



Mission for America

Semper vigilans!
Semper volans!

The Coastwatcher

Newsletter of the Thames River Composite Squadron
GON
Connecticut Wing
Civil Air Patrol

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SCHEDULE OF COMING EVENTS

AUGUST

09 AUG-BCUT Course-Middletown
13 AUG-AEO Meeting-Middletown
08-10 AUG-ET Bivouac-Danielson
0-17 AUG-MAWG Encampment-Ft. Devens
16 AUG-TRCS Orientation flights-GON
23 AUG-Rifle Safety and Marksmanship Day-QH

Long Term Planning

06 SEP-CT National Guard Family Day
07 SEP-Westover ARB Great NE Air Show
21 SEP-Simsbury Fly-In
27-28 SEP-Squadron Leadership School
3-5 OCT-Harwinton Fair
16-18 OCT-Nat'l Conference on A/S Education
18-19 OCT-Corporate Learning Course
25 OCT-Cadet Ball
25 OCT-ACUT-Middletown
15 NOV-BCUT-Middletown
22-23 NOV-Unit Commanders Course
06-07 DEC-Training Leaders of Cadets Course

CADET MEETING MINUTES 29 July, 2008

C/CMSgt Michael Molinari led the Cadets in opening formation.

Lt Wojtcuk reported that our three new Cadets, Jacob Schlauder, Michael Herzog, and Annabelle Orlando have completed OpSec requirements and the Moral Leadership Ground School.

A "Rocketry Program Scorecard" has been posted. Cadets are instructed to review their remaining requirements for the Rocketry Badge.

Maj Bourque briefed the parents on the general CAP program and the specific goals which our Squadron has established. He explained our recent participation at the Danielson Emergency Services Training Bivouacs, aerospace education and rocketry, orientation flights, and fund raising.

Cadet Andrew Molinari was presented his certificate for completion of the Redstone Hands-On Phase.

Cadet Kevin Roe was promoted to C/A1C, passing all requirements for the Arnold and was also presented his Radio Operators Authorization Card. It was announced that he has enlisted in the CT Army National Guard as a Military Police Officer and Corrections Specialist.



Maj Bourque presents Cadet Roe with Insignia

Capt Rocketto gave a short briefing on the the anniversaries of the introduction of the KC-135 Stratotanker and the KC-10 Extender and the ongoing controversy regarding the awarding of the contract for the new USAF tanker fleet.

LtCol Reed Foster of the RIANG and American Airlines presented a talk about his experiences flying the MC-130 Combat Talon on Special Operations Missions. See the accompanying article in this edition for details.

Light refreshments were served after the meeting.

SQUADRON TEE-SHIRTS

The Squadron Tee Shirts have been ordered. They are black, suitable for wear with your BDUs and for PT with the Squadron Patch in full color on the left breast. Price is \$10.

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER

The Squadron was honored to have LtCol Reed Foster of the 143 Airlift Wing, Rhode Island Air National Guard as our guest speaker on 29 July.



Col Foster and Cadet Plourde Chat

Col Foster became enthralled with aviation as a young boy in Oxford, Maine. He would lay on the ground and watch aircraft on approach to the nearby Oxford, Airport. But flying entails more than wishing, part of his message to our Cadets. It requires an act of will and a desire for excellence.

Foster enrolled in the USAF Reserve Officer Training Corps Program at the University of Connecticut, joined the Connecticut Air National Guard, and took private instructions at Brainard Field in Hartford. While at UConn, he was one of ten ROTC Cadets selected to receive summer training with the Royal Air Force in Great Britain where he flew the Scottish Aviation Bulldog.

Commissioned a second lieutenant, he was assigned to Sheppard AFB in Wichita Falls, Texas for Undergraduate Pilot Training in the novel Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training Program. He graduated as a fighter pilot but requested and was finally allowed to join special operations flying the Lockheed MC-130 Combat Talons, the special warfare version of the venerable Hercules.

While stationed at Mildenhall, England as part of the 352nd Special Operations Group, he was aircraft commander of the Whiskey-05 crew which won the Mackay Trophy for the most meritorious flight of the year.

In June of 1997, a civil war raged in the Republic of the Congo. The former ruler Denis Sassou-Nguesso was challenging the incumbent, President Pascal Lissouba for control. Chaos reigned and U.S. authorities decided to dispatch a rescue mission to the capital city, Brazzaville, to land reinforcements for the Marine guard at the Embassy and to evacuate unneeded personnel.

Flying an MC-130H Talon II of the 7th Special Operations Squadron, they departed Mildenhall to Stuttgart Army Air Field in Germany to board the European Command Survey and Assessment Team and their equipment. Heavily overloaded with fuel, two special vehicles, equipment, supplies and extra personnel, they departed Stuttgart

The flight from Stuttgart to Brazzaville required three refuelings by Boeing KC-135 Stratotankers of the 100th Air Refueling Wing. Because of the heavy overload in the MC-130 and its inability to

maintain a high enough airspeed for refueling, the then Capt Foster was forced to climb above the tanker and dive to attain adequate airspeed for connection to the refueling boom. Both aircraft then descended in order to maintain airspeed. Each refueling, and there were three, required two hours each in the 13 hour mission.

Upon arriving at Brazzaville, they were forced to orbit because the airfield was under contention. They contacted Germany and were told that the decision to land was theirs to make. In an interview for the award, Foster stated that, "There was no question in anyone's mind. There were people down there, some of them Americans, who needed our help. It took maybe a second to make up our minds."

Foster described a hairy approach to avoid the gunfire. Maya-Maya airport is located on a plateau so they descended into the Congo River valley and then popped up to land. Halfway down the runway, French Foreign Legionnaires were engaged in a firefight with the rebels. Stopping with haste, they were marshaled to relatively safe area to disembark the Special Forces troops and to embark the evacuees. Told to expect 40 people, they departed with 56 and flew them to safety in Libreville, Gabon.

They remained on alert in Libreville in case additional relief flights were needed and returned about a week later to complete the evacuation under more peaceful conditions. A woman who had missed the first flight had sought refuge in the United States Embassy and remarked as to how the efforts of the U.S. service men had changed her attitude towards the military. Foster relates that "she was moved when she saw the Marines putting themselves between the evacuees and the bullets.. We were wrong about you. You aren't a bunch of John Wayne cowboy-type reckless individuals. You risked your lives to take care of us and I love you for it."

Col Foster also used a video to show some of the various missions which are undertaken by the Combat Talons. These included training against Sukhoi SU-27 fighters flown by former Warsaw Pact nations, nap-of-the-earth flying using night vision goggles, leaflet drops, HALO drops, and insertion of SEAL units and their boats.



Lockheed MC-130H Combat Talon II

After his talk, Col Foster answered questions posed by the audience.

In his civilian life, Col Foster has just qualified as a Boeing 767 First Officer with American Airlines and is Safety Officer of Snoopy's Flying Club in Westerly.

Col Foster and two of our newest members,



Michael Herzog and Jakob Schlauder