

# The Diablo Aviator

A Publication of the Contra Costa County Airports Division

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

## Buchanan Field Airport Begins Airfield Signage Upgrade



The older signs will be replaced to look like the newer, modern signs, as well as the addition of 100 new signs.

### Director's Corner

On September 17, 2002 the Board of Supervisors authorized the acceptance of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) grant funding to complete the upgrades of the Buchanan Field Airport electrical system and airfield signage. This project, at an estimated cost of \$1,300,000, will bring Buchanan Field Airport's signage up to the newest standards, as depicted in FAA Advisory Circular 150/5340-18C "Standards for Airport Sign Systems." The new signs will provide to pilots a much more comprehensive picture of their location on the airfield. Completion of the project is expected within 180 days, plus additional days for weather related delays.

In August, the Airports Division received FAA approval for the selection of St. Francis Electric as the project contractor. Construction began in September on the first phase of the project, which includes the electrical power upgrades to the airfield and FAA Air Traffic Control Tower. This portion of the project will ensure meeting current and future airfield electrical needs.

The most complex portion of the project is the second phase, the installation of new signs on the airfield, which began in October. Crews must trench, form, place concrete, tie into power and install signs at 187 sites. Due to the specific runway and taxiway safety area set back distances there will be significant periods of closures. These will even include closure of the entire Airport on more than one occasion. Such occasions are currently scheduled during nighttime hours. The Airports Division will be working with tenants to provide as much advance notice regarding main runways and complete Airport closures as possible. Closures will be listed via Notice to Airmen (NOTAM).

The plan for the contractor is to complete as many of the concrete sign bases as possible, prior to the rainy season beginning in November/December. Once the rains begin, the contractor will refocus on the electrical upgrades to the tower. The contractor will then wait for the spring of 2004 to complete the sign bases, install the actual signs and bring power to each of the locations. Airport staff is asking for patience and diligence during this project.

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## Santa Claus Returning To Buchanan Field and Byron



Contra Costa County Airports in conjunction with Bay Area Skydiving and the Sheraton Hotel are pleased to announce the return of Skydiving Santa. Saint Nick will be descending upon Buchanan Field and Byron Airports on Saturday, December 6, 2003. The event benefits the Contra Costa Food Bank.

The jump at Buchanan Field Airport is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. Santa will be landing near the transient ramp behind the Sheraton Hotel (45 John Glenn Drive, Concord).

The jump at Byron Airport will be at 2:00 p.m. Santa will be landing in the field across

from Bay Area Skydiving (6900 Falcon Way, Byron).

As always, the event is free, although, anyone who would like to take a picture with Santa is encouraged to bring a non-perishable food item to donate to the Contra Costa Food Bank.

In the case of inclement weather, Santa will be greeting the kids at Buchanan Field Airport inside the Sheraton Hotel. At Byron Airport Santa will be in the Bay Area Skydiving hangar if the weather is not cooperating.

Please call the Director of Airports office with any questions at (925) 646-5722 or e-mail [daren@airport.cccounty.us](mailto:daren@airport.cccounty.us)

## Airports Staff Holding Community Forum



A community meeting with Contra Costa County Airports staff has been scheduled for Tuesday, December 9, 2003, from 6:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Pacheco Town Council Community Center at 5800 Pacheco Boulevard, Pacheco.

Items to be discussed include, but are not limited to:

- Airport history
- Community outreach
- Airport ordinance
- Noise complaint process
- The upcoming Master Plan

Additionally, there will be an opportunity to ask questions and meet with Airports staff. Supervisor Mark DeSaulnier has been invited to attend, and refreshments will be provided.

With the success of this meeting, Airports staff hopes to meet with the Community on a semi-annual basis to provide information to the neighbors of the Airport about what is going on within the fence-line. Please call the Director of Airports office with any questions at (925) 646-5722 or e-mail Doreen Arens at [daren@airport.cccounty.us](mailto:daren@airport.cccounty.us)

## Keith Freitas Named New Director Of Airports



After a long, exhaustive search, Contra Costa County Airports have a new Director at the helm ... Well, sort of. Keith Freitas has been promoted to Director of Airports. Mr. Freitas was previously the Assistant Director of Airports and has been Acting Director since January of this year.

Mr. Freitas was born in San Leandro, California and raised in Fremont, California. He is married and has two children, ages six and ten. They live in Clayton. Keith graduated from San Jose State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Aviation Man-

agement. He holds a private pilot certificate and is an active pilot ... Well, as active a pilot as he can be with two boys involved in every sport known to mankind!

Mr. Freitas has held various positions at Long Beach Municipal and San Jose International Airports before coming to Contra Costa County. His experience ranges from operations, maintenance, facilities, and noise abatement to property management. Keith has been with Contra Costa County since December of 1997, when he accepted the position of Assistant Director of Airports.

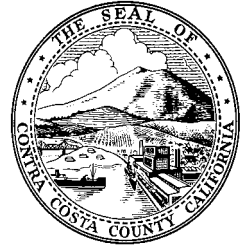
## Aviation Advisory Committee To Honor Virginia Schaefer

The Aviation Advisory Committee (AAC) for the County Airports will be putting an order before the Board of Supervisors on December 16, 2003, to recognize the retirement of Virginia Schaefer from the Committee.

Virginia Schaefer was a member of the AAC for more than 20 years. She began as the representative for District IV and ended her term as the Airport Land Use Commission representative to the AAC. Ms. Schaefer served as Chairperson of the Committee for the majority of her term.

Ms. Schaefer is a long-standing member of the Ninety-Nines, an organization that was founded in 1929 by 99 licensed women pilots for the mutual support and advancement of women in aviation.

The Aviation Advisory Committee and County Airports staff wants to recognize Virginia's efforts to keep Buchanan Field and Byron Airports valuable assets for the County, the community, and to the aviation community at large.



## Byron Master Plan Beginning

The Byron Airport Master Plan is being developed in two phases and Leigh Fisher Associates has been contracted to complete both phases. Phase I, the Byron Airport Air Cargo Feasibility and Roles Assessment was completed in October. In brief, the final report concluded that creating an air cargo hub at Byron Airport is a long-term possibility dependent upon population growth, economic development and infrastructure improvements developing in the broader East Contra Costa County region.

Phase II of the Master Plan is now commencing and will likely take nine to twelve months to complete. The Master Plan process

will assess and determine existing and future facility needs to accommodate both aviation and non-aviation activities at Byron Airport. The process will also include developing a business plan to assist facilitating development on and around the airport within County-owned property. The Master Plan is intended to provide the blueprint for long-range aviation, aviation-related, and industrial development at the airport.

Public participation is a critical element of the master plan process, especially to achieve long-term regional development and infrastructure improvements necessary to **Continues on back**



## Remembering The Wright Brothers

[http://www.centennialofflight.gov/user/Media\\_Kit\\_03.htm](http://www.centennialofflight.gov/user/Media_Kit_03.htm)

On December 17, 1903, at 10:35 a.m., the world's first successful powered aircraft lifted off the beach at the Outer Banks, North Carolina for a 12-second, 120-foot journey. A new industry was born, and a new way of life followed closely behind.

Driven by two brothers unwavering in their task, that flight accomplished what people had only imagined since the beginning of time. Realizing this dream took more than wings, wheels and a motor. It took the spirit of adventure, the tenacity brought on by risk and failure, and the desire to achieve

a freedom which humans had never before experienced.

No invention has made such an indelible imprint on our world as the airplane. In 2003, the national celebration *Centennial of Flight: Born of Dreams - Inspired by Freedom* will commemorate the world's rich history of aviation accomplishments through events, symposiums, air shows, special programming, exhibits, tours, educational outreach and more throughout the country. Visit the U.S. Centennial of Flight Commission at [www.centennialofflight.gov](http://www.centennialofflight.gov)



## Contra Costa County Airports

### Buchanan Field and Byron Airports

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attract air cargo operations and other commercial businesses.

To maximize stakeholder involvement in the Master Plan, the process will include a three-tiered approach: a County staff working committee, a Master Plan Steering Committee and larger, general public meetings throughout the development process. Their functions will differ:

- County staff will ensure that County policies, plans, and standards are incorporated in the process.
- The Steering Committee is being estab-

lished to provide external policy direction for the process and will include representatives from neighboring jurisdictions, businesses, pilots, economic development/environmental/community serving organizations, municipal advisory committees, elected officials, and other relevant interests.

- The broader public meetings will provide an on-going opportunity to make sure that plans and policy direction are consistent with residents of the greater Byron area.

