



To: 1st Lt. Frank Blazich, Ph.D., Interim CAP National Historian
From: Maj. Todd Epp, S.D. Wing Public Affairs Officer and Historian
CC: Col. Robert Todd, NCR Commander; Col. John Seten, S.D. Wing Commander
Date: 30 June 2013
Re: Report of 2012 S.D. Wing activities/history

I. Overview

It was the best of times; it was the worst of times for the South Dakota Wing in 2012.

The wing lost a cadet to a kayaking accident. One of the last remaining World War II sub chasers in South Dakota died. A water tanker crashed in the Black Hills while fighting a forest fire. The Wing had to close two squadrons they had lost members.

But the Wing also had some of the greatest successes in its history. It's 10th cadet earned the Spaatz Award. A team of cadets won high honors at the CyberPatriot IV competition. The Wing flew high profile missions with generals and helping the FAA determine the impact wind turbines have on air traffic radar. Two of its pilots were honored for their safety and professionalism.

In addition, the Wing continued its traditions of serving its communities by providing color guards for parades and other activities as well as assisting with crowd control and other services at air shows, music festival and community celebrations. It continued a busy schedule of training in SAREXs and other events. It came to the rescue of the annual Joint Dakota Encampment.

II. Key 2012 Events

- **March 2012**--A team of cadets from the Big Sioux Composite Squadron was one of the top overall finishers in the CyberPatriot national competition.

- **April-May 2012**—The S.D. Wing flew numerous sorties into the wind generator fields of western Minnesota as part of an FAA study on the impact the wind turbines have on air traffic radar.
- **May-June 2012**--SD and ND Wing members searched for one of their own in the Black Hills, C/1st Lt. Justin Lewis from the Crazy Horse Composite Squadron. He drowned in a non-CAP kayaking accident.
- **June 2012**--Laverne "Vern" Kramer, the last surviving CAP sub-chaser from World War II from the state and a South Dakota aviation legend, died at the age of 95.
- **July 2012**--Col. John Seten and Lt. Col. Rick Larson, both of Sioux Falls, were name S.D. Wing Commander and Vice Commander June 19 and 21, respectively.
- **July 2012**—A U.S. Air Force water tanker crashed in the Black Hills while fighting a forest fire. The S.D. Wing assisted the Air Force with aerial surveys of the crash site.
- **August 2012**--C/Col. William Small, Lookout Mountain Composite Squadron, became the S.D. Wing's 10th cadet to earn the Spaatz Award.
- **August 2012**--Maj. Rodney "Buck" DeWeese, Lookout Mountain Composite Squadron, received the International Superior Airmanship Award from the Air Line Pilots Association for his actions averting a disaster while captaining a Delta Airlines airliner in Hawaii.
- **November 2012**--MG Tim Reisch, adjutant general of the South Dakota National Guard, rode in a S.D. Wing Cessna 182T crewed by S.D. Wing members that is intercepted by an F-16 piloted by Lt. Gen. Stanley E. Clark III, commander of the 1st Air Force, in Operation Falcon Keynote over north central Nebraska.

III. Other 2012 Events

- **March 2012**--The Crazy Horse Composite Squadron participated in the annual Trade Show in Custer with a booth for DDR information. The squadron also performed drill exercises several times during the event.
- **March 2012**—The Sioux Falls Composite Squadron's color guard participated in the annual Sioux Falls St. Patrick's Day Parade.
- **April 2012**--The Sioux Falls Composite Squadron assisted the S.D. Air National Guard's annual Easter egg hunt.
- **May 2012**—The Sioux Falls Composite Squadron held a SAREX with the S.D. Air National Guard featuring the SDANG's state of the art Mobile Emergency Operations Center truck.
- **May 2012**—Members of the Sioux Falls Composite Squadron again placed flags on veterans' graves the Friday before Memorial Day at Hills of Rest Cemetery.
- **May-July 2012**—The S.D. Wing conducts aerial Low Level Route Surveys of S.D. Air National Guard and U.S. Air Force airways, searching for unmapped obstructions.
- **July 2012**--Though held at Camp Grafton, N.D., the S.D. Wing is in charge of the Joint Dakota Leadership Encampment.

- **July 2012**--The Sioux Falls Composite Squadron assisted the City of Sioux Falls with the annual 4th of July parade and Mayor's picnic.
- **July 2012**—The Crazy Horse Composite Squadron color guard led the Custer Independence Day parade and assisted the local VFW in a flag easing ceremony.
- **August 2012**--Lt. Col. Forrest Wixon, Pierre Composite Squadron, received the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award from the FAA for his over 50 years as a pilot.
- **July 2012**--The Rushmore, Crazy Horse and Lookout Mountain Composite Squadrons staffed an information and recruitment display at the Hills Alive Festival in Rapid City.
- **July 2012**--The Sioux Falls Composite Squadron, along with CAP members from South Dakota and Minnesota, provided crowd control, parking assistance and security assistance to the Sioux Falls Regional Airport and the S.D. National Guard for the triennial Pride on the Prairie Air Show.
- **July 2012**--International Air Cadet Exchange cadets from around the world visited the Sioux Falls Composite Squadron and the triennial Pride on the Prairie Air Show.
- **July 2012**—The Crazy Horse Composite Squadron color guard led the Custer Independence Day parade and assisted the local VFW in a flag easing ceremony.
- **August 2012**--The S.D. Wing provided Drug Demand Reduction training with the "Fatal Vision" goggles at the Badlands Astronomy Festival at Badlands National Park. Cadets from the Pierre and Crazy Horse Composite Squadron also performed color guard duties.
- **August 2012**--The S.D. Wing held its annual Aviation Weekend in Philip, featuring glider and powered aircraft rides for cadets.
- **August 2012**--The Lewis and Clark Composite Squadron in Yankton and the Philip Composite Squadron were deactivated.
- **September 2012**--The Sioux Falls Composite Squadron assisted local law enforcement with airborne traffic monitoring at the Lifelight Festival over Labor Day Weekend. The event is one of the largest Christian music festivals in the country.
- **September 2012**--The Sioux Falls Composite Squadron assisted the City of Sioux Falls in setting up for the Downtown Arts Festival.
- **October 2012**--The S.D. Wing held its annual conference in Custer.
- **October 2012**--The Sioux Falls Composite Squadron assisted the Great Plains Zoo with parking assistance in its annual Zoo Boo Halloween celebration.
- **November 2012**--The Sioux Falls Composite Squadron assisted the City of Sioux Falls with crowd control at the Parade of Lights the Friday after Thanksgiving.
- **November 2012**--The Rushmore Composite Squadron moved from the old Rapid City Regional Terminal to Ellsworth Air Force Base.
- **December 2012**--Members of the S.D. Wing and the Sioux Falls Composite Squadron cadet color guard participated in the annual Wreaths Across America ceremony at Hills of Rest Cemetery in Sioux Falls.

December 2012--The Crazy Horse Composite Squadron officiated the annual Wreaths Across America ceremony at the Hot Springs National Cemetery and then again the same day at the historic Cold Brook cemetery at the request of Hot Springs and Custer VFWs.