

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



## The Coastwatcher

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

300 Tower Rd., Groton, CT  
<http://ct075.org>

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### *SCHEDULE OF COMING EVENTS*

10 NOV-CTWG Conference-Cromwell  
13 NOV-Fruit Sale Ends  
17 NOV-Commander's Cup Rocket Contest  
18 DEC-Annual Squadron Holiday Party  
25 DEC & 01 JAN-No Meetings

### **FRUIT SALE DEADLINE** **ONE WEEK LEFT**

If any additional sales are made after 06  
November, they must be handed in on **13**  
**November.**

**NO ORDERS CAN BE ACCEPTED AFTER  
THIS DATE. REPEAT, NO ORDERS CAN BE  
ACCEPTED AFTER THIS DATE.**

### **CADET MEETING MINUTES**

*06 November, 2012*

A drill session practicing spacing and alignment during different movements opened the meeting.

The second part of the meeting was devoted to an awards ceremony, part of which was carried on by long distance Skype using the voice and audio over internet.

C/2Lt Alexis Wojtcuk was presented with the Air Force Association Award for 2011. She is presently attending Liberty College in Lynchburg, Virginia and participated from her dormitory room.



*DCC Capt Wojtcuk  
reads the citation as  
Cadet Wojtcuk looks  
and listens.*

She was cited for her long term efforts in improving squadron performance. Cadet Wojtcuk received a certificate, medal, and ribbon.

C/Maj Brendan Flynn was presented with a certificate naming him Squadron Cadet of the Year. Flynn was cited for his leadership and commitment to the CAP program.



*The Entire Flynn  
Family, CONUS  
Branch*

Flynn's father, Capt. Paul Flynn, USCG. is serving as Commodore, United States Coast Guard Patrol Forces Southwest Asia and is stationed in Bahrain where it was 0300 local time during the ceremony.

The meeting closed with pizza, cake, and soda.

## SENIOR MEETING MINUTES

*06 November, 2012*

Squadron Commander, Maj Paul Noniewicz, led the squadron in a review and discussion of the on-going Hurricane Sandy damage assessment mission.

The mission opened on Tuesday morning in the Emergency Operation Center at the Hartford National Guard Armory. Maj Jack Shapiro ran planning and Majs Michael Heath, Rui Rodriguez, and John deAndrade served as Incident Commanders.

Weather curtailed flight operations on Wednesday and Thursday but Friday brought good weather and a number of missions were dispatched.

The meeting ended with a critique and discussion of lessons learned and consideration of future steps for improved performance.

## WORKING HURRICANE SANDY AFTERMATH

The CTWG was active in the damage assessment and disaster relief activities after the passage of Hurricane Sandy. Thames River played a major role in Wing activities.

On Friday, Maj Noniewicz worked at the Emergency Operations Center as Air Operations Branch Director. The AOB is responsible for planning air operations, allocating personnel and aircraft resources, and coordinating air ops with the other units working the incident.

Maj John deAndrade served on Saturday as Incident Commander. He supervised three location flights. One of these flights involved Capt Farley and Major Rocketto flying from Hartford to Danbury, picking up Lenny Kimball and transporting him back to Hartford.

Kimball they flew with SM Jim Skiff and Sgt Kathleen Keating, CTNG. Sgt Keating is our local expert on the Geospatial Information

Interoperability Exploitation Portable system. GIIEP, pronounced "jeep, is a camera, computer, and cell phone system designed to acquire imagery which then can be transmitted to analysts for interpretation.

Farley then departed with Coastguardsman Scott Baumgartner and CT DEEP official Peter Zack on an impact assessment flight searching for possible oil contamination due to leaking or destroyed storage tanks. The flight covered the Connecticut River from Hartford to Long Island Sound, the Thames River, and the Connecticut coastline from Greenwich to Stonington. Baumgartner recorded the entire flight path on a laptop equipped with software used by the International Ice Patrol.



*An oil slick in a coastal lagoon.*

Rocketto stayed in Hartford at Royal Charter Composite Squadron headquarters where he answered the telephone, relayed messages, and ate MREs.

The Fairfield component also manned shelters on the western edge of the state.

## AEROSPACE CURRENT EVENTS

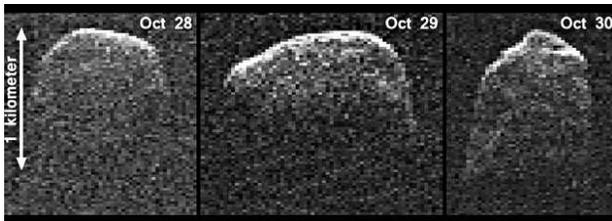
### *ASTEROID RADAR IMAGED*



*(NASA/JPL photo)*

NASA's 70 meter (230 ft) Deep Space Network antenna at the Goldstone, California

facility have secured images of an asteroid designated 2007PA8 which passed with four million miles of earth during last week of October and the first week of November. The asteroid is about a mile in diameter and has a rotation period of four hours. Some surface details were revealed by the radar images and further analysis of the data is planned.



(NASA/JPL photo)

## AEROSPACE HISTORY

### *An Uncommon Politician Uses an Aircraft to “Broadcast” His Candidacy*

Over the last few weeks, we have been plagued with robo-calls from candidates for political office. If you were on a “no-call registry” it availed you nought because those craft devils are exempt from the law. Are you surprised?

Anyway, the “broadcasting” of political messages have run the gamut from pamphleteering to posters to the almost obscene expense of televised advertisement but one of the strangest attempts to place a name before the electorate occurred on 31 October, 1920 in the skies over Toledo, Ohio, home state of the Wright Brothers. Oddly enough, both the Republican candidate, Warren Harding, and the Democratic aspirant, James Cox, were Ohio residents and even odder, neither were involved in the aerial advertising.

On that date, two days before the election, a Curtiss JN-4 “Jenny papered Toledo with a shower of leaflets advocating the cause of Eugene V. Debs, in his fourth run for the White House.



*Olde  
Rhinebeck  
Jenny*

Debs was having difficulties gaining the ear of the electorate in this, his penultimate run for office because he was Convict Number 9653 serving a ten year sentence in the Atlanta Federal Prison. Debs, an ardent socialist, promoter of women's rights and campaigner to abolish child labor had, in a careless moment, publicly advocated that citizens not comply with the military conscription ordered by the Selective Service Act of 1917. His promotion of the illegal act of draft evasion, while the United States was engaged in World War I led to his conviction under The Espionage Act.

Debs did pull in almost a million votes on the following Tuesday but Warren Harding won the election and the spoils which come with victory. A number of his appointees, including a member of his cabinet, were convicted of fraud and bribery and the Teapot Dome scandal is probably the one thing most people remember about his administration. For what its worth, the academic community, historians and political scientists, generally rank him as one of the ten worst presidents.

Harding never finished his term, dying after serving a little more than two years. The putative cause was heart failure but a conspiracy theory developed as to the *real* cause of his death. Are you surprised?

In 1921, before he died, Harding pardoned Debs. The day after he left prison, Debs visited Harding in the White House! He then returned home to a rousing reception in Terre Haute, Indiana. He spent much of his last years

promoting prison reform. In 1924, he was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. Like Harding, he died of heart failure in 1926. His former home is a National Historic Monument and the US Labor Department has named his a member of its Labor Hall of Fame. Are you surprised.

Debs may have been the first politician to use aircraft to promote his candidacy. At least he gave some work to some pilot whose name has been lost to history. Given the track record of political campaigns paying off their debts, we hope he was paid in advance.

### A CONUNDRUM

*More Aerial Advertising*

&

*Who was the best pilot you ever saw?*

Speaking of pilots, a question always arises as to whom is the best of the best, the man who flies higher, farther, and faster, the pilot at the top of the pyramid.

This was the theme of the film, *The Right Stuff*, which depicted the rivalry between the Edwards test pilots and the Mercury Seven astronauts. Near the end of the film, Dennis Quaid, the actor who plays “Gordo” Cooper, is asked a question: “Who is the best pilot you ever saw?” The question was an on-going theme in the film. “Cooper’s” response follows:

*I seen a lot of them. Most of them are pictures on a wall...back at some place...that doesn't even exist anymore...Some of them are...right here in this room and some of them are still out there somewhere, doing what they always do--going up each day in a hurtling piece of machinery, putting their hides out on the line, hanging it out over the edge, pushing that envelope and hauling it in.*

*But there was one pilot I once saw who I think truly did have the right (stuff). Who was the best pilot I I ever saw?*

*Well, uh...you're looking at him.*

But when one really considers what pilot has *The Right Stuff*, has anyone ever thought about a skywriter working the sky over Shanghai?

顶  
好

**Ding Hao**



*North American P-51B Mustang flown by Ace Maj James H. Howard. The markings indicate victories while flying with the American Volunteer Group in China and against the Luftwaffe in Europe.*

### JAMES H. HOWARD



The son of missionary parents, Howard was born in Canton, China and returned to the United States as a teenager. Trained as a navy pilot, he “resigned” his commission and returned to China to join Chennault's Flying Tigers. In 1942, The AVG became part of the USAAF and Howard was commissioned as a

major and ended up with the 356<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of January, 1944, he was leading 50 Mustangs escorting B-17s on their way to bomb factories near Berlin. As the Luftwaffe interceptors attacked, Howard dispatched components of his escort force to defend the bombers. He destroyed a Messerschmidt Bf-110 and in the melee, lost contact with his group. Returning alone to the bomber formation and unable to reassemble his group, single-handedly launched an attack against an estimated 30 German fighters. He shot down three more of the attackers. When his ammunition ran out, Howard continued to feint attacks to protect the bombers. For this action, Howard was awarded the Medal of Honor.

After the war, Howard became an engineer and continued flying in the Air Force Reserve. He retired with the grade of Brigadier General.

### **FIRST JET LANDING ON CARRIER**

Election Day also marked the 67<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first landing of a jet powered aircraft on a US aircraft carrier. The aircraft type was the Ryan FR-1 Fireball flown by Ens. James C. West.

The Fireball was composite powered, having both a piston engine and a turbine. The piston engine was a Wright 1820 radial producing 1350 horsepower and a General Electric J-31 turbojet which turned out 1,600 pounds of thrust.



*Fireball at Planes of Fame, Chino, California*

The reason for the composite arrangement had to do with the anemic thrust of the contemporary jet engines. Although useful at altitude and capable

of producing high speeds, a pure jet aircraft of that day's high fuel consumption and low thrust was definitely unsuited for carrier operations.

The concept developed was to use both engines to get off the deck, cruise on the piston engine, and fire up the jet for additional performance in combat.

The first landing, under jet power alone, occurred accidentally. Ens. West was approaching the USS Wake Island when his reciprocating engine failed. He feathered the prop and got the jet started, landing successfully!

The Fireball reached squadron service but was soon retired due to its many structural faults but it was not the only Navy composite powered aircraft developed.

Another was the Curtiss XF-15C powered by the fabled Pratt & Whitney R-2800 developing 2,100 horsepower and an Allis-Chalmers J-36 turbojet with 2,100 pounds of thrust. Only three were built and the sole survivor went to the Bradley Air Museum but was traded and now resides in Rhode Island at the Quonset Air Museum. The machine at Quonset is equipped with a 2,700 lb thrust DeHavilland H-1B Goblin engine.



*XF-15 at Bradley and Quonset.*



**Note: Ideas for the “Debs and “First Landing” articles came from Historic Wings, a an outstanding website. Go to [HistoricWings.com](http://HistoricWings.com) and subscribe.**