

AeroJet Podcast Transcript

Peter: Hi ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the Prairie City Podcast. My name is Peter and I am the Interpreter I here and I am joined by Addison our intern with Sac State and we are going to be doing a little bit different of a podcast today. The reason why is it's about some of the history of the park and some of the answers Addison got were pretty interesting. So, Addison what was this project about? What was this podcast supposed to be about?

Addison: So, as you mentioned I'm an intern with Sac state in their recreation park tourism and administration program and for an internship I had to do a final project and we came up with the idea of doing a series of podcasts and videos and in the end videos had to be cut due to some issues but we ended up doing a series of podcasts which hopefully you guys have been enjoying and one of the topics I wanted to do was Aerojet

Peter: Hmm okay yea.....

A: So, for those who don't know Aerojet previously owned most of, I mean all of the property.

P: um hmm

A: That Prairie City is currently on and Aerojet did a lot of stuff here. So, what I did is create a list of questions and sent them to Aerojet asking for an interview. Well, they replied with the answers to most of the questions. So, I have some of the answers here and we're going to delve into the history of Aerojet at Prairie City.

P: That's cool.... So, for visitors coming to the park yes Aerojet was a major part of the parks history they were testing rockets out here during the Cold War, they were supposed to anyway, and there are still a few buildings on our property that are remnants from Aerojet. One building you might notice is called the, "Moon Room". It's found right next to our district office so after you come in through the main gate you keep going straight and make that slight turn from BigTime Speedway big concrete building on your left so that's one spot. Supposedly there are tunnels here too which is kind of an interesting story. But, what did Aerojet give you? Like what did you come up with your questions and what'd you find?

A: So, they gave me a lot of canned answers. The first question that I asked them is what is Aerojet? They came back with they are an innovative company delivering solutions that create value for their customers in aerospace and defense markets. Essentially they tested solid and liquid rocket fuels and they tested rockets and created pesticides and herbicides and various different chemicals. Within the park. That is more or less what they are. They're a rocket tester and chemical testing company.

P: Okay

A: So, what they did at Prairie City in general was they burnt a lot of their fuels they weren't using anymore. They tested some rockets out here but for the most part the land that Prairie City is on is built up over a few years and they didn't use it to its full potential.

P: Oh... okay.

A: Other than that, that's more or less the history of AeroJet at Prairie City. They built the buildings they built some solid fuels, burnt some solid fuels and liquid fuels out here, and those parts of Prairie City are actually closed off to visitors because they are dangerous for visitors to go to.

P: Yea, one area in particular with the park is Prairie City Practice track when you go off to the right, in zone 2?

A: Yea

P: There is an area that's fenced off and will always be fenced off because of that.

A: Yup

P: So, yea

A: There are two major areas, the other one is behind that and to the south of that. I believe it's right next to the Barton property.

P: Yea so folks if you're every wondering about that. That's the reason why. It's not because of environmental.

A: So, a few of the other questions I asked them was, do they participate in outreach? And they came back with yea, they participate in outreach, they have a lot of outreach. The Aerojet Rock Dyne Foundation which is dedicated to supporting nonprofit organizations in the communities in where the employees live, work, and volunteer. Through various grants, works, and scholarships and matching gifts the AeroJet Rocket Dyne Foundation has distributed almost 12 million dollars since 1999. They're a really giving company trying to build the community up and make sure that people can participate in recreation and go to school.

P: That's cool!

A: They also came back with ... they offer a few different scholarships through their foundation. They're available to high school graduating seniors who intend to pursue a post-secondary study in Science and Technology in engineering and mathematics, they have obtained a 3.0 grade point average, completed a minimum 2 years high school math, 2 years laboratory sciences, have been involved in community service and that they have an economic need based on FASFA for this scholarship. So, you do

need to qualify they just don't hand these scholarships out. Then for someone that may be interested in an internship with Aerojet, they do offer summer internships. Which the selection process begins in December January time period. Then if someone is interested in working with Aerojet they do accept applications for entry level positions and you have to meet certain series of qualifications to work for them.

Now that we have that out of the way. As mentioned previously they did do some burning of fuels in this area. Which left it in a pretty dangerous area for habitat for people to live in. They also, which this is all online, and can be found online have dumped various chemicals into the ground water. Which they have been, after the government came in and told them they need to clean it up, they have been very proactive about cleaning it up and they have a plan that I believe reaches to 2050. Where they are taking sections of the ground water pumping it out, putting it through filters, and making sure it's all clean and then letting it go back underground.

On top of that they have been working with Prairie City and coming and making sure that the dangerous areas in Prairie City are fenced off and they're doing studies to make sure there is no more dangerous areas that they can find and just basically making sure the mistakes they made in the past are being accounted for and they're cleaning them all up.

P: Right, because there were no regulations for agencies like this they viewing these things coming and saying no you can't do that and so now they're trying to fix it. Which is really nice, that's the right move to do.

A: Yea, definitely

That's more or less the history of Aerojet at Prairie City, if you guys want to know more information I suggest hopping on Google and searching it out there is the information out there and it's fairly interesting but it's very detailed and can get a little boring sometimes.

P: Yea, one thing that people should check out too is the Prairie City General Plan for our park. The reason why, well two reasons: one it does talk about Aerojet, the second reason is our general plan going to be finalized hopefully fairly soon we're actually having a commission meeting out here on September 8th and 9th and the public is free to come out here and check that out. They do have to pay the entrance fee but you can come and talk to your commissioners here for the OHV and to find out more about that via our website and Facebook!

A: Alright, and for those who don't know how much is the entrance fee?

P: It's 5 dollars for the day for a vehicle

A: 5 dollars to come to the commission meeting and hear about the General Plan. Alright well, once again my name is Addison.

P: And I'm Peter

A: Thank you for joining us on the Prairie City Podcast.