

# PRESS RELEASE

## Local Veteran Donates “Runway” to Enhance Air Museum

### Synthetic Grass Donation Gives Local Vet Personal Satisfaction

*Palm Springs, CA-* Not everyone gets as excited about vintage aircraft as retired USAF Master Sgt. Todd Mighell. But after his first visit to the Palm Springs Air Museum last October, the desert newcomer became a man on a mission...to install a new runway.

Mighell, a former aircraft maintenance supervisor, noticed the museum’s smallest aircraft display, a Piper J3 Cub, proudly resting on the polished concrete floor.

“Don’t get me wrong,” Mighell said. “It’s a beautiful aircraft, and it was famous for landing on a grass runway. I knew I had the perfect solution for creating a grass landing strip.”

Mighell now works for JSA Depot Synthetic Turf Supply which installs natural-looking replicated grass requiring no maintenance or water.

While thousands of museum visitors over the years have admired the aircraft just the way it was, Mighell’s fascination with aircraft history took him straight to the museum management with an unusual idea; donating a 350 square foot section of synthetic grass to act as a landing strip under the Piper Cub display.

“When we were first approached me with this idea, it was just unusual enough to sound interesting,” said museum Director, Sharon Maguire. “ But I really didn’t know how great the grass would look until I saw it in place. It brings that little Cub to life.”

“I don’t know if they were as excited about it as I was”. Mighell said. “But after they saw the ForeverLawn product, they knew it was going to be a great addition to the display.”

The JSA Depot turf is a combination of soft, natural-looking nylon and incredibly durable polyethylene. It looks and feels like real grass, but requires no water, no fertilizer and no maintenance.

Maintenance supervisor Mario Juarez said, “People don’t believe it’s artificial. Again and again I see them kneeling down to touch it to see if it’s real. When they tug on it, that’s when they figure it out. The blades don’t come out.

The museum is divided into two major sections, European Theater aircraft in the North hangar, and Pacific Theater planes in the South. One of the docents from the Pacific portion of the museum side asked when we can get some grass under one of his planes.

“I’ve met some amazing people here in this museum,” Mighell said. “They are quiet heroes that fought for us years ago and are now glad to be here serving the public. Honestly, it just feels good to do something to benefit this great museum.”

Along with airplane runways, JSA Depot replicated grass is more commonly used for residential and commercial lawns, playgrounds, sports fields and putting greens.

*BIO- Msgt. Todd Mighell served 24 years with the USAF. After moving to Palm Springs in 2005, he was recently asked to return to a flight line in the Middle East to serve in a civilian capacity supporting the war on terror.*

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