

**Saving Our Story: COVID-19 History Collection Effort**  
**Col Frank Blazich, Jr. – Director, Morse Center**

The COVID-19 pandemic is disrupting the daily lives of almost all citizens world-wide. Here in the United States, Civil Air Patrol's members are confronting the challenges of the virus while finding ways to serve wherever possible. Nationwide our members are assisting their neighbors and communities to provide needed humanitarian and medical supplies, conducting search and rescue missions, or assisting state and federal officials to meet evolving needs.

As CAP responds to this generational event, members are generating an array of records, imagery, and physical artifacts. These items all document our role in the pandemic. The National History Program's Col Louisa S. Morse Center for CAP History is asking for your help to capture and preserve these materials related to CAP's involvement with the COVID-19 outbreak.

The National History Program already has a template to capture annual unit histories, from the squadron to the region level. For commanders and CAP historians, we ask that you consider drafting a special COVID-19 narrative summary documenting your unit's activities. To assist in this effort, establishing a journal or logbook of activities now will help you chronologically keep pace with the evolving crisis. Create a folder on your computer where you can save pertinent emails, photographs, news articles, memoranda or Power Point slides related to the virus response. We welcome as much or as little information you have.

The photographs many of us are seeing on CAP.news or shared on social media are a tremendous reminder of the power and ingenuity of our members. We ask if you are the photographer to save your imagery and provide as much metadata as possible about the images. From the historian's perspective, think of this as "who, what, when, where, why, how" for the pictures.

Should you or your unit design any distinctive items to commemorate this event, please set aside a copy or sample of the graphic, patch, or challenge coin for CAP's National Archives and Historical Collections housed in the Morse Center. We ask you include all relevant information about the insignia, notably the name(s) of the designer, the date of creation/approval, and the significance of the design.

Other objects we are interested in run the gamut of possibilities. If you or your unit are making face masks, please save one for us. If you have created a piece of equipment or a tool or used a particular object specifically for the virus response, we would love to include this with the national collection. If you have other items you feel have a historical story to share, please set them aside. Feel free to contact the Morse Center at [morse@cap.gov](mailto:morse@cap.gov) to share photographs of and information about any/all of these.

In keeping with social distancing, we request that nothing be shipped to the Morse Center at present time. We ask instead that you save artifacts and set them aside for now. The same policy applies to all photographs and digital files mentioned previously. Once the pandemic has passed and we can safely resume our normal routines information about sending information and artifacts to the Morse Center will be disseminated.

The enduring heritage of CAP is made and preserved by volunteers every day. Through your help in documenting the corporation's COVID-19 response, we will ensure a record of CAP's actions is available for the education and benefit of future generations of Americans.