



# Behind the 8 Ball



## Blue Beret National Cadet Special Activity Oshkosh, Wisconsin

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### Beret Responsibility

As the activity draws to a close, I would like to tell you how proud I am of the progress you have made. During your time here, you have worked hard and earned your berets. You will return from this activity with uniform items that have significant meaning. In addition to your beret, you are taking home a St. Alban's Cross which signifies sacrifice on behalf of others. Wearing the unique uniform items that are earned by a Blue Beret is a privilege and it is one that must be carefully managed. Let's look at what we can learn from Sgt. Alvin C. York about uniforms.

Alvin C. York, a soldier in the 82<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division in World War I, was a country boy from a rural area in Tennessee. While a teen, York led a wild life drinking and gambling. He later became very religious and gave up his wild ways. York was drafted to serve in World War I. When he received his draft notice, he didn't think he could serve his country because his religion prevented him from killing men, even in war. When his request was denied, York graduated basic training. A hunter for most of his life, York was a crack shot with a rifle. York's citation for gallantry, like that of most Medal of Honor recipients, is remarkable. During action in 1918, York's platoon suffered many casualties. Corporal York had to take command and managed to advance his few troops. With a group of seven men, York was able to capture more than 120 German infantrymen, four officers, and more than 30 guns. York was modest and always played down what he did during the war and could not wait to get back to a peaceful life. He never had much money but he returned a very famous person. Many companies offered him money to endorse their products. York replied, "This uniform ain't for sale."



As the civilian auxiliary of the United States Air Force, CAP members are given the opportunity to wear uniforms similar to those of the active duty military. To Sgt. York and many others, the military uniform serves as a symbol of our country—and wearing it is a privilege not to be taken lightly. With each privilege, we accept responsibility. The distinctive items worn by Blue Berets also require exemplary discipline and good judgment. When you wear your beret, be responsible. Wear it only when you are allowed to do so. Follow all guidelines. Finally, make sure your attitude reflects the values of the Blue Berets. Wearing the beret is a symbol of your commitment to a higher level of humble service. Remember, when you are in uniform you are more than an individual, you are a proud member of the team. You represent all the Berets who came before you and you impact the privileges all Berets with your actions. Make sure your actions reflect favorably on yourself, all Blue Berets, Civil Air Patrol, the USAF, and our country. Wear your uniform properly and with pride!



Think back to the qualities that we talked about the first night at National Blue Beret. As a beret, you need to return to your home unit as, "a leader who exhibits the highest level of integrity." You need to ensure that you are dedicated "to the service of others rendered with respect and humility." A tough task awaits you. Make sure you are, "what your country and Civil Air Patrol expects you to be - the best of American youth and an example of leadership for today and the future." The beret creed says that berets are, "dedicated to the service of others." Look for opportunities to help. Remember, Berets are, "committed to the well-being of comrades and community." I look forward to seeing you at future activities and hearing about the great things you will do.

**Regena Aye, Col.**  
**NBB Activity Director 2009**

## **CAP and EAA – Building Americas Youth**

The 42<sup>nd</sup> year of National Blue Beret (NBB), a National Cadet Special Activity of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP), commenced on July 20. CAP members from 44 states came to support of the 2009 Experimental Aviation Association's (EAA) AirVenture event. This partnership is a Win-Win for both organizations.

More than 600 CAP members apply for the honor of serving in one of the 200 NBB slots at AirVenture. NBB candidates, must be the best of the best at the local level and be selected at the national level. Of the 200 CAP members attending, 16 are also EAA members.

AirVenture affords CAP the opportunity to conduct emergency services training and then practice those skills in real world environments. It is a unique experience that brings together all three missions for Civil Air Patrol: Aerospace Education, Cadet Programs, and Emergency Services. During the activity cadets learn leadership skills, practice teamwork, explore new innovations, and hone emergency services skills.

The relationship between CAP and EAA is mutually beneficial. EAA President Tom Poberezny said, "EAA has an outstanding relationship with CAP. They provide wonderful support and service to EAA AirVenture Oshkosh, which contributes significantly to the convention's success and safety."

This relationship continues year around and is coordinated by Wisconsin Wing members like Lt Col Harvey Moss and Col Donald Haffner. Haffner, the Wisconsin Wing commander, said, "The continued positive and mutually supportive relationship between CAP and the EAA exemplifies what can happen when two organizations work together to provide a successful and safe activity for the thousands of people who attend EAA AirVenture in Oshkosh each year." Haffner continued, "The value of our relationship is experienced year-round." Tom Poberezny has been the keynote speaker at the Wisconsin Wing Conference and the EAA has provided of valuable information and support to the CAP National Historic Foundation. Additionally, it enhances CAP's aerospace program granting cadets access to the EAA's world class aviation museum.

Each year at AirVenture, the hard work of the dedicated individual in both organizations culminates with a memorable experience and our relationship is renewed. The result is the development of youth and aviation enthusiasts alike that will secure and forge new roads in the future of aviation. This may be best summed up in the comments by CAP National Director of Cadet Programs Lt Col Joe Curry, "NBB is a WIN – WIN situation for both CAP and the EAA."



**Anonymous Visitor**

An older gentleman stopped by the CAP compound in 2007, and you could see a twinkle in his eye and his heart swell as he saw the cadets. He would only identify himself as John.

John said he went to school in California, PA and used to work with a group sponsored by the CAP. We would meet one to two times a week. He said they learned close order drill. They would go up in the observation tower and count planes, record altitude, direction of flight, and tail numbers if possible. That was when the B-17s were being built and deployed. At the age of 17 he joined the Army Air Corps and was slotted for 8<sup>th</sup> Army Air Force Bombarding School. After World War II he went to college in the 1950's and earned a degree in Information Education. He became a teacher of Industrial Arts. Again his nation called and he joined what was now the USAF. When the nation called he went to Korea.

I asked him why all the interest in the in CAP? "There is a future in Civil Air Patrol; even through most of the cadets can't see it right now." He went on to say, "It is an organization that gave a whole lot to me when I was younger and while times have changed, the core values have not."

Finally, I asked him why he did not want to be identified and he said in a firm but humble voice, "It is not about recognition, it is about service." CAP can take you where you want to go, all you have to do is want it and go for it.

**1<sup>st</sup> Lt Daren Jaeger**

**What does it mean to be a Blue Beret?**

As I go through my 5<sup>th</sup> year at Blue Beret, I am forced to reflect on all of the changes I have seen over the years. Although the idea of a Beret never changes, the Berets we get every year do. Each has its strengths and weaknesses and changes and traditions.

Traditions at Beret and Oshkosh have changed over the years. The staff and the duties are as always, ever changing.

Beret-isms one year may not be here the next. Change is the only thing that is constant and sometimes we have to trade short term pain for long-term gain. We used to have graffiti on the rafters of the barracks so each of us could leave our mark, now each flight makes their own patch that is recorded for historical significance.

A few things remain a constant, Gary the flightline guy remains the keeper of flightline on the 9-27 runway; the Chicken man, although not always here, is always remembered; and the hunt for the first find and the tiger tales will always remain. We keep waiting for the guy with the "camp?" flip "park?" sign to go away, but he never does. And Operation Thirst people are the kings and queens of the volunteer force at Oshkosh and they always will be, never will you find kinder people with free food.

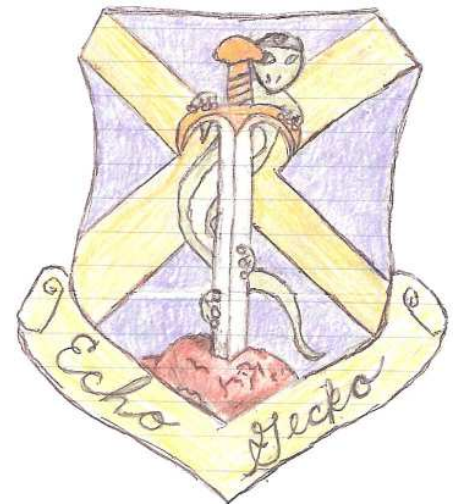
As Beret goes, the mission never changes; we are volunteers for the Oshkosh Airshow and the servants for the EAA. We work the flightline, we work Warbirds, and we work Ultralights. These activities expose CAP to the world in a way that no other National, Region, or Wing activity can. The world gets a small glimpse of what it means to be a Civil Air Patrol cadet.



We are the Blue Berets. As Berets we are keepers of the flightline, protectors of the Ultralights, and guardians of the Warbirds. We will find you if you are lost, close your flight plan if you forget, and silence the distress calls. These things we do with careful attention and quietly in the background of the largest Airshow in the Nation. We are the Blue Berets, follow us.

**Jane Smalley, Maj**

**Featured Flight: Echo**



- Flight Commander:** C/Capt Matthew Campbell
- Flight Leader:** C/2d Lt Camille Walters
- TAC Officer:** Capt Thomas Rauch

**Featured Flight: Foxtrot**



- Flight Commander:** C/Lt Col Mitch Edwards
- Flight Leader:** C/George Dendrinis
- TAC Officer:** Maj Jane Smalley



## Final Thoughts from Public Affairs

This year was my 3<sup>rd</sup> time to make the trek from Austin, Texas to National Blue Beret and my 6<sup>th</sup> year to attend Airventure. This was a year of transition and change. Like any group we moved through the stages of forming, storming, norming and performing. We are all here for one thing; **we all want:**

- to **SERVE** our community to the best of our abilities
- to become part of something greater than ourselves
- to become part of the family we call the cadre of Blue Berets

Each of us, in our own way, fulfilled this desire and the obligations that came with that commitment. And to our own amazement and surprise, many of our often exceeded what they thought was possible.

This year we had cadets serve for the first time in Public Affairs and Administration. C/Maj Cyrus Gardener and C/CMSgt Noonan cadet PAOs. In addition we had 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Pam Morris as the Assistant PAO. Another first was the addition of a Cadet Admin officer, C/Capt Wildman who always made her skills available to the public affairs team. Each member of this team was vastly different but we brought out the best in each other. Bringing their talents to bear on the mission, we were able to do more than we had ever done before! It was my privilege to work with such a talented and driven team. Thank you for all you have contributed to the success of this year.

Bazal the bat made his appearance this year from behind the St Alban's Cross that is posted outside admin shack. The curious little creature seemed to be the perfect mascot for our group. We flew around sometimes unseen and captured the history and legacy of NBB 2009.

This year, we improved relationships with EAA and the Explorer scouts. The bag piper at final formation was a memorable experience.



It is now time to take these lessons back to the 44 states from which we came. It is time to share our learning with our local squadrons so they too can benefit from the experience.

As you travel home, remember the good times, celebrate the experience, and start planning your future. Next year, we will be looking to you for your leadership, knowledge, skills, and abilities. The time you will return to beret. Or better yet, send candidates from your squadrons that you have mentored. This is the legacy of a BERET!

**Daren Jaeger, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt  
Public Affairs Officer**

