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ON OUR COVER

Hot air ballooning is taking flight in Civil Air Patrol. The New Mexico Wing has launched a new hot air balloon program and recently held its first CAP Balloon Ground Crew Clinic. Eighteen cadets and four officers participated in the three-day event. See story on page 44.

Civil Air Patrol Volunteer is oriented toward both internal (CAP) and external audiences. For that reason, it uses Associated Press style for such things as military abbreviations. Official internal CAP communications should continue to use the U.S. Air Force rank abbreviations found in CAPR 35-5.
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Civil Air Patrol, Red Cross execute formal agreement

Civil Air Patrol has formalized its long-standing relationship with the American Red Cross in the form of a new agreement between the two premier public service organizations. CAP's new national commander and CEO, Maj. Gen. Joe Vazquez, made signing the pact his first act after assuming command at the 2014 National Conference in Las Vegas. On hand for the event were, from left, CAP's Chief Operating Officer Don Rowland; Brig. Gen. Larry Myrick, national vice commander; Fernandez Leary, regional disaster program officer for the Red Cross' Southern Nevada Chapter; Charles Blake, division disaster executive of the Red Cross' Southwest and Rocky Mountain Division; and John Desmarais, CAP director of operations. The two organizations “have a long history of supporting communities in need, and this agreement provides a framework for our personnel to work and train together to do that for years to come,” Vazquez said. Photo by Susan Schneider, CAP National Headquarters

Maryland Wing unit visits National Museum of the Air Force

Members of the Maryland Wing's Glenn L. Martin Composite Squadron recently spent a day touring the National Museum of the Air Force in Dayton, Ohio, taking in more than 360 displays of aircraft and aviation history in three large hangars. The visit included a review of a large outdoor display featuring Air Force aircraft from several decades, along with an outdoor memorial park established to honor Air Force-associated units and individuals for courageous service and sacrifice. The squadron members also had the opportunity to view several IMAX movies and to visit the Wright Brothers Memorial just outside Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Photo by Senior Member Tina Williams, Maryland Wing
Greetings to all the members of Civil Air Patrol!

I look forward to serving as your national commander over the next three years.

Many exciting events, from presentation of the Congressional Gold Medal to our upcoming 75th anniversary, will happen during that time. Together with the developing relationships CAP continues to nurture and grow with agencies and organizations like the American Red Cross, the International Association of Emergency Managers, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the National Association for Search And Rescue, the National Governors Association, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Soaring Society of America and the U.S. Geological Survey, as well as the missions we perform for all of them and our parent service, the U.S. Air Force, now is a great time to be a member of CAP!

Over my 39 years of membership, I’ve watched our corporation grow and develop from supporting primarily search and rescue and disaster relief to today’s great variety of state and federal agency tasks like border security, infrastructure protection and air defense intercept training. Every year we still save an average of 70 lives on SAR missions and support responses to dozens of disasters around the country. But with the scope and funding of the modern CAP, we now have the ability to take on much more. In addition to flying many different types of missions, we now provide manpower support on the ground at disaster shelters and points of distribution as well as full-spectrum communications support using our state-of-the-art radio networks.

One of the challenges for the national staff will be to streamline CAP regulations and procedures, making it easier for you to do the job as CAP members. More regarding this new initiative will be communicated in the days and months ahead.

Just as I did during my tenure as CAP’s national vice commander, I plan to regularly visit CAP wings and regions throughout the country. Thank you for your service as members of Civil Air Patrol, and I hope to see you soon.

Semper Vigilans!

*From Your National Commander*

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The Oath of Office: “I, Joseph R. Vazquez, having been promoted to the grade of Major General in the United States Civil Air Patrol, do solemnly swear that I will support and comply with the Constitution, Bylaws and regulations of the Civil Air Patrol; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge all duties and responsibilities as well as obey the orders of the officers appointed over me according to regulations, so help me God.”

Photos by Susan Schneider, CAP National Headquarters
Civil Air Patrol’s Promotion and Change of Command ceremony was a major attraction for the 800 participants attending CAP’s 2014 National Conference. Here, the ceremony’s presiding officer, retired U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. John M. Speigel, CAP Board of Governors chairman, congratulates the new national vice commander, Brig. Gen. Larry Myrick.

In keeping with a time-honored tradition, a change of command is conducted to signify the formal change of leadership in an organization. When the incoming commander accepts the flag — the symbol of the organization — he assumes command. At center is CAP’s new Command Chief Master Sgt. Frank Eldridge.
Shaping CAP’s Growth through Relevance

What It Means to CAP’s Future

Cadet 1st Lt. Sara Butler of the Maryland Wing makes a point while talking with fellow Cadet Officer School participants, clockwise from left, Cadet 1st Lt. Adam Quichocho of the California Wing; Cadet Capt. Ching Yap of the Washington Wing; Cadet Lt. Col. Jazmin Goodson of the Nevada Wing; Cadet Capts. John Godfrey of the New Jersey Wing, Tommy D. Willis of the North Carolina Wing and Morgan Edwards of the Maryland Wing; and Cadet 2nd Lt. Betsy Tang of the Maryland Wing outside Maxwell Air Force Base’s main Squadron Officer College building.

Increasing cultural, gender and age diversity supports CAP’s emphasis on establishing relevance and a more solid brand identity. Photo by Susan Schneider, CAP National Headquarters
The need to change is also external, because CAP’s brand cannot stay relevant in the absence of a clear brand identity. Increasing CAP’s brand awareness nationwide is Goal 3.1 in our 2014-15 strategic plan. The plan calls for us to:

• Implement an internal and external branding campaign designed to retain current members by generating excitement and enthusiasm for their CAP service and to attract new members through grassroots and nationally planned initiatives.

• Implement a brands standards policy to ensure seamless brand representation across media platforms, graphic elements and geographical contexts.

• Publish CAP articles and photos in publications such as Air Force Times, Air Force Magazine, Airman Magazine, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard periodicals, joint publications and industry and general public publications.

• Maximize exposure through grassroots partnerships targeting groups and organizations with a national and common interest in CAP.

• Use community service projects as a source for promotional opportunities and publicity.

• Create an inclusive environment and ensure diverse pools of candidates are available for leadership positions.

• Educate the Air Force Total Force on CAP capabilities, responsiveness and value.

Support for establishing relevance and a more solid brand identity is provided in CAP’s new Branding Master Plan and Branding Resource Guide, which are posted online at http://bit.ly/1rtr2if. These documents are

CAP’s Demographics have remained largely static over the years, with an ongoing need to more accurately reflect the cultural diversity of the communities we serve.

By age, our adult members fall into the following categories — 11 percent 18-30, 14 percent 30-40, 50 percent 41-60 and 25 percent older than 60. In other words, 75 percent of our adult members are over the age of 40, though cadets make up about 42 percent of the membership.

This data is particularly important in light of the recent downward trend in CAP’s membership, which is currently 58,443, very close to our total of 58,426 in 2009. Though we have jumped back up in the years in-between, peaking at 61,027 in 2010, CAP’s membership has been trending downward over the past few years.

Lots of familiar companies can relate to CAP’s membership challenges. Many of us can remember the days when Sears, Kodak, Circuit City, TWA and Life magazine were at the top of their game. Today, those that are still in existence are struggling to stay alive. What happened, and how can CAP avoid a similar result?

It really boils down to one critical need — the ability to stay relevant while remaining true to our core values.

That’s what companies like Boeing, IBM, Walmart and Apple, for example, are doing to ensure their success. They have adapted to and embraced change.

Ross Shafer, who conducts seminars on this topic, says, “If you don’t like change, you are really going to hate extinction.” That’s a bit dramatic, but it’s a case in point.

For Civil Air Patrol, the need to change is both internal and external. We are almost 73 years old. The tried and true way of growing our membership — mostly word of mouth — has worked for all these years. Why change now?

The why is weighted in relevance, and the end result for not changing is not extinction, but it definitely means, at the very least, continued shrinkage in our membership.

CAP conducted branding research several years ago, and the data revealed several critical missed opportunities for establishing relevance. Our current membership profile supports the fact that we are still missing the same opportunities related to women, other cultures and youth.
designed to help all members understand what branding is, who is responsible for it and why it matters. Simple strategies for establishing a consistent brand identity nationwide are provided, with an emphasis on social media because of its relevance in today’s world. Stage II for branding, which is currently under development, will take our emphasis on social media to a whole new level by providing all members online access to instructional videos on how to use social media to effectively brand CAP.

Maj. Gen. Joe Vazquez has identified membership recruitment as among his top priorities. In order to successfully grow the organization, CAP must change the way we do business. Guided by CAP’s strategic plan, Branding Master Plan and Branding Resource Guide, we can and will achieve that goal.
Young Civil Air Patrol career explorers traveled to Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, this summer for a close-up study of military civil engineering.

Sunny Tyndall is the perfect site for cadets to learn the ins and outs of military civil engineering, because it’s home to the Air Force’s 823rd Red Horse Squadron/Detachment 1’s Silver Flag Exercise Site. Here, more than 4,500 people a year affiliated with various armed services, including foreign military, are trained in how to support base operations.

This summer the Air Force Civil Engineering Academy brought military civil engineering to life with eight classroom and hands-on sessions that allowed the participants to see civil engineering is more than just constructing and maintaining buildings on a base.

“Each of these eight is with a different shop, which are specific to a career field,” said Col. David Carter, the activity director. These shops included power production, utilities, structures, heavy equipment, emergency management, engineering assistants and firefighters — all of which are separate Air Force careers.

“The staff of the 823rd Detachment 1 Red Horse tell the cadets about their career field and, whenever possible, expose them to some aspects by having the cadets do an activity,” Carter said.

Among topics the cadets explored were firefighting, bridge-building and robots used to deal with explosive ordnance.

The academy was the first CAP national activity for Cadet Chief Master Sgt. Hannah Fletcher of the North Carolina Wing, a home-schooled junior. Because she’s considering an engineering-related college major, the activity fit her hands-on career-exploration needs.

It also came highly recommended.

“I emailed my cadet commander asking for recommendations for engineering-themed (National Cadet Special Activities), and she sent me information on four but also included that her brother had enjoyed AFCEA so much he had attended twice,” Fletcher said.

The cadets’ wide range of experiences wasn’t limited to civil engineering, something she appreciated.

“While the emphasis was on civil engineering, we interacted with material engineering, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, industrial engineering, aerospace engineering and many more,” Fletcher said.

Another academy participant, Cadet Capt. Rachel Sydow of the Virginia Wing, is studying engineering at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University. Because she didn’t know anything about engineering in the military,
the academy intrigued her.

The activity was also directly applicable to her studies, Sydow said, since “I’ve been on the fence on what kind of engineering to do. It’s definitely something I want to pursue.”

The cadets were excited about the amount of hands-on activities.

“We got to talk to the Department of Defense guys and control the robots and actually got to see what they do, not just learn about it,” Sydow said. “I honestly had no idea what civil engineering in the military is. It really opened my eyes.”

“The hands-on side was extremely exciting, and AFCEA also covered a wide range of topics spanning both civilian and military areas,” Fletcher said, adding, “I have always enjoyed construction, building and big tools.”

Though she knew civil engineering is responsible for buildings on base, Sydow didn’t know about the overseas tasks, including creating a base from the contents of a box — “basically building a base out of nothing,” she said.

“It was a great experience getting to see the people who do this in real life, and it was definitely different from what I expected, but I enjoyed it,” Sydow said.

Nine female cadets took part in the academy this year, exposing them to a career field in which women are traditionally underrepresented.

“From my view, exposing any of the cadets to the trades and engineering in general provides them with both hands-on and classroom materials and skills they would not get anywhere else,” Carter said. “The activity does not specifically target young women, but my hope is that they will get to see and hear things they would not normally experience.”

Cadets went beyond the classroom to erect a small shelter system tent. They also crawled through a “smoke house” — mimicking the conditions of a burning house — to rescue mannequins.

One tabletop exercise challenged the cadets’ creativity when faced with a challenging engineering problem. Using tape and paper, the cadets had to build a bridge large enough to span two table tops, yet strong enough to hold up at least 15 candy bars.
The power lecture sparked the cadets’ understanding of the electrical needs of a base as well as different types of power units.

Cadets also donned “bomb suits” and controlled robots used to deal with improvised explosive devices, training that also uses realistic mannequins to hone skills for a response that could save lives in conflict areas. Both of the explosive ordnance disposal techs leading the session had completed several tours of duty in Afghanistan and Iraq, where both received injuries.

The academy definitely made an impression on the cadets.

“Spending time on Tyndall was really cool, and driving robots (with explosive ordnance disposal) was fantastic,” Fletcher said. ▲

Maj. John Payne and Capt. Nancy Carlson, both of the Virginia Wing, contributed to this report.
Cadet Officer School Draws Cream of CAP Crop to National Headquarters

By Jennifer S. Kornegay

Cadet Capt. Nicole Khattar of the California Wing’s Corona Cadet Squadron 29 emerges from a makeshift tunnel during Project X. Photos by Susan Schneider, CAP National Headquarters
A lot of kids wrap up their summers soaking up sun at the beach, playing basketball or just hanging out with friends. For 121 Civil Air Patrol cadets, the period before the start of school couldn’t have been more different: Over the course of 10 days, they completed 500 pages of reading, delivered three speeches and drafted six talking papers as part of their studies on leadership at Cadet Officer School.

“I am continually impressed with the caliber of these young leaders. While their peers are playing this summer, they are here, in the Alabama heat, working really hard to better their leadership skills and talents,” said Lt. Col. Rajesh Kothari, who was completing his third year as activity director of the school, held annually at National Headquarters at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama.

“And they want to be here,” he said.

In fact, they strive to make it to COS. As one of the top professional development opportunities for CAP cadets, COS trains the leaders of tomorrow, teaching them lessons and skills they take home and use as they prepare for college and their careers.

Only the top 15 percent of CAP cadets get the chance to participate in COS. This year, 121 from 35 wings made the cut.

“COS is teaching us all to develop critical thought processes,” said Cadet 1st Lt. Harris Kruse Jr. of the Missouri Wing’s Platte Valley Composite Squadron. “And I’ve improved my communication and teamwork skills too.”

One of the final COS programs in the 10-day experience required the cadets, divided into 10 flights, to choose one of 15 aerospace pioneers, then give a speech on their choice to their fellow flight members about their leadership contributions and impact on aerospace. “The goal was to hone their communication capabilities while also helping them better understand each subject’s unique leadership style,” Kothari said.

“We don’t want just a bio on these guys,” he said. “We want the cadets to really digest the information and then be able to effectively share that with others.”

Cadet Maj. Andrew Teubl, a member of the New York Wing’s Vanguard Composite Squadron, delivered a speech on U.S. Air Force Gen. Haywood Hansell, a chief architect of the Army Air Forces’ daylight strategic bombing program during World War II. Teubl began with some background, then outlined the general’s successes and failures and pointed out which aspects of his personality and leadership style influenced both.

As he spoke, his fellow cadets listened intently. When the speeches were completed, they and two COS instructors offered feedback and
While their peers are playing this summer, they are here, in the Alabama heat, working really hard to better their leadership skills and talents.” — COS Activity Director Lt. Col. Rajesh Kothari

Constructive criticism, all designed to enhance their communication skills.

The speech sessions allowed the cadets to try out some of the tools and techniques they learned at COS.

Patterned after Air Force Squadron Officer College, COS mixes lectures, seminars and hands-on training.

Kruse’s favorite activity, Project X, was one of the hands-on segments. It pushed the cadets to work together to solve some interesting problems that involved crossing bridges, scaling walls and other tasks that tested their limits.

The challenges look almost insurmountable at first, but by using communication, leadership, critical thinking, problem solving and teamwork, the cadets can — and do — overcome the obstacles.

Cadet Capt. Nicole Khattar, a member of the California Wing’s Corona Cadet Squadron 29, said she got the most from the Compound, another leadership exercise.

“It lets us see firsthand what works and what doesn’t and how to deal with that and how to deal with different personalities,” Khattar said. “We’ll all need that in the real world.”

Cadet 1st Lt. Kiana Ward of the Washington Wing’s Overlake Composite Squadron echoed Khattar.

“I came to COS to interact with my fellow cadets,”

COS participants work to solve a Project X challenge. They are, back row from left, Cadet Capts. Joe Korona and Nathaniel Tarttler, Cadet 2nd Lt. Julie Einbinder, Cadet 1st Lt. Adam Nelson and Cadet Capt. Stephon Tonko. In front is Cadet Capt. Ryan Marsh.
Ward said. “I’m leaving with a deeper knowledge of leadership and new ideas about what kinds of leadership really work.”

Kothari stressed one other important component of COS: “These cadets get to learn, up close and personal, about the Air Force. Doing this on base and with Air Force officers involved is really special.”

Outside the classroom, a highlight of the course was an hourlong program featuring Col. Mary Feik of the Maryland Wing, the aviation legend who’s one of CAP’s most storied members. Feik answered questions from Lt. Col. Robert Smith of the North Carolina Wing on stage in front of a packed audience of cadets in Husband Auditorium at Maxwell’s Squadron Officer College.

Feik reminisced about her long career dating back to World War II as an aviation engineer, master mechanic, pilot, aircraft maintenance instructor, author of maintenance instruction manuals, trainer designer and National Air and Space Museum restorer of vintage aircraft. Afterward, she fielded questions about her experiences and her views on the opportunities CAP offers its members.

The visit was the first to National Headquarters for Feik, a lifetime CAP member who has been inducted into the Women in Aviation Pioneer Hall of Fame, has been honored by NASA as one of the 47 most significant women in aerospace and has received the Order of Merit from the World Aerospace Education Organization.
Every summer since 1998, hundreds of CAP members have made their way to the grounds of Indiana’s Camp Atterbury in what has become an annual pilgrimage designed to sharpen their skills. The National Emergency Services Academy drew 376 participants from across the country for this year’s training, which was held during weeklong sessions July 20-26 and July 27-Aug. 2.

NESA offers students the opportunity to connect with fellow service-minded volunteers and make new friends, all while learning vital mission-critical skills. Those who complete the various schools return to their local units with increased knowledge gained during the intensive hands-on training.

NESA consists of three main components: Mission Aircrew School, Ground Search and Rescue School and Incident Command System School. All three schools offer challenging courses designed for various skill levels to help students achieve competence in their specific area of study.

The academy was launched in 1996 as the National Ground Search and Rescue School in Virginia. Founded by Lt. Col. John Desmarais, now director of operations at CAP National Headquarters, today’s academy is the result of countless hours of work and fine-tuning over many years.
“As NESA’s founder, I’m proud to see how far we’ve come and more importantly the results of the great work that our dedicated staff puts in for our main courses and other training conducted throughout the year,” Desmarais said. “I know the work the staff puts in is incredibly valuable and has a huge impact. I love to hear the stories of members that have saved lives or helped their communities in a crisis after they go home — it makes it all worth it.”

Mission readiness, or producing volunteers qualified for their tasks, is the combined goal of the academy director and the trio of commandants who oversee the schools. The multidisciplinary exercises conducted at Camp Atterbury’s Joint Maneuver Training Center in Edinburgh, Indiana, use both classroom presentations and training in the field to strengthen and advance participants’ capabilities.

By taking independent study courses offered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Emergency Management Institute, students can familiarize themselves with the material before realistic application in training.

Under the watchful eye of CAP volunteer instructors and their counterparts from multiple local, state and federal agencies, students get to practice jobs they could be tasked with during real emergency scenarios. As force-multipliers, CAP members can be summoned to assist authorities, helping augment personnel who may become
overwhelmed during tumultuous times. Serving local communities and neighboring regions is one of the chief reasons many join CAP in the first place.

“NESA offers some unique opportunities that cannot be found in other programs,” said Maj. Gary Brockman, academy director. “As the largest Civil Air Patrol training event, we have personnel come in from every wing. This allows us to not only bring in top instructors from across the nation, but also for emergency service personnel to work and learn together, which benefits CAP when missions cross wing and region lines.”

Lost and Found

While some students may compare NESA to nostalgic summer camp experiences, the intensity of the training quickly distinguishes it from the more casual activities characterizing a typical CAP encampment.

Aside from completing basic first aid and communications training, students in the Ground Search and Rescue School — helmed by Lt. Col. Michael Long, who also doubles as NESA’s deputy director — practice search operations and cross-country travel between overnight stays in the field. No tents are allowed; students must sleep in field expedient shelters they construct themselves.

The advanced course tests a student’s proficiency in map reading, the use of compasses and other direction-finding equipment as well as accurate assembly of both 24-hour and 72-hour gear as specified by the NESA gear list.

“With the advent of increased homeland security and the need for disaster operations posed by increased weather events, we are committed to training as many members as possible to provide mutual aid and community support in times of need,” Long said. “Our training emphasizes support to civil authorities, communications, direction finding and search planning and techniques and allows us to be a force-multiplier for a variety of mission types.”

Those aspiring to reach the position of ground search and rescue team leader must perform their grueling duties under all conditions, rain or shine. Mental alertness and physical fitness prove equally important as students are required to learn academic course material, perform practical fieldwork and walk significant distances in extreme heat or sudden storms, all while wearing 24-hour gear.

“As CAP’s missions evolve, our capabilities remain consistent; only the customers change,” Long said. “Training activities like NESA are important because they train and qualify CAP personnel in ground operations based on national standards. This is meant to assure our customers CAP can meet mission requirements anywhere in the country with a trained volunteer force that has common requirements for mission performance.”

Top: Cadet Senior Master Sgt. Christopher Holland, left, of the Alabama Wing instructs Cadet Master Sgt. Grant Falite of the Georgia Wing on how to use direction finding equipment. Photo by Maj. Gary Brockman, National Headquarters Squadron

From left, Senior Member Adam Berman of the Utah Wing, Col. Maurice Givens of the Illinois Wing and Maj. Rafael Salort of the Florida Wing study images on a computer monitor. Photo by Lt. Col. Pat Mitcham, Alabama Wing
Aerial Learning

Mission Aircrew School, under the leadership of Lt. Col. Eric Templeton, is an option for students who would rather take to the sky for their training. Working in conjunction with searchers on the ground, aircrews serve as an invaluable resource by relaying and recording observations from their bird’s-eye point of view.

Introductory courses offer the opportunity to qualify as a mission scanner or aerial photographer; qualification as a mission scanner is a prerequisite to advance to intermediate level pilot and observer training. Student pilots are required to complete 50 hours of cross-country time before enrolling in the intermediate course. Observers in advanced training need to display high levels of understanding of air navigation as well as GPS usage.

Both mission pilots and observers must be able to independently plan the details of each flight in a consistent and highly accurate manner. Weather permitting, students can expect to fly five days during the six-day course.

Another aspect of Mission Aircrew School is the challenging survival course. In a classic example of “hope for the best, prepare for the worst,” students are taught how to survive on their own in various wilderness environments should a worst-case scenario ever arise. Participants are schooled in building suitable shelters out of available materials, finding local sources of food and water, treating injuries using basic first aid, signaling for help and increasing the probability of being discovered.

Students with an interest in the latest technological developments can whet their appetites by training on the GIIEP (Geospatial Information Interoperability Exploitation — Portable) system. GIIEP is a portable multiband receiver capable of handling various forms of both visual and text information. The resulting ability to capture still photos and video footage for distribution to mission partners helps enhance and maximize CAP’s advantage in supporting operations during disaster situations.

United Response

Man-made and natural disasters can strike at any place or time, often crossing lines of jurisdiction and forcing local, state and federal responders to act in concert. The ability to seamlessly blend organizations’ official response is due largely to the Incident Command System.

As a direct result of ICS training and implementation, organizations like CAP can smoothly integrate with other agencies during a crisis and boost both operational safety and resource management.

Through NESA’s ICS School, led by Lt. Col. Larry Mangum and his team, participants learn about the basics of communication by constructing and applying antennas, assembling operating positions, troubleshooting and message handling. An intermediate course focuses on the staff positions of ICS, including branch director, mission safety officer and public information officer. The advanced class also covers the posts of section chief and incident commander.

Forging Lasting Connections

CAP volunteers who spend extended amounts of time training with one another tend to develop a solid sense of camaraderie and lasting friendships. NESA participants are no exception.

“Not only do the participants make lifelong friendships,” Desmarais said, “but when that big incident occurs, these personnel already have the experience of working with hundreds of other volunteers in a mission setting and in all likelihood will know someone, wherever the disaster is.”

Although curriculum and courses may take new forms over time, the core NESA mission remains unchanged. Thanks to the efforts of a dedicated staff and the training they provide, CAP members stand ready to respond to calls for assistance when and if the time comes.
More than 70 Civil Air Patrol members aid in F-15 Pilot Search

By 1st Lt. Greg Fletcher

More than 70 members of Civil Air Patrol’s Virginia, North Carolina and National Capital wings deployed communications gear, aircraft and ground-search personnel in support of the search in late August for a missing Air National Guard fighter pilot in the mountains of western Virginia.

In addition to staffing standby aircrews with a high-bird communications relay aircraft and supplementing Augusta County, Virginia, VHF communications capabilities with radios and net operators, CAP deployed more than 20 ground search teams and conducted some 35 ground tasks to search for the pilot in difficult terrain.

Operating out of a makeshift mission base at Deerfield Valley Volunteer Fire Department, CAP joined 34 other federal, state and local agencies as part of the massive search operation.


“They operated in tough conditions, slept outside and lived on MREs and pizza from the Deerfield VFD Auxiliary. They did us all proud!”

The pilot, a member of the 104th Fighter Wing of the Massachusetts Air National Guard, had reported an in-flight emergency before radio communication with air traffic controllers was lost. By the end of the next day, crash site investigators were able to determine that the pilot had died after failing to eject from the stricken fighter.

A variety of agencies searched from the air as ground teams hiked through the steep terrain. C-130s provided command and control for the many military and law-enforcement helicopters from the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Army, Air National Guard, Virginia State Police, U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the FBI that were deployed in the search. A-10 attack aircraft, normally used to support tank battles on the ground, flew close patterns around the crash site, assisting in the search operations.
Teams initially reached the crash, but the search for the pilot took more time and resources. Searchers endured steep and mountainous terrain while scouring the area for clues. Teams had to travel 5 to 10 miles to reach their trailhead. CAP vans proved to be a vital asset in transporting multi-agency teams to their search location. Many teams then had to hike on the trail for several miles to reach their assigned search area. All search teams included trained search and rescue personnel and members of the state police.

This incident involved many agencies, including airmen from the U.S. Air Force and Air National Guard, and there were plenty of opportunities for interagency communication at all levels. Brig. Gen. Tim Williams, adjutant general for the Virginia ANG, said, “This is the epitome of multi-agency, multi-component operations.”

Ground team members from the Virginia Wing’s Fredericksburg Composite Squadron are briefed before beginning their search on the mountain.

A search and rescue agency member and an Air Force sergeant confer on assigned tasks for the day.

Photos by 1st Lt. Greg Fletcher, Virginia Wing
seven decades ago, five young men were sitting in school and listening to their teachers in Waterbury, Vermont, when they were suddenly called on to help with a search and rescue mission. Little did these Civil Air Patrol cadets know when they got to cut class that day what waited them on Camel’s Hump mountain.

What they found and what they did went somewhat unnoticed for 70 years. In May, their actions were finally recognized.

It all began when a U.S. Army Air Forces B-24 bomber with 10 men crashed on Camel’s Hump in October 1944. The Army enlisted the help of CAP, and in turn the head of the Vermont Wing, Maj. William Mason, enlisted the help of seven CAP cadets, including his son, Peter.

The Army was searching one area of the mountain, but Mason believed they were looking in the wrong spot. His knowledge of the area, aided by observations from an airplane flown by CAP member Ed Knapp, led him to send the cadets to another spot on the Hump. After making it to the top, they saw a B-24 shining a red light. Then they saw the plane and the light a second time.

They made their way down to the spot the plane had circled and began to search there. They found Pfc. Jimmy Wilson, sole survivor of the crash, in rough shape. Without hesitation, they each began a different task in an effort to keep him alive.

Rolland Lafayette, who was 16 at the time, still vividly remembers that day. “Peter’s dad and the principal pulled us out of class and told us to go home, put on warm clothes and grab some food,” he said. “We weren’t even sure then what we were going to be doing.

“When we got to the bottom of the trail that went up the Hump, I took the lead since I had hiked up part of the mountain before.”

Despite frigid weather and difficult terrain, Lafayette and the other four cadets — Mason, Richard Izor, Robert Ladd and Malcolm Nelson — made it close to the wreckage. “We started hollering ‘hello,’ and then we heard someone yelling back,” he said.

They followed the voice and found Wilson, basically frozen. “He was not too much older than us, and he was leaning up against the fuselage, badly hurt,” Lafayette said. By the time the cadets reached him, he’d been there for two days.

Peter Mason, also 16 at the time, recalls being very happy to find anyone alive. “We were anxious to get up there to see what happened. We knew it was bad, and so we were not really expecting to find anyone alive,” he said. “Once we heard him, we were thrilled. And then we just got to work. Our attitude was, ‘We have a lot to do, so let’s get busy.’”

Lafayette echoed Mason. “We knew what we had to do. We only had a sandwich among us, so we gave that to him,” he said. One cadet went to find pine boughs to lay Wilson on. Another began searching the wreckage to see what might be useful. A third went to fetch wood for...
a fire. Lafayette went to find water.

“We got some parachutes and tarp from the plane and laid Wilson on the pine and then covered him with a chute and a tarp. We got a fire started, and then made a shelter with another tarp,” Lafayette said.

By then night had fallen, and the cadets knew they could not get Wilson or themselves down the mountain in the dark.

“Right then, our mission was to keep him warm to keep him alive until morning,” Lafayette said. “We made him as comfortable as we could and took turns getting him water throughout the night.”

One cadet even slept beside Wilson, hoping his body heat would provide additional warmth.

The next morning, Lafayette and Izor got back down the mountain as quickly as they could to let the Army know they’d found a survivor. A team with a stretcher went back up and brought Wilson down.

While Wilson was in a perilous situation, so were the cadets. Yet they were not afraid.

“We were so busy, we didn’t have a chance to be frightened,” Mason said.

Brian Lindner, a historian who wrote a book about the rescue, stressed the importance of the cadets’ actions. “They saved Wilson’s life,” he said. “If they had not found him, and if they had not been smart enough to do the things they did, I don’t know that he would have lived through another night. They did a remarkable job, and their story is truly one of the most amazing aviation disaster stories.”

Wilson lived to be a successful lawyer in spite of losing both hands and both feet. He married and fathered two children, both of whom were at the ceremony.

Lindner first became interested in the event as a
young boy. “I used to hike Camel’s Hump as a kid, and I heard the story about this rescue, and I wanted to know more,” he said. He contacted the five cadets and documented the stories.

He was thrilled when they finally got the recognition they deserved. “When the rescue happened during World War II, no one thought about honoring them,” he said.

But earlier this year, a local TV station produced a series called “Super Seniors” and profiled Lafayette, focusing on his volunteerism at a local school. He mentioned the Camel’s Hump incident in passing.

“The colonel of the Vermont State Police saw the show and said, ‘Wow, these guys need a search and rescue award for that,’” Lindner said. “So he got the ball rolling.”

In June, Lafayette and Mason, the only two of the five cadets still living, were honored at the Vermont State Police annual awards ceremony with the agency’s first-ever search and rescue award.

Both Mason and Lafayette were grateful for the award but said it was not necessary. “We’ve been labeled as heroes, and I’m not so sure about that, but I loved being honored even though we didn’t need it,” Mason said.

“We just came together and did what had to be done,” Lafayette said. “We used our heads and did it to the best of our ability. The good Lord was there with us for sure.”

Mason credits CAP with preparing them well for the rescue … and for life.

“Our CAP cadet training helped us on the mountain, because it taught us discipline, leadership and teamwork,” he said. “And CAP prepared me for my active duty in the Army later and prepared us all for so much more.”
Two members of the California Wing’s Camarillo Composite Squadron 61 will receive Civil Air Patrol lifesaving awards for their work providing high-bird communications during a search and rescue mission in the Los Padres National Forest.

Maj. Tom Scott and 1st Lt. John Foy flew high above the forest’s deep valleys and gorges, working to keep communication flowing among the emergency personnel searching fervently for an off-duty Arcadia firefighter missing in the Sespe Wilderness. Michael Herdman, 36, his dog Duke and fellow Arcadia firefighter Tyler Byars had gone on a four-day backpacking trip when the two men became separated. Byars hiked out of the area to safety, so the focus was on finding Herdman.

During this mission Scott and Foy received a relay call requesting an emergency evacuation for a searcher who had been bitten by a rattlesnake, so they handled those messages in addition to relaying communications stemming from the ongoing search for the missing firefighter.

“We were just constantly working the radios,” Scott said. “When our shift was over, I updated the next crew so they were prepared when they came in to pick up where we left off.”

Later he learned the snakebite victim survived, and his and Foy’s work had contributed to that outcome, Scott said.

“I found out about it when I got an email from the wing commander saying, ‘Congratulations, you’ve been nominated for a lifesaving award,’” he said. “I didn’t even connect the dots. I didn’t even think of it as I saved someone’s life — I was just doing my job.”

Foy, who spent 37 years as a firefighter, was further surprised when he discovered the snakebite victim was someone he knows — Fillmore Assistant Fire Chief Bill Herrera, who spent more than a week in intensive care.

The outcome for Herdman was tragic. His body was discovered two weeks after he was reported missing.

“It was pretty intense,” said Scott, the mission observer. “There were eight ground teams with their own call signs, as well as three helicopters with a..."
command base, and the Civil Air Patrol command base.” In the high-bird role, Scott and Foy, the mission pilot, helped coordinate messages and relay information among the various first responders. All told, CAP aircrews flew 84 hours over four days.

Scott, a CAP member for 24 years, is deputy commander for the Camarillo squadron. He also serves as the California Wing’s director of aerospace education.

“Civil Air Patrol provides a real benefit to the communities we all live in,” he said.

Maj. Bob Phillips, commander of the Camarillo unit, said the mission was conducted in an area of Southern California known for its hazardous terrain. Had Foy and Scott not been flying and relaying communication that day, Herrera’s evacuation likely would have been delayed, he said. ▲
Why is the U.S. a superpower? Why is Vladimir Putin threatened by Ukraine? Why is China so concerned about the South China Sea?

These geopolitical-military-technology questions float through Dale Brown’s psyche on an ongoing basis, creating “what-if” scenarios that he morphs into New York Times best-selling novels — 24 to date.

“It’s my stock-in-trade,” Brown said. “I look at geography and politics and think what if this, that or the other happens. World leaders sometimes have no choice about what to do and sometimes can’t avoid what will happen. When you think about it, you can predict the future.”

Civil Air Patrol appears in two of his novels. In a scene in “Strike Force” a young, exiled Iranian princess harbored in the U.S. is a CAP ground team leader; “A Time For Patriots” features CAP throughout.

Brown explained CAP’s attraction: “Quite simply, CAP is about ordinary folks doing extraordinary stuff. That’s the definition of a hero.”

A monthlong search in 2007 for missing adventurer Steve Fossett, whose body was later found by hikers in California, sparked Brown’s interest in CAP. The Fossett search, which was headquartered out of the writer’s home airport in Minden, Nevada, generated yet another what-if scenario. “I thought about designing a high-tech CAP that could make such searches easier and faster,” he said.

His first squadron visit in 2010 to learn more about the organization while researching a novel led to an unexpected outcome. “The members
Brown meets Mike Thompson, left, East Coast and government sales rep for one of the National Conference’s sponsors, AeroComputers, and Larry Corbin, the company’s West Coast representative.

Brown and Col. Warren Vest, one of the CAP Board of Governors’ newest members, pose during the VIP reception.

Brown and Warren Vest

convinced me that the best way to learn about CAP was to join,” he said. This year he was named the Douglas County Composite Squadron’s commander.

Brown’s interest in aviation began during an eight-year stint in the U.S. Air Force, where he served for four years as a B-52G navigator. “The Air Force didn’t have to pay me to fly. I would have done that for free,” he said.

He wrote his first book the old-fashioned way — with pen and paper — while still on active duty; the novel, “Flight of the Old Dog,” was published a year later when he was 31. His first bylines came earlier — with articles in his high school and college newspapers and, later, the base newspaper. While stationed at Mather Air Force Base, California, he also freelanced for various newspapers and magazines.

“It’s been a great journey,” he said.

As a history major at Penn State University, Brown said, he learned a lot about geopolitics, and that, coupled with a lifelong interest in high tech, gave him the idea to apply up-and-coming technology to older weapon systems in his books. “I know all about advanced sensors and communications equipment, so what if CAP had some of that on the B-52s I was flying?” he asked.

His knack for geopolitics aside, Brown’s formula for creating a best-selling novel is simple: “Sit down and write, finish the work, get out and push it until it sells, then repeat.”

“A little luck helps, but the more you write the luckier you become,” he said.

“Notice I didn’t say you had to have a degree in English or literature, take a bunch of creative writing courses, join a writing club or know somebody in the business. You need to produce the one thing that publishers and agents are hungrily searching for — completed manuscripts that tell an interesting story.”

All but one of his 25 novels have been best-sellers, which means the books have appeared either as a hardcover or paperback on the New York Times fiction best-seller list, made up of the 30 top-selling books each week nationwide. Only about 80 authors make the list each year.
Cadets Hobnob with Higher-Ups at National Conference

By Markeshia Ricks

Cadet Day proved to be a popular draw at the Civil Air Patrol National Conference in Las Vegas this year, with nearly double the number of participants from 2013.

About 60 cadets, mostly from western states like Oklahoma, Arizona and Nevada, turned out for a day filled with opportunities to meet and hear from high-profile members like retired U.S. Army Lt. Col. Al Hulstrunk, a World War II glider pilot, and Col. Mary Feik, master mechanic and pilot.

The day, which has been a part of CAP National Conferences since 2011, offers young members from 12 to 20 a chance not only to hear from the organization’s leaders but also to learn and interact with fellow cadets from other squadrons.


The cadets also got to meet Civil Air Patrol’s newest leaders, National Commander and CEO Maj. Gen. Joe Vazquez, and National Vice Commander Brig. Gen. Larry Myrick, both of whom assumed command during the conference.

Cadet Col. Patrick Arnold, who serves as cadet affairs

Cadet Chief Master Sgt. Rafael De Leon proudly displays the challenge coin he received from U.S. Air Force Lt. Gen. James K. McLaughlin during Cadet Day. The coin was one of the first McLaughlin had presented since his recent promotion to deputy commander of U.S. Cyber Command. De Leon is a member of the Arizona Wing’s London Bridge Composite Squadron 501. Photos by Susan Schneider, CAP National Headquarters
McLaughlin presents the Gen. Carl A. Spaatz Award to Cadet Col. Patrick Arnold, a member of the Oklahoma Wing’s Cleveland County Composite Squadron, who was one of about 60 Cadet Day participants.

Cadet Airman Christopher Swauger gives a thumbs-up to Cadet Day. Swauger is a member of the Arizona Wing’s Mohave Valley Composite Squadron 231.

advisor to the commander of the Oklahoma Wing’s Cleveland County Composite Squadron, was participating in his first Cadet Day. One of the reasons he was eager to attend the conference was because he was receiving the Gen. Carl A. Spaatz Award, which is the highest honor a cadet can receive. McLaughlin presented him with his award during the conference.

The high school senior, who hopes to attend Texas A&M University and then enter the Air Force, said Feik’s appearance was a Cadet Day highlight for him. One of CAP’s cadet achievements is named for Feik, who taught aircraft maintenance to crew chiefs and mechanics for the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II and was the first woman engineer in research and development in the Air Technical Service Command Division at Wright Field in Dayton, Ohio.

“She was just as respected as the men because she was so knowledgeable,” Arnold said. “All the men treated her just the same.”

He said he enjoyed Cadet Day and added that the leadership skills he’s gained are among the most valuable things he’s learned in CAP. “The biggest thing I’ve received is the opportunity to learn how to lead my peers,” he said.

Arnold wasn’t the only cadet captivated by what Feik had to say.

Cadet 1st Lt. Katie Hamiel, cadet commander of the Arizona Wing’s Mohave Valley Composite Squadron 231, said the opportunity to participate in Cadet Day was also her first.

The high school junior said she found Feik’s life story inspiring.

“I really liked hearing her story — her life, all that she has accomplished and everything she has done as a female figure,” the aspiring aerospace engineer said.

In addition to the chance to hear presentations by VIP speakers, cadets participated in a hands-on aerospace education project by building marshmallow-launching catapults.

The next Cadet Day is scheduled for Aug. 29, 2015, during the National Conference in Orlando, Florida.
Air Force general, family active in Civil Air Patrol

U.S. Air Force Lt. Gen. James K. McLaughlin, deputy commander of U.S. Cyber Command at Fort Meade, Maryland, stressed the importance of cyber technology to America’s future when he spoke to an audience of 750 at Civil Air Patrol’s 2014 National Conference banquet in Las Vegas.

The gathering marked the finale of a week of professional development training designed to ensure CAP’s members are prepared to perform their emergency services, disaster relief, cadet programs and aerospace education duties at the highest professional levels possible.

“Cyberspace is critical to all of our lives and to the national security of the United States,” McLaughlin said. “The threats to this man-made domain are rapidly increasing, and the Department of Defense is taking steps to build the capability and capacity to defend the U.S. in cyberspace.

“I am confident Civil Air Patrol will also play a key role in raising awareness and building the capability to assist in this important new field.”

Beyond his expertise in the subject of cyberspace and his Air Force career, McLaughlin, his wife, CAP 1st Lt. Victoria McLaughlin, and their three sons — Cadet Lt. Cols. Andrew and William McLaughlin and Cadet Capt. Bryson McLaughlin — have been members of CAP since 2004. Victoria McLaughlin...
Civil Air Patrol Volunteer  October-December 2014

McLaughlin visits with members of the cadet color guard from the California Wing’s Skyhawk Composite Squadron 47. They are, from left, Cadet Capt. Jean Pendergrass, Cadet 2nd Lt. Samuel Cho, Cadet Staff Sgt. Logan Williams and Cadet Maj. Sean Wollaston.

McLaughlin and Col. Mary Feik were among the VIP participants in CAP’s annual Cadet Day.

served as character development instructor and drug demand reduction officer for their unit.

The McLaughlins were instrumental in creation of the first Cyberspace Familiarization Course, which took place this summer at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas.

“What a great thing CAP has been for our family,” McLaughlin said. “The boys have benefited from so many experiences, including international and leadership opportunities.

“The thing that’s most important about CAP members is that they serve the nation in incredible ways but it’s unheralded. They don’t get to meet the president and generally don’t get a lot of recognition for what they do. Clearly, they are motivated by a passion for service,” he said. ▲
Scenes from the 2014 National Conference

Featuring a Las Vegas-style reception, inspiring speeches, 50-plus learning labs, Cadet Day and a salute to outstanding members

A Special Guest
U.S. Army Col. Jayson Altieri, commander of the 110th Aviation Brigade and vice chairman of the CAP Board of Governors, poses for a banquet photo with his daughter, Isabella Grace.

Emcee Appreciated
Retired U.S. Air Force Col. Ken Goss, known in Civil Air Patrol as Spaatz Cadet No. 39, is presented a clay eagle for acting as master of ceremonies for the National Conference banquet by CAP Chief Operating Officer Don Rowland, left.

Programmers
Cols. Donald J. Haffner, Great Lakes Region vice commander, and Rose Hunt, Wisconsin Wing commander, look over the program before Friday morning’s change of command ceremony.
**Medal of Honor**

Retired U.S. Marine Corps Col. Jay Vargas, right, a Medal of Honor recipient, awards one of his Medal of Honor coins during an inspirational talk with cadets. Vargas’ visit was part of CAP’s new partnership with the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation, which offers a character curriculum for middle and high school youth that is now available to CAP cadets.

**Renewing Acquaintances**

Two former National Capital Wing commanders, Cols. Jane Davies, left, and Richard J. Cooper, center, visit with Capt. Kevin Geiss during a conference break.

**Helping Hands**

Becky Lee, right front, of CAP National Headquarters assists Puerto Rico Wing members at the National Conference registration desk.

**Prayer Breakfast**

Four Commanders

Carr Award
Maj. Gen. Chuck Carr presents Civil Air Patrol’s Exceptional Service Award to Lt. Col. Jett Mayhew for her service as national Drug Demand Reduction officer. She was among about 50 members recognized by the outgoing CAP national commander during the Command Council meeting.

Surrogate Missions
Tom Shubert, right, director of U.S. Air Force Auxiliary Programs at the Pentagon, representing the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Reserve Affairs, is briefed on Civil Air Patrol’s Surrogate Remotely Piloted Aircraft missions. Shubert also received a tour of CAP’s Green Flag-West headquarters at North Las Vegas Airport in Nevada from which SRPA flights originate.
Civil Air Patrol has an abundance of riches when it comes to the services rendered by its members, so choosing those to honor at its annual conference is always a difficult task. The accomplishments of some, however, demanded — and received — special recognition when the organization’s membership convened in Las Vegas in mid-August.

Congratulations for service above and beyond!

By Kristi Carr

Col. Richard F. Himebrook
Senior Member of the Year

Even his death in April could not derail the nomination of Col. Richard F. Himebrook for this honor, awarded posthumously. Himebrook was a fixture in CAP’s Southwest Region for more than half a century.

He joined CAP as a cadet in 1957. While a cadet he went on International Air Cadet Exchange, earned his Certificate of Proficiency (the top cadet honor before institution of the Gen. Carl A. Spaatz Award), was cadet squadron commander and was chairman of the Cadet Advisory Council. Communications was his focus then, and he was on wing staff. At the end of his career in the U.S. Air Force, he conducted a study of VHF radio transmissions in New Mexico and had the responsibility for maintaining an FM repeater site at Alamo Peak. He collaborated with the U.S. Forest Service to relocate and expand the site, more than quadrupling the FM coverage area.

By the 1980s his interests expanded to include cadet programs and emergency services. Under his command, the New Mexico Wing’s
Alamogordo Composite Squadron fielded the only ground team in the state, oversaw 18 percent of the wing’s aircraft fleet and established a mission headquarters — the only one of its kind in New Mexico — at the local municipal airport. Meanwhile, the cadets he commanded took home honors in both the wing and region for the unit’s cadet drill team.

In 1990 Himebrook moved on to the wing staff, serving six years as director of emergency services. During that time he oversaw more than 200 search and rescue missions, and the New Mexico Wing was named the best SAR wing in CAP’s Southwest Region in 1993, the same year Himebrook carved out time to earn his pilot’s certificate.

He then served three years as wing director of cadet programs and eight years as vice commander, during which time he was instrumental in securing Federal Emergency Management Agency trailers for three mobile operations centers. In 2007 he became wing commander and reached out to many groups to help cement CAP’s influence in the state. He started one of the nation’s most active legislative squadrons, secured funding for CAP offices at Las Cruces, executed memoranda of understanding with several agencies in the state and had the wing host everything from an Aerospace Extravaganza, cadet glider academies and leadership conferences to teacher orientation flights and senior member training programs, including the Southwest Region’s Staff College.

During his tenure as commander, the wing also arranged field training for crews for the Surrogate Remotely Piloted Aircraft program, a military training mission that uses a manned aircraft to simulate an unmanned one; provided lake patrols at Elephant Butte and Navajo Lake; and participated in Falcon Virgo, a series of ongoing military exercises designed to test airspace security. During his time on New Mexico Wing staff, he oversaw nearly 27,000 flying hours conducting search and rescue or counterdrug missions, which resulted in 62 saves.

Also a volunteer state policeman, Himebrook served on the New Mexico Search and Rescue Review Board, where he helped rewrite many training requirements for search organizations in the state. Even after moving to Texas in 2011, he continued to serve as adviser to the New Mexico Wing commander.

“There simply was not an area in CAP which he did not touch. With his guidance, our cadet and aerospace education programs flourished, and he wrote the book on how the New Mexico Wing participated in real-world contingencies, covering everything from communications to air, ground and mission-based resources and procedures,” said Col. Mark E. Smith, who commands the New Mexico Wing and submitted Himebrook’s nomination as this year’s Senior Member of the Year.

“In short, Col. Himebrook had a stellar CAP career, having a significant impact at squadron, wing, regional and national levels.”
Cadet Col. Robert H. Ward
Cadet of the Year

Born into a U.S. Air Force family where service to others was paramount, Cadet Col. Robert H. Ward was a natural fit for CAP.

Like other goals he set for himself, Ward buzzed through CAP achievements until he reached the cadet program’s pinnacle, the Gen. Carl A. Spaatz Award. He has participated in the organization at all levels, including working close to home as cadet commander of the Florida Wing’s Tyndall-Panama Composite Squadron, assuming leadership roles at wing encampments and cadet conferences and serving as lead instructor of the recently re-established Florida Leadership Academy.

On CAP’s broader regional and national stages, in 2013-2014 Ward served as chairman of the Southeast Region Cadet Advisory Council and was a member of the National Cadet Advisory Council and the principal cadet adviser to the Southeast Region commander.

At Rutherford High School in Panama City, Florida — where he received nothing less than an “A” in all subjects — he commanded the Air Force Junior ROTC unit, participated in cross country, acted in several school dramatic and musical productions and took on jobs in student government. Outside class, he continued his volunteer service, mentoring elementary students every week, delivering speeches and participating in numerous faith-based activities.

Ward’s passion for service and strong desire to lead have been duly noted. Retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Gerald E. “Gary” Hahn recalls first meeting Ward when he was only 7 years old. “I quickly became aware of the traits and qualities that set him apart from his contemporaries. Of course, he reflected all the usual childhood energy and sense of adventure of boys his age. But, more importantly, he demonstrated a rare degree of seriousness, self-motivation, discipline and character.”

Lt. Col. Kelly G. Noler, commander of the Florida Wing’s Group 1, said simply, “He is easily the best cadet I have ever met.”

Ward received nominations to multiple service academies, ultimately choosing the Air Force Academy, where he is a first-year cadet.

Capt. Kevin Geiss
F. Ward Reilly Leadership Award

With the oversight and guidance of its former commander, Capt. Kevin Geiss, the National Capital Wing’s Mount Vernon Composite Squadron captured the honor of Squadron of the Year, making Geiss the recipient of the F. Ward Reilly Leadership Award.

Geiss credits the contributions of others in the squadron for this achievement. “We had a strong leadership team, including my deputy commander for cadets and very sharp cadet commanders. Of course, the cadets are the ones who deserve recognition. I am very proud of them,” he said.

The squadron’s cadet members racked up an impressive array of CAP awards in 2013, with two earning the Gen. Ira C. Eaker Award, two the Amelia Earhart Award and three the Gen. Billy Mitchell Award; 44 percent of the 45 cadets attained the Wright Brothers Award.
CAP activities were also encouraged under Geiss. Escorted by a senior member, the squadron sent an International Air Cadet Exchange team to Singapore, while four cadets completed Regional Cadet Leadership School and eight participated in nine different CAP National Cadet Special Activities.

Six cadets completed the Tri-Wing Encampment, a joint effort of the National Capital, Maryland and Virginia wings. The squadron’s color guard placed first for the National Capital Wing in 2013 competition and performed at both the 2013 Spaatz Association dinner and at the Air Force Memorial in a CAP service honoring members who had died during the preceding year.

In addition, squadron cadets represented CAP at Operation Community Connection at Fort Belvoir, where they informed attendees about CAP and distributed drug demand reduction information. Ten squadron cadets competed on two teams in two of the Air Force Association’s CyberPatriot VI competitions. And three Mount Vernon cadets serve on staff at National Capital Wing headquarters.

“CAP gives me a direct, hands-on way to serve my community,” said Geiss, who was deputy assistant secretary of the Air Force for energy when he began his CAP career. His son, Benjamin, is a CAP cadet.

North and South Carolina Wings

AFNORTH Commander’s Award

Members of the North and South Carolina wings achieved a first in aviation history when they helped transfer an unmanned aerial system escort from a rotary wing aircraft to a fixed-wing aircraft. Their mission, tasked by 1st Air Force and U.S. Northern Command, was conducted in support of a U.S. Marine Corps unmanned aerial system airspace integration exercise in the summer of 2013 at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, North Carolina.

This NORTHCOM exercise demonstrated to the Federal Aviation Administration and others that the Marine Corps could safely operate unmanned aerial systems in national airspace without incident.

To help achieve this goal, a CAP team developed new procedures and modified existing ones in order to precisely rendezvous and fly a very close escort of the unmanned system in confined airspace. Their work was complicated by the unmanned aerial system’s very small size and by required cruise speeds near the minimum flying speed for CAP aircraft, as well as timing requirements measured in seconds.

While the unmanned aerial system and as many as three CAP planes were in the air, CAP ground personnel actively coordinated with Marine Corps operators to accomplish specific exercise goals.

During the exercise, a U.S. Army Black Hawk helicopter joined in, requiring CAP members to quickly develop procedures for communications, rendezvous and hand-off.

By the exercise’s conclusion, CAP aircrews from the two participating wings had carried out more than 65 flights totaling 99 hours without incident and completed

Vazquez, left, presents Civil Air Patrol’s F.Ward Reilly Leadership Award to Capt. Kevin Geiss, former commander of the National Capital Wing’s Mount Vernon Composite Squadron. The unit was named Squadron of the Year, making Geiss the recipient of the Reilly award. Photo by Susan Schneider, CAP National Headquarters

Geiss, inset, is in flight during Civil Air Patrol’s response to Hurricane Sandy in 2012. Photo by 2nd Lt. Mark Patrick, National Capital Wing
all of the exercise goals — all at minimal cost.

“I was honored along with the other crew members to be selected to fly this mission and to accomplish the tasks that the customer requested,” said Maj. Steven Askew, a CAP pilot from the South Carolina Wing. “I was also proud and privileged to represent the crews from North Carolina and South Carolina for this accomplishment and to experience this recognition on their behalf.”

**Capt. Mary Beth Marx**

**Aerospace Education Teacher of the Year**

Capt. Mary Beth Marx set out to be a science teacher and ended up also being a CAP member.

A teacher for many years in Wisconsin’s Westby Area School District, Marx joined CAP as an aerospace education member in 2007 and last year became a member of the Wisconsin Wing’s La Crosse Composite Squadron. She’s now extending her love of aviation to both her students and CAP cadets.

The practicality of CAP’s AE materials attracted Marx at first, and she consistently used CAP’s Aerospace Education Excellence, or AEX, program in her classes. She also tapped into the organization’s resources, such as the CAP grant she was awarded last year, which provided flight simulator software along with a full yoke, rudder pedals and throttle controls.

Her CAP membership attracted the interest of some of her students. Last fall, after a field day featuring programs presented by CAP members — including the opportunity to experience a mobile F-16 simulator — many of the children expressed interest in joining.

Marx is also a conduit for relationships with other groups, such as local remote control clubs and aviation enthusiasts, the Experimental Aircraft Association Young Eagles, the La Crosse Area Astronomical Society, Friends of the University of Wisconsin–Madison Geology Museum and the Air Force Association.

Marx takes full advantage of extracurricular opportunities, such as Arizona State University’s Rock Around the World project for geological analysis and NASA’s Send Your Name to Mars and Explorer Schools programs.

U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Trulan Eyre, third from right, leads applause after presenting the AFNORTH Commander’s Award to, from left, Maj. Steven Askew and Col. Francis H. Smith Jr. representing the South Carolina Wing and Col. Dave Crawford representing the North Carolina Wing. The two CAP wings were honored for their support of the United States Marine Corps Unmanned Aerial System Airspace Integration Exercise conducted at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, North Carolina. Photo by Susan Schneider, CAP National Headquarters.
She also received a fully paid scholarship from Honeywell to attend Space Camp for Educators at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama.

Even students and cadets who may not be all that interested in science find themselves looking forward to Marx's hands-on classes that seamlessly entwine science, technology, engineering and math — the STEM subjects. As one student said, “Her class is basically the one you look forward to attending every day because of the fun way she helps us learn.”

“Receiving the Aerospace Education Teacher of the Year Award has been the highlight of my teaching career and of my involvement with CAP,” Marx said. “When I attended a CAP workshop in 2007, I never dreamed how far this opportunity would take me as an educator or how many doors it would open for my students.

“What this award really represents is the hundreds and hundreds of students whose lives have been so positively impacted by CAP in my science classroom.”

Cadet Master Sgt. Nicholas Krupa
Air Force Sergeants Association Cadet Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year

With a keen interest in emergency services, Cadet Master Sgt. Nicholas Krupa of the New York Wing is a leader and role model in CAP, at school and in his community.

As a cadet in the F. R. Sussey Composite Squadron, he attended Hawk Mountain Ranger School, participated in color guard encampments and trained in SAR exercises.

At Cato-Meridian High School in Cato, New York, he excelled both academically and athletically, being named to the National Honor Society and representing his school as a member of the varsity cross-country and track and field teams. He has not let his personal accomplishments interfere with service to others, once stopping in the middle of a cross-country meet to help an opponent who was having trouble breathing and also taking on tutoring responsibilities for a teammate who was struggling with his studies.

In his community, Krupa serves with the Cato Ira Meridian Volunteer Ambulance Corps. Shadowing health professionals to gain more experience, he initiated and planned an independent study and mentoring program in the emergency medical field.

The CAP award took Krupa by surprise. “I wasn’t expecting this,” he said, “but am just glad I was able to bring more attention to my squadron.”

Krupa is a freshman at Cornell University, where he is pursuing a degree in biological science with a focus on pre-med.

Though largely known for his work with search and rescue and emergency services, participating in color guard was another CAP activity for Cadet Master Sgt. Nicholas Krupa, center, who was named the Air Force Sergeants Association Cadet Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year. Here he is pictured accepting his award as New York Wing Cadet NCO of the Year, which was presented by the wing’s then-director of cadet programs, Lt. Col. Stephen Samuels, left, and Col. Jack Ozer, then the wing’s commander.

“What this award really represents is the hundreds and hundreds of students whose lives have been so positively impacted by CAP in my science classroom.” — Capt. Mary Beth Marx
Other Outstanding Members in CAP’s Galaxy

The following members also were recognized at the 2014 National Conference:

Mission Awards: Search and Rescue
New Hampshire Wing
New Mexico Wing
Utah Wing
Utah Wing
Hawaii Wing
Hawaii Wing

Frank G. Brewer Sr. Memorial Aerospace Awards
Cadet: Cadet Capt. Rosalyn C. Carlisi, Utah Wing
Senior Member: Capt. Carol Samuelsen, Michigan Wing
Individual/Organization: Interamerican University of Puerto Rico
Lifetime Achievement: Lt. Col. Alfred Hulstrunk, Northeast Region

Maj. Gen. Jeanne M. Holm Aerospace Education Officer of the Year
Lt. Col. Kathleen E. Beauford, Louisiana Wing

John V. “Jack” Sorenson Cadet Programs Officer of the Year
Maj. Jennifer A. Derr, Indiana Wing

Senior Chaplain of the Year
Chaplain Lt. Col. Donald S. Mikitta Jr., North Central Region

Squadron Chaplain of the Year
Chaplain Lt. Col. Robert A. Ledden, Oregon Wing

Character Development Instructor of the Year
Maj. David W. Snyder Sr., Wisconsin Wing

Communications Officer of the Year
Maj. Richard D. Fitzgerald, Oklahoma Wing

Norm Edwards Counterdrug Officer of the Year
Lt. Col. William P. Geyer Sr., Pennsylvania Wing

Col. Edwin W. Lewis Jr. Incident Staff Member of the Year
Maj. Dallas C. Lane, Arizona Wing

Col. Dion E DeCamp Ground Team of the Year
Arizona Wing Ground Team, Southwest Region

Outstanding Drug Demand Reduction Wing
South Carolina Wing, Middle East Region

Drug Demand Reduction Member of the Year
Capt. Frank A. D’Angelo, Nebraska Wing

Professional Development Officer of the Year
Col. Stanley A. Skrabut, Wyoming Wing

Col. Lester Hopper Historian of the Year
1st Lt. David A. Gopperton, Wyoming Wing

George Texido Legislative Officer of the Year
Lt. Col. Robert Bleeley, Texas Wing

Property Management Officer of the Year
Maj. Richard D. Pope Sr., Texas Wing

Col. Robert V. “Bud” Payton Public Affairs Officer of the Year
Lt. Col. Michael C. Daniels, Colorado Wing

Safety Officer of the Year
Maj. George A. Cobley, Iowa Wing

Paul W. Turner Safety Award
Arizona Wing

Director of Finance of the Year
Lt. Col. Janet C. Shepard, New Mexico Wing

Inspector General of the Year
Lt. Col. James R. Fallon, Massachusetts Wing

Squadron of Distinction
Mount Vernon Composite Squadron, National Capital Wing
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Today, more than 230 years after the first hot air balloon took to the skies above the French town of Annonay, people remain intrigued by this unique method of flight. “Hot air ballooning attracts people like crazy,” said 1st Lt. Mike Gallant, head of the Indiana Wing’s balloon program. “Anytime the CAP balloon gets set up, people just appear out of nowhere. Sometimes groups of cars follow us just for pictures and to ask us questions about it.”

Cadet Chief Master Sgt. Raily Blankley, left, and Cadet Master Sgt. J.D. Downing hold open the bottom of a hot air balloon for inflation. Blankley belongs to the New Mexico Wing’s LBJ Middle School Cadet Squadron, while Downing is a member of the Los Alamos Composite Squadron. Photo by 1st Lt. Ryan M. Stark, New Mexico Wing.
Johnson Flight Academy Training

Gallant maintains the balloon used for the primary training of cadets interested in hot air balloon flight at the annual Lt. Col. Raymond J. Johnson Flight Academy in Mattoon, Illinois. “It’s a team activity in the truest sense. The pilot, passengers and ground crew depend on each other for a safe flight,” Gallant said. “They need planning, communication and coordination to be successful. There is also a lot of preparation prior to launch.”

Since the 1970s the Johnson Flight Academy, which just celebrated its 48th anniversary, has been CAP’s go-to program for cadets interested in balloon flight. This year the two-week academy, which also provides hands-on flight training in airplanes and gliders, hosted hot air balloon training for six cadets from five states.

“Each cadet is required to learn how to select a launch location, unload, assemble, instruct, disassemble, pack up, load, refuel, understand emergency procedures and ground crew duties, complete detailed weather checks and learn ground school material,” Gallant said.

Many cadets and senior members don’t fully understand all that goes into the back-to-basics aspect of hot air balloon flight, he said.

“I always saw hot air balloons but never thought I’d ever be flying one,” said Cadet Senior Master Sgt. Elizabeth McMahon of the California Wing’s Palm Springs Composite Squadron 1, who attended

Photo by Cadet Airman 1st Class Catherine Gallant, Illinois Wing
the Johnson Flight Academy this year.

“It made me want to become a balloon pilot, and I definitely plan on going back next year,” she said.

Gallant and his team, which includes Capts. Wayne Werner and Sue Louck and 2nd Lt. Rachael Gallant — Gallant’s daughter, who first attended the academy as a cadet in 2005 and is now a licensed pilot and senior staff member — are part of the Montgolfier Society of Indiana, the Ballooning Association of Greater Illinois and the Balloon Federation of America.

The CAP balloon has participated in the Indiana State Airshow and the Indiana Balloon Fest to generate interest in the program.

New Mexico Wing’s New Balloon Program

In July, under the leadership of Group 800 Commander Maj. Ben Noyce, the New Mexico Wing launched a new hot air balloon program during its first CAP Balloon Ground Crew Clinic.

During the three-day chase crew clinic in New Mexico, globally known as the Hot Air Ballooning Capital of the World, 18 cadets and four senior members participated. “Each completed the clinic and have continued to serve at many flying events, both CAP and non-CAP, logging their experience into their crew logbooks — similar to a pilot logbook but for ground crews,” said Noyce, who is program director of the New Mexico Wing’s hot air balloon program and a student pilot.

Noyce has encouraged his fellow squadron members to assist as chase crew members in the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta as well as other balloon flying events for many years. He said interest in hot air balloon flight — especially the chase crew element — is growing.

“The overall goal of our ballooning program is to offer aerospace education and the ability for cadets to work with another airframe, update the text and modules used to teach about balloons, eventually incorporate an orientation flight portion with balloons and hopefully expand to have our own hot air balloon pilot academy here in New Mexico similar to the glider encampment/academy.”

Noyce’s experience with ballooning started in 2002 when he was a sales representative for Kodak cameras at the Albuquerque festival. He soon became a public safety officer for the event and then a chase crew member during the off-season. His first flight was in 2011.

“New Mexico has the greatest weather to allow ballooning practically year-round, with many visible balloons in the skyline every morning, so finding a crew to assist is quite easy,” he said. “It’s great to show cadets how they can become more engaged in aerospace activities — more than just marshaling on the flight line.

Noyce said the new program in New Mexico is getting positive feedback — not only from CAP members but also local residents and organizations.

“We are hearing that the cadets are really enjoying the hands-on work and teamwork required to be a part of a ground chase crew,” he said. “They also enjoy the full interaction during the flight, the hands-on work during setup, the launch, the chase, helping the aircrew with navigation and landing and then assisting with the landing and packing up.

“It’s a lot of hard work but so worth the experience,” he said.

Currently, the ballooning group for the New Mexico Wing has enrolled three commercial-rated pilots — Capts. Al Lowenstein, William Manus and Jessica Makin, who Noyce said are the keys to the program’s success.
Amelia Rose Earhart answered the question yet again and went on to explain how sharing the name of the world’s most famous female aviator has shaped her life and helped lead to her recent trek around the world as she followed the first Amelia Earhart’s flight path.

A Civil Air Patrol squadron in Oakland, California, also bears the pioneering aviator’s name, and the members were there to welcome her namesake home.

“My parents’ last name is Earhart, and when I was born, they saw an opportunity to tie me to a positive role model,” Earhart said. “They knew if nothing else, no one would ever forget me once they met me!”

As a child, she sometimes got teased for the name and so began going by Amy instead of Amelia. As a teenager, though, she embraced her given name and decided she wanted to know more about the original Amelia.

“My name sparked my interest in her and in aviation,” Earhart said.

At 21, she took her first flight lesson and was hooked. “I left my heart in the sky,” she said.

She saved money to keep fueling her newfound passion. “It took me awhile to get my private pilot’s license,” she said.

Then Earhart had an idea. “I was always in such awe of what the original Amelia accomplished. She made me want to promote and support other women in aviation as well as help other young women who wanted to fly. I was working in Denver in broadcasting, and I kept thinking, the best thing I can do with this name is to do, and finish, Amelia’s original flight around the world.”

Once the idea started gaining momentum and she decided to commit to it, she launched the Fly With Amelia Foundation, which provides flight-lesson scholarships to young women hoping to become pilots.

“Right now only 4 percent of pilots are women, but the good news is that 12 percent of current flight students are female,” Earhart said.

“It was daunting and expensive, but I knew the flight would bring attention to the foundation,” said Earhart, and it did. “When the word got out, so many people engaged, especially young girls. What I did shows them they can do something great too, whether it be getting a pilot’s license or finishing school or starting a business. I hope I can inspire people to set big goals and give themselves a reason to jump out of bed each morning and go after that goal.”
Despite the challenges involved in the flight, which covered 24,300 nautical miles, Earhart enjoyed every second. “Of course I loved the experience of the flight, but I loved the planning process too. It made me focus on something bigger than myself.”

And while she was careful, she wasn’t afraid. “I wasn’t fearful. I knew the dangers and risks going in, but I trusted my plane and my equipment,” Earhart said. “We planned for as many variables as we could.”

She completed the flight in 18 days in her Pilatus PC-12 NG, making her, at 31, the youngest woman to circumnavigate the globe in a single-engine aircraft. After landing at Oakland International Airport’s North Field, she received a hero’s welcome.

“When we taxied in, and the CAP folks had flags from every country my flight had taken me to, it was really special and a surprise,” Earhart said. “They have such a neat connection to the original Amelia flight.”

Lt. Col. Juan Tinnirello, public affairs officer for Amelia Earhart Senior Squadron 188, arranged the warm welcome.

“Our squadron is named the Amelia Earhart squadron, so I knew we wanted to be a part of this,” Tinnirello said. “We greeted her at the airport and then invited her to tour our squadron facility, including the room where the original Amelia Earhart stayed when the building was a hotel.”

He is impressed with Earhart’s feat: “It is fantastic what she did, and what she is doing with her foundation is great,” Tinnirello said. “We wanted to celebrate that; her goals are very similar to CAP’s.”

Earhart is equally as impressed with CAP. “The members were so kind and gracious, and they’ve asked me to be an honorary member,” she said. “I feel so lucky to be a part of it, and it has been so nice to see such positive press in the aviation community.

“I really love CAP and what they are doing for youth in aviation,” she added.

Earhart is working on a book about her flight and starting an aviation business, but she’s also maintaining her dedication to helping young women become pilots.

“Flying around the world was such a gift, so I’m still soaking that in and I really want to pay that forward by focusing on the foundation,” she said.
Safety-conscious member hones paramedic skills at remote Alaskan mine

By Jenn Rowell

Greens Creek is a massive underground mine on Alaska’s Admiralty Island. The mine is the largest producer of silver in the United States.
For nearly a decade, Civil Air Patrol 2nd Lt. Karl Kisser has been the onsite paramedic at Greens Creek Mine on Admiralty Island in southeast Alaska. Greens Creek is the largest producer of silver in the United States and also produces smaller quantities of zinc, lead and gold.

Kisser cares for about 420 employees and 60 contractors who work at the underground mine and live in the mine camp 8 miles away on Hawk Inlet.

Most of Kisser’s job is devoted to accident prevention. He oversees safety and occupational health and performs fit testing for respirator masks, annual hearing tests and lung function tests for wearing respirators.

“The majority of my work revolves around preventing accidents from happening in the first place,” he said. That’s one of the things he likes most about his job.

The worst injury Kisser has treated at Greens Creek was an open leg fracture from a rock fall. A suture case or stitches is a big deal, since it’s a reportable injury, he said.

“Safety challenges revolve around our remote off-the-road-system location, wintertime ice and snow and the operation of very large pieces of industrial equipment,” he said. “Year-round our most likely injuries involve slips, trips and falls, isolated hand injuries and muscle and tendon strains and sprains, as well as occasional repetitive stress or overuse injuries.”

Working at Greens Creek complements Kisser’s role as a CAP volunteer. “Safety is job one at the mine,” he said. “Stop and Take Five, Risk Evaluation, Assessment and Analysis programs are religiously adhered to and mishaps and near-misses are looked at for lessons learned as well as for root causes to prevent future mishaps.

“Being aware of your immediate environment and how it can change are evaluated constantly, and all of those issues also apply to the missions and tasks we participate in as Civil Air Patrol members,” he added.

The Journey
Kisser’s background includes service as a volunteer firefighter, emergency medical technician and paramedic in eastern Washington. After he moved to Alaska in 1994 he initially worked for a company that provided medical services at remote locations. The services were provided on a contract basis, so when a contract ended, he had to find a new one. During that time, he spent some winters on the tundra.

“I got to see lots of areas doing those jobs, parts of the state I wouldn’t have seen otherwise,” Kisser said.

A friend told him about a job opening at Greens Creek, and he’s been at the mine ever since. It’s steady work, and the schedule gives him “time to enjoy living in the wonderful state of Alaska.”

Though life in such a remote place can have its challenges, like the invasion of brown bears in the spring, there’s nothing like being on Admiralty Island: “Our camp is an ex-cannery on Hawk Inlet, and it is in the midst of the splendor of the Tongass National Forest,” Kisser said. “Each day is different, and I work with people who enjoy being Second Lt. Karl Kisser, squatting center, works with cadets during an Alaska Wing cadet search and rescue clinic. The clinic was sponsored by the Alaska Department of Public Safety.
here and strive to protect all we are surrounded by.”

That includes the brown bears, which are quite common on the island and are part of his responsibility when it comes to the safety of employees and contractors. “During the early spring through late fall, we use a combination of firearm-launched noisemakers and nonlethal projectiles for wildlife hazing,” he said. “The bears can keep us busy in the early spring, but they are smart animals and quickly learn to avoid the mine and camp each year.”

The CAP Connection

Not long after moving to Alaska, Kisser, who’s also a pilot, went to Birchwood Airport. He noticed a Civil Air Patrol squadron was based there.

Initially, he wanted to meet other aviators and people who flew locally who had knowledge of the area. “I was surrounded by decades and decades of Alaskan aviation experience,” he said. “I also was surrounded by people contributing to the outdoor recreational community as well — people that were looking after each other, especially in the more remote areas.”

As transportation officer for Birchwood Composite Squadron in Chugiak, Kisser is responsible for the unit’s three vehicles — a plow truck, an eight-passenger van and a Ford Excursion. He is a mission pilot, cadet orientation pilot and Air Force ROTC cadet orientation pilot, as well as a mission observer and scanner.

He also served as the unit’s search and rescue officer.

So, what advice does Kisser have for CAP cadets interested in following in his footsteps?

• Look for opportunities to volunteer in emergency services. “I started as a Red Cross First Aid volunteer, then I joined an Explorer post and later became an EMT with a local volunteer fire department before becoming a paramedic.”

• Continue to learn. “The emergency medical field evolves rapidly. In the state of Alaska I am required to attend 60 hours per year of continuing medical education, and both myself and my co-workers are always looking for opportunities to do things better for our employee population. Practices change as the field of medicine learns more about what works, what doesn’t and why.”

• Actively seek out people doing what you want to do and ask them how they got there and what they would recommend if they were to do it all over again.
Inspiration Nearly Five Decades Strong

By Mitzi Palmer

Letter Celebrates the Power of CAP Leadership

Brig. Gen. William B. Cass recently received a pleasant surprise in his mailbox — a letter of pure gratitude from a former cadet he mentored almost five decades ago in Civil Air Patrol’s cadet program.

“In all my years, I have never received a letter like this,” said Cass, who served as CAP national commander from August 1984-March 1986.

The letter was from Dr. David A. Clough, an orthopedic and hand surgeon and president of Lakeside Orthopedics, P.C., in Omaha, Nebraska.

The two originally met in the summer of 1967, when Clough, then 15, moved with his family from Omaha to Des Moines, Iowa, and transferred to the Iowa Wing, joining the Des Moines Composite Squadron and becoming involved with the CAP Special Service Corps, the group known as the Blue Berets.

At the time, the group had just begun at the request of Col. Allen Towne, Iowa Wing commander, to train senior and cadet members in ground search and rescue techniques and wilderness survival. The program was founded under the command of Cass, who at the time was the wing’s vice commander and held the rank of lieutenant colonel.

The Blue Beret Experience

Clough attended two Blue Beret encampments in the fall of 1967, but because of conflicts with his high school band he didn’t complete training to receive his beret during the program’s inaugural year.

In the summer of 1968, the Blue Beret encampment moved to the east side of Iowa along the Mississippi River. “I was told I would qualify for the beret partway through the encampment because of my prior training sessions,” Clough said.

He had never been involved in anything so strenuous, he recalled. Participants in Blue Beret encampments would sometimes start the summer training sessions a few dozen miles away from their final destination, completing a series of two- to three-day long marches to get there.
“That was the ’60s version of team-building exercises,” Clough joked. “But I remember Col. Cass always pressing forward at a brisk pace regardless of the hot or wet weather, always urging everyone forward, but taking the time for water breaks and paying close attention to all the cadets’ physical and mental condition.”

That was his first exposure to leadership in the field, he said.

“That lesson helped me after later graduations and completions of training from high school, joining Pershing Rifles at the University of Nebraska ROTC, Recondo School at Fort Carson, the U.S. Air Force Academy, Air Force commissioning, medical school, residency, flight surgery school, active and reserve duty as an orthopedic surgeon and flight surgeon, post-doctoral fellowship and managing a private medical practice,” he said. “You remember the first steps of a long journey more so than the many thereafter.”

By the end of the encampment, he had nearly forgotten he’d qualified for his Blue Beret earlier than the others. Instead, because of Cass’ leadership, he found himself spending most of his time helping the younger cadets on the road marches and in training activities.

“After 45 years, only my marriage, the births and marriages of my three sons and the births of my two granddaughters outshine the moment I was awarded a Blue Beret,” Clough said. “Col. Cass taught me that hard work, perseverance and more hard work would be its own reward.”

A Sustaining Impact

During the next three years, Clough learned that work as a Blue Beret member would be harder than earning the beret itself.

“That lesson helped me after later graduations and completions of training from high school, joining Pershing Rifles at the University of Nebraska ROTC, Recondo School at Fort Carson, the U.S. Air Force Academy, Air Force commissioning, medical school, residency, flight surgery school, active and reserve duty as an orthopedic surgeon and flight surgeon, post-doctoral fellowship and managing a private medical practice,” he said. “You remember the first steps of a long journey more so than the many thereafter.”

Former cadet David A. Clough obtained his Blue Beret in 1968 under the leadership of the group’s founder — Cass. Clough attributes the experience for guiding his success: “Everything I have done in life (and sometime not done) was shaped by your example,” wrote Clough in a recent letter to Cass. “I am eternally grateful to you.”

The Blue Beret program began in 1967, when Col. Allen Towne, Iowa Wing commander, requested an intensive training program be established to train senior members and cadets to become knowledgeable and effective in ground search and rescue operations. Under the command of then-Lt. Col. William B. Cass, the wing’s vice commander, the program’s purpose was to create the ability to function effectively in almost any capacity when called upon.

The first training session was held in April 1967, and the program soon grew rapidly. Over the next three decades, it transitioned from focusing mainly on search and rescue to overseeing a 20,000-aircraft flight line at the Experimental Aircraft Association’s annual fly-in at Oshkosh, Wisconsin, the nation’s largest air show. Now known as National Blue Beret, it is CAP’s most diverse national cadet special activity, with participants representing 45 wings and all eight regions. Last year, 137 cadets and 42 senior members participated.

More information on the Blue Berets can be found at www.ncsas.com.

History of the Blue Berets

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More information on the Blue Berets can be found at www.ncsas.com.
Clough particularly recalls attending National Cadet Leadership School in the Sierra Nevada mountains above Reno with fellow cadet Judy Miller in July 1969 — the same month Apollo 11 landed on the moon.

“Of all the cadets at this national leadership school, only a few were comfortable in the field, including Judy and myself and the cadets from Pennsylvania who were in a similar elite program,” he recalled. “As we hiked away from the drop-off point, Judy and I reached into our rucksacks and put on our Blue Berets.”

The two weren’t allowed to wear the berets at school, since the program at the time was a wing program, not a national-level one.

“Two Pennsylvania cadets then reached into their packs and got out their distinctive caps and we were immediately a band of brothers,” Clough remembered.

As a small group, the four hiked, camped and excelled in their field training tasks.

“That’s when I clearly realized how special my CAP and Blue Beret training from Col. Cass was for Judy and me.”

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Clough and Cass first met at Iowa Wing Headquarters in Des Moines, but the impact still resonates.

Over that period, Cass has helped shaped the lives of hundreds of young CAP cadets. Perhaps his most cherished memories are those associated with founding what’s now the National Blue Beret cadet activity, he said.

“I’ve definitely made the dearest acquaintances from the Blue Beret program,” Cass said.

As for Clough, “Dave was a great young cadet,” he said.

Today, Cass and his wife, Nancy, are enjoying retirement in the Florida Gulf Coast community of Seminole.

In closing his letter to Cass, Clough wrote, “Bill, everything I have done in my life (and sometimes not done) was shaped by your example. I am eternally grateful to you.” ▲

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AchEvements

Gill Robb Wilson Award

Highest award for senior members, presented to those who complete Level V of the Civil Air Patrol Senior Member Training Program. (Only about 5 percent of CAP senior members achieve this award.) The senior members listed below received their awards in May, June and July.

- Lt. Col. Azriel Gorski AL
- Lt. Col. John P. Neil AL
- Lt. Col. Larry D. Killian AR
- Col. Brian N. Ready AZ
- Lt. Col. John J. DiGiantomasso CA
- Lt. Col. Reynold Lopez CA
- Maj. John H. Nagle CA
- Lt. Col. Scott M. Dellinger CO
- Capt. Matthew C. Hooper NJ
- Maj. Jeremiah Richards FL
- Lt. Col. Anita S. Elliott IA
- Lt. Col. Alfredo R. Reynoso IL
- Col. Matthew R. Creed IN
- Maj. Sharon R. Groome IN
- Lt. Col. Darrell D. Williamson IN
- Maj. Daren K. Jaeger KS
- Maj. Lillette M. Lahan KS
- Maj. Pamela C. Morris KS
- Lt. Col. Michael D. Bryant KY
- Lt. Col. Evan K. Harrod KY
- Maj. Harold A. Hernandez LA
- Lt. Col. Scott B. Harris MD
- Maj. Mark L. Davalos MI
- Maj. Antonio C. Gutierrez MI
- Maj. Charles B. Malley MI
- Maj. Jeffrey D. Cunningham MO
- Lt. Col. Kim Alan Nash MT
- Maj. Robert J. Neil AL
- Lt. Col. John J. DiGiantomasso WA
- Maj. John Jones WA
- Lt. Col. John R. Roach WA
- Maj. Michael D. Bryant WY
- Maj. Marven L. Roberson WY
- Lt. Col. Dominic R. Goupiel WY
- Maj. Michael F. Castania WY
- Maj. Christopher R. Branam WY
- Maj. Mike Lee WY
- Maj. Edward D. Leccacorvi WY
- Maj. Steven M. Schliper WY
- Lt. Col. Louis P. Fench WY
- Lt. Col. Alan M. Gibbs WY

Gen. Carl A. Spaatz Award

Highest award for cadets, presented to those who complete all phases of the CAP Cadet Program and the Spaatz award examination. (Only about one-half of 1 percent of CAP cadets achieve this award.) The cadets listed below received their awards in May, June and July.

- Benjamin Shea AL
- Benjamin Parmer AR
- Anthony R. Cummins CA
- Adam M. Hocutt CT
- Joshua D. Lewis FL
- Kevin C. Tierney FL
- Jason S. Reid IN
- Nathan C. Shinabarger IN
- John T. Rowan MD
- Rachael L. Bailey NC
- Joshua D. Waters NC
- Jared J. Mohler OH
- Patrick Arnold OK
- Ethan J. Dunlap PA
- David A. Eudy SC
- Mark A. Eudy SC
- Robert L. Stone SC
- Abigail C. Dickerson TN
- Korbin T. Niehaus TN
- James L. Stevens TX
- Matthew C. Skelton WA
- Evan C. Unruh WA

Gen. Ira C. Eaker Award

Second-highest award for cadets, presented to those who complete Level IV of the CAP Cadet Program. The cadets listed below received their awards in May, June and July.

- Capt. Donald A. Cain AL
- Lt. Col. Harrell E. Clendenin AR
- Lt. Col. Joseph J. Herczeg AZ
- Maj. Attila P. Szokol AZ
- Maj. Robert C. Biting CA
- Maj. Michael E. Hoover CA
- Maj. Michael D. Lynch CA
- Lt. Col. Henry H. Peralez CA
- Maj. Michael Patrick Swift CA
- Maj. Denise A. Van Loo CA
- Maj. Morris D. Hall CO
- Maj. Bethany K. Lenell CO
- Capt. Paul E. Patnode CT
- Lt. Col. Stephen M. Valastro CT
- Maj. James T. Brogan DC
- Lt. Col. Marvin L. Chase DE
- Lt. Col. Matthew D. Kimbler DE
- Capt. Scott D. Brown FL
- Lt. Col. Jim J. Clark FL
- Maj. Adrian Cuarta FL
- Lt. Col. Willard F. Garman FL
- Maj. Justin R. McElvaney FL
- Lt. Col. Kevin M. McSparron FL
- Maj. Keith F. Wall FL
- Maj. Arthur E. Yarbrough FL
- Lt. Col. Wanda A. Petty GA
- Maj. Andrea M. Van Buren GA
- Maj. Justin W. Bekker ID
- Maj. Jennifer A. Derr IN
- Maj. Frank E. Merrill IN
- Maj. Brenda G. Woodhouse IN
- Maj. Stephen P. Hood MA
- Capt. Richard J. Walsh MA
- Capt. David M. Trick MD
- Lt. Col. James H. Matthews MI
- Maj. David V. Mansheffer MN
- Capt. Blane A. Pierson MN
- Capt. Paul D. Prior MN
- Maj. Donald W. Raleigh MN
- Maj. Adrian T. Ramler MN
- Lt. Col. Antonio M. Rossini MN
- Maj. David W. Yost MN
- Maj. Edward P. Angelovich NCR
- Maj. Charles D. Hudson NE
- Lt. Col. John H. Hall NE
- Capt. Matthew C. Hooper NJ
- Maj. Franklin E. Porah NJ
- Maj. David G. Finley NM
- Maj. Althea L. Levell NV

Paul E. Garber Award

Second-highest award for senior members, presented to those who complete Level IV of the CAP Senior Member Training Program. The senior members listed below received their awards in May, June and July.

- Capt. Evan C. Unruh WA
- Maj. Bryan L. Watson WA
- Maj. Michael A. Fernandez UT
- LTC. Col. Robert A. Siau WA

- Allison J. Schuster CA
- Thomas R. Henkel FL
- Matthew S. Medla FL
- Kevin C. Tierney FL
- Brittany Palmquist GA
- Jory Brower ID
- John T. Rowan MD
- Joshua K. Morton NC
- Anthony P. DeAngelis NJ
- James Grindstaff NV
- Joshua Chandler NY
- Meghan J. Duell NY
- Jonathan M. Vega NY
- Richard A. Ware Jr. NY
- Tyler R. Dookum OH
- Audrey J. Crismon PA
- Felicia J. Martin PA
- Drew Switzer PA
- Gerardo E. Sanchez PR
- Tyler C. Hoover SC
- James M. Bailey TN
- Anna G. Dickerson TN
- Hunter J. E. Riffle TN
- Thomas E. Schwahn TN
- David E. Feig WV
- Tim W. Oy WV
- Nathan W. Lewis WV
- Nathan A. Worley WV

- Maj. Paul D. Prior MN
- Maj. Donald W. Raleigh MN
- Maj. Adrian T. Ramler MN
- Lt. Col. Antonio M. Rossini MN
- Maj. David W. Yost MN
- Maj. Edward P. Angelovich NCR
- Maj. Charles D. Hudson NE
- Lt. Col. John H. Hall NE
- Capt. Matthew C. Hooper NJ
- Maj. Franklin E. Porah NJ
- Maj. David G. Finley NM
- Maj. Althea L. Levell NV

- Maj. William L. Creekbaum OH
- Maj. David A. Dlugiewicz OH
- Maj. Hilda E. Pereyo OR
- Capt. Carlos E. Galarza PR
- Lt. Col. Raymond T. Rader TN
- Maj. William H. Schroder TX
- Maj. Fletcher E. Sharp TX
- Maj. William D. Wallace TX
- Maj. Nathan E. Yalcin TX
- Maj. Fred Clayton Wilkins VA
- Lt. Col. Robert A. Siau WA

- Maj. William L. Creekbaum OH
- Maj. David A. Dlugiewicz OH
- Maj. Hilda E. Pereyo OR
- Capt. Carlos E. Galarza PR
- Lt. Col. Raymond T. Rader TN
- Maj. William H. Schroder TX
- Maj. Fletcher E. Sharp TX
- Maj. William D. Wallace TX
- Maj. Nathan E. Yalcin TX
- Maj. Fred Clayton Wilkins VA
- Lt. Col. Robert A. Siau WA
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