 2002



"A complete report of the events as they may have occurred."

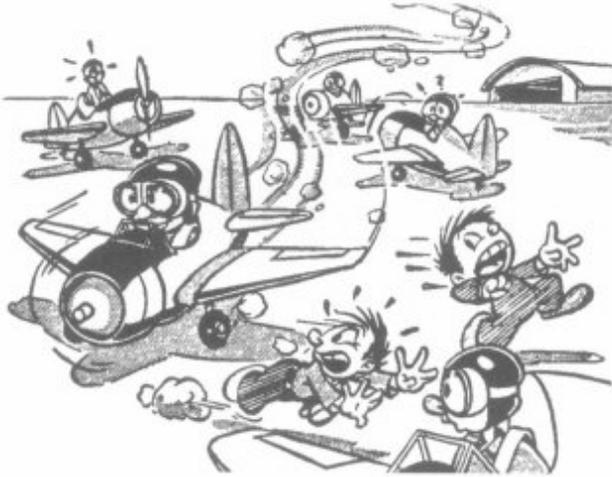
**PPTAF** members

**Aldrich, Erb, Gennuso and**

**Troxel** assembled at **KWJF**

airport (designated rally

point) and departed precisely on schedule at or around 0800ish in the **VC-180 Fighting Skywagon**, proceeding to Apple Valley airport for breakfast. The **Kommandant** used the layover to brief the team on routes, timetables and objectives. Upon departure, **Vice-Kommandant George "Knife" Gennuso** took the opportunity to "demonstrate S-turn technique" to the crew during taxi for take-off.



**The Vice Kommandant Demonstrates His S-Turn Technique**

As the new member of the team, I exercised uncommon judgment in remaining silent and instead observed the veteran **PPTAF** team as it prepared for action. Having the usual butterflies associated with “first time in combat”, I was encouraged by tales of past assaults on Chapter 1, and especially the quelling of the Flabobian Rebellion of '98.

Our formation of one arrived at Flabob International Airport without incident, but upon entering the pattern was intercepted by a **Bushmaster Tri-motor**. The **Kommandant** demonstrated coolness under fire and executed evasive action, culminating in a landing almost as planned. Flabobian ground troops immediately set upon us and directed the **Fighting Skywagon** to transient parking in the grass portion of the apron. Again, the **Kommandant** demonstrated his mastery of tactics by accepting the obvious sleight rather than prematurely divulging our cover and true intent. After all, we appeared to the world just another 180, despite the awesome force concealed within.



**The Bushmaster—Hardly An Effective Interceptor**

The team members disembarked and secured the aircraft by placing the “**Project Police Tactical Assault Force**” placard in the windshield, having complete

confidence that the fear such notice would instill would ensure the safety of the aircraft. The team proceeded with assigned inspection assignments.



**The First Part of Any Operation—Land, Secure the Aircraft, and Take Pictures of Ourselves. Pictured are Vice Kommandant Gennuso, Kommandant Aldrich, and PPO Newbie Troxel**

In addition to the **Bushmaster Tri-motor** (a modern reproduction of the famed Ford tri-motor, other aircraft inspected were numerous **RVs**, **Lancairs**, **Glaisirs**, **Wacos**, **Stearman**, a **230HP Super Stinson**, a beautiful restored **L-19/O-1A Bird Dog**, and a rare **Twin Navion**. The team encountered several “friendly forces” including **Bernie Bakken** with **Ron Karwacky’s** beautiful **Cessna 195**, and **Paul and Victoria Rosales** and their award winning **RV-6A**. In addition, the **Northrop N9M** flying wing made several low passes over the admiring assemblage.



**Very Nice L-19 Bird Dog, Although A Search Of The Archives Found No Reference To The Army Every Painting Their Aircraft With Imron...hmmm...**





**Erbman and Knife Succeed In Their Assignment To Find Long, Pointy Things On The Bird Dog**



**The Northrop N9M Flying Wing Mucks Up The Flabob Pattern**



**PPO Newbie Cobra Receives Project Police Pointing Training From Knife, Using the Karwacky/Bakken Pitot Tube Cover as a Subject**



**What Happens When Pilots Don't Get Enough Tail**



**The Latest In High-Tech Airspeed Systems on a Tiger Moth**



**The Smiling Twin Navion Taxes By the Watchful Eyes of the PPTAF**



**Linking Up with the Rosales Contingent**

Next stop was Turner’s Repeat Aviation. Finding no airplanes in work, we still enjoyed viewing the fine art work and what seemed to be a meeting of the local Porsche club. Most interesting was a 914 powered by a Chevy small block V-8.

The assault team then proceeded to capture the airport flag. The event was recorded on film by **Erbman**, the team’s designated historian. I was instructed in the use of the “**Project Police Point**” as developed and refined by **Knife**, and had the opportunity to hone this skill during the remainder of the operation. Team members then stormed the airport restaurant where we were offered serving wenchens in an attempt to appease our wrath, but we could not be swayed from our appointed rounds, or squares either.



**Capturing The Flabobian Memorial Flag (Flag Cropped Out To Save Space)**

Moving on, the team encountered **Ray Stits** presiding over copious amounts of prized aeronautical memorabilia. Ray displayed a Pitot tube with North American Aviation markings. The **Kommandant** easily identified and declared the part to be from the X-15. Ray Stits immediately elevated his asking price from \$5 to \$6 based on the evaluation.

Next came entry into the EAA tent, command center of the **Chapter One “Flabobians”**. Exercising his

“command voice”, the **Vice-Kommandant** announced to all present: “**Project Police!** Hands up against the wall, feet back and spread ‘em!” In what would appear to the casual observer to be a blatant disregard of the order, the **Vice-Kommandant** astutely deduced that everyone was actually paralyzed with fear. Satisfied with the result, the team moved on.

However, one Flabobian was not impressed. “Wingnut” editor **D.K. Heller** attempted to use her “bull”horn to direct the **Project Police** to depart the tent. If it were only that easy. The **Project Police** don’t take instructions from just anyone. Don’t believe me? Ask their mothers....

Anyway, **D.K.** was quickly overcome with confusion trying to establish the center of gravity of the **PPTAF**, being thrown off by the non-uniform display of uniforms, not being able to make sense of the black, yellow, white, or incognito choices. Overwhelmed, she gave up and hung her head in shame, surrendering control of the airport to the all-powerful **Project Police**.



**“Wingnut” Editor D.K. Heller Hangs Her Head In Shame After Surrendering To The Project Police**

Since the **PPTAF** was only set up as a raiding force and not as an occupation force, it was in our best interest to see that diplomatic control of Flabob International Airport was returned to the Flabobians. After hours of counseling crammed into minutes, **D.K.** regained her composure and resumed her fly-in duties.



**D.K. Ready to Resume Diplomatic Control of Flabob International Airport**

Just outside the EAA tent, the team stumbled upon the RV factory display area featuring a beautiful RV-9A. The **Vice-Kommandant** requested permission to inspect the cockpit (he wanted to sit in it). As fate would have it, the RV “salesman” was none other than **Dick VanGrunsven** himself. Determining that he had sufficient authority to grant such permission, the **V-K** accepted his offer and proceeded to insert himself into the pilot’s station. Airplane noises were heard emanating from the cockpit. **NLE Erbman**, sensing an opportunity for blackmail, quickly snapped a photo of the **V-K** in this non-Pulsar aircraft for threatened posting in any areas where **Pulsar** builders are known to congregate. To ensure authenticity, and so that the **Pulsar** builders would know what they were looking at, I quickly turned on my mentor, using the **Project Police Point** to identify the backslider for another photo.



**A Photo Suitable For Blackmail: World Renowned Pulsar Builder George “Knife” Gennuso Jumps Ship and Tries On an RV-9A**



**Caught In The Act, Knife Stops Making 4-Stroke Airplane Noises Long Enough To Bemoan the Low Reliability of His 2-Stroke Rotax 582.**

At that point, having seen all there was to see, and having decimated (*centimated even?*) the meager resistance offered, the **Kommandant** declared “**Victory!**” and the

team returned to the parking area. The **PPTAF** placard had performed its intended purpose, as the **Fighting Skywagon** was found unmolested. Oddly enough, though, the two Cessna 180s that we had parked next to had mysteriously morphed into other types of aircraft during our stay. How rather odd....

The team returned to KWJF through the treacherous Cajon Pass, encountering the usual turbulence. I swore all other team members to secrecy about **my mild case of air-sickness**, which I attributed to **Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome** and/or **Combat Fatigue**. They agreed that no mention of this would be made in the newsletter or any other documentation. Still, the **Kommandant** graciously declared me fully “assault-team” qualified, provided I write the after-action report (*so tricky!*). The team debriefed (*I hope that’s not a pun!*) and departed, each man alone with his thoughts about the horrors of war. So disturbed by the day’s events, the **Vice-Kommandant** and I proceeded to the **Pancho Barnes** party to drown out our thoughts with alcohol.

But that, my friends, is another story.

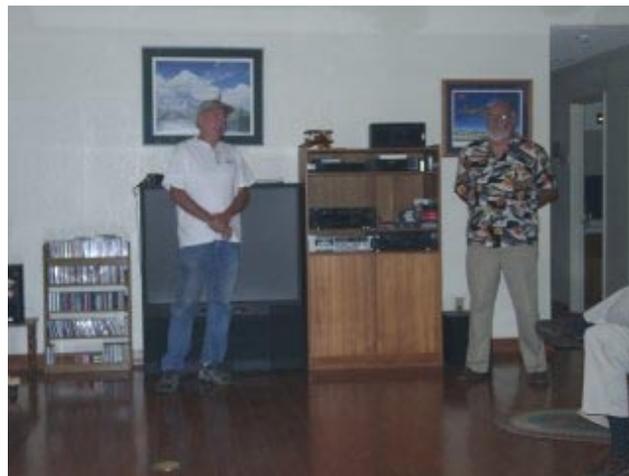
**- MAJ Kent “Cobra” Troxel**  
CA ARNG, Retired.

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### **Last Month's Meeting**

**EAA Chapter 1000**  
High Cay, Rosamond CA  
1700, 17 September 2002  
**Gary Aldrich**, Presiding

If you missed last month's meeting, you not only missed some great brats (courtesy der **Grillmeister**, **PPO Gennuso**). You also missed some great brewskis (courtesy the **Dodsons**) and some great camaraderie (courtesy the near-record turnout for September). But you mainly missed a great presentation by **Cliff Heathcoat** and **Steve Korney**. These guys are two SoCal formation pilots with FFI tickets that clear them to fly formation in special use (airshow) airspace. The crux of their message was that formation is challenging, educational, and fun to the point of being addictive.



## THE LEADING EDGE

The presentation wasn't all fun and games though. Steve kept it in perspective with a very difficult story of losing 6 close friends when he was in a trail formation last year along with 5 other airplanes. Their flight lead unknowingly took a turn up a box canyon without the performance to climb out. Try to imagine the radio chatter when three airplanes of the six realize that they aren't going to make it. Try to imagine the mood when Steve had to set up rescap over not just one but three smoke plumes, all the while knowing that no one was going to be rescued.



These guys made it clear that formation responsibilities, especially the lead's, are very serious. You don't want to get into this unless you plan to do it right. The good news is that **Stu McMurdy**, the CEO of FFI, feels that we already have within the chapter all the resources we need to set up a safe and enjoyable formation upgrade program. If that's our goal, we have been provided a bunch of resources to get it started, and several of our guys with military formation experience have volunteered to help. If you're interested, please contact me or any of the chapter honchos.

- Mark "Buttons" Dickerson

### Kommandant's Korner

Hey! We missed you at the Second Annual Aviation Street Faire last month. We saw a fine turnout of Antelope Valley residents despite the unseasonably cool temperatures and all-too-common blustery winds. Chapter stalwarts Doug and Gail Dodson, Russ Erb, George Gennuso, and yours truly were joined by Project Policeman and soaring icon Jim Payne to provide the only "real airplanes" on display. These included JP's world-record setting ASH-25E sailplane, Russ's Bearhawk, and the Pedal Pitts. Of course, one could argue that the P-38 fuselage remnant and the F-4D "plane-sickle" on display were also real airplanes...but I think the Bearhawk will see the skies long before the poor old Lightning and Phantom ever do.



The cool weather put a real damper on our ice-cold soft drink sales, but the Chapter treasury benefited, nonetheless, from our successful raffle. Second prize, the nifty **Keystone-Loening Amphibian** replica went to local Lancaster resident **Phil Kincaid**. First prize, the **Mike Machat** litho of the F-84s once flown by the USAF Thunderbirds, and beautifully custom-framed by **Graphic Experience** (on Lancaster Blvd); went to none other than our own **Grillmeister** and V-K, **George "Knife" Gennuso!** George was amazed at his luck over the other hundred or so hopefuls, but I'm convinced the win was in tribute for his unflagging support of the Chapter over the years. Congrats, **George**...I hope **Diane** lets you place your litho in a prominent spot in the Gennuso castle.

I don't want to overlook the contribution of **Project Policeman-in-training Shawn Fleming**; who showed up to help **Erbman** move his hardware back to Rosamond. His assistance meant for a quick and efficient tear-down as the **PPTAF** are wont to do.

Speaking of teardown, you won't be seeing the "world's most over-engineered piece of plywood", aka the Chapter 1000 Booth, at our events henceforth. Based on a recent Board decision to procure a more portable and lightweight booth for Chapter activities; the sturdy old monster was advertised for sale and went home with a representative of the **Soroptomists**. The \$250 received will more than cover the cost of the new "EZ-Up" folding shelter recently purchased at Costco.

The weather change seems to signal the end of the Summer flying season, but a few significant events remain. As you know, the Chapter is hosting the EAA's **B-17G, "Aluminum Overcast"**, at Fox Airfield on **Thursday, 24 October**. Seats are filling up fast for the nostalgic sorties, so act quickly if you want to say you've flown a Flying Fortress (and be eligible to purchase a nifty leather jacket embellished with Aluminum Overcast nose-art.) Remember, there are only 14 Flying Forts still airborne in this world. Even if you don't want to fly, come out and support the Chapter by assisting in launching and recovering the plane and marketing souvenirs. Due to the busy flying schedule, there won't be time for ground tours on Thursday, but I've just arranged for the airplane to be placed on static display at the **Edwards Open House** on **26 Oct** so you can get a look inside this beautifully restored piece of history. Of course, if you'd rather travel to Palm Springs to get your aviation fix, you might like to attend the annual AOPA convention being held there on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Forced to choose between these two fine events, Anne and I will be winging our way to PSP after the B-17 flights on Thursday.

With all this activity, I've decided to forego the Columbus Day Copperstate Fly-in at its new venue in Grande Valley, AZ (which will probably be passed by the time you read this.) I don't know who is going to have their picture taken with **Paul** and **Victoria**...

Anyway, best close before Evil Editor Zurg gets out his **red pen....**

Fly safe and check six!

- Gary Aldrich  
Kommanding

## Update On Chris And Lisa Shearer

Just wanted to send out an update on our status here at home before the real life changing events happen.

Lisa is doing well and is 2 1/2 weeks out from our due date (28 Sep 02). We still don't know the sex of the kid, but "Dot" is busily moving around. Consequently Lisa is having troubles sleeping. The room is ready, bags are packed, diplomas from all the classes (childbirth, anesthesiologist, stress and pain, hospital visit, breast feeding) are complete (no frames yet).

This past weekend I took care of the "man nesting," including washing the cars, changing the oil, rotating the tires, washing the dogs, mowing the yard, etc. Left to do are to install the baby seats and clean the bath room.

The giant rubber band (Lycoming IO-540, 260 hp engine) for our bi-plane made its way home from the airport a week and a half ago. I still love working on this project and am learning more and more everyday. For those who are interested I learned an important lesson when assembling all the parts. When the engine is mounted on its stand pointed down, you should place a rag in the back of the cam shaft until the engine is completely closed. Otherwise it is very easy to drop a bolt down that cam shaft. About 10 hours of labor later intermixed among 3 TDYs, I successfully retrieved the bolt without any damage. Progress is still being made on the airplane, but to the casual observer it doesn't appear like it. Oh well, I have a new assistant on the way to hold (or is that throw) my wrenches :-)!

I am looking forward to the excuse not to go on so many TDYs, and more importantly just looking forward to meeting this new little one.

Cheers

- **Chris "Mom" Shearer**

EAA Chapter 1000 Det 12, Melbourne FL

## Introducing Cassandra Marie Shearer

*Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above...James 1:17a*



Hi everyone!

She's here! Our beautiful, miraculous, gift from God arrived here on Thursday, September 19, 2002 at 5:42 PM. She weighed in at 8 lbs. 6 oz. and was 22 inches long. She is the most amazing blessing and we could not be happier. Baby, Mom and Dad are doing well. We are home now and learning a lot about each other. Grandma Doris is here and enjoying her time with Cassie, too. Thank you for being a part of our lives and for sharing in this incredible life-altering blessing.

With Love and Joy,

- **The Shearer Family**

EAA Chapter 1000 Det 12, Melbourne FL

## Coming Attractions

Things to look for in the next newsletter(s) that we couldn't fit in this month:

The **Kommandant** and our Tech Counselor **Ron Wilcox** check out the latest offering from Cirrus, including a glass cockpit, the much vaunted ballistic recovery chute, and a (what?) rudder trim tab (?).

A two-ship **PPTAF** invades the Golden West Fly-In.

Pictures showing how the **Project Police** wowed them at the Aerospace Walk Of Honor Street Faire.

And maybe, just maybe, an article about flying the B-17 by someone other than me(!).

Shucks, I might even eventually write an article about my Air Kompressor Hush Haus.

## Other Stuff To Do

If you're quick, you can still make it to the **Hollister AirFair 2002 Fly-In and Crash-Out on 11-12 October 2002**. The Fly-In will be held at Hollister Airport (307), about 30 miles east of Monterey CA. On 11 Oct 02 their guest speaker will be **John Kounis**, editor in chief of *Pilot Getaways* magazine. *(If you can't make it there, maybe we can have **Anne Aldrich** (aka **Mrs. Kommandant**) talk to us about writing about places to fly. Many of us think her style of writing is better anyway. If she wanted to take it up again, we would happily print her stuff right here in the **Leading Edge**. We can't pay anything, but it would give the **Kommandant** more excuses to fly places...)* For more info, contact EAA Chapter 1264 at 831-630-3020 or [joergens@gte.net](mailto:joergens@gte.net).

**Sean Roberts** of National Test Pilot School will be speaking at the Society of Flight Test Engineers annual banquet on 1 Nov 02, and you're invited! Contact **Dave VanHoy** at [david.vanhoy@edwards.af.mil](mailto:david.vanhoy@edwards.af.mil) or 661-277-8923.

## Web Site Update

As of 5 Oct 02, the hit counter stood at **77292**, giving a hit rate of 36 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**

Oct 10-13: Copperstate Regional EAA Fly-In, Phoenix Regional Grand Valley Airport (A39), Phoenix AZ

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

Oct 19: Young Eagles Rally, 9:00 a.m. Tehachapi Municipal Airport, Tehachapi, CA. (661) 822-0806

Oct 24-26: AOPA Expo 2002, Palm Springs CA

Oct 26: Edwards AFB Open House

Nov 5: EAA Chapter 49 Monthly Meeting, 7:30 p.m., General William J. Fox Field, Lancaster, CA. (661) 948-0646

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Feb 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.

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 CORRECTION REQUESTED**

**THIS MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS:**  
**A BOOGER RETURNS @ TPS 15 OCT**  
**FLABOB 2002 REPORT**  
**PRELIMINARY AWOH REPORT**  
**NEWEST, YOUNGEST PPO**



**The Leader In Recreational Aviation**