

F-35 Visions



To serve and support the men, women, families and mission of Luke Air Force Base

Fall 2013

F-35 expansion the reward of focus and hard work

For years, we have researched, interviewed, written, photographed and laid out the latest news about the F-35 Lightning II and what it means to Luke Air Force Base's future and economic vitality with its arrival.

That day is almost here. And it all came about through focus and hard work of Fighter Country Partnership and its many supporters. There was

my Luke Forward campaign that drew support from all over the Valley and state. Gov. Jan Brewer helped kick off the initial campaign at the state capitol.

Through it all, West Valley mayors, the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Greater Phoenix Economic Council gave their full support. Trips to Washington, D.C... and calls to the public

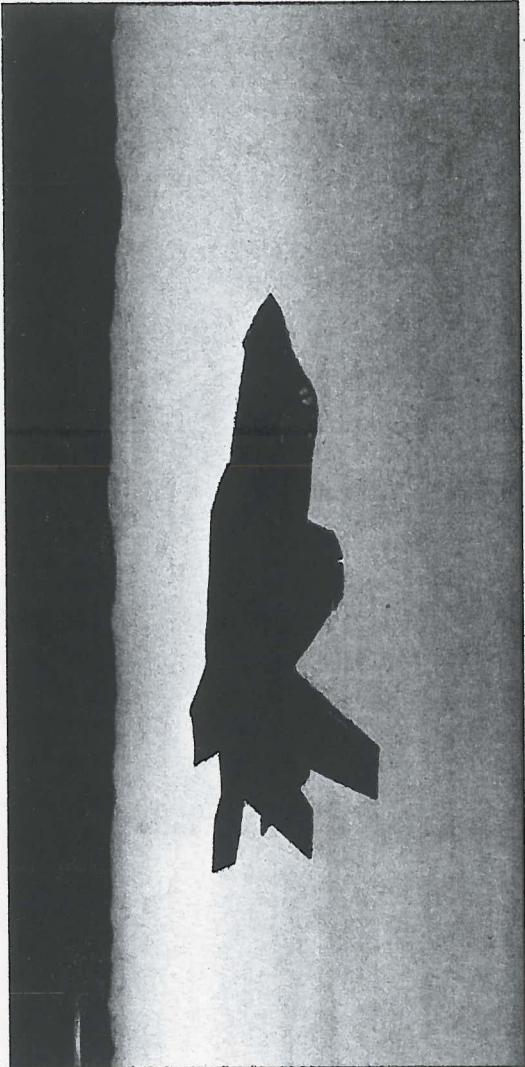


Photo courtesy Lockheed Martin
Soon, the West Valley may see the same vision as seen here in a photo of the first night flight of the F-35A, Jan. 18, 2012 at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., piloted by Lockheed Martin test pilot Mark Ward.

during environmental impact statement hearings resulted in overwhelming support for the F-35 training mission at Luke. What was viewed as a daunting task, however, turned

into a streamlined work of art, a coming together for a common cause. This past summer, the Department of Defense made its decision: Luke AFB would be

the primary pilot training base for the country's fifth-generation fighter jet. It is a great honor to be the home of this mission. It means a revitalized econo-

my in the West Valley, a signal of a brighter future for even small businesses who manufacture the most common parts of a futuristic aircraft. It means jobs for people who live not only in the largest metropolis of Phoenix, but in the smallest cities, such as El Mirage and Youngtown.

So, as a gesture of thanks to the DoD, and to salute the men and women at Luke AFB, who will be working with the F-35 on a daily basis some day soon, West Valley mayors, GPC and Arizona Chamber officials have written their opinions about what the expansion of the F-35 program means for the Valley and state.

We at VISIONS hope these commentaries will enlighten everyone about the significance of the F-35's flight home to Luke AFB