

# No Train, No Gain

Capt. Bill O'Conner, center, of the Colorado Wing coordinates a flight plan with other Civil Air Patrol members and a representative of the Montrose Sheriff's Posse, right, who joined CAP for a training mission. Training is a No. 1 priority in CAP.



Photo by William Woody, Montrose (Colo.) Daily Press

*By Neil Probst*

## Preparation Key to CAP's Success



Civil Air Patrol's training opportunities are so vast that citizens of just about any background or special interest can find a place to serve. From pilot training to search and rescue, finance to public affairs, growth potential is unlimited for CAP's 57,000 volunteers nationwide.

Members train in their own units as well as at the wing, region and national levels. In the process, they interact with members of the community as well as other emergency service providers.

Senior CAP pilots like 1st Lt. Karen Meyers of the Colorado Wing already know how to fly when they join, but they must qualify to fly CAP's diverse emergency services missions.

For Meyers, the training in CAP has been nonstop, from the time she completed general emergency services qualifications through mission scanner, observer and pilot training. She has accumulated 150 hours as a CAP mission pilot.

Meyers said the training is essential.

"The CAP courses were valuable, not only for my work with CAP but also for my everyday life. Leadership courses provide information you can use anywhere," she said.

"One thing we work on is the camaraderie," she added. "We work closely not only with our own squadron but also with the five other squadrons on the western slope of Colorado and the whole state, so we're part of a bigger picture within CAP as well as within the community, especially with law enforcement."

## TRAINING HELPS SAVE LIVES

During a recent search and rescue exercise,

Colorado Wing Civil Air Patrol members in four Cessnas and others in ground teams searched for targets alongside Montrose County deputies. A practice beacon and a tarp were used to simulate a missing aircraft.

Maj. Mark Young, Rocky Mountain Region director of operations and acting Colorado Wing DOS, said volunteers there train with the sheriff's posse at least once a year.



Maj. Mark Young

"Especially for new volunteers, training is paramount to being able to doing it right when there's a real mission," said Young, referring to the successful search for a downed aircraft with one survivor.

For its effort the wing earned a save from the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center.

Young said the greatest benefit from training alongside other agencies is name recognition.

"The biggest benefit is people get to know each other and their names and faces, and then when they have a search down the road and they need air support, they think about Civil Air Patrol and they'll call us for help because we recently trained together," he said.

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*— Maj. Mark Young, Rocky Mountain Region director of operations*



A CAP aircrew prepares to launch during a search and rescue exercise in Colorado. Training ensures that CAP volunteers are prepared to assist local, state and federal agencies when called upon. Members' dedication to practice, study and skill implementation helped save 90 lives last year.

## LEARNING, IN THE MOUNTAINS OR AT HOME

CAP's training is multifaceted.

In addition to search and rescue, members increase their knowledge at specialized camps, like Hawk Mountain and the National Emergency Services Academy. Others travel to region and national colleges and academies, like chaplain and inspector general schools. The endless opportunities include online and correspondence courses.

Through the Air Force Institute for Advanced Distributed Learning (AFIADL), volunteers can actually

take part in top Air Force correspondence courses such as Squadron Officer School, Air War College and Air Command Staff College. AFIADL also offers specialized correspondence courses for mission scanner, mission observer, safety officer and emergency services.

In addition, courses are available that augment members' CAP contributions. Meyers, for instance, has taken four courses offered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency that aided her understanding of the National Incident Management System — critical knowledge for leaders taking part in emergency services missions.

Of course, not all training can be easily completed



in Independence, Kan. FITS teaches members to fly CAP's Garmin G-1000 glass-cockpit-equipped Cessna 182 Skylane.

As each wing has taken delivery of the new aircraft, two experienced C-182 instructor pilots have been trained by Cessna in Independence.

National Commander Maj. Gen. Amy S. Courter applauded members who take responsibility for their training.

"Any time when the members truly own the program, when they step up and provide these kinds of opportunities for others, it certainly exemplifies that volunteer spirit that we have in CAP," said Courter, "because it's not CAP's program, it's not National Headquarters' program, it's the members' program." ▲

online or through correspondence.

Many members traverse the country to stay mission-prepared.

## HOMETOWN HEROES

Like the members in Colorado, CAP volunteers conduct their own training at the wing and region levels.

CAP's Southwest Region, for example, recently reinforced lessons learned by other members who studied Federal Aviation Administration Industry Training Standards, or FITS,



Civil Air Patrol members across the country, like these cadets stabilizing the neck of a "victim" during a training exercise, often find themselves in real situations helping injured citizens. A typical CAP unit will offer CPR and basic first aid to its members annually, and many units also will arrange for more advanced training for members interested in supporting CAP's emergency services mission.

# TRAINING ABOUNDS

Civil Air Patrol stands out from other volunteer organizations because of the immense and diverse training opportunities available to members. Numerous wing, region, unit and national training opportunities are available, including:

- Advanced First Aid and First Responder Training
- Air Command and Staff College
- Airborne Real-time Cueing Hyperspectral Enhanced Reconnaissance (ARCHER) Operator Training
- Air Force Rescue Coordination Center CAP SAR Management Course
- Air War College
- CAP Senior Officer Course
- Chaplain Service Region Staff College
- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training
- Corporate Learning Course
- Critical Incident Stress Management Training
- Flight Clinics and Pilot Continuation Training
- Inland Search and Rescue course
- Inspector General College
- Intermediate and Advanced Incident Command System Training
- Mountain Flying Clinics/Mountain Fury Course
- National Check Pilot Standardization Courses
- National Legal Officer College
- National SAR School Inland Search and Rescue Planner Courses
- National/Region Aerospace Education Officer School
- National Staff College
- National Emergency Services Academy
- Organizational Excellence
- Region Staff College

- Satellite-transmitted Digital Imaging System (SDIS) Operator Training
- Specialized Technical Courses
- Squadron Leadership School
- Squadron Officer School
- State-held Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Staff College
- Survival courses
- Training Leaders of Cadets
- Unit Commander Course
- Wing Commanders Course

## SPECIALTY TRACKS

- Administration
- Aerospace Education Officer
- Cadet Program Officer
- Character Development Officer
- Communications Officer
- Drug Demand Reduction
- Emergency Services Officer
- Finance Officer
- Flight Operations Officer
- Historian
- Information Technology Officer
- Inspector General
- Logistics Officer
- Character Development Officer
- Operations Officer
- Personnel
- Plans and Programs Officer
- Public Affairs Officer
- Recruiting and Retention Officer

- Safety Officer
- Senior Program Officer
- Standardization/Evaluation Officer

## CADET OPPORTUNITIES

- Advanced Technologies Academy
- Aerospace Education Academy
- Air Force Pararescue Orientation Course
- Air Force Space Command Familiarization Course
- Air Force Weather Agency Familiarization Course
- Aircraft Manufacturing & Maintenance Academy
- Aviation Challenge
- Cadet Officer School
- EAA Air Academy
- Engineering & Technology Academy
- Michael K. Smith Aviation Business Academy
- Hawk Mountain Search & Rescue School
- Honor Guard Academy
- Incident Command System School (Basic and Advanced)
- International Air Cadet Exchange
- Mission Aircrew School (Basic and Advanced)
- National Blue Beret
- National Emergency Services Academy
- National Glider Flight Academy (Basic and Advanced)
- Space Camp
- Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Familiarization