



NEWS

CAP National Headquarters
Public Affairs
105 S. Hansell St.
Maxwell AFB, AL 36112
Toll free: 877-227-9142, x250

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 30, 2018

Civil Air Patrol observes 77 years of volunteer service this weekend

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala. – Civil Air Patrol’s rich heritage of volunteer service will be celebrated this coming weekend, as the longtime U.S. Air Force Auxiliary observes its 77th anniversary.

“Our legacy is well worth celebrating,” said Maj. Gen. Mark Smith, CAP’s national commander and chief executive officer. “Each year, on the first day of December, we are reminded of the sacrifices of CAP’s earliest members, whose extraordinary contributions to America continue today in our citizen volunteers’ vigilant service to country and community.”

CAP was founded on Dec. 1, 1941, less than a week before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor led to America’s involvement in World War II. Its members quickly proved their worth by conducting aerial patrols on their own, heroism that discouraged and eventually helped stop deadly German U-boat attacks along U.S. coastlines and waterways.

The wartime service of CAP’s “subchasers” helped stop the loss of American and Allied merchant vessels, saving the lives of untold thousands of sailors and countless millions of dollars of war materiel destined for the battlefields in Europe and the Pacific. In addition to coastal patrols, CAP aircrews assisted with other essential wartime missions on the home front, such as search and rescue, disaster relief, border patrol, forest fire patrol, target towing for military practice and transporting critical supplies. Members also managed hundreds of airports and trained aviators — many of them teenage cadets — for future service in CAP and the military.

Those services provided by Civil Air Patrol’s World War II-era veterans earned CAP a Congressional Gold Medal on Dec. 10, 2014. The medal — the highest civilian honor bestowed by Congress — was presented to CAP on behalf of those founding members.

That legacy lives on in today’s all-volunteer force, which still contributes greatly to America’s defense by providing aerial reconnaissance for homeland security, giving Air Force fighter pilots practice in protecting America’s airspace and helping train U.S. military troops for service overseas. CAP members also make a profound difference in more than 1,500 communities across the nation, saving lives through search and rescue and other emergency services and

conducting aerospace education and youth programs that help develop the nation's next generation of leaders.

"Every day, our more than 61,000 members continue to build on the terrific foundation forged by their forefathers," said Smith. "Their contributions have helped Civil Air Patrol evolve into the premier public service organization that it is today."

CAP, which celebrated 70 years as the official Air Force Auxiliary in 2018, truly makes its mark as a force-multiplier, providing vital services for both country and community. This coming year, CAP and its cadet program have been tasked by the Air Force to help identify and train young pilots for future military services as well as commercial airlines and general aviation.

In observance of CAP's 77th anniversary, Smith has asked CAP cadets and senior members to join him in an annual tradition this weekend — representing CAP by wearing their Air Force-style blue uniforms to their place of worship.

Members of all faiths, particularly CAP's chaplains and character development officers, are encouraged to participate.

Civil Air Patrol, the longtime all-volunteer U.S. Air Force auxiliary, is the newest member of the Air Force's Total Force. In this role, CAP operates a fleet of 560 aircraft, performs about 90 percent of continental U.S. inland search and rescue missions as tasked by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center and is credited by the AFRCC with saving an average of 82 lives annually. CAP's 61,000 members also perform homeland security, disaster relief and drug interdiction missions at the request of federal, state and local agencies. In addition, CAP plays a leading role in aerospace/STEM education, and its members serve as mentors to 26,000 young people participating in CAP's Cadet Programs. Visit www.GoCivilAirPatrol.com or www.CAP.news for more information.

CAP contact info:

Julie DeBardelaben – jdebardelaben@capnhq.gov – 334-953-7593.

Steve Cox – scox@capnhq.gov – 334-953-9369.

