

Missions for America  
*Semper vigilans!*  
*Semper volans!*



## The Coastwatcher

Newsletter of the Thames River Composite Squadron  
GON

Connecticut Wing  
Civil Air Patrol

<http://capct075.web.officelive.com/default.aspx>

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### *SCHEDULE OF COMING EVENTS*

02 JUN-Basic Communications Course  
05 JUN-TRCS Meeting  
12 JUN-TRCS Meeting  
16-17 JUN-Quonset Air Show  
19 JUN-TRCS Meeting  
23 JUN-Rifle Event #3  
23 JUN-CTWG TRANEX  
26 JUN-TRCS Meeting  
23-30 JUN-PAWG RCLS Course  
24 JUN-Pancake Breakfast-WST 0800-1300

14 JULY-Rifle Event #4  
12-14 JUL-*Casa Wojtcuk* Bivouac  
21 JUL-04 AUG-Nat'l. ES Academy  
04 AUG-Basic Communications Course  
04-05 AUG-Westover Air Show  
11 AUG-CTWG SAREX/Cadet Ball  
18 AUG-Rifle Event #5  
22-23AUG-CAP Nat'l A/S Ed Academy  
24-26 AUG-CAP National Conference

15 SEP-Advanced Communications Course  
15 SEP-CTWG Rifle Tournament  
16 SEP-WWI Day at Olde Rhinebeck  
21-23 SEP-USAF Compliance Inspection  
29 SEP-Wings Over Westerly 1000-1500

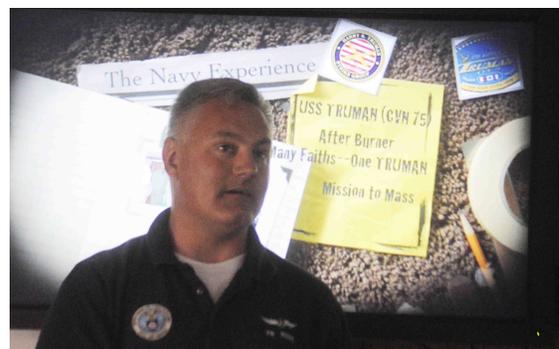
10-11 OCT-NER A/S Education Academy  
12-14 CT-NER Conference  
20 OCT-Commander's Cup Rocket Competition  
03 NOV-Basic Communications Course  
10 NOV-CTWG Conference-Cromwell

### CADET MEETING MINUTES

29 May, 2012

*Fr. Mode's Vaedictory*

After drill, cadets and senior members repaired to the Cadet meeting room to listen to listen to Father and LtCol Mode's audio-video presentation of his past ministry on board the *USS Truman* and as a padre with US military forces in Afghanistan.



Father Mode detailed life at sea aboard an aircraft carrier and in landlocked Afghanistan. He first discussed the various functions of the ship's crew and the duties of a Navy chaplain as a religious leader and facilitator for all faiths on board. During his service in Afghanistan, he was assigned to US Army and US Marine Corps units which involved continual travel and constant improvisations of his temporary "field churches"



*No church too rude. No congregation too small. Mode ministers in the field.*

The Father's next assignment is sea duty. He will report to the *USS George Washington* as Command Chaplain of the carrier's strike group.



*Washington Strike Group consists of the carrier, an air wing, cruisers, destroyers, a replenishment ship and not visible, at least one submarine.*

Father Mode reminisced on his time with TRCS, thanked Captain Farley for guiding him through the blizzard of CAP paperwork, and fondly spoke of his love of flying, especially cadet orientation flights. His last duties with us will be one last set of 'O flights on the first of June. Then departure by road for the west coast and his next home port, Yokosuka Naval Base, home to Carrier Strike Force Five.

**VENUS TRANSIT**  
**LAST CHANCE IN YOUR LIFETIME**  
*05 June, 2012*

Next Tuesday, around 1800, Venus will cross in front of the sun and be visible but only if special

precautions are taken. This astronomical phenomenon is called a "transit" and yields important data about the size of the solar system.

The last occurrence of this event was on 08 June, 2004. The event occurs in pairs separated by eight years. After Tuesday's transit, the next one will occur in 2117.

Historically, some of the past transits were observed by names familiar to you. In 1676, Edmund Halley traveled to St. Helena to observe the transit. Captain Cook traveled to Tahiti in 1769 and set up an observatory at a site now known as Point Venus.

The upcoming event will start around 1800 and visibility will be lost at sunset. Maj Rocketto will set up a 125 mm telescope with a special filter and squadron members may observe the disc of Venus as it passes in front of the sun.

**ANNIE FISHER ACES LAUNCH**  
**ROCKETS**  
*23 MAY, 2012*

Majs Bourque and Rocketto traveled to the Annie Fisher STEM Magnet School in Hartford on Wednesday to assist teacher Rachael Manzer's classes to launch rockets. They were briefly joined with C/CMSgt Jvaughn Joseph from the Hartford Royal Charter Squadron.

The event was part of a Civil Air Patrol ACES (Aerospace Connections in Education) Program, a K-6 initiative which provides aerospace education lessons which enhance STEM (Science, Technology, Mathematics, and Engineering) within the normal school curricula.

Manzer, a CAP Aerospace Education Member and CAP's Aerospace Education teacher of the Year in 2010, directs the program at Annie Fisher. Five classes, four K-2 and one 3-5,

spend one period a day for six to eight weeks studying a range of aerospace subjects such as the parts of an aircraft, the science of flight, wind and weather, space suits, and rocketry. In addition, Manzer is training two other teachers so that the program may be expanded next year.

Maj Rocketto conducted a quick review on the forces of flight and Newton's First Law. Then, Bourque and Rocketto assembled eight launch pads. After a safety briefing by Manzer, the students were shown how to prepare their rockets for flight: folding and stowing the streamers, installing the engines, and inserting the igniters. An explanation of the launch procedure followed after which two dozen rockets were fired, singly or in salvos.



*Maj Bourque assists a student in preparing a rocket for launch.*

Student excitement peaked as the rockets soared aloft. Once they had landed, students retrieved their rockets and a second relay and third relay of launches followed.



*Three Rockets Race Skyward!*

The event was terminated with a cleanup and storage of equipment. The tyro rocketeers headed back to class, chattering about the performance of their rockets.



*Annie Fisher CAP ACES Rocketeers*

## **BOOK REVIEW**

*by*  
*Stephen M. Rocketto*



*The Grunt Padre*  
*by*  
*Fr. Daniel L. Mode*

The Coastwatcher is exploring the possibilities of doing book reviews on volumes of possible interest to our readers. Our first selection is *The Grunt Padre* by Fr. Daniel L. Mode. Father Mode, a LtCol in the Thames River Composite Squadron, is a Navy Commander and has just completed a tour of duty as Chaplain at the US Coast Guard Academy. He leaves in June to assume duties aboard the USS George Washington.

*The Grunt Padre* bears witness to Father Vincent Capodanno's life of service and sacrifice. Scion of an Italian immigrant father and a second generation Italian mother, Vincent

Capodanno was born in 1929, the year of the financial crash and was raised by a pious and patriotic family during the Great Depression and World War II.

When the twenty year old Vincent discerned that his future was in the priesthood, he also chose the life of missionary priest, attracted by the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America, more familiarly known as the Maryknolls. The choice reveals a character willing to face an arduous life in foreign climes among strangers, not all of whom might be receptive to his mission nor his message.

Fr. Capodanno's first assignment sent him to Taiwan. After a year of struggling with a difficult new language, he commenced his priestly duties, proselytizing, training and dispatching catechists, and assisting in relief efforts, while serving as an exemplar of the spirit of Christ.

After six years, Fr. Capodanno returned to the United States and was then assigned to Hong Kong. Unhappy with this posting, he requested transfer back to Taiwan but was refused. After some maneuvering, he requested permission to enlist in the US Navy Chaplain's Corps for service with the US Marines and this was granted.

Although obedient to Church officialdom, Fr. Capodanno exhibited an definite air of truculence in accepting Maryknoll decisions as to his posting. His biographer suggests that this attitude might be attributed both to nature and nurture. Military officers are exhorted to ride towards the sound of the guns. John Paul Jones stated that one could do no wrong if one laid ones ship along side that of the enemy. Fr. Capodanno seems to have subsumed a fundamental Maryknoll tenet: to go to where one is needed. The desire to serve as a military chaplain might have been inspired by the fact that three of his older brothers served in the military in World War II and one, James, was a Marine.

In addition, he also was influenced by a book, *Radiating Christ*, written by Fr. Raoul Plus, a French chaplain in World War I. Plus was a Jesuit, militant ecclesiastics, sometimes called God's Marines. The order was founded by Ignatius Loyola who heard the call while recovering from wounds received in battle. Plus seems to argue that the appropriate path for a Christian is to emulate Jesus and allow ones deeds to influence those whom you serve.

Capodanno's choice of duty with Marines is somewhat ironic. Mode notes that he was a meticulous individual who prized neatness and order and found living in the primitive conditions demanded by the missionary calling unsettling. One might surmise that he saw the rough life of serving combat troops as another challenge and as another opportunity to live the simple ministerial life of Jesus?

During his initial service in Vietnam, Capodanno made a name for himself as a dedicated servant of the troops in the field and became known as the "Grunt Padre."



Then on the fourth of September, 1967, a company of US Marines were ambushed in the Que Son Valley. Two companies from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 5<sup>th</sup> Marines were sent to assist but encountered heavy resistance and soon found themselves pinned down and taking heavy casualties.

Fr. Capodanno left the command post to assist the trapped Marines and was observed rendering medical aid and administering last rites. While with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon of Company M, he suffered multiple wounds including the severing of part of his right hand. Repeatedly refusing evacuation, Fr. Cappodano continued to assist. When he saw a corpsman who was tending a wounded Marine struck by machine gun fire, he ran to assist, interposed himself between the Vietnamese gunner and the stricken troops and was fatally wounded. His citation for the Medal of Honor reads in part, as follows:

*For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as Chaplain of the 3d Battalion...Lt. Capodanno left the relative safety of the company command post...ran through an open area raked with fire...moved about the battlefield administering last rites to the dying and giving medical aid to the wounded...an exploding mortar round inflicted painful multiple wounds to his arms and legs, and severed a portion of his right hand, he steadfastly refused all medical aid...directed the corpsmen to help their wounded comrades and, with calm vigor, continued to move about the battlefield as he provided encouragement by voice and example....Upon encountering a wounded corpsman...Lt. Capodanno rushed a daring attempt to aid and assist the mortally wounded corpsman...he was struck down by a burst of machine gun fire. By his heroic conduct on the battlefield, and his inspiring example, Lt. Capodanno upheld the finest traditions of the U.S. Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life in the cause of freedom.*

Fr. Mode's book is a valuable example of a literary and artistic genre in decline, hortatory exposition. In an age in which the media tends to celebrate the lewd, crude, and vulgar antics of the entertainment

and sports industries, to name two, it is refreshing to read about the selfless service of a Capodanno.

The story of Vincent Capodanno is a valuable teaching tool which presents a paradigm of how one ought to behave. One can find many past examples in fact and fiction: Job, Shakespeare's Henry V at Agincourt, Macauley's *Horatius at the Bridge*, John Wayne's Sgt. Stryker, and George Bailey in *It's a Wonderful Life*, and the passengers on United Airlines Flight 93.

In the *Nichomachean Ethics*, Aristotle argued that virtue, excellence of character, is achieved by acquiring appropriate habits of conduct and these habits are learned by observing the actions of those who have acquired them and by practicing those acts until they become habitual.

Father Mode's *Grunt Padre* is one more contribution to the body of literature from which one can “observe” and thus learn appropriate behavior. The model of Vincent Capodanno will serve us all as a guide to steadfastness, selflessness, and service.



*Fr. Capodanno is named a Servant of God, under investigation for canonization, and is memorialized in a number of locations. One is the Knox Class frigate FF-1093, USS Capodanno. Interestingly, moored outboard of the Capodanno is the Forrest Sherman Class destroyer, USS Edson, DD-946, named after Medal of Honor winner Merritt Edson, Commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Raider Battalion which defended “Bloody Ridge” on Guadalcanal.*

## AEROSPACE CURRENT EVENTS

### *Military Airships Still Live*

Curtailment or cancellation of the Air Force's "Blue Devil," the Navy's MZ-3A, and the Army's JLENS airships seems to spell *fini* for military airship programs but Northrop Grumman has announced that the remotely piloted Long Endurance Multi-Intelligence Vehicle is scheduled for its first flight in early June. The LEMV, an Army initiative, is designed to operate as a surveillance and reconnaissance platform with weeks long loitering capabilities. The aircraft promises to lift over a ton of sensors for a relatively low cost in fuel.

*Northrop Grumman graphic of the LEMV*



### *Solar Powered Aircraft Commences Long Distance Flight*

Solar Impulse, a manned solar-powered airplane, left Switzerland last week and is attempting to travel 1,500 miles to Morocco. The first leg of the proving flight was completed safely when the ship landed in Madrid after a 17 hour flight. Solar Impulse has a 207 foot wingspan and uses 12,000 solar cells to drive four electric motors. They hope to complete an around the world flight in 2014.

*Solar Impulse exhibits it high aspect ratio wings.*  
(École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne photo)



### *Dragon by the Tail*

Space Exploration Technologies Corporation (SpaceX) succeeded in delivering the first commercially flown supplies to the International Space Station. The crew used a robotic arm equipped with a grapple to snag the Dragon capsule and locking it to a docking port.



*Robert Pettit prepares to capture Dragon capsule using robotic arm and grapple.*  
(NASA/SpaceX photo)

The capsule was delivered to the ISS atop a Falcon 9 rocket and will spend six days at the ISS while the crew unload cargo and replace it with materials for transfer to earth. Afterwards, the capsule is scheduled for a parachute assisted splashdown off the coast of California.

## AEROSPACE HISTORY

### *The Second Week of June*

09 June, 1927 - President Calvin Coolidge issues the first executive order restricting airspace. Aircraft are forbidden to fly over Washington, DC during the celebration of Charles Lindbergh's return from Paris after his solo North Atlantic crossing.

10 June, 1942 - The US Navy utilizes a blimp and a Douglas B-18 in Project Sail, the development of the first magnetic anomaly detection system.



*Douglas B-18A Bolo, a DC-3 Derivative and Pioneer MAD and RADAR Platform and Sub Hunter in the Early Days of World War II.*

11 June, 1937 - Reginald Mitchell, Chief Designer of Supermarine, responsible for the Schneider Cup seaplanes and the graceful Spitfire, goes West.



*Mitchell's "Spit" was flown by the US Army Air Force as a photo-recce bird. This Mark XI in the USAF Museum carries the low visibility paint and the markings of the 14<sup>th</sup> Photographic Squadron.*

12 June, 1925 - Daniel Guggenheim donates \$500,000 to New York University to fund a School of Aeronautics, the first of his philanthropic grants to promote aviation.

13 June, 1944 - The first operational V-1 cruise missile is launched from France against England.



*Feisler Fi 103, the Vergeltungswaffe 1 on its launch rail.*

14 June, 1919 - John Alcock and Arthur Brown pilot a Vickers Vimy from Newfoundland to Ireland, marking the first non-stop crossing of the Atlantic Ocean by aircraft.



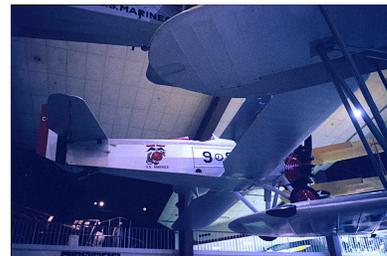
*The Smith Brothers Vimy on Display at Adelaide Airport, South Australia. This Vimy made the first flight of a British aircraft from England to Australia.*

## USMC AVIATION 100TH ANNIVERSARY

### *Marine Biplanes*



*Curtiss JN-4 Jenny at Quantico*



*Curtiss F7C-1 Seahawk*

*Grumman F3F-1*

