



Mission for America

*Semper vigilans!*  
*Semper volans!*

# The Coastwatcher

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

website: <http://cap-ct075.com/default.aspx>

Vol. II No. 5

15 February, 2008

## SCHEDULE OF COMING EVENTS

### February

16 SAT Aircrew Training/BCUT  
19 TUE Blues/Squadron Commander's Call  
20 WED Wing Staff Meeting  
26 TUE BDU/Grasso Tech Computer Room

### Long Term Planning

12 Apr-SAT-SAREX  
26 Apr-SAT Wing Convention  
28 Apr-5 May-USAFA Graded Training Event  
10 May-SAT-ACUT  
21 Jun-SAT Wing Rocket Competition  
4-13 July Encampment  
19 July SAREX  
20-24 July AIAA Power Plant Conference

## SEAMSTRESS SERVICES

Betty Allard on Fitch Hill Road in Montville offers seamstress services. The quality of her work is excellent and her prices are reasonable. She charges \$2/patch and \$8 to alter slacks. She may be contacted at 848-0894.

## CADET MEETING MINUTES

04 February, 2008

PT testing was conducted according to schedule.

11 FEBRUARY, 2008

The meeting was canceled due to a power failure.

## PRIZE WINNERS

The Squadron is pleased to recognize the following Cadets.

C/MSgt Michael Molinari has been selected as the Cadet-of-the Cycle for the last trimester of 2007. Sgt. Molinari will be presented with a special award at a future meeting.

Cadet George Barberan has won the last quiz and will be presented with an award at a future meeting. Cadet Montgomery was a close second.

## THE BIG MOVE

A large party of senior members turned out last Saturday in order to move furniture into the new trailer and complete some unfinished projects. Members in the working party were Col. Kinch, Robin and Adam Wojtcuk, Tom Wisheart, Steve Heard, Scott Farley, Justin Allison, John DeAndrade, Bill Dolan, Ed Miller, and Bill Wholean. Cadets also assisted. Participating Cadets were Alexis and Abigail Wojtcuk, John Holt, Jonathan Scannell, and Jesse Brohinsky.

## GRANTS RECEIVED

We are pleased to announce that the Squadron has received two grants. The Air Force Association has given us \$250 to assist us with our trip to the National Air and Space Museum and the USMC Museum.

The Connecticut Friends of the National Rifle Association has given us \$710 to support the wing wide rifle safety and marksmanship program.

## TESTING NEXT WEDNESDAY

Next Wednesday, Blues Night, will involve a moral leadership session and testing. Cadets are requested to prepare for testing by studying required materials.

If you are studying for a leadership test or an aerospace module, go to the following website:

<http://mdlh.hws.edu/cap/modules/index.asp>

Take as many of the appropriate practice tests as possible before Wednesday.

If you have no other plans, the following Cadets should study for the Rocketry Badge. The information may be found in the Rocketry Manual which is on "The Next Step" disc. If you do not have the disc, go to the following website:

[http://www.cap.gov/visitors/members/aerospace\\_education/activities/model\\_rocketry/](http://www.cap.gov/visitors/members/aerospace_education/activities/model_rocketry/)

Click on the appropriate stage and you will find the section of the manual which you should read.

Here are our recommendations for reading in order to prepare for the Rocketry tests::

Redstone Stage (pp. 6-9) Cadets Holt, Andrew Molinari, Roe, Montgomery, Abigail Wojtcuk, Barberan, Dougherty, Gaffey, Wallace, Manner

Titan Stage: (pp. 30-33) Cadets East

Saturn Stage (pp. 56-63) Cadets Alexis Wojtcuk

## ANSWERS TO LAST QUIZ

These answers are courtesy of Lt. Col. Carl Stidsen, Wing Inspector General

1. Mystery Bird: Curtiss C-46.

2. The XB-41 was modified from a B-24D (41-11822) for use as an escort fighter.

Only One B-24D was modified. Double dorsal turrets, twin waist gun mounts. Chin Turret. Later tested with a four gun turret . not a success. Actually less successful than the B-17 /XB-40/YB-40, because of its Davis Wing airfoil, which meant it couldn't carry the load of weapons much past 20,000 ft.

3. High Aspect Airfoil: An early form of what would later be known as a supercritical wing airfoil. Great for cruise, but formation flying was difficult

1.

4. The Granville Brothers built their creations in Springfield, MA, and flew them out of what later became Barnes Airport.

5. The Dardanelles is the strait between Europe and Asia, connecting the Bosphorus to the Mediterranean.

6. The Silver Dart was built by the Aerial Experiment Association (AEA). Though Alexander G. Bell was a member , interestingly the AEA was funded by his wife, Mabel Grosvenor.

7. Willow Grove is in Pennsylvania.

8. Yah Sure. Da countrie of Schweden, das Viggen has built.

9. Edwards AFB is located at Muroc, CA.

10. The original settlers to the dry lake bed , the Corum family , wanted to name the place after themselves, but the Union Pacific, said "Nope, Cain't do it Sonny" ; since another RR Town stop in Sunny Californy was named Corum, and the UP thought there might be some confusion. So, the Brothers simply reversed the name from "Corum" to "Muroc" and got their RR stop and town named. Another version states that the United States Post Office was the agency which rejected the name Corum.

## GROUND OBSERVER CORPS REDUX

The aircraft posted in the last “mystery aircraft” contest was a Curtiss C-46 Commando. The Commando was a derivative of the CW-20, a Curtiss-Wright design for a pressurized civilian airliner. It was the “wall-flower” stepsister to the well known Douglas C-47 Skytrain, born as the DC-3 and known to the Navy as the R4D, the British as the Dakota, and its many admirers as the Gooney Bird.



Curtiss C-46 at El Alto, Bolivia



Douglas DC-3, Southern Chile

The Commando was designed to be a competitor to the DC-3 although it was about twice the weight and twice the horsepower although the much higher fuel consumption handicapped the C-46 in commercial service.

After suffering the usual teething problems of most new aircraft, the C-46 eventually saw service in all theaters of World War II. However, its long range and large load bearing characteristics made it particularly valuable in the Pacific.

The C-46 achieved glory for its role in flying route known as “The Hump,” the India to China supply missions over the Himalayas. As a youngster, I first learned about this remarkable achievement from Mr. Gracewski, my English and Latin teacher who was an Army Air Force pilot in C-46s on that route.

In mid 1944, the legendary aerial logistics expert, B.G. William H. Tunner was transferred from the Ferrying Division of Air Transport Command in order to reduce the horrific accident rate. Over 150 major accidents occurred in the last half of 1943 alone as the aircraft and crews fell victim to weather, the extreme altitude, fatigue, and enemy action. Tunner worked to improve living conditions for the flight and maintenance crews and standardize operations. By the end of the war, the aircraft in use had doubled, personal involved had tripled, the accident rate had dropped by half, and tonnage transported increased five-fold.

When the war ended, the availability of cheap surplus cargo aircraft forced Curtiss to curtail plans for producing new commercial models of the Commando. However, the surplus C-46 soldiered on as a tramp freighter and was heavily employed in South America and Southeast Asia. Eventually, the high cost of fuel and maintenance forced the withdrawal of most of the Commandos and very few are found still flying. Nonetheless, although always in the shadow of the more popular C-47, the Commando fulfilled an important role at a crucial time in World War II.

## WING WIDE TRAINING SATURDAY

The Wing will conduct training exercises on Saturday, the 16<sup>th</sup> out of Brainard Field.

Members are urged to contact Capt Noniewicz, or Major Neilson if you are interested in completing some phase of operational training.

Plans have been made to conduct Form 5 and Form 91 check rides and to train scanners, observers, and SDIS operators.