

July 2011



# Civilian Military Support Group NEWSLETTER



## President's Corner

By Mike Belzil

### *Summer Activities Heating Up!*



With summer upon us, Edwards Air Force Base Civilian-Military Support Group activities are heating up and we want you to be part of the action! As many of you know, on May 19th, Civ-Mil hosted our annual Spring Mixer at BeX Bar & Grill in downtown Lancaster. You will find a recap of the event in this newsletter. The mixer provided an excellent opportunity for commu-

nity and base leaders to socialize. The event was well-supported and the success of the event was validated by our highest attendance in several years. We intend to build on our success by delivering quality activities throughout the summer. Please mark your calendars and plan to participate!

### **Civ-Mil Annual BBQ, Thursday, July 28.**

The annual Civ-Mil BBQ will kickoff at 5 pm on Thursday, July 28th at Lane Ranch. Plan to come out to renew friendships and meet the newest base arrivals from Edwards AFB resulting from the summer rotation of leadership positions. Dress will be casual western attire, and our cooks will be grilling steak and chicken with all the fixings. We'll have prize drawings and a 50-50 promotion for the Airman's Attic at Edwards AFB. Invitations went out in late June. Be sure to sign up early so we can get an accurate attendance count and be sure to purchase enough food. Bob Slade, our point of contact, will be looking for help with set up, hosting and logistics.

## Civ-Mil Annual Elections

Our nominating committee chaired by Bob Johnstone has formed a slate of candidates, and voting will be under way throughout July to elect the Civ-Mil Board of Directors for 2012. Ballots will be received in the mail, so be sure to return your ballot and make your vote count! If you are interested in participating as a Board Member, a committee member, or even a member-at-large, please contact us so we can apply your talents to improve our organization! Our founder, Aida O'Connor, is always looking for assistance to help respond to the needs of the base.

As in previous years, this summer will be as busy as ever. The sole aim of Civ-Mil is to undertake initiatives which will benefit the active duty and family members of Edwards Air Force Base. We are always looking for volunteers, so I urge you to participate however you can. Let's resolve to make the summer of 2011 a great one for Civ-Mil and the Edwards AFB base residents! Finally, if you have any suggestions for Civ-Mil events, please let us know. We always welcome fresh ideas!

*Photos from past elections*



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# Edwards' Civilian Military Support Group Spring Mixer Enjoyed By All

By Raphael Jaffe and Linda KC Reynolds -Staff writers

(Reprinted with the permission of Aerotech News and Review)

The Edwards AFB Civ-Mil Support Group Spring Mixer was well attended and greatly enjoyed by all. It was held at BeX Grill on Lancaster Boulevard the evening of May 19. Over 110 attended, and reaction was that this "was the best Spring Mixer ever."



The Air Force Flight Test Center Commander, Brig. General Robert C. Nolan II headed the many command staff attendees from the base. Col. Gregory E. Schwab, Commander, 95th Air Base Wing and Col. Dawn M. Dunlop, Commander 412th Test Wing were there. Lt. Col. Ronald E. Cleaves, Commander of the Air Force plant 42 also was there. Both of Edwards Command Chiefs, CMSgt. Bill Thomaston and CMSgt. Chris McCollor were in attendance.

Most of the Civ-Mil groups Directors were there as well as many of the 125 members, many accompanied by their partners. Palmdale was represented by Councilman Mike Dispenza, and Kern County by Bryan Williams, local representative of Supervisor Zack Scrivner. Among the civic leaders was George C. Nagy, President/CEO of Mojave Desert Bank.

Brig. General Nolan thanked the Civ-Mil Support Group and the community for its "incredible community support" throughout the 60 year history of Edwards Air Force Base. "We sincerely respect the help and support we get from the community," said Nolan, "It really does make a huge difference."

The base now has about 13,000 personnel, and there is mutual support between the base and the surrounding communities.

Nolan said the base was now home to six of the new JSF aircraft, and would soon have nine of these newest Air Force aircraft. Those are larger numbers than originally planned, assigned here because of the outstanding work being accomplished in the test program.

He said in recent weeks, 30 new airmen have arrived, 8 of whom had young children. They have taken advantage of the Airman's Attic, which Civ-Mil is in the process of supplying with attractive carpeting

Another military officer in attendance was Air Force Reserve Brig. General James R. Hogue, who is the mobilization assistant to General Nolan. Among his other duties, General Hogue directs base support for space shuttle landings at Edward, upon requests from NASA Dryden Flight Research Center.

The evening was enhanced by continuously restocked heavy hors d'oeuvres tables. Many complimentary gift awards and gift baskets were handed out by drawing. There was a 50/50 drawing to benefit the Airman's Attic project. Director John Fergione arranged the mixer. Director Bob Slade and wife Michelle admirably handled the door and the raffle tickets.

The Edwards AFB Support Group exists to support warriors who support warriors. "I joined Civ-Mil because, as a veteran, I wanted to be able to take part in helping our young military men and women make their quality of life a little bit better," said Director John Fergione. "As a member, I feel I am achieving that goal, one project at a time."

About 125 civic leaders raise funds and contribute to provide essential but Air Force-unfunded activities such as "goodie bags" for deployed troops; Christmas family dinners and gifts for low-level enlisted; and a dorm Internet Café. The current project is about half accomplished. It is providing carpeting for the Airman's Attic, which helps the enlisted Airmen and their families. The Attic has clothes, household appliances, furniture and toys, etc. all free of charge.

New membership rolls close on May 31st this year. However, those who join before will get a free four months of membership as they will be enrolled until Oct 1, 2012. In addition to knowing you are supporting our troops; members-only obtain networking contacts with both business and military leaders. There are also social gatherings and unique member's only opportunities to participate in Air Force events. Also, Edwards AFB is considering granting base access passes to Civ-Mil members.

Those interested are invited to contact Membership Chair, [artfurta-do@roadrunner.com](mailto:artfurta-do@roadrunner.com), or group founder Aida O'Connor at [aidao.hanford@verizon.net](mailto:aidao.hanford@verizon.net). For more information, please call (661) 942-9657. Membership dues are \$60 annually for individuals, an additional \$40 for partners; and corporate memberships, which include a personal representative, are \$125.



# Preamble to Civ-Mil History

In the following newsletters, Civ-Mil will expand upon the group's accomplishments by delving past the "bullet format list" and talking to the individual items, one chapter at a time. But they won't be published in order (hey, George Lucas got away with it!); instead they'll be presented as they become available.

*(These chapters are not necessarily the final historical document either. If you, the reader, remember something pertinent about the subject presented, please let me know so that I can continue to update our historical documentation. Thanks in advance, John A. Fergione, EAFB Civ-Mil Historical Committee Chairman, john.a.fergione@Xsetp.org)*

## The History of the Edwards Air Force Base Civilian-Military Support Group

Chapter 5: The Honorary Commanders' Program  
by John A. Fergione

With special thanks to Maj Gen (ret) Curt Bedke and especially his wife Ina!

When Curt and Ina Bedke arrived at Edwards AFB in October, 2004 they knew there had been an Honorary Commanders' program in the past, but it had apparently not been maintained. They had some email notes referring to Joan Witte, from Paramount, as the Test Operations Honorary Commander, but they don't remember if any other squadrons still had one. He wanted to formalize the program across the Air Force Flight Test Center (AFFTC), and so he talked with Aida O'Connor, naturally, and they got things rolling.

In an email sent by Mike Belzil, who is currently the EAFB Civ-Mil President and was then the AFFTC/DS (Director of Staff) on Wednesday, July 27, 2005 (Can you believe Ina still had the original email? – Oh yes, if you know her, you can!), Mike wrote that Maj Gen Bedke planned to formally announce the establishment of the Edwards Honorary Commanders Program during his remarks at the Civ-Mil Annual Barbecue at Lane Ranch on the following evening. From a handout prepared by the AFFTC:

The Edwards AFB Honorary Commanders Program will pair Center, Wing, Group and selected Squadron Commanders with community leaders for a 1-year "tour". These pairings will encourage community-military leadership interaction and promote mutual involvement in base and community events. The program offers a great opportunity for community leaders to gain insight into EAFB operations. Military leaders will benefit through greater involvement in key community events. In-

creased interaction between civilian and military leaders will foster mutual cooperation, trust and esprit de corps.

*Honorary Commanders invite Comanders for a night at Jet Hawks ball park.*



Host Commanders will invite their respective honorary commanders and spouses to unit events such as tours, quarterly awards presentations, commander's calls, holiday parties, barbecues, ceremonies, deployments, and homecomings. In return, honorary commanders will include military leaders in similar community events. At the conclusion of the 1-year tour, host commanders will be paired with different honorary counterparts to promote expanded interaction with community leaders.

*Commanders invite Honorary Comanders for a party at Edwards Air Force Base.*



Following a meeting with Ms. Terry Scott, the EAFB Civ-Mil President at the time, Maj Gen Bedke endorsed the following as his first Honorary Commanders:

**Honorary AFFTC/CC (Commander): Ms Aida O'Connor**  
*Charter Member and Founder of the AFFTC Civ-Mil Support Group*

**Honorary AFFTC/MA (Mobilization Assistant): Mr. Lynn Watkins**  
*Director, Lancaster Department of Motor Vehicles*

**Honorary AFFTC/DV (Deputy Commander): Mr. Domingo Gutierrez**  
*Owner, Domingo's Restaurant, Boron*

**Honorary 412 TW/CC (Test Wing Commander): Ms. Alis Clausen**  
*Regional Manager of Public Affairs, Southern California Edison Company*

**Honorary 95 ABW/CC (Air Base Wing Commander): Mr. Dennis Davenport**  
*Former City Manager, City of Lancaster*

Thus, we can state that the official start of the "reincarnation" of the AFFTC Honorary Commanders' program was in July, 2005.

*End*

# Airman's Attic Fundraising Nearing Goal

By Danny Bazzell

Vice President, EAFB Civ-Mil Support Group

Last year the EAFB Civ/Mil Support Group took on the challenge of raising the necessary funds to provide new carpeting in the Airman's Attic at Edwards AFB. We were successful in raising 50% of the estimated \$15,000 needed to complete the project and the first phase of carpet installation was conducted in July of last year.

This year, the Board elected to continue the fundraising efforts in order to see the Airman's Attic fully carpeted and to-date we have raised approximately \$4,800 of the remaining \$7,500 needed to finish the project.

As you can see, we are almost there and with your help we can raise the remaining funds and have the last of the carpeting installed by the end of summer.

Your taxable charitable donations can be made by sending a check or money order payable to:

**EAFB Civ/Mil ,  
PO Box 812, Lancaster, CA 93584-0812**

*Please note on your payment that it is for the:*

**"Airman's Attic"**

## Civ-Mil Annual Project Airman's Attic Phase 2.

The Spring Mixer marked the kickoff of our 2011 annual project: Airman's Attic Phase 2. We successfully completed Phase 1 last year when we raised the needed funds for half of the carpeting needed to resurface the Airman's Attic. We are well on our way to meeting our fund-raising goal, but we won't stop short of the finish line. We are always looking for individual and business contributors. No donation is too small! Please contact our point of contact and Civ-Mil Vice President, Danny Bazzell, if you can help with contributions or can volunteer to assist. The Airman's Attic is rapidly becoming one of Air Force Materiel Command's showcase facilities, and our phase 2 project will complete the transformation. You can find additional details on Airman's Attic in a related article in this newsletter.

*The below is reproduced with permission from: Jeanne Bonfilio  
Public Information Officer California Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Homes of California for Greater Los Angeles and Ventura Counties.*



The William J. "Pete" Knight Veterans Home of California in Lancaster is a 60-bed Residential Care Facility, also known as "assisted living." The Veterans Home opened in 2010 and is currently accepting applications for residency. The Veterans Home provides residents with individualized care within a homelike environment that contributes to self-reliance and an independent lifestyle. It offers an enhanced plan of amenities, including:

- assistance with medical and dental services
- assistance with medications
- a modern fitness center and exercise classes
- library, cable television, and wireless Internet
- restaurant dining—three meals plus snacks
- dietary modifications
- housekeeping and laundry services
- caring and compassionate staff, and
- a variety of community outings and an enhanced activity program

The Veterans Home is located in the picturesque high-desert area of Southern California, just off the Antelope Valley Freeway, an hour's drive north from the San Fernando Valley. Lancaster and nearby Palmdale offer recreational and educational opportunities, including the:

- Antelope Valley Fairgrounds,
- Aerospace Walk of Honor
- California Poppy Reserve
- JetHawks Baseball Stadium
- Prime Desert Woodland Preserve
- Lancaster Center for the Performing Arts, and
- Parks, shopping centers and movie theaters

Veterans considering assisted living are encouraged to apply to any of the Veterans Homes of California. Spouses are also eligible to apply with the veteran. The Lancaster Veterans home is currently accepting applications for residency.

For admission information, contact:

**William J. "Pete" Knight Veterans Home  
of California - Lancaster**  
45221 30th Street West, Lancaster, CA 93536  
(661) 974-8140 or (661) 974-8160  
RCFE LICENSE #197607726

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# EAFB Civilian Military Support Group Accomplishments

*The EAFB Civ-Mil was founded in 1988/1989*



## ***Project***

***Airman's Attic***

## ***Status***

Phase 1: Funded and installation of half the carpet tiles completed October 13, 2010

Phase 2: Fund the remaining carpet tiles. In work.

***Operation Higher Grounds***

Internet Café. Fully funded all day-room furniture, 6 Computers and 2 Plasma TVs.

August, 2007: Dedication

July, 2007: Ground Breaking

2009: Supplied the coffee for the year

***Deploying Troops***

Provided numerous, over 3,000, goodie bags for deploying service men and servicewomen. (Ongoing since 2002)

***Flag Park across from Building 1***

Fully funded. Provided flags and poles. Replaced all flags several times.

***Operation Warm Heart***

Holiday Gift Baskets for families (Annual Holiday Meal Program).  
Christmas presents for children (Angel Tree). Support of the US Marines' Toys-for-Tots programs. Annual support since 2000.

***Air Show and Open House***

Sponsor. Set up booths and manned them with posters showing the current history of EAFB. Placed banners and other decorations and posters for the VIP tent as well.

***Armed Services Day Parade***

Financed buses for Airmen to participate in the Armed Services Day Parades.

***Building 1600***

Purchased the large US Flag used for Building 1600 events.

***Civ-Mil Wall***

Annual replacement of displays. First begun in September, 1998 and accomplished major renovations to it numerous times. This wall has been on display at various places at EAFB. Currently resides on 1st floor of the Consolidated Support Facility (95 ABW HQ), Building 3000

***Employee of the Year program***

Annual since 2002

***Operation Shoe Fly***

Joint Air Force and Marine assistance. Provided 7,000 pairs of shoes to Afghanistan school children (Summer, 2004).

***Picnic Tables and Benches***

Several projects all over the Base from 1995 - 2006, to include:  
Concrete picnic tables and benches at the Flag Park.  
Picnic tables for the Air Force Research Laboratory (2001).  
Six Benches for the Yeager Sound Barrier Park.  
Provided benches at the Century Circle display.

***Welcoming Receptions***

Sponsored welcoming receptions for the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, AFMC Commander and numerous other Distinguished Visitors and Civic Leaders from around the USA.

***60th Anniversary of the USAF Sponsor.***



# Edwards' Civilian Military Support Group Spring Mixer Enjoyed By All



Art Furtado, Bill Hogrefe,  
Kathleen Spoor



Shelly Shepherd,  
Allyson Graham



Col Russel Kurtz,  
Lt Col Ron Cleaves,  
Tim Hughes



George Nagy, Sue Hogrefe,  
Diane Nagy



Dana Haycock, Viki Lin,  
Robin Schwab



Brad and Rannah Smith



Charlotte Welling, Jane Uhazy,  
Norma Contreras



Civ-Mil Founder Aida O'Connor,  
Vice President Danny Bazzell,  
President Michael Belzil



Aida O'Connor, Harry Engle  
Bill Silva, Ron and Yvette Emard



Stan and Joan Turner,  
Jack and Ada Gregory  
Col Steven O'Connor



Jim Savena, Jack Gregory,  
Bill Shelton



Danny Bazzell, Col Dawn Dunlop,  
Brig Gen Jim Hogue



Roger Hemme, Brad Smith



Dana and David Haycock



Bob Slade, Paul Vitale, Danny Bazzell, Kim Perkins  
John Fergione, Aida O'Connor, Al Hoffman, Mike Belzil

# Edwards' Civilian Military Support Group Spring Mixer Enjoyed By All



Cathy and John Hart



Bob and Michelle Slade,  
Jeanette Ingold, John Fergione



CMSgt Bill Thomaston



Laura Mowry,  
Kim and Mike Strickler



Mark Thompson, Harriet Spann



Bryan Williams, Aida O'Connor,  
John Fergione



Art Furtado



Aida O'Connor, Lisa Wilkerson,  
Michael Belzil



Dennis Shoffner,  
Brig Gen Robert C. Nolan



Col Gregory and Robin Schwab,  
Cathy Hart, Aida O'Connor,  
Yvette Emard



Stacy and Domingo Gutierrez  
Charlotte and James Welling



Edmond Banayan, Viki Lin



Yvette Emard,  
Brig Gen Robert C. Nolan  
Aida O'Connor

## UP COMING EVENTS

### Annual Barbecue

*Hacienda Lane Ranch*

*Thursday, July 28*

*Chairman: Bob Slade*

*Social at 5:00 p.m.*

*Dinner (Steak or Chicken) at 6:00 p.m.*

*\$25.00*

*RSVP to:*

*Aida O'Connor (661) 942-1153*

### Installation Banquet

*September*

*More Information to Follow*

## MISSION

“The purpose and general nature of this organization is to establish a friendly, benevolent association of civic leaders and military personnel at Edwards Air Force Base (EAFB), to host groups incoming to Edwards, and to consider service projects to benefit EAFB.”



Photography  
*Linda KC Reynolds*

## BOARD DIRECTORS

Mike Belzil: President

Danny Bazzell: Vice President

James Welling: Secretary

George “Bud” Reams: Treasurer

Judy Bauer

Jim McGuire

John Fergione

Rex Moen

Art Furtado

Pan Patel

Cathy Hart

Pat Russell

Roger Hemme

Robert Slade

Allen Hoffman

Mark Thompson

Bob Johnstone

Dr. Les Uhazy

Terry Landsiedel

### Founder

Aida O'Connor

### Directors Emeritus

Terry Scott, Alis Clausen

### Honorary Lifetime Directors

Clyde Bailey, Tom Craft

George Fox, Roger Persons,  
Aida O'Connor, Andy Shillinglaw

Editor: **JOHN A FERGIONE**

Designer: **BRADLEY SMITH**

Printer: **BOHN'S PRINTING**

*If you are enjoying reading this Newsletter, and you're 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**