



SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
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## Letter from the Commander

Colonel Thomas B. Theis



To restate my acceptance speech at the change of command at the 2008 Minnesota Wing Conference, "I would like to thank Colonel Miller, the staff of Minnesota Wing Headquarters,

the four Group Commanders and their staff, and our 24 squadron commanders and their members for passing on a program that is highly respected throughout the Region and nation. This success could not have been accomplished without the dedication and service of the over 1200 members of the Wing.

I am honored to be counted among those who have served before me and look forward to their guidance and wisdom during the next four years.

Some of my personal goals as commander, are to ensure that the successes established by my predecessors continue; attempt to make activities of the wing accessible to all members of the wing, especially members of greater Minnesota; ensure all members of the Wing can appreciate a feeling of self-worth and appreciation for the service(s) they provide and ensure fair and equitable treatment for all members regardless of status or position..."

There have been a number of staff changes made in the weeks following taking command. The most significant of these appointments is naming my closest assistants in the

management of the Wing, Major Jerry Rosendahl as Vice Commander and Major Sherrie Herzfeld as the Chief of Staff.

At the Monday night meeting following the conference, I began placing an emphasis of professionalism at the Wing level. To meet that end, I have reminded Wing staff to remember they are serving at the corporate level of the Civil Air Patrol program. It is important for the staff to have the experience and working knowledge in their selected areas of service in order to best serve the units for which we are responsible. Although there are always exceptions to the rule, future appointees to Wing directorate and officer positions (will not apply to assistants) will be expected to have graduated from a Squadron Leadership School (SLS), Corporate Learning Course (CLC) and have attained a Senior rating in the function in which they are seeking appointment. Personnel already appointed to positions who have not yet attained this training, will be grand-fathered in and assisted in attaining this goal.

The transition from Colonel Miller to my accepting command was less than customary. Having a couple months behind us, I hope that we can all refocus our efforts into the tasks at hand, supporting the missions of Civil Air Patrol as best we can, at the level of excellence we, our communities, Region and Nation have become accustomed.

Semper Vigilans (Always Vigilant)

Colonel Thomas B. Theis

Commander

# Minnesota Wing Cadet Earns Spaatz Award, Named Wing Cadet of the Year

Capt. Richard Sprouse



C/Col Charles Cox (center) with Brig. Gen. Timothy Cossalter (left) and Col. Stephen Miller (right).

The Civil Air Patrol (CAP) Cadet Program seems a natural starting point for any young adult looking to launch a career in the US Air Force. But it's also a great place to start for anyone looking to serve in any branch of the military, or any career field. Take for instance, C/Col. Charles Cox of Edina, MN, the most recent recipient of the prestigious Gen. Carl A. Spaatz Award and Minnesota Wing Cadet of the Year.

"When I became a CAP cadet with Viking Squadron in Eden Prairie, I wanted to be an Air Force pilot," Cox said, "but I lost interest in flying, mostly due to my extensive participation in Emergency Services (ES)."

The cadet's interest in ES didn't go unnoticed by former Viking Composite Squadron commander, Maj. Alan Matson, of Minnetonka, who tasked Cox and several other Viking cadets to lead a squadron ES training exercise.

"Cadet Cox became part of the 'Core Team' of highly trained members at Viking Squadron who spent considerable time training for Emergency Services missions," Maj. Matson said. "We then invited members from other squadrons around the area to participate in our exercise. They were all amazed to see how well run the exercise was, and even more amazed when we told them that it had been planned and executed by our cadets."

Cadet Cox said participating in Emergency Services (ES) made him realize he liked working in the field, something better served in the US Army. It also led to a four-year Army ROTC scholarship at the University of St. Thomas, where's he completing his first year of college majoring in political science.

"Even though CAP is based on an Air Force structure it proved to be great preparation for serving in the Army," Cox said. "I never would have received a four-year Army ROTC scholarship without CAP."

Cox noted that proper wear of the uniform, drill and ceremony, understanding the military chain of command,

and "living in the field" due to his CAP ES experiences also prepared him to stand out in Army ROTC.

Other CAP opportunities included Hawk Mountain Ranger School, National Honor Guard Academy, and International Air Cadet Exchange where Cox spent 2 ½ weeks in England calling it, "One of the biggest and best honors, as well as overall experiences I've had in CAP."

A 2007 graduate of Edina High School, Cadet Cox became a member of Viking Squadron in 2003 where he held every position from element leader to cadet commander before joining Ft. Snelling Cadet Squadron in Minneapolis last September.

Cox said CAP also provided him something that many young military leaders and young adults lack: confidence. His confidence level has soared because of his CAP leadership experiences.

"When Cadet Cox first joined Viking Squadron, he was fairly quiet and unsure of himself," Maj. Matson said. "As he progressed through the ranks he kept seeking new responsibilities, and he quickly mastered each of the new tasks that we assigned to him. We could tell early on that he would develop into a top cadet, because he exhibited all of the traits of a leader." CAP learned traits that Cox now applies to ROTC.

"I learned how to look after people, work with people, communicate effectively with subordinates, peers and superiors, and be a mentor," Cox said. "CAP provided me an avenue to succeed, so I strongly recommend it to any young adult, whether they're thinking of a military career or not."

Already recognizing that a job in the business world would be rather unsatisfying, Cox hopes for a long career as an Army Infantry Officer.

"Nothing against the Air Force, but for me, I think with the Army there is a lot of satisfaction in what you do as well as something different, exciting, and even dangerous at times," Cox said. "I never want to sit at a desk."

Cadet Cox is the son of Mark Cox of St. Paul and the son and stepson of Suzanne and Grant Hartman of Edina.

## **Theis Assumes Command of Minnesota Wing**

**Capt. Richard Sprouse**

Thomas Theis was promoted to the rank of colonel and named commander of the Minnesota Wing of the Civil Air Patrol during the 61<sup>st</sup> Annual Minnesota Wing Conference, April 11-13, in Alexandria, MN. He succeeded Colonel Stephen Miller who had served as wing commander for the past four years.

Theis, a CAP member since 1980, has held staff positions at Wing Headquarters including Administration Officer Assistant, Director of Cadet Programs, and two terms as Inspector General, his most recent position.

Theis has also been commander of Bloomington, North Hennepin, Valley, Viking, West Metro and 130<sup>th</sup> squadrons, as well as Group III Headquarters.

Major awards and recognition received include a Master Rating in Cadet Programs and Senior Rating in Inspector General; Paul Garber and Charles E. "Chuck" Yeager Aerospace Awards; three Commander's Commendations; and numerous additional CAP awards including the CAP-USAF "Torch Award." He has also received the "Air Force Association Aerospace Excellence" award, and the "WTCN '11 Who Care' Award."

Theis' military experience includes 24 years of active and reserve service in the US Air Force. He's scheduled to retire from the Reserves this August.

His civilian occupation includes 20 years service as a Department of Defense employee with the Defense Logistics Agency and the 934<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing at the Minnea-

polis Air Reserve Station, Minnesota.

A pilot, his FAA qualifications include a Ground Instructor rating, Fixed Wing Private Pilot and Rotary Wing, Commercial, licenses.



**Col. Dale Hoium, NCR-COS (left) and Col. Kevin Sliwinski (right) slip on the epaulettes for incoming Wing Commander, Col. Tom Theis (center).**

## **Minnesota Wing Adds New Member to Legislative Squadron**

**Capt. Richard Sprouse**

Minnesota State Senator Bill Ingebrigtsen of Alexandria, MN, is the newest member of the Minnesota Wing's legislative squadron. Senator Ingebrigtsen was presented his membership certificate at the 2008 MN Wing Conference.

Senator Ingebrigtsen worked in law enforcement for 34 years, including 32 years in law enforcement in Douglas County. The last 16 years he served as the elected sheriff of Douglas County before retiring and being elected to the Minnesota Senate in 2006.

Senator Ingebrigtsen is the first elected sheriff to the legislature.



**Senator Bill Ingebrigtsen receives his membership certificate from Col. Stephen Miller.**

## Wing Conference CAC Meeting

C/2nd Lt. David Johnson

CAC, or Cadet Advisory Counsel, is a group of our Wing's sterling cadets; those who shape the fabric of our cadet program in Minnesota Wing.

Although, even with the significant responsibility placed on the cadets of the CAC, I was doubtful that these cadets could have much of an impact on Minnesota Wing. I was poorly mistaken, and having now attended the meeting at Wing Conference this year, I can now conclude that I have the utmost respect for the officers and representatives of the CAC.

The meeting was extremely informative and covered a multitude of different subjects. One of the first major subjects discussed was the wing conference itself. We discussed the classes and cadet activities. It was decided that more cadet classes should be held next year as well as inter-squadron activities, to encourage the cadets of Minnesota Wing get to know one another. Many ideas were put forth, including a military ball as well as a cadet pizza party on Friday night.

Next we moved on to the planning of future weekend activities in the wing such as, SnoDayz, St. Cloud Lock-in and Volleyball Competition and the Cadet Competition.

The most discussed of these activities was the Cadet Competition. This year seven squadrons participated in the competition, which is outstanding. Last year there were only three. We discussed ways to try to get more teams to the competition. The consensus was to have cadets who were able to send a team the previous year go to other squadrons to instruct them on the finer points of color guard.

Next was the election of the new Wing Executive Council, who will be taking command in August of this year. After several nominations and short speeches from those running, the Wing Executive Council stands thus: Chair, C/Maj. Joshua Woodard of Crow Wing Composite Squadron; Vice Chair, C/1st Lt. Jacob Otterson of North Hennepin Composite Squadron; and Recorder, C/2nd Lt. Travis Parker of South East Composite Squadron.

The Wing Conference CAC meeting was a very

good experience for me and I plan on attending more in the future.



Some of the 250 Cadet and Officer Members in attendance of the 2008 MN Wing Conference. (Photo by Capt. Richard Sprouse)



2008 MN Wing Conference logo. (Photo by Capt. Richard Sprouse)

# Minnesota Wing Cadets Take Second in the NCR Color Guard Competition

Maj. Janelle Gates

Congratulations and thank you to our Cadets for representing Minnesota Wing.

The cadets competed at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska April 18-20<sup>th</sup>. Five Wings from the region were represented at the competition.

It was a full day filled with leadership, team building, and camaraderie. The cadets really pulled together and did an outstanding job in their performance.

Top Fleet Foot Awards went to C/TSgt. Lance Myron (Anoka- CG) 6.11 minute mile and C/Capt. Jared Hendler (Valley- DT) 6.02 minute mile.

Thanks to the senior officers; Capt. Ryan Kenny, 1st Lt. Norine Olson and 2nd Lt. Russ Olson, who made sure the cadets were well taken care of with extra food and beverages for the long weekend and driving them safely there and home.

A special thank you to 1st Lt. Norine Olson and 2nd Lt. Russ Olson for all their extra efforts. Many cadets had to be picked up and dropped off at various locations not only for the competition but a few of the practices as well. Both Lt's Olson worked with several parents and cadets to help in getting this team together.

## Anoka represented Minnesota in the Color Guard Competition

C/MSgt. Peter Mayhew (Color Guard Commander).

C/SSgt. Emily Tholen

C/TSgt. Lance Myren

C/SSgt. Hanna Olsen

## The drill team consisted of many squadrons uniting together

C/Maj. Mike Kenny (Drill Team Commander) -Anoka

C/Maj. David Lucey- Anoka

C/Capt. Jared Hendler - Valley

C/MSgt. Jonathan Whitcomb - Anoka

C/MSgt. David Trudeau – St. Croix

C/TSgt. Matthew Frame - Anoka

C/TSgt. Andrew Prestegaard – St. Paul

C/TSgt. Dane Bjorkman - Anoka

C/SSgt. Kaelyn Olson - Valley

C/SRA Joseph Pahr – St. Paul

C/SRA Christian Lysholm - Anoka

C/A1C Caleb Schmidt – St. Paul

C/Amn Dylan Jackson - Valley



Minnesota Wing cadets placed second in the North Central Region Color Guard Competition held at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska. Cadets came from several squadrons across the wing that included Anoka, St. Croix, St. Paul and Valley.

## Members Deliver Annual Report to Congress Col. Kevin Sliwinski and C/Col. Charles Cox

Cadet and Officer Members from four squadrons met with many state legislators when they presented the Civil Air Patrol Annual Report to Congress to the senators and representatives at the State Capitol. The reports contained information about each of CAP's three missions, membership statistics, exciting new initiatives, and the overall direction of the corporation. In addition to the national report, a Minnesota-specific report and an invitation to join the Legislative Squadron were delivered as well.

Hand delivering each copy, the cadets had the chance to meet with multiple representatives and senators during the day. "To be able to meet such influential people and talk to them about CAP and what it is and has done for me personally, that was a rare opportunity. It was a great time," said C/CMSgt. Stefan Hall. The cadets enjoyed meeting with their representatives and presenting what CAP has to offer to their communities.

After delivering the reports, the cadets were showed around the Capitol by Col. Kevin Sliwinski, the Wing Government Relations Officer. The group sat in the upper gallery and watched the proceedings on the floor of the House of Representatives and the Senate Chambers. It was a great chance to see the state government at work debating bills and conducting business.

The participants were: Col. Kevin Sliwinski, Maj. Janelle Gates, 2nd Lt. George Supan, C/Col. Charles Cox, C/CMSgt. Stefan Hall, C/CMSgt. Peter Mayhew, C/SMSgt. Lance Myren, C/SSgt. Emily Tholen, C/SSgt. Kaelyn Olson, and C/Amn Dylan Jackson.



Minnesota Wing members present Senator Leroy Stumpf the Annual Report to Congress. Senator Stumpf was one of the founding members of the Northwest MN Composite Squadron.

Cadets Mayhew (left) and Whitney (right) with Senator Jim Metzen.



Cadets Whitney (left) and Mayhew (right) with Senator Dan Sparks.

Cadets Mayhew (left) and Whitney (right) with Senator David Tomassoni.



## Members Recognized by AFA 2nd Lt. Norine Olson

Many members from across the Air Force gathered on April 26 for the 2008 Annual Awards Dinner hosted by the Air Force Association and Air Force Sergeant's Association.

Those in attendance had the opportunity to enjoy a great meal and excellent company. Brig. Gen. Dennis Schulstad was the guest speaker for the evening.

Five members of Minnesota Wing were recognized for their work and contributions to their communities. Those members were C/1st Lt. Jason Anderson, 130th; Maj. Conrad Peterson, Group Two; C/SSgt. Kaelyn Olson, Valley; C/Col. Laura Broker, Ft. Snelling and Maj. Ryan Brovold, St. Cloud.



Minnesota Wing members were recognized by the Air Force Association at their annual awards dinner in Forest Lake. From left to right are: C/1st Lt. Jason Anderson, Maj. Conrad Peterson, C/SSgt. Kaelyn Olson, C/Col. Laura Broker, Col. Tom Theis and Maj. Ryan Brovold.

## Awards and Promotions

### Officer Promotions

#### **Second Lieutenant**

Erik Lindquist, Viking  
Ann Moudry, Wesota

#### **Major**

D. Curtis Martin, Southeast MN  
Antonio Rossini, 130th  
Cecil Schmidt, Crow Wing  
David Olin, MN State Legislative  
Steve Drazkowski, MN State Legislative

#### **Colonel**

Thomas Theis, MN Wing HQ



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**Chaplain (Maj.)  
Robert McLawhorn  
shows off his  
Samurai skills  
while teaching one  
of the Cadet Pro-  
grams classes at  
Wing Conference.**

**Chap. McLaw-  
horn's class was  
based on self-  
discipline and  
standing up to peer  
pressure.**



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those of the U.S. Air Force, Civil Air Patrol or Minnesota Wing.  
Submissions should be sent to the above email address.

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