



The Fly-By



A Quarterly Newsletter Of the

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SOUTHWEST REGION

2007



AF LTC Carleton discussing the SAREX exercise



CAP Col. Skiba addressing the SAREX staff

On May 17-18-19 the first Region-wide SAREX was conducted out of the new C-4 facility located in the Arkansas Wing Headquarters in Little Rock. This exercise was conducted by Region Commander Col. Reggie Chitwood and his Vice-Commander Col. Joe Jensen.

They were assisted by Controllers for individual Wings as follows:

New Mexico Wing-LTC Nancy Smalley
Texas Wing –Major Larry Matiello
Arizona Wing-Col. Andre Davis
Oklahoma Wing-LTC Paul Spencer
Arkansas Wing-LTC Doug Alexander
Louisiana Wing-CM Sgt. Lou Walpus

These Controllers were in close contact both by phone and video with their respective Wings all through this exercise, setting up and monitoring their missions. Additional support was provided by Regional Staff members Capt. Harriet Smith, the SWR Director of Admin/Per and Capt. Fran Burger, Senior Advisor to Col. Chitwood. Also, SWR Chaplain LTC Smalley and SWR Chief of Staff Major Matiello did double duty both as controllers and as Chaplain and Safety Officer for this exercise. LTC Jim Gilbert, the Arkansas Wing Chief of Staff was responsible for setting up and putting into operational readiness this new C-4 facility, but was not able to be present at this first exercise.

Col. Andrew E. Skiba, the National Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations was present to evaluate and advise for this exercise. Present also as observers were AF LTC Jim Lasche, the SWLR Commander; AF Major Don Hensley, the SWLR/OPS Officer; and LTC Carleton, the EPLO Officer from FEMA Region 6.

In addition to the SAREX, a CAP-USAF SAR/EVAL was conducted on the TXWG having the CAP-USAF team utilize the C-4 to task and receive mission reports from the TXWG.

In his formal report Col. Skiba stated that he found that Col. Chitwood had put together an outstanding team who addressed many of the issues that could be expected under an actual wide-spread disaster mission such as 'Katrina' presented. He reported to Nat. Commander Gen. Pineda that we could activate the C-4 LIT as a functional, available C-4 center.

Congratulations to all for a job well done!

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Arkansas Wing Headquarters building and secured parking lot.

As Col. Andy Skiba from National Headquarters said after a recent visit to the Arkansas Wing Headquarters, "The facility that they have at LIT is the best that I have seen in CAP" and "It is an ideal site to consider as a staging area should that be required for future missions." High praise, indeed!

He was commenting upon the Headquarters building that the Arkansas Wing had been operating out of since 2002. When Col. Reggie Chitwood became Arkansas Wing Commander in late 2001, he saw immediately the need for an expanded facility. The Wing was, at that time, operating out of a double-wide trailer on the edge of the Little Rock Airport grounds. Taking into consideration the new tasks demanded by 9/11 and the needs of the Cadet Squadron, it was apparent the more space was needed.

Across the airport, next to an FBO facility was a large two-story, 33,000 sq. ft. former Air National Guard Armory that was no longer occupied. Col. Chitwood negotiated with the Airport Commission and was able to obtain perpetual, rent-free, all maintenance provided occupancy of the structure. The Airport Commission also provided about \$25,000 in renovations to make it suitable for CAP purposes.

The result is a state of the art facility that has potential for more than just Arkansas Wing activities and is in fact now being also used as a Regional C-4 center.

This building is extensively DSL and 'wireless' equipped. It has separate offices for Wing Staff members, kitchen, dining area, several restrooms, shower facilities, storage rooms, and an up-to-date operations center. This OC has an interconnected computer system allowing real-time WMIRS and MIMS updates and is connected to large TV monitors situated around the building so that the status of on going operations can be viewed without having to visit the OC.

The entire structure is centrally heated and cooled. The facility also has a paved, fenced-in, secure parking lot for over 50 vehicles. A public thoroughfare provided access to the Headquarters without having to enter the airport proper. Aircraft can be parked within 1/4th mile and in the future, will probably be parked right next to the building.

The facility's upper floor houses the 42nd Composite Squadron with large classrooms and full audio/visual equipment, more restroom and shower facilities and a 60 x 60 drill hall that can also be used for large assemblies, storing gear, or as sleeping quarters. This floor is where the new Regional C-4 has been located.

Because of its central location in the country, this facility has great potential on a local, regional, and national level. It is something in which we can all take great pride.

New SW Region Commander

On June 26, 2007 SW Region Commander Col. Reggie Chitwood was called upon by National Commander General Pineda to assume new duties as National Chief of Staff. At the same time Gen. Pineda expressed a desire that Vice-Commander Col. Joe Jensen be named the next SW Region Commander. Both these changes took place the following day, June 27, 2007.

Col. Jensen plans at this time to retain the same Regional Staff and to lead the Region toward the same goals that were instituted by Col. Chitwood. The formal change of command for Col. Jensen will take place at the National Board meeting in Atlanta in August.

We wish both these gentlemen our best wishes as we enter a new era of Command in our Region.

New NM Wing Commander

At the June SW Region Staff meeting, interviews for the position of New Mexico Wing Commander were conducted by Col. Reggie Chitwood, Col. Joe Jensen, and Arizona Wing Commander Col. William Lynch.

On June 20, 2007 Col. Ric Himebrook was named the next New Mexico Wing Commander and promoted to the rank of Colonel. The formal Change of Command will take place in New Mexico on July 20, 2007. At this time the graduation of the Region Staff College will also occur. We will be reporting on both events.

Meanwhile, congratulations to Col. Himebrook on his new position. He has been doing a stellar job as NM Wing Vice-Commander and should be a great Wing Commander.



On May 12, 2007 C/Col. Caitlin Raye Cima was presented the Spatz award by former Texas Wing Commander Frank Eldridge at a ceremony held at the Texas Wing Headquarters. SWR Chaplain Lt. Col. Nancy Smalley presented C/Col. Cima with a Spatz coin and Major Mike

Hopkins, Cima's squadron commander, presented her with a squadron challenge coin. Attending the ceremony were family and CAP members that have served as guides and mentors through the years.

At this time C/Col Cima also graduated from college and received a commission in the United States Air Force.

All members of the CAP should be very proud to have people of the quality of C/Col Cima in their organization. We congratulate her on all her accomplishments!

Keep in mind that safety must be on every CAP members mind at all times.

The primary method of accomplishing this is through the safety briefing that is required to be done before engaging in any CAP activity.

In addition to the actual information that may be disseminated at these briefings, they also tend to keep reminding everyone that safety is our Number One priority.

From the Editor - - - This past quarter has been a very exciting time in our Region. The new C-4 was put into operation in Little Rock and we've seen numerous Changes of Command. Again, I urge all NWC members to forward to me any photos or news items that seem pertinent to our mission. I'd particularly like to hear of Cadet activities. The Cadet Corp is our future and we glory in each and every one of their accomplishments.