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Minnesota Flight Log is published quarterly for the members of the Rawlings Chapter of AFA. Members may view the newsletter on the Chapter website: rawlings-afa.org. To submit news articles or to report problems, call Bob McGonigal at 952-884-1625, or email him at mconginal67@earthlink.net.

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AFA MISSION

The Air Force Association **educates** the public about the critical role of aerospace power in defense of our nation, **advocates** aerospace power and a strong national defense, and **supports** the U.S. Air Force and the Air Force family.

Visions of Exploration – Teacher of the Year

The 2008-2009 Rawlings Teacher of the Year is Jennifer Birkel. Mrs. Birkel is a teacher at Lake Jr. High School, Woodbury, MN, and has been actively involved with the Visions of Exploration Program for over five years.

This school year, the Chapter is sponsoring 145 classrooms in the Visions of Exploration Program. Throughout 17 years of participation, the Rawlings Chapter, along with the Air Force Association and USA TODAY, has teamed up to encourage the nation's elementary, middle, and high school students learn skills necessary for success in Math, Science, Technology, Language, Geography and History.

This is an easy opportunity for you to get involved with your chapter. Sponsor a classroom in your area, get credit as an AFA member, and get the word spread about the Air Force Association and its objectives within the community. Your tax deductible sponsorship cost is about \$115 per classroom. Each sponsored classroom receives 30 copies of USA TODAY one day a week for 18 weeks. You choose the school and teacher, or give us an area and we will place it for you.

If interested, contact Kimberly Johnson at 651.636.4100, ext. 621, or e-mail kojohnson@usatoday.com. Kimberly will answer any questions and get you started.

Take note: End of TriCare for Life

There are rumors in the DoD ... that to meet budget and field weapons systems, health care will require reform. NOTE: The reference is Page 175 – Option 96. Check out <http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/00xx/doc9925/12-18HealthOptions.pdf>.

The proposal is to increase deductibles and co-pays up to \$6,301 the first year for you and your spouse, with future years being indexed to increase with inflation.

Need more info? Contact Bob McGonigal for a copy of the e-mail at 952-884-1625 or mconginal67@earthlink.net.

AFA National Coverage

The Aerospace Education Council of AFA has added Rawlings Chapter's TV coverage of our awards banquet to their newest newsletter. Take note of the link: afa.org/members/AENews/May09/rawlings.asp

Awards Banquet



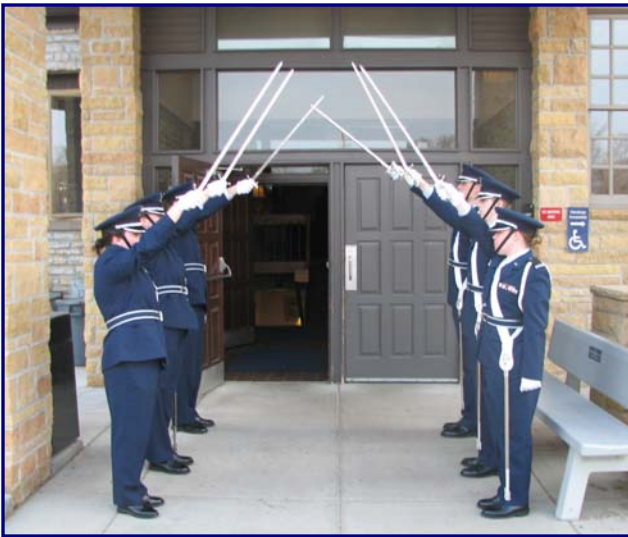
*One of four Cadet Speakers
Cadet Gharrity*



POW / MIA Table



*Rawlings Teacher of the Year
2009, Mrs. Jennifer Birkel,
Lake Jr HS Woodbury*



University of St. Thomas Saber Arch Team



*Vic Seavers presented awards to (row 1) David Johnson,
Andrew Prestegaard, (row 2) Thomas Briggs, John Kubat,
(row 3) Talon Beck, Alex Magnuson*



Vic Seavers presented awards to (row 1) Christine Spampinato, Anthony Zerwas, (row 2) Kristoffer Bornetun, Mathew Countryman, (row 3) Richard Krivanek, Christopher Nietzel, (row 4) Charles Moore, Stephanie Belle-Isle, (row 5) 96AS/CC excepting for Dennis Mishler

Air & Space Conference 14 – 16 September 2009

On Sunday evening, September 13, The Air Force Association, through the generosity of Lockheed Martin Corporation, will again offer AFA Delegates an exciting opportunity to “fly” the F-22 Raptor and F-35 Lighting II – the world’s only 5th Generation Fighters. You will be able to climb into the cockpit demonstrators that realistically simulate the revolutionary technologies that only these two aircraft possess. Representatives will be on hand to provide the latest, up-to-date information on the status of the Air Force acquisition programs for this game-changing technology. Invitation is limited to first 140 who RSVP. More info needed? Contact: Glenn Shull at 952.831.5235.

Mentorship Program

We're at the end of the 2009 school year for the ROTC cadets at St. Thomas and the University of Minnesota. So the mentor program is also done for this session. I very much appreciate the cooperation and participation from all of you.

Not everyone was assigned a cadet, but there are some new things I'd like to incorporate this fall to make the program more effective and beneficial, to wit: 1) consider reassigning mentors and cadets at the end of the first semester so the cadets have the opportunity to talk to more than one AFA member; 2) assign an officer mentor for one semester and a non-commissioned officer mentor for the other semester so the cadets get the perspective of both sides of the Air Force; 3) develop a Speakers Bureau to provide AFA members willing to be at brown bag get-togethers of the Detachments to talk informally with cadets; 4) encourage AFA members to come to various functions of the detachments, e.g. Lead Labs, Awards Ceremonies, Change of Command, etc., to show the flag and have the opportunity to talk to cadets.

If you have other ideas about making the program better or thoughts about these ideas of mine, please e-mail me at gjsamp66@comcast.net. The ROTC detachments have been very supportive of the mentor program so I would like to continue working with them and the cadets as a value-added benefit from the Rawlings Chapter and hopefully an incentive to continue their careers in the Air Force.

I'm looking forward to this fall – have a great summer!
– Garrett Sampson

Silver Wings

Military or civilian, this generation knows the importance of service. We volunteer more than any generation before us and the sacrifice of those allied with our armed forces means that much of American society escapes the burden of our global involvements.

And service starts young. At the University of St Thomas we have a Silver Wings chapter – a group of students and cadets dedicated to serving others. Our Silver Wings chapter is the largest in the upper Midwest area and we combined for over 200 service hours last semester.

In one year, we have assembled food packages for starving countries, painted the children’s bedroom in an immigrant’s first American home and stayed up ‘till dawn supporting the St. Jude Children’s’ Research Hospital.

But Silver Wings means much more. It also serves to bring together civilians and cadets to reach common goals. Bridging the military and civilian worlds is essential for this generation, probably more so than in any recent one. Working side by side with my Silver Wings comrades, I don’t think we have much to worry about.

Volunteer means you’re there because you want to contribute, and I feel proud pitching in, even if it’s just a few hours out of my weekly schedule. With cooperation and purpose, we can give our children a world as peaceful as the one we grew up in, and I personally hope to continue giving back long after our cadets graduate and earn their commissions. – Zack Thielke, Public Affairs Officer, St. Thomas Silver Wings

Reaching for the Sky

In the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) University of St. Thomas Detachment 410 students are encouraged to reach their goals, including those thousands of feet from the ground. This year ROTC at St. Thomas is proud to reveal that all six of our cadets that competed nationwide for the chance to be pilots or navigators won the contest! The desire to fly for these men started when most of them were young boys.

Cadets are rated nationwide by their academic performance, physical fitness test scores and performance as cadet officers. At St. Thomas, we have a long standing tradition of training cadets to compete favorably for flying slots. It has been an exciting college experience for these cadets.



Pictured from left to right Cadet Colonel Michael Kieffaber, Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Phillip J. Brick, Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Craig Ingvalson, Cadet First Lieutenant Andrew Pagenkof, Cadet First Lieutenant Brenton Glaus, Cadet Colonel Alexander Peterson

When asked what they like most about the ROTC, Cadet Peterson says, “The cadets overall have become my brothers and sisters and I would do anything, anytime, anyplace to help them out.” Cadet Kieffaber says AFROTC Det 410 has helped him become a better leader because of “... the high standards they hold every cadet to, the friendly competition between cadets to be better ourselves, the excellent example of cadets before me and cadre members.”

The stories of these cadets are close echoes of many great pilots, navigators and leaders in the proud tradition of St. Thomas. We are proud of their accomplishments and look forward to seeing them soar in the skies, and help other young men and women reach their dreams. For more information about the Air Force ROTC program at St. Thomas please visit our website at stthomas.edu/afrotc/default.htm – Cadet Major Rachel C. Willenbring

Preparation for Field Training

Cadets in the 410th Cadet Wing at the University of Saint Thomas (UST) prepare for Field Training in an AFROTC program known as FTP, or Field Training Preparation. FTP is a training curriculum which usually lasts one academic year. Any cadet who is attending Field Training the upcoming summer participates in FTP. The FTP curriculum is directed and taught by upperclassmen who performed exceptionally well at past Field Trainings. Sometimes these upperclassmen have even attended an additional Field Training as Cadet Training Assistants.

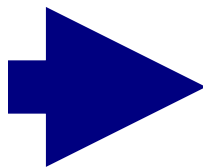
In the fall semester, the curriculum is learning-based and has an academic tone or environment. This is when FTP cadets begin to learn about Field Training, using the Field Training Manual and Airman's Manual in preparation for the spring semester. In the spring semester, the curriculum becomes more intense and has a training tone or environment. During this time cadets master key components of Field Training knowledge such as physical fitness, drill, inspections, standard operating procedures and uniform wear.

The event that FTP cadets prepare for over the course of this one academic year, Field Training, is a 28-day long encampment. Cadets are assigned to attend one of six Field Training Units held over the course of the summer. Each unit will train, and possibly graduate, approximately 400 cadets. Field Training is designed to evaluate military leadership and discipline, determine cadets' potential for entry into the professional officer corps, and stratify cadets among their peers. Tools for assessment at training include physical fitness tests, confidence courses, group leadership problems, leadership competency evaluations and tests of individual situational leadership. Attrition

rates at Field Training Units have ranged from 2-10% over the past two summers. No cadet from our unit has been removed with prejudice from Field Training in recent history, largely due to our quality training programs.

In January 2008, the Air Force unveiled sweeping changes to the AFROTC Field Training program. Both directors of the FTP curriculum this academic year attended the 'old' Field Training as trainees in 2007 and attended the 'new' Field Training as trainers in 2008. This added experience has been invaluable to this year's FTP cadets at UST.

The old Field Training involved living 28 days in-garrison (in dorms) with physical training, classroom lessons, outdoor lessons on tactics and a three-day stint in the field. The new and improved Field Training involves cadets living in-garrison for the first 12 days with physical training and classroom lessons. The following 14 days, cadets live in the field, first learning and then applying Air Expeditionary Force concepts in a mock forward operating base with intense physical training. This new experience gives cadets a sensitivity of responsibility to service, not just for the sake of one's self, but for the sake of the 400+ other cadets also training and serving in the experience. The new Field Training concludes in-garrison with a debrief that explains the why behind Field Training. This new Field Training better prepares your American Airmen to fly, fight and win in the defense of this nation. – *by Cadets Brad Byington, Tim Flesch, and Brenton Glaus*



Volunteer Needed

Note: The June 3rd and July 8th meeting minutes of the United Veterans Legislative Council of Minnesota are available at their website: mnuvlc.org. Rawlings Chapter needs a volunteer to attend future meetings of the UVLC and present a synopsis at our Chapter meetings. Contact Glenn Shull at 952-831-5235.

Veterans Benefits

(for full stories and links, go to AFA.org/VBA)

DFAS Suspends Separation Recoupment

Recoupment of military retirees' Variable Separation Incentive, Special Separation Benefit and separation payments by DFAS has been temporarily suspended pending a formal policy and legal review by DoD. The suspension of recoupment actions is being taken for military retirees in an active pay status effective for the May 2009 retired pay entitlements, according to DFAS officials. Military retired pay received on June 1 will not be reduced by any recoupment amounts.

Deployment Opportunities Available for Civilians

Whether it's helping Iraqis with reconstruction projects or assisting Afghans with their motor pools, the Air Force relies on its civilian work force to help meet its global mission requirements. In 2007, more than 1,100 DoD civilians volunteered to fill 129 provincial reconstruction team positions in Iraq. Although the deployment of civilians is not a new concept, that show of support demonstrated to defense officials the need to find more opportunities for civilians to deploy.

Little Known Social Security Benefit – Extra Earnings for Military Service

Since 1957, if you had military service earnings for active duty (including active duty for training), you paid Social Security taxes on those earnings. Since 1988, inactive duty service in the Armed Forces reserves (such as weekend drills) has also been covered by Social Security. Under certain circumstances, special extra earnings for your military service from 1957 through 2001 can be credited to your record for Social Security purposes. These extra earnings credits may help you qualify for Social Security or increase the amount of your Social Security benefit.

Airmen, Veterans Can Now Apply for New GI Bill

The Department of Veterans Affairs opened its doors for accepting Post-9/11 GI Bill applications May 1, 2009. All Airmen and former Airmen with at least 90 days of active duty service since September 11, 2001, can choose to apply for education benefits, which begin August 1, 2009, under the new GI Bill law.



Gen. EW Rawlings Chapter#213
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