



# *Behind the 8 Ball*

*Blue Beret  
National Cadet Special Activity  
Oshkosh, Wisconsin*



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## **From the Assistant Director**



Greetings and welcome to Oshkosh! I have had the pleasure of emailing most of you during the course of the last few months. I am enjoying meeting all of you in person. Now that we have all made our way to Oshkosh and in-processed, it's time to stop and look around. You will see a lot of new faces that will soon become lifelong friends and a lot of green grass that will soon become aircraft parking and camping. You will see more airplanes at AirVenture than many people see in a lifetime.



Take some time to get to know the senior members as well as cadets you will meet at National Blue Beret. The seniors who staff this activity generously give their time and energy to ensure the activity is successful and your experience is one you will not soon forget. Please give the senior members your attention and listen to the wisdom they can share with you. Many of these members have been coming to Oshkosh for quite a few years.



As you complete your training, focus on learning tasks quickly. Master the tasks you are being trained to carry out so that you can complete them without stopping to think about it. We have a very short time to prepare you for all the experiences this activity can offer, so please pay attention. Learn your task well so you are a strong team member for your flight and the Beret team.

*Rick Franz, Col  
NBB Assistant Activity Director 2013*

## **Beret Medical**



Captain Pat Crockett, a member of Kansas Wing, accepted a challenging position at National Blue Beret. Capt. Crockett returned to NBB this year to serve as a medic. In this role, she helps keep both cadets and seniors safe and healthy during the activity.

"I am happy to see attendees at any time. I just ask that each person know his or her medical information so that I can treat each individual to the best of my ability," said Capt. Crockett. She is prepared for the common illnesses that might be encountered at an activity from allergies to homesickness to sunburns.

Crockett shared, "Many attendees are unsure of what they are truly capable of physically and mentally accomplishing." "However," she cautioned, "you need to listen to your body and never be afraid to ask for help when needed." She reminds those attending NBB to, "Let your TAC and flight commander know you need help, then grab a wingman and go!"

If Captain Crockett is not available at her normal post in the Dining Facility, don't worry! There are a host of other medical professionals available including EMTs, paramedics, and combat medics.

Capt. Crockett's duties also include working with head chef, Captain Thorpe. Working together, this team ensures cadets have balanced meals and cadets stay hydrated. The two also work together to work around food allergies that members at NBB might have.

*James Eimers, C/Capt  
PAO*

## **Advance Party Preps Beret Base**



In the military, an advance party provides terminal guidance, air traffic control, ground control measures, intelligence gathering, and surface weather observation in the objective area of an airlift operation. National Blue Beret also has an advance party each year but with a different mission.

The NBB advance party arrived before the rest of the attendees and prepared Beret Base for the activity. Dedicated seniors and cadets tirelessly scrubbed, painted, cleaned and polished much of the compound.

It's very important that attendees maintain the facility and equipment used at NBB. The Beret Rocks were cleaned and painted. Equipment and vehicles were also unpacked, inventoried, and prepared for use. Please return any equipment in the same or better condition than you received it. Also, teams installed antennas for communications and organized the ES building. Finally, the kitchen received a deep cleaning from this dedicated crew. Thanks to all those who helped with these tasks.



*James Eimers, C/Capt  
PAO*

## From the Cadet Commander

Two hours before I graduated from Whitewater High School, with my best friend sitting next to me, I opened an email that informed me I would be the cadet commander for this National Blue Beret. I was excited, to say the least, and three months later I am sure my friend's ears are still ringing! After I walked across the stage and received my diploma, I began worrying. All I could think about were the challenges I would face. At times I was filled with doubt. I was a short, female cadet second lieutenant with just more than two years experience in CAP and just two months experience as cadet commander in my home squadron. How in the world would I lead a successful National Cadet Special Activity? I turned to the best resource I had--my fellow Berets and my fellow cadets from my home squadron. With support from my friends and Col Bracewell, my mentor, I began to work through my doubts and build a plan for success. By the time I arrived, I knew I could meet this challenge.



I mention my personal experience with this challenge, to make a point. In life, you will face difficulties that will test your ability to lead. Regardless of the source (CAP, school, family, work), you will face challenges and the way you handle these opportunities will shape and mold your leadership style. Experience is a great teacher. You will make mistakes and you may feel like quitting at times--like when you are exhausted beyond belief on the flight line. This is a natural response to being overwhelmed. True leaders in tough situations will take a step back, make a plan, and dive into the problem. Leaders draw from a deep reserve of energy, and perhaps from coffee, in occasions such as this.

During this activity, you will think about quitting at least once. When you get to that point, view your exhaustion as a leadership challenge. Give yourself a chance to breathe, look at the big picture, and find the strength

to have a positive attitude. One cadet with a positive attitude can affect the attitude of the entire flight and it can spread to the whole activity. Overcoming this challenge lead to an important leadership characteristic: stress management. Bosses, teachers, and parents love a person who can handle a difficult situation in a calm manner. You can learn this at NBB. We teach you many things here in classes and using on the job training. However, leadership experience is something WE cannot teach you--you have to learn it for yourself.

I am honored to be the cadet commander and I hope you enjoy your time here at National Blue Beret 2013.



**Elizabeth Johnson, C/2d Lt  
Cadet Commander**

**Did you know?**

The EAA Museum has more than 230 aircraft in its collection. It started back in 1962 when Steve Wittman donated his famous air racer “Bonzo”. Since then over 20,000 historic aviation objects have been added to the collection!

*Major Carolyn Franz  
PAO*



**Flight Patch**



Flight Commander: C/2d Lt Matthew Johnson

Flight Leader: C/Capt Kyle Adams

TAC: 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Ethan Peterson

Echo flight chose the minion because they think minions are totally cool. They carry around a minion holding a banana. Between them they know English, Latin, German, Spanish and Indonesian. They worked on the Green Glass Door riddle for 15 minutes.

**From the Safety Officer**

NBB 2013 is off to a great start. The cadets have been receiving a significant amount of flight line training and they have been practicing their skills on the flight lines at Oshkosh for the past two days. I am fully confident in their ability to keep the lines moving quickly to see that each arriving pilot is able to enjoy everything EAA AirVenture has to offer. Just remember to keep your head on a swivel and make sure the orange vest you are wearing is covering your gear, not beneath it.

*J. Anthony Plattsmier, 2d Lt  
Safety Officer*