

ROADRUNNERS INTERNATIONAL MONTHLY HOUSE SIX NEWS AND GOSSIP

(Not to be confused with the Stars and Stripes)

1 October 2008 - 24th Edition

NEW MEMBERS

The Roadrunners are thrilled to welcome aboard Peter DeForth whom several of us know from the last SR-71 Blackbird reunion and the CIA 60th anniversary celebration at Langley last September. After 31 years of service, Peter retired from the CIA in 2004 where he had worked in DI&D/S&T. He is currently assisting DIA as a Senior Advisor on a part time basis.

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ONE TOUGH COOKIE!!

USAF Colonel Marty Knutson appeared on our radar scope this past month when he suffered a stroke while vacationing in Alaska. We are happy to report that Marty is on track for a full recovery. Since he's on our scope we'll use this opportunity to share his legacy with our readers. While all Roadrunners are icons of Cold War and aviation



history, Colonel Knutson shines a bit brighter than the average. He served in the Korean War, flew the CIA U-2, and served as Director of Flight Operations NASA's Ames Research Center Moffett Field, California and Site Manager Ames-Dryden Flight Research Facility - Edwards, California. On 9 July 1956, Mission 2020, the 3rd Soviet overflight was flown by CIA pilot Marty Knutson from Wiesbaden, North over Berlin, East Germany and the Baltic States to Riga, then east and south covering targets around Kaunas, Vilnius and Minsk before returning via Warsaw to Wiesbaden. Marty's e-mail address Mach 3.275 depicts the top speed Marty flew in a checkout flight of the SR-71. Marty is a Command Pilot with 6,500 hours flying time. His awards include the Meritorious Service Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross, both from the Air Force. He has also received the CIA Intelligence Star twice, NASA's Outstanding Leadership Award and the Presidential Rank of Meritorious Executive. He is an Associate Fellow of the Society of Experimental Test Pilots and a charter member of the federal government's Senior Executive Service. So it's no surprise that after suffering a stroke while driving on the tundra and spending a night with the bears, wind and rain, Marty has not only made a remarkable recovery, he, an accomplished golfer and scuba diver, is now looking for his snow skis for when it snows at Tahoe where

he has a condo. He will be staying for a while with daughter Robin in the Bay area. Marty has two sons: Marty and Eric, two daughters: Kristin and Robin, 5 grandchildren: Eric, Brandon, Samantha, Joshua, and Natasha. Exactly 2 years ago today, 1 October 2006, Marty and the children lost Jeanine Knutson, wonderful wife, mother and precious member of the Roadrunner family. We love you kids and Godspeed on your full recovery, Marty. For more see Col. Knutson's web page on the Roadrunner website.

The Roadrunner staff has to admit to a bit of jealousy when it was learned what Marty was doing in Alaska. In fact some of us felt a bit of satisfaction when we saw the photo on the right where it appeared that our old warhorse might have been up S. . . Creek (Salmon Creek of course) with a broken paddle. As always we investigated before publishing and must print the truth (as always.) We learned that Marty's daughter Kristin was with him and hadn't caught a fish. Thinking she might weasel a new Dodge Ram 4x4



out of her dad by playing the old "good daughter" trick that many of us with daughters have also experienced, Kristin scoured all over Anchorage at midnight looking for Starbucks Yukon blend coffee and Ottis Spunkmeyer blueberry muffins to please him. Our investigation has uncovered that the paddle broke when Marty cracked it on Kristin's head for asking (again) for a free truck at which time she shoved his boat into the river, and yelled, "See you in Russia, Pops," the last place in the world he would want to revisit after his U-2



overflights. (See Kristin, we told you we would get even for your not telling us the location of the old man's fishing hole) ha

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Col. Hugh Slater about Col. Marty Knutson: Marty was one of the U-2 pilots who checked me out in the U-2 at Edwards AFB (North Base) prior to my assignment with the CAF in Taiwan. He also spent various periods with me in Taiwan. His final night at Edwards Barbara and I had dinner with he and his wife at a Lancaster restaurant. Later, we stayed in contact when he headed a NASA project. He finally checked out in the SR and his Email address reflected his max speed in the SR. mach3.275@aol.com



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Hello Roadrunners,

Many thanks re your email on Marty, he's what we Brits call 'a really good bloke '. I'm still planning to try calling him on his (or his son Eric's) cell phone, just to say Hi. My wife and I had the great pleasure of meeting him again at Sacramento (U-2's 50th)back in 05. We have to see the old warhorse firing on all his cylinders again. Meanwhile, cheers and thanks, John and Julie MacArthur

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It's official that Roadrunner Bill Fox was enshrined in the Iowa Aviation Hall of Fame on September on the 27th at Greenfield, Iowa in recognition of his distinguished career at Area 51 as a Honeywell engineer developing numerous systems for the A-12. Joining the Lockheed Skunkworks team he became Engineering and Program Manager for the YF-12 member of the Blackbird family. He continued at Area 51 with the

Have Blue stealth projects in the 1970s before becoming the Engineering Flight Test Manager for the Aquila, an unmanned aircraft used as a battlefield overhead target designator for the U.S. Army.

Attending the induction ceremony were Roadrunners: L to R: Russ Buyse, Roger Andersen, Carolyn Buyse, Jerry Havener, T.D. Barnes, Bill Fox, and Rick Fox.



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Kansas Aviation Hall of Fame - Robert Sieker

The KAHF and the DLA (Dragonlady Association) have extended their appreciation for the Roadrunner support of the induction of Robert Sieker into the Kansas Aviation Hall in Wichita. Robert Sieker, Lockheed experimental test pilot and native Kansan, was selected by a committee empanelled by the governor of Kansas for induction into the Kansas Aviation Hall of Fame.



For those of you who don't know Robert was killed

testing stealth modifications on the prototype U-2, Article 341 in April 1957. During a Project RAINBOW test flight, Article 341 suffered a flameout at 72,000 feet due to airframe heat build-up.

Pilot Robert Sieker's pressure suit inflated, but his helmet faceplate failed and he lost consciousness. The aircraft stalled at 65,000 feet and entered a flat spin. Sieker revived at low altitude and attempted to bail out. Without an ejection seat, or enough altitude for a safe manual egress, Sieker was killed. His body was



found near the wreck, with his parachute partially deployed. He was awarded the CIA Seal Medallion posthumously for his contributions to the

program and the nation. His award was accepted by his 84 year old sister, Laverne Sieker Larson at the awards banquet last November.

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ARTICLE 121 NEWS

Blackbird Air Park, Palmdale, CA

NOTHING TO REPORT

<http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/article121.html>

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ARTICLE 122 NEWS

Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum New York City

NOTHING TO REPORT

<http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/article122.html>

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ARTICLE 128 NEWS

CIA Compound Langley, VA

3rd month requesting update photo of plane - NO RESPONSE????

<http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/article128.html>

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ARTICLE 130 NEWS

San Diego Aerospace Museum San Diego, CA

NOTHING TO REPORT

<http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/article130.html>

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ARTICLE 134M NEWS

Museum of Flight Seattle, WA

Sends Monthly Newsletter - NOTHING TO REPORT

<http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/article940.html>

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ARTICLE 131 NEWS

Southern Museum of Flight Birmingham, AL

Is in constant contact with us. Nothing new to report.

<http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/article131.html>

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ARTICLE 132 NEWS

Battleship Memorial Park - Mobile, Alabama

<http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/article132.html>



The Roadrunners thank the staff at Mobile for the new photos of Article 132 taken last week for posting on the website and for the daily reports concerning the threat of Hurricane Ike. Obviously, by the tie downs on the A-12, the staff took extraordinary steps to prevent the destruction experienced during Hurricane Katrina. We also appreciate the



added displays depicting the Roadrunners who built and flew the A-12. We've added the photos to the Article 132 web page. Taking on the task of continuing the legacy of the CIA and the Roadrunners who flew the A-12, Mobile has definitely established a high water mark (excuse the pun)

for other museums to follow. We thank Director Bill Tunnell (below) and staff at Mobile and Dr. Jim Griffin (right) and staff at the Southern Museum of Flight in Birmingham for elevating the care and status of our A-12s and associating the planes with the Roadrunners.



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Enough of that serious stuff. When the Roadrunners visited Mobile for the Jack Weeks tribute both they and the CIA



representatives noted that Bill Tunnell (left), Mike Thompson, a.k.a. Pete, and Owen Miller seemed preoccupied with something. We have since learned that Bill had temporarily lost command of the USS Alabama to a Captain Coon who had set up occupancy in one of the 16 inch gun turrets. According to our latest Intel, there has been another Battleship coon



incident, this time in the museum gift shop where he chewed up some boxes and pooped in the middle of the floor in both



bathrooms. Old ringtail set off the alarm so many times that night the alarm company people were ready to join the chase. No big mystery there. It had to be a young coon trained by the Navy fighter pilots at the Pensacola Naval Base. That's what they do until they're housebroken and the reason they are persona non grata in

most O'Clubs except Navy. We had a couple Annapolis grads at Area 51 during Project OXCART that we had to house train: Bob Gilliland, Lockheed test pilot who was the first to fly the SR-71 and CIA project pilot Dennis Sullivan, who thanks to our training retired a Brigadier General. Checking with the staff we learned that last week's adventure was a cat in the Gift Shop!! Cherie and Mary cornered it in the stockroom, chased it all through the Gift Shop and finally holed it up in the bathroom to make the capture. The visitors watching the incident



said they would pay good money to see it again, which didn't sit too well with Cherie and some of the other participants. Our friends in Mobile are obviously having way too much fun. There's a rumor that Mike had a wild cat in the start cart last week. We'll cover that adventure next month along with new



developments in our investigation of the museum staff and CIA co-conspirators serving up Pete the alligator to the Roadrunners the last night we were there. Most of the Roadrunner ranch hands are getting leery of all this Southern cuisine. The barbeque alligator wasn't too bad, but the thoughts of chowin down a bowl of Captain Coon stew, rack of





possum, or a platter of chiggers is a bit too much for us Area 51 Thursday night all you can eat red meat carnivores.

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We also heard that Pete, a.k.a. Mike Thompson stood up beneath one of the prop blades of the museum's C-47. Though his old "Jar Head" didn't hurt the prop, we understand he is being written up for airplane abuse anyway. In our day this would have called for a UCMJ Article 32 hearing or at least an Article 15.

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ARTICLE 124 NEWS

California Science Center Los Angeles, CA

<http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/article124.html>

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Many of us Roadrunners consider any museum dishonoring an A-12 to also be dishonoring the CIA and the Roadrunners who built and flew

it. We feel obligated to correct such an event or rescue any planes in that circumstance as we assisted the CIA when it rescued Article 128 in Minnesota. As if our A-12 trainer didn't get abused enough while parked beside Article 128 at Plant 42 while the Minnesota NG representatives were restoring 128, this historical plane continues to being neglected at its retirement home at the California Science Center in Los Angeles. The photos speak for themselves.

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ARTICLE 127 NEWS

Alabama Space and Rocket Center Huntsville, AL

<http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/article127.html>

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Another of our A-12s not receiving the honor it deserves is Article #127 at the Alabama Space and Rocket Center, Huntsville, Alabama. Article 127 is one of the three A-12s operational during Operation BLACK SHIELD. It flew a total of 258 sorties for the CIA, 8 of them over North Vietnam and two over North Korea, yet in retirement is parked in from of

the NASA entrance where it is being identified as a SR-71 that flew for NASA. Thus far our outcry about this degradation has gone unheeded, as has our offer to provide Roadrunner support to the museum as we are in Mobile and Birmingham. The photo is an old one so there is no telling the shape the plane is in today. Someone needs to check it out and let us know.

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FEEDBACK ON THE JACK WEEKS ACCIDENT

By: BG Dennis Sullivan - Dutch 23



In Okinawa we had 3 A-12's conducting Operation BLACK SHIELD, the OXCART program's operational phase. The original plan was to change out planes periodically, but with the SR-71 coming, it was never done. The SR was delayed two or three times, which added to the time the 3 A-12's stayed in place. It is my opinion that the A-12 support deteriorated near the end. Jack Weeks had performance problems trying to fly over North Korea. My last local flight was a routine test hop for engine work. On takeoff, all was normal until about 200 knots when I noticed the left engine temp rising out of limits. I down trimmed the fuel control to no affect. I throttled back, watching the temperature stay high all the way to the idle stop and then shut the engine down. I took off single engine, which had never been done before, and eventually landed OK. The downside of all of this was that Jack Weeks flew the same airplane and engine a week or so later on a test flight and had the same problem as I did just as he hit Mach 3. When the engine overtemped (first four birdwatcher chirps were engine overtemp), he did not know that all he could do was to shut it down, which I don't believe had ever been done above Mach 3. Shortly thereafter, the airplane broke up and he was lost. That left two airplanes to ferry home. Ken Collins and Frank Murray took a week and I took four and one half hours to the West coast. Only one of the three planes made it home OK. A sad finish that should not have happened to a great program.

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FEEDBACK ON WALT RAY CRASH

By: BG Dennis Sullivan - Dutch 23

At Area 51 Walt Ray had the room next to me. One day he said that he could not get his head against the headrest on the ejection seat with our oversized parachute.



My comment was that this was a non problem, as Ken Collins found out early on when he bailed out. On the day Walt was killed I had an early flight, the longest by a project pilot at that time, three air refuelings and all over country. Walt had the later mission which was shorter. When I got to the aircraft all suited up I noticed a balsa wood spacer glued on the headrest about two inches thick. I asked about it and was assured it was OK. I assumed it had been tested. It had not. When Walt ejected the butt snapper fired and as it tried to separate him from the seat the survival kit pushed the parachute up and it wedged against the balsa wood block. He was locked into the seat with no way out. A day or two later I knew the seat was

going to be hung in a hangar and tested to see if the seat would separate when the "butt snapper" fired. I arrived just after they quit. It failed seven times in a row. This unauthorized, untested mod killed Walt. It was the failure of a system that allowed untested modifications to be made with no supervisory oversight.

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MORE FEEDBACK

Have enjoyed looking at all the info & photos on the web sites. I appreciate your satisfying my long curiosity about the use of the equipment I was involved with on the original U-2's. Attached is an account of the self contained navigation system that we designed for the U-2 long before Inertial Navigation & GPS. Bill Reed *Thanks, Bill. We posted your interesting account to our Cold War Stories section of the web site.*

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Here is the old M-208 secret code system that we worked with. It might be suitable for the newsletter. I used it in 1950-51, USAF, AACS, S-2. A thumb cutting lug setting antique that not too many remember. Charles Christian. *Thanks to you as well Charles. We posted the information in our Cold War Stories section as M-209 Secret Code Machine.*

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SLATER LAKE

November 1970 - Project HAVE GLIB, evaluation of foreign radar and threat systems began. A complex of actual Soviet systems and replicas began to grow around "Slater Lake" (the pond, which had been named after the former Roadrunners commander), a mile northwest of the main base. The systems were given names such as Mary, Kay, Susan, and Kathy. They were arranged to simulate a Soviet-style air defense complex. Thirty years later Slater Lake still had female names associated to it, but now they were Suzi, Deb, ---, ---, the names of the flight attendants who sunned at the lake between flights. That is until chopper pilots found out about it and started circling like buzzards over the area. Sounds familiar to what we've heard about one of our former Roadrunner helo pilots buzzing around the island



beaches of Lake Meade broadcasting "Naughty, naughty" on his PA at the nudists during the Oxcart parasail event, huh, Colonel Trapp? Hope you took some photos to share with us.

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There is a petition circulating to put a Federal Prison in Rachel, Nevada that has the citizens of Lincoln County up in arms for fear the traffic and bright security lights will impede their sightings of ET zooming around Area 51. Word had leaked that this is really going to be an alien research center

and a secure site for housing the overflow of Aliens currently at the Area. The Roadrunner staff is concerned that someone also leaked a copy of our Roadrunner membership roster and now one of the opposing Rachel residents has discovered that a great number of the future occupants are listed with the same last name as several of our OXCART personnel who stayed at the Ranch. The tenant listing reveals a lot of them using the name Wilson and even more named "Andersen," spelled with an e. The lack of hair and other similar features are rather disturbing. You don't suppose they .

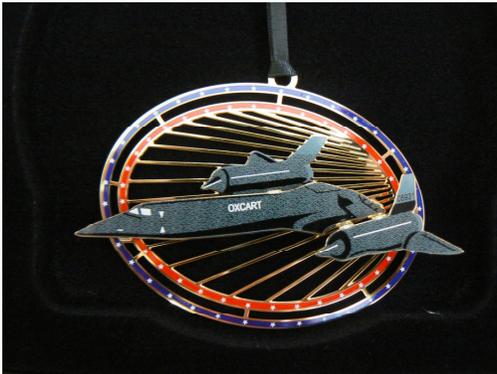


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The EAAMOC (Employee Activity Association Mail Order Center) has redesigned their website!



www.eaamoc.com In addition to White House and CIA unique holiday ornaments (left) the store is now offering A-12 merchandise that us Roadrunners should consider while



doing our Christmas shopping. Several of us have ordered from the store and found it to be a pleasant experience. You can access the EAA store from our website. At the upper top you'll find a box where you can either login or do a search. Those interested in specifically A-12 or

Roadrunner merchandise can simply enter either the words A-12 or Roadrunner to see what is available. To purchase you will need to login with your e-mail address and EAA membership number. The store accepts all credit cards. You'll find a lot of really neat merchandise besides Roadrunner and A-12, so happy shopping.



Those Roadrunners who have not done so may access a registration form in the Members section of our Roadrunner website. .

The New email address for the store is: info@eaamoc.com. Call if you need assistance: 703-834-3001 or 866-274-8749. Address:

EAA Mail Order Center, 200 Spring Street Suite 440/130, Herndon, VA 20170-5209 Telephone: (866) 274-8749 or (703) 834-3001 | Fax: (703) 834-3002 | info@eaamoc.com



Those Roadrunners who have not ordered one of the silver special edition Roadrunner coins should do so now. Only 100 were produced and only a few are left. Those not sold to Roadrunners will be released to non-roadrunners to relieve the store of its inventory. This is a one time production so don't let it slip away. If you don't want a coin at least buy one for your children to remember the Roadrunners.

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DID YOU KNOW?

Bill Fox had been at the Ranch for only three weeks when Lou Schalk made the first flight of the A-12. Kelly Johnson had brought General Doolittle to the Area in a DC-3 to view Lou's flight. (Bill Park owned a half interest in the DC-3.) After the flight Bill Fox told Red Harvey, who handled transportation operations from Burbank that he needed to be back to Burbank in 3 hours. Kelly found out and informed Fox that he could fly back with him in the Gooney Bird. McMartin also needed to get back so Kelly told him and Fox to get on the plane with him and General Doolittle. Bill Park and Lou Schalk got in and seeing that the crew wasn't aboard entered the cockpit and shut the door. The regular crew boarded and seeing the situation took a seat in the rear where they sit in awe to be amongst such dignitaries. The regular pilots sitting in the rear could only stare at the shut cockpit door as Lou and Bill Park flipped every switch on the panel trying to start the engines. After five minutes Kelly Johnson yelled, "Get someone up there who knows what they're doing." (For the readers who don't know these names, Bill Park and Lou Schalk were Lockheed test pilots and Kelly Johnson was head honcho at the Skunkworks.) The regular pilot Billy Robinson went up front and replaced Bill Park. He got the engines started and let Lou Schalk fly the DC-3 to Burbank. Foxy soared with the eagles that day.

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Let us know if we post something in error and help us get it right. TIRED OF THE SAME FACES EACH EDITION? - SEND US YOUR STORIES AND GOSSIP.

