

128th Air Refueling Wing, Make-A-Wish Wisconsin team up for a one-of-a-kind wish fulfillment

By Master Sgt. Kellen Kroening

Wisconsin National Guard

MILWAUKEE — The 128th Air Refueling Wing held its first joint pilot-for-a-day and honorary commander ceremony Aug. 3, 2022, at General Mitchell Field, Milwaukee.

Caleb Zimmet's wish was to be a pilot. Unfortunately, Department of Defense regulations won't allow anyone under the age of 17 on an orientation flight. This meant flying on a KC-135 was out of the question.

Members of the 128th Air Refueling Wing adjusted fire and decided to make Caleb's visit a joint venture.

The 128 Air Refueling Wing's first Make-A-Wish event entailed a full day of ceremony, training, tours and Caleb's favorite foods — pizza and ice cream.

Upon arriving to the wing, Caleb was greeted by Col. Daniel Aber, 128th Air Refueling Wing vice commander, and several other support personnel.

Caleb was soon escorted into a hangar where over two hundred wing personnel stood at attention to observe the honorary commander ceremony.

"The induction ceremony, making Caleb our Wing's first ever honorary commander, was truly magical," said Aber. "The energy in the room was spectacular. Filled with immeasurable joy and excitement as we witnessed a true leader, inspiration, and aspiring aviator join our ranks.'

By looking at him you wouldn't be able to tell Caleb is fighting a medical battle because his bright smile and stoic appearance does not admit such.

However, the truth is Caleb is living with a brain tumor and has endured long hospital stays, treatments, and so much more. Following the ceremony nearly every Airman in attendance got in line to shake Caleb's hand, many of them taking the unit or morale patch off their sleeve to present as a keepsake for the new commander.

Next, Caleb attended an abbreviated flight school led by



U.S. Air National Guard photos by Master Sgt. Kellen Kroening

Members of the 128th Air Refueling Wing stand in formation as the honor guard posts the colors at the beginning of the honorary commander ceremony for Caleb Zimmet at 128th Air Refueling Wing, Milwaukee, on Aug. 3, 2022. The 128th Air Refueling Wing and Make-A-Wish Wisconsin teamed up to fulfill the wish of Caleb Zimmet to become a pilot for a day.

Capt. Justin Gruber, a pilot with the 128th Air Refueling Wing. 'Caleb and his family are amazing people," said Gruber. "It was a humbling experience to be a part of this event for some-

one who has been through so much at such a young age."

At the end of the flight school Caleb was awarded his pilot wings by Gruber and given a framed photograph of a KC-135 Tanker signed by members of the 128th Operations Group.

After a quick visit to the Jet Engine classroom, Caleb and his family were escorted to the ramp where Caleb and his mother boarded the personal aircraft of Maj. Bill Peters, a pilot with the 128th Air Refueling Wing, for a private flight over Milwaukee.

Caleb and his family were then given a tour of the KC-135 aircraft. The wing public affairs team also took the opportunity to have Caleb take a portrait sitting in the pilot's seat of the aircraft.

newly minted commander broke for chow, and invited the entire wing to join him for pizza and ice cream in Sijan Hall.

Following along the entire day was Jennilyn Parulski, Director of Volunteer Services for Make-A-Wish Wisconsin, admiring Caleb as he took to his new role as honorary com-

"When we talk about wish ideas and a child determining what will be the one they wish for, we use the phrase of getting to the heart of the child — what makes that child unique, what is special about their personality, what is at the center of who they are — and we utilize these details within the creation and design of that wish for our wish child," said Parulski.

Caleb finished up his first day as an honorary commander with a visit to the flight and boom simulators, which for any one that likes video games, was a great deal of fun.

Before finishing his first day as an honorary commander, Caleb and his family met back at Sijan Hall to be presented with a few more gifts and to say goodbye to his wing escorts.

"The Airmen at the 128th provided a day that not only fulfilled his wish of the pilot experience, but one that was filled with so many personal touches, all tailored to Caleb's likes and favorites, and his unique-self," said Parulski. "The 128th provided a one-of-a-kind wish for Caleb for which we are extremely grateful. You could see the joy radiating from Caleb's face throughout the day, and it was clear his parents felt that this wish had a significant impact on all of their lives.'

The Airmen of the 128th Air Refueling Wing were beyond At this point in the day, the honored to make this wish happen for Caleb.

Air Refueling Wing, Milwaukee. The 128th Air Refueling Wing and Make-A-Wish Wisconsin teamed up to fulfill the wish of Caleb Zimmet to become a pilot for a day. Green among 5 counties add 'Clean Water Now' to Nov. ballots

guard posts the colors at the beginning of his honorary commander ceremony at 128th

Caleb Zimmet stands before members of the 128th Air Refueling Wing as the honor

WISCONSIN — The deadline for counties to add referendum questions to local ballots is complete and Adams, Bayfield, Juneau, Green and Outagamie Counties will offer advisory referendum questions on clean water protection in the fall elections.

The question on the ballot will read: "Should the State of Wisconsin establish a right to clean water to protect human health, the environment, and the diverse cultural and natural heritage of Wisconsin?"

The Clean Water Now advisory referendum gives Wisconsinites a direct

support for more action by state government and elected officials to protect drinking water and groundwater across Wisconsin.

"What we hear from Wisconsinites all across the state is that they are frustrated with the lack of significant action from state leaders to make water protection a priority," said River Alliance of Wisconsin Water Organizer Advocates Bridgwater. Johnson "Another year has passed, and tens of thousands of Wisconsinites are still unable to drink their own water, and that is not accept-

opportunity to express their able. Wisconsin's greatest asset is and will always be our water. Voters will agree by voting 'yes' to Clean Water Now on November

In spring 2021 elections, voters in Marquette County (73%), Portage County (77%) and Wood County (76%) approved referendum questions. In spring 2022 elections, Eau Claire (79%) and La Crosse (86%) Counties approved the question. Also this spring, Monroe County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution committing to conserving, protecting, and restor-

ing clean water.

Meet Susan, Pleasant View's mascot



CAN Susan welcoming Pleasant View's new 2022 Oversight Committee members: Joan Rufenacht, Dave Bristow, Paul Roemer, Todd Larson, Linda Boll.

FREE DAY PASS

Join us at the Green County Family YMCA! Enjoy free access to our group fitness classes, aquatic center, wellness facility and more.

Must be 18 years or older. Valid only at the Green County Family YMCA.

Must be presented to the Welcome Center. Expires September 30, 2022.

MONROE — CNA Susan is the new mascot for Pleasant View Nursing Home in Monroe. She has been traveling around Green County meeting people and visiting the great places that make up

the local community. Every Tuesday a picture of CNA Susan in a specific Green County location is posted on Facebook for people to guess where she is; on Thursday is the reveal. So far, she stopped by a car show in the Town of Exeter, enjoyed a hike in Browntown, got ice cream in Brodhead, went fishing in Monticello, checked out the shops in New Glarus, and made some friends on the ATV trail in Monroe.

WE ARE EXCITED TO WELCOME Janelle Rucker



Janelle Rucker is the new Business Banking Development Officer with Woodford State Bank! Janelle comes with over 10 years of banking experience and over three years in retail banking and operations. She is the Administrator for the Brodhead Chamber and a Monroe Chamber Ambassador! She loves spending time outdoors and traveling with her husband, Derek and kids Caston,

Keegan, and fur babies. Janelle can help make your business successful by setting up services like ACH

Services, Merchant Remote Deposit, Positive Pay, & Merchant Services.



Argyle, Blanchardville, Darlington, Monroe, New Glarus, & South Wayne