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2017 California Capital Airshow Connects Visitors with Regional Aviation History and Current Events



Sacramento, Calif. – The 12th annual California Capital Airshow (CCA), presented by Sacramento County in partnership with the City of Rancho Cordova, welcomed crowds of veterans, families and thrill seekers on Sept. 9 and 10 at Mather Airport. From the heart-stopping roar of U.S. Navy F/A-18 Super Hornet and battle-worn U.S. Air Force A-10 Thunderbolt II jets overhead, and some of the most rare and vintage planes displayed on the ground, attendees got to experience first-hand the power, technology and art of aviation.

The California Capital Airshow, and events like it, are an important opportunity for our children and grandchildren to see up close the innovation, ingenuity, bravery and perseverance that has shaped our country over the last century,” said CCA Executive Director Darcy Brewer. “Thousands of people got to meet the heroes of current events and the living legends who changed history. They got to touch and climb on board the magnificent equipment we use to protect the freedoms and safety we all enjoy today, and that is life changing.”

For the first time in 2017, CCA was host to the prestigious National Aviation Heritage Invitational, an annual competition that reviews nearly 20 rare and beautifully restored vintage planes against rigorous criteria developed by the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum. Awards are given for authenticity, quality of workmanship, attention to detail and technical merit. On Sunday, the Grand Champion Neil A. Armstrong National Aviation Heritage Trophy was awarded to the 1954 Grumman F111 Albatross, owned by Joe Duke of Ponte Vedra, Florida. In addition, Airshow attendees designated the 1944 Douglas DC-3 Historic Flight Foundation as the National Aviation Hall of Fame ‘People’s Choice.’ Air and Space Smithsonian recipient.

Also new this year, loyal fans and first-time spectators received a special surprise when the E-4B Nightwatch made its first-ever airshow fly-by. Often referred to as the Doomsday Plane, this is one of only four Boeing E-4 Advanced Airborne Command Posts specially modified to serve as a survivable mobile command post for the National Command Authority.

The California Air National Guard and other branches of military brought pilots and planes straight from rescue missions in Houston, Texas, and in route to areas anticipated to be impacted by Hurricane Irma, Hurricane Jose and other natural disasters and threats. National Guard highlights included an aerial demonstration of the F-15C Eagle and an on-ground MQ-9 Reaper display showcasing the 66-foot unmanned piloted aircraft.

“I want to give a heartfelt thanks to the brave men and women who were here to represent their branches and the aircraft they support, and I salute those who were called away from the show for critical rescue and recovery missions throughout the U.S. and abroad,” Brewer said. I also want to thank the 1,347 community volunteers, the 21 members of our all-volunteer board of directors and the teams of law enforcement and emergency services that give their time and energy to make this a safe and fun event every year.”

The Saturday and Sunday shows were kicked off by the Patriots Parachute Team, a group of four former Navy SEALs who presented the American flag as part of their precision descent and landing. The show was headlined each day by the Patriots Jet Team, which features former U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds, U.S. Navy Blue Angels and Royal Canadian Air Force Snowbirds pilots, and highly celebrated pilots Steve Hinton, Bill Stein and Kent Pietsch wowed the crowds with aerobatics and iconic planes of the past.

CCA proceeds fund charitable group donations and educational youth programming throughout the year, as well as scholarships awarded to students across the Sacramento region who are interested in pursuing education and careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), as well as aviation and aerospace.

Special thanks go to Sacramento County, the City of Rancho Cordova, Aerojet Rocketdyne, Sacramento Jet Center, Lasher Auto Group, Dr. Pepper Snapple Group, Budweiser, FOX 40, iHeart Media, Atlas Disposal, Raley’s, and Elliott Homes.

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About California Capital Airshow

Established in 2004, the California Capital Airshow uses the power and magic of flight to entertain and amaze tens of thousands of attendees annually at historic Mather Airport for one of the largest and most prestigious demonstrations of a century of military and civilian aircraft on display and in the sky. Year round, the California Capital Airshow 501c3 is dedicated to inspiring a life-long passion for STEM education and careers, with a variety of youth events, presentations and scholarships that help drive the future of aeronautics and encourage young people to reach for the stars. For more information about discount tickets, performer details, sponsorship or volunteer opportunities, please visit CaliforniaCapitalAirshow.com