



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

JANUARY

09 JAN-Gales Ferry Aerospace Festival
13 JAN-BDU-Cadet: A/S, AEX Training
Officers: Safety, PIF Review
20 JAN-Blues-Cadet: ML Training, A/S
Officers: Aircrew Training
27 JAN-BDU-Cadet ES Training

FOR FUTURE PLANNING

TBA APR-Wing DC Trip ((between 10-17 April)
TBA-APR, MAY, or JUN-Rocketry Contest
TBA-MAY or JUN-Wing Rifle Tournament
4-11 JUL-CTWG Encampment
10-18 JUL-NER Staff College
16-17 OCT-CTWG Conference

SEWING BY BETTY

Cadets and Officers who need insignia sewn or uniform alterations may contact Mrs. Betty Allard in Oakdale at 848-0894. Her work is excellent and her rates are very reasonable.

CADET MEETING MINUTES 06 JAN, 2009

The first meeting for the year with 13 Cadets attending was opened by C/2Lt Scannell.

The primary order of business was preparation for the defense of the Commander's Cup in the annual Wing rocketry contest.

The rules were reviewed. First time Cadets will construct an *Alpha* decorated with a Squadron theme. Advanced competitors have four options. They may construct either an historical vehicle and write an essay on its importance, a scratch built rocket based upon a cartoon character or mythological theme, or a multistage or load bearing rocket. Motors may be no larger than B.

The Squadron broke into two groups. One brainstormed possible rocket themes. The second organized and inventoried our supply of rocket materials and equipment.

The weekly historical segment of the meeting noted that it was the 84th anniversary of the birth of *Lufthansa Airlines*. The week also celebrates first flights of the Lockheed XP-80 Shooting Star, developed by the Skunk Works from drawing to takeoff in only 80 days.

The 7th of the month marks the 80th anniversary of the landing of the Fokker C-2A trimotor, *Question Mark*, in Los Angeles following a 10 hour, 40 minute, 14 second flight which was an experiment in the techniques need for successful aerial refueling.

The remarkable crew consisted of five men who all gained fame in future operations in WW II and beyond. Maj Carl Spaatz went on to command the US Strategic Air Forces in Europe, and achieved the rank of full general, serving as Chief of Staff of the USAF.. Capt. Ira "Tooney" Eaker commanded the Mediterranean Allied Air Force, retired as a lieutenant general and was subsequently promoted to full general. Second lieutenant Elwood "Pete" Quesada became a

lieutenant general, became the first commander of the Tactical Air Command and served as head of the FAA and Second Lieutenant Harry Halverson led the first Ploesti mission. Staff Sergeant Roy Hooe, the sole enlisted man, and the genius who oversaw the plumbing installations which allowed fuel and lubricants to be transferred, retired as a master sergeant and was inducted into the Airlift Tanker Association Hall of Fame.

For further details about this amazing flight, you might take a look at Walter Boyne's article, originally published in *AIR FORCE* magazine and available at:

<http://www.dairfield.com/The%20Question%20Mark.pdf>

The current events discussion centered about the recurrence of open hostilities in Gaza and the use of air resources such as UAVs.

WRITERS WANTED

The Coastwatcher invites readers to contribute news and articles.

Cadets Abbiati and Abi Wojtcuk are interviewing two Officers for our "Meet a Senior" feature. Cadet East is researching the Boeing P-12 for the second article in the series, "Golden Age of Flight."

Contact The Editor at srocketto@aquilasys.com for suggestions.

GALES FERRY AEROSPACE FESTIVAL

The Squadron will offer a presentation at the Gales Ferry Aerospace Festival on Friday, the 9th of January. The Festival will feature a number of aerospace activities suitable for elementary school children and is sponsored by the Juliet Long School Aerospace Adventurers Club under the leadership of Mr. Stuart Sharack, a teacher and CAP Aerospace Education Member.

Our table will feature our rocket building program and an information and recruiting station. We are looking for Cadet volunteers to assist. Contact srocketto@aquilasys.com if you are interested in assisting.

ORIENTATION FLIGHTS

Winter weather caused us to scrub two of our three scheduled orientation flight days. Our one successful day was on the 29th. Cadet Dougherty and Cadet Andrew Molinari flew the first two sorties. Dougherty then flew again, with Cadet Michael Herzog on the third and fourth sorties. Captain Rocketto was the pilot. Another set of flights will be scheduled in the near future.



Cadets Andrew Molinari, Pat Dougherty, and Mike Herzog at the last O Flight day

RIFLE PRACTICE

When weather prevented us from flying O flights, the scheduled fliers adjourned to the Quaker Hill Rod and Gun Club and engaged in a session of rifle practice. Cadets Abbiati, Herzog, and Dougherty practiced prone. Cadet Timothy Plourde fired in the standing position as he worked on completing his requirements for the coveted NRA Distinguished Expert medal.

ERIK NELSON REPORTS IN

Former Cadet Commander Erik Nelson was back from the Air Force Academy over the holiday break and has had some exciting experiences. While at Thames River, Erik was Cadet Squadron Commander, earned his private pilot license, and received the Mitchell Award. He was an National Honor Society student at Montville High School and Captain of the indoor and outdoor track teams and the cross country team. His extracurricular hobby was building hot rods.

Erik is now in his third year at the US Air Force Academy. He is majoring in Systems Engineering/Aeronautical Engineering and ranks academically in the top 15% of the class. He just spent a semester as 2nd ranking officer in his squadron during which he was accountable for the organization and discipline of 110 fellow cadets. His current position is Public Affairs NCO.

Between freshman and sophomore years, Erik participated in the parachuting program, completed five independent free falls, and earned his Jump wings. He was also an element leader in a two week combat preparedness exercise.



C2C Bryan Watson, C2C Erik Nelson, C2C Kevin Leroux at Jump School

During the sophomore year, he soloed the TG-10B Merlin glider, the AFA version of the L23 Super Blanik. For the next five months, in addition to his academic work and military duties, he also flew the TG-10C Kestrel (Blanik L-13AC) and became an instructor. Since that time, he has been teaching a special introductory flight program to new Cadets.



Czech Blanik TG-10C Sailplane

Erik still has the opportunity for powered flight. In exchange for flying privileges, he painted classmate Kristin Henry's Piper Comanche which is shown below.



Piper PA-24-250

He has also gained experience in the wider mission of the USAF. Erik has spent time at Shaw AFB, South Carolina working with F-16s, Little Rock AFB, Arkansas with C-130s, and Nellis AFB, Nevada at the A-10 Weapons School.



Eric and an F-16 at Shaw AFB

He has a number of options for the coming summer: a four week deployment to Kuwait, Summer Soaring Squadron Commander of the 94th FTS, or an academic research opportunity.

Erik expects to return to southeastern Connecticut in mid-summer and we hope that we can arrange a session so that the Cadets can meet with him.