



Missions for America

*Semper vigilans!  
Semper volans!*

## The Coastwatcher

Newsletter of the Thames River Composite  
Squadron  
GON  
Connecticut Wing  
Civil Air Patrol  
<http://cap-ct075.com/default.aspx>

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### SCHEDULE OF COMING EVENTS

28 DEC-Orientation Flights  
29 DEC-NO MEETING

#### *January*

05-Cadet Testing/Preparation of A/S Festival  
Senior General CAP Training-AE Instruction  
08-Ledyard Aerospace Festival  
12-Cadet Character Development/Ldrship Ch. 1  
Senior Commander's Call  
19-Cadet AE Mode 5 Part 1/Rocketry  
Senior Emergency Services Training  
22-24-Danielson Bivouac  
23-Squadron SAREX  
26-Cadet AE Mode 5 Part 2/Color Guard  
Senior Duty Briefing-Operations  
30-Orientation Flights

### FOR FUTURE PLANNING

27-28 FEB-CLC Course-Middletown  
27-28 MAR-UCC Course-Middletown  
Spring-SLS Course-Date TBA-Middletown

## ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

22 December 2009



*The Annual  
Holiday Party  
commences under  
the stern visage of  
Commandant Lt.  
Wojtcuk*

The Squadron Wing-Ding overflowed with holiday spirit as 33 Cadets and Officers gathered with guests to celebrate.

For the first time, the Cadets won the Annual Holiday Trivia Contest with their encyclopedic knowledge of the superabundance of commercial movies turned out for the season. One Officer muttered that he would rather lose than listen to Chipmunks sing carols.

A cornucopia of foodstuffs graced our tables; barbecued wings, ham, mad-dog chili, meatballs, cold cuts, and sides were flanked by baked delicacies, fruits, and sweets.



*The Groaning Board and the Ravenous Horde*



*Cadet Hall Displays His Badge of Office As The Spirit of CAP Future*

The usual Cadet gift exchange took place and Cadet Hall became the custodian of the TRCS Bright Light Crown, formerly held by Cadet Herzog. Cadet Hall is now vested with all the rights and privileges of the Office until our next holiday party.

Lt Wojtuck is commended for her efforts in organizing and managing the evening's festivities.

### **NEW CADET PARENT ORIENTATION**

*15 December, 2009*

Lt Wojtuck conducted a thorough Orientation Session for the parents of new Cadets. Many of the frequently asked questions which newcomers to the Squadron have were answered. Some of the topics covered were uniforms, insignia placement, documentation, important CAP websites and critical sections of those websites, Squadron finances, parent involvement, testing, and details of the general Cadet program.

### **CADET ENCAMPMENT STAFF APPOINTMENTS**

Applications are now being accepted for the Cadet Staff at the 2010 Wing Encampment. The application document is on the Wing website under "Forms." TRCS candidates must turn in a completed application to Col Kinch by Tuesday, February 2, 2010.

### **LEDYARD AEROSPACE FESTIVAL**

Cadet and Officer volunteers are needed for the Ledyard Aerospace Festival on Friday, January 8th, from 1800 to 2000.

The Squadron will set up a display, hand out CAP information, recruit cadet and adult candidates, and present a series of aerospace demonstrations. These will include the bicycle wheel gyroscope, the Bernoulli ball, the popper and the blind nipple. Volunteers should contact Maj Rocketto at the next meeting.

### **CURRENT EVENTS**

A TMA-17 *Soyuz* spacecraft lifted off from Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan on Monday bound for the International Space Station. On board are the Russian vehicle commander Oleg Kotov, veteran Japanese astronaut Soichi Noguchi, and Timothy Creamer, a rookie astronaut from the United States. The craft is expected to dock on Tuesday and the crew will join the two ISS astronauts already on board.

### **GROUND OBSERVER CORPS REDUX**

The winner of last week's contest was Cadet Patrick Dougherty who correctly identified both mystery aircraft. Here are the answers which he submitted:

The first aircraft of the two, the top one, has a tail number of N8554Y, and is a Luscombe 8A. This aircraft has an engine built by Continental, the A-65. The aircraft was built in 1946, and is registered to a John A. Laroche.

The second aircraft has a number of X626N. It is an Aeronautical Corporation of America (Aeronca) C-2. The original C-2 was a single person, single engine aircraft with an engine made by Aeronca that had 26 horsepower. The C-2 deluxe had an upgraded engine that had 36 horsepower. From what I have read, these

monoplanes, at the time, could be bought for less than \$2,000, bringing an affordable means of flight.

For his efforts, at the next meeting, Cadet Dougherty will be allowed to rummage through the fabulous chest of trash and treasures and select a prize for himself.

### *New Contest*

Not everything observed by our Ground Observer is an aircraft. Note the picture below and the shirt which is being worn by Cadet Johnston. Now answer the following questions:

1. What is the aviation significance of the French word which appears on her pink shirt?



2. Once associated with that which the French word denotes is an author who wrote the well known fable, *The Little Prince*. Identify the author.

3. The author was lost in World War II flying on a photo-reconnaissance mission. Recently, a claim was made that the crash site was found in the Mediterranean off the south coast of France. I prefer to think, as French school children are taught about another lost aviator, George Guynemer, that our author "flew so high, he could never come down again." Name the aircraft flown by our author.



4. *Luftwaffe* pilots called this aircraft "*Der Gabelschwanz Teufel*." Get a Wörterbuch und translate the phrase.

### **SHAGGY REINDEER STORY**

Some weeks before Santa's big delivery night, the government bureaucrats showed up at his North Pole workshop, court orders in hand and laptops at the ready.

The Equal Opportunity representative noted that Santa only employed Elves, a clear cut discriminatory practice which penalized tall people and filed a negative report.

A staff member from the Environmental Protection Agency noted that Santa was planning on a distribution of bituminous coal to those children who had not been nice. The impact of the burning of soft coal on the environment was explained to Santa and a negative report was filed.

The National Safety Transportation Board official expressed concern about flying in icing conditions, use of short runways, and the carriage of hazardous material such as a Red Ryder BB gun with which one could shoot out ones eye. Santa was presented with a stack of accident investigation reports and a list of materials banned from aerial transport.

The Surgeon-General sent a Lt. Commander from the Public Health Service. He asked Santa to distribute some literature which cautioned people about kissing under the mistletoe during the flu season. He also pointed out that the medicinal use of mistletoe had no basis in current science and that the European variety will cause diarrhea if ingested. Finally, he also warned that the red berries which adorn the holly decking the walls were attractive to young children who might eat them and their use ought to be avoided.

The Animal and Plant Inspection Service warned Santa that the use of his reindeer for propulsion bordered on abuse due to the long hours and rapid accelerations and decelerations which he demanded in order to meet his schedule. A letter of admonishment was placed in his official jacket.

A lackey from the Women's Congressional Caucus probed the conditions under which Mrs. Claus worked and her rate of pay as compared to non-for-profit administrators with similar duties. Using their subpoena power, Santa was ordered to submit time cards and payroll records for the last 90 years.

An Immigration and Customs Agent wondered why the proper paperwork for the importation of goods over the last seven years had not been filed and pointed out that Santa's passport had expired and due to the heavy seasonal workload, could not be renewed until February 29th.

And so, like lemmings heading for the sea, they came on, swarms of Officials, regulations at the ready and pens poised except for one, from the TSA, who just stood around.

By the end of a week, Santa was weakening but the end was in sight with only two more bureaucrats in the line, both from the FAA. The man from the Aircraft Certification Branch said that unless proper running lights were installed, the sled's airworthiness certificate would be

pulled. A single red running light on the nose of the lead reindeer did not meet the standards set by FAR 91.209, para. 1, 2i and 2ii and the *Airmen's Information Manual*.

Finally, the end of the line and it turned out to be an examiner from the Boreal FSDO who pointed out that Santa had neglected to meet the requirements of an annual flight review and he was there to see that it happened. After a short oral examination on some esoteric details of the sled system focusing on braking ability on slippery roofs, center of gravity limits, and grades of reindeer fuel, they walked out to the ramp for the flight check.

As he drew closer to the sled, Santa noticed that the examiner had a short barreled shotgun hanging on a rope under his trench coat. Santa inquired as to why he was carrying the gun and the examiner replied, "Oh, that's because you're going to lose one on takeoff!"

## **HISTORY FEATURE ARTICLE OF THE MONTH**

### **CAP VERSUS THE U-BOATS**

#### *An American Hero*

Colonel Edmond I. Edwards, age 95, Delaware Wing, Civil Air Patrol, went West on the 5th of December. Col Edwards, one of the last surviving members of the Civil Air Patrol Sub Chasers, was a principal player in two of the more notable events in CAP history.

On July 21st, 1942, two Fairchild 24s from (the) CAP's Coastal Patrol Base #2, Rehoboth, Delaware were on a routine anti-submarine patrol. Twenty miles north of Winter Quarter Light, the aircraft crewed by Lts. Harry Cross and Charles Shelfus had to ditch. Their "buddy aircraft,"

crewed by Lts. Carl Verdin and Shelly Edmondson radioed a position report.



*The Fairchild 24s were workhorses of the Coastal Patrol. They were unusual in that they were available with two types of engines, the Warner radial above and the Ranger inline below. They were adopted by the USAAF as the UC-61.*



Back at Rehoboth Beach, the base commander, Hugh Sharp, pilot, and Eddie Edwards, observer launched their Sikorsky S-39 amphibian into the darkening skies to rescue the downed airmen. Once they arrived at the ditching site and Sharp managed to land the Sikorsky in the eight to ten foot swell, their troubles really began. The port pontoon was damaged and the sea conditions made the pickup extremely difficult. With difficulty, Edwards hoisted Cross, who had a broken back, aboard but the nineteen year old Shelfus could not be found and became one of the earliest of the 42 CAP members lost in the line of duty during World War II.

The sea state made takeoff impossible so Sharp decided to try to taxi the 20 miles back to shore. The Sikorsky was shipping water and the damaged pontoon caused the plane to list left so

Edwards crawled out on to the right float in order to counterbalance the aircraft. As the ship wildly pitched, rolled, and yawed, Edwards gripped the struts with all of the strength which he could muster. Eventually, a Coast Guard patrol boat arrived and took the Sikorsky in tow but it was an agonizingly slow trip back to Chincoteague, Virginia. For the next eleven hours, Edwards, exposed and battered by the cold rough seas, maintained his grip and when the plane was finally beached, his hands had to be pried from the struts.



*The New England Air Museum's S-39 is the actual aircraft used in the rescue of Lt Cross. Note the plethora of drag inducing struts, the twin boom tail, and the awkward shoe-shaped fuselage.*



In 1943, Sharp and Edwards were summoned to The White House where President Franklin D. Roosevelt presented them with the first two Air Medals ever awarded to civilians.

Edwards, a North Carolina native, later entered the U.S. Navy and flew the Douglas SBD Dauntless. He remained in the active and reserve military for thirty years. As a civilian, he operated the Fixed Base Operation and instructed at Weimer Airport in Newark, Delaware. His life long contributions to civil aviation earned him membership in the Delaware Aviation Hall of Fame.

### *How It All Started*

The Civil Air Patrol was organized so that civil aviation could contribute to national security. It is doubtful that any of the founders imagined that part of the mission would evolve into a combat role in which civilian aircrews engaged enemy submarines. Although clear signs of aggressive military activity against the United States had been present for years, the nation was slow to initiate preparations for war.

In 1937, Japanese aircraft sank the *USS Panay*, a gunboat stationed in China. After Germany invaded Poland and President Roosevelt's Lend-Lease Program started, U.S. naval vessels were placed on "Neutrality Patrol," escorting Britain bound convoys as far as Iceland. On April 10th, 1940, eight months before Pearl Harbor, the *USS Niblack* depth charged a German submarine during an attempt to rescue survivors of a torpedoed ship. Later, the *USS Kearny* was damaged by a torpedo and lost 11 men while on convoy duty. Finally, on October 31, 1940, 119 men died when the *USS Reuben James* was sunk by U-552. Some six weeks later, the Japanese struck Pearl Harbor and on December 11th, 1941, Germany declared war against the United States. One week later, Vice Admiral Karl Dönitz activated Operation *Paukenschlag* (Drumbeat) and dispatched five Type XI U-boats to the East Coast of the United States.

The country was woefully unprepared for this submarine onslaught. The US Navy only had a few obsolete patrol craft and a handful of inadequate aircraft with which to defend the Eastern Sea Frontier. The US Army Air Force was no better equipped and had no training in anti-submarine warfare. The British suggested a convoy system to better protect the ships and a blackout so that the coastwise traffic would not be silhouetted against the well lit shoreline but their advice was ignored. In the next few months, the small U-boat force sank 23 ships carrying about 150,000 tons of materials and petroleum products.

Seizing the opportunity, the *Kriegsmarine* pressed the attack. In the first six months of 1942, over 100 ships were sunk off the East Coast and the Germans opened up a further campaign along the Gulf Coast. Petroleum stained flotsam from the wrecks littered the beaches and the reek of bunker oil pervaded the coastal air. German submarines penetrated the mouth of the Mississippi River, torpedoed ships off Cape Cod and Block Island, even landed saboteurs on the beaches at Amagansett, Long Island, and Jacksonville, Florida.

### *Necessity is the Mother of Invention and Improvisation is an Adopted Daughter*

The carnage caused by the U-boats and the (War Department's) lack of resources to adequately combat the menace resulted in a request that light aircraft of the Civil Air Patrol be employed to scout offshore and report submarine sightings. World War Two submarines were limited in their ability to sail and attack submerged because their underwater speed was very slow and they had to surface frequently to recharge their batteries. Submarine tactics of the time were predicated on surface attacks and many of them were armed with large caliber deck guns in order to conserve the precious torpedoes. Consequently, the CAP scouting force might be a real asset for the anti-submarine mission. On February 28, 1942, the first Coastal Patrol Bases were activated at Atlantic City, New Jersey and Rehoboth Beach, Delaware. CPB#3, Morrison Field, Palm Beach, Florida, soon relocated to the nearby field at Lantana. Quite often cruising CAP aircraft forced submarines to submerge and lose their chance to score a victory while also directing vessels to rescue survivors or take damaged ships in tow.

In May of 1942, a submarine dived to escape a CAP aircraft and grounded on a mudbank. The aircraft could do nothing to the exposed boat except send a report. By the time armed aircraft reached the site, the submarine had made its escape. Consequently, the US War Department

authorized the arming of CAP coastal patrol aircraft and within a short time, CAP and USAAF mechanics devised methods to fix bomb racks to the light planes and improvised primitive bomb sights. The gaggle of Stinson, Fairchilds, and assorted other aircraft were a fair representation of the U.S. general aviation aircraft of the day. The lighter aircraft were tasked to carry 100 lb. demolition bombs while the heavier aircraft could carry as many as two 325 lb. depth charges. The civilian pilots of the Coastal Patrol assumed a combat role!



*The "Spirit of Lantana, a Stinson Model 105 Voyager, on display at the New England Air Museum, carries a 100 lb. bomb. The aircraft was generally referred to in the Coastal Patrol as the 10A. Adopted by the USAAF, the plane was designated the L-5 Sentinel.*



*Sometimes seen at Coastal Patrol Bases was the WACO YKC-2. This aircraft is now based at Bradley.*

Eventually, 21 Coast Patrol Bases were established stretching from Bar Harbor, Maine to Corpus Christi, Texas. Many of the bases were built from scratch by the CAP volunteers who hailed from 45 different states. Civilian Conservation Corps buildings were disassembled, transported, and reconstructed. Crude runways

were cobbled out from seashells and gravel. Materials were begged, borrowed, donated, scrounged, and without doubt, acquired *via* "midnight requisition."

The pay was minimal. Pilots were given a *per diem* of eight dollars to cover food, lodging, uniforms, and incidentals. A sliding scale down to five dollars per day remunerated observers, mechanics, communicators, administrative personnel, and guards. The aircraft were either purchased or leased from their civilian owners and hourly rates were set to cover, maintenance, depreciation, and insurance. Some of the variety of aircraft used include the:



*Monocoupe 90 on Display at Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome*

*An Old Rhinebeck Rearwin Cloudster*



*The Beech Staggerwing in profile reveals the origin of its name.*



*The Stinson V-77 Reliant sometimes known as the Stinson Gullwing, It was Stinson's Model SR-10 and the USAAF UC-81.*



*The Piper J-3 Cub, now on display at the National Museum of the USAF, carried a 65 HP engine, too little power to lift a bomb but was used as a base hack.*

Wartime confusion and governmental inefficiency often meant that the *per diem* checks were months behind and, more often than not, the volunteers survived on personal funds, credit, and other support offered by local governments, businesses, social organizations, and patriotic citizens. At one point, the Atlantic City contingent were being evicted for non-payment of rent. The District Manager of the Sun Oil Company made the rounds of his service stations, cleaning out the cash boxes, and delivered the funds to the Coastal Patrol Base Commander so that he could pay off the CAP creditors.

### *Coastal Patrol Operations*

The Rehoboth base launched the first Coastal Patrol on March 5, 1942. Five days later, two Atlantic City crews, Pilots Lts. Ivan Culbertson and Benny Benedict and Observers Howard Carter and Edmund Edwards, one of the heroes of the rescue effort cited above, made the first submarine sighting when they spotted a surfaced U-boat, its decks awash, lying in wait to ambush an approaching tanker. When the sub spotted the approaching Fairchilds, the boat's captain abandoned his plans to torpedo the tanker and dived to escape. The mere presence of two CAP light aircraft had saved a ship and its valuable cargo.

The first patrol from Atlantic City went out on March 10th. Base Commander Maj. Wynant Farr

and Capt. Al Muthig discovered a seriously damaged tanker with its crew in the water. The made a position report and CAP recorded its first save.

CAP received credit for sinking a U-Boat in July. Capt. Johnny Haggin and Maj. Farr were flying a Grumman Widgeon off the coast of New Jersey in order to investigate a reported submarine contact. They picked up a oil slick, followed it, and found its source, a submerged submarine. The crew trailed it for four and a half hours. Fuel was approaching the minimal level so they decided to attack. On the first pass, they dropped one of their 325 lb. depth charges and then circled and made a second run. Observation after the second attack indicated an increase in the oil and the presence of floating debris. CAP was credited with the first of its two submarine kills.



*Incongruous in a desert setting, this G-44 Widgeon in Navy colors suns itself at the Pima Air Museum in Tucson, Arizona.*

Over the next year and a half, the Coastal Patrol bases dispatched their single engine fleet into the teeth of the foul North Atlantic weather and shark infested Gulf, searching and sometimes attacking U-boats, locating survivors, and escorting merchantmen. The flight conditions would make the authors of *CAPR 60-1 CAP Flight Management*, tremble in horror. Operational necessity forced flight to cruise at altitudes of 200 and 300 feet 50 miles offshore. Visibility could drop to one mile or less but CAP pressed on. Generally, two planes, each with two crew, were launched on each mission in order to provide mutual support in case of an aircraft going down. Ninety aircraft were lost, many at sea. The CAP

survivors were inducted into the "Duck Club," entitled to wear a blue patch upon which was superimposed a red duck.

### *Disbandment of the Coastal Patrol*

By the late summer of 1943, the industrial might of the United States was providing the active military with sufficient aircraft and ships to adequately guard the coasts and the training organizations were supplying the (skills and) men. On the 31st of August, CAP's Coastal Patrol force stood down. During the course of their activities, they flew nearly 87,000 sorties for a total of 24 million miles and a quarter of a million logged flight hours, sighted 173 enemy submarines, attacked 57 of them, and were credited with sinking two. More importantly, the Coastal Patrol located 337 survivors from sinking ships, establishing a tradition for CAP's future role in Search and Rescue.

Volunteers turned to other tasks. CAP resources were used in the sometimes hazardous task of towing banners which anti-aircraft trainee gunners used for practice. They flew ice patrols on the Great Lakes, maintained aerial watches for forest fires, performed courier service for the military, and maintained vigilance over our southern border for infiltrators. Other members joined the military or worked in the defense industries, flew as Air Transport Command or Service Pilots or returned home to continue their previous civilian occupations.

Airmen who had flown at least 200 hours of overwater missions were eventually awarded the Air Medal. After the war, an effort was made to provide benefits under the G.I. Bill of Rights to the volunteers but this failed in Congress. Nonetheless, many of the wartime members continued with CAP and as the organization changed and matured, continued to contribute their hard work and valuable experience to make the Civil Air Patrol the outstanding organization which it is today.

### *References*

It has been the policy of *The Coastwatcher* to not supply references for articles in order to conserve column space. However, we have always stood ready to supply the needed references upon request. Because this article is so closely tied to our organization, the following list of reference used is provided so that interested parties may pursue our history in depth.

Go to the CAP Museum Website and for a donation, you can order some of this material as well as historical CAP posters and patches.

1. Burnham, Frank A., *Hero Next Door*, Aero Publishers Inc., Fallbrook, Calif., 1974.
2. Keefer, Louis E., *From Maine to Mexico (With America's Private Pilots in the Fight Against Nazi U-Boats)*, COTU Publishing, Reston, Va., 1997.
3. *Introduction to Civil Air Patrol, CAPP 50-5*, NHQ, CAP, Maxwell AFB, AL, 2002.
4. Neprud, Robert E., *Flying Minutemen (The Story of the Civil Air Patrol)*, DVD, CAP Historical Foundation, 2009.
5. The National Museum of the Civil Air Patrol (website), <http://www.caphistory.org/>.

### **A Side Note**

Some of you may have noted that some of the aircraft displayed had CAP insignia but the red propeller was not evident in the white circle. The design was altered to eliminate a possibility of mistaking it for the Japanese national markings, the *Hinomaru*.

The Mystery Aircraft displays the red circle in the national insignia before its elimination in 1941.

