

The Diablo Aviator

A Publication of the Contra Costa County Airports Division

Buchanan Field and Byron Airports - www.buchananfield-byronairports.org

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The Spirit Of Athenian Soars

By Doreen Stockdale



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On November 19, 2005, students, instructors, family members, and alumni of The Athenian School took part in a proud moment: the inaugural flight of an aircraft that they helped create. More than 100 Athenian middle and upper school students contributed to the building of the two-seat *Piper Cub* style airplane.

The project began in March of 2003 when Marshall Freeman approached the school with an amazing opportunity. Mr. Freeman agreed to fund the project and to provide instruction to the Athenian students. He was able to give them the

rare and unique learning experience of building their own airplane. Mr. Freeman, with help from Jim Manley, Bob Rudolph, John Meyer and Tony Tiritilli, donated their time, services and expertise to help make the program a success.

The intent of the Airplane program is to become partially self sustaining. The *Spirit of Athenian* will be sold and will provide some funding for the next program cycle—a new group of students building a new airplane. For information about the program or the school, call (925) 362-7212.

Buchanan Field Master Plan Update

By Tracy Craig



The third in a series of meetings to help shape Buchanan Field Airport's Master Plan was held in October, 2005, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel adjacent to the Airport. The session drew over one-hundred residents and members of the area's business and aviation communities.

Peter Van Pelt of Barnard Dunkelberg & Co. Inc., the company that is preparing the Master Plan, began the meeting with an overview of what has been accomplished to date. He explained that a collection of background information and a thorough inventory of the Airport's existing conditions. In addition, a forecast of aviation activities was completed in June, with anticipated activity growth estimated at approximately 1.75 percent annually over the next 20 years.

Mr. Van Pelt spent the remainder of the presentation discussing Airport capacity and airside and landside facility needs that would satisfy the projected

increase in aviation activity. Those included a discussion of runways and taxiway needs, aircraft tiedown and storage requirements and a general discussion of how the information developed in the first two working papers will be used to facilitate the analysis of land use alternatives for Buchanan Field Airport.

The next step in the master planning process, called the Land Use Alternatives Analysis, will be to evaluate the various ways these needed facilities can be used. The Alternatives Analysis is an important step in the planning process since it provides the underlying rationale for the final Master Plan recommendations.

The Alternatives Analysis working paper will be made available for public review and comment. A public meeting will be held at the Crowne Plaza on January 18th, 2006 at 7:00 p.m., to present the various alternatives and recommend a preferred plan.

What's New and Notable

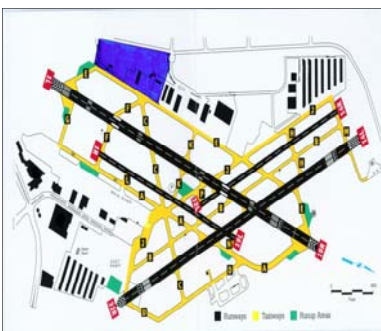
By Beth Lee

Buchanan Field Airport is excited to announce that Seecon Builders Inc. received the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors approval on December 20, 2005, to build about 33,000 sq. ft. of hangar space and 4,000 sq. ft. of office space. The new development will be built on about 2 acres just south of Apex Aviation. The Seecon Executive Hangar is the second development project approved in 2005 on the west side of the Airport.

In August of 2005, the Airport received a letter of interest to develop approximately 9 acres on the southwest side of Buchanan Field Airport, south of Sally Ride Drive. The initial proposed development concept included aviation uses such as various sizes of aircraft hangars and some office space. In keeping with the Federal Aviation Administra-

tion's (FAA) Airports District Office (ADO) requirements, the County initiated a competitive solicitation process and received bids from a total of 6 interested parties. A secondary request for information was distributed to those parties with a deadline of December 23, 2005. Three (3) parties completed this process and are competing to develop the 9 acre site.

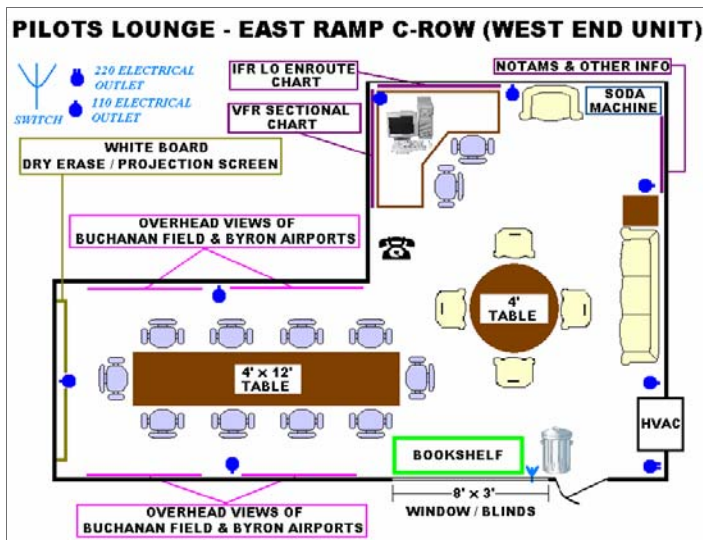
Airport staff has convened a Selection Committee, consisting of County staff and representatives from the Airport businesses and surrounding neighborhood. Members of the Aviation Advisory Committee may fill these roles. The Selection Committee will assist Airport staff in the review, interview (if deemed necessary) and selection of the preferred Master Developer. Upon selection, Airport staff will negotiate ground lease and business terms for the parcel.



9 acre development is highlighted in blue (above)

Construction To Begin Soon on the Pilot's Lounge

By Rob Wangan



After months of work behind the scenes, Airport staff has chosen a contractor to design and build a new East Ramp Pilot's lounge. The chosen company, PJ Atkinson Construction of Walnut Creek, has already begun the design phase. Once completed, the plans will be submitted for approval and permitting. Staff is expecting construction to begin by February or March.

Some of the improvements that pilots will see in the new Pilot's lounge (located on the east ramp, C row, west end) are insulated walls and ceiling, 9 foot drop-ceiling with fluorescent lights, a 3' x 8' window looking out onto the east ramp, plenty of electrical outlets and heating and air conditioning. Once

the basic interior is completed, Contra Costa County Airports Division will furnish the space with new tables, chairs, and a desk, among other things.

Airport staff is extremely eager to move forward with this project. Again, the goal of this project is to create a facility that will enhance aviation activities, provide an area for Airport clubs to meet, and to allow pilots to plan flights, as well as a place to socialize.

As stated in earlier publications of the *Diablo Aviator*, if there is anyone-(an individual, a club or group)-who can provide suggestions, expertise or assistance with this project, please contact Rob Wangan or Steve Callahan at 646-5722.

Even the Bad Weather Can't Stop Santa

By Doreen Stockdale

On December 17, 2005, Contra Costa County Airports Division held its annual Santa Skydive to benefit the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano Counties. Foggy, rainy weather did not allow Santa Claus to skydive into Buchanan Field Airport; however, The Jolly Old Elf arrived via Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting Truck with the help of Ron Richman, Airport Operations Specialist. The Crowne Plaza Hotel provided a warm, spirited shelter from the inclem-

ent weather for Santa and his visitors. More than 40 kids, with their parents in tow, shared their most precious holiday wishes with Santa.

The annual Santa Skydive is free, and with any donation of a non-perishable food item to the Food Bank, each child receives a picture with Santa and a candy cane. The event would not be possible without the unending support of Bay Area Skydiving and the Crowne Plaza Hotel.



