



Behind the 8 Ball



Blue Beret National Cadet Special Activity Oshkosh, Wisconsin

Volume 11
Issue 6
1 August 2014

Two American Heroes come to the Beret Compound

Dick Rutan and Charlie Plum visited the NBB compound on Monday to share their experiences as leaders. By Dick Rutan's nineteenth birthday, he joined the Air Force Aviation Cadet Program where he was commissioned as a 2d Lieutenant. In flight school he was top of his class out of all the other pilots in the nation and was allowed to choose his own combat aircraft, the F-100. Most of his time in the Air Force was spent flying in Vietnam. There he flew 325 combat missions, 105 of which were high-risk classified missions also known as "MISTYs". On his last mission over North Vietnam he was hit by enemy ground fire and had to eject over the Gulf of Tonkin. Mr. Rutan evaded the enemy and was later rescued by the "Jolly Green Giants". Before his retirement, he was awarded the Silver Star, five Distinguished Flying Crosses, 16 Air Medals and the Purple Heart. Charlie Plum also flew missions over Vietnam as a naval aviator. He was shot down, captured, and imprisoned in the famous Hanoi Hilton. He described how communication and leadership among the American POWs allowed them to survive in the torturous conditions for years. Their message was that freedom is never more than a generation away from going away and it is our responsibility to protect and preserve it.



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Matthew Chirik, C/1st Lt
Chief Cadet Public Affairs Article

National Director of Cadet Programs, Curt LaFond, Speaks to Cadets

On Tuesday the Blue Beret cadets had the opportunity to meet with the Director of Cadet Programs at National Headquarters, Mr. Curt LaFond. After sharing his background in CAP and offering some advice, he opened the floor to any and all questions. Many cadets took full advantage of the opportunity and asked some very intelligent, well thought out questions. Questions ranged from uniform policy, to the new encampment regulations, to Mr. LaFond's favorite memories as a cadet.

Kyle Adams, C/Maj
Cadet Public Affairs Officer



Thoughts from the Safety Officer

Expertly commanding the flight line, cadets marshaled thousands of aircraft over the last 10 days. Continuing the tradition of Blue Beret, CAP has caused zero mishaps out of the thousands of arrivals and departures. Being front row for all aircraft attending and performing in Air Venture, the cadets witnessed vintage, warbird, modern, and homebuilt aircraft up close and personal. Overall, Blue Beret activities have enabled the airshow's success.

To guarantee each cadet's health and welfare, safety has remained the number one priority. Safety briefs, demonstrations, and practical applications were conducted each morning to assist in this goal. A safety survey was conducted over the first two days that identified concerns and issues, after which, recommendations were forwarded to Lt Col Peace. It is exciting that there were zero critical items identified and the Fire Marshal's inspection proved to be spotless.

As the Safety Officer, I am pleased with the efforts all members have made towards safe and mission effective conduct. Each member responded to minor corrections, recommendations, and advisories in a timely manner.

Thanks to cadets, staff members, senior members, and EAA flightline operations for contributions to maintaining a solid safety posture, while accomplishing mission requirements in support of EAA's Air Venture at Oshkosh.



**Brian Bauer, Maj
NBB Safety Officer**

From the Chief Cadet Public Affairs Officer



We have had a great year at National Blue Beret. This activity is a place like no other; the unique educational and service opportunities aren't available anywhere else. This is my second year at Blue Beret and it has once again proven to be an incredible experience.

In my opinion, there are three things that make National Blue Beret so special. First is the opportunities that you have here. AirVenture becomes the aviation capital of the world for the week of the show. Cadets have the chance to see the newest planes, best pilots, and other rare sights. It is an opportunity that should never be passed up, you will regret it if you don't experience it. The second thing that makes NBB great is the set of skills that you will learn here. Cadets learn UDF skills in a unique environment where there are thousands of possible aircraft that could be emitting an ELT signal. Working the flight line at NBB is a rare opportunity because you get to marshal hundreds of aircraft. During my first year, I marshaled more aircraft than are at most airshows. The third, and best part of NBB in my opinion, is the friends that you will make. You may or may not like the people around you all of the time, but they are part of the beret family. The friendships that you make here will last and may grow into some of the strongest friendships that you have. This year has been a great year and I have enjoyed watching all of you learn and earn your berets. You all embody the spirit of service before self. Without you upholding the tradition of service, the beret is just a piece of cloth on your head. Good luck to all of you and remember that the person makes the beret, not the other way around.

**Matthew J. Chirik, C/1st Lt
Chief Cadet Public Affairs Officer**

A Final Thought From the Cadet Executive Staff



Leading the cadets at National Blue Beret is one of the most rewarding experiences that CAP offers. The diversity of challenges, combined with the mission at Airventure and the excitement that the cadets get out of the airshow, all come together to create a unique leadership experience at every level that cannot be duplicated by any other activity.

**Joshua Schwanke, C/Capt
NBB Cadet Deputy Commander**

Kilo Flight Patch



Flight Commander: C/Capt. Travis Seibt
Flight Leader: C/CMSgt Russell Page
TAC: Maj Paul Kloehn

Charlie Flight Patch



Flight Commander: C/1st Lt Anthony Bojanowski
Flight Leader: C/Capt. Kara McRorey
TAC: Capt. Richard Ware

Cadets Receive Their Berets

Wednesday night, CAP members at the activity received their berets. After returning from the night air show, the cadets were called to formation on compound. Flight-by-flight, cadet-by-cadet, everyone received their blue beret from the activity director. The most important thing is to remember that the person makes the beret, the beret does not make the person. Being a Blue Beret is about embodying the idea of selfless service. "Being a Beret to me means to put others before self. It is all about the crest, not the hat," said Col Rick Franz, Assistant Activity Director. According to our Beret Handbook, the Saint Albans cross stands for being a protector of others. For those of you who have never heard the story of Saint Alban, here it is:

"Alban sheltered a Christian priest in his home, and was converted and baptized by him. When Roman soldiers went to Alban's house to look for the priest, Alban exchanged cloaks with the priest and was arrested in his stead at Chantry Island. Alban was taken before the magistrate, who was furious at the deception and ordered that Alban be given the punishment due to the priest if he had indeed become a Christian. Alban declared, "I worship and adore the true and living God who created all things." These words are still used in prayer at St Albans Abbey. St Alban was condemned to death and eventually sacrificed to the Roman gods."

Congratulations to all cadets for earning their berets.

Matthew Chirik, C/1st Lt
Chief Cadet Public Affairs Officer



Reflections of a New Beret

I came to this activity with an open mind and I am so glad that I did. This activity has reminded me of the importance of serving others... "servant leadership". Cadets have grown over the past couple of weeks into leaders that put others before themselves. It is an honor serving as a flight commander and it allows me to physically see the difference in the mindsets of my fellow flight members. Leadership through service is what it is all about, and this activity made a major impact on many cadets, including myself.

The airshow itself is like no other thing I have ever seen. It is absolutely spectacular and I can clearly understand now why people keep coming back. The esprit de corps at this activity is like no other NCSA I have ever been to. We have transformed from strangers arriving on compound to a family that has bonded over the past two weeks in support of the world's largest airshow. I would not trade my experiences or the friendships made for the world.

**Logan Gallo, C/Lt Col
Juliet Flight Commander**

Trivia

Last Issue Answer:

*What was the name of the Wing Commander
who formed Blue Beret in the 1960's?*

Col. Allen Towne



National Blue Beret Public Affairs Staff 2014



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