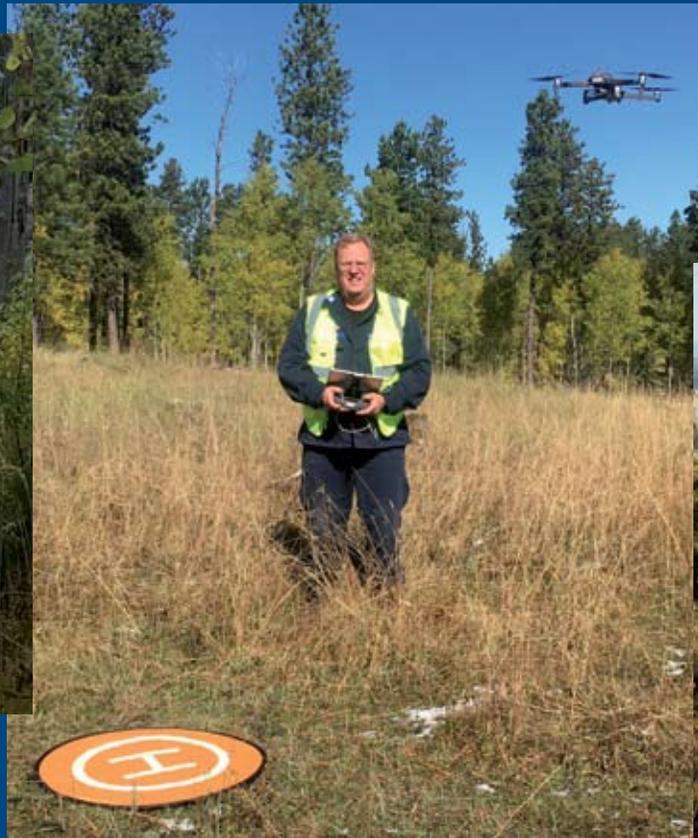




South Dakota Wing Roundup



CIVIL AIR PATROL • WINTER 2019 • UNITED STATES AIR FORCE AUXILIARY



**SOUTH DAKOTA WING CARRIED OUT
CIVIL AIR PATROL'S FIRST IN NATION
DRONE SEARCH AND RESCUE MISSION**



South Dakota Wing, Civil Air Patrol
4275 Airport Road, Suite A, Rapid City, SD 57703
Office: 605-393-4215, Fax: 605-393-4216

Email: rkuecker@capnhq.gov
 Website: <http://sdcap.us>
 Facebook: www.facebook.com/SDWingCAP

Col. David Small Jr.
 Commander, South Dakota Wing
 Civil Air Patrol

South Dakota Wing Roundup Staff

Publishers
 Col. David Small Jr., Wing Commander
 Lt. Col. Buck DeWeese, Wing Vice Commander
 1st Lt. Maria Klosterman, Wing Director of Public Affairs

Editor
 Lt. Col. Bruce Kipp, Wing Assistant Public Affairs
 Email: bruce.kipp@sdcap.us, Cell: 605-261-4507

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AERIAL WILDLIFE SURVEYS

*By Lt. Col. Craig Goodrich, CAP
Wing Director of Operations*

Each month there is an article in the South Dakota Wing e-newsletter the “Skychaser” reporting the statistical data for aerial wildlife surveys carried out by SDWG in support of research projects by the Office of Natural Resource Management of the College of Agricultural and Biological Sciences of South Dakota State University (SDSU) and the Office of Terrestrial Resources of the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks (GF&P). Both organizations have continually ongoing research projects surveying mountain lions, bobcats, swift foxes, white-tailed deer, mule deer, elk, bighorn sheep, and mountain goats.

The CAP pilot flies with either a representative from SDSU or from GF&P onboard the CAP aircraft. The animals being tracked have been fitted with collars that send out a tracking signal on a discrete frequency. For this type of sortie,



Clamp-on radio-telemetry collection antenna on the right wing strut. There is a matching antenna on the left wing strut.



Forward view of the aerial wildlife survey aircraft with radio-telemetry antenna on both struts.



Logo of South Dakota State University, one of the principal participants in the aerial wildlife survey program.



Logo of the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks, one of the principal participants in the aerial wildlife survey program.



Mountain lion wearing a radio-telemetry transmitted around its neck.

the CAP aircraft has a special external antenna mounted midway up the wing strut on each side of the aircraft. These antennas feed the signals to a portable radio operated by the animal researcher. The CAP pilot tracks the location of the animal by switching between antennas, and comparing the



GF&P intern on an aerial wildlife survey sortie on 14 April operating the radio-telemetry signals recording device. The locations of 100 Mule Deer and 94 Pronghorn Antelope were tracked that day.



Radio-telemetry signals relay box in the cockpit.

signal strength coming to each side of the aircraft by listening to the audio levels of the signal the collar is transmitting. When the pilot determines the aircraft is over the animal, he notifies the researcher who marks the location of each with a hand-held Global Positioning System (GPS).

The aerial surveys help researchers assess parameters such as population size, the animals' home range, if the animals are traveling to new areas, their survival rates and mortality rates.

So far in 2019, South Dakota Wing has flown 55 aerial wildlife survey sorties, averaging about six per month. 🇺🇸



Commander's Corner

*By Col. David G. Small Jr., CAP
South Dakota Wing Commander*

Because We Care



The last few weeks of September were very intense with four search and rescue operations coming back to back. First a small aircraft went missing with a 39-year-old rancher and his 16 year old son. That was followed very quickly by a missing 78-year-old woman with Alzheimer's. Before we had a chance to recover a 22-year-old student was reported missing, and finally, following that, was a missing 66-year-old hunter.

The South Dakota Wing of CAP rose to every occasion. Inevitably the request for assistance calls come at night and we work late into the evening rounding up volunteers to leave their homes well before dawn to come to the aid of those in distress.

In three of these missions I had the opportunity to talk with anxious family members wondering about their loved one(s) and speculating about what might have happened. They are all looking for answers. I don't

have any answers. All that I can say to these families is that every one of the CAP members present is there because they care. CAP members have disrupted their lives because they care about a complete stranger, a fellow human in distress.

A couple of these missions have particularly bothered me. First, from the human perspective, a grieving wife and mother lost her husband and son in a plane crash less than a mile from their home. Father and son went flying on a beautiful Sunday afternoon and never came home. A young man, full of life, nearing graduation from college, made a bad call, fell off a 200' rock cliff and died. He was in the beautiful outdoors, doing what he loved most, but lives no more.

These tragedies reinforce our commitment to executing our missions safely. Risk management needs to be ingrained into all of us. What can we do to minimize the risk to ourselves while accomplishing our task?

After four intense days of searching with ground teams and drones, CAP was called off the search for a missing hunter, his whereabouts unknown in the cold, snowy high country of the Black Hills. His family's questions unanswered.

The one good outcome was that the missing 78-year-old woman was found safe and alive a couple of hundred miles from home.

From a CAP professional perspective, we did not do our jobs on any of these missions. I'm not criticizing our members' commitment and talent; I am simply stating that we did not find the missing person in any of these cases.

What especially bothers me is that we (and I was part of the aircrew) overflew the missing woman at least three times and never spotted her car. We should have found it. Why didn't we find it?

The missing hunter should have been found. Despite CAP

Continued on page 21 . . .

AN INSPECTOR GENERAL IN THE CIVIL AIR PATROL

*By Maj. William Collister, CAP
Assistant Inspector General, South Dakota Wing*

How many times have we said or heard as a joke: “Hello, I am from the Government and am here to help you”? With my prior military service, the collective “we” had said about the same thing about the Inspector General (IG), visits. In many cases, it meant hide this or that from view, and get the written records polished up for presentation. At least that was what it was like until I got to the higher tiers of management.

I have been lucky enough to be recently appointed as an Assistant IG in the South Dakota Wing. “Lucky enough?” I do consider it so. This gets me in a position to help maintain and improve our Wing in what it does best by using comparison

standards provided by the USAF and Corporate Civil Air Patrol as they are applied to how we conduct our business. This means, for me, more study time and working with my mentors to gain the knowledge to do this job well.

This story starts in June 2019 with the question being asked if I was interested in helping out the IG as an assistant. I figured it was a big enough step to warrant a bit of study before I accepted. After my requested two weeks were up, I had decided I would accept the challenge. This started the deeper learning process. Some information is not really available until one is assigned, then I went WOW! There are definite timelines to obtain educational



Maj. Collister (center rear) with his cohort of fellow IG Senior Course students.

levels. I had online studies to complete before moving forward. I was scheduled to assist in the Small Unit Inspection (SUI) for the Crazy Horse Composite Squadron in Custer. Then to meet a timeline I needed to accomplish the Inspector General Senior Course. As luck would have it for me, there was one set up for the Rocky Mountain Region (RMR) in the Denver, Colorado area in October. Seating was limited, but I was allowed to attend by the RMR IG.

There are two distinct areas of importance in the IG field, and after dipping my toe in the water with online courses, a bit more immersion was soon to take place in Centennial, Colorado. I was not looking forward to death by PowerPoint, but soon found out much of the course material was covered by discussion and practical exercises. The two areas include Inspections and Complaint resolution. I received some instruction through interesting presentations on both. More time was spent on Complaint resolution than Inspections. In all, the focus is always on facts and comparisons using best practices, guidance by regulations and proper application of fairness.

Many of us have been involved, at least in part, with Inspections. We in Civil Air Patrol are held to pretty high standards since we are caretakers of public trust. We have equipment that is provided by the US taxpayer through the USAF and Congress and are tasked to use this material wisely and efficiently to perform our three missions. How we prove this is through our Inspection Program. We constantly show our ability to perform missions, maintain these procured supplies and by being successful, hopefully expect reasonable replacements and upgrades from time to time as we progress in our jobs. When we use other peoples' money, they expect to realize that we are using that which we are given is used for expected purposes. These expectations are realized by showing a transparent reporting method to whoever needs to see it.

An inspection for a unit or wing is graded "effective" or "ineffective", as well as some functional areas by themselves possibly being graded "highly effective". There are also "commendables" which relate to what used to be best practices. The "commendables" must improve the ability to perform the mission, save manpower, or



Maj. Collister receives his certificate of completion from the course coordinator.

save resources. The after effects of an inspection are applied to the standards using the facts at hand and there is a scoring system to fairly result in a grade along with any observations that need to be addressed to improve a process so it will meet standards. This is where the helping comes in that I referred to at the beginning of this piece. Assistance is then directed from many possible sources to correct the process in question to an effective level. Of course, the IG doesn't provide corrections, just the standards that need to be met. This direction comes from Civil Air Patrol regulations, CAPR 20-1 and CAPR 20-3, which in turn may lead to many other directives within the regulatory world of CAP as well as guidance from pamphlets. The inspection process is very simple at this point.

The other part of the IG world concerns Complaint resolutions that are a bit more in depth, but still work with facts at hand. All of these start with application to a multipart process. Complaints are always handled with parties knowing there is integrity in the process. The complaint must be put through a rigorous review to even determine if it worthy of investigation. Records have shown in the South Dakota Wing that complaints are few which reflect well upon the quality of our members.

This part of the IG is a worthy discussion that can be delved into in a future article. 🇺🇸

SOUTH DAKOTA WING CONDUCTED CAP'S FIRST IN NATION DRONE SEARCH AND RESCUE MISSION

*Capt. Richard Rezac, CAP
Miller Flight, South Dakota Wing*

Civil Air Patrol's first two searches using small Unmanned Aerial Systems (sUAS) are in the books after a pair of South Dakota Wing missions.

South Dakota Wing began deploying drones with a missing-person search in Custer State Park in Custer County, on the state's western border, after a 22-year-old South Dakota School of Mines and Technology student was last seen at his Rapid City residence, where he mentioned he was going out for a hike. When his family reported him missing, Civil Air Patrol was called to assist. From 21 to 25 September 2019 the Wing responded in its usual fashion. Members were contacted and asked to help. CAP aircrews were deployed and aided in the search. The wing coordinated with local authorities, ready to assist in any way it could. The man was found dead Sept. 25 at the base of a cliff, the victim of an apparent fall.

In the meantime, the South Dakota Wing had taken a new approach to the search, using new tools and new techniques. The search marked the first time CAP used drones in a real-world corporate search and rescue mission.

For some time, the wing has made sUAS a priority, joining a growing trend. Nationwide, over 1 million sUAS units have been registered with the Federal Aviation Administration. More than 100,000 Americans have obtained an FAA Part 107 license for sUAS. Many of our members have devoted additional time and energy to obtain FAA licenses and other training to operate these in search operations. The growth in sUAS use has exploded in the last few years. It was obvious that drones could become powerful



Panoramic view of the rugged terrain of the search area.



The missing person, an avid rock climber, was expected to head for this craggy area.

tools in our Emergency Services missions.

Last spring, the South Dakota Legislature approved a one-time appropriation to acquire several sUAS units to use in search-and-rescue efforts. These drones are state-of-the-art. They can capture still photos and video, self-hover, and auto-return if there is an emergency or a low battery. Some of them have infrared capabilities. They can even land themselves, coming within inches of their takeoff location.

CAP drones have been used in other ways, such as damage assessment after natural disasters. But this was a historic moment, as it was the first time CAP has used drones in a real-world corporate search and rescue mission. For now, the U.S. Air Force is not participating in or funding any sUAS use. The South Dakota wing has put forth a lot of time and effort to prepare for this. According to Austin Worcester, our national sUAS Program Manager, this mission “was the very first true SAR (Search and Rescue) mission where UAVs were used by CAP in a corporate status. Trained Wing members developed techniques for pattern searches and detecting targets at oblique angles and in challenging areas. The Custer County mission “proved many of the concepts and procedures we’ve developed,” Austin Worcester, CAP’s national sUAS program manager, told wing officials. “You performed this mission precisely as it should have been ... so I commend you and your team!” Thank you to all who participated in this ground-breaking task.

The second such mission began Oct. 2 in neighboring Pennington County after a 66-year-old hunter with diabetes and congestive heart failure was reported missing. His nephew had dropped him off to drive game down a draw, but the hunter never arrived at a designated pickup spot. The man is still missing.



First responder team leaders gather to plan the operation and assign search areas.

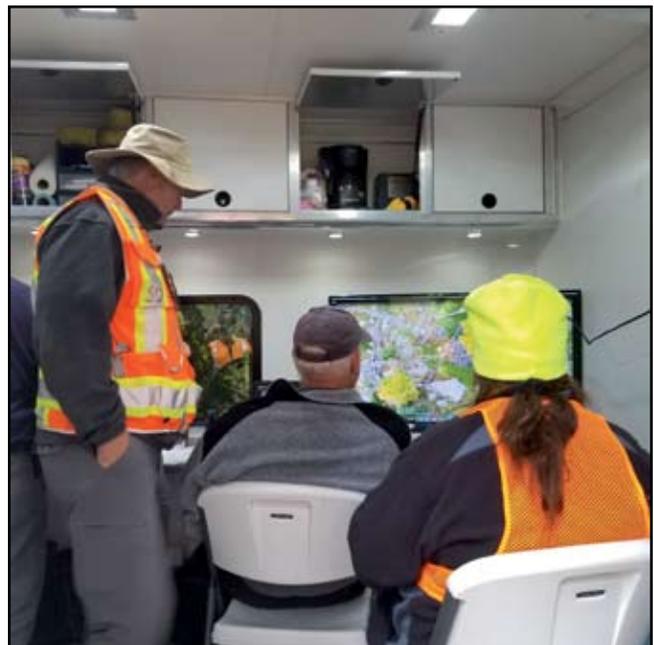


Example of the adverse terrain in which the ground teams had to operate.



When he was last seen, the weather was clear and temperatures were in the low 50s. In the interim, though, lows fell below 18 and light snow with accumulation occurred – conditions the hunter wasn’t dressed for. Ground searches involving CAP members yielded no discoveries. Meanwhile, Pennington County Search and Rescue requested CAP sUAS photo flights over the search area. The sUAS flights conducted all four days generated more than 2,500 photos, which search and rescue agency officials and CAP members reviewed for signs of the missing man.

We foresee the use of our drones in these and other types of missions in the future. The usefulness of this technology was apparent to our leadership. The South Dakota wing made sure that we were ready to use it when the time came. While the outcome in our first real-world search and rescue mission was not the one we hoped for, we are glad we could help bring closure for his family. Our wing has shown that we can use this 21st century technology effectively to fulfill our mission. 🇺🇸



Multiple pairs of eyes scanned every frame looking for clues that could reveal the location of the missing person.



SDWG sUAS cruises over the rugged terrain in a programmed search pattern.



ABOVE: Most of the sUAS launch positions were in inhospitable terrain requiring considerable physical effort to reach the spot.



LEFT: South Dakota Wing Commander launches a drone from a more hospitable terrain location.



WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA | FACT SHEET

About Civil Air Patrol

- More than 61,000 members nationwide.
- Celebrates its 77th anniversary Dec. 1, 2018.
- Three primary missions – aerospace education, cadet programs and emergency services.
- Performs 90 percent of continental U.S. inland search and rescue missions, as tasked by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center, saving an average of 82 lives per year.
- Also performs aerial reconnaissance for homeland security and disaster relief missions for local, state and national organizations.
- Operates one of the largest fleets of single-engine piston aircraft in the world, with 560 currently in the fleet.
- Flies, through volunteer members, approximately 100,000 hours each year.
- Maintains fleet of 1,000-plus emergency service vehicles for training and mission support.
- Mentors over 25,000 cadets ages 12-20 in four areas: leadership, aerospace, fitness and character development.
- Cadet activities include an active role in emergency services missions, orientation flights in powered and glider aircraft, flight training scholarships and career explorations, as well as activities and competition for cadets at local, state, regional and national levels.

About Wreaths Across America

Civil Air Patrol is a Wreaths Across America partner. The nonprofit organization's mission is to Remember, Honor and Teach about the service and sacrifices of the nation's veterans. Founded in 2007, Wreaths Across America is an offshoot of the Arlington National Cemetery wreath project, which was started in 1992 with the annual placement of wreaths donated by Worcester Wreath Co. of Harrington, Maine. Wreaths designated for Arlington are transported on a 750-mile journey from Columbia Falls, Maine, after a sendoff ceremony. The route is known as the world's largest veterans' parade, stopping at schools, monuments, veterans' homes and communities along the way to remind people how important it is to Remember, Honor and Teach.

Last year's observances

More than 1.5 million veterans' wreaths were sponsored by the public for placement on veterans' graves at 1,433 ceremonies in all 50 states and abroad. Civil Air Patrol's sponsorship of wreaths over the past 11 years has raised \$1.1 million for participating CAP units. Civil Air Patrol's Arlington observances annually include a wreath-laying ceremony at the CAP Memorial, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Women in Military Service Memorial. Each year Civil Air Patrol's National Honor Guard take part in a special ceremonial holiday wreath-laying at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. Similar ceremonies were held at state capitols nationwide.

GLIDER OPERATIONS – SUMMER UPDATE 2019

*By Lt. Col. Buck DeWeese, CAP
Vice Commander, South Dakota Wing*

South Dakota Wing's 2019 Summer Soaring Season for glider operations has come to a close. We started out with a broken glider; it had a bad strut in the landing gear. This was especially problematic as our model of glider, a Super Blahnik L-23, has long been out of production and replacement parts are hard to find. Several attempts to repair the broken strut failed until we finally got a replacement from a grounded glider in New Jersey.

With the landing gear repaired we were up and running just in time for the 2019 North Central Region Glider Academy held in New Ulm, MN. After some 50 sorties (flights) only one South Dakota Wing cadet had gotten flight time in it; a cadet from the Crazy

Horse Composite Squadron in Custer who attended the academy. He got all the way to solo when, unfortunately, poor flying weather shortened the syllabus rides on the last day. I have been promising him we will get our glider back to its base in Spearfish in time to fly a bit more before winter weather shuts us down so that he could get his glider solo wings, he has certainly earned them.

In the meantime, we have used Flandreau Airport, north of Sioux Falls as the base for our Wing's East River Glider camp. In addition to several cadets getting orientation rides in the glider and others working through the flight syllabus to earn their glider wings we had reasonable success getting

two more tow pilots trained, Capt. Neal Schmid and Lt. Col. EW Filler. We will finish off training as well as the Form-5 Glider Check Ride for 2nd Lt. Jayne Fogarty of Lincoln County Composite Squadron. Unfortunately, we were also hampered by bad weather while at the Flandreau Airport. We had a small break in the glider program when the Sioux Falls airshow commanded our attention for four beautiful days. So, "Glider-7" now sits in her trailer in Sioux Falls waiting to finish off the East River training. I am confident we will have at least one good day of flying weather for cadet glider flights for both our East and West River units before our glider goes into her bat cave for the winter.



South Dakota Wing is pleased to have one of the Civil Air Patrol-owned gliders assigned to it to provide orientation flights and glider pilot instruction to cadets in-state and at regional flight academies.

IN THE LINE OF DUTY: A HISTORY LESSON WORTH REMEMBERING

*By Staff Sgt. F. Shawn Bawden, CAP
South Dakota Wing Command NCO*

Military units across the world honor their past by commemorating important events in their histories, whether they are great accomplishments or poignant tragedies, and Civil Air Patrol is no different. However, some significant events are less well-known than others and, after enough time, become something more akin to legends. This is the case with three deaths in the first decade of CAP's history which included the loss of one of South Dakota's (SDWG) first Wing Commanders. Stories of this incident have been passed down through the decades, but many of the details have been lost.

On September 24, 1950, a CAP T-7 Beechcraft was flying from Olathe, Kansas, to Louisville, Kentucky. Onboard were Col. James R. Barnett, CAP (SDWG Commander), 1st Lt. M. Duane Reeve, CAP, and 1st Lt. Oliver A. Singleton, Jr., USAF (USAF Liaison Officer). Singleton was the pilot.

Also on the plane was Stewart "Skip" Alexander, who had just finished playing in the Kansas City Open golf tournament. Alexander was on the flight as part of a CAP initiative that sought the support of professional golfers. The scheme had been first presented to CAP's National Commander in December 1949 by two North Dakota Wing officers. The idea was to solicit the aid of the Professional Golfers Association and its members to donate one round of golf a year with all the proceeds going to CAP's Cadet Program. Alexander appears to be the first golfer to fly on a CAP plane as part of this initiative.

Tragedy struck when the plane crashed near Evansville, Indiana. Witnesses reported that it barely cleared several buildings before it went down, and there was even speculation that the pilot may have mistaken the lights of a nearby railyard for those of the municipal airport located a quarter of a mile northeast of the crash site.

Barnett, Reeve, and Singleton all died in the crash and ensuing fire, but Alexander was able to free himself from the wreckage despite suffering third-degree burns on his arms, face, and upper body as well as a broken left leg. At the hospital, he insisted that his badly burned fingers be surgically "frozen" around the grip of a golf club rather than having them removed. Remarkably, Alexander soon returned to golf and helped the United States win in the Ryder Cup in 1951.

Not surprisingly, Alexander sued CAP and in 1955 a judge ruled in his favor. It was determined that the cause of the crash was due to a faulty fuel selection switch. In his ruling, the judge wrote, "The fuel selector pin was defective and known to be so by the pilot. They flew anyways knowing it was defective and didn't test it. The pilot ran the tank dry and tried to switch tanks, but the defective valve wouldn't change tanks. The pilot was guilty of negligence by exhausting all of the gas from the tank in use before testing the selector valve to see if it was functioning," adding, "The proper functioning of the selector valve was essential to get gas from the reserve tank...It is difficult to conceive of a more vital part of the plane for a prolonged flight."

It's not clear at this time if this incident had any impact on CAP policies regarding safety or the transportation of passengers.

1st Lt. Singleton was buried in Arkansas, while Col. Barnett and 1st Lt. Reeve were interred in Sioux Falls and Watertown. Barnett and Reeve are among three CAP members lost in the line of duty and known to be buried in South Dakota (the other being Charles Behymer, a California Wing member, killed in a 1969 accident). Their service and sacrifice is worthy of remembrance.



Headstone of Civil Air Patrol Col. James Barnett, commander of the South Dakota Wing from 16 October 1945 until lost in the line of duty on 24 September 1950.

Commander's Corner

Continued from page 5

putting more than 30 searchers in the area, working with the local sheriff and other teams, he still hasn't been found. Is there anything that we could have done better?

Rather than get discouraged by these "failures" we need to focus on what we can learn and how we can do better in the future. There is a new tool in our search "bag". Two of these missions were the first in all of CAP nationwide to use SUAS (UAVs, drones) in a real-life search. We haven't perfected their use but there is promise that they will complement our manned eyes-in-the-sky as well as extending the reach of ground teams.

Our search and rescue work exemplifies two of our core values, volunteer service, and excellence. Our volunteers give up their weekends to practice emergency service skills. From the newest cadet to the most experienced 50-year member, all our members seek excellence in our search and rescue skills. We learn from every mission and every practice session. We want to be the "save" – a lost person rescued and returned to their daily life.

We do this because we care.



MOVIE REVIEW - THE THING FROM ANOTHER WORLD

By Lt. Col. Bruce Kipp, CAP

I love science fiction movies, especially the black and white ones from the early 1950s. Some of my favorites involve giant insects mutated by radiation rampaging across America or evil aliens attempting to conquer the world. In my book, the very best of them is the classic *The Thing from Another World*, sometimes referred to as just *The Thing*, a black-and white science fiction-horror film released in 1951 by RKO Pictures.

The storyline relates how a team of Arctic research scientists detect a massive impact not far from their camp. A U.S. Air Force crew is sent from Alaska to the camp and together with the scientists fly to the crash site to investigate. As they spread out to determine its shape of the object buried in the ice they realize they are standing in a circle; it's a flying saucer! Their attempt to melt the ice covering the saucer inadvertently ends up destroying it. Their Geiger counter however, detects a body nearby; it is excavated in a large block of ice and loaded aboard the transport for return to the research outpost. When the creature is accidentally defrosted they are forced to defend themselves against it. Ultimately, they retreat to their last stand where they rig an electrical "fly trap". At the tense last moment the alien walks into the trap and is electrocuted to a pile of ash. Despite the film's age there are some great special effects in the battles with the creature.

According to its entry in Wikipedia, *The Thing* is now considered one of the best films of 1951. The film holds an 88% "Fresh" rating at the film review website Rotten Tomatoes, with the consensus that the film "is better than most flying saucer movies, thanks to well-drawn characters and concise, tense plotting". In 2001, the U.S. Library of Congress deemed the film "culturally significant" and selected it for preservation in the National Film Registry. Time magazine named *The Thing from Another World* "the greatest 1950s sci-fi movie".



Screenshot of the opening title sequence.

LIBRARY OF SDWG LOGOS

Heraldry of the

2019 JOINT DAKOTA ENCAMPMENT LOGO

The 2019 Joint Dakota Cadet Leadership Encampment was held 08-16 July 2019 at Camp Rapid, the main Army National Guard installation in South Dakota, located near Rapid City. Joint Dakota Encampments alternate between Camp Rapid, SD in odd numbered years and Camp Grafton, ND in even numbered years.

The logo for the 2019 Joint Dakota Cadet Leadership Encampment is in the traditional shape of a circle. Along the upper arc of the circle is the motto “Vincere Provocatio” (To Overcome the Challenge) in Latin. Within the disc are three wolves. The wolfpack represents the value of teamwork to overcome obstacles or challenges. The lightning flash on each wolf represents the modern technology which Civil Air Patrol operates. The crescent moon at upper right represents the aerospace aspects of Civil Air Patrol. Along the base of the circle is the name of the activity and the sponsoring organization.

Each flight at the encampment wore the logo on a different color t-shirt: black for cadet and senior cadre, red for Alpha Flight, blue for Bravo Flight, yellow for Charlie Flight, green for Delta Flight, and purple for the Advanced Course.

The logo was designed by Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Mariel Klosterman and Cadet Captain Jaden Petersen, both members of the Big Sioux Composite Squadron in Brookings. It was approved for wear by Encampment Commander Lt. Col. Nicholas Gengler, South Dakota Wing.



DRONE'S EYE VIEW OF ENCAMPMENT PARTICIPANTS WITH THE FLIGHTS WEARING THEIR DISTINCTIVE COLOR T-SHIRT WITH THE ENCAMPMENT LOGO ON THE UPPER LEFT BREAST

NCSA JOINT FLIGHT ACADEMY

*By Cadet Technical Sgt. Alexander Heinrich, CAP
Crazy Horse Composite Squadron*

[Editor's Note: The Civil Air Patrol North Central Region's National Cadet Special Activity (NCSA) Joint Flight Academy was held at airports in southern Minnesota from 11-20 July 2019. As it was a joint flight academy they sponsored both powered aircraft and glider flight training. Glider flight training operations took place at Mankato Regional Airport. Cadet Technical Sgt. Alexander Heinrich of the Crazy Horse Composite Squadron in Custer, SD attended the academy as a cadet-in-training to fly gliders.]



Organizational logo for Civil Air Patrol's National Flight Academy.

“This summer I was honored to attend the North Central Region's Joint Flight Academy in Mankato, Minnesota along with 12 other Civil Air Patrol cadets from many different states. I learned a lot about flying gliders and a lot more about aviation that I had not known before. I've flown a couple of planes before; I've done stuff in the simulator at home. Learning to get the skills down, it does take a little bit of practice, make sure you have good turns, and keep the glider streamlined. It was an exciting and fun experience learning how to fly the glider. I am very grateful to all of the pilots and staff who took their time off to come to this academy and teach us on how to fly. I just want to say thank you to the North Central Region Joint Flight Academy for giving me this opportunity to attend the academy. I learned a lot and had a lot of fun. “It is amazing, it is great. All the experience and everything that you learn from this academy will stick with you for the rest of your life. It's great.”



Cadet Heinrich prepares for landing on his return from a glider flight.



Cadet Technical Sgt. Alexander Heinrich prepares for a flight with glider instructor Maj. Brad Haynes from Civil Air Patrol's Georgia Wing.



Lt. Col. Buck DeWeese, South Dakota Wing Vice Commander who served as one of the tow pilots for the Joint Flight Academy.

THE SHORTAGE OF WOMEN IN AVIATION

*By Capt. Richard Rezac, CAP
Commander, Miller Flight, South Dakota Wing*

The aviation industry faces a worldwide shortage of qualified pilots. This is evident in all aviation fields; military, passenger carrier, freight, agricultural aviation, etc. In fact, some air carriers are already reducing or canceling flight schedules as a result of pilot shortages.

Given the need to hire new pilots, the industry knows now that it needs to tap the entire potential talent pool. Employers are actively seeking pilots from historically under-represented demographics. One of these demographics is females. Unfortunately, women make up only about 6% of commercial pilots, according to the Air Line Pilots Association. This is partly due to the historical pipeline of male military pilots. For decades, female pilots were not allowed to participate.

Dr. Rebecca Lutte, an assistant professor of Aviation at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO), has pointed out that, “In an age where pilot supply is a global challenge, recruiting women and underrepresented groups to the cockpit is an essential part of the solution.” And as Dr. Victoria Dunbar, an associate professor of Aviation at the Florida Institute of Technology, noted, “There is no particular skill set that a pilot needs that’s based on their gender. Aircraft are designed to be flown with light hand controls, so it’s not an issue of strength. I believe that men and women are equally capable of being good, safe pilots.”

Sadly, too many girls and young women might think, “I didn’t even know I could be a pilot. I thought that was a man’s job.” If they can’t see it – through role models in the air, or in their own minds – they’re less likely to be one someday. They need to see more examples of successful women throughout the aviation industry. Examples like Capt. Tammie Jo Shults, the former fighter jet pilot who became a hero after safely landing a badly damaged Southwest Airlines plane.

Universities and flight schools are taking several avenues to address this bias in aviation. One of them is educating the public and particularly younger girls who might consider becoming a pilot. Many schools host day events and summer flight exploration camps where they invite middle-school and high-school girls to visit the campus and go on introductory flights.

Civil Air Patrol is also doing what it can to eliminate this division. Hundreds of girls get their first taste of flying every year in a CAP Orientation Ride. Many female cadets attend our Regional Flight Academies that are hosted across the country each summer. And of the 21 cadets currently enrolled in our Cadet Wings program, five are young women. That’s about 24%, four times the current national average of women who are commercial pilots. Once the public comes to accept that female pilots are no different than their male counterparts, our society will have made the shift to accepting women as equals in the sky.



Cadet 1st Lt. Julia Lair, has not earned her private pilot’s license yet but is working on it in the Civil Air Patrol, talks about her aviation experiences with a group of Girl Scouts.