

Carroll Composite Squadron Color Guard
L-R Cadet Parrish, Team Leader Cadet Persing,
Cadets Yerger & Scanlan



Carroll Composite Squadron Color Guard Places First at Middle East Region Competition.

By 2ndLt Alice Raatjes, PAO and C/CSgt Olivia Persing. Photography by C/TSgt Blair Barao and Hailey Barao. Carroll Composite Squadron www.carrollcap.org

March 22-23, 2013, Fort Picket, Va. The Civil Air Patrol (CAP) Carroll Composite Squadron Color Guard continues to reap top honors. The Carroll Color Guard, steadfast in their pursuit of excellence, placed first in the 2013 Middle East Region (MER) color guard/drill team competition. The MER competition is the second color guard championship for the Carroll team this year. At the 2013 Maryland Wing competition in February, the Carroll Color Guard placed first and was selected to represent Maryland CAP at the MER competition.

To compete in the MER event, the Carroll team traveled from their home base in Westminster, Maryland, to Fort Picket Army National Guard Training Center in Blackstone, Virginia. The MER competition included teams from National Capital, Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina and South Carolina. The North Carolina Color Guard took second place and the team from West Virginia placed third. In addition to trophies and accolades, the Carroll Color Guard won the honor of representing the Middle East Region at the July National Cadet competition in Ohio.

Colonel Larry Ragland, Commander, Middle East Region commented, "It was my distinct pleasure to present the trophies and I really enjoyed the happy faces of the excited cadets we have in MER. The parents and adult leaders have much to be proud of for every cadet that participated. This was one of the best competitions MER has had in a while. Please join me in congratulating all these members for conducting such a great event and sending the best of the best to represent MER at National competition."

The five-member Carroll Color Guard initially formed in 2012. Strong leadership and the cadets' commitment to honor and duty are noticeable markers of their success. The Carroll team executes synchronized and ceremonial drills with precision and attention to detail. Lead by Cadet Chief Master Sergeant (C/CMSgt) Olivia Persing, the team also includes Cadet Chief Master Sergeants Jonathan Yerger, and Logan Parrish, and Cadet Technical Sergeant (C/TSgt) Aaron Scanlan and alternate Cadet Senior Airman Angie Auth. When asked about her experience, C/CMSgt Persing said, "I am extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to compete with such a wonderful team in the last two events and am excited for what lies ahead!"

In addition to placing first in the MER Color Guard competition, the Carroll cadets were first in the standard drill. They placed second in the in-ranks inspection and panel quiz. C/CMSgt Jonathan Yerger received the award for the highest written test score and C/CMsgr Olivia Persing received the female Fleet Foot award for having the fastest mile run-time.



Carroll Squadron Color Guard performing Flag Drill at Middle East Regional Competition at Ft. Picket, Va



Carroll Composite Squadron Color Guard Left to right:
Cadets: Parrish, Yerger, Auth, Persing and Scanlan

Cadets were excited with the announcement of first place for the Carroll team. C/TSgt Aaron Scanlan remarked, "When they called out Maryland as the first place color guard, I was literally stunned. All of our hard work has been blessed by God. Being part of the winning team, I feel a tremendous sense of honor and excitement at being selected to represent the Middle East Region at the Nationals."

The Carroll Squadron Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Frank Jarosinski, joined by other squadron members, cadets' friends and families traveled with the Carroll Color Guard to Ft. Picket. These home-town supporters expressed excitement and avid appreciation for the cadets and the event. One parent said, "It was a 'nail-biting' experience. We are impressed by our team's accomplishments and are excited for them. We are so proud of our young men and women."

Squadron Commander Jarosinski expressed his pride and gratitude for a job well done, "The Carroll Color Guard achieved success because of their willingness to work together toward a goal of excellence and it is because of their commitment to each other and the squadron that we stand here today, with our State and Regional Champions! We salute you and now... it is off to the Nationals in July!"

Participation as a Color Guard team member provides incentive and motivation for cadets to train and attain goals in leadership, aerospace education, physical fitness and teamwork. As a team, cadets work closely with members of their unit in a competitive team environment where they share experience, expertise and group dynamics. Being part of a Color Guard also provides an opportunity for cadets to increase esprit de corps through excellence in training and performance.

Civil Air Patrol, the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, is a nonprofit organization with more than 61,000 members nationwide, operating a fleet of 550 aircraft. CAP, in its Air Force auxiliary role, performs 90 percent of continental U.S. inland search and rescue missions as tasked by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center and was credited by the AFRCC with saving 54 lives in fiscal year 2011. Its volunteers also perform homeland security, disaster relief and drug interdiction missions at the request of federal, state and local agencies. The members play a leading role in aerospace education and serve as mentors to nearly 27,000 young people currently participating in the CAP cadet program. CAP received the World Peace Prize in 2011 and has been performing missions for America for 70 years. CAP also participates in Wreaths Across America, an initiative to remember, honor and teach about the sacrifices of U.S. military veterans. Visit www.gocivilairpatrol.com or www.capvolunteernow.com for more information.

Nearly 1,600 members of CAP serve in Maryland. Last fiscal year wing members flew 29 search and rescue missions and were credited with 13 finds saving three lives. Maryland Wing flew over 160 missions for the State of Maryland resulting in 2,222 hours flown. Volunteers contributed services estimated at \$4.2 million. For more information, contact the Maryland Wing at www.mdcap.org.

The Carroll Composite Squadron meets 7 p.m. Tuesday evenings at the Hilltop Assembly of God Church Hall at 30 North Cranberry Road in Westminster, Maryland. Prospective cadets, ages 12-18, and their parents are always welcome. Adults seeking mentoring opportunities are invited as well. For more information e-mail carrollcomposite@yahoo.com or visit www.carrollcap.org.