



NEWS

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CAP brings historical touch to EAA AirVenture Oshkosh mission

Air Force Auxiliary observing 75th anniversary with vintage planes, exhibits

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala. – Civil Air Patrol’s longstanding role in helping ensure the success of EAA’s AirVenture Oshkosh, the world’s largest air show, comes with an added dimension this year — commemoration of the organization’s 75th anniversary.

CAP cadets and senior members began arriving Monday, July 18, at Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, to help fill a number of vital roles for AirVenture. The air show itself will be held from July 25-31.

Service at the event is the focus for one of CAP’s major summer cadet activities, National Blue Beret, and is also a major mission for the Wisconsin Wing.

CAP’s responsibilities include assisting with crowd control, flight line and exhibit patrols, aircraft marshaling, emergency locator transmitter detection and arrival confirmation.

Starting Tuesday, participants began carrying out a U.S. Air Force-assigned precautionary search and rescue mission for aircraft that fail to arrive as scheduled, with wing members operating at Fond du Lac and elsewhere and National Blue Beret cadets handling planes expected at Wittman.

“With 550,000 in attendance and more than 10,000 planes, it can be a challenge,” said Col. Regena Aye, commander of CAP’s North Central Region, who’s serving as the National Blue Beret public affairs officer. The 154 cadets participating this year will be divided into 15 flights, Aye said, adding that “a cadet will marshal between 100 to 150 aircraft on a busy shift.”

During downtime, cadets visit exhibits, listen to presentations, watch takeoffs and landings of both vintage and sophisticated aircraft and meet aviators, celebrities and aviation professionals.

This year, in conjunction with CAP’s 75th anniversary, some of those attractions will embrace the organization’s history and legacy. Maj. Susan Neal of CAP’s New York Wing and her husband, Lt. Col. Sean Neal, plan on presenting two of their vintage CAP planes at Oshkosh — a 1940 Fairchild 24R and a 1941 Stinson 10A.

Plans call for other vintage CAP planes to be on hand as well, including a 1936 WACO YKS-6, a 1936 Fairchild 24C8F and an additional 1941 Stinson 10A, Maj. Neal said. Most have been restored to reflect CAP's World War II-era paint scheme. Propeller sleeves will feature information about the planes and about the 75th anniversary.

One of the planes will be included in AirVenture's extremely popular warbirds exhibit of World War II planes and will fly in the warbirds portion of the air show, Neal said.

Lt. Col. Harvey Moss, Wisconsin Wing vice commander, said the CAP recruiting booth maintained every year at AirVenture by the wing's Fox Cities Composite Squadron will highlight the 75th anniversary as well as the organization's three core missions — emergency services, cadet programs and aerospace education. Members staffing the booth expect to answer questions from and hand out informational material to thousands of visitors, he said. The Fox Cities unit's CAP Cessna 182T will be on display at the booth.

CAP is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. The organization was founded Dec. 1, 1941, six days before Pearl Harbor. Its service in defense of the homeland during World War II, especially in flying single-engine planes to combat German U-boats that were sinking commercial shipments off the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, was recognized Dec. 10, 2014, with the Congressional Gold Medal.

Civil Air Patrol was recognized in May 1948 as the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force. It became a part of the Air Force Total Force in August 2015.

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Civil Air Patrol, the longtime all-volunteer U.S. Air Force auxiliary, is the newest member of the Air Force's Total Force, which consists of regular Air Force, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, along with Air Force retired military and civilian employees. CAP, in its Total Force role, operates a fleet of 550 aircraft and 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 78 lives annually. Civil Air Patrol's 56,000 members nationwide also perform homeland security, disaster relief and drug interdiction missions at the request of federal, state and local agencies. Its members additionally play a leading role in aerospace education and serve as mentors to 24,000 young people currently participating in the CAP cadet program. Performing missions for America for the past 75 years, CAP received the Congressional Gold Medal in 2014 in honor of the heroic efforts of its World War II veterans. CAP also participates in Wreaths Across America, an initiative to remember, honor and teach about the sacrifices of U.S. military veterans. Visit www.capvolunteernow.com for more information.

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