



## “THE SKYCHASER”

South Dakota Wing Electronic Newsletter for October 2015

*Official Auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force - Citizens Serving Communities: Above and Beyond*

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### WING TIPS

- ***GLIDING IN MINNESOTA***: By Capt. Neil Schmid. It was a great day for flying for the Sioux Falls Composite Squadron on Saturday, 17 October. A fortuitous confluence of events led to the availability of two Sioux Falls based SDWG aircraft, a MNWG glider, six cadets and several senior members for a day of powered orientation flights and gliding over the Mankato Minnesota countryside.

Getting from Sioux Falls to Mankato was half the fun. Lt. Jerry Hayden was pilot in command and orientation pilot for Cadet Kyle Clement, with Cadets Taylor Moyer and Kyle Kreger as backseaters in the squadron’s new Cessna-172 “GlassHawk”. This aircraft features state of the art Garmin G500 and GTN650 “glass” cockpit instrumentation and navigation systems. Capt. Neil Schmid piloted the squadron’s Cessna-182 G1000 equipped aircraft and was the orientation pilot for Cadet Nick Nash. This was Nash’s final powered orientation flight, which covered aviation topics such as weather, compensating for wind by crabbing, wake turbulence avoidance, and how climb rate is affected by temperate and altitude. Back seat flyers were Cadets Max Moline and Robert Boecker.

Once the crews landed at Mankato at 1130, an initial introduction to gliders was given by MNWG Maj. Carl Hallum. After pre-flight checks the glider was moved to Mankato’s long grass runway. Then the Cessna-172 tow-plane underwent pre-flight checks. This aircraft has a special “climb” propeller and flying it is somewhat tricky because the difference between the stall speed of the Cessna and the maximum speed of the glider isn’t all that great. This was Capt. Schmid’s first time as a tow-pilot trainee and at the conclusion of seven glider tows he was getting the hang of it.

The gliders were towed to an altitude of 2,500 feet and released. The glider remained aloft for about 15 minutes for each flight. The glider was flown by orientation pilot MNWG Capt. William Pagel and he successfully

mentored SDWG Cadets Kreger (glider flight #3), Moyer (glider flight #1), Boecker (glider flight #1), Clement (glider flight #1 & 2), Moline (glider flight #1), and Nash (glider flight #3). Under the CAP Orientation Flight Program each cadet is entitled to five powered orientation flights and five glider flights. It was a cool day and by the end of the glider flights pilot Pagel was a bit chilly because the glider is drafty and without a heater.

On the way home, Lt. Hayden piloted the Cessna-182 with Cadet Boecker at the controls and Capt. Schmid piloted the Cessna-172 with Cadet Moyer receiving his third powered flight experience. Everyone was smiling at the end of the day with the great experience of flight Thanks to Lt. Col. Greg Lair for herding the cats on this one and to Lt. Jerry Hayden for coordination on the ground.

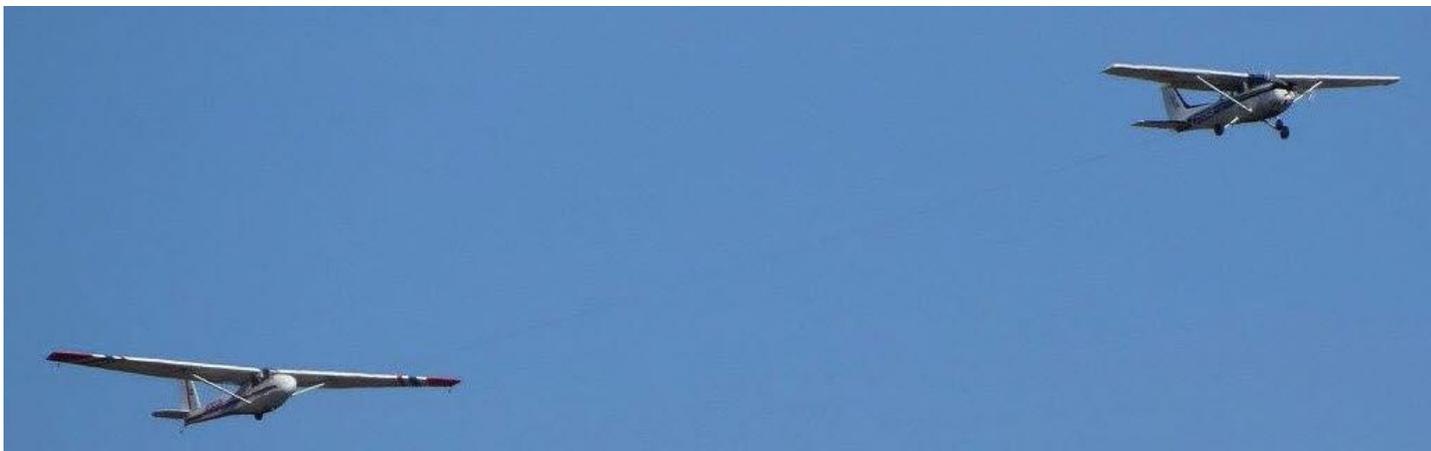


**SIOUX FALLS AVIATORS: CAPT. SCHMID, LT. HAYDEN, CADETS KREGER, MOYER, BOECKER, CLEMENT, MOLINE AND NASH**



**L-R: C/LT NICK NASH, C/MSGT ROBERT BOECKER, C/MSGT MAX MOLINE AND CAPT. NEIL SCHMID**

# GLIDER FLIGHT OPERATIONS





- **AERIAL WILDLIFE SURVEYS:** SDWG flew eight aerial surveys of terrestrial wildlife over seven days in October in support of the state Department of Game, Fish & Parks and South Dakota State University. GF&P surveys deer, goats, mountain lions, and elk while SDSU surveys elk, bobcats and big horn sheep. The result was 19.9 hours flying over western South Dakota and the Black Hills. The CAP pilot for the sorties was Lt. Col. Gary Hewitt. Depending on whom the sortie supported they were accompanied by one or more representatives from SDSU or from Game, Fish & Parks.

- **EXPANDED POWDER RIVER COMPLEX OPENS FOR TRAINING:** By Arie Church. The Air Force recently opened the expanded Powder River Training Complex to military flight operations and plans to host its first large-scale training exercise there early next month, officials announced. Powder River is now the largest training airspace in the Continental United States, spanning 35,000 square miles over the Dakotas, Montana, and Wyoming, to provide nearby bases with closer training areas. The expanded sectors are limited to 10 days of use each year, and large-forces exercises in these sectors are restricted to no more than three days at a time, every three months, according to the Nov. 2 release. The Federal Aviation Administration updated civil aeronautical charts and cleared the Air Force to begin military training flights in the new sectors on Sept. 17, and the first large-force exercise is planned for Dec. 2-3, according to officials at Ellsworth AFB, S.D. The expanded range specifically provides training space for Air Force Global Strike Command bombers based at neighboring Ellsworth and Minot AFB, N.D.

Source: Air Force Magazine, Daily Report, Thursday, 5 November 2015

- **WEBINAR WEBSITE:** NHQ has established a website for Ops Training Webinars. It has downloads from past ops webinars: [www.capmembers.com/emergency\\_services/operations\\_support/education\\_and\\_training/operations-training-webinars/](http://www.capmembers.com/emergency_services/operations_support/education_and_training/operations-training-webinars/)

- The new “CAP Vector”, a quarterly, online news/information tool designed to get the word out on CAP initiatives, events and programs is at: [www.capmembers.com/cap\\_national\\_hq/cap\\_vector\\_staff\\_updates/](http://www.capmembers.com/cap_national_hq/cap_vector_staff_updates/).

- The digital Oct-Dec 2015 issue of *Volunteer* is at [www.capvolunteernow.com/cap\\_volunteer/](http://www.capvolunteernow.com/cap_volunteer/). Just click on the *Volunteer* cover or the link under the cover. In addition to the story about an Air Force grant that helped disadvantaged cadets attend CAP encampments nationwide, the E-edition of the *Volunteer* includes CAP’s response to historic flooding in Texas, Oklahoma and Missouri earlier this year. In addition, there is coverage of CAP’s efforts to improve pilot proficiencies and promote aerospace education through the use of STEM Kits. Be sure to check out the videos on pages 8, 19, 38 and 44.

## STAFF NOTES



### **WING COMMANDER**

Col. John Seten, CAP

A while ago I announced a Wreaths Across America contest. The WAA program is endorsed by the CAP and is a great way to honor our fallen veterans and get involved with our communities. More information can be found at [www.wreathscrossamerica.org](http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org). This fundraiser is a great way to put some money into your unit’s bank account, honor fallen veterans and get involved with your community.

The SD Wing will reward participating squadrons as follows:

- The squadron selling the most wreaths in the program will receive \$500
- The squadron selling the second most wreaths in the program will receive \$300
- The squadron selling the third most wreaths in the program will receive \$250
- The remaining participating squadrons will receive \$100 each

In order to receive any of the awards from Wing the squadrons will have to sell a minimum of 100 wreaths. The contest will end on 30 November.

I wish you all a great selling season and am excited to see the results.

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## **WING DIRECTOR OF CADET PROGRAMS**

Lt. Col. Linda Buechler, CAP

Big Sioux Composite Squadron in Brookings is one of two units selected by North Central Region to attend the National Cadet Competition in December 2016. Each Region HQ has the opportunity to send two squadrons in their Region for the competition. Wing Directors of Cadet Programs were asked to notify their Wing's units so they could decide if they wish to attend. Big Sioux is the only squadron that responded positively. I notified the NCR DCP and was informed a Minnesota Wing squadron had also requested to attend the competition. Congratulations Big Sioux Composite Squadron on your selection. We wish you well!

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## **WING HISTORIAN**

Maj. Todd Epp, CAP

- The new "Wing History" section of the wing website continues to evolve. An NHQ order dated 1 October 1942 that created the CAP cadet program has been added to the "History" category as have two photos of Sioux Falls cadets probably taken in 1946 at the Sioux Falls Airport. The red box in the photos shows Cadet Walter Wilson, whose family will soon receive the Congressional Gold Medal for his CAP WWII service. A revised list of South Dakota Wing units has been added to the "Genealogy" category, and the patch for the Sioux Falls Cadet Squadron has been added to the "Heraldry" category. The Wing History section is part of the celebration of CAP's and concurrently South Dakota Wing's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2016. All three sections are works in progress. If anyone has a suggestion as to a document to be added to the "History" section; some new, amplifying or correcting information on former SDWG units for the "Genealogy" section; or information on patches for the "Heraldry" section, please contact a member of the Wing Historical Staff.

- South Dakota Wing - anticipate CAP's 75th Anniversary in 2016! Chaplain Rae has obtained six small sized WWII Uniforms, including Eisenhower coats in both Army and US Air Force 1950's blues, summer khaki shirts, two covers and khaki service coat/utilities. All are best suited for smaller cadets who want to be part of displaying CAP uniforms from that era. Any units that wish to make use of these uniforms, which still need to be completed, should contact Chaplain Lt. Col. Rae at [gwrae@juno.com](mailto:gwrae@juno.com). The wool uniforms have been dry cleaned and pressed; cotton uniforms have been wash and ironed. Now is the time to begin planning your local

celebrations in anticipation of our upcoming Wing Conference! Vanguard has available patches and devices such as wings, CAP shoulder patches and more at [www.vanguardmil.com/collections/cap-historical-insignia](http://www.vanguardmil.com/collections/cap-historical-insignia)

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## **WING ADMINISTRATOR**

Ms. Rachel Kuecker

October was Breast Cancer Awareness month. No one is more aware than I am. This month has always been awareness month, and with a sea of pink everywhere it is hard to overlook. I think everyone is “aware” but when you are the one fighting for your life – aware is just not enough.

I have recently joined an organization no one ever plans to join. No one ever volunteers to join it, but it is a very sincere, family oriented group and we are all trying to save lives. We are suddenly members trying to save and support our own lives. I have joined a breast cancer sisterhood of fighters.

Some of you know and some of you may not know. I was recently diagnosed with breast cancer. This was a huge shock as I suppose it is to anyone who hears this news. I have no family history and I am young. I have an 8 year old and an 11 year old. Cancer? Are you sure?

Breast cancer is not a find that I wish to have on my resume. But it is there and I feel as if I must share that awareness is not always fool proof. I did the right things, I had my yearly mammograms, I may not exercise or eat right all the time, but I tried. Still, like being swept away from a flash flood, I was suddenly helpless and in need of being saved. I wish I could have “found” this lump earlier. Mammograms don’t always find or see what we can feel. So my public service announcement and safety report for the month is: Do your monthly exams. Get checked out and report anything that is not right to you. Request an ultrasound and find out if you have dense tissue. It could have helped me find this earlier, if only I had only known. The other tip I have is that – I had absolutely none of the symptoms that I read were cancer. I just had a lump. So protect yourself and never, ever ignore anything new even if it is not “textbook”.

Well that was in August. Since then I have had four sessions of the first round of chemotherapy. Due to the size of my tumors and the type of cancer (triple negative, stage 3) I will need to undergo an aggressive treatment plan. I have opted to do my treatment in Sioux Falls vs. Rapid City due to the availability of a “team” of care that I cannot receive here. In November I start a new round of chemo for 12 weeks. So if you ever want to stop by and say hi. I welcome it. Col. Seten and Capt. Erickson have both been by for a visit.

I planned all along to continue to work after all “how hard could it be?” I thought. Well as it turns out – it is



very hard. Some days are worse than others of course. I am still working, but I would not be without the help of our Wing Commander and Director of Finance who have both stepped in and taken over so many of the behind the scene items. They got a fast lesson in wing banking. In addition we are blessed to have the help of a former Wing Administrator who has returned. Some you may remember Mrs. Terrie Thurston. She ran the wing a long time ago, got married and left, but has returned and has already helped me clean off my desk and get my files organized, so between Terrie, Col. Seten, Capt. Sylvia Small and so many more that I fail to mention here, but who I name in my heart. I hope to keep things as

seamless as possible. My e-mail still gets read and the payments still go out, I just need a little more time and patience for some things. In an effort to keep work as normal as possible and to keep family and friends aware I have created a blog you can follow and post on or just read; lots of pictures and a journal of sorts at

www.caring bridge.org/visit/rachelkuecker. In the photo (l-r) are Dan Kuecker, Rachel Kuecker and Terrie Thurston. Photo by Lt. Col. Gary Hewett

My prognosis is good with a long haul ahead, but I know that I have a great God, a wonderful family and an unequivocal extended family with all of you and I will fight and I will win. I have heard from other SD Wing members that they have had loved ones fight this beast. I welcome those stories as I am strong and positive and a fighter, some days it is just hard to find the strength. So please share (just not during work hours).

## SQUADRON HIGHLIGHTS

### **BIG SIOUX COMPOSITE SQUADRON (SD-58, BROOKINGS)**

(Item submitted by C/Maj Tyler Gross)



- ***CYBERPATRIOT-VIII***: The Air Force Association announced that the 2015-2016 CyberPatriot National Youth Cyber Defense Competition has registered 3,379 teams representing all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, US Virgin Islands, Canada, and Department of Defense Dependent schools in Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan, and South Korea. This marks a 55% increase in team registrations from last season's CyberPatriot-VII.

Beginning with a practice round this month, the CyberPatriot-VIII teams will compete from their home locations in a series of online qualifying rounds that challenge them to find and fix security vulnerabilities in a variety of simulated networks. The top teams from the online rounds will travel all-expenses-paid to Baltimore, Md., for the CyberPatriot-VIII National Finals Competition April 10-14, 2016.

The Big Sioux Composite Squadron (Brookings) will have one and possibly two teams competing in this year's CyberPatriot-VIII competition. "Team Big Sioux" has enjoyed success at the national level in all four years that they have competed. Last year they placed second in the nation. In addition, they were the top CAP team in the competition. This year they compete against 1,280 teams in the All-Services Division, 447 of them CAP teams.

Their Team Big Sioux roster will be completed by the 6 November deadline. This year's team will be mentored by C/Lt Col Joshua Klosterman and coached by C/Maj Tyler Gross. The Team Captain is C/Lt Jaden Petersen. The squadron has been working with a group of students at Flandreau Indian School, who may participate as another team under our auspices if they join CAP.

### **CRAZY HORSE COMPOSITE SQUADRON (SD-068, CUSTER)**

(Items and photos submitted by Capt. K. Bierwirth and Maj. David Small)

- ***CIVIL AIR PATROL EXHIBIT***: At the request of the Custer County Courthouse Art Council we created a Civil Air Patrol exhibit at the Custer County Courthouse on 6 October. The exhibit will be on display until 4 January 2016. On the 6<sup>th</sup> there was a grand opening reception with about 30 people attending. Capt. Bierwirth gave a brief speech about CAP and its history and relation to the community. This was a great way for us to interact with the public. We had one person attend our next meeting and is interested in joining.

- ***SPOOKY RECRUITING***: Since Halloween is upon us this gives us chances to hand out CAP information attached to each piece of candy we give out at our residences.

- **WELCOME ABOARD/BACK ABOARD:** Welcoming to our newest cadet Robert Hewitt. Rejoining us is C/TSgt Kyle Stiffarm. Welcome Robert and welcome back Kyle!

## **RUSHMORE COMPOSITE SQUADRON (SD-031, RAPID CITY)**

(Items and photos submitted Maj. Goodrich)



- **SURVIVAL TRAINING:** On 3 October, nine cadets and seniors Maj. Craig Goodrich and Capt. Ryan Jones went into the Black Hills to learn how to bivouac and for some survival training.

Unfortunately, it turned out to be a cold, rainy weekend, so instead of camping in Black Hills National Forest as planned, we asked for help from Crazy Horse Composite Squadron in Custer. The commander, Capt. Kris Bierworth, gave us a warm, dry section of floor to sleep on.

The cadets learned land navigation skills, how to use a compass, how to start a fire (in the rain) and even got to practice some drill movements under the direction of C/SSgt Noah Misselt. Mostly they just had a good time getting to know each other while out for the weekend. All but one cadet joined our squadron just last month.

- **MICKELSON MARATHON SUPPORT:** On 4 October, the nine-cadet/two senior team packed up, and set up the aid station along the Mickelson Trail near Crazy Horse. Capt. Jones made great bacon, toast, and egg sandwiches for breakfast over a contained wood fire to get the day started. Over 1,000 runners took part in the race, and hundreds of folks expressed thanks for the water, power-aid, fruit and other things we handed out.



LEFT PHOTO (L-R): CADETS GRIFFIN, CARLIN, OLSEN, MISSELT, MOORE, BENTLEY, HELGELAND, JENSEN AND SPENSE

- **NEW SENIOR MEMBER:** Welcome to SM Sam Huntington. He transferred from Sioux Falls Composite Squadron and changed status from Patron Member to active Senior Member. We're pleased you are with us.
- **NEW CADET:** Welcome Patience Sundstrom. We are pleased to have you with us.
- **WELCOME BACK:** We welcome Capt. T.J. Nicolai back to active status from the "Ghost" squadron. He has joined our squadron's safety staff.

● **RECORD GROWTH**: Things are going very well at Rushmore Composite Squadron right now. Current membership is 52 members, the largest membership the squadron has had for more than a decade. In the last 12 months, senior membership has grown 31% and cadet membership has grown 67%.

**SIoux FALLS COMPOSITE SQUADRON (SD-050, SIoux FALLS)**

(Items and photo submitted by Capt. Jason Erickson)

● **MARATHON MAN**: Capt. Jason Erickson took part in the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Medtronic Twin Cities Marathon held on 4 October. He completed the 26.2 mile run which began in Minneapolis and finished in St. Paul with a time of 4 Hours 28 Minutes 4 Seconds, a personal best, and 20 minutes faster than when he ran the marathon in 2013. This year, his third full marathon, Capt. Erickson finished 5,019<sup>th</sup> out of the 8,543 runners.



● **BEUCKENS FLIGHT SCHOLARSHIP**: Rosemary Beuckens and family visited us on 1 October. She has been a strong supporter of our cadet program for many years. Her son Brett was killed in a plane crash in 2010 and she started a memorial flight scholarship in his honor. The Beuckens family and friends have donated money for the past several years to further Sioux Falls Composite Squadron cadets' aspirations to learn to fly. In recognition of their support Capt. Erickson presented her with a Certificate of Appreciation as a champion of Civil Air Patrol, our cadet program, and encourager of our young pilots to pursue their dreams. (L-R) Capt. Erickson, Francis Beuckens, Rosemary Beuckens and Wanda Beuckens.

● **SQUADRON OPEN HOUSE**: The squadron hosted an open house for the community on 10 October at the hangars northwest of Nelson Engineering. Around 50 visitors and family enjoyed a beautiful day at the hanger visiting with cadets and senior members and checking out our planes. The cadets also led tours of our nearby squadron headquarters. The nice weather stimulated appetites for the grilled burgers and dogs and side dishes. All-in-all it was a successful event with the potential to generate some new members.



**★ ★ PROMOTIONS ★ ★**

**Senior Member Promotions**



Congratulations to Kris Bierwirth of the Crazy Horse Composite Squadron in Custer and to David Galluzzo of Rushmore Composite Squadron in Rapid City on their promotion to the rank of Captain!

## **Cadet Noncommissioned Officer Promotions**



Congratulations to Julia Lair of Sioux Falls Composite Squadron in Sioux Falls and to Graham Dinnel of Big Sioux Composite Squadron in Brookings on their promotion to the rank of Cadet Chief Master Sergeant and receipt of the Dr. Robert H Goddard Award!



Congratulations to Kyle Kreger of Sioux Falls Composite Squadron in Sioux Falls on his promotion to the rank of Cadet Senior Master Sergeant and receipt of the General Jimmy Doolittle Award!



Congratulations to Robert Boecker of Sioux Falls Composite Squadron in Sioux Falls on promotion to the rank of Cadet Master Sergeant and receipt of the Charles Lindbergh Award!



Congratulations to Taylor Umland-Moyer of Sioux Falls Composite Squadron on his promotion to the rank of Cadet Technical Sergeant and receipt of the Captain Eddie Rickenbacker Award!



Congratulations to Tyler Eberle and Noah Misselt, both of Rushmore Composite Squadron in Rapid City on promotion to the rank of Cadet Staff Sergeant and receipt of the Wright Brothers Award!



## **Cadet Airman Promotions**



Congratulations to Andrew Sweebe of Big Sioux Composite Squadron in Brookings on his promotion to the rank of Cadet Airman First Class and receipt of the General Hap Arnold Award!



Congratulations to Keithen Griffin, Amelia Jensen and Andrew Olsen, all of Rushmore Composite Squadron in Rapid City, and to Ethan Updike of Crazy Horse Composite Squadron in Custer, on their promotion to the rank of Cadet Airman and receipt of the General J.F. Curry Award!



★ ★ **KUDOS** ★ ★



Captain Victoria Bierwirth of Custer, and member of the Crazy Horse Composite Squadron, graduated *cum laude* from the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology on 9 May with a Bachelor of Science degree in Geological Engineering with a minor in Geospatial Technology and a minor in German from Northern State University. She has accepted a job as a Geological Engineer with TriHydro; an environmental and engineering consulting firm in Jacksonville, Florida. She will continue to

interact with the Crazy Horse Composite Squadron for the near future. Once settled into her new job she will look for a flight instructor and a local squadron of the Florida Wing. We all will miss and wish her well.



Congratulations to Capt. Victoria Bierwirth of Crazy Horse Composite Squadron in Custer on earning "Senior" level in Specialty Track - Aerospace Education in CAP's Senior Member Professional Development Program!



Congratulations to Cadet Lieutenants Bradley Blansett and Justin Harris, both of Lookout Mountain Composite Squadron in Spearfish, who completed the requirements for certification as a Ground Team Leader!

