

# Wisconsin Wing Summer Encampment

## Message to Attendees

Welcome to the Wisconsin Wing Summer Encampment web page. If you have already applied for the encampment or are planning on attending and just haven't put your application in yet, you're in the right place (whether you're a cadet or a senior). If this encampment will be your first, this page will tell you all the secrets and tips that will let you survive the week with no troubles so that you can have the time of your life. If you've been to the encampment before, this page will be a good refresher (and you could learn something new!). If you haven't already read the letter in the application packet, do that first and then come back and read this page. Together, these two pages will answer most of the questions you probably have about the encampment program. If you still have any questions after reading this page, feel free to contact any of the Command Staff members. Good reading, and we'll see you at Encampment!

## Why Am I Going to Encampment?

First and foremost, if you're a cadet who hasn't yet gone to an encampment, CAP requires you to attend at least one before you can receive your Mitchell Award and be promoted to Cadet Second Lieutenant. You shouldn't look at encampment as just something you "have to do," though.

Whether you are a brand new member, a cadet who's been through Basic and WCA already or a senior who's been to more than a dozen encampments, the encampment program offers you something. You will have the chance to make new friends and refresh old friendships. You will learn new things and will have fun doing so. You will have the chance to give a little something back to an organization that you so obviously love.

## Applying for Encampment

The first thing you will need to do is apply for the encampment. The encampment applications are available for download from this website now and notifications been sent to each cadet and CAP unit within Wisconsin Wing.

There are three pages to the application itself, while a cover letter, a general information sheet and an equipment list are also attached, making up the application packet. Two other forms are included for family members who want to attend the graduation banquet and for those who would like to return home with their families after the banquet. The entire packet can be downloaded from the [downloads](#) page, so you can easily replace missing or damaged pages.

Please follow these directions for filling out and sending in the encampment application:

You will enter general information on the first page (such as your name, address, unit charter number, etc.) You will also check off which school/program you are applying for (WBS, WCA or WSS). If you are a cadet who has not already attended an encampment, you will check off the Wisconsin Basic School (WBS) box (you cannot take part in any other programs without first attending WBS). If you are a cadet who has already attended at least one encampment and who wants to attend Wisconsin Wing's premier Cadet Leadership School, you will check off the Wisconsin Cadet Academy (WCA) box. Cadet and senior members who have already been accepted as staff members should check off the Wisconsin Staff School (WSS) box. We also need proof of the fact that you are a current CAP member; make a photocopy of your membership card and attach it (stapled or taped) in the space provided at the top right of the application's first page. After you have done that, read the release agreement and then sign and date on the appropriate lines.

Next, fill out the third page, which is the Medical Information form. Answer each question truthfully and fully. We understand that we are asking for information that is very personal, but we need to know these things before you can come to the encampment. If you take medication, our medical staff will monitor that to make sure you do. If you have a medical condition, we will make sure you will be taken care of. Most importantly, in case of emergency we will have the information that a doctor requires to best treat you. This information will be kept strictly confidential by our medical staff (which includes several registered nurses). We *will not* be able to accept you if you do not fill out this form.

If you answered "yes" to any of the questions on the medical form, write an explanation for each "yes" in the remarks section - tell us what the medical problem is, what medications you take, etc. (For example, if you are allergic to Penicillin, you should answer the "Any known allergies" question "yes" and then you should write "Allergic to Penicillin" in the remarks section.) If you run out of space in the remarks block, use the back of the form or another piece of paper (and then staple that piece of paper to the medical form). Cadets, you may not know the answers to all these questions, so you should get your parents to help you with this form. After you have answered all of the questions, we need proof that you are covered by medical insurance; photocopy your insurance card (or the card belonging to the person whose insurance you are covered under) and attach it to the block provided in the middle of this form.

Cadets, after you have filled out both the first page of the application and the medical form, you will need to get your parents' permission to attend the encampment (even if you are over the age of 18). We need your parents to sign and date the appropriate lines in the "Release by Parent or Guardian" block on the first page. We also require someone of legal age (i.e., over 18 and *not* you) to witness these signatures (your parents can witness for each other, though we prefer a third person, such as a relative, friend of the family, etc.). If circumstances are such that you can't get both parents' signatures, the signature of either your mother or your father (or a legal guardian) will be enough.

After you have completed the first page, the medical form, attached copies of their membership and insurance cards and signed the release (and cadets received permission from their parents), you will need to attach payment for the encampment. The cost for the encampment is \$170 per cadet and \$100 per senior member; please make this payment with a personal check or a money order, made out to Civil Air Patrol Encampment (do

not send cash). Attach this payment directly to the first page of the application (staple it, paperclip it, etc.). Once you have attached payment, you need to get approval to attend the encampment from your squadron commander. After reviewing your application, insuring that all necessary information is included and that payment is attached, your squadron will either approve your attendance by signing and dating the "Squadron Certification" block on the second page of the application *or* will disapprove you and tell you why. If you did not completely fill out the application, or are missing the payment or required photocopies, your squadron commander will disapprove you. (Your squadron commander may also disapprove you if you are subject to disciplinary action, have not been regularly participating in unit functions, or you are not yet ready to attend the encampment; he or she will tell you the reasons you are being disapproved.)

Once you have completed all of these steps, mail the application to the listed address.

You *must* complete all of these steps and send the application in prior to the due date (6 August) in order to attend the encampment. Applications sent after 6 August are subject to a \$15 late fee. If you are missing any information, the application may be returned to you for completion. If you do not return the application prior to the due date, you may not be accepted to the encampment.

### **Encampment Scholarships**

Financial aid scholarships are available to any member that needs it in order to attend the encampment. Full and partial scholarships are available. Members requesting a scholarship need only fill out the Scholarship block on the front of the application, and include a brief note explaining why they need the scholarship and what they are hoping to get out of the encampment. All scholarship requests must be submitted by 6 August; any requests sent after that date may not be filled, and in any event will be subject to the late fee.

### **Are You Ready For Encampment?**

We will review each and every application that comes in, both to insure that all required information is included and to make sure that the encampment will be right for you. CAP's National Headquarters requires that all attendees have passed either the Curry Achievement (for cadets) or Level I (for seniors). This insures that everyone at the encampment has at least a basic level of understanding about CAP in general.

Unfortunately, the fact you have gotten your first stripe doesn't necessarily mean that you are ready for encampment yet. In fact, chances are that if you've only been a member of CAP for three months or less, you probably aren't fully prepared to go to encampment - you just haven't been a member long enough to know all of the information and drill maneuvers that the rest of the encampment attendees do.

We rely on other members of your squadron, especially your squadron commander, as well as your parents to tell us if you're ready. If we have a question, we will talk with them to find out. They may tell us that you're more than ready, in which case you won't have anything to worry about. If someone thinks that you just haven't been in quite long enough, we may want you to wait until next year to come to the encampment. If we tell you this, don't worry - we're making this decision to help *you* out. We want you to have a fun encampment, and that would be really hard to do if you have to "catch up" to the

older cadets for the entire week. There will always be more encampments, and *next* year you'll be more than ready!

## **Preparing for Encampment**

Now that you've put your application in for encampment, you'll have to do a little preparing. Not much, mind you, but you should spend some time getting ready. Do yourself a favor - don't wait until the last minute to get ready. If you do, you *will* either miss something or will find that there is something that you need but don't have. If you're a newer member, you will also want to spend some time making sure you know all the "basics" (more on that below).

### **Getting Yourself Ready**

If you have never been to an encampment, you might be in for a surprise. If no one in your squadron has told you what to expect, you may be in for a shock; on the other hand, if someone in your squadron *did* tell you what to expect, you'll also be in for a shock (don't worry - encampment isn't nearly as bad as they made it out to be).

Cadets, the best way to get ready for encampment is to train, train and train again. Practice drilling as much as you can (if you can master the basic maneuvers, you will be that much ahead of everyone else when you get there). Take some time and at least skim through your leadership and aerospace books - again, it can't hurt to bone up on the basics and stay ahead of "the curve." At the same time, study the uniform manual (CAPM 39-1) and make sure you know how to wear both your blues uniform and your BDUs properly.

Just before encampment starts (say, a week or so before), go to a barber or a hair salon and get a haircut. If you don't know what the standards are, look it up in the CAPM 39-1, the CAP Uniform Manual. (The grooming standards for males and females is listed in CAPM 39-1, p. 130 in attachment 2. All new CAP members get this manual, though if you don't have that or misplaced it, you can also download it from the National Headquarters website.) If your hair is not within these standards when you show up at encampment, we may either send you back home or to a barber, where you will pay for a haircut out of your own pocket. You have been warned!

### **Gathering Equipment and Uniforms**

While we're on the subject of uniforms, take a look at both your blues and your BDUs. Make sure you have all of the correct patches, badges and ribbons. Also, make sure the uniforms fit you and they are not ripped or stained. If you are missing something or need to get new uniform parts, get them *now*, before it's too late. You should check with your squadron first to see if they have some or all of the items you are missing. If you need uniform parts (such as shoes, shirts/blouses, etc.) that your unit doesn't have on hand, talk to your squadron commander as he or she may be able to get those items from the Wing Supply Officer. If you cannot get the items you need from your squadron, your last option is to purchase them from the [Hock Shop](#), Vanguard or an [AAFES](#) Clothing Sales Store (the Hock Shop and Vanguard are the best place to go to get CAP uniform items, as AAFES Clothing Sales stores do not stock our CAP badges, ribbons, nameplates and the like). You can follow the above links for more information about that source.

While you're checking out your uniforms, take a look at the Encampment Personal Clothing and Equipment List, which is included in the Encampment Application Packet.

Make sure you have not only all of the listed uniform items, but everything else, too. Some of the items on the list require batteries or other parts to make them work (blades for non-electric razors, for instance) - make sure you have those as well. If you are missing something off of this list when you get to encampment, you won't have the opportunity to go to a drug store or department store to buy them (and Basic and WCA cadets do not have Post Exchange privileges). Make sure you have all of those items now, while you have the chance.

You will also want to take a look and see if you have all the optional items as well. You won't necessarily need them, but these things could make your stay at encampment a little easier (and the camera will let you prove to your friends and family that you actually *did* stay at a military base for a week).

## **The Night Before**

The night before you leave will probably be "worst" part about encampment. Not only will you be rushing to pack, get your final chores done and errands run, call your friends and family members and other things like that, but if you've never been to encampment, you'll probably be nervous. Some of you may have heard very little about encampment and won't know what to expect. For others, friends may have told you *all* about encampment, exaggerating some things and blowing others out of proportion. No matter what, it's perfectly natural to be nervous about going into a new situation - we all feel the same way. At the same time, you'll probably also feel excited. Most of you will have heard how much fun encampment is, and you just "can't wait to get there." That's also normal.

But before I tell you how to deal with those butterflies, let's talk a little bit about packing.

## **Packing**

If you're like most people, you'll pack your luggage the night before you leave. That's fine. Just make sure you have a couple of hours set aside before you go to bed. The key to packing is to take *as little as possible*. The less you pack, the less you have to lug around with you and, more importantly, the less you have to try to shove back into your luggage at the end of encampment.

First, you want to have as few pieces of luggage as possible; a total of two pieces is probably the most you want to have. Start off with a good sized suitcase or duffel bag - you want to be able to pack everything except your uniforms into this. If you don't think you can fit everything in, ***get a bigger bag!*** Start off by padding the bottom - towels and washcloths are a good bottom layer. Then keep going right on up, padding larger and more fragile items, like a toiletries case (where you keep your toothbrush, deodorant, soap, etc.) or a box that you keep your uniform insignia in, with clothes so they don't get damaged during the trip (or in case you drop the bag or suitcase). Remember, you want to be able to fit everything *but* your uniforms into this main bag (though you will want to put your dress shoes, tennis shoes and any *spare* combat boots into this bag - just make sure don't pack the combat boots that you will need to wear to encampment). You probably also want to leave some room in the bag, because you will be coming home with more things than you went to encampment with (and nothing ever seems to go back in the way you originally packed it).

Next, you want to pack both your blues uniforms and BDUs (except the pair of BDUs that you will be wearing when you make the trip to encampment) in a garment bag. You want to use a garment bag because otherwise your uniforms will get so wrinkled that you will spend hours ironing them out. If you don't have a garment bag, use either the plastic cover from a dry cleaner or, if you can't find one of those in the house, a large garbage bag. (If you use a garbage bag, make a small hole at the bottom of the bag that you can put the hook of the hangars through.)

Finally, **mark your luggage with your name and address.** Whether or not you are traveling to encampment via CAP transportation, at one point or another your luggage will be put into a large pile with everyone else's. Once it's in that pile, you'll never find your luggage unless it has your name on it. Or, worse yet, if you forget a piece of luggage, we won't know who it belongs to and you'll never see it again!

### **What *Not* to Bring**

The same Encampment Personal Clothing and Equipment List that told you what to bring to encampment also tells you the types of things you shouldn't bring. If it's on that list, don't bring it. If it's something that seems a lot like something on the list, don't bring it. We inspect the luggage of *every* cadet to make sure you haven't brought anything on that is considered contraband. If it's not on that list, but you're not sure whether or not you should bring it, don't bring it. When you're packing clothes, use this rule of thumb to decide if you should bring it: if it's something you wouldn't want to wear in front of your pastor, priest, or grandmother (or if it's something your parents tell you not to wear), then don't bring it. Girls, please pack only one-piece swimming suits (and guys, no speedos).

Now, there are some items that you might think we might take away from you that you can bring along. If you shave with a non-electric razor, you're going to need blades. We realize that, and we're not going to take those away from you (and keep you from shaving). That's just one example. If there is some reason you need an item that you think is questionable, but that you use every day, we're probably not going to take it away from you.

Some of you might be tempted to bring food (candy bars, munchies, etc.) with you. If you do, just make sure that it's finished by the time you get to the encampment because we will confiscate it. We do have a dayroom where you will be able to purchase snacks and such during your free time, so if you want to be able to snack, bring some extra money instead of several bags of chips and candy.

A very few of you might be traveling to a different CAP activity immediately after completing the encampment (without first having the opportunity to stop at home to repack). If that activity requires you to bring items that are on our contraband list (for example, an ES activity might require you to bring a knife and food), don't worry. We will confiscate the contraband items, but only for the duration of the encampment - you will get those items you need for the next activity back before you leave. If you are planning on going directly to a different activity, please let us know ahead of time (either by including a note with your application or contacting the Commandant or Commander directly).

### **Just Don't Leave Home Without...**

Once you're done packing, make sure you have everything. If you take medication for any reason, double check that you packed it. If you still need to take some medicine before you leave, make sure that you remember to pack it because if you don't, you'll either have to live a week without it or someone will have to drive all the way to Volk Field to bring it to you.

Before you leave, you also want to make sure you have your CAP membership card. We can't let you attend the encampment if you don't have a membership card. If you don't have one or you've lost your card, let your squadron commander know *immediately!* If your membership has expired, you will need to renew immediately. Use the renewal form that National Headquarters sent you about three months before your membership expired, or you can also go directly to eServices.

### **Get Some Sleep!!**

Once you're done packing, finding all your cards, saying goodbye to all your friends and anything else you were doing that last night, *go to bed!* You've got a *long* day ahead of you, probably including several hours of travel time to Volk Field. Get some sleep while you have the opportunity. If you're worried about those butterflies in your stomach, don't be. You've got nothing to worry about. If your squadron commander signed your application, then you're ready to come to encampment. You'll have fun. Now get some sleep!

### **Getting to the Encampment**

There are a few different ways to get yourself to the encampment. The way you get there depends mostly on where you live (and if you're on staff or not). Here's a brief description of those ways.

#### **CAP Transport**

Unlike years past, the encampment will be providing transport for every member that needs it. But don't expect curbside pickup! We will be setting up staging areas at various locations around the state. For the majority of the members within Wisconsin Wing, you will be within about one hour's driving distance from a staging area, though for members in outlying areas of the state, the closest staging area may be up to 2 1/2 hours from your normal meeting place. At the end of encampment, we will drop you off at the same place we picked you up at.

If you are going to take CAP transport to the encampment, you will need to meet at your assigned staging area on time! As soon as we finalize the transport plans, we will both inform the squadrons directly of the actual departure points and times for these staging areas, as well as e-mail you that information and post the information on this website.

#### **Driving to Encampment**

If you don't want to use CAP transport, you will have to provide your own transportation to the encampment. Cadets and senior members, you should first check with other members of your squadron to see if you can carpool together. If that is not an option, you will either have to drive yourself to the encampment or have someone drive

you (and likewise pick you up). This site has information on where Camp Ripley is located as well as a link to an online road map.

### **Driving Yourself to Encampment**

Members, this should really be your last option. If you have no other way to get to encampment other than driving yourself, we're not going to tell you no. *However*, cadets *must* first get permission from the Commandant of Cadets before you drive yourself. Additionally, once you get to encampment, we *will* confiscate your keys. Cadets *may not* drive vehicles of any sort during encampment.

### **"Surviving" Encampment**

Actually, you'll survive encampment even if you don't read the following paragraphs. *But*, if you *do* read them, you'll know exactly what we expect of you before you get to encampment and you won't have *any* problems adjusting to life at the encampment. You'll also get a preview of what the encampment will be like. Now I'm not going to spill *all* of our secrets, but I'll probably let a few slip...

### **Some of the "Basics"**

There are a few basic pieces of information that you need to know and understand about the encampment. These next three points are the main ideas that make up the foundation of the encampment. If you don't follow these principles, you will have a problem (then again, since they are the same principles that the entire Civil Air Patrol is built on, you shouldn't have a problem with them).

#### **Following Orders**

It doesn't matter if you're a senior member or a cadet, a basic or a staff officer. You will have *someone* who will give you orders, orders that we expect you to follow. We also expect you to follow the orders, rules and code of conduct found in the Encampment Handbook, posted notices and Civil Air Patrol regulations. Not only is it the *right* thing to do, but by following orders, you will keep yourself and your friends safe.

#### **Customs and Courtesies**

You will show the proper customs and courtesies while you are a member of the Civil Air Patrol. We expect you to salute your superior officers, address officers with either "sir" or "ma'am" and sergeants with "sergeant," report to your superiors when required, march in formation wherever you go and, above all, show kindness and compassion to your fellow members.

#### **Camp Ripley is a *Military* Base**

Because the encampment is being held on a military base, there will be quite a few military officers sharing the base with us. *All* CAP members will render the appropriate courtesies to these officers. We are also guests on the base, treat the facilities assigned to us with the same respect you would show your own belongings.

#### **“Getting off the Bus”**

Your first few hours at the encampment will be pretty hectic, but that's because we have a lot of things to do to get the encampment going and not a lot of time to do it in. I'll go over some of the most important things that you'll be doing in those first few hours after you "get off of the bus."

### **Luggage Inspection**

The first thing that will happen once you get to the encampment is called inprocessing. Our administration officers will check you into the encampment; they will check to make sure you have a current CAP membership card on you and that all of the information that you put on your application is correct. After that, the Tactical Officers will give each cadet a shakedown inspection.

What that officer will do is check you and your luggage for contraband. If he (or she) finds any contraband, that officer will immediately confiscate it. He or she will also take charge of any medications you have (prescription or not) - our medical staff will hold the medications for you for the duration of the encampment (we do this for the safety of everyone at the encampment). If you take regular doses of medicine, they will make your medication available to you at the proper times (and will find you if you miss a dose).

If you are a cadet who happens to be going on to a different activity right after the end of the encampment, and because of that brought items that are considered contraband, tell the Tactical Officer this. We will specially mark the items we confiscate so that you get them back before you leave. The return of all other items is at the discretion of the Commandant of Cadets. If we confiscate an item that is illegal (such as tobacco products from *any* cadet), you may be subject to not only disciplinary action, but criminal prosecution as well. The moral of the story is thus: if you don't bring anything illegal, you won't have anything to worry about.

### **Flight Assignments**

Once the Tactical Officers are done with the shakedown inspections, all cadets will be assigned into flights. If you are a Basic School cadet, that means you will be a part of a single flight of ten to fifteen other cadets for the entire week. WCA cadets are all assigned into the same training squadron, though flight assignments may vary from day to day. Either way, you will be a part of the same team for the entire week. Get to know your fellow teammates as soon as you can.

Once you've been assigned into a flight, your staff will take you to your dormitory and assign you to a room. Your staff will also spend some time going over the encampment rules with you.

Now, as long as I'm on the topic of your flight and your dorm, you do need to understand something. You won't have your own private room; you will be sharing a bedroom with at least one other cadet from your flight (you will have your own locker to keep your belongings in, though). You also won't have your own private bathroom; the entire flight shares a common bathroom and shower facility (the same way you would share a bathroom and showers in a gym locker room). I know it won't be a problem for you, but I'm telling you this ahead of time just so it won't be a shock.

### **Your Handbooks**

Basic cadets, sometime after inprocessing, you will get your encampment handbook. This handbook tells you almost everything you need to know about the encampment program, and gives you room to write the rest in as you learn it (such as the encampment chain of command). You will carry this handbook with you wherever you go during the duty day. Whenever you have the opportunity, study this handbook. Your staff will regularly quiz you on its contents.

## **More of the "Basics"**

Here's a few more bits of information that will help you out when you get to the encampment. Pay close attention to these, because if you do what they say, you'll have a great encampment (and better yet, won't have to see the nurse because of a problem).

### **Eat, Drink and Sleep**

Yes, this is a common sense rule, but the encampment days are packed with a lot of activities and it's easy enough to forget these simple rules sometimes. We serve you three meals a day: breakfast, lunch and dinner. These are not optional activities; you *will* eat a full plate at each meal (your Flight Commanders and Tactical Officers will be checking). You will need all the energy you can get.

You will also need to drink *a lot* of water. The encampment happens during the hottest days of the year, and you will be marching and drilling a lot. While drilling and marching aren't strenuous activities, you will sweat and lose water. Water that you will need to replenish. That's why we require everyone to bring a canteen - so you can drink when you need to so that you don't get dehydrated or suffer from heat stroke. Your Flight Commander will make sure that you get frequent water breaks; whenever you are given a break, take a drink, even if you don't seem thirsty. Drinking during your water breaks isn't going to be enough to keep you healthy, though, so we also want you to drink at least two glasses of water with each meal (your Flight Commander and Tactical Officers will make sure of this, too). It may seem like we're making you drink too much water, but really that's just barely enough. We would rather you make an extra trip to the bathroom than send you to the hospital.

### **Marching**

One of the goals of the encampment is to train cadets in drill and ceremonies. As a result, you will be marching almost everywhere you go on the base. Volk Field isn't a large base, you won't be marching long distances. You will be marching a lot, though, and unless you're careful, you could fall victim to a common, yet painful problem: blisters.

The first precaution you need to take is to make sure your shoes and boots are broken in *before* you get to the encampment. Don't go out and buy new boots the day before you leave. If you do, that's a sure bet to get blisters (and trust me, if you've never had a blister on your feet, you don't want to get any). If you get new shoes or boots for the encampment, make sure you get them a few weeks before you leave and take the time to break them in *well*. Breaking in a pair of shoes or boots takes more than a few minutes of walking around in them, though. If you have a new pair of shoes or boots, wear them several hours a day for two weeks or for at least good weekend of activity (though the longer you wear them, the better).

You also want to make sure you keep your feet clean and dry. Change your socks every day. If you start to get "hot spots" red spots that are irritated or begin to hurt if you touch them, take care of them immediately. Tell your Flight Commander; he or she will make sure that your hot spots are bandaged or that you are given some padding to keep them from turning into blisters. These hot spots (and eventually the blisters) form because of rubbing, which can happen if your shoes or boots are loose. Some people wear two pair of socks to add extra "padding" to their feet.

If you do develop a blister, tell your Flight Commander immediately. He or she will make sure that one of our nurses takes care of your feet. Whatever you do, don't pop the blister. Not only will that be painful, but the blister may become infected. Don't just try to "tough out" the pain of a blister, either. Let our nurses take care of that for you.

### **If You Have Problems**

If you happen to run into any sort of problems, let your Flight Commander or a Tactical Officer know immediately. If you're having a medical problem, we will need to take care of it immediately. If you're having some sort of other problem, we want you to talk to someone as soon as possible. If you don't feel comfortable talking with your Flight Commander or a Tactical Officer about something, you can talk with one of our nurses or a chaplain. We want to be able to help you take care of any problem you might have.

### **Discipline**

We want you to have a good encampment, but we also want everyone else to have a good encampment, too. Sometimes, a single person's behavior can get in the way of that. We will not tolerate anyone who breaks the rules or who causes a disruption. If you are coming to this encampment, then you are old enough to exercise self discipline - you have read the rules and you know what is right and what is wrong. If you don't let yourself do anything wrong, then you won't have anything to worry about.

## **Tell Me Again *Why* I'm Going to Encampment?**

Okay, if your friends have told you some horror stories about the encampment, I can understand that you might be a bit nervous about coming to the encampment, especially after reading some of the things above. Don't be. The encampment is really a fun program. Sure, we expect a lot out of you and fill your day with classes and make you march around the base, but that's not the entire program. In fact, it's just a minor part of the program.

First of all, remember that National Headquarters requires all cadets to attend at least one encampment. That shouldn't be the only reason you want to come, though. We usually have somewhere between 100 and 150 Wisconsin Wing cadets come to the encampment, which means you'll have the chance to meet other people from all over the wing. Even better, once you get to know the other members of your flight, you'll form lasting friendships with many of them, friendships that may continue for the rest of your lives.

Some of you are thinking about joining one of the US Armed Services when you are old enough, either by enlisting or becoming an officer by going to an academy or through ROTC. The encampment program gives you the chance to live on a military base for a week, hear Air Force officers talk about some of the different missions of the Air Force

and the opportunities it can offer and actually let you see if the military might actually be the life for you. Others of you may never have considered it *until* you got to the encampment.

Your week will be filled with far more than classes and marching around. We give every cadet the opportunity to take at least one orientation flight in a CAP aircraft. We've also got a host of new activities that we can offer: M1 Abrams tank simulators, H-60 Blackhawk helicopter simulators, a small-arms marksmanship simulator, a confidence course, a land navigation course and a rope bridge activity. Those are all things we've never had before!

Of course, we do watch each flight closely to make sure you are learning everything that we expect and to make sure you're doing okay. We also do this so we can recognize the people who are doing the best. Every day, we pick one cadet from each flight who has done the best and name that cadet as an honor cadet. We also recognize the one flight that has performed the best and award it a streamer show that it is that day's honor flight.

What it boils down to is this: sure, we expect you to do some work, but you'll also have a lot of fun at the encampment. Where else are you going to be able to do all that? If the encampment program *wasn't* fun, we wouldn't have people coming back year after year. We've got cadets who have been doing this for five or more years in a row, while some of the senior members have been coming to the encampment for longer than you've been alive. They wouldn't be doing that if the encampment wasn't fun.

## **The Final Days of Encampment**

I've told you a lot about what goes on during the week, but the final days of the encampment are a bit different. Throughout the week, you and your flight will have trained hard to be the best. Your Flight Commander will have built you up and given you all the information you need to know by then. These last days are your chance to finally prove that you *are* the best.

### **Quiz Bowl**

Starting on Thursday, you and your flight will take part in a quiz bowl (which is a lot like a team version of *Jeopardy!*) against the other flights at the encampment. During this quiz bowl, the judges will ask you questions about the things you learned at the encampment, questions about information in your handbook and questions from your Leadership Laboratory and Aerospace books. The flights that did the best on Thursday will face off against each other on Friday to see which flight knows the most.

### **Drill Competition and Final Inspection**

You will be competing against the other flights in more than just the quiz bowl. On Friday, you will take part in a drill competition to see which flight knows its drill and ceremonies the best. You will also have your final inspection, when the encampment commander himself, along with several other senior officers, will inspect your dormitories to see which flight is the best.

### **The Parade**

The parade (technically called a pass-in-review) is your final chance to show off. We have invited the friends and family of every encampment cadet, plus special dignitaries

from Civil Air Patrol and the military. This is your chance to show your love of CAP, your pride in wearing the uniform and to show off for your family and friends.

## **Graduation and the Banquet**

After the parade is finished, we have only a few more things to do. We'll hold a special graduation ceremony on base, giving your family and friends the chance to see you graduate with your flight (and take pictures, of course). After the graduation ceremony, you will have the chance to talk with your family and friends, show them your dormitory and tell them all about the week you've had.

You won't have *too* long to visit with your family, though, because we still have the final banquet to get to. We'll go off of base to a nearby hall for this final activity. Before dinner, we'll tell all the guests who are there with us about the week you had and all the different activities you did. After dinner is when the fun happens, though. That's when we hand out the encampment awards. We will award one cadet from the Basic School and one cadet from WCA with the Commander's Commendation for being the outstanding cadets of the encampment. We will also present the outstanding staff members (both cadet and senior) with the same award. Those aren't the only awards we will be giving out, though.

Throughout the week, we will be keeping track of each flight's performance. We give the flights that performed the best in inspection, drill, physical training and quiz bowl each a special award, with the highest award going to the flight that did the best overall. We will give cadets belonging to this encampment honor flight a special graduation certificate, letting you show off even more to your friends and family.

## **Going Home**

The banquet may be the last scheduled encampment activity, but the encampment isn't quite done, yet. You still need to pack your belongings into your luggage and we all need to clean up the buildings assigned to our encampment. After all, we're not the only people who use the base.

Once the cleanup is done, you're ready to go home. You'll go home the same way you got to the encampment (unless you or your parents have made other arrangements with the Encampment Commander or the Commandant of Cadets). If your family or friends came to Camp Ripley to take part in the open house, it's obviously easier for everyone if you go home with them (though you do need to let us know if you're leaving with them).

## **So, What's Next?**

So, your back home after the encampment. Now what?

Well, the first thing you need to know is that the Encampment Commander will tell National Headquarters that you went to the encampment. That way, you won't run into any problems when you take your Mitchell test and try to get promoted to Cadet Second Lieutenant.

More than that, though, you now have a responsibility: put all that knowledge we taught you to good use. You'll be able to drill better than probably anyone else in your squadron now, and all that studying for the quiz bowl means that you also know more than they do, so now it's time for *you* to teach the other cadets. Get *them* ready for their

next test or for the encampment next year. We taught you how to be the best, so don't let that waste away.

Next year's encampment isn't all that far away, either. We will actually start planning the encampment only a couple of months after this one is over, and before you know it, it'll be time to apply again. If you were a Basic School cadet this year, WCA is the program for you next year (and applications should be out sometime in April). If you were a WCA cadet this year, then we want you to come back and be on the encampment staff (and staff applications are usually available sometime in January). Of course, if you were on staff this year, we want you back again, too. We will send your squadron all the information about next year's encampment as soon as we can. Of course, you can always check out this website - we will keep this site updated with the latest information.

Oh, and one more thing. Now that you've been through the encampment program, it's your job to get your friends to come to the encampment next year. You know how much fun it is. Let them know. Give *them* the same chance we gave you this year.

Lt Col Chris Trossen  
Commander