



A holistic approach to cadets

“**H**olistic” is defined at <http://dictionary.reference.com> as “Emphasizing the importance of the whole and the interdependence of its parts,” or “Concerned with wholes rather than analysis or separation into parts”. Some of us may have used “holistic” to describe a specific approach to medicine, to education, or to another discipline.

Two features in this issue—“Physical well-being—a healthy mind and a healthy body” on page 10 and the entire section on the Cadet Program Update (pages 14 to 19)—reveal the Cadet Program as taking a holistic approach to cadet training. It approaches each cadet as a whole person with body, mind, emotions and spirit—all interconnected.

There was a time when the terminology “physical well-being” brought to mind, exclusively, the fitness or healthiness of the physical body. In our feature on physical well-being, however, you will see that the Cadet Program describes physical well-being as “a life-long process of healthy mind *and* body development”. In other words, the Cadet Program is looking at the 'whole' cadet. And when the Cadet Program pursues its aim of physical fitness, it is with this definition in mind.

An element of wholeness is also evident in our new mission statement, created as part of the Cadet Program Update. Our mission is described as “contributing to the

development and preparation of youth for the transition to adulthood.” In other words, the Cadet Program is not only concerned about cadets during their time in Cadets. It is also concerned with their transition to adulthood and the kinds of adults they will become.

The design of the updated training program, scheduled to begin with first-year training in corps and squadrons in September of 2007, is based on a better understanding of youth as a whole. Contemporary research related to how they learn, how they develop and what they want and need has enabled us to work with a more complete picture—a holistic picture that will help us make learning fun, active/interactive and memorable for cadets.

Speaking of more complete pictures, we have added extra dimension to our physical well-being feature by soliciting the views of seven officers in the field on the Cadet Program's success in promoting physical fitness. They also share information on local initiatives that take that extra step.

The final article in our series on “Recognition for CIC officers” and part two of “Responding to problem behaviours in the classroom” also appear in this issue. As well, an expert in education from outside the Cadet Program shares his strategies for recruiting in schools, and an officer from the field shares his ideas for retaining new recruits. Finally, you won't want to miss the results of the most recent Department of National Defence and Ipsos-Reid survey on the Cadet Program. Check the contents page for these stories and more. *

CADENCE

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NICE TO BE NOTICED

I would like to comment on the article "Recognition for Cadet Program Leaders" (*Cadence*, Winter 2005).

CIC officers are rarely recognized, especially at the national level, for their work. A full-page newspaper advertisement in our local newspaper (last Nov. 11) offered "A special thank you to those reservists serving in Northwestern Ontario". The ad listed every reservist in Thunder Bay—except CIC officers. I realize that we are not deployable and are the lowest priority in the CF, but we are still serving our community.

The last article I read on this subject, entitled "Rewarding a job well done" (*Cadence*, Spring 2003), listed available awards and recognition to officers, but it seems that little has changed. I can probably count on one hand the number of CIC officers who receive these awards.

Unfortunately, the statistics on the Directorate of History and Heritage Honours and Awards website would seem to indicate that we would be wasting our time to nominate a CIC officer for a national award. Here are the statistics: Medal of Military Merit – 1999 recipients since 1972, all ranks, all services; Meritorious Service Cross – 78 military recipients since 1984; and Meritorious Service Medal – 135 military recipients since 1991. Statistics on other awards are the same—few recipients, with the chances of a local CIC officer receiving one, next to none.

So, what *can* we do nationally to thank CIC officers? How about a CIC service medal after six years of service, upon recommendation by the unit commanding officer (CO) or detachment commander? Why six years? The officer is recognized for a job well done at the half-way point

to receiving their Canadian Forces' Decoration (CD)—an incentive to stay on for another six years.

If six years seems like a short time to qualify for a medal just for "doing our jobs", then you may be interested to learn that the Special Service Medal is awarded to Canadian Rangers after only four years of "just doing their jobs". The medal is also awarded to those at Canadian Forces Station Alert after only six months of "just doing their jobs".

I agree with the *Cadence* articles that no CIC officers are in the Cadet Program for medals or money. But it's always nice for the national government to thank us for keeping the program strong and dedicating much of our lives to it. *

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SUFFERING FROM LOW ESTEEM?

One of the most rewarding parts of being a civilian instructor (CI) in Cadets is accompanying cadets to the airport for their glider familiarization flights. For many cadets, it is their first experience in the air, and I take great joy in seeing the smile on their faces after their flights.

Reading that last year's glider familiarization program in Atlantic Region had to be cancelled because of a lack of instructors (*Cadence*, Winter 2005) made me think about the issues and write this letter.

At our local squadron, I teach ground school to flying scholarship candidates. I am a former air cadet who continued gliding, having joined a civilian club and accomplished many of my goals of soaring cross-country. My experience in gliding in a civilian club and being involved with Cadets gives me, I think, a different perspective.

As the *Cadence* article mentioned, it is true that the 2-33 is not the Porsche of aircraft. In fact, many civilian clubs have replaced this venerable aircraft, once the backbone of most civilian clubs in Canada, with higher performance trainers with more appeal.

The low esteem that the gliding program suffers from, however, goes beyond a specific aircraft. I have heard cadets refer to the ITAC [Introduction to Aviation Course] as "I slack". Are these cadets choosing this course for the wrong reason? Where are they getting the perception that gliding courses are any less rigorous (or less glamorous) than other courses?

Perhaps, we, as instructors, are partly to blame. Are we missing the significance that gliding has as an aero sport? Are we missing the fact that many top professional pilots learned

the subtle skills of "feel" and co-ordination during their glider flying years?

Having young people who trained as air cadets come back to the gliding program as instructors—giving familiarization flights and teaching courses—is the best reflection of a successful program.

In the interim, I would suggest that the Cadet Program encourage leaders to promote gliding as a skill worthy of honing and an aero sport that's just 'plain' fun. It should also encourage CIC officers and CIs who are qualified to help with familiarization flights. Over the long term, I hope the Cadet Program can find ways to raise the esteem of the gliding program. *

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Cadence reserves the right to edit for length and clarity. Please restrict your letters to 250 words.