



2 VandenBos Whitby Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron

(September 2010)

PARENTS INFORMATION HANDBOOK

Dear parents /guardians: Welcome (or Welcome again) to the Royal Canadian Air Cadet Program. By joining **2 VandenBos Whitby Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron**, your children have joined one of Canada's truly premier youth organizations. In Ontario, there are about 8,000 young people between the ages of 12 and 18 enrolled in 125 Air Cadet squadrons. In Canada there are 24,000 Air Cadets in some 452 squadrons. On behalf of the Air Cadet League of Canada and its Ontario Provincial Committee, the Department of National Defense, the Squadron Sponsoring Committee and the Commanding Officer and staff of the 2 VandenBos Whitby Air Cadet Squadron, we would like to say how pleased we are to have your children in the Air Cadet program. This Handbook aims to give you some information about the organization, its program and the squadron. It also seeks to guide the cadets and parents/guardians as participants in the program.

THE BEGINNING

The Air Cadet program started in 1941, as part of the war effort, when a group of civilian volunteers set up a country-wide organization to help stimulate an interest in flying and aviation, with an eye to the requirements of the Royal Canadian Air Force. Many cadets eventually entered wartime service with the RCAF. (To note that there were Army Cadets and Sea Cadets long before then.)

Following the end of the war, the Air Cadet program remained solidly in place. Its role changed to adjust to the changing needs of the Canadian society and its young people. Today the aims of the Air Cadet program are:

- *To develop in youth the attributes of good citizenship and leadership.

- *To promote physical fitness.

- *To stimulate, without obligation, the interest of youth toward the aviation and aerospace fields, including the air element of the Canadian Forces. Some portions of the program assist in related career preparation, some very directly as in the case of pilot scholarships, aircraft maintenance and airport management.

Be completely assured that cadets are not military, nor is there any expectation for them to join the military. The Air Cadet program is focused on providing Canadian youth with the skills, knowledge and inclination to become effective leaders, good citizens and healthy well-adjusted persons.

Although there are significant costs to run the Air Cadet Program, and fund raising is necessary, there are no costs to join the program at our VandenBos Squadron and everything we do in Air Cadets can be summed up in the motto of the program: **To Learn, To Serve, To Advance.**

THE PARTNERSHIP

The Royal Canadian Air Cadet Program, part of the largest Federal Government youth program, is a unique **partnership** between the Federal Government's Department of National Defence and the Air Cadet League of Canada, the latter a civilian not-for-profit organization. This partnership can be found at all three levels of the program: the national level, the provincial level and, your focus, the local level.

Each squadron is sponsored by a local organization, in this case the '2 Whitby Royal Canadian Air Cadet **Squadron Sponsoring Committee**'. It supports the Commanding Officer and staff in the

operation of the squadron. The Sponsoring Committee is responsible for: securing and paying for the squadron facilities for training, parades, office and storage; for funding certain elements of the program such as a band, optional training and social events; for attracting recruit cadets and adult leaders and supporters; for ensuring registration and screening of volunteer adult leaders and supporters, which includes a police check with 'vulnerable sector screening'; for public relations; for fund raising; for managing the squadron finances; and, for other functions in concert with the Commanding Officer.

Each **squadron** is staffed by a group of officers, civilian instructors and volunteers under the direction of the **Commanding Officer**. The CO is responsible for organizing and supervising the operation of the squadron, with the staff and for the cadets, and for the implementation of the training program. The CO and his/her team, often with the Sponsoring Committee, organize the training program according to nationally set standards. They plan and implement the various training activities throughout the year, including on some weekends.

At the provincial and national level, the Department of National Defence/Canadian Forces and the Air Cadet League work cooperatively to provide the necessary oversight and resources to support the squadrons. This includes provision of uniforms and training for officers and cadets, aircraft and gliders for the flying program, as well as administrative support for squadrons and sponsoring committees.

Without this unique partnership, the Air Cadet program would not be as successful as it has been and it is today.

HISTORY OF 2 VANDENBOS ROYAL CANADIAN AIR CADET SQUADRON

Why and when was 2 VandenBos Whitby squadron formed? For years the Air Cadet population remained more or less steady in the face of the ever-increasing Canadian population. In southern Ontario, youth was particularly under-served by the Air Cadet Movement East of Toronto. In south Durham, the combined population of Pickering, Ajax, Whitby and Oshawa had reached over 400,000 by 2003. Until 1998, when 856 Sqn Pickering was formed, 151 Sqn Oshawa had been the sole Air Cadet squadron in the area. Five years later, in 2003, those two units had a combined strength of over 300 Air Cadets and maintained that strength without need of much active recruiting. It was high time to start another squadron.

Whitby had a rapidly expanding population just reaching 100,000 and was in need of a squadron. A formation committee was created by Bob Robert. When approached, then Mayor Marcel Brunelle, an ex-Air Cadet, readily endorsed the formation of a Whitby Squadron. A Commanding Officer was found and a list of 35 interested area youth was compiled. Some were from the Oshawa and Pickering squadrons to provide the senior cadet cadre. The then Principal of the Captain Michael VandenBos Public School, Claire Boychyn, was approached and offered her principal's school night for the weekly squadron training activities. The Whitby Mayor's Community Development Fund as well as Royal Canadian Legion Whitby Branch 112 and the Rotary Club of Whitby provided generous grants as start up funds. Others also contributed. The pieces were in place and the formation application was processed successfully through the provincial and national levels. The Whitby Squadron was authorized in August 2003 and started operating a month later. Then leading the formation committee and becoming the first Sponsoring Committee Chair was Bob Robert. The Commanding Officer was Captain Ian Howie.

Note that the **Captain Michael VandenBos Public School** is named after a former 151 Chadburn Oshawa Squadron Air Cadet, resident of Whitby, who was killed in a 10 December 1998 training accident as a member of Canada's **Snowbirds** aerobatic team. Michael VandenBos had obtained

glider and private pilot wings through the Air Cadet Program. The School is an Honorary Member of the Canadian Forces and the Snowbirds fly past and/or visit every year on the first day of school.

Shortly after starting operations, the squadron decided to seek permission to name the squadron after Captain Michael **VandenBos**. Permission was granted by the VandenBos family and by higher Air Cadet authorities. (To learn more about Michael VandenBos, see the last pages.) After gaining some initial proficiency, the squadron's Grand Opening, with many squadron cadets just issued uniforms, took place on 5 February 2004 at the school in front of numerous dignitaries.

The 2 VandenBos Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron had made a solid start. As announced at the Ontario Provincial Committee Annual General Meeting in October 2004, it won the **Strathcona Shield** for the **Best New Squadron** in Ontario for its first year of operation. Progress and development continued. In 2005, the long sought-after office and storage space at 'the hangar' was offered by and accepted from Manny Rosario of Enterprise Airline. In March 2005 the Sponsoring Committee applied for a Trillium Foundation of Ontario grant of \$22,700 to buy musical instruments to start a 26-member band. The application was successful and the grant received in August 2005. The band was unveiled on 10 November 2005. What a fine addition to the squadron this was. Success was still mounting. At the October 2005 Ontario Provincial Committee Annual General Meeting, the 2 Whitby Squadron Sponsoring Committee was awarded the **Executive Director Trophy** for 2004-05 as the **Best of the 108 Sponsoring Committees** in the parent Provincial organization. The squadron has indeed evolved nicely with 80 proud Air Cadets on parade at the May 2006 Annual Review. During that summer, among the numerous cadets attending Summer Camps, three came back proudly wearing pilot wings. At the start of the 2006-07 year, the Friday Sports Night at Donald A. Wilson Secondary School was added to the Program. At the Fall 2006 Ontario Provincial Committee Annual General Meeting, the 2 Whitby Squadron Sponsoring Committee was awarded the **Duggan Shield** as the **Best Sponsoring Committee in York-Durham-Scarborough**. At the Fall 2007 Ontario Provincial Committee Annual General Meeting, the 2 Whitby Squadron Sponsoring Committee was again awarded the **Duggan Shield** as the **Best Sponsoring Committee in York-Durham-Scarborough**. Effective Speaking and Debating Skills competitions have since been added. The squadron has become a premier Air Cadet Squadron! It will continue to evolve as a valued Whitby community asset.

How does it happen? Here's how member cadets and their parents/guardians can better participate in the program and contribute to the success of the squadron.

CADET RESPONSIBILITIES

There are still at this point no costs involved with joining our Air Cadet Squadron. However, there are expectations for all cadets. These include:

- ❖ **Attending all training nights, band practices, core training activities and parades and participating as often as possible in the other, optional/extra, activities.**

It is important for cadets to attend all scheduled core activities and for band members, the band practices. Cadets who do not attend core training nights regularly will fall behind in their training and will not be as successful. The same applies for weekend training. Band members who miss band practices fall behind and affect the proficiency of the entire band. Attendance at special parades such as the Annual Review is critical and mandatory. If your son/daughter has a legitimate reason why he/she cannot attend a core squadron activity or band practice, call the designated squadron person in advance. NOTE that by attending all activities over the years, cadets will easily accumulate the **Community Service hours** required to graduate from high school. Cadets wanting to document their Community Service hours are to make a request to the Commanding Officer through their Flight Commander.

❖ **Keeping informed on upcoming activities.**

The cadets are expected to keep informed on current and upcoming activities. They do this by remembering information passed at training nights and reading/keeping various handouts. They must share all that information with parents/guardians. In addition, parents/guardians are allowed and encouraged to attend the 'closing parade' at 9:20 PM on regular Thursday training nights when much information is disseminated to the cadets. Perhaps the best practice of all is for cadets and parents/guardians to subscribe to the weekly squadron Newsletter. To do so, **send an email to weekly@2vandenbos.org** with the title 'subscribe'. **Alternatively**, we strongly encourage you to frequently (weekly) visit our **squadron website at <www.2vandenbos.org>** where the Newsletter appears and for more long range planned activities (view the web calendar for this) and general cadet information and links.

❖ **Taking part in fund raising activities.**

Although there is still no cost to join the squadron, cadets are fully expected to take part in fund raising activities such as **Tag Days** and selling/buying Air Cadet League **Lottery Tickets** (*See "Lottery Facts" at the end of this Handbook). These activities raise some of the very necessary funds that make it possible for the squadron to plan and conduct various training, citizenship and social activities. We ask that Lottery Tickets be sold/bought expeditiously and the monies and tickets and stubs be well taken care of and returned promptly.

❖ **Taking care of the uniform.**

Each cadet is issued a uniform when she/he completes the recruit training program. It costs over \$500 to outfit each cadet (and keep up with the growth spurs). The squadron CO has a fixed budget to purchase uniforms each year. It is critical that the cadet takes care of his/her uniform, keeps it cleaned and pressed. The uniform must be in good condition when exchanged on outgrowing it AND upon leaving cadets. Each cadet is given training on how to look after the uniform. This information is also included in the Proficiency Level 1 Handbook. *Ask your son/daughter to share this information.*

❖ **Taking care of the band instrument and accessories.**

Each Band member is issued his/her band instrument and accessories in September. The parent/guardian may be asked to sign a loan agreement at that time, as well as provide an accompanying minimally set deposit when applicable. The cadet must take excellent care of the loaned instrument and equipment always. Particular care must be taken to secure them at all time, including by locking vehicles and stowing them in the trunk of an unattended vehicle. The instruments and equipment are to be returned at the announced time after the last band event each year in June or so. Any deposit can then be returned per conditions in the loan agreement.

❖ **Paperwork, paperwork, paperwork! And Documents!**

There are enrolment forms, there are permission forms for weekend training and other approved activities such as the citizenship/year-end or other trip, there are summer camp applications, information bulletins, training schedules, etc., etc. This information is sent home for you as well as for the cadet. Please insure that forms are properly completed and returned in a timely manner. There is always a requirement for the cadet to have his/her **Ontario Health Card** on his/her person during cadet activities. Any trip to the USA will have other requirements.

If you have any questions about each cadet's responsibilities and duties, please contact the squadron Commanding Officer or phone the squadron telephone number: (905) 243-8001

HOW CAN PARENTS HELP THEIR CADETS?

You can do a great deal to help your son/daughter become successful in the Air Cadet Program. The most important thing is to show an interest in their success and training and to support them during the year. There are many other ways that you can help your son/daughter be successful. These include:

- ✓ Helping them organize and manage their after-school time so that there will be time for both Air Cadets and schoolwork.
- ✓ Helping them look after their uniform (that includes not losing any part of it).
- ✓ Helping them look after and secure their band instrument and accessories.
- ✓ Ensuring they sell/buy their lottery tickets promptly, securing the tickets, stubs and monies at all times. Be familiar with the instructions supplied with the tickets.
- ✓ Including Air Cadet activities such as weekend training on the family calendar.
- ✓ Trying to avoid family scheduling conflicts with major activities such as Annual Reviews.
- ✓ Transporting your son/daughter (and maybe their friends) to training nights and picking them up at the end. (To arrive no earlier than and picking up no later than the times posted in the Newsletter.)
- ✓ Encourage them to participate in all squadron activities. The more they put in to the squadron, the more they will get out of it.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Should you or your Air Cadet daughter/son choose to organize or host an activity attended by cadets (even if it is *only* for cadets), you must understand that it will not be an official or sanctioned ‘cadet activity’. As such, the Air Cadet Program insurance will not be in effect, nor will Air Cadet Program authorities get involved in redressing any discipline or other resulting issues. The responsibilities will be entirely yours as organizers or hosts of a private function. In fact it is your responsibility to make clear to those invited and attending that it is not a ‘cadet activity’. Conversely, parents/guardians should enquire about the ‘cadet activity’ status of the event their son/daughter is planning to attend.

PROMOTIONS

Promotion in the Air Cadet Program is based on strict criteria. Up to the rank of Sergeant, promotion is based mainly on regular attendance, good participation and attitude and successful completion of each proficiency level of training. For the senior cadet ranks (Flight Sergeant and up), each squadron is allowed to have a certain maximum number of cadets at each rank based on the size of the squadron. A cadet must first meet certain national standards (e.g. attendance, time as a cadet and in rank, training levels completed and summer camps attended). These establish the minimum standards for promotion. The squadron sets additional standards for those senior promotions. These include participation in weekend training, participation in squadron activities, dress, drill and deportment and a willingness and availability to take on leadership and administrative roles. (A ‘merit filing system’ is in place.)

The decision to promote a cadet is made by the Commanding Officer in consultation with other members of the squadron staff and sponsoring committee. For more information about promotions, please contact the Commanding Officer.

SUMMER CAMPS

Each year, some ten thousand Air Cadets have the opportunity to attend summer camps throughout Ontario and Canada. Courses run two, three, six and seven weeks and cover a wide range of subjects from general (basic) training to music, athletics, instruction, leadership, aviation and gliding/power flying. With each year of attendance, the opportunities for selection to summer camp improve to the

point that after 3 years of cadet service, individuals may apply for senior level camps (six and seven weeks duration) held at various locations across Canada. These include, Drill & Ceremonial Leadership training in Ontario, Introduction to Space studies in Quebec, Survival training in Quebec and/or Ontario, and Music, Athletics, Aviation Maintenance and Airport Management training in Ontario. For cadets aspiring to be pilots, the Glider Pilot Scholarship and the Power Flying Scholarship are offered to those individuals who have a demonstrated aptitude in aviation subjects, have good school marks and made a strong commitment to squadron activities over their cadet career. Senior cadets also have the opportunity for summer employment at cadet camps and the very senior cadets may apply for a three-week International Exchange. There is no cost to attend summer camps however the available spaces are finite. There are more Air Cadets who want to attend summer camp than spaces at the camps! (Nevertheless, our squadron has done very well in sending most applicants to camp, about 40 in recent years.) *It is important that cadets who apply to go to a camp be committed to go if and when their selection is announced. Applying, then declining later, is unfair to the system. Cadets should apply with commitment and declare right away if circumstances dictate a change.*

The Commanding Officer has to establish a priority list for each summer camp. A cadet's position on the priority list is determined by a number of qualifying factors variously including the cadet's age, interest and aptitude in the particular course, previous summer training for more advanced cadets and level of participation in local squadron activities. The final decisions on which cadets go to camp are made by higher levels in Trenton, Borden or Ottawa.

In order to apply for the shorter summer camps, each cadet needs to fill out an application form. These forms are usually sent home in October or November. When the form arrives, please take the time to **complete the form fully** and return it to the squadron promptly per instructions. They have to be processed through the squadron and be on their way up the chain of command before Christmas.

Six and seven-week courses sponsored by the Air Cadet League have a more involved application process. The application package is sent home in October or November as well. Supporting documentation, including a narrative and a transcript of marks from school, must be included in the application package. Questions must be answered and the forms signed by your cadet and you. You must assist your son/daughter in completing these forms. There is also a written test for flying and gliding scholarship candidates in January and an interview in February for all applicants moving forward. There are fall preparatory classes to attend at the squadron for these tests.

For more information about summer camps, including application procedures and timelines, and summer camp dates, contact the Commanding Officer or CI Don Biffin.

OTHER WAYS ADULTS/ PARENTS CAN HELP

There are many ways that adults can get involved with the Air Cadet Program.

- Become an occasional Volunteer.

Ask the Commanding Officer if there is a need for more occasional volunteers. Some events require adult volunteers to drive for weekend activities, or help in some way with special activities.

- Become a Volunteer Staff Instructor.

If you can devote time on a regular basis to the squadron, or if you have special skills (flying, first aid, photography, music, etc) you could become a Volunteer Staff Instructor, or in some circumstances a paid Civilian Instructor.

- Become a CIC Officer.

The Cadet Instructor Cadre officers are members of a special component of the Canadian Forces whose sole duties are as youth development leaders. Officers must be able to attend regularly (both regular parade nights and weekend activities) as well as take training courses offered. CIC officers receive pay, uniforms and training through the Canadian Forces and are eligible for promotion after meeting national standards.

- Join the Squadron Sponsoring Committee.

Each squadron has a Sponsoring Committee. As previously described, the Sponsoring Committee provides support for the squadron and has many functions, including fund raising, providing facilities and promoting the squadron activities. The 2 Whitby Squadron Sponsoring Committee meets monthly. If you have particular skills (event organizer, fund raising, public relations, etc) you think might be useful to the Sponsoring Committee or simply want to help, please contact the Sponsoring Committee Chairperson.

Any adult who wishes to work (volunteer) with an Air Cadet squadron must be registered and screened by the Sponsoring Committee and the Air Cadet League. This process includes an interview, a reference check, and a police/criminal records check with 'vulnerable sector screening' (and for certain positions a credit check).

YET OTHER WAYS PARENTS/ FRIENDS CAN HELP 2 VANDENBOS WHITBY SQUADRON SPECIFICALLY

- We know from experience, that some parents/ guardians/ friends can sometimes tap into companies/ work place/ clubs/ associations/ etc. for **items that the squadron needs**. This could be donations (money, or goods, including for the canteen, or products to be used or raffled, etc.), the use of facilities for squadron activities, and perhaps other 'goodies'. If you can help there, please speak to a member of the Sponsoring Committee or the Commanding Officer and his staff.
- The Squadron Sponsoring Committee is officially a **Registered Charity** with Canada Revenue Agency. As such, if you or someone you know wishes to make a donation, we can issue an official **income tax receipt**.
In addition if you regularly **donate through your work place** each pay, you may wish to direct your contribution in whole or in part to our charity. This could also apply to one of your relatives, a friend, neighbour, ex-air cadet you know, etc. For details on the name and number of our Registered Charity, contact a member of the Sponsoring Committee.
- The Squadron Sponsoring Committee is collecting **Canadian Tire money** for purchasing required squadron equipment. Donated CT money is collected by senior cadets every parade night.

CONCLUSION

Making the decision to join the Air Cadets is a big step for a young person. The demands of the program are significant but the rewards are absolutely worth it. As parents, you can indeed do a lot to support you son/daughter as they proceed through the Air Cadet Program or the Squadron in general.

If you have any questions about the information included in this publication, please contact the Commanding Officer. He/she will be able to answer your questions and provide you with additional information about squadron procedures, the Air Cadet program and the Air Cadet League of Canada.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Official Squadron Name: **2 VandenBos Whitby Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron**

Official Squadron Sponsoring Committee Name:

2 Whitby Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron Sponsoring Committee

Squadron Telephone Number: **(905) 243-8001**

Main Parade Night & Locations: **THURSDAYS, 6:30 to 9:35 PM,**

Captain Michael VandenBos Public School, 3121 Country Lane, in NW Whitby (West of Cochrane, North of Rossland)

(It should be noted that on occasions when the squadron cannot use the Captain Michael VandenBos school, Thursday night training will likely be at the **blue Enterprise Airline hangar**, located on the North side of Oshawa Airport, off of Taunton at 1190 Keith Ross Court

Squadron Mailing Address: 1288 Ritson Road North, Suite 416, Oshawa ON L1G 8B2

Squadron E-Mail Address: webmaster@2vandenbos.org

Squadron Web Site: **www.2vandenbos.org**

Commanding Officer: **Captain Lindsay Cadenhead**

Squadron Staff: Captain Rick Hutchuk CD

Captain Ian Howie CD (Founding Commanding Officer)

Captain Jim Goodall CD

Civilian Instructor Nick Erdelyi

Civilian Instructor Don Biffin

Civilian Instructor Anick Bureau

Civilian Instructor Morgan Cadenhead

CV Adam Biffin

CV Robin Taylor

CV Terry Eldridge

CV Susan Fisher

CV Tracy Martin

CV Randy Peake

CV Bonnie Peake

CV Daren Huard

CV Ken Stronge

CV Andrew Rankin

Squadron Sponsoring Committee:

Chair – **Stephanie Mazer** (Employee at the Town of Whitby & Parent of a squadron cadet)

Treasurer & Founding Chair - Bob Robert (Retired Brigadier General

& First Vice President of the Air Cadet League of Canada)

Secretary – Sharmila Saigaonkar (Parent of a squadron cadet)

Member – Manny Rosario (Operations Manager & Partner, Enterprise Airline)

Member - Michelle Saddler (McGraw Hill Publishing & Parent of two squadron cadets)

Member – Bill Rankin (Systems Administrator at EDS Canada & Parent of a sqn cadet)

Member – Abe Abu-Halagah (Apotex Pharmaceutical & Parent of a squadron cadet)

Member – Sherrie Gibson (Office Mgr at Nucap Industries and Parent of a squadron cadet)

Air Cadet League of Canada (Ontario) Contact Numbers:

Telephone: 1-800-513-0952 FAX: 1-416-635-2789

E-Mail: lynette.mercado@aircadetleague.on.ca Web Site: www.aircadetleague.on.ca

Air Cadet League of Canada Web Site: www.aircadetleague.com

(This Handbook is produced by the Squadron Sponsoring Committee - September 2010)

Subj: **Congratulations from an air cadet friend of M. Vandebos**
Date: 19/03/2004 10:47:56 AM Eastern Standard Time
From: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
To: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Sent from the Internet ([Details](#))

Hi. I read with great interest the naming and numbering of the new Air Cadet Squadron in Whitby.

I'm a former air cadet with 870 Sqn. Brockville (1983-1988). During my years as a cadet, I was able to get to know Mike Vandebos through my air cadet training programs - as a fellow cadet on Air Studies (Belleville) in 1985, as my partner for Gliding Scholarship (we were both on the same "shift" with the same instructor) in Trenton in 1986, and during Flying Scholarship in North Bay in 1987. We formed a friendship in 1986, spending an entire summer, six days a week, for six weeks, sun up till sun down, flying (and chasing) gliders at Mountain View and Picton airfields. It was a joyous reunion for much of our 1986 Gliding Scholarship gang in North Bay in 1987.

I lost touch with Mike in 1988 after cadets as we both went our separate ways - him into an aviation program, myself into university science studies. We re-established contact in 1995 through an air cadet website and I was able to keep in touch with him right up until his accident. Like everyone who knew him, I too was devastated to learn of the accident that claimed his life. I still *really* miss him and still can't believe that I'll never hear from him again.

Although many Air Cadet flying scholarship graduates - such as myself - do not go on to become commercial or military pilots, my Air Cadet, gliding and flying scholarship experiences were far and away the best experiences I've ever had. The friendships made and the experience of taking challenging ground school classes, flying lessons, first solos and passing multiple flying exams as a teenager helped shaped a foundation of confidence, endurance and discipline that has benefited me in so many ways.

It is very intriguing to see that now that Mike has passed on, that he is being remembered by so many tributes - the flying scholarship trophy at 151 Chadburn Sqn, a public school in Whitby and now your Cadet squadron!

I only met Captain Mike Vandebos - the air force pilot, twice. The Mike I remember was a fun-loving teen with a charming politeness, an awesome sense of humour, a passion for airplanes, as well as an *incredibly* mischevious streak. He was an awesome friend from an amazing time of my life. Though in his late 20's Mike did fly with the elite of the aviation world - the Snowbirds - never let your cadets forget that at one time, Capt. Vandebos was just like them - a teenager who liked to have fun, and LOVED to fly!

Sincerely,

Patty Story
Ottawa, Ont.

Hi Patty Story.

Thx very much for your heart-warming e-mail.

I'll share it with the Vandebos family and the sqn cadets, staff and sponsoring committee.

Patty, where did you read about it?

Also, in my capacity with the OPC of the Air Cadet League, I write the quarterly Bulletin and like to include stories about what became of ex-Air Cadets. Can you say something about your life since cadets please?
Thx again.

Bob Robert, Brig Gen (Ret'd)
Chairman 2 Vandebos Whitby Squadron Sponsoring Committee
& Associate Executive Director, Ontario Provincial Committee

Subj: **Re: Re: Congratulations from an air cadet friend of M. VandenBos**
Date: 24/03/2004 4:24:49 PM Eastern Standard Time
From: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
To: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Sent from the Internet ([Details](#))

Hi - Thanks for sharing the email with the VandenBos family and the squadron - Please share this one too!

I read about the 2 VandenBos Whitby Sqn. by doing a search on Air Cadets on the internet. Every once in awhile I find myself searching around on the web for news on Cadets - also every few months I do a search when I think of Mike too, just to look for any new pictures of him with the snowbirds, or news about the school named after him, and I came across the listing for the new air cadet squadron.

There's still a whole complex set of emotions when I think of Mike, and when I see all the tributes to him (a school, a cadet squadron, etc.) Certainly I've not experienced the same kind of loss with his passing as his family and closest friends. However, the fact that it was aviation that brought him, myself, and a small group of teenagers together to learn how to fly, which was for me a very powerful and life changing experience. Add to this the fact that he was one of my most memorable cadet friends from those years - he was so much fun, and had such a considerate politeness about him, he was in the prime of his flying career and was *just* engaged when he died. Also add in the sad irony that it was indeed a flying accident that claimed Mike's life.

The tragedy of his accident hit me pretty hard at the time and it is still a dizzying emotional roller-coaster when I think too much about it. I still find it difficult on the anniversary of his accident and on Remembrance Day. I also still have a strong emotional reaction whenever I see the Snowbirds at a show or a fly over (e.g. Canada Day in Ottawa). I can't believe it's been over five years now.

I hope the VandenBos family will be heartened to see that 5 years later Mike is still very much in people's memories - and in mine in a really powerful way. One thing I am sure of is that meeting up with Mike again in 1995 really motivated me to think closely about following dreams and choosing carefully about what I was to do with my life. At the time I made contact with him in 1995-96 I was in an interesting but somewhat dead-end job (the government cutbacks in the environment/natural resources field were causing a lot of dead ends). Mike and I had several interesting email conversations about following dreams, about finding something fulfilling and rewarding, and just about plain old "being happy". His advice was pretty simple and straightforward - do things that make me happy, and don't spend too much time on things that don't. I am still so impressed that after so many years of non-contact, my old cadet friend came back into my life and cared enough to take time out of his busy, high-profile flying schedule to give me sage advice about happiness.

Many amazing things have opened up for me since that time, both career and personal (I am getting married in September). I strongly believe that meeting Mike again was a big part of my motivation to move forward and take on new challenges, to expand my horizons, to not settle for anything less than I deserved, and to not be beaten down by difficult challenges just as I had during our cadet flying days. Re-establishing contact with him again almost 10 years after gliding/flying scholarship had a *major* effect on so many things in my life. Mike re-introduced me to a person that I had long forgotten - myself at age 15-17 - someone who would not back down from ANY challenge, including being the first cadet to go solo at Flying Scholarship in 1987!

What has become of me? Well it's not nearly as exciting as flying with the Snowbirds, but I am certain that my cadet experience also has shaped my current life. I am currently working as a senior environmental policy analyst for the Federal Government. I studied Natural Resources at the University of Guelph (1988-1992) and worked for a not for profit environmental agency in Eastern Ontario for about 7 years before going to Graduate School for Communications (Concordia University in Montreal) before coming here to work for the Federal Government.

Being a former Brigadier General with all that military experience you are probably all too familiar with federal policy work - the specific work I am in is related to water. Specifically, I work on helping to formulate policy advice from the federal perspective (especially a challenge as most of the jurisdiction for water is provincial) on how to reduce agricultural impacts on water quality and supply - in the name of protecting public health and the environment, while at the same time trying to minimize economic/business impact on farmers and the agriculture/food industry. It's a difficult balancing act for sure and has the potential to drive one crazy as there is no perfect answer to anything, especially because in Canada, something as important as the water we drink

falls within (and outside) a very complex set of jurisdictions and regulations. Also, as it is so often in public sector work, the needs and wishes of one group are often at odds with those of another. One solution that works for one group can open up a whole new set of challenges for others.

This type of work requires a lot of mental fitness, patience, tact, teamwork, judgement, discipline, persistence and diplomacy. I have no doubt that the discipline of Cadets and learning to fly have helped me in my adult life. No doubt this training had an effect on learning persistence (giving up is NOT an option while flying), thinking creatively, the importance of teamwork, staying calm under pressure, and sticking a project through until the end.

Although I went on to work in environmental/policy field - not military or civilian aviation, I know the reason I liked flying was not so much for aviation itself but for the view. The experience of spending summers on an airfield, outside, with my friends... as well as being able to see the trees, water, and the sky from a bird's eye view really was what was so attractive about aviation for me.

I've recently made contact with another former fellow glider/flying scholarship colleague here in Ottawa (she does not remember Mike as well as I do - we were sorted alphabetically by last name and as such she was in a different flight for Gliding scholarship). We've gotten together once this year, had a lot of fun reminiscing about flying and gliding days. She's also working in the environmental field here in Ottawa. We both feel that the summers we spent learning to fly were the "perfect" summers of our lives.

After meeting up again with her and a few others from that group (including Mike) in my adult life, I have come to realize there really is a unique and powerful bond that my gliding and flying scholarship gang shares even to this day - almost 20 years later.

Have a great time with the new squadron!

Patty Story

*Lottery Facts

What Happens to the Lottery Money Every Year?

The Air Cadet Lottery is administered by the Ontario Provincial Committee of the Air Cadet League of Canada (the OPC), under a license issued by the Ontario Lottery & Gaming Commission. Each Squadron is required to sell a Minimum number of books of tickets (quota), based on the previous year's squadron average effective strength of cadets. Squadrons receive a portion of the Lottery proceeds based on the number of books they sell. Squadrons also have the option of requesting over-quota books of tickets, which provide a higher percentage of return to the selling Squadron.

The portion of proceeds retained by the OPC is used to:

1. Pay all direct Lottery costs (e.g., ticket printing, letter of credit, license fees, prizes, publishing names of winners in a newspaper, etc.).
2. Support the OPC gliding program, by paying for fleet procurement, and maintenance costs associated with the tow planes and gliders it owns and provide to the Air Cadet Program. Of note in this regard:
 - The OPC owns 24 Schweizer gliders (including one for recruiting and fundraising displays) and 10 Bellanca Scout tow planes, used for the Spring and Fall familiarization gliding programs.

The gliders and tow planes are also used in the summer to train some 95 Cadet glider pilots, and to provide training and upgrading for familiarization pilots and instructors.

Acknowledgements

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The squadron is eternally grateful to **Enterprise Airline** for the generous continuous use of its facilities and also to **420 Wing** of the Air Force Association of Canada for the occasional use of its facilities to the great benefit of our cadets and program.

The squadron is no less grateful for the ongoing major sponsorship of the **Royal Canadian Legion Branch 112 (Whitby)** and the **Rotary Club of Whitby**, plus donations by numerous generous donors and supporters which it lists annually in the Program at its Annual Review.

Plus, the squadron cadets acknowledge the staff, sponsoring committee members, volunteers, parents and friends of the squadron for their contribution to and support of their cadet program and their personal development as ready and responsible citizens.

Lastly, the Squadron Staff and Sponsoring Committee are very proud of their VandenBos cadets who have made a laudable commitment to their own development as youth with a future of good citizenship and leadership.

To Learn * To Serve * To Advance