



Civil Air Patrol

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Winchester Composite Squadron
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News Release

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Winchester Composite Squadron Celebrates Anniversary / Finds New Home with Army National Guard

Winchester, VA – “We're pleased to continue our close working relationship with the Civil Air Patrol,” said Lieutenant Colonel William Zana, battalion commander, Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT). “We have many shared interests and goals, particularly in providing support to the Commonwealth and our local community.”

Lieutenant Colonel Charles Gittins, squadron commander, Winchester Composite Squadron, is pleased with the opportunity presented to the squadron. “The Armory is the perfect place for our squadron to conduct meetings. We have access to classrooms and a large indoor area that will allow our cadets to do physical fitness training and drill during inclement weather.”

“Both of our organizations seek to develop young people by expanding their skills through training, developing discipline and leadership, and by building teamwork at all levels,” Zana continued. “Working together across our organizations is a way for us to build teams and for our staffs to train on Joint and Interagency interoperability.”

The Civil Air Patrol, a volunteer, non-profit organization was founded on December 1, 1941, less than a week before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor led to America’s involvement in World War II. Its members soon proved their worth by conducting aerial patrols, vigilance that discouraged and eventually stopped deadly German U-boat attacks on shipping in American waterways. Fifty-nine heroic members died, twenty-six were lost at sea and seven others were severely injured while carrying out CAP missions during the war.

“This occasion provides citizens across America the opportunity to honor the Civil Air Patrol and its members,” said Major General Amy Courter, CAP’s national commander. “Be sure to say ‘thanks’ to these men and women in your communities who provide such vigilant service, often without fanfare. Each day, through their volunteer efforts, our members help save lives and preserve liberty for all. They truly go above and beyond, giving their best as the needs arise.”

Sixty-eight years later the Civil Air Patrol, the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, still performs a multitude of missions in communities in the nation’s 50 states and Puerto Rico:

Citizens Serving Communities; Above and Beyond
www.merva040.org

CAP responds day or night when planes are overdue and emergency locator transmitters go off. Its volunteers perform 90 percent of continental U.S. inland search and rescue missions, as tasked by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center, and were credited by the AFRCC with saving ninety-one lives in fiscal year 2008.

The Civil Air Patrol provides disaster relief during hurricanes, floods, wildfires, earthquakes, tornados and countless other emergencies. In addition, members perform homeland security and counterdrug missions at the request of federal, state and local agencies.

CAP plays a leading role in aerospace education and mentors more than 23,000 young Americans through its cadet program. By partnering with 900 educators nationwide, members nurture the talents of generations of the nation's sons and daughters with cadet programs that stress leadership and moral responsibility and teach aviation and emergency response skills.

For more information about the Winchester Composite Squadron, please visit merva040.org.

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