



CAP Anniversary Planning Guide

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

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CAP Anniversary Planning Guide

Since December 1, 1941

Purpose of an anniversary celebration

Civil Air Patrol's Anniversary is recognized on December 1 each year. The celebration provides a unique opportunity to elevate public awareness of CAP, which, in turn provides these potential benefits:

- Increased visibility for your CAP squadron will help foster community [support and goodwill for CAP](#) as a whole. It is critical for a nonprofit organization performing a public service to have community support and acceptance if it is to thrive. By exposing the public to CAP's grand history, its vital public service mission and your squadron's activities, you foster public support.
- The increased publicity and visibility surrounding CAP's anniversary can be a golden opportunity for [new member recruitment](#). New members and new ideas are the lifeblood of a volunteer, nonprofit organization.
- The increased visibility and public awareness can generate [alternative sources of funding](#) for local squadrons. Individuals, businesses and corporations are more likely to support organizations with which they are familiar.

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Things to consider before you start planning

Enlist the help of other local CAP units

If other CAP squadrons are nearby, plan a combined anniversary observance so all squadrons can share in the responsibility and benefit from the visibility. A duplication of efforts by neighboring squadrons may make CAP appear disorganized and lessen the impact of the events.

Share responsibility

Even if your squadron is the only one in your area, an anniversary celebration should not be a one-person affair. If you attempt to perform too many jobs, details will be overlooked and tasks may not be performed as well as they could be. Form a committee of active, enthusiastic members to plan the details and perform the work to ensure the observance is a success. If possible, appoint some cadets to the committee. CAP cadets can make a strong, positive impression at public events and will help make the event more memorable.

Don't overdo it

There are many things you can do to gain publicity for CAP while commemorating the anniversary; however, it is not practical to attempt all of them. Decide what ideas or venues will gain the most positive results for CAP and your squadron. This guide includes suggestions to celebrate the anniversary. Keep in mind that these are only suggestions and that other ideas from within your membership may serve your squadron's purpose better. It is preferable to plan a few meaningful events to celebrate the anniversary than to attempt too many and risk failure.

Early planning is key

The best time to start planning your anniversary observance is now. Form your committee early, make your plans early and assign tasks to committee members early. Ensure everyone has time to complete their tasks in order to produce the best possible result. Haste makes waste. Contact targeted VIPs early, because the schedules of people in demand usually are quick to fill.

Involve cadets

Include cadets whenever possible as they tend to make a favorable impression on people. When visiting civic officials, business leaders or members of the media, take along a couple of well-groomed cadets, dressed neatly in the appropriate uniforms. Remember to wear your uniform, too, when participating in any anniversary activities and all photo opportunities. Be sure people know you are a member of CAP rather than the Air Force.

Enlist help from the Air Force

Most public affairs officers on Air Force bases know CAP is the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force. Make them aware of CAP's anniversary. If you are located in a city with an Air Force base or if your squadron meets on a base, visit the Public Affairs Office, talk to its personnel about what you hope to accomplish and see if they can help. They may offer suggestions and assist with arrangements, news releases or media contacts.

Use resources

For publicity and recruiting purposes, find videos, posters and reprintable materials about CAP at www.capvolunteernow.com. Browse the menu directly under the masthead.

Secure plenty of recruiting materials prior to the event your squadron decides to host. Contact CAP National Headquarters Public Affairs if you need help in making or obtaining sufficient copies, but do so at least six weeks prior to your events.

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Event ideas to celebrate CAP's anniversary

Some ideas for squadron-level anniversary celebrations that have been well received include:

- Moment of silence on noon December 1, broken with blaring of auto horns and pealing of bells, coordinated with wing commanders and public affairs officers
- Birthday parties on December 1
- Open house programs at unit headquarters and at Air Force bases
- Proclamations adopted by local public officials
- Weekend religious recognition services
- Special lunches/dinners with elected officials
- Displays in public settings
- Social media messages and links

Birthday celebration/open house at unit headquarters

Hosting an anniversary birthday celebration at your squadron is an excellent way to make people in the community aware of CAP, its missions and your squadron's support of the community. If you are planning an open house, be sure to present a clean, organized squadron location to the public. Have each member in the squadron wear a neatly pressed, clean uniform in accordance with applicable CAP regulations.

Perhaps attendees could dress up in 1940s vintage attire and the reception area could be designed with the 1940s in mind. Another way to give the event a historic feeling would be to have a live band play or a CD playing big band music. Don't invite people without a plan. Have something for them to see or do. Perhaps play a recruiting video on a continuous loop or set up a display with literature visitors can take with them. Don't make visitors stand around and wonder why they came.

Invite local officials, the mayor and city council, business leaders or others who may have something to offer CAP. The more prominent members of the community that commit to attend the event, the more newsworthy the event will be and the more coverage you are likely to receive. To avoid ruining your credibility with the media, ensure the event will be worthy of the media's time before you invite them to attend.

Serve refreshments. A unique cake adorned with CAP heraldry or showing scenes from CAP's past could be a focal point for the refreshments table. Other items could include coffee, punch or cookies. If the squadron budget is tight, members can make the refreshments.

If you would rather have a banquet to commemorate the anniversary, the same general rules apply. Make sure you invite the right people from the community and make it a special event worthy of Civil Air Patrol's anniversary. A banquet could be an opportunity to hold an awards ceremony, impress the guests and give the honorees the credit they deserve.

Proclamations by local officials

If you prepare a proclamation in advance, your mayor or governor will most likely sign it. You may have to go through channels to see your mayor or governor in order to get the signature, but it will be worth it. You will be creating an awareness of CAP with that official and his or her staff.

The proclamation should pay tribute to CAP on its anniversary and should end by proclaiming the first week of December as "Civil Air Patrol Week" in your city or state. You can invite the press to attend the signing, but most media do not cover signings due to the number of such events. If the media does not send someone to cover the signing, take the pictures yourself, preferably with a digital camera, and provide the jpegs to the newspaper as quickly as possible.

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Weekend religious recognition services

Get your squadron chaplain involved in weekend religious recognition services such as Civil Air Patrol Sunday. He or she can possibly enlist other members of the clergy to participate in such events. Ask your members who attend church services to attend on the designated Sunday dressed in uniform and encourage the clergy to recognize the members present and CAP's anniversary celebration. The recognition might also be able to receive mention in the church bulletin published weekly if enough advance notice is given. For further assistance, contact the National Chaplain's Office at 877-227-9142, extension 341.

Special lunches/dinners with elected officials

This does not have to be a big event, but it should be done well. The size and scope of this particular event could range from a banquet and awards ceremony to an informal gathering with snacks and a slide presentation on the squadron's activities and accomplishments. No matter the size of the event, it is a great opportunity to acquaint important officials with Civil Air Patrol and with the squadron.

Public exhibits

The purpose of a public CAP display is to increase the group's visibility and to recruit new members. Examples of public exhibits include displays at malls, community centers, state or regional fairs, large sporting events, school or career fairs, etc. Keep in mind that holiday shoppers are out in force during late November or early December, making a mall or shopping center display a good bet for high visibility.

An exhibit booth involves members staffing the exhibit or booth, handing out literature and answering questions about CAP. Be sure to have some handouts ready. A video loop about CAP is also engaging. Those who staff the exhibit should look professional in either a neatly pressed, clean uniform or some other business casual attire with something identifying them as CAP members such as a name badge or polo shirt. Include cadets in manning the exhibit.

Plan your display in advance so that it will be professional, educational and of interest to all age groups. If time and space permit, conduct a demonstration such as a cadet drill exercise, first aid, mission planning or an aerospace activity such as the construction of a rocket. Members staffing the exhibit should remain attentive to the public while at the exhibit

Guest speaker at civic club meetings

Most local civic clubs such as Kiwanis, Lions, Rotary, etc., are always in the market for someone to conduct a free, 20-minute program for their meetings. The commander or another well-prepared senior member should attend these meetings in uniform and give an interesting presentation about CAP to the group. The CAP National Headquarters Public Awareness and Membership Development Directorate can assist you in preparing your presentation with videos downloadable from www.capchannel.com. For additional video assistance, contact Brad Holley at bholley@capnhq.gov.

Electronic signs

Many motels, banks, car dealerships and other businesses have billboards or electronic signs they use to place messages. Many of these businesses would be receptive to placing a message on their sign congratulating CAP for their years of service to the nation. Be sure to make your request several weeks in advance so the business can place you on the schedule, and be sure to follow up before the scheduled message placement.

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Holiday parades or events

With Civil Air Patrol's anniversary falling in the midst of the holiday season, another venue for promoting CAP and our anniversary might be holiday parades, festivals, carnivals, etc. Including the CAP Honor Guard or Color Guard in a holiday parade would get the public's attention.

Sporting events

Sporting events offer many possibilities for spreading the word about CAP's anniversary. First, if the event features an electronic scoreboard, you could coordinate with the management to flash a "Happy Anniversary, Civil Air Patrol" message on the scoreboard during a time-out or lull in the game. Also, you could talk to the respective team representatives to see if the CAP Color Guard could present the colors before the start of the game. One other opportunity at sporting events is to get an ad or announcement placed in the printed programs that are distributed and/or sold at sporting events.

Other community events

Glom onto other community events held around CAP's anniversary week. Perhaps there is a clean-up initiative, recycling day, drive to send packages to American servicemen overseas, etc. Advertise with signs and in the media that you are participating to honor CAP's anniversary.

Veterans' affairs

After obtaining permission, deliver CAP birthday cake to the foyer or patient lounge in a local VA hospital. Or arrange to have your Color Guard or Drill Team at the VA hospital at a certain time every day during CAP anniversary week. You could also arrange for CAP to hold a movie night at the VA hospital, where your unit would provide a wartime-era movie, popcorn, etc.

Sponsor a contest

Interest your local school district in holding a contest for elementary and/or middle school students to design a CAP birthday card. Besides the advance publicity, this will naturally provide an opportunity for even more publicity when winners are announced. Be prepared to have a prize, perhaps a model CAP airplane or a ride in the real thing. For students 12 and older, this activity could also prove to be a recruitment tool.

Fly-over

If you have the resources for fuel and materials, make a banner wishing CAP a happy birthday and tow it behind a small private plane, flying over your metro area.

Let your imagination take flight

This guide contains only a few suggestions for ways to celebrate Civil Air Patrol's anniversary and, at the same time, gain positive publicity for CAP and recruit new members. There are countless numbers of activities you can do. Brainstorm with members of your squadron or other squadrons in your area. If you try something unique that gets results, let us know at CAP NHQ Public Affairs. Email the details of your project to paa@capnhq.gov. We would like to share your success with others.

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Publicizing your events

News is not just limited to newspapers, radio and TV anymore. Today there is a host of non-traditional social media, such as Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Twitter, blogs and texting. The best approach to publicity is to use as many means as you can in as many ways as you can.

For example, you might email a news release to a reporter but imbed a photo or two, include a link to your unit's website and attach a CAP fact sheet. You might even set up instant messaging, but go easy here; you don't want to be a pest — one message to remind the reporter that your event is happening that day would be sufficient. You could then take the same news release and post it to your unit's website and/or Facebook page, plus link to it on your Twitter page.

Anniversary ad in local newspaper

Any newspaper will publish a full or half-page paid advertisement, congratulating your squadron and Civil Air Patrol on its anniversary. Depending on the size of the circulation, market area and ad size, such an ad could be very expensive, however, but there might be ways to offset this cost.

You can perhaps persuade the newspaper editor to run the ad as a public service announcement. Another way is to sell small ads consisting of small congratulatory messages at the bottom of the page or a listing of the names of sponsors. Or approach a larger business or corporation in your area or one with which the squadron has conducted business and request a donation to cover the cost of the ad. The contributor would benefit by receiving recognition in the newspaper, i.e. "ABC Corporation congratulates Civil Air Patrol on XX years of humanitarian service to the [name of your community or city]." The remainder of ad would contain information about CAP. If you decide to try the latter method, remember the contributor could receive a tax deduction for the donation.

Regional, wing, squadron publications/websites

Don't forget to promote the anniversary in regional, wing and squadron publications, websites and newsletters. Include a general history of CAP in the publications and publicize anniversary-related events here.

News releases

Though newspapers, especially large ones, are on the decline, they are still a good way for now to get out the message about Civil Air Patrol, since everyone reads newspapers at some time. When planning publicity for your anniversary observance, try to schedule the news item to appear in the local newspaper a week or two before the actual anniversary or at the beginning of Civil Air Patrol Week.

The release should be a general news story which explains what CAP is and what CAP Week is all about, including how you are planning to celebrate the anniversary. Include a bit of history on how CAP began, but keep it brief. [Refer to example news releases at the back of this guide.](#)

In addition, you may be able to get a short news story in the newspaper about specific events that you are planning such as CAP Sunday, a luncheon for civic or business leaders, open house or banquet, etc. Don't overlook release of this information to the features page editor.

If you live in a small town, getting coverage for CAP's anniversary will be much easier, since the editor usually knows the organizations and leaders in the community. If your area is served by a weekly newspaper, the publicity will probably span one or two weekly editions rather than several daily editions.

If you live in a large, metropolitan area, it is usually very difficult for a small organization to get something in the paper (or radio or television) unless it is truly outstanding or unusual. If you are cooperating with other CAP squadrons for an impressive area-wide observance, your chances of

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making the news will be much better. You should have one PAO to represent all units involved.

If you are planning a large open house and/or public event involving community leaders, you may be able to get a reporter and/or photographer to cover the event. Become acquainted with your newspaper editor and his/her staff. Do this in advance so they are familiar with you when the event occurs. Whenever your squadron receives favorable press, be sure to send a personal thank you note to the editor and/or reporter responsible.

News release formats

Refer to the examples in the next section for more information about the proper format for news releases. Email has become increasingly the preferred method of receiving news releases. If you send your news releases by email, make the news release part of the body of the email message. Photos should always be included whenever possible. Make sure the photos are saved as a jpeg file (.jpg extension) and that they were taken and saved as a high resolution file, with little or no compression.

Newspaper editorials

A brief editorial in your local newspaper is another good way to draw attention to CAP and its anniversary. If the local paper staff regularly writes its own editorials, visit the editorial editor, explain the history and mission of CAP and request that a brief editorial be written on CAP's anniversary. Take along background information on CAP to help the writer be as prepared as possible.

Many small papers, however, will publish outside editorials. If so, submit one.

Radio public service announcements (PSAs)

Radio stations are committed (and required by law) to deliver public service. As a result, they put free commercials on the air in the public service category to fulfill this obligation. They are not obligated, however, to use your particular radio spot — only to allocate a certain amount of airtime to public service. Do not remind them of this or try to tell them that they are required to use your particular radio spot.

Your competition includes hundreds of other worthy institutions also seeking free airtime. A visit by the squadron PAO and/or commander to the station's program or public service director may be the key to getting CAP's message on the air.

Don't overload the station with announcements and don't expect them to rerun your announcement endlessly. They have to spread the free airtime around to other deserving organizations. Do not call them and ask why they did not play your announcement.

Television

National Headquarters does not have any TV spot announcements about CAP's anniversary. However, if you plan a noteworthy event as part of your anniversary celebration, your local TV station might be interested in covering it as part of their local newscast. They might show interest in such things as a practice mission, a ground search, a communications and first aid or cadet drill team demonstration. These events should be professionally executed and interesting to warrant TV coverage.

Before the event for which you have requested coverage, visit with your TV station news director and explain what CAP is and what the occasion is. Provide the news director with literature, such as brochures, the national magazine and the CAP fact sheet (download at http://members.gocivilairpatrol.com/media/cms/FACT_SHEET_924_2DDDBEB3311C4.pdf), to explain about CAP. Make the program's goals clear, and be cooperative with the reporters or newscasters.

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Social media

Social media is the generic term for non-traditional forms of communication that typically use email or websites. Perhaps their best feature is how interactive they can be. For instance, you might use one type of social media to send someone to a website loaded with much more information. Social media also often combine a variety of modes of information — text, audio, video, animation, still photographs, etc.

If you aren't familiar with social media examples, ask your cadets. Popular ones include Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Twitter, blogs and texting.

- Facebook and MySpace are existing websites which you can “join” and which allow you to determine those who can have access to you on that website. Your “page” is typically a place to post personal photos and comments. Those you allow to view your page are typically your friends.
- YouTube, also a Web site, is devoted to video clips that can be posted and seen by anyone.
- A blog is a record of your personal thoughts posted on a website and might include photos, audio or video, as well as text. Bloggers might have personal websites or might blog on behalf of an employer or group on a company/group website.
- Twitter and texting use written messages sent typically via a cell phone. Texting is an option on your cell phone to send a typed message to one person at a time. Twitter, however, is a mass text-messaging service that allows you to send 140-character updates, called “tweets,” to several people at once. “Tweets” can be viewed on your cell phone or on your computer at twitter.com, so long as you've set up a profile there. Twitter is more a means for promotion, however, than for chatting, and you do not really exist on Twitter unless you have followers, people who subscribe to receive your messages.

One of the problems with social media is that you might not be able to control how someone you invite in responds. They could sabotage you with negativity or simply monopolize time and space. Use social media cautiously, but still use it.

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Samples and templates

This section includes samples of news releases and also a sample proclamation. These can be modified to suit the needs of your unit, but, if using, make sure to substitute your unit's full and formal name.

For news releases to the media, include the following at the top of the sheet:

- CAP logo
- Squadron name
- Words: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
- Point of contact (PAO or commander)
- Contact information (phone and email)

End your news release with a stock boilerplate paragraph. This is the sentence or paragraph at the end of the news release that explains to the reader what the organization is and what it does. The following is a good example of a boilerplate paragraph that could be used for any news release. This boilerplate paragraph is updated as needed, however, so check that you are using the current version by going to

http://capmembers.com/cap_national_hq/public_affairs/boilerplate.cfm.

Civil Air Patrol, the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, is a nonprofit organization with more than 61,000 members nationwide. 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 113 lives in fiscal year 2010. 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 the more than 26,000 young people currently participating in CAP cadet programs. CAP has been performing missions for America for 69 years. It is a major partner with Wreaths Across America, an initiative to remember, honor and teach about the sacrifices of U.S. military veterans. For more information on Civil Air Patrol, visit www.gocivilairpatrol.com or www.capvolunteernow.com.

If the media receiving your releases will be posting them on their own websites, provide them with your unit's web address and request they provide a link to it.

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Sample Proclamation Wording

WHEREAS, Civil Air Patrol was established on Dec. 1, 1941, to supplement the U.S. military during World War II; and

WHEREAS, in 1948 CAP was designated as the U.S. Air Force's official auxiliary with three missions – emergency services, cadet programs and aerospace education; and

WHEREAS, since CAP's beginning, the organization has set itself apart during the country's most tumultuous times: Locating and sinking enemy submarines during World War II, assisting rescuers and state agencies immediately following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, heavily supporting hurricane relief efforts in 2005 and 2008 and more recently in response to the Gulf oil spill, as well as aiding communities during other natural disasters, such as floods, wildfires, ice storms and tornadoes; and

WHEREAS, CAP further provides vital homeland security missions that help ensure the protection of the nation's capital and the nation as a whole by assisting Air Force pilots with target-intercept training as well as the military with acquiring distant targets; and

WHEREAS, CAP provides exceptional educational and growth opportunities for youth through its nearly 26,000-member strong cadet program, which annually provides access to top national summer flight academies to learn to fly powered or glider aircraft, as well as to approximately 30 national programs emphasizing leadership and careers in aviation; and

WHEREAS, CAP's Aerospace Education Program annually touches more than 1,800 educators, more than 40,000 youths — cadets and others in classrooms across America — teaching multidisciplinary aviation concepts that emphasize aviation's connection to history, math, science, government and economics;

THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED, that **[insert name of governmental body or official]** hereby commends CAP for its "Missions for America" and its outstanding cadet and aerospace programs, which annually touch the lives and ensure the safety of thousands of American citizens; and

NOW, THEREFORE: I, **[NAME OF OFFICIAL]**, hereby proclaim **[INSERT DATES]** as

CIVIL AIR PATROL WEEK [OR OTHER TITLE]

In **[LOCATION]**, and I encourage all citizens to join in the observance.

[PERSON SIGNING WILL INSERT STANDARD SIGNATURE BLOCK AND SEAL HERE]

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Sample news release about upcoming event(s)

Note: If you use a release similar to this sample, be sure to change it to suit the occasion. The words in brackets indicate places where your current data will need to be inserted.



Civil Air Patrol

[WING OR SQUADRON NAME]
[DATE]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
PRESS RELEASE
POC: [NAME]
[PHONE/FAX/EMAIL]

Local CAP squadron to join in nationwide observance of CAP anniversary

[City name, state abbreviation] — The [Squadron name or names] will join other units of the Civil Air Patrol across the nation in observing the organization's anniversary, announced [commander rank and name], squadron commander.

"A number of activities have been planned for the occasion to make more people in our community aware of Civil Air Patrol and our contributions to this community," [he/she] explained.

Among the events tentatively scheduled for Civil Air Patrol Week, the week of December 1-7, are a luncheon for the mayor and city council, an open house and a display that will be at [location] throughout the week.

Civil Air Patrol was founded Dec. 1, 1941, by a group of aviation enthusiasts and private pilots who wanted to donate their time and aircraft to protect the nation's coastlines during World War II and to perform other critical civil defense missions.

Civil Air Patrol, the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, is a nonprofit organization with more than 61,000 members nationwide. 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 113 lives in fiscal year 2010. 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 the more than 26,000 young people currently participating in CAP cadet programs. CAP has been performing missions for America for 69 years. It is a major partner with Wreaths Across America, an initiative to remember, honor and teach about the sacrifices of U.S. military veterans. For more information on Civil Air Patrol, visit www.gocivilairpatrol.com or www.capvolunteernow.com.

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Sample news release about upcoming VIP luncheon/banquet

Note: Be sure to use the complete name of your squadron.



Civil Air Patrol

[WING OR SQUADRON NAME]

[DATE]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

POC: [NAME]

[PHONE/FAX/EMAIL]

Mayor, civic officials to attend luncheon/banquet in honor of CAP anniversary

[City name, state abbreviation] — Mayor [insert name] and members of the [insert city name] City Council will be the guests of [name of hosting squadron], one of approximately 1,500 Civil Air Patrol squadrons located throughout the U.S.

The luncheon is in observance of Civil Air Patrol's anniversary. CAP was established Dec. 1, 1941, less than a week before the beginning of American involvement in World War II. CAP won recognition during that time for its coastal patrol and other civil defense activities.

Among those expected to attend the luncheon are [list council members and government representatives and their titles for those expected to be present]. The luncheon is part of CAP's yearlong anniversary observance.

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Sample news release about CAP visit to local civic club

Note: For quotes, be sure to get permission from the person quoted if you are fashioning the quote.



Civil Air Patrol

[WING OR SQUADRON NAME]
[DATE]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
PRESS RELEASE
POC: [NAME]
[PHONE/FAX/EMAIL]

CAP members to visit local civic club

[City name, state abbreviation] — Members of the [civic organization name] will have a special opportunity [day and date] to learn more about Civil Air Patrol, the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, as it celebrates its anniversary on December 1.

“Members from the [local squadron name] will present the program during our weekly meeting and we are anxious to hear about this unique organization,” said [club president name and title].

The [local squadron name], commanded by [commander's name and rank], is one of 1,500 squadrons around the country involved in yearlong activities celebrating CAP's founding just before the start of American involvement in World War II.

Civil Air Patrol, the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, is a nonprofit organization with more than 61,000 members nationwide. 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 113 lives in fiscal year 2010. 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 the more than 26,000 young people currently participating in CAP cadet programs. CAP has been performing missions for America for 69 years. It is a major partner with Wreaths Across America, an initiative to remember, honor and teach about the sacrifices of U.S. military veterans. For more information on Civil Air Patrol, visit www.gocivilairpatrol.com or www.capvolunteernow.com.

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Sample news release about a scheduled CAP Sunday

Note: Again, this is intended to be a sample only. You are expected to write your own news release to suit your own needs. Also, plan to get your chaplain involved in this activity.



Civil Air Patrol

[WING OR SQUADRON NAME]
[DATE]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
PRESS RELEASE
POC: [NAME]
[PHONE/FAX/EMAIL]

Civil Air Patrol Sunday scheduled

[City name, state abbreviation] — If you attend church services next week, you may notice some members of the congregation in uniform. These individuals are part of the [Squadron name] Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol. They are observing the anniversary of Civil Air Patrol, which was established Dec. 1, 1941, just before the beginning of American involvement in World War II. Each year, CAP observes its anniversary during the first week of December.

The [Squadron name], commanded by [rank and name], is one of 1,500 units around the country that performs emergency services missions, including disaster relief, search and rescue, humanitarian and national security activities. CAP also serves the community through aerospace education and youth leadership training. Membership in CAP's cadet program is open to youth aged 12 to 20, while senior membership is open to adults 21 and older.

Civil Air Patrol Sunday is intended to emphasize CAP's moral leadership training and is one of several events planned to commemorate CAP's anniversary. Many clergymen across the nation are members of Civil Air Patrol, serving as chaplains in the organization.

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Sample news release about a CAP open house

Note: This sample news release could be longer and could go into more detail about CAP and its history and about your own squadron. It all depends on how much space your newspaper is willing or able to give you. The bracketed words are places where changes need to be made.



Civil Air Patrol

[WING OR SQUADRON NAME]

[DATE]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

POC: [NAME]

[PHONE/FAX/EMAIL]

Civil Air Patrol squadron plans open house

[City name, state abbreviation] — The [squadron name] Squadron, local unit of the Civil Air Patrol, is hosting an open house at [time, day, date] at [location]. According to [rank and name], squadron commander, the entire community is welcome to attend and learn more about CAP.

Members of the squadron will be present to greet visitors and explain CAP's missions for America. CAP was established Dec. 1, 1941, and [squadron name] is celebrating Civil Air Patrol Week Dec. 1-7. The open house is part of the anniversary observance designed to create a greater awareness of CAP's presence and contributions in the community.

Civil Air Patrol, the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, is a nonprofit organization with more than 61,000 members nationwide. 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 113 lives in fiscal year 2010. 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 the more than 26,000 young people currently participating in CAP cadet programs. CAP has been performing missions for America for 69 years. It is a major partner with Wreaths Across America, an initiative to remember, honor and teach about the sacrifices of U.S. military veterans. For more information on Civil Air Patrol, visit www.gocivilairpatrol.com or www.capvolunteernow.com.

CAP Anniversary Planning Guide

Sample Radio Spots for broadcast during Civil Air Patrol Week

[20-second PSA]

THIS WEEK [STATION CALL LETTERS] EXTENDS CONGRATULATIONS TO CIVIL AIR PATROL ON ITS ANNIVERSARY. WE SALUTE CIVIL AIR PATROL FOR [INSERT NUMBER HERE] YEARS OF AEROSPACE EDUCATION, CADET PROGRAMS AND EMERGENCY SERVICES. CAP — A LEGACY OF SERVICE... POISED FOR THE FUTURE.

[30-second PSA]

WE AT [STATION CALL LETTERS] PROUDLY CONGRATULATE CIVIL AIR PATROL FOR ITS [INSERT NUMBER HERE] ANNIVERSARY. WELL-KNOWN FOR ITS SEARCH AND RESCUE WORK, CIVIL AIR PATROL, THE OFFICIAL AUXILIARY OF THE U.S. AIR FORCE, SERVES THE NATION ON A MUCH BROADER SPECTRUM THROUGH AEROSPACE EDUCATION, CADET PROGRAMS AND EMERGENCY SERVICES. CAP — A LEGACY OF SERVICE... POISED FOR THE FUTURE.

[10-second PSAs]

CONGRATULATIONS TO CIVIL AIR PATROL ON ITS [INSERT NUMBER HERE] ANNIVERSARY. CAP VOLUNTEERS PERFORM MANY HOURS OF EMERGENCY SERVICES MISSIONS EACH YEAR.

-OR-

CONGRATULATIONS TO CIVIL AIR PATROL ON ITS [INSERT NUMBER HERE] ANNIVERSARY. CAP'S CADET PROGRAM TRAINS MORE THAN 26,000 YOUTH ACROSS THE NATION EACH YEAR.

-OR-

CONGRATULATIONS TO CIVIL AIR PATROL ON ITS [INSERT NUMBER HERE] ANNIVERSARY. CAP'S AEROSPACE EDUCATION PROGRAM HELPS KIDS LEARN MATH AND SCIENCE THROUGH AVIATION.

[CAP Anniversary Planning Guide](#)

Reminders

This CAP Anniversary Planning Guide is part of the PAO Tool Kit and can be found at http://members.gocivilairpatrol.com/cap_national_hq/public_affairs/cap_pao_toolkit/index.cfm; click on “Anniversary Planning Guide.” Just scroll down and click on the words “Anniversary Planning guide.” Feel free to print it out. Refer to it each year when your squadron is planning CAP’s anniversary celebration, but remember the suggested activities can be used at any time during the year when your squadron or wing is planning a special event. To ensure Civil Air Patrol’s survival and growth, community support is vital.

Please let National Headquarters Public Affairs know about your successes in celebrating CAP’s birthday. And remember, the Anniversary Planning Guide is just that — a guide. Your unit may come up with other and better ideas.

The Anniversary Planning Guide was first published in February 1982 by the Civil Air Patrol National Headquarters Office of Public Affairs, which continues to update it yearly.



CAP Anniversary Planning Guide



Addendum to CAP Anniversary Planning Guide

Ideas for celebrating milestone anniversaries

National Headquarters' Public Affairs will establish a universal theme for milestone anniversaries, as well as other initiatives, including a message from the National Commander, a special coin, a special anniversary logo, written and multimedia presentations on CAP's history and print, TV and radio public service announcements. Check the PAO Toolkit (http://members.gocivilairpatrol.com/cap_national_hq/public_affairs/cap_pao_toolkit/index.cfm) for "70th Anniversary" to find downloadable poster art and the official 70th anniversary logo. In addition, there are many ways local units and wings can add to CAP's recognition.

Airport displays, events

At different area airports, coordinate celebrations that feature displays of current and/or vintage CAP planes, search and rescue equipment, cadet drill teams, rocket launches, etc.

Air shows

Add historic facts about CAP as well as how to join CAP to a vintage CAP poster and give away at existing air shows. Alternatively, a CAP scene can be painted and auctioned off at the air show.

Media coverage

Seek to interest local public television or cable access channels in doing a program on CAP's legacy or present-day service.

Visits to government

Visit state or local legislatures, providing legislators with a save-the-date notice of the CAP anniversary on Dec. 1. Then follow up with specific invitations to an event, such as an open house.

Visits to schools

Piggyback onto existing school activities, such as fall fairs, to publicize CAP and its anniversary.

Air Force support

Ask nearby U.S. Air Force assets to run a congratulatory notice on their websites, in their newsletters, etc.