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Bear Facts

The Official Magazine of California Wing Civil Air Patrol



Member Highlights

Bear Facts

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Commander's Corner

By Col. Ross E. Veta, CAP
Commander, California Wing



Dear Fellow California Wing Members,

It has been just over five months since the change of command at the time of this writing. Since that time, so much has happened that it would be difficult to cover everything in this brief message. Members from all over our Wing are working hard together to drive new methodologies, initiatives, and ideas. I will try to cover just a few of the many exciting things that are happening.



For the first time in California history, Cadet Programs successfully conducted a “Super ILP,” integrating a Basic Cadet School, Airman Training School, NCO School and Senior NCO School all in one activity. The Cadet Program Conference just completed was one of the best and most innovative in California history. Cadet Programs is busily moving forward in preparation for summer encampment, having completed Senior and Cadet Executive Staff selections. Cadet Programs is now planning a wing-level event to take place each and every month for the foreseeable future.

Aerospace Education is busily preparing for the world class Aerospace Education and Stem Academy. This event is the only one of its kind in the U.S., and it is growing in popularity.

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ON THE COVER: CAWG's Director of AE, Lt. Col. Roger Dunn, is photographed graduating from pilot training in 1965. Roger went on to earn a Bronze Star, three Distinguished Flying Crosses for Heroism, and 13 Air Medals over the course of 880 combat missions.

High-Altitude Field Training Exercise with Composite Squadron 50

Capt. Joseph LeChuga, CAP

The weather at Lt. Col. Arthur King Composite Squadron 50 headquarters in Modesto, California was a mild 48 degrees with calm winds when we began. Capt. Joe LeChuga and 1st Lt. Mark Day were greeting parents and loading gear into the vehicles as the cadets arrived. Six-thirty seems early for a Saturday in October, but the two-hour drive to our High Sierra campsite demands we leave by 0700.

This High-Altitude Field Training Exercise (HAFTX) at Coyote Meadow near Pinecrest, California was the culmination of this year's Emergency Services training classes and bivouacs for this group of cadets. Our cadet participants were: C/CMSgt Matthew Day, C/SSgt Caleb Riddle, C/SSgt Joshua Churchill, C/SrA Judah Corkwell, C/SrA William Hasket, C/SrA Anthony Hastings, and C/A1C Noah Daniels.



Taking a quick break at Pinecrest Lake are C/A1C Noah Daniels, C/SrA William Hasket, 1st Lt Mark Day, C/SSgt Caleb Riddle, C/SrA Anthony Hastings, C/CMSgt Matthew Day, C/SSgt Joshua Churchill, and C/SrA Judah Corkwell. Photo credit: Capt. Joe LeChuga, CAWG



Cadets string a line to hang food bags to protect them from bears and wildlife. Photo credit: Capt. Joe LeChuga, CAWG

Once all the gear and personnel were loaded and the safety briefing was given, we hit the planned departure time for our cold-weather field exercise right on the button. Although the weather here in the San Joaquin Valley was mild, our campsite in the Stanislaus National Forest was at 8700 feet. The current temperature there was in the low 30's, dropping to the 20's by Sunday morning. The forecast also called for a dry cold front moving through that would bring winds reaching 30 to 50 mph at the ridge to-- right where we were headed.

Once in route, the two vehicles navigated along the county highways as they meandered their way up the Sierra Nevada. Since part of the training was instruction in log keeping and proper CAP radio communications, the cadets were required to use the radios to communicate between the two vehicles and log all communications. Rotating the

radio operator for the required 30-minute check-in ensured all cadets had a turn practicing their radio skills.

Taking a quick stretch break at Pinecrest Lake, we couldn't resist our first photo opportunity. The mountain peak in the background behind us is our destination.

Leaving the paved highway behind, the next 50 minutes was a dusty ride. We crept along at a snail's pace dodging large rocks and ruts, but we made it without any mishaps. The van was parked and the cadets gathered their gear for the short hike into the clearing that was to be our forward command post for the next 24 hours.

The setup of our base began with a safety briefing pointing out environmental challenges such as dead trees, bears, and food storage safety. The cadets were then allotted 60 minutes to establish their camp. They worked in teams to set up tents, hammocks, and shelters. This was followed by a twenty-minute snack break.

The weather was still favorable as the temps were in the upper 70's with a calm wind, clear visibility, and blue skies. After gearing up and checking their wingman, we all set off to the top of our local peak using map and compass, and shooting azimuths along the way.

Up we went breathing heavy, trying to squeeze all the oxygen out of the thin air as we approached 8900 feet. On our frequent stops ascending, Lt. Day enlightened us on the history of the area, pointing out peaks, landmarks, and local points of interest. We proceeded to the top, where further instruction and training on map orientation was given and a group photo was taken.

Returning down the mountain to our forward command post, we took a minute to hydrate and catch our breath before beginning our next task-- building an emergency shelter with the contents of a 24-hour pack. The clock started and the shelter building began. Cadets worked individually, with the time ticking down from the 30-minute time limit. Once all the shelters were built, the instructors inspected and tested them for structural integrity.

We next turned to cooking dinner. Here, the cadets learn how to use gas cookstoves, prepare MREs



**Hiking up to the mountain peak at 8700 feet.
Photo credit: 1st Lt. Mark Day, CAWG**

(Meals Ready to Eat), and why we do not to camp where we eat. After dinner, it's now time to hang our food bags in the trees before relaxing around the fire. As the temps start to fall, we put on more layers to stay warm and settle in around the fire to tell stories under a billion stars.

As the evening continued and the chatter died down, our eyes got heavy. We doused the fire, secured our campsite, and were off to bed to sleep through the cold night. The temperature was now in the upper 30's with a calm wind. But this weather wouldn't last.

The hour 0600 brought darkness, cold temperatures (26 degrees), and a wind of 10 mph. This was the time to start the fire and make some



C/SrA Anthony Hastings inside his emergency shelter. Photo credit: Capt. Joe LeChuga, CAWG

coffee. It wasn't long after the fire was raging that the cadets surrounded it, seeking the comfort of its warmth. The temperature had dropped during the night when the low pressure of the cold front moved in, bringing with it gusty winds of 30 mph. Fortunately, by morning the winds had died down, temporarily.

Breakfast was the next order of business, though staying warm was everyone's priority. With clouds looming to the northwest, and the wind funneling up the valley straight at our base camp, it was decided to pack up camp before we began training.

After clearing and policing our campsite, it was time for today's class in Pace Counting.

A 1000-meter pace-count site was marked off. Each cadet was then sent out at 15-second intervals to get their pace count. Next, in pairs of two, they were tasked to measure and record the distance back to our van parked at the Emigrant Wilderness trailhead. This location proved to be an excellent teaching opportunity as we took advantage of a posted sign which included an area map, wilderness regulations, and instructions on how to be safe in the backcountry. The wind picked up further by 0900. From that point forward, the temperatures never left the 20s as the winds increased.

With the weather worsening, it was decided that our planned hike into the wilderness would



C/SrA Anthony Hastings, C/SrA Judah Corkwell and C/CMSgt Matthew Day warm themselves by the morning campfire on Sunday, Oct. 27, 2019. Photo credit: Capt. Joe LeChuga, CAWG




Group photo with "Big Foot" at MiWuk Village. Pictured are Capt. Joe LeChuga, C/A1C Noah Daniels, C/SrA Anthony Hastings, C/SSgt Caleb Riddle, C/SrA William Hasket, C/SrA Judah Corkwell, C/SSgt Joshua Churchill, C/CMSgt Matthew Day, and 1st Lt. Mark Day. Photo credit: 1st Lt. Mark Day, CAWG

best be left for another day. After a safety briefing and reestablishing communication between vehicles, we loaded up and began the trek down the mountain. It was time to return to Lt Col. Arthur King Composite Squadron 50 headquarters in Modesto.

During the entire FTX, we looked for sightings or signs of the World Champion Hide and Seeker, Big Foot. We finally found him in Miwuk Village where he obliged us with a photo.

Mission accomplished. No mishaps.

The valuable senior member resources for this exercise were Capt. LeChuga, Safety Officer, Certified Red Cross Instructor, and Physician Assistant; and 1st Lt. Day, GTL-Trainee, Project Officer, and ES Officer. 

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First AE/STEM Leadership Symposium Hosted in Oakland

Capt. Joseph Spears, Lt. Col. Juan Tinnirello, and Capt. Karin Hollerbach, CAP

On November 9 and 10, our members were asked to challenge their assumptions about the CAP Aerospace Education (AE) mission during the first ever AE/STEM Leadership Symposium held in Oakland at the new Squadron 188 building. This event was open to all senior members and Aerospace Education Members (AEMs). However, it was designed for Aerospace Education Officers (AEOs), command staff, and cadet programs officers. The goal was to inform our members about the administration of the AE program and to provide inspiring activities that could be brought back to participants' squadrons, schools and communities.



The participants. Photo credit: Lt. Col. Tinnirello

“My primary goal for the event was to get our members to think about delivering our Aerospace Education mission in new ways. In our squadrons, so many of us concentrate on internal Aerospace Education,” said Captain Joe Spears, one of the event organizers. “But internal Aerospace Education is like internal Emergency Services (ES): if one of our planes went missing, of course we would look for it, but that’s not why we do ES. Aerospace Education is the same thing.”

Thirty-six members from squadrons throughout California attended the event, plus two AEMs. Our attendees included a broad range of squadron staff officers, reflecting our members’ dedication to CAP’s AE mission. Attendance at the full event also counted as having attended a wing AE conference for completing Level 3 of the senior member professional development program.



1st Lt Anderson showing data regarding the increase in the number of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) jobs. Photo credit: Lt. Col. Tinnirello

The first day of training consisted of the Pacific Region AEO School. This course, designed by the Region Director of AE, covers the administration and management of the AE program. By attending the AEO School, AEOs can demonstrate all the knowledge requirements needed to earn the technician rating in the Aerospace Specialty Track. This program also covers aerospace awards, grants, and various AE products that assist all our members in conducting external aerospace education.

The second day of training consisted of a series of hands-on AE workshops organized into multiple tracks. The sessions were intended for participants

to experience lessons and subjects that participants could bring home to teach in their own squadrons, classrooms and communities. “When we do an ES mission, we don’t rely only on officers in the ES track to do the jobs. Everyone pitches in for those missions,” said Spears. “Aerospace Education works the same way. Everyone in CAP can do outreach and should have the tools they need to bring AE to their community.”

One of the most popular morning sessions during the AE workshop was on “Design, Build, Fly.” These sessions led the participants through activities that took common, everyday materials to build multiple types of flying model aircraft. The course concepts during this session could be taught to a wide variety of students from elementary school through CAP senior members.

At the same time, students were treated to a full computer lab with Real Flight remote control (RC) aircraft simulators. Participants learned how to pilot RC aircraft, and they learned how to use



The trainees visiting and learning about what the STEM CAP trailer can offer. Photo credit: Lt. Col. Tinnirello



A group of participants building paper planes guided by 1st Lt Anderson (on right). Photo credit: Lt. Col. Tinnirello



Capt. Hollerbach explaining the safe and proper use of the larger quad-copters that CAWG is beginning to use in operations. Photo credit: Lt. Col. Tinnirello

this tool in classrooms to teach everything from hand-eye coordination to forces-of-flight. Workshop students also learned about various tutorials that are part of the software that can be used to assist them in lesson plans.

Some members participated in outdoor activities featuring a homemade hovercraft using a leaf-blower engine on which our adult attendees got to ride, and also a simple design for launching water rockets.

Afternoon sessions included airplane flight simulators, as well as small, unmanned, aerial systems (sUAS). One of the most popular afternoon sessions included a block of instruction that demonstrated two sizes of quad-copters. In Squadron 188’s “drone room”, AEO candidates were able to challenge themselves by flying their quad-copters through an obstacle course.

One of the most unique sessions for this event was offered during the afternoon and covered topics in aeronautical engineering. SM Sherrie Fenton described the Bernoulli Principle and taught students how to build models of a camshaft from a reciprocating engine using simple household materials.

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“Inclusivity, Values and Belonging”

*2nd Lt. Victoria Schneider, CAP
CAWG Diversity Communications & Innovations Officer*

Civil Air Patrol’s core values of Integrity, Volunteer Service, Excellence, and Respect were born out of those adopted by United States Air Force. Since 1999 when they were first instituted, our organizational culture, practice, and aspirations have attested to this foundation. Each member has contributed through their service, individuality and skill. In CAPP 80-3, *Character and Leadership: Applying Core Values for Senior Members*, Chaplain Col. James “Jay” Hughes reminds us that “*Every decision is a core values decision,*” and at its heart, an inclusive culture must communicate respect. Your diversity team’s overarching goal is to be a dynamic advocate for these core values, facilitating both the opportunity for the growth of our members, and a broadening of our external reach.

The commonality of culture described above offers significant scope to drive our diversity initiatives, and in turn strengthen our skill base. Indeed, as early as 1890, an American philosopher and psychiatrist William James stressed that individuals possess a fundamental need for *inclusion* and *belonging*. Furthermore, the research of Pat Waters (Harvard Business Review, Aug 10, 2016), illustrates that this *belonging* must extend beyond the personal context, and be at the heart of organizations if they are to prosper. She considers that without this, all diversity efforts will fall short. Similarly, Daniel Coyle, who trained the U.S Navy’s SEAL Team Six in communication, highlights the importance of *belonging* in achieving effective team cohesiveness. The strategies he observed to facilitate this are not complex, and already are evident within our teams. Should you wish to identify and emulate such strategies, or “*belonging cues,*” they are described as follows:

Energy: Investing in the exchange that is occurring

Individualization: Treating the person as unique and valued

Future Orientation: Signaling that the relationship will continue

With this in mind, your Diversity team, led by Capt. Jenny Lynn Burnett, hopes to build on what is already here. We aim to further strengthen our collective culture and promote inclusivity through initiatives such as the development of educational opportunities, member resource banks, programs, events, outreach, and the fostering of external partnership. Inequalities of any kind are not in keeping with our values and culture. However, if we make “*every decision a values-based decision*” as Chaplain Col. Hughes suggests, an inclusive culture will surely follow. Daniel Coyle (In the Culture Code, 2018) poses a question;

“Why do some groups add up to be greater than the sum of their parts while others add up to be less?”

The answer to this question, while multifaceted, is grounded firmly in a shared culture and skillful communication. The vast skill of individuals within CAP is unquestionable, and when such individuals work collectively, the potential is limitless. This provides the tools to tap into talent from different walks of life, and it encourages members with wide ranging experiences and backgrounds to contribute. This can only serve to strengthen our group culture, the power of which will allow us to be far “*greater than the sum of our parts.*”

“Member Highlights”

Brought to you by your CAWG Diversity team

This is the second in a series of articles highlighting our diverse corps of volunteers in the California Wing. As I stated in the preceding article, “Our greatest strength as a wing is embracing who we are while sharing the same core values and representing the Total Force.” As we profile a CAWG member with whom you may have worked, you may gain a deeper appreciation of their contributions, and of the breadth and uniqueness of the background they bring to our mission.

Lt. Col. Roger Dunn, CAP (USAF, Ret)



Photo Credit: Pilot Training Graduation, Webb Air Force Base, 1965

Lt. Col. Roger Dunn fulfilled his childhood dream of being a pilot by graduating from the United States Air Force Academy and entering pilot training at Webb Air Force Base. He flew 4000 hours as fighter pilot, instructor pilot, and test pilot, including two combat tours in Vietnam and 880 combat missions. He was decorated with a Bronze Star, three Distinguished Flying Crosses for Heroism, and 13 Air Medals. He completed a master’s degree in Research Development Management from the Air Force Institute of Technology. He conducted test missions at the Tactical Air Warfare Center in Florida, and after being accepted by the USAF Flight Test School, chose to serve as a test manager for the A-10A system program at Wright-Patterson AFB.

Lt Col Dunn completed his flying career with the 49th Fighter Interceptor Squadron equipped

with the supersonic F-106 Delta Dart. He retired to join General Electric Aircraft Engines Company in Cincinnati. Lt. Col. Dunn also completed a Ph.D in Organizational Leadership from the University of Phoenix that complimented his passion for aerospace management. He served many years as a professor at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

Lt. Col. Dunn joined CAP in 2007 and achieved a CAP Aerospace Education (AE) Master rating in 2013, enthusiastically serving as Squadron 14 Aerospace Education Officer (AEO) until 2016, followed by Group 5 AEO. In January 2016 he was asked to serve as California Wing Director of Aerospace Education (DAE). Inspired by Colonel Ferguson, he organized the first Wing Aerospace Education Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Academy at Edwards AFB, which continues annually. He innovated the Wing STEM Trailer Program and was asked to present at the STEM for Girls Conference at Fresno Pacific University.

In 2016 and 2017, the Wing was honored with Pacific Coast Region Aerospace Education Achievement awards. Lt. Col. Dunn was awarded three Commanders Commendation Awards between 2015 and 2019 and an Achievement Award in 2017. In 2017 Lt. Col. Dunn was selected as California Wing Officer of the Year and achieved the Gill Robb Wilson award.

He and his wife Linda have nine children, all but one with jobs in STEM related career fields.

Capt. Karin Hollerbach, CAP



Photo Credit: Margit M. Macchia

Capt. Karin Hollerbach recently made history as CAP's first woman Green Flag mission pilot. CAP's Green Flag program is key in providing realistic Predator/Reaper Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) integration into air and ground force battlefield combat training through the use of CAP Surrogate sensor camera equipped airplanes (MQ-1/MQ-9 SRPAs). Capt. Hollerbach will serve as pilot in command during essential mission flights that aid in the training and preparation of Air Force airmen and Army and Marine ground troops prior to their deployment overseas. Capt. Hollerbach has a multi-cultural background that includes being raised in Europe as well as Alaska. She has earned multiple STEM related degrees from universities such as MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and the University of California, and earned her Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering, Robotics and Controls from UC Berkeley and UC San Francisco. Dr. Hollerbach has worked in or with organizations in more than 30 countries and for hundreds of companies and government agencies from all continents except Antarctica (she's still hoping to work on a project there). Her professional interests are focused on developing and implementing emerging technologies. Additionally, she has co-authored a chapter in a book in German. Within CAP, Capt. Hollerbach is a SAR/DR/AP Mission Pilot, sUAS (drone) Mission Pilot, AOBD, PIO, MRO, and a SET evaluator in multiple areas. She has multiple FAA pilot ratings which include instrument,

commercial and seaplane. In her free time, Capt. Hollerbach loves to taste adventure by traveling the world and spending time in remote regions. She recently embraced a mountaineering expedition to Aconcagua, the tallest mountain in the western and southern hemisphere (22,838'). She loves to learn and explore uncharted territory, in both the real and virtual worlds, and finds balance in her meditation practice.

Capt. Jesse James, CAP



Photo credit: C/1st Lt. Jesse James II

Capt. Jesse James joined the Civil Air Patrol in October 2017 and is a member of Squadron 40, Group 7. He served as a Wing Staff Legal Officer and was recently appointed the Diversity Legal Officer for California Wing. During Captain James' CAP tenure, he has had the opportunity to attend two National Conferences and the National Legal Officer College in Orlando, Florida in June 2019. Capt. James is a current CAP Mission Pilot-Trainee who holds an FAA Commercial Pilot License with Multi-Engine and Instrument rating endorsements.

Capt. James' civilian experience includes 28 years as a Los Angeles Police Officer where he retired in December 2008 at the rank of Police Sergeant. Capt. James has been a practicing attorney since June 2005 practicing in the area of Criminal Defense and Family Law. Capt. James has a daughter, Frances, who is a senior at UC Berkeley, and a son, C/1st Lt Jesse James II, who is a cadet in Squadron 56, Group 7.

Capt. Jagger Osseck, CAP



Photo Credit: C/CMSgt Preston Kwok

Capt. Jagger Osseck has been in Civil Air Patrol for almost ten years. A former Earhart cadet at Squadron 3 in Van Nuys, he enjoyed an active cadet career taking advantage of opportunities at the local, wing, and national levels. Capt. Osseck has served within the CAWG Cadet Program directorate in several capacities, including the Activity Director of Cadet Programs Conference, Project Officer for Ultimate Bear and Wings Challenge, Executive Officer and most recently as a Deputy Director for the California Wing Cadet Programs Department. He is a 2017 graduate of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University earning a Bachelor of Science in Global Security & Intelligence, and is currently pursuing his Masters in Public Administration at Norwich University where he aims to culminate in June of 2020. Since 2017, he has worked as a Client Service Manager for Orora Visual, a publicly traded corporation, where he leads a team of representatives focused on providing a customer-centric approach at Visual Communication Solutions. His passion is to provide a platform for all cadets to sharpen their skills, network with confidence, and build the tenacity to follow their dreams and develop their own opportunities.

C/2d Lt. Varsha Penumatsa, CAP



Photo Credit: 1st Lt. Ada Hurst

C/2d Lt. Varsha Penumatsa has been in Civil Air Patrol for four years. She is a Cadet Commander and Color Guard Commander at Squadron 18 in Hayward. She joined after attending an airshow that sparked her interest, both in CAP and in aviation, and she has been a dedicated member ever since. C/2d Lt. Penumatsa has participated each year in the annual encampments and Cadet Programs Conferences, attended several training programs, and graduated from Cadet Officers' Basic Course 2017/2018 ranked in the top ten. She has been the recipient of the Air Force Association Award in 2016, California Wing Cadet NCO of the Year in 2018, and National Cadet NCO of the Year in 2019. C/2d Lt. Penumatsa is currently a high school senior, the Captain of the Speech and Debate team, and a former Hurdler for Varsity Track and Field. She is working towards her goal to become a pilot and is currently in flight training for a Private Pilot's certificate at the Bay Area Flying Club. For more information on C/2d Lt. Penumatsa, go to <https://eagleera.org/2018/11/29/living-an-uncommon-dream/>.



Correction The Winter 2019 issue of *Bear Facts* incorrectly identified the recipient of the Spaatz Award as Lt. Col. Jeremy Jurkoic. The *Bear Facts* article (and the Wing Conference) should have identified the recipient as C/Col. Jacob Jurkoic.

2020 California Wing Encampment 46th Year of The Cadet Training Group

*1st Lt. Jillian Restivo, CAP
Encampment Public Affairs Officer*

Camp San Luis Obispo, Calif – California Wing will hold its annual encampment at Camp San Luis Obispo (SLO) on 2-10 July. SLO has been used for twenty encampments, beginning in 1996. In conjunction with encampment, the CAWG Patrol Cadet Program also hold advanced training for those cadets who had previously completed their basic training.

Last year’s encampment involved 268 first time students, 22 Advanced Training Squadron (ATS) students, 89 cadet cadre, and 79 senior members (full and part time), with a total of 458 participants in total. Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey A. Mueller is the 2020 Encampment Commander, and Cadet Major Rebecca A. Cherry has been selected as The Cadet Training Group Commander. Together, their teams have been working on preparing for this summer’s encampment.

Continued . . .



The Cadet Training Group, Group Run. Photo credit: 1st Lt. Jillian R. Restivo



The Advanced Training Squadron learning how to use an Urban Direction Finder with California Wing Vice Commander, Lt. Col. Gregory Chase. Photo credit: C/CMSgt. Maximus B. Davenport



A flight debriefs after a flight inspection. Photo credit: 1st Lt. Jillian R. Restivo




Group physical fitness. Photo credit: 1st Lt. Jillian R. Restivo

Wing Encampment

Continued

Registration for first-time cadets and returning (ATS) cadets for the 2020 Encampment is now open. Cadet Major Cherry said, “*Encampment is a great opportunity to learn important skills which will build a strong synergy of training for yourself, other cadets, to create a legacy of lifelong relationships, and to provide the opportunity for you to overcome challenges and accomplish more than you ever thought possible.*” For more information on prerequisites and requirements please visit www.cawgcadets.org/enc2020.


Encampment week is impossible without the help of our dedicated senior members. If you have an interest and experience in any of the following areas, and can support the dates of the encampment, we would appreciate hearing from you: Training Officers, Assistant Training Officers, Logistics, Transportation, Mess, Health Services, Public Affairs, Information Technology, Administration/Finance. Interested training officers should contact Major Timothy Albert, Chief Training Officer at timothy.albert@cawgcap.org. Interested support seniors please contact either Lt. Col. Wayne Brown, Deputy Commander for Support, at wayne.brown@cawgcap.org, or Major Christa Cabrera, Chief of Staff, at christa.cabrera@cawgcap.org. 

First AE/STEM

Continued from page 11 . . .

Multiple other workshop sessions were available to students, including virtual reality astronomy and flight simulators. Each session covered a dose of theory, a reminder of how to be safe and legal (especially in activities with “moving parts”), and a large dose of hands-on fun.

Each AEO candidate experienced firsthand how to use all the equipment and material available and how to apply it in an AE setting. Two of the key takeaways for the weekend were that education is collaborative and that STEM is fun!

A special thanks goes to the ten instructors who delivered the amazing weekend of training. 



All the participants and instructors, except Lt. Col. Tinnirello, the photographer. Photo credit: Lt. Col. Tinnirello

Lifted by the Winds of History

Shonto's Bahé Ketchum CAP Squadron Follows in Footsteps of the Heroic Navajo Code Talkers

By Paul South

On the flight line, even as piercing glare bounced off the cockpit windshield of the rising single-engine Cessna, Frederick Fout could see smiles brighter than the early morning sun.

“I was on the flight line when they were landing, and you could see the kids’ faces even as they were pulling up through the glare. . . You could still see the excitement on their faces. And that was amazing. And after they landed, they wouldn’t stop talking forever — and that’s rare.”

The smiles belonged to the cadets of Arizona’s first new Civil Air Patrol squadron in 20 years. Codetalker Bahé Ketchum Composite Squadron 211, named for one of the legendary “Code Talker” Navajo heroes of World War II. Cpl. Ketchum and his comrades distinguished themselves in the Pacific Theater during bloody battles like Guadalcanal and Okinawa.

The Code Talkers made their mark and changed the course of the war by crafting a Navajo language-based code that confounded the Japanese.



Members of Navajo Codetalker Bahé Ketchum Composite Squadron 211 walk toward their assigned aircraft at Page Municipal Airport. Members of the squadron took their first orientation flight over Lake Powell country, which included parts of the Grand Canyon. Photo by Krista Allen, Navajo Times



Cadet Airman Amaris Tracy settles into the cockpit and prepares for an orientation ride in a single-engine CAP Cessna over the Grand Canyon. Photo by Olivia Richard/Cronkite News

The Code Talkers’ story has been immortalized in books and on film.

Ketchum, who died in 2015, lived near Navajo Mountain, sacred ground for the Navajo Nation and located near the school. The sacred peak’s Navajo name, Naatsis’a’a’n, means “Head of the Earth.”

Fittingly, the young pilots-to-be flew over Navajo Mountain and the Grand Canyon, also sacred ground for the Navajo, as well as the kids’ own homes.

Formed in 2018, the squadron is the result of collaboration between Fout, then principal at Shonto Preparatory School, the school superintendent and school board, and the community.

“When I was hired there by the board and accepted by the board, one of the board members expressed an extreme interest in having this for their kids,” said Fout, now the head of school at Sarasota Military Academy in Florida. He served K-8 students at Shonto Prep for three years.

“At first, they were just looking for some kind

of military-type service opportunity for the kids, like an ROTC or something like that,” Fout said. “And through my research, Civil Air Patrol was the one that was most successful to us, primarily because it addressed a wider range of kids. It goes all the way down to sixth grade. Junior ROTC programs don’t start until they’re in high school.

“That was one of the real draws of the program,” he said. “We were able to include more kids and start at a younger age. Plus the fact that the CAP was completely volunteer, whereas the JROTC program requires that you actually hire an employee — retired military personnel — to lead the group.”

The CAP aerospace curriculum also dovetails with Shonto Prep’s STEM curriculum — science, technology, engineering and math. While teaching young people to fly is the exciting sizzle of CAP’s cadet mission, education is the meat.

“The great thing about the CAP is it lent very nicely to our desire to open our kids’ minds to careers that had something to do with science and technology, engineering and math,” Fout said.

“The curriculum that comes along with Civil Air Patrol is just spectacular. The kids had a lot of hands-on activities to do, dealing primarily with aerospace engineering. The aerospace education portion of the Civil Air Patrol was an excellent addition to our curriculum.

“When I see these kids doing some of these STEM projects based on the aerospace curriculum, they’re learning physics,” he said. “They’re learning things that are applicable across the board everywhere. And they’re learning it in a fun way.

“It’s really an opportunity for the kids to open their eyes to careers and possibilities that for a kid living in a rural area or on a reservation may never have come up before.”

The Ketchum squadron also opens another chapter in the proud Navajo heritage of military service to the U.S., embodied in not only the Code Talkers but also generations of the Navajo Nation. During his time in Shonto, Fout saw a strong veteran presence.

“There’s really a great deal of pride in the Navajo Nation, within the people for that concept of service to country. They take a lot of pride in that history of the Code Talkers. The kids see that, not



Members of the squadron are briefed by Capt. Russ Miller before they head out on orientation flights. Photo by Krista Allen, Navajo Times

so much as an opportunity, but something [they’re] supposed to do,” Fout says. “[The attitude is] ‘It’s what my father did. This is what my grandfather did. This is what we do.’ ”

One of the Shonto members, Cadet Airman Tymicus Yazzie, embodies the spirit that lives in the hearts of the Navajo.

“I want to serve like those before me,” he told Cronkite News last year in a story broadcast by Arizona PBS. “One day, it will be my turn.”

Tymicus’ mother, Ferleighshea Yazzie, understands the tribe’s treasured legacy of duty, honor and country.

“The Code Talkers are individuals of great honor for our tribe,” she told Cronkite News. “To have my son be part of that legacy — wow, it makes my heart want to burst with happiness.”

Since Civil Air Patrol is the U.S. Air Force auxiliary, involvement as a cadet opens greater opportunities within the military.

“It’s a great opportunity in expanding their education in STEM, but it also has a great character development program within it,” Fout said. “And, with CAP being an auxiliary of the Air Force, it’s viewed similarly to the JROTC. So when a cadet goes through CAP and earns those ranks, that can transfer over to greater opportunities when they get into military service.”

The impact of the Bahé Ketchum squadron has reached quickly across the Navajo Nation.

“I know that it is recognized as something positive for the youth of the Navajo Nation. It’s definitely appreciated. Since the inception of the

squadron we've had requests by the Navajo Nation and different organizations to do color guards and things like that. It's also a great opportunity for the kids to stand up and shine and show how they are having a positive impact within the Navajo Nation," Fout said.

He added, "I know within the school itself and for the community around the school, it's definitely had a positive impact in that there's something else that maybe a kid who doesn't excel at athletics or (isn't) academically gifted has perhaps found a niche in this. It's another opportunity for kids. And it's not just on reservations. Kids anywhere that aren't blessed with privilege could benefit from a program like this."

Even now, nearly 3,000 miles from Shonto, Fout, as a member of the U.S. Army Reserve and a veteran of the war in Afghanistan, feels the impact of the Bahé Ketchum squadron, and not just on the flight line.

"Even when they post colors, for a person like me, or the veterans that are there, you can't explain that. It's pretty special."

When the Bahé Ketchum squadron was born, Fout and his wife, Gerlie Alicando Fout, were the only non-Native Americans involved. Now the unit is completely Navajo-run.

The squadron wasn't the result of one person's efforts, Fout said.

"I was just that one person in the right place at the right time. We gave people the green light, and they ran with it. The support from the parents, the support from the superintendent and the school board, and the way the community opened their arms and said, 'Yes, we love this,' has been fantastic. If it goes on for however long it goes on, it will be because of them."

He added, "They're going to do great things with it, because they believe in it."

In its short history, the squadron has opened the world to the Navajo and the Navajo to the world, building bridges of understanding. For Fout, that's something to cherish.

"I would want people to fall in love with kids doing something they didn't know they could do and having dreams. This kind of opportunity really does that for them." ★


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Commander's Corner

Continued from page 1

AE is also working on new ways to bring AE to more people—making it more exciting and present.

Emergency Services and Operations have been busily working towards supporting the new Wing vision to make California Wing the premier Disaster Preparedness, Prevention, and Relief organization in America. We introduced our new vision in September, and shortly after that National Headquarters and many of our partners and customers, including CAP-USAF, announced their intentions to do the same. California is leading the way in developing our ground and air resources in innovative ways with new partners and customers. We are moving forward with Cal OES to get all of our members CERT qualified. We are in discussion with the California Guard to develop a working partnership with the goal of providing disaster relief resource stations in time of need. We are expanding our Drone program with more state-of-the-art aircraft. We are developing technology to provide real time data transmittal from aircraft. This is just to name a few.

The point is, we are succeeding together already in achievement of our new shared vision. We are growing through innovation. We are growing through cooperation. We are growing through enthusiasm. We have momentum, and it is so exciting. Let's all grow this great momentum while we continue to grow our Wing. Thank you for all you do: you are an inspiration. 



Launching in 3-2-1

Capt. Mike Hamnquist, CAP

On a cool, crisp, Southern California morning, cadets from Skyhawks Composite Squadron 47 enthusiastically count down “3-2-1” and a mass of rockets soar into the cloudy sky.

The cadets have been working on the rocketry program under the watchful eyes of C/Capt Nathan Bierle, Squadron 47 Aerospace Education Officer (AEO). Capt. Bierle started the rocketry course back in October 2019 with the introduction to Redstone, Stage 1. Compressed air paper rockets, Goddard rockets, fizzy rockets, trash rockets and ultimately the Alpha. After an in-house written test had been administered, the cadets were ready to launch.



Group picture. Front row from left - Cadet Sririshi Reddy, C/SrA Vaughn Thomas, C/Amn Hayaat Asiedu, C/A1C Kyan Dang. Back row from left - Cadet Ryder Zook, C/Amn Anna Nunez, Glenn Pohly, C/Capt Nathan Bierle, C/MSgt Jayden Murray, C/A1C Drew Barnard, Cadet Graham Mason, C/A1C Camryn Kendrick. Photo credit: Capt. Mike Hamnquist

Our partner for the big day was the fantastic group from the Palomar RC Flyers in San Marcos, California. A caravan of vehicles rolled up the dirt road at 7 a.m. to find 8 launch pads ready to be used. After a short safety brief, the first group of cadets eagerly awaited the “Go For Launch!” Eleven cadets, three seniors, and seven parents, plus three members of the Palomar RC Flyers, enjoyed three hours of

exciting, high flying, fun. The cadets completed over 70 launches, and underwent some interesting retrieval scenarios.




Launch pads set out for rocket mounting. Photo credit: Capt. Mike Hamnquist



Tailgate display provides a training opportunity, as well as deployment organization. Photo credit: Capt. Mike Hamnquist



Cadets take stock of the day's launch materials. From the left - Cadet Graham Mason, Cadet Sririshi Reddy, C/Capt Nathan Bierle, C/SrA Vaughn Thomas, C/A1C Kyan Dang. Photo credit: Capt. Mike Hamnquist

After many hours of location and logistics planning by Squadron 47, the day was great! Thanks to all! 

“Operational Readiness through Preparedness”

Group 7 SAREX/DREX

Capt. Rick DeMartino, CAP

On February 23, 2020 Southern California Group 7 hosted a Damage Assessment Exercise (DREX) with the focus on aerial photography (AP) and coordinating with CAP ground teams.

The DREX mission base was established at Fullerton Municipal Airport in Fullerton, home of CAP Senior Falcon Squadron 40. Major Craig Newton functioned as the Incident Commander (IC). Lt. Col. Eric Krause was the Planning Section Chief, Captain David Powell was the Operations Section Chief, Captain Dan Balderson served as the Air Operations Branch Director, Major James Bertz was Ground Branch Director, Lt. Col. Scott Dineen was Safety Officer, Major Jeffrey Goeggel was Public Information Officer, and Captain Rick DeMartino was the Project Officer for the event.

Single engine aircraft crews conducting emergency services (ES) in rural and remote areas remains a core CAP mission. Demand for ES services, including search and rescue, disaster relief, and aerial reconnaissance will only increase as our customers and partners call upon us for assistance. However, even with the ever-emerging technologies in CAP aircraft, flying those sorties in urban areas of Southern California can be challenging. This training exercise was tailored for mission air and ground teams to hone their skills as crews coordinating with each other in a challenging disaster relief environment. These advanced skills are intended to ensure the safe and successful outcomes at subsequent actual missions. Accordingly, aircrews and ground teams, along with aerial photographers from around the California Wing participated in the exercise.

The first day, the exercise was delayed by rain as the flight and ground crews were chal-



Mock crash site with Orange County Sheriff's UH-1 "Duke-6" rescue Helicopter overhead.

lenged with Instrument Meteorological Conditions at Fullerton Airport and throughout the Los Angeles basin. Although this created some delays, the aircrews and ground teams rose to the occasion and planned safe sorties for the following day. Several AP scenarios were planned with last minute re-tasking of the aircrews to measure flexibility and adaptability-- the hallmark of the day.

A training highlight occurred when a “Black Hat” wrinkle was introduced into a scenario: an aircraft on an AP sortie was re-tasked to search for a possible downed aircraft. The mock crashed aircraft was found by the CAP aircrew; however, technical issues with the aircraft precluded the mission observer from communicating over the radio. The aerial photographer in the back seat was able to step in and coordinate communications with the ground team, which was summoned for a simulated rescue of a downed pilot. The ground team was directed to the crash site and, through coordination with the mission base, the Orange County Sheriff’s UH-1 “Duke-6” rescue helicopter responded. “Duke-6” first simulated medical treatment of the victim (a life-size mannequin), and then actually extracted and airlifted the victim in a medevac simulation.



Mock aircraft crash as seen by the CAP aircraft overhead.



“Duke-6” extracting rescue deputy during simulated medevac of pilot.

To say Major Newton was a busy IC at the mission base would be an understatement, as he provided leadership and guidance. Planning such an activity takes considerable effort to coordinate all the logistics involved. Implementing the training takes creativity and patience as well. Lt. Col. Eric Krause is no stranger to organizing emergency services training, particularly training associated with CAP flight operations. He has been involved in numerous training exercises, including Mission Aircrew Schools and numerous search and rescue exercises. The skills of Lt .Col. Krause and his team were proven by the results.

Special appreciation is extended to Master Sergeant Rob Dimel of California Wing for coordinating the logistics and coordination with the Project Officer, Ground Team, and Orange County Sheriffs.

A total of 49 members signed up for the single day event. This level of member participation, particularly from Group 7, is indicative of a commitment to proactivity and excellence for which they have been regularly recognized.

Congratulations to those in attendance that were able to advance their training efforts into new qualifications.

As the Civil Air Patrol continues at the group level to forge alliances with local and state agencies and national customers such as the Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency, CAP members are striving to maintain a strong level of operational readiness through preparedness. 