

# Contra Costa County Airports Newsletter

*Buchanan Field and Byron Airports - [www.buchananfield-byronairports.org](http://www.buchananfield-byronairports.org)*

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**Correct**



**Incorrect**

## Where Does Airport Security Stand Now?

By Keith Freitas

As most of you know, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has raised and lowered the Country's Alert Level as the threats to the country change. Where does this leave General Aviation and specifically Buchanan Field and Byron Airports?

After the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the face of aviation security, at all levels, changed forever. With the formation of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), aviation security continues to be defined and refined. The TSA has focused the majority of its time, energy and funding on the 546 commercial airline airports in the United States. Additionally, the TSA is expected to provide specific security direction to the 2,818 Reliever and General Aviation public-use airports in the near future.

Contra Costa County has been proactive in implementing various new security measures at both Buchanan Field and Byron Airports. Any specific security measures directed by the TSA will also be implemented, when provided. Additionally, Contra Costa County will be expending funds on new physical security measures and equipment in 2004.

The reality is that new security measures and requirements will be with us for the near and foreseeable future. We have a responsibility to protect all stakeholders, which may be yourself, your aircraft, your business, the

community and this country.

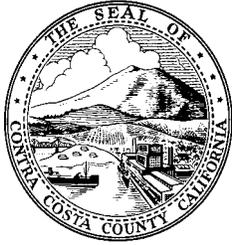
In today's aviation world, we will need to make some cultural changes. Most of us were raised to be courteous, kind and friendly to others. Access onto an airport once meant that if someone was behind us at a vehicle gate, we would let them follow behind us onto the airfield. We would also let someone have access onto the airfield if they stated that they had forgotten their key or access code. We would walk away from these interactions with a feeling that we had done a good deed for the day. Post September 11<sup>th</sup>, those days are gone. Today, access onto the airfield must be very different for obvious reasons.

A pilot's preflight should begin a little earlier than before. When driving to the airport give some thought to aviation security. Much like your aircraft preflight, if your gut doesn't feel right about something, investigate it further. If you feel it's appropriate, call 911, Airport Operations at (925) 646-5722 or use the AOPA/TSA National Hotline at 866-GASECUR (866-427-3287).

It is unlikely terrorism will touch Buchanan Field or Byron Airports, but if we keep up the vigilance, we may at least keep our neighbors' aircraft from being vandalized.

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## County Airports Forum Gets The Word Out

On May 1, 2003, County Airport staff and the FAA held a joint meeting for the users of the County Airports, as well as the community around the airports. Approximately 125 people attended the meeting. The group was welcomed by District IV Supervisor Mark DeSaulnier.

Airport staff reported on construction projects, budget and community relations. They were followed by the U.S. Coast Guard. The Coast Guard gave information on flying near the ADIZ (air defense identification zone)

and what to do if a pilot is intercepted.

Travis RAPCON gave a very informational presentation regarding the procedures to follow while flying through their airspace. The FAA runway safety group spoke about preventing incursions, and they gave an overview of a possible ground marker system at Buchanan Field.

Concord Air Traffic Control concluded the night by giving a presentation on problem spots on the airport, as well as information on the new tower displays (not Radar).

## What's Going On With All Those Weeds?

A question often asked this time of year (April and May) is why staff is not mowing the infields and vacant land at the airport. Many years of managing the grasses on the airports have shown that the primary maintenance nemesis and the most dangerous to aircraft operations is the starthistle.

Throughout the spring months the starthistle lies dormant under the shade of the other grasses, such as the rye and wild oats. Those two grasses are easily traversed by aircraft unlike the starthistle. Once that comes up, it grows rapidly, is very hard to cut and can easily flip over small aircraft that venture into it.

The vegetation management technique that works best is to do no mowing until the

first of June. That allows the rye grasses and oats to 1) dry out the soil, depleting the supply of moisture available to the starthistle, 2) provide shade to the small thistle plants that are just coming up in late spring, and 3) allow the ryes and oats to generate seed, perpetuating wanted vegetation.

After the first cutting, the County's herbicide spray crew sprays the starthistle that does come up without harming the ryes and oats that are then dormant. This process has many benefits. It controls the starthistle, reduces mowing costs, and makes a safer aviation-operating environment. The drawbacks are that the airport starts looking a bit shaggy in April and May each year. Please be patient. There is a method to the madness!



*To reach Airport  
Operations  
24-hours a day,  
365 days a year call  
(925) 646-5722*

## Byron Master Plan Update

On May 20, 2003, Leigh Fisher Associates presented their preliminary findings regarding the Air Cargo Feasibility Study for the Byron Airport to the County's Board of Supervisors.

On May 31, 2003, Leigh Fisher Associates then met with East County elected officials from Antioch, Byron, Discovery Bay, Oakley, and the Municipal Advisory Councils.

Preliminary findings from the air cargo industry indicate that Byron Airport is not feasible for air cargo hub operations within the 5 to 15 year planning window. Study findings also show:

- Air cargo operators are demand driven, which means sites must have local de-

mand.

- Byron Airport would compete with Oakland, Sacramento-Mather and Stockton Airports for air cargo operations.
- A majority of air cargo movements are via truck and East County roadways are restrictive.
- The cargo capacity at existing air cargo airports still has significant room for growth; therefore, capacity constraints will not force air cargo operators to look for alternate sites in the near future.

Leigh Fisher will concurrently be exploring other uses for the Byron Airport and will also review associated environmental and financial constraints.



## EAA Young Eagles Program Starts Another Year

The Experimental Aircraft Association's (EAA) Young Eagles Program was developed to welcome young people into the world of aviation. Children can experience a safe and enjoyable flight that will give new perspectives on the world and life in general. Participation in the Young Eagles Program will help them understand that an individual's potential is limitless.

The Young Eagles program allows young people ages 8 through 17 to go on a free airplane ride. The EAA has set a goal of flying 1 million Young Eagles by December 2003. Currently the number is almost 900,000. You can see the tally changing at [www.youngeagles.org](http://www.youngeagles.org).

Flights are given the first Saturday of each month. Young Eagles rallies were held

April 5, May 3, and June 7. Upcoming dates are July 5, August 2, and September 6. Registration begins at 9:00 a.m. and continues until 11:30 a.m. Volunteer pilots will fly as many kids as time and weather permit. The meeting location for the rallies at Buchanan Field Airport is the old terminal building at 181 John Glenn Drive, just south of the Concord Air Traffic Control Tower.

Rallies are designed for people who are not already Young Eagles. Current members may attend the rallies, but may not participate in the free flights.

General Chuck Yeager, the Honorary Chairman of the Young Eagles states it best: "Through the Young Eagles Program kids can learn to set high goals in all walks of life."



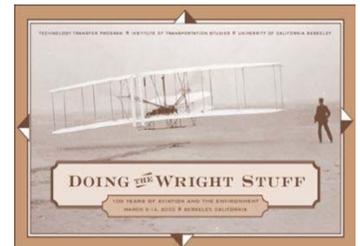
## Aviation Noise Symposium

The UC Berkeley Technology Transfer Program and Institute of Transportation Studies host an annual Aviation Noise Symposium to explore new technologies and lift efforts of maintaining the Air Transportation System while doing what is right for the environment. Some ideas explored at this year's symposium were:

- Community relations programs' vital importance to effective noise management programs.
- Airports as a community asset, not simply a

community cost.

- The airport's responsibility to show the stakeholders what the benefits are.
- Noise Management & Community Involvement:
  - Daily noise monitoring
  - Proactive approach
  - Airport, FAA, neighbors (The Players) must work together
  - Critical role of educating the public
- Imperative continuation of dialogue and compromise between all stakeholders



Aviation Noise Symposium was held in Berkeley, March 9 –14.

## Concord Hosts The CHRMRO Transportation Conference

The Coastal Region Hazardous Materials Response Organization (CHRMRO) hosted its annual Transportation Conference at the Concord Sheraton Hotel April 1-3, 2003. The organization was formed by a small group of hazardous materials handlers in the early 1990s.

Some of CHRMRO goals include team work within a joint command system, communication between agencies, common response practices and procedures, disaster preplanning, and training to respond together.

The conference offered 22 different classes ranging from *Up-righting Cargo Tanks* to *Placarding and Marking Requirements* to *Highway Transportation of Hazardous Package Freight*.

There were numerous static displays of different types of tankers and response equipment on the Airport transient ramp behind the Sheraton Hotel. CHRMRO also performed demonstrations of how to upright tankers after a roll-over accident. Providing space at the airport is another way the airport is able to support the community.



Up-righting full tankers will save hours of clean-up and commute time.

## Contra Costa County Airports

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### Buchanan Field and Byron Airports

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## Hard Working Students Day at Buchanan Field is a Success

On Monday, March 17, 2003, 14 advanced science students from Glenbrook Middle School in Concord met at the airport for some hands-on learning. These students have applied themselves academically and were invited to see real-world applications of the topics they have been studying.

The student's day started with a tour of the entire airport on one of the Contra Costa County Airport vehicles. The kids were able to see where aircraft are stored, what different businesses are at the airport, and to get a glimpse of all the different emergency services (such as CALSTAR, REACH, and County Sheriff's helicopter, STARR 1) based at Buchanan Field Airport.

Students were given a basic ground school course, taught by Pat Peters, a member of the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA), Chapter 393. They were taught many things, such as the basic principles of flight, airport layout, and navigation. Mr. Peters also took the students to see first hand three different types of experimental aircraft in the process of being built.

Students were able to go up into the Air Traffic Control Tower and get a bird's-eye view of the airport and

the runway configurations. They were all very excited that they got to watch airplanes and helicopters take-off and land.

The day was topped off with professional golf instruction and a hosted lunch at Buchanan Fields Golf Course.

This was the first *Hard Working Students Day* at Buchanan Field Airport. Glenbrook Middle School students and faculty were so happy with the experience that they have asked that the tour become an annual event.

Student's Day was a collaborative effort between many groups: County Airport staff, Mt. Diablo Unified School District, Debra Dew with the Federal Aviation Administration, Pat Peters with EAA, Tim Sullivan with Buchanan Fields Golf Course, and David Bonini, who orchestrated the event. Thanks are due to everyone for their support and commit-

