

# AEROTECH NEWS



Journal of Aerospace, Defense Industry and Veteran News

and Review

## Honor Flight Kern County flies veterans to DC

by Dennis Anderson  
special to Aerotech News

WASHINGTON D.C.— It is 21 steps that an Honor Guard soldier guarding the Tomb of The Unknowns takes, heels tapping while a hushed crowd watches his solemn line of march.

At 21 steps, in perfect dress blue uniform, the silent soldier executes an “about face,” shouldering an immaculate M-14 ceremonial rifle with chromed bayonet. The soldier repeats the process until relieved by the staff sergeant of the “Old Guard.”

All eyes were on the sergeant who escorted the relief guard out, changed the guard, and returned to his post with the guard who was just replaced. But eyes were also on rows of veterans in blue shirts who were watching the ceremony in silent respect.

So goes the “Change of Guard” ceremony at one of the nation’s most sacred memorials, the Tomb Of The Unknown Soldier, who rests “in honored glory ... known but to God.”

Among the troops, an entire “L-shaped” row with about half of them seated in wheeled “transport chairs,” there was a truck dispatcher, a cook, a submariner, plus a collection of “grunt infantry” soldiers, joined by Marines, airmen, sailors.

These were the veterans of Honor Flight Kern County Flight 46, seated, and standing, in the VIP section, because on this warm spring day at Arlington National Cemetery, they were the very important people. D.C. tourists standing across from them on the marble steps had their eyes on them, too.

Among them was one authentic combat hero, and one conscientious objector, both drafted during the Vietnam War, both served with honor and distinction. There were two female veterans of the Vietnam Era, one Army soldier, one Marine. There were fighting sailors of the Navy, and flying crew chiefs of the Air Force and Army helicopter assault squadrons.

In their youth, some of these veterans fought until their shed blood transformed into Purple Heart medals, fighting in places like the Mekong Delta, the Ashau Valley, the Central Highlands.

As the late author Joseph Galloway who served alongside them put it, “In their youth, they were tigers.” As Steven Mayer, reporter for the *Bakerfield Californian* put it, there were too many different jobs on the Honor Flight manifest to list “but everyone had a story,” and simply too many stories to tell.

Mayer attended the first Honor Flight Kern County, more than 10 years ago, with 20 World War II veterans attending. In the years since, and 45 flights later, the local non-profit has emerged into a regional movement.

In company as close as they ever kept in a barracks or ship, veterans ranging back to the Korean War, through the Cold War years, and the Vietnam War Era, spent an intense three days together as the honor roll of Honor Flight 46.

They flew via charter from Bakersfield to the nation’s capital for a lightning-round tour of all the armed forces memorials, and the grandeur of the Capitol where they were hosted in the House chamber by their elected representative, House Speaker Kevin McCarthy. He was joined by Rep. Mike Garcia, R-Santa Clarita, a decorated Navy pilot who flew during the Iraq War.

No veteran paid a penny out of pocket. The dozens of “Guardians” and volunteers who escorted the veteran cohort

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Photograph by Dennis Anderson

Since its inception in November of 1982, visitors, family, friends, and battle buddies have left mementos at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall: cards, photos, boots, challenge coins, dogtags, even a bicycle and a tailpiece of a Huey helicopter. Every day since 1984, National Park Rangers collect all the mementos to put them in the Vietnam Veterans Memorial museum.



# HONOR FLIGHT, from 1

paid their own way.

“The Honor Flight is our gift from the people of Kern County, and Bakersfield,” said Janis Mattoon Varner, one of the four group leaders who tended to the diverse flock.

One Army veteran, Anthony Kitson, marked his 90th birthday the day the group departed Bakersfield Airport.

Kitson was born in London in 1933, and was seven years-old during the Battle of Britain. Along with many other British children, he was evacuated to the country during the Blitz.

“It was the trip of a lifetime,” said Kitson, who shifted from active Army to spend more than 20 years working for the Department of Defense in Thailand, Laos and Vietnam. In those days he flew aboard Air America, the CIA-owned airline.

“I think the Honor Flight was one of the most significant experiences of my life,” Kitson said.

During the round of tour stops, veterans stepped off the bus to visit Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps memorials. The Marine Corps Memorial, seated on a strip of highway near Arlington National Cemetery features the gargantuan statuette of the Iwo Jima flag raisers. Vets of every branch formed up at their memorial and saluted for the camera.

Flight 46 veterans also visited the Vietnam Memorial, the Korean War Memorial, the World War II Memorial. They also visited memorials of the nation’s historic leaders, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Dr. Martin Luther King, and our 16th President who preserved the Union, Abraham Lincoln, and the Women’s Memorial at Arlington.

“There’s only one monument in Washington,” Eddie, the bus driver said. “It’s the Washington Monument. The others are memorials.”

As the veterans walked or moved by chair, hundreds of schoolchildren turned out, joined by teachers and parents. As veterans stepped into the memorial entryways they were greeted by applause, and children handing them flowers and notes.

“We want them to experience this,” Varner said. “We want them to understand that they are honored, and their service appreciated and recognized.”

Schoolchildren by the dozens pressed “Thank You” notes into their hands.

My note said, “People don’t really have an idea of what you go through. I want to thank you for being brave,” from Max Vogt, a sixth grader.

The Honor Flight non-profit program has 136 “hubs,” or chapters nationwide. The mission

emerged nearly 20 years ago, to honor quickly departing “Greatest Generation” World War II veterans, most of whom are gone. Now it is Korea and Vietnam and elder veterans of the Cold War.

At the World War II Memorial, middle school girls presented me with a red carnation, and beaming smiles.

Honor Flight Kern County is an all-volunteer non-profit created to honor veterans of Kern County and surrounding areas with veterans as far away as the San Fernando and Antelope Valleys. Priority is given to the oldest first, any veteran of World War II — and those from any conflict who are terminally ill.

As we approached the Vietnam Memorial, the sense of hallowed ground pervades the quiet. More school children beckoned us with handshakes, and bowed heads. It was a little overwhelming, especially for those who served in Vietnam.

“I was at Ia Drang with 1st Cav,” Army veteran Alex Hernandez said. “Not at the time of the big battle, but not long after.” Wounded, he received the Purple Heart. He added, “I was with 7th Cavalry. Our motto, ‘is Garry Owen,’ which references the Irish song that has been the 7th Cavalry regimental march since the Battle of Little Big Horn.”

Hernandez was recalling the epic fight between two 7th Cav battalions of the 1st Cavalry Division, Airmobile, heavily outnumbered against a regiment of North Vietnamese Army regulars. The battle was recounted in the book *We Were Soldiers Once, and Young* and the Mel Gibson film, *We Were Soldiers*.

That book was co-authored by the late Joe Galloway and Lt. Gen. Hal Moore. Galloway, a UPI journalist at the Ia Drang battle, hired me into the Washington D.C. bureau of UPI in 1981. Galloway had a soft spot for hiring veterans.

Two names inscribed on that sloping inverted pyramid of black granite with the 58,000-plus names of all Americans killed in Vietnam held a personal connection. It is said the Vietnam Memorial is the most visited war memorial on the Washington Mall.

I searched out Jimmy Nakay-



Courtesy photograph

Members of the Honor Flight Kern County in Washington, D.C., in April, 2023



Photograph by Dennis Anderson

The Old Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.

ma, a badly wounded soldier assisted by Galloway at Ia Drang where he was horribly burned by a U.S. napalm strike that mistakenly hit U.S. troops. Nakayama died two days later, Nov. 17, 1965, within days of his son’s birth. Nakayama’s name is among 237 listed on Panel 3E of the Vietnam Memorial, so many killed in the space of a few days.

The other name I found was Richard K. Carter, killed Nov. 19, 1967, two years later. Carter, on Panel 30E. Carter was older brother to my Antelope Valley Vietnam Memorial volunteer comrade, Augie Anderson, Air Force veteran. We are not related, but we are connected.

My Army hitch began about a month after “MAC-V,” Military Assistance Command, shut



Photograph by Dennis Anderson

U.S. Air Force Vietnam veteran Dan Contreras, left, with U.S. Army Vietnam veteran Larry Walker at the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C., during last month’s Honor Flight Kern County visit.

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## HONOR FLIGHT, from 2

down on March 29, 1973. The Army sent me to Europe as a paratrooper, and my service was with an armor recon unit scouting walls, barbed wire and mine fields along the Cold War border of East Germany, a state that dissolved in 1989 with the Soviet Union's fall imminent.

Volunteers known as "Guardians," made us all feel honored, whether we served in Korea, Vietnam, or the Cold War. Whether we worked in a cookhouse in Greenland, or a nuclear

code bunker in Germany, we were welcomed.

Guardians monitor medication, push "transport chairs," and assist veterans any way they can. My companion, Anthony Kitson, friend of more than 30 years, was escorted by Guardian Fabian Millan, a communications expert with the shoulders of a linebacker. Millan and Kitson made fast friends.

"It's an honor to work with Anthony Kitson," Millan said. His sentiments reflected the enthusiasm of all the

more than 50 Guardians, some among them veterans, some just earnest, kind, and helpful.

"I have always been patriotic, and I go to every veterans event I can," Guardian Cissy Teagarten said.

Two female Vietnam Era veterans attended, Donnie Alexander, Marine, and Glenda Dukes-Sonkur, Army, both from the Antelope Valley. Together, they explored the many galleries of the Women's Memorial with the history of service dating back to the American Revolution.

No World War II veterans flew on Flight 46. Of 16 million Americans who served more than 75 years ago during World War II, only about 100,000 are living.

At a ceremonial dinner, each veteran was summoned to hear a short paragraph about their service read aloud by Group Leader Glen Nakashima. Each was presented a flag flown over the Capitol presented by McCarthy's staff.

During the service, Earle Cooper, a draftee who became an officer, was recognized for his valor fighting with the 101st Airborne Division in a battle the history books call "Hamburger Hill." Everyone in the room rose to their feet and applauded.

"I appreciate it," he said, quietly. "Please," he added. "I am the same as all the others."

On the flight home, each vet received a mail bag packed with letters of gratitude from family members, from the "Police Wives of Bakersfield," from volunteers with Honor Flights Kern County, from more school children, and friends.

Travel weary but jubilant, the vets trooped off the aircraft on return to Bakersfield. Huddled together and tired, we heard a din and roar. Through the corridor, we sighted flags, Old Glory, dozens of flags waved. We heard applause. The applause rose to a roar of cheers and a band played. High school sports teams, motorcycle clubs, American Legion, VFW and veteran groups, and family members and friends waved, and grabbed at the vet-



Photograph by Dennis Anderson

Alex Hernandez, a Young Marine from Palmdale, Calif., renders a salute to the veterans as they arrive at the Bakersfield Airport following their Honor Flight trip to Washington, D.C.



Photograph by Dennis Anderson

The daughter of U.S. Army Pfc. Alejandro Hernandez welcomes her father home to Bakersfield, Calif., following his Honor Flight visit to the nation's capital.

erans. Women of the American Legion offered decorative blankets. People clapped, stamped their feet and many cried, whether veteran or members of the welcome home crowd.

It looked like half of Bakersfield turned out. For troops who returned home, quietly, often with little or no welcome more than half a century ago, it looked and sounded like the Fifth Avenue parade they never got. It was the kind of parade that happened

at the end of World War II. And that was how it felt.

*Editor's note: Dennis Anderson is an Army veteran, a paratrooper who served in the Cold War and covered the Iraq War as embedded journalist with local National Guard troops. He serves on the Los Angeles County Veterans Advisory Commission.*

## AV College to buy Cessna jets, providing aerospace students with hands-on training

**LANCASTER, Calif.**—Antelope Valley College aerospace students will now have access to industry-standard, hands-on training with fully operational jets after the college's Board of Trustees approved the purchase of two Cessna Citation II jets, officials announced April 11, 2023.

Although the college will pay \$1.9 million for the jets, officials say these purchases are critical in order to meet industry standards for some of the college's most successful programs, including Aircraft Fabrication and Assembly; Aeronautical and Aviation Technology; and Airframe Manufacturing Technology. The new aircraft will allow students to work on modern airframes, avionics, fabrication, landing gear, and powerplants.

"These are programs that continue to grow year after year, helping our students prepare for rewarding careers in the dynamic aerospace industry," said Antelope Valley College Superintendent/President, Jennifer Zellet, PhD. "But make no mistake, these are very demanding roles, and our industry partners require the most highly trained individuals, and that requires a serious investment from the college."

"These are programs that have the ability to transform the lives of our students, particularly for traditionally underrepresented student populations," Zellet said. "Seventy-one percent of the students enrolled in aerospace programs at AVC are Hispanic."

These aerospace programs have consistently been an area of growth for the college. In the last three years, the number of certificates and

degrees awarded has increased by more than 53 percent. Students are recruited immediately after graduation, sometimes even before completing their programs. Some local employers, such as Northrop Grumman, even guarantee interviews for students enrolled in the Aircraft Fabrication and Assembly program.

Zellet says entry-level jobs in these fields pay between \$25 - \$30 per hour after just one eight-week course, with the potential to earn \$50 per hour after five years on the job with a certificate.



# MASP updates, including runway closures

by **Cathy Hansen**  
special to Aerotech News

## MASP director of operations

Mojave Air and Space Port at Rutan Field has welcomed, Arielle Sewell, the new director of operations. She previously worked for the City of Fresno with Airport Safety Management Systems and Airports Operations Manager.

She earned a MS in Aeronautics from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, with a focus in Aerospace Safety Program Management, a BS in Technical Management, as well as several certifications in SMS, emergency management, accident investigation, and human factors.



Arielle Sewell

## MASP runway 12-30 upgrades

Work will begin on Runway 12-30 at the Mojave Air and Space Port at the end of May, 2023.

Runway 12/30 will be closed, and is expected to be closed for 42 days.



Photograph by Matt Martman

Stratolunch takes off from the Mojave Air and Space Port, April 1, 2023.

Expected construction phase dates, subject to change:

**May 30-June 8:** Runway rehabilitation work between RWY 8/26 and TWY J.

- RWY 12/30 closed. NOTAM will be issued to reflect closure.

**June 9-20:** Runway Rehabilitation work across RWY 8/26 and 4/22. NOTAMs will be issued to reflect closure 72 hours in advance for 4/22 or 8/26 closures.

- RWY 12/30 closed.
- RWY 8/26: 7 day closure time within this phase.
- RWY 4/22: 3 day closure time within this phase, will not be closed while 8/26 is closed.

**June 21-July 2:** Runway rehabilitation work at the west and east ends of RWY 12/30.

- RWY 12/30 closed.

**July 3-31:** All Runways reopened.

**Aug. 1-7:** RWY 12/30 closed for pavement markings.

- RWY 12/30 closed.
- Rolling closures of RWYs 4/22 and 8/26 anticipated as needed for painting

Federal Aviation Administration grants were approved in 2021 and 2022. The first grant was for \$5.9-million to strengthen the runway and the second grant was approved for \$4.3-million for improvements. The FAA grant has requirements for nearly \$478,000 match from the airport.

At a MASP Board meeting held in January 2023, CEO Tim Reid said, "Construction will take 68 days, with the contractor working 24 hours a day, seven days a week to minimize the impact on the airport tenants' operations."

"The rehabilitation will address the main, center section of the runway, which meets the FAA's standard of 150 feet wide. Mojave's runway, however, is a non-standard 200 feet wide. The FAA funding will cover only the standard width, leaving 25 feet on either

side undone," Reid said.

He said, "I have been working extensively on this to find other funding sources."

Some of Mojave Air and Space Port tenants have to use runway 12-30 because they need the 12,500 feet of length it offers. Firms like Stratolunch and Virgin Galactic will be dramatically affected by the runway closures.

## Masten Space Systems acquired by Astrobotic in September 2022

Masten Space Systems was founded in 2004 at Mojave Airport and was successful for 18 years, completing more than 600 vertical



Courtesy photograph

Masten Space Systems rocket

takeoff and landing (VTVL) rocket flights.

Two years ago the company was awarded a NASA contract, but the small business was over budget and filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in July 1922. They were unable to raise funds or

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# Hollywood, NASA Armstrong value flight safety

by Jay Levine  
NASA Armstrong

If you've seen movie or television scenes with fighter jets zooming through tight canyon terrain, a helicopter flying under a bridge, or astonishing drone stunts, it's likely you are seeing Kevin LaRosa II's pulse-pounding footage.

LaRosa II, an aerial coordinator and stunt pilot, said his work in coordinating and documenting seemingly impossible visuals has similarities to research flights at a recent presentation at NASA's Armstrong Flight Research Center at Edwards, Calif.

He has a long list of film credits including "Ironman," "Avengers," "Transformer 5," "Top Gun: Maverick," and "Devotion."

Working safely to deliver results is a common goal, said LaRosa II, a third-generation pilot. Also similar is that both organizations have specialized mission teams, detailed flight planning and safety plans, aircraft crews, and schedulers.

LaRosa II has two other links to the center. He knew former NASA Armstrong pilot Tom McMurtry, who he worked with and learned about military flying from earlier in his career. He also

knows NASA Armstrong pilot Hernan Posada, who he first met when Posada flew aircraft for his father Kevin LaRosa's business. Posada invited him to speak at Safety Day.

Landing on moving cars, or boats looks cool on screen, but the process for setting it up is methodical. "It is so far from stunt," he said. In fact, LaRosa II often works with the Federal Aviation Administration to ensure his work complies with established rules.

Another similarity between LaRosa II's work and NASA Armstrong's is that just as NASA employees are expected to identify when they think something is unsafe, he said he must do the same.

Sometimes preparation reveals a proposed sequence is not worth the risk. LaRosa II explained to "Top Gun: Maverick" star Tom Cruise, who is an accomplished aviator, that a planned scene could not unfold as planned.

"Tom flew his own P-51 Mustang to the set," LaRosa II said. "Wing mounted cameras were to be used to film a closing sequence of Cruise and Jennifer Connelly. The aerodynamics disturbance on the aircraft's wing developed poor handling qualities. Multiple test flights were performed by a highly experienced P-51 maintenance test pilot



Photograph courtesy of Kevin LaRosa II

Aerial coordinator and stunt pilot Kevin LaRosa II sits in the Cinejet, which is an L-39 jet with a customized camera gimbal system that is the first of its kind. The system is maneuverable, stable and permits the aircraft to be in the right position at the right time for some of the hard-to-get footage.



NASA photograph by Steve Freeman

Aerial coordinator and stunt pilot Kevin LaRosa II describes what it takes to safely plan and document breathtaking footage of aircraft at a presentation at NASA's Armstrong Flight Research Center in Edwards, Calif.

and he reported that the aircraft would not be safe in that configuration."

In other words, it wasn't safe and how to shoot the scene needed a new plan.

"I called Tom and reported the results and advised him that the aircraft couldn't be flown with the cameras for safety," LaRosa II recalled.

"Tom's response is what you would expect from a professional pilot. He said, 'No problem, how do you propose we move forward?' I proposed that we could shoot this sequence using close formation with the camera jet to accomplish the tight shots of the actors."

The CineJet, which is an L-39 jet with a customized camera gimbal system that is the first of its kind, was used to capture the scene with Cruise and Connelly. The system is maneuverable, stable and permits the aircraft to be in the right position at the right time for some of the hard-to-get

footage of the F-18s and P-51 in action, LaRosa II explained.

Pilot training was another key to making the film look authentic. LaRosa II created, under the direction of Cruise, a pilot curriculum of intense training. Included were multitudes of high energy, high-g flying to simulate gravitational forces a pilot endures and flying an F/A-18 from an aircraft carrier.

"We knew exactly what we were going to do before we went to fly it," he said.

That statement can be appreciated by people in LaRosa II's world and in the flight research environment. Risk is not entirely avoidable, but finding out what those risks are and mitigating them to increase safety is paramount to mission success.

## MASP, from 5

pay their employees.

According to an article in The Robot Report, the Pittsburgh, Penn., based company, Astrobotic, acquired Masten Space Systems along with its entire portfolio of advanced space technology developed over 18 years of operation for \$4.5 million.

The article also stated, "The combined companies' more than 200 employees will continue operating in Pittsburgh, where Astrobotic is headquartered, and at the Mojave Air and Space Port in California. Astrobotic plans to maintain suborbital flight operations at Masten's testing sites at Mojave. It also plans to continue offering the space industry a testing site for hot fire rockets."

Dave Masten, founder and president of Masten Space Systems gave a quote to The Robot Report. "I started Masten with the goal of tearing down barriers to space. On behalf of the Masten team, I am excited to join Astrobotic in our shared mission to make space accessible to the world. This combined organization will let us continue to provide important services to our customers and help us make a bigger impact on humanity's future in space."

## Plane Crazy Saturday still going strong

At the April 15, 2023, Plane Crazy, Phil Schultz, retired chief test pilot for General Electric Aircraft Engines, gave an interesting talk about flight testing the GE-36 Unducted Fan engine.

The first flight test was conducted on Aug. 20, 1986, at Mojave. This prototype engine was flown on a Boeing 727 testbed aircraft 25 times from August 1986 to February 1987.

The sound to people standing on the ground was very unusual,

as the two rows of carbon composite blades were contra rotating (turning in opposite directions) and the tips of the blades were supersonic when spinning at flying speeds. You felt it as well as hearing it as it flew past.

Schultz stated that the GE-36 was more fuel efficient by 50% compared to the stock engine on the 727 test aircraft. He also said that GE experimented with shorter blade lengths and number of blades for the rear set of blades.

He showed a short video of the 727 flying by so the audience could hear the odd sound it made.

He concluded his talk by saying that even though this engine was never put into production, all of the information gained during ground run testing and flying test hours, was retained and used in future engine designs, including the massive GE-90 engine that was used on the Boeing 777 airliner.

Many aircraft flew in for display as the weather was picture perfect! Many thanks to the California Highway Patrol Officer Blais and the CHP Senior Volunteers for setting up a display and handing out special goodies for the kids who attended Plane Crazy.

A special thanks to MASP Fire Chief Damien Farrar for his time explaining what it takes to be a fire fighter at the airport. Kids of all ages enjoyed hearing about the fire truck and how it works!

Next month at Plane Crazy Saturday on May 20, Roy Martin will give presentation titled, "Technology and Tactics of Operation Linebacker I and II of the Vietnam Air War." Martin flew



Photograph by Jim Wilhelm

Plane Crazy Saturday speaker Phil Schultz and Cathy Hansen

F-4s while serving in the United States Air Force in Southeast Asia.

He retired as Chief Test Pilot for Northrop Grumman Aerospace Systems West Region several years ago and is a retired U.S. Air Force colonel. He has more than 45 years flying experience with over 10,800 flight hours in more than 70 aircraft types. Don't miss his talk! Roy has great stories to tell.

*On this date...*



**May 6, 1968:** Astronaut Neil Armstrong ejects at about 200 feet, from Bell Aerospace Lunar Landing Research Vehicle No. 1, known as the "Flying Bedstead", at NASA's Manned Spacecraft Center, Ellington AFB, Houston, Texas, as it goes out of control. Had he ejected 1/2 second later, his chute would not have deployed fully.



**May 9, 1949:** The initial flight of Republic's rocket-assisted jet fighter, the XF-91 Thunderceptor, took place piloted by Carl Bellingier. The aircraft was unusual in a number of respects. Its swept back wings were wider and thicker at the tip than the root; its dual-wheel landing gear retracted outward; and it carried an auxiliary jet motor at the base of its tail.



**May 10, 1972:** Fairchild Republic's YA-10A Thunderbolt II made its first flight, flown by company chief test pilot Howard "Sam" Nelson, in Farmingdale, N.Y. The twin-engine, twin-tailed ground attack aircraft was designed around the General Electric GAU-8 Avenger 30mm rotary cannon.



**May 7, 1991:** Space Shuttle Endeavour arrived at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, after being flown on the Shuttle Carrier Aircraft from NASA's Dryden (now Armstrong) Flight Research Center, Edwards Calif. In 1987, the U.S. Congress approved the construction of Endeavour to replace the Challenger that was destroyed in 1986. NASA chose, on cost grounds, to build much of Endeavour from spare parts rather than refitting the Space Shuttle Enterprise, and used structural spares built during the construction of Discovery and Atlantis in its assembly. Endeavour rolled out of the Rockwell facility at Air Force Plant 42 in Palmdale, Calif., on April 25, 1991.



**May 10, 1967:** The M2-F2 lifting body aircraft was seriously damaged in a landing accident on the lakebed, injuring NASA test pilot Bruce A. Peterson. The aircraft impacted the lakebed and rolled several times, coming to rest on its top. The aircraft subsequently was rebuilt with a center fin and a reaction flight control system and was redesignated M2-F3. This was the 16th and final glide flight for the M2-F2. Film taken of the accident was later widely viewed in the popular television series *The Six-Million Dollar Man*.



**May 11, 1964:** The first prototype North American XB-70A-1-NA Valkyrie rolled out at Air Force Plant 42, Palmdale, Calif. A crowd of more than 5,000 were on hand for the event. In August 1960, the U.S. Air Force had contracted for one XB-70 prototype and 11 pre-production YB-70 development aircraft. By 1964, however, the program had been scaled back to two XB-70As and one XB-70B. Only two were actually completed. The B-70 was designed as a Mach 3+ strategic bomber capable of flying higher than 70,000 feet.



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The Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area is a United States Army Corps of Engineers Facility and a unit of the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation System.

# NASA Armstrong tests model of efficient wing

by Jay Levine  
NASA Armstrong

NASA researchers have completed testing on a scale model of a unique aircraft wing, gaining data that will help build larger versions of the design with the goal of improving fuel efficiency.

The model tested at NASA's Armstrong Flight Research Center at Edwards, Calif., is a six-foot version of the Transonic Truss-Braced Wing. This concept involves a wing braced on an aircraft using diagonal struts that also add lift and could result in significantly improved aerodynamics.

During load testing, researchers observed the interaction of the model strut and wing, as well as the forces affecting each, said Frank Pena, mock wing test director at the NASA Armstrong Flight Loads Laboratory. Until now, researchers had no calculations to estimate how forces transferred from the main wing to the strut. Information the team gathered from the model will enable them to calculate what will happen when NASA builds a larger wing.

"We identified early that we needed to learn more about how these structures with the strut respond to load and

to see what additional information we may need for a calibration of a bigger structure," Pena said. "We decided to use the load cell between the strut and the main wing to help us track down some of this missing information that otherwise could not be obtained."

The Armstrong team will use the six-foot model data to guide the design of a 10-foot version, in coordination with NASA's Langley Research Center in Hampton, Va., which has worked on the TTBW concept for decades. The 10-foot wing will have a swept-back angle closer to the TTBW concept developed at Langley. It differs from the smaller wing version, which focused on testing instrumentation and methods. The larger wing will also have more representative connections between the fuselage and the strut and wing.

In addition to NASA's current TTBW research, which began more than a year ago, the agency also made an award in January for a TTBW proposal submitted by The Boeing Company for the Sustainable Flight Demonstrator project. Boeing will work with NASA to build, test, and fly a full-scale demonstrator aircraft and validate technologies aimed at dramatically reduc-



NASA photograph by Carla Thomas

Aaron Rumsey and Beto Hinojos carefully add weight to a six-foot model of the Transonic Truss-Braced Wing at NASA's Armstrong Flight Research Center, at Edwards, Calif. The aircraft concept involves a wing braced on an aircraft using diagonal struts that also add lift and could result in significantly improved aerodynamics.



NASA photograph by Joel Kowsky

NASA Administrator Bill Nelson holds a model of an aircraft with a Transonic Truss-Braced Wing during a news conference on NASA's Sustainable Flight Demonstrator project on Jan. 18, 2023.

ing fuel burn and carbon emissions. The project's goal is to inform a new generation of single-aisle aircraft that will help the U.S. achieve its goal of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

While much of the hardware for the six-foot mock wing was readily available to Flight Loads Laboratory staff, some parts required the sheet metal capabilities of NASA Armstrong's Experimental Fabrication Branch, Pena said. For example, the root of the truss sweep angle and the angle between the wings of the aircraft — known as a dihedral — required custom components, along with the adaptor plate for the three-axis load cell interface.

Success in testing the six-foot and

10-foot wings could provide additional information for deciding if researchers will use the NASA Armstrong-developed Fiber Optic Sensing System (FOSS) to gather data for the future full-scale Sustainable Flight Demonstrator aircraft. The sensing system can take thousands of strain measurements along an optical fiber about the thickness of a human hair, which could resolve some of the challenges in gathering data along the extra-long, thin wings. The team used it successfully with the 6-foot model.

"FOSS generated 125 gigabytes of data," Pena said. "The testing was really smooth, and we finished it in one afternoon."

The 10-foot wing design is expected

to be complete this year, with testing at NASA Armstrong set for later this year or 2024.

The TTBW models, part of NASA's Advanced Air Transport Technology project, are aimed at learning more about the concept and will indirectly benefit the Sustainable Flight Demonstrator. NASA Armstrong will also play other, more direct roles with the Sustainable Flight Demonstrator. These will include piloted simulation work, structural testing, technical expertise, flight testing, and the development of potential instrumentation and sensors. Armstrong will also provide facilities and equipment such as control rooms, radars, video tracking, hangars, and chase aircraft.

## NASA leadership details Moon to Mars strategy at Armstrong

by Teresa Whiting  
NASA Armstrong

NASA Administrator Bill Nelson, Deputy Administrator Pam Melroy, Associate Administrator Bob Cabana, and team, visited NASA's Armstrong Flight Research Center at Edwards, Calif., April 12, 2023.

The team shared updates about NASA's plan to go back to the Moon and then to Mars with the Artemis Mission. Nelson and team also met with several groups around the center for one-on-one discussions.

"We return to the Moon to stay," said Administrator Nelson. "To learn and to live and to create. To do incredible science we can do nowhere else. To continue to build our nation's capabilities in space, creating positive effects on our economy, our security, and our daily lives.

From left: NASA Administrator Bill Nelson, Armstrong Deputy Center Director Laurie Grindle, Deputy Administrator Pam Melroy, Associate Administrator Bob Cabana, and various other members from the Moon to Mars team speak to NASA Armstrong Flight Research Center employees during a town hall on April 12, 2023, at Edwards, Calif.

And we go on to inspire the Artemis Generation to extend human presence and exploration throughout the solar system — and beyond."

California has more Artemis suppliers than any other U.S. state with 335 companies manufacturing pieces for upcoming space missions. NASA Armstrong continues to support space exploration in Southern California.

For more than a decade, NASA Armstrong has supported development and testing efforts for the Orion spacecraft and other key elements of NASA's Artemis missions.

Recently, researchers at the center invented a space-rated Fiber Optic Sensing System, or FOSS, which uses fiber optics to collect temperature and strain information critical to space flight safety. This system flew on the Low-Earth Orbit Flight Test of an Inflatable Decelerator, or LOFTID, mission.



NASA photograph by Genaro Vavuris





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# Have 5tarboy: USAF Test Pilot School's Test Management Project uses new GPS system for better navigation guidance

by Adam Bowles  
Edwards AFB, Calif.

The USAF Test Pilot School at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., is known for providing high quality resources for greater aerospace testing.

This was recently demonstrated through their partnership with Los Angeles based "StarNav" to test a unique GPS system.

Flown on a special T-38C from Holloman Air Force Base, the system aims to provide more accurate navigation information to older aircraft using existing onboard antennas. TPS proudly named this project "Have 5tarboy".

"It's an interesting project and name," Capt. Nathan Raquet, Project Lead, USAF TPS explained. "We changed the 'S' to a '5' in our project '5tarboy' because we are testing the L5 GPS signal. The project is testing a L5 and GPS Galileo E5A re-

ceiver through existing hardware on the aircraft on this case, a T-38C." StarNav LLC, a LA based company that implements leading edge technologies, the implication of a successful test of "5tarboy" would be a system that provides accurate navigation information to older aircraft using the existing onboard antennas.

"GPS L5 is the newest signal that is being deployed on GPS satellites," Joshua Morales, CEO of StarNav explained. "What StarNav has been working on is a piece of equipment that allows jets to be able to use those signals and it allows the team to accomplish this without equipping the aircraft with new hardware."

Using a test kit and a mobile GPS space station, the "5tarboy" team makes sure the navigational test goes as smooth as possible.

"With the test kit, we do a bit of regression testing so we make sure the capabilities of the aircraft are still unaffected by our system," Capt. Steve O'Briant, Project Pilot,



Air Force photographs by Adam Bowles

USAF Test Pilot School's bus acts as a GPS space station for the "Have 5tarboy" program.



Capt. Steve "Nike" O'Briant, project pilot, uses a test kit to test the "5tarboy" GPS system on the T-38C

Capt. Steve "Nike" O'Briant, Project Pilot uses a test kit to test the "5tarboy" GPS system on the T-38C.

ceiver through existing hardware on the aircraft on this case, a T-38C."

Traditional GPS signals are split into L1, L2, and L5 signals. "5tarboy" would further utilize the GPS L5 signal reception through existing onboard antennas that would be more accurate for navigation guidance on aircraft.

"We are seeing can this implementation of the receiver work and then see how can L5 and Galileo E5A be used to improve the navigation systems already on the aircraft," Raquet explained.

L1 and L2 signals have been around for years but the newer L5 GPS signal is not always utilized by older military aircraft, sometimes because of outdated GPS antennas. With the help of

USAF TPS said.

"The TPS students painted a bus that looks like the X-62 VISTA," Raquet explained. "We are using it for our test as a GPS space station. So, we are recording GPS on the T-38C and also the space station and we use what is called differential GPS processing to get a more accurate position solution for the test."

The 412th Test Wing Guidance and Navigation Technical Adequacy Office desired a solution that can produce accurate position information while undergoing this project that would benefit the warfighter, the Edwards test mission and the Department of Defense as a whole.



Maj. Matthew Daugherty, Project Pilot gets a lesson about the new GPS system "5tarboy". "5tarboy" would utilize the GPS L5 signal reception through a TACAN antenna that would be more accurate for navigation guidance.

"The more frequencies you have, you can correct for atmospheric errors and it also gives you more redundancy in the electromagnetic spectrum by having more ways of getting information," Raquet explained. "If we don't do this test, we don't have the answers to if this implementation is realistic

and we won't have this asset available to the test community."

With a successful test from the "5tarboy" team, more accurate navigation information using the L5 GPS signal is slowly becoming possible with aircraft in the United States Air Force.

"We have predictions that we are reviewing for validation, but we flew seven sorties and got a ton of data during this project," Raquet said. "I worked with the USAF TPS before, so I am very proud to be working on this Test Management Project with them again."



The "Have 5tarboy" team poses for a photo in front of a T-38C from Holloman. From left: Capt. Steve "Nike" O'Briant, project pilot; Capt. Nathan "Loball" Raquet, project lead/engineer; Joshua Morales, CEO of StarNav; Capt. Ajericho "Saint" Malia, project engineer; RAF Sqdn. Ldr. Stephen "Tavo" Tavener, project pilot; Capt. Casey "Sandman" Slattery, project engineer; and Maj. Matt "Doc" Daugherty, project pilot.



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## The Empty Shell: A look back at a cherished old hangar

by Bob Alvis  
special to Aerotech News

It's been some time since I brought up the grand old lady War Eagle Field, out on Avenue I and 60th West, but the other night I was reading an old World War II issue of *BULAERO*, the base newspaper that covered all the Cal Aero fields in Southern California, including our very own Polaris Flight Academy at War Eagle Field.

The stories shared were the up-and-coming entertainment of USO shows making their way to the airfields, and on that list was War Eagle. Being in proximity to Hollywood and the entertainment industry, there were many famous people who could take time to perform at local venues and still make first call in Hollywood on workdays.

My love for the old field out on that corner is well documented and two of my favorite old haunts there are Hangars One and Two which during the life of the field, were beehives of activity 24-hours-a-day. Aircraft upkeep was constant for the hundreds



of cadets who needed aircraft to train in every day, and the constant sound of engines and air tools gave a concert that the everyday ground personnel took for granted. But there were times when those sounds were replaced with others just as important to the war effort for keeping up morale in such trying times.

The Antelope Valley has seen many famous people come here and entertain over the years but during those years of World War II those old hangars at War Eagle were the stage for more celebrities than our valley has

seen since World War II.

On many special occasions the hangars were emptied of aircraft and filled with portable stages. Sound systems filled the facility as hundreds of airmen crowded in to hear the very best of Hollywood and the music industry, along with stand-up comedians who today we consider legendary.

Young airmen and old alike who kept the field buzzing could escape the world and its problems for a while at these shows, and ease the pain of separation from their families, and fear of the unknown. On those special days and nights, one could listen and laugh while drifting away to the sounds of a Hollywood starlet singing like her song was personally to every soldier in attendance.

Bob Hope, Joe E Brown, Mickey Rooney, Clark Gable, John Wayne, Jack Benny, and Bing Crosby were always big draws, but it was those shapely girls with soft voices, talented troupes like the Andrew Sisters, and a mixture of Big Bands that prompted thoughts of home, good times, friends, and family.

Starlets like Veronica Lake, Carole Landis, Betty Grable, Rita Hayworth, Jane Russell, Ginger Rogers, and Lauren Bacall all made appearances out at that old hangar that is now filled with dust-covered storage from years of non-use.

We also must not overlook entertainers who were not famous but had skills, like the amateurs who would fill the bill in between the big names with



Veronica Lake is helped out of a plane by Army Air Corp airmen. Many celebrities were flown to War Eagle Field to entertain troops during World War II.

dancing and unique talents. For many of these entertainers the USO shows were their start in the entertainment industry.

One of those starlets who entertained at our old field in those hangars was Lancaster's own Judy Garland. One day when I was being given a tour, the silence that is that old hangars' daily routine gave way to my imagination as that space was filled with the sounds of a very young Judy singing her signature song "Some-

where over the Rainbow" to many of those cadets with mist in their eyes hearing it in a setting that we can only imagine. I wonder how many of those young pilots went off to war, never to return, with that song in their hearts, and memories of that special night.

The Antelope Valley has many places that over the years became the stage for performances of famous people and acts. Who would have ever thought that two old hangars wasting away at a forgotten location would become our Hollywood Bowl? For a brief time, the top celebrities who set the standards for American entertainment entertained what would become our Greatest Generation.

I sure hope when the powers-that-be decide those old hangars must come to an end that

*Someday I'll wish upon a star, and wake up where the clouds are far behind me*

*Where troubles melt like lemon drops, away above the chimney tops That's where you'll find me.*

I sure hope those two old hangars and the thousands of cadets found that magical place, if only for a brief time, when Hollywood came to Lancaster and wrote their history in the hearts of those far from home, in buildings training them for war in far-off lands.

Until next time, peace my friends, and Bob out ...



Courtesy photographs

The writer, Bob Alvis, with copies of the *BULAERO*, the base newspaper that covered all the Cal Aero fields in Southern California including our very own Polaris Flight Academy at War Eagle Field during World War II.



One of the hangars at World War II-era War Eagle Field, located at Avenue I and 60th West in Lancaster, Calif.



Bob Alvis inside the hangar at the former War Eagle Field in Lancaster, Calif.

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Edwards Air Force Base

**Restoration Advisory Board**

Meeting

**May 18, 2023  
5:30 p.m.  
California City**

**Presentation**

Environmental Restoration Program Update

◆

The RAB provides two-way communication between the public and those responsible for environmental cleanup at Edwards AFB. The meeting is open to the public.

◆

For more information, contact Gary Hatch at (661) 277-8707 or e-mail [412tw.pae@us.af.mil](mailto:412tw.pae@us.af.mil).



Paid public announcement

Air Force Civil Engineer Center, Installation Support Section, Edwards Air Force Base, California

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC LIEN SALES**

**Business & Professional Code Section 21700-21707**

Notice is hereby given by the undersigned that a public lien sale of the following described personal property will be held at the hours of **12 noon on the 17th day of May 2023** or thereafter. The auction is being held at [www.selfstorageauction.com](http://www.selfstorageauction.com) by competitive bid. The property is stored by **Nova Storage located 825 W Avenue L12., Lancaster, CA 93534.**

The items to be sold are generally described as follows: Furniture, clothing, tools and or other household items stored by the following persons.

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- 0199 Matamoros, Jose Luis
- 0311 King, Charon
- 0124 Stelmach, Adam
- 0301 Vargas, Paulina

Date: April 24th, 2023 Signed NOVA STORAGE

This notice is given in accordance with the provisions of section 21700 et seq. of Business & Professional Code of the State of California. The owner reserves the right to bid at the sale. All purchased goods are sold "As Is" and must be paid for and removed at the time of sale. Sales subject to prior cancellation in the event of settlement between owner & obligated party. Auctioneer: Nova Storage

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The items to be sold are generally described as follows: Furniture, clothing, tools and or other household items stored by the following persons.

- E345 Lavayen, Keyla

Date: April 24th, 2023 Signed NOVA STORAGE

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Paid Public Announcement

**Public Notice**

**PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT PERIOD  
27 April – 30 May 2023**

**Community Involvement Plan, Edwards Air Force Base Environmental Restoration Program**

The U.S. Air Force is accepting public comments on the Community Involvement Plan for environmental restoration activities at Edwards Air Force Base, California. Base officials developed the Community Involvement Plan, or CIP, to guide environmental investigation and cleanup communications.

In preparation for the CIP, Edwards AFB conducted research and interviews with 18 community members, elected officials, Air Force personnel and other stakeholders in the fall of 2021. The CIP identifies current and potential community concerns, provides guidance for communicating with the local public and establishes an action plan to address those concerns through various activities.

The Edwards AFB Environmental Restoration Program Community Involvement Plan is available for review online at <https://www.edwards.af.mil/About/Environment> and at the following repositories:

Wanda Kirk Library 3611 Rosamond Blvd. Rosamond, Calif. (661) 256-3236	Lancaster Regional Library 601 W. Lancaster Blvd. Lancaster, Calif. (661) 948-5029	Main Base Library 5 W. Yeager Blvd. Edwards, Calif. (661) 275-2665
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**The public review and comment period for the Community Involvement Plan ends 30 May 2023.**

Written comments can be mailed to: Gary Hatch, 305 E. Popson Ave., Edwards AFB, CA 93524. Electronic comments can be e-mailed to [412tw.pae@us.af.mil](mailto:412tw.pae@us.af.mil). Air Force officials will respond in writing to any public comments received on the CIP. A public meeting to discuss the CIP may be held if there is sufficient public interest. Details of the time and location of the meeting, if held, will be provided at a later date during the comment period.

For more information, contact Gary Hatch, 412th Test Wing Public Affairs, at (661) 277-8707.

**Air Force Civil Engineer Center, Installation Support Section, Edwards Air Force Base, CA**

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- ✓ Our Hometown Heroes promotion, offering \$1,000 off of options or closing costs for military, aerospace employees, and others working for the safety of their community<sup>\*</sup>
- ✓ Special interest rates, closing cost reductions, base price discounts, "No Cash to Close" refinancing<sup>^^</sup> and more

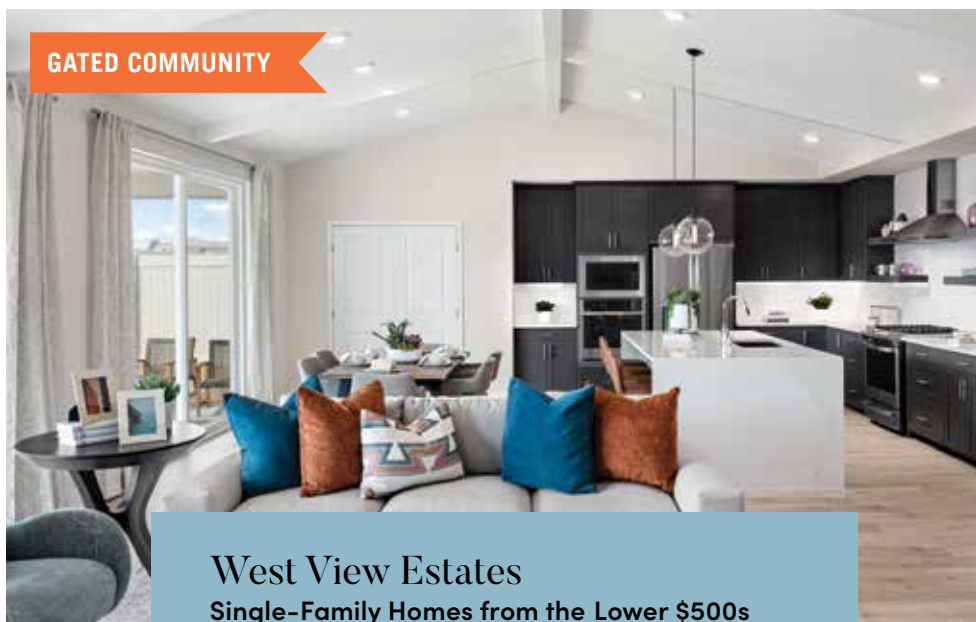


SCAN TO LEARN MORE

Contact us today to learn more and schedule an appointment—we'd love to hear from you!

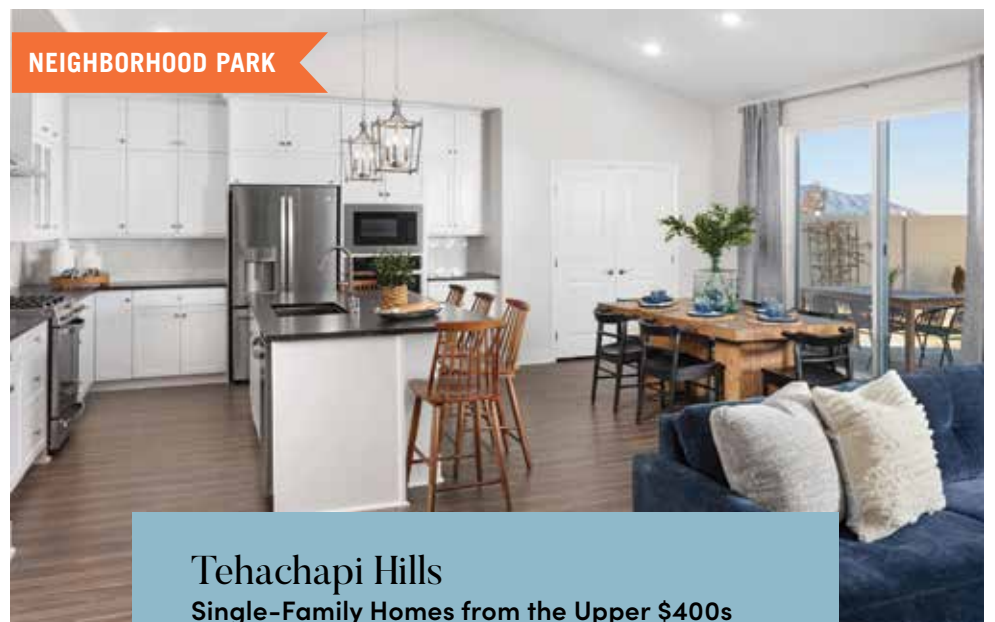
VISIT US AT [KHOV.COM/ANTELOPEVALLEY](https://www.khov.com/antelopevalley) OR CALL US AT 888-807-0881

#### GATED COMMUNITY



**West View Estates**  
Single-Family Homes from the Lower \$500s

#### NEIGHBORHOOD PARK



**Tehachapi Hills**  
Single-Family Homes from the Upper \$400s

<sup>\*</sup>Tehachapi Hills is offered by K. Hovnanian Communities, Inc.. Sales Consultants: Miranda Ezell DRE#02068397 and Michelle Roybal DRE#01967793. West View Estates is offered by K. Hovnanian at West View Estates, L.L.C.. Sales Consultants: Damien Felix DRE#01985204 and April Mirabella DRE#02083596. ©2023 K. Hovnanian California Operations, Inc. DRE#01183847. All dimensions are approximate. Features and options may vary. Unless stated hardscape, landscape and decorator items not included. K. Hovnanian California Operations, Inc. reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to make changes or modifications without prior notice. Value of Heroes incentive not to exceed \$1,000. Unless otherwise specified, incentives may be applied towards closing costs, upgrades or options. Offer may not be available in all communities. Incentive must be included at the time of contract. Offer valid for owner occupants only. Additional conditions or restrictions may apply. To qualify for the incentive, applicant must show proof of eligibility at the time of contract signing. To be eligible the applicant on the contract and mortgage must show proof of military or employment status with an ID card or other official documentation. Void where prohibited by law. Incentive is per applicant. Seller contribution limits may apply and affect maximum financing. Maximum closing cost assistance may vary based on the purchase price, product and occupancy. The incentives are based on the use of K. Hovnanian American Mortgage, L.L.C. ("KHAM") for financing or an all cash purchase. If KHAM or all cash is not used, the incentives will be reduced by \$1,000. K. Hovnanian American Mortgage, L.L.C. 3601 Quantum Boulevard, Boynton Beach, FL 33426. NMLS #3259 ([www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org](http://www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org)). Licensed by California Department of Financial Protection and Innovation under the California Residential Mortgage Lending Act. Lic. #4130532

<sup>^</sup>Special Financing Incentives may vary and are subject to change without notice. Special Financing Incentives may not be combined with any other offers. Seller contribution limits apply and may affect maximum financing. Maximum closing cost assistance may vary based on the purchase price, product and occupancy. Special Financing Incentives are based on the use of K. Hovnanian American Mortgage, L.L.C. ("KHAM"). K. Hovnanian American Mortgage, L.L.C. 3601 Quantum Boulevard, Boynton Beach, FL 33426. NMLS #3259 ([www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org](http://www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org)). Licensed by California Department of Financial Protection and Innovation under the California Residential Mortgage Lending Act. Lic. #4130532

<sup>^^</sup>Offer is subject to program requirements, credit and underwriting approval, and use of K. Hovnanian American Mortgage, L.L.C.(KHAM) for the financing of your K. Hovnanian Home purchase. Limited to one-time refinance per household within the first three years from KHAM closing date. Offer excludes government recording costs or transfer taxes, funding fee, upfront mortgage insurance premium fees, interest per diem or escrow funds set up. Equal Housing Opportunity. K. Hovnanian American Mortgage, L.L.C. 3601 Quantum Boulevard, Boynton Beach, FL 33426. NMLS #3259 ([www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org](http://www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org)). Licensed by California Department of Financial Protection and Innovation under the California Residential Mortgage Lending Act. Lic. #4130532. See a Sales Consultant for full details. Equal Housing Opportunity.

The list price for qualifying quick move-in homes may reflect a portion or all of the base sales price reduction.