

Submitted Articles from Texas Members

Cadet Officer School, 16-26 June

MONTGOMERY, Alabama - “Estamos aquí (*We are here*, in Spanish), Sir!” shouted Flight One during Colonel Governale’s unique roll call.

On June 16, 2008, cadet officers from all over the country, some even from Puerto Rico, flew far and wide to reach Montgomery, Alabama for a National Cadet Special Activity: Cadet Officer School. This course, hosted at Huntingdon College in Alabama, was a ten-day journey strictly for cadet officers ages 16 to 21. Over 120 cadets eagerly showed up at the event. C/Col Elizabeth Dumont, Michigan Wing, commented, “The primary purpose of COS is to produce the best leaders in the Civil Air Patrol.”

Upon arriving, the cadets were divided into ten flights, with one CAP Senior member and one Air Force member assigned to each one. The next day, the cadets’ journey would begin.



[1] CAP National Headquarters. **[2]** The subjects were taught in an atmosphere of relaxed seriousness. **[3]**-**[4]** The campus was beautiful **[5]** The traditional architecture was conducive to learning and camaraderie.

Throughout the week, the cadets heard lectures presented by various people. If one were to attend these lectures outside of Cadet Officer School, the cost would have amounted to thousands of dollars. The speakers included: Dr. John Ackerman on critical thinking, Major General Stephen Miller on senior officer perspective, Captain Shon Dodson on talking papers, Colonel John Warden on strategic thinking, Charles Lawler on speaking effectively, Colonel Hank Fowler on courage under fire, Dr. Hank Dasinger on foundations and psychology of leadership, Chief Master Sergeant Sam Whalum on leadership and followership, Dr. Tom Hughes on evolution of airpower, Dr. Phil Chansler on innovation and creativity, Lieutenant Colonel Michael Hower on evolution of space power, Colonel George Boyd on Tuskegee Airmen, Second Lieutenant Kyle Yates on small unit leadership, and Chaplain Robert Hicks on leadership and ethics.



(Col. John Warden)

“The speakers were absolutely fantastic,” said C/Maj Chad Aukerman, Tennessee Wing.

The speaker who influenced me the most was Colonel John Warden. It is just so amazing that one man could create such an intricate thinking process that it even came to be used in U.S. wars. Surprisingly, he brought hundreds of copies of his book, *Winning in Fast Time* that cadets could purchase, and he autographed them for the cadets, including mine.



[6] The world is uncertainty, where the unexpected is the norm. [7] Lt Col Rob Smith was always there for us. [8] Our mascot, Wilson, having a bad hair day. [9] Every class was a challenge of the mind. (2nd from right, C/Capt Tiffany Hamm - Ed.) [10] Every evening we tested our volley ball skills. (Photo 9, unknown. All others, C/Capt Tiffany Hamm.)

In addition to everyday lectures, the flights held volley ball matches every day as well. We played three games a night. If one team won two out of three games, that was the winning team. My team, Flight One, lost only one game, which in turn shows how much teamwork and practice we put into our effort.

“You can tell when the cadets begin to ‘come out of their shells.’ That’s usually when the flights start to advance,” said Major Brandon Ford, USAF, Nevada Wing.

Towards the end of the week, the cadets were able to participate in a special treat, Project X. Although it was fascinating, the details cannot be disclosed to the public; but I can say that contributing to Project X was an incredible experience.

Some flights chose to have their own mascot. Flight One’s mascot was Wilson, a volley ball. Wilson was based on the volley ball from the movie *Castaway*, although the flight members gave it hair made out of paper.

To summarize my experience at Cadet Officer School, it was absolutely amazing -- and completely worth every bit of the \$250.00 tuition. It was amazing to be in a group of cadets who had come from all over the country, experience our coming together, and be able to

produce such teamwork without even thinking twice. I was truly in the heart of CAP activities.

“COS is the premier professional education program for our cadets. We present high standards, and every year, our cadets always rise to the challenge,” said CAP Lieutenant Colonel Rob Smith, our flight's assigned CAP officer.