



THE DIABLO AVIATOR

Scheduled Charter Service JetSuiteX Lands at Buchanan Field!



Travelling from Contra Costa County to Southern California just got much more convenient with the April launch of a new scheduled charter jet service out of Buchanan Field.

JetSuiteX, a new venture from private jet company JetSuite, will initially kick off service from Buchanan Field to Burbank round-trip up to two times daily. In addition, JetSuiteX offers flights to Las Vegas connecting through Burbank for east bay residents looking for a quick weekend trip. JetSuiteX will be rolling out additional routes across the county this year, with the possibility of more service in and out of Contra Costa County.

The service is unique; with 30-seat private charter Embraer 135 jets, the public won't have to buy the full jet, but can reserve a single seat at an affordable price. The convenience of Buchanan Field for JetSuiteX's operation is enhanced by the fact that Buchanan Field offers free parking, a huge benefit for those used to paying for high-priced airport parking. Our facilities are also more travel-friendly than an airport with long TSA lines and crowded terminals.

Neighboring communities won't have to worry about JetSuiteX overburdening the area with significantly more air traffic. JetSuiteX operations represent a fraction of the 300 daily flights, many of which are similar to the JetSuiteX fleet, which is among the quietest jet aircraft available. In fact, there has not been a single confirmed noise complaint regarding JetSuiteX operations since service started.

"Contra Costa is delighted to welcome JetSuiteX to the Buchanan Field Airport, and provide our residents and

SUMMER 2016

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"There is no sport equal to that which aviators enjoy while being carried through the air on great white wings." - Wilbur Wright (1905)

businesses with a local travel option to Southern California and other desirable destinations," said County Supervisor Karen Mitchoff, whose district includes the airport. "Buchanan Field is an important County asset, and the new JetSuiteX scheduled charter service will offer more opportunities and services to the general public."

For more information about JetSuiteX services visit, www.JetSuiteX.com.

Learning to Fly – County Airports are a Gateway into Aviation

Contra Costa County Airports is nearing completion of *Learning to Fly*, the second in a series of brief, informational videos which provide public information about services and benefits of Buchanan Field and Byron Airports.

A follow up to the first video, *Touch Down in the Bay Area*, the video aims to bring the non-aviation community to the Airports, demystify the process of becoming a pilot, and encourage viewers who have considered learning to fly to explore opportunities at the County Airports.

Learning to Fly explains the basic steps of getting a pilot license through interview clips with flight instructors and local pilots, and introduces the various businesses, clubs, organizations, and programs at the Airports, which act as a

gateway into aviation and/or make flying more attainable and affordable.

The video will be featured on the County Airports website, as well as on Contra Costa Television (CCTV) and Youtube. Produced in conjunction with CCTV, the video represents Airports staff's priority of improving marketing and public relations by exploring new avenues for reaching the public.

Taking advantage of technology that newer generations of pilots are growing up with will help ensure the future stability of the Airports. Airports staff will email an update to all tenants upon completion with an invitation to visit the County Airports website, view the video, provide feedback, and recommend the Airports to potential pilots.

Learning to Fly was made possible

with the participation of representatives from the Airports' businesses, clubs, and organizations, who graciously gave their time and enthusiasm to the video's production. Airports staff greatly appreciates these individuals that help make Contra Costa County Airports "the place YOU want to be."



"Learning to Fly" Screen Shot

Buchanan Field Flight School Instructor Wins Top Award

Buchanan Field is home to premier aviation facilities and services and the aviation community is noticing. Rashid Yahya, who manages Pacific States Aviation Flight Academy*, was recently selected as the 2016 Oakland Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) Certified Flight Instructor of the Year.

The award is a great accomplishment, considering that the Oakland FSDO services not only the vast majority of the airports in the Bay Area, but also the airports that span the California Coast north of the Bay Area. Mr. Yahya now has the opportunity to compete at Regional and National Levels of the award competition.

Buchanan Field's Fixed Based Operators (FBOs) offer top-notch flight schools, which include flight simulator training and the ability to attain various levels of flight certificates. For more information about these services, please visit www.ContraCostaCountyAirports.org and select "Airport Businesses", located under the Buchanan Field (CCR) link on the navigation menu.



Mr. Yahya has over 8000 hours of flight experience with more than 15 years training pilots from all over the world. Airports staff wishes him luck in the national award competition. Congratulations! * Correction from original distribution.

Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Cause Growing Concern

If you don't own one yet, you probably know somebody that does—or at least have seen the plethora of holiday advertisements last year selling them. Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS, also known as “drones”) are becoming more sophisticated and more affordable. Many drones now come equipped with high definition cameras, stabilizing equipment and GPS features to auto-return to the operator on the ground when battery power is running low. These features can make it enticing for recreational and professional users to purchase a UAS and start flying. Along with the excitement from new drone owners however, has come a significant amount of concern from pilots, law enforcement and emergency response personnel, as well as the Federal Aviation Administration and the general public. Unlike flying a manned aircraft, no formal training is required to fly a UAS recreationally, meaning anybody with some expendable income may soon be sharing navigable air space with trained pilots and full size aircraft.

Articles have littered local and national news and social media sites expressing concerns ranging from privacy violations, with camera drones flying over backyards and businesses, to safety concerns with drones flying over wildfires preventing fire helicopters from responding and drones being operated near airport

departure and approach paths.

In 2015, Airports staff fielded several calls reporting drones flying near Buchanan Field and several more from UAS operators inquiring about rules and restrictions when operating within the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Air Traffic Control Tower's control radius. The concern is certainly warranted, when considering the potential damage a 30-55 pound recreational drone may cause to jet or propeller aircraft operating at local airports.

The FAA recently responded to the increase in requests for guidance from various airports by issuing a bulletin (available on the FAA website) regarding UAS operations at or near airports. The FAA has also partnered with several aviation industry associations to promote “Know Before You Fly”, a campaign to educate the public about using UAS safely and responsibly. If you are a UAS operator, or know somebody who is, please help keep our airspace safe by sharing the following information from the FAA bulletin:

UAS operators need to determine their intended application: Public (governmental), civil (non-governmental) or model application. All UAS over 0.55lbs and less than 55lbs are required to be registered with the FAA and affixed with a N- number. The public operation [See UAS Concerns, continued on Page 7...](#)

CCR & C83 Completed Pavement Projects

Buchanan Field and Byron Airport each completed important pavement improvement projects in the Fall/winter of 2015. A chronological picture archive of the projects' progress is available on the County Airports website under each Airport's navigation link. Here is a brief summary of work done:

Buchanan Field East Ramp

Reconstruction and drainage improvements for eight taxiways between hangars AA-F and the taxiway between the hangars and tie-downs on the east ramp of Buchanan Field were included in the scope of work. This is the first time the pavement at the East Ramp Hangars has been replaced since the initial construction over 40 years

ago. The cooperation from Airport tenants (over 100 of whom were temporarily displaced during construction) was extraordinary, making the efficient completion of this project possible.

Byron Airport Pavement Project

The Byron Airport Pavement, Signage and Lighting Project included minor reconstruction and surface maintenance of the runways, taxiways and ramp. The project was completed in two phases: pavement, then paint finishing, electrical and LED lighting improvements.

Thank you all for your cooperation!

CCR Upcoming Project

Airport staff has submitted an FAA grant application requesting funding to perform pavement reconstruction and overlay on Taxiway Echo and Taxiway Kilo. Following the award of the grant funding, construction is estimated to begin late 2016.

The project will also include replacement of all airfield sign panels, upgrading signs to LED lighting, and installation of new edge lighting and associated signage to Taxiway Echo. Lastly, the project will include pilot controlled lighting system for the entire airfield.

Keep an eye out for future emails regarding impacts to operations as the project becomes more defined.

Airport Watch: Help Keep Your Airport Safe

Airport security to keep pilots and the surrounding community safe is a top priority for the County Airports. Following the events of September 11, 2001, the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) developed the Airport Watch program to help pilots be the eyes and ears in reporting suspicious activity at airports across the country. According to Airport Watch, the best security comes from the people who have a direct stake in the outcome; those who know what is normal and what is not normal at their airports. That's you!

It is important for us to team up to prevent unauthorized access, vandalism and theft by reviewing the following basic procedures to follow if you observe someone/something that looks suspicious or out of place on the airfield.

Immediate Threat

If you perceive an individual or situation to be an immediate threat to people or property, call 911. If the situation looks hostile, do not put yourself at risk. After calling 911, continue to observe, but do not attempt to intervene. Be sure to note an individual's defining characteristics such as height, weight, hair color, clothes and distinguishing marks (tattoos, scars, etc.). If an aircraft is involved, note the N Number. After calling 911, contact Airports staff at (925) 681-4200 so they are aware of the threat.

Suspicious Activity/Something Out of Place

If you observe an individual acting in a way that does not look right, or that makes you suspicious, contact Airports staff at (925) 681-4200. If during off hours when Airports staff is not immediately available, or if you are at another Airport, you may also contact 866-GA-SECURE; an around the clock telephone hotline that is answered by federal authorities. Remember to report suspicious activity rather than someone who may look suspicious. Tips: Listen to what people are saying and observe body language. Look for people who are uncomfortable or who are moving around an aircraft in a way that isn't normal (for example, someone checking locks). You might also look for out of place packages, boxes or other items that do not appear to belong on the airfield.

If the issue you are reporting is facility related, is not an immediate threat, and/or does not involve a suspicious individual, please contact Airports staff only at (925) 681-4200.



Lock Up, Look Out (AOPA Airport Watch Slogan)

Airports staff encourages you to lock your aircraft when not in use. You might also consider adding a throttle lock, prop lock, or tie-down lock. Be aware of your surroundings and look out for suspicious activity. Crime often happens because of opportunity, which may be avoided by making access to the airfield difficult. When entering the airfield, do not let other vehicles piggyback through the open gate behind you. After driving through the gate, stop and wait for the gate to close. Contact Airports staff to report unlocked gates, holes in fences, and push-button gate codes that are displayed for everyone to see.

Make it difficult to do things unseen. Greet strangers you do not recognize as belonging at the airfield. This will not only give the Airports a reputation as friendly, neighborly places to visit, it will discourage criminals from doing bad things that are easier to do when left alone.

Preserve General Aviation

By keeping our Airports safe, we are preserving general aviation by helping it to be viewed as an asset, rather than a threat. Consider the regulations and restrictions that have been introduced since the events of September 11, 2001. In addition to protecting pilots and the community from future threats, doing your part to watch for and report suspicious behavior could prevent another high profile aircraft theft and the potential additional regulations and restrictions that may result from it.

If you have questions about security at Buchanan Field or Byron Airports, please contact Airports staff. Thank you for your assistance.

Housekeeping Briefs

New Stormwater Sampling Requirements

June 30, 2016, marked the close of the first reporting year under the new Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for Buchanan Field and Byron Airports. The SWPPP requires biannual stormwater sampling of all outfalls (points where stormwater leaves the Airports). As a result, the increased sampling is required to represent all industrial activity areas of the Airport at Buchanan Field.

As a friendly reminder, please be sure to keep ramp space clear of debris that may come in contact with stormwater, keep spill kits on and near fuel and maintenance areas, only wash aircraft at the designated aircraft wash rack, perform minor maintenance in the Owner Maintenance Hangar only (FBOs only for more significant repairs), and do not discharge anything into the storm drain, including uncontaminated water, as only stormwater is allowed in the storm drain system.

Thank you for helping us meet our regulatory obligations under the new Industrial General Permit and here is to another successful reporting year!

Byron Airport Hangar Inspections

Byron Airport hangar and building inspections are currently being scheduled between October and December. In a new approach, Airport staff is scheduling and spacing out inspections for the convenience and ease of everyone involved. The inspections will focus on:

- Alterations and Additions
- Maintenance and Repairs
- Use of Premises

In the last Byron inspection (2012), the primary inspection issues were excessive storage plus combustible items under aircraft.

To schedule an appointment, please call Steve Callahan, Lead Operations Specialist, at 925-383-1384. To increase flexibility, we encourage asking an Operations staff to conduct an impromptu inspection when you are at the Airport at any time in advance of your assigned inspection period. We thank you in advance for your cooperation and assistance during this process.

Noise Complaints Rise with Increase in Operations

With the improvement in the economy, the number of operations at Buchanan Field has risen approximately 22% from 2013 to 2015. This is welcome news for Airport businesses and local school districts, which benefit from business and tax revenue that is generated by the Airports.

However, if you are a Contra Costa resident living or working in a community adjacent to the Airport, this news may not seem so welcome. Airports staff has received a significant increase in noise complaints in the same time period. The majority of the complaints are regarding propeller aircraft flying in the pattern, often performing touch and go operations.

In response to this increase, Airports staff has reached out to the flight training schools and aviation clubs at Buchanan Field, asking flight instructors and pilots to remind students and fellow pilots who may not be as familiar with the field to follow suggested noise abatement procedures whenever possible. Airports staff needs your help! Please take a moment to brush up on the noise management program and suggested procedures by visiting the noise management page on the County Airports website and promoting the procedures in a positive light to fellow pilots. The Airports are valuable assets to pilots, businesses and the local community. Staying in positive favor with our neighbors only further promotes our shared success. Thank you!



Storm Water Sampling



Noise Sensitive Communities Sign

Flight School Highlights - Pacific States Aviation



Just a few of PSA's Instructors with Praveen Pandey after he graduated from our Professional Pilot Program as a Commercial Pilot!



Soki Maeda recently got his Private Pilot's License at PSA, BEFORE he got his Driver's License!

Learn to Fly

Learn to fly with the best at Buchanan Field. Whether for fun, professionally or to grow your business, our flight schools can help you accomplish your flying dreams.

Pacific States Aviation Flight Training Academy

- Flexibility in flight training with both Part-141 and Part- 61 flight school curriculum.
- 99.9% of ground school students take and pass the FAA Written Exam.
- Full time students receive their Private Pilot License, Instrument Rating, and Commercial Pilot License in an average of 12-14 months.
- Currently 65 full time and 10 part time students enrolled at PSA Flight

Check back next issue for highlights on: **Sterling Flight Training Center.**

New Additions to Airports Staff



Daniel Wick

Daniel joined the Public Works, Airport Divisions as the Environmental and Community Relations officer on an auspicious date, February 29, 2016. Coming from the private sustainable small business industry, Daniel's background includes operations management and customer service. Daniel enjoys exploring all that Contra Costa County has to offer through the beautiful trail network of the East Bay Regional Parks District. An avid traveler, Daniel has visited 16 countries on 4 continents.



Mohammed Tucker

Mohammed joined the Public Works, Airport Division as an Airport Operations Specialist on May 16, 2016. He has been a resident of Concord, CA for more than 20 years. After serving in the U.S. Navy as Helicopter Technician, his passion for aviation led him to a degree in Aeronautics from Embry Riddle University. Mohammed is excited to join the excellent Airport Operations team here at Buchanan Field and at Byron Airport.

Recapping Recent and Upcoming Airport Events

2016 Collings Foundation - Wings of Freedom Tour

The Wings of Freedom Tour flew into Buchanan Field June 8th to the 12th.

The unique WWII flying history tour presented a wonderful opportunity to experience the beautifully restored aircraft for the young and old alike. Aircraft tours were open to the public, with some taking to the skies in an ultimate flight experience.

Keep an eye skyward for the Wings of Freedom Tour to return in 2017.

Wings of Freedom Tour

B-25 MITCHELL P-51 MUSTANG
(Full dual controls)

B-17 FLYING FORTRESS

B-24 LIBERATOR

Scan the code
for more info

EXPERIENCE WWII FLYING HISTORY
TOURS - FLIGHTS

Four of the most famous WWII bomber and fighter aircraft are visiting your community as part of the Wings of Freedom Tour. Tour the beautifully restored aircraft and even TAKE TO THE SKIES YOURSELF in an ultimate flight experience aboard the bombers - or get some "stick time" in the world's only full Dual Control P-51C Mustang! 30-minute B-17 or B-24 flights are \$450 per person. 30-minute B-25 flights are \$400. P-51 flight training is \$2200 for a half hour and \$3200 for full hour. The Collings Foundation is a 501-c3 non-profit. The majority of your flight is a tax-deductible donation. Rules and conditions subject to change.

CONCORD
Buchanan Field Airport
at Main Ramp

June 8 -	2:00 PM to 5:00 PM
June 9 -	9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
June 10 -	9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
June 11 -	9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
June 12 -	9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Tour - Explore - Fly
The Ultimate Living History Experience.
Walk-through tours: \$12 for adults and \$6 for children 12 years and younger.

★ COLLINGS FOUNDATION ★
Keeping History Alive
800.568.8924 www.cfdn.org

8th Annual Tenant Appreciation BBQ

The 8th Annual Tenant Appreciation BBQ was held on May 5, 2016. Approximately 450 guests from throughout the Buchanan Field/Byron Airport community were treated to some of the finest BBQ fare from Airport Staff.

The annual event is a wonderful opportunity for tenants and business partners to gather, converse with friends, put a face to some new Airport employees, and relax as

Airports staff shows our continual appreciation for their business. A resounding success by everyone involved. No one left hungry, not even these little two aviators pictured to the right.



Brushy Creek Property Near Byron to be Donated to County Airports

Pending Board of Supervisor approval, a 120 acre property located directly northeast of Byron Airport, known as the Brushy Creek Conservation Bank property, will be donated to Contra Costa County. The parcel is identified in the Byron Airport Master Plan as a property that should be considered for acquisition, as it is situated in the approach path of Runway 12/30.

The property is part of a trust and was previously managed by Wildlands, Inc. The trust designated the property as habitat management land to protect breeding areas for the burrowing owl—a special status, protected species. The interest earned on the existing trust fund account has provided the means to monitor, survey and maintain the property, which is grazed by cattle on a leasing basis.

The County Airports Division is currently managing approximately 814 acres of habitat management land at the Byron Airport. The acquisition of Brushy Creek Conservation Bank will mean extending monitoring and management to the new property through existing and future range management, wildlife biologist and grazing lease agreements. Grazing leases and interest from the existing trust fund will be used to fund the management of the new property.

UAS Concerns (continued from page 3)...

requires a Certificate of Waiver or Authorization (COA) to operate. Most commercial operations are now regulated under the small UAS Rule (Part 107).

UAS operations defined as model aircraft operations are for hobby/recreational purposes only. The FAA strongly encourages drone operators to follow specific community safety guidelines while operating. These include:

- Fly below 400 feet and remain clear of surrounding obstacles
- Keep UAS within visual line of site at all times
- Never fly near other aircraft
- Do not fly within 5 miles of an airport unless you contact the airport and control tower before flying
- Do not fly near people or stadiums
- Do not fly an aircraft that weighs more than 55 pounds
- Do not be careless or reckless with your unmanned aircraft - you could be fined for endangering people or other aircraft.

More information about UAS policies is available at <http://www.faa.gov/uas>.

Looking a Little Bushy, Mow it Down

Each year, around May, the Airport staff gets questioned about why the infields and vacant lands around the Airport are not being mowed. Many years of managing the grasses on the airports have proved 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 rye and wild oats. Those tall grasses, unlike the starthistle, are easily traversed by aircraft. Once the thistle 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. That 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!

The Diablo Aviator is a publication of the Contra Costa County Public Works Airports Division. Past newsletters are available at www.ContraCostaCountyAirports.org. The newsletter editor is Daniel Wick. The Director of Airports is Keith Freitas.

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY AIRPORTS

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