

April, May, June, July 2013



Civilian Military Support Group NEWSLETTER



President's Corner

By **Danny A. Bazzell**



Danny A. Bazzell

Greetings Friends!

Summer is in full force here in the High Desert and it is inevitable that when starting up a conversation, someone will ask; "is it hot enough for you?" as if 110 in the shade is leaving some people wishing it could be a bit hotter? It has been a hot summer so far. In fact, the other day it was so hot I looked out in the yard and saw my dog chasing the neighbor's cat.... and they were both walking!

Over the last few months, a lot of behind the scenes activity has taken place within Civ/Mil. Our project to restore the name plaques at the flag park across from Building 1 at Edwards has been recently completed and the finished product looks amazing. Special thanks go out to our Civ/Mil project lead, George Nagy as well as Kevin and Brandon Garcia of Pacific Coast Powder Coating in Palmdale. They did an excellent job removing over 20 years of corrosion, repairing and refinishing all the nameplates and did so at a more than reasonable price. I would also like to acknowledge SSgt. Brody Anderson, 412th TW Command Chief Exec, for his assistance in removing and installing the nameplates at their respective flagpoles.

We have also been working with the Edwards First Sergeants' Council and Airman's Council in identifying certain quality of life issues faced by the single/unaccompanied Airmen residing in the dormitories at Edwards AFB. I have received a top 5 "wish list" of things these young men and women feel would have a positive impact on their quality of life while living on base and will be reviewing the costs associated with this list to present recommendations to the Board at our August meeting. Stay tuned for more information on how you may be able to assist going forward.

Our 24th Annual BBQ was held on July 18 at the Hacienda Lane Ranch and as always, it was a wonderful event. A great time to get together with old friends, make new acquaintances and have an all-around fun evening of food and fellowship.

We were especially honored to have representatives of the Royal Air Force {RAF} contingent of the Joint Strike Fighter program in attendance. United Kingdom Operational and Test Director, Wing Commander Glenn "LJ" Littlejohns and Squadron Leader David Bapte along with their respective wives, Hayley and Alison, came out to experience the western hospitality of the Hacienda Lane Ranch as well as to be introduced to many community leaders and Civ-Mil members. Talk about climate change! Going from the United Kingdom to the Antelope Valley has to be a major adjustment. I wish the Littlejohns, the Baptes and the rest of the RAF contingent all the best here in our little corner of the desert. There will be more on the Barbecue in this newsletter so suffice it to say; I want to thank all of you who attended and those who worked to make it a success. I hope you had as much fun attending as Frances Lane and I did in hosting you.

On August 3, the Civ/Mil group will be participating as a sponsor of the Air Force Sergeants Association, "Wounded Warrior 5K Run" at the Jethawks Stadium in Lancaster. Proceeds from the event will benefit the Edwards AFB chapter of the Air Force Sergeants Association and the Wounded Warrior Project.

Our annual election cycle is full swing and you should be seeing ballots in the mail soon. Please remember to take the time to vote and mail back your ballots. Your participation will help set the future course of the Civ/Mil Group and its leadership and it is greatly appreciated.

In closing, I'd like to mention that we do have a website and Facebook page for those of you who are into this internet phenomenon. Al Hoffman and I try to keep Facebook updated with the latest happenings within Civ/Mil and John Fergione works hard on our website content. I invite you all to check out these sites and hope you "like" it. You can search Facebook using the name Edwards AFB Civilian/Military Support Group and our website is www.eafbcivmil.org.

Thank you and I wish you all a very blessed summer

Danny A. Bazzell

President

Edwards Air Force Base Civilian/Military Support Group

Civ-Mil Celebrates 24th Annual Barbecue

By Linda K.C. Reynolds
Staff Writer

“Courtesy of Aerotech News and Review”



The Edward Air Force Base Civilian-Military “Civ-Mil” Support Group celebrated their 24th annual barbecue at the beautiful Hacienda Lane Ranch in Palmdale, Thursday July 18, with approximately 160 members and guests. Aida O’Connor formed the organization with the purpose of establishing a friendly benevolent association of civic leaders and military personnel at Edwards Air Force Base.



Photograph by Linda K.C. Reynolds

Each year, the group considers a project that benefits Edwards AFB. Last year they purchased four sets of 56 flags to replace those tattered and worn at the Flag Park. A family, an individual or a business originally purchased each flagpole and plaque twenty-two years ago. This year’s project was to restore the plaques at the base of the flagpoles to their original condition.

“I want to give a special thanks to Pacific Coast Powder Coaters who gave us a price that was ridiculously low,” said Civ-Mil President Danny Bazzell. “Because of their generosity, the Flag Park looks as it did in 1991.” Bazzell also thanked TSgt. Brodie Anderson and his people for helping to install the refurbished plaques.



Bazzell started the informal and relaxed event with introductions of special guests including:

AFTC Commander Maj. Gen Arnold Bunch
Vice Commander 412th Test Wing Col. Daniel Daetz
Wing Commander Glen “LJ” Littlejohns,
Commanding Officer of the United Kingdom contingent of the F35 Joint Strike Fighter test program
Squadron Commander, David Bapte
Jack Connell, Chairman, China Lake Alliance
California City Manager Tom Weil
Palmdale City Manager David Childs

As well as representatives from Congressman McKeon’s, Congressman McCarthy’s and Senator Jean Fullers’ office.

Staying with tradition, guests recited the Pledge of Allegiance and Robert “Bob” Munden gave the invocation.



Civ-Mil gatherings are one of the few events where one can save their spot at a table with their purse or wallet.

“I think this is absolutely wonderful, sort of like it was in the 1940’s,” said a first time guest.

Senator Steve Knight, long-time supporter and dear friend of Civ-Mil, spoke about the newly formed Governor’s Military Advisory Council and the

Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC). When Governor Brown asked Knight for his input on who should be on the council, Knight advocated for Thomas Berard. "Tom knows Edwards inside and out and is a pillar of the community," Knight said.

The main mission for the council is BRAC. "If we have any more base closures, what do we do to protect California? Edwards is a unique place and I think everyone here would agree. We also have Plant 42," said Knight, "but things are changing."

Knight said that the newly formed council is only one month old while other states have had them for years. Whether it is a base, camp or factory, when BRAC comes around, Knight said everyone must be informed and protect their interests.

He also spoke of the largest contract in Air Force history, the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program that will hopefully last 30-40 more years and employ thousands of people, not just in California but also around the country.

For next year's agenda, Knight plans to work on a solution for the social security pension that is running out of money. "People are living longer, we are running out of money, and you need to talk to your doctors and pharmacists about that," he joked.

With people buying more hybrid and electric cars, the 36 cents tax that is collected with every gallon of gas will need to be obtained by other means to maintain and build new roads.

He was certain that Brown would run for office again. "He doesn't fix things the way I would, but he is working and trying hard to fix a lot in California. We are still broken but getting better," Knight said of Sacramento.



Along with Bazzell, Community Queens Vanessa Banford and Tiny Miss Antelope Valley, Madison Dicob, helped with the raffle.

Madison's eyes lit up when an ice cream maker was up for raffle and she showed great poise when her ticket was not picked. At the end of the evening, the lucky winner, Aerotech News and Review Publisher Lisa Kinison gave the Tiny Miss the coveted

prize. "I'm so happy, I wanted it so bad! Thank you!" said Madison.

On behalf of Civ-Mil, Frances Lane was presented a gift from Dr. George "Bud" Reams and Aida O'Connor for graciously donating her property as the venue for the barbecue for the past 24 years. "I don't expect anything, but I certainly do appreciate the gifts," said Frances.

General Bunch wrapped up the evening by leading the group in the Air Force Song.

While Gen. Bunch was cleaning off tables and stacking chairs he whispered, "Hurry and take my picture; nobody ever thinks that we generals do any work!"

For more information on the Edwards AFB Civ-Mil Support Group, please visit <http://www.eafbcivmil.org>.

*To the Men and Women in Uniform
Past and Present*

We Thank You for Your Service



Our 2013 Annual Project is Complete

By John A. Fergione
Board of Directors



As we reported in our May 2013 Newsletter, the decision on what our annual project for 2013 would be had not yet been made. There were a few possibilities. Since then, and due to overall cost considerations, the Board

of Directors decided to undertake the restoration of the

name plaques at the Flag Park. The plaques were in need of cleaning from water stains and a small number of them were bent and in need of repair or replacement. These plaques are 24"X 6", are made of bronze and are mounted on aluminum mounting brackets. You saw some of the damaged plaques in the May 2013 Newsletter.

George Nagy, a member of the Civ-Mil Board of Directors, took on the task of heading up the project. Quotes were obtained, recommendations were made to the Board of Directors, decisions were made and money was allocated. This project was expected to take some time, but Pacific Coast Powder Coating in Palmdale was able to restore the plaques soon after being contracted. It was announced at the annual barbecue on July 18 that all fifty-six of the plaques had been delivered and installed at the Flag Park.

Cost was initially expected to be high enough that this would have been considered a multi-year project. Thanks to George Nagy's diligent efforts, Pacific Coast Powder Coating was able to complete the restoration for \$30.00/plaque. The total cost for the project was thus \$1,620.00. Bravo Zulu {Navy Speak} George!

Our thanks also go to Tech Sergeant {Select} Brody Anderson for coordinating the installation of the plaques at Edwards AFB. Some examples of the newly completed plaques are shown below:



Photography by: Al Hoffman

EAFB Civ-Mil History

Chapter 5: Operation Higher Grounds Internet Cafe

By Richard Spann

Board of Directors



In the middle of 2006, Lt. Col. Herrie Reed, a Protestant Chaplain at Edwards, recognized the need for a facility geared to dormitory residents of the Base. He visualized a place within walking distance where Airmen could congregate in a relaxing, non-alcoholic atmosphere, and where they could surf the internet, play video games, read and watch TV and movies. As he was formulating his idea, and was passing it up the command chain, he tragically suffered a massive stroke and died on September 22, 2006. Shortly thereafter, Major General Curtis M. Bedke, AF-FTC Commander, was concerned with the closing, due to budget constraints, of the Joshua Tree Inn, a place where Airmen could eat and have a place to congregate. When the concept of an Internet Café reached him, he invited Aida O'Connor, Roger Persons and other Civ-Mil leaders to meet with him and discuss the possibility of some major financial help to launch the project. He asked the Civ-Mil members to meet with Command Chief Master Sergeants Juan Lewis and Kevin Soltis, who had a rough draft plan and financial need calculation, and determine the feasibility of such a project. The initial estimate was in the range of \$19,000 to \$20,000. After the meeting, Aida asked Roger what his financial assessment of the program was and he estimated it to be between \$35,000 and \$40,000. At the same time, the day room and an adjoining room in Building 2423 were being prepared for potential use as the Internet Cafe.

Aida, Roger, and the rest of the Civ-Mil Board decided to assist Major General Bedke by appealing for donations from citizens and organizations within the Antelope Valley. Showing their leadership, both Aida and Roger donated \$5,000 each and soon Aida talked to Frank Visco who donated \$2,500. She was also able to get an additional \$2,500 from R. Rex Parris. The campaign was now in full swing, with Ridgeview Land Company and Tri-Anim Health Services of Sylmar donating \$2,500 each. Several other companies and individuals donated between \$500 and \$1,000. An article in the Antelope Valley Press also brought in a number of donations, large and small. Very poignant donations by people, who were obviously supporters of the Military, but also people of little means, stood out. A donation by a Littlerock couple of \$5,000 and

a Quartz Hill widow's \$100 gift were significant in this regard. When the campaign was finished, \$31,050 was transferred by Civ-Mil to the Mission Support and Services Wing of the 95th Air Base Wing at Edwards AFB. There the supplies and materials used to furnish and complete the Internet Café were purchased, including televisions, game consoles, video games, a cappuccino machine, electrical fixtures, lighting, and other items

The opening of the Internet Café was announced for 0900 on July 13, 2007 by Colonel Bryan J. Gallagher, Commander of the 95th Air Base Wing. On that day, many Antelope Valley residents and Air Force personnel attended the ribbon cutting. Aida O'Connor and Master Sergeant Wilbert Hoffman of the 95th Mission Support and Services Squadron summed it all up by stating, "The Higher Grounds Café provides our Airmen with a state-of-the-art facility and they can take ownership of it. It provides them with a place to focus on their four dimensions of wellness. Airman 1st Class Nancy Rouse also stated that in planning the Café, "the committee didn't want it to look like an Air Force facility, but rather like a place Airmen could go and unwind." In retrospect, through the work of Civ-Mil and donations from many civilians in the Antelope Valley, the project was completed within less than a year from a concept by Lt. Col. Reed to fruition even though it started with no funds. Coupled with the fact that it finished before the Great Recession of 2007, an event that probably would have doomed donations, this is an effort of which Civ-Mil, the Antelope Valley, and Edwards AFB can be justly proud.

However, this was not the end of the by-products from Operation Higher Grounds. As a result of her leadership and efforts on this project, in particular, being involved in the founding of Civ/Mil and her leadership in many of its other projects over the years, Aida O'Connor was selected to represent the Air Force for a military-wide award, the Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher Distinguished Civilian Humanitarian Award for 2007. Major General Bedke, who had initially nominated Aida, stated, "She has been the spiritual center of {Civ-Mil} since it first began in 1989. She is a classy and fun woman with a huge heart. We love her for who she is, as much as for what she does."

Lastly, on September 22, 2007, Lt. Col. Reed's widow, Gwendolyn Reed, was present when Brigadier General Cecil Richardson, the USAF Deputy Chief of Chaplains, Major General Bedke, Colonel Bryan Gallagher, Master Sergeant Shawn Aldridge, the 95th ABW Superintendent, dedicated the Operation Higher Ground Internet Café in memory of Lt. Col. Reed. Aida O'Connor was a special guest. A large portrait of Reed was unveiled and hung in the Café as part of the ceremony.

The 2013 Annual Barbecue

Pictures by Kathy Fergione and Linda K.C. Reynolds



The Setup Crew (Jose, Ken, Frances Lane, John Fergione, Bob Slade)



Michelle Slade and Frances Lane



At the Bar (Pan Patel and Terry Landsiedel)

2013 ANNUAL BARBECUE



New Members

*We Welcome Our
Newest Members:*

PAUL DOBON

*As of the publishing of this Newsletter, our
Membership stands at 104 strong!*

Upcoming Events

**Aerospace
Appreciation Night**
August 17, 2013
Jethawks Stadium

Civ-Mil Installation
September 2013
More Information to Be Provided

Airman's Attic Notice

Special thanks to Pan Patel

If you, or anyone you know, are interested in making a donation to the Airman's Attic, here is some important information you should know. Pan has donated the use of a storage facility to hold items for delivery to the Airman's Attic. The storage unit is on his property at the Devonshire Inn, 2076 West Rosamond Boulevard in Rosamond. If you have any questions or would like to coordinate storage, please contact Pan Patel at (661) 256-3454.

We Need Volunteers...

At times, we get calls, with usually only a few days' notice, to pick up items being donated to the Airman's Attic. This generally involves loading a truck at a home or a storage facility and moving these donations to the Devonshire. If you would like to help us in this endeavor, please let us know and we will be glad to add your name to our volunteer list. We will call you, with as much advance notice as we get, when a pickup and delivery is being scheduled. The time you spend loading our (donated) truck will surely be appreciated by the young military men and women who really need these items.

Thanks in Advance!

Mission Statement

The purpose and general nature of the Edwards Air Force Base Civilian-Military Support Group is to establish a friendly, benevolent association of civic leaders and military personnel at Edwards Air Force Base, to act as a host group whenever needed and additionally, to consider an annual service project to benefit EAFB.

Find us on Facebook

search for
Edwards-AFB-Civilian Military-Support-group/

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The EAFB Civ-Mil Newsletter

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Kathy Fergione

Al Hoffman

Linda KC Reynolds

If you are enjoying reading this Newsletter, and you are not a member of Civ-Mil, but would like more information on the organization, please contact:

Art Furtado at (661) 965-5452.

You may also submit your request in writing to:

EAFB Civ-Mil

P.O. Box 812

Lancaster, CA 93584-0812

Attn: Membership Chairman

<http://www.eafbcivmil.org>