



# NEWS

CAP National Headquarters  
Marketing & Strategic Communications  
105 South Hansell Street  
Maxwell Air Force Base, AL 36112  
Toll free: 877-227-9143

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Kilian Assumes Command of Local Civil Air Patrol Unit**

**AZLE, TEXAS (August 31, 2021)**

**Written by 2nd Lt. Ronda Kilian, CAP**

**Photo Credits 2nd Lt. Ronda Kilian, CAP**



*Major Brian Kilian*

Azle Composite Squadron (TX456), Civil Air Patrol, held a formal Change of Command ceremony August 31, 2021 welcoming Major Brian Kilian as Squadron Commander and thanking Captain Robert DuRall, for his service as commander for the past four and half years. Within Civil Air Patrol, a commander typically serves a term of four years making way for fresh ideas and regeneration within the unit. Major Jason Quick, Group VI Commander, officiated the ceremony and commended Capt DuRall for his invaluable service to the unit and congratulated him on successful completion of his duty assignment. “He has overseen this squadron through good times, he has overseen it through bad times. He has built a squadron; he has renewed a squadron; he has watched a squadron flourish,” recounted Major Quick. He further stated, “Capt DuRall did an excellent job. Major Kilian will do an excellent job.”

1st Lt. Scott Moore served as Master of Ceremonies, Cadet 2nd Lt. Emilou Shrake as Cadet Commander, and Cadet Chief Master Sgt Jordan Ritcherson as First Sergeant. Also notable in attendance were former Civil Air Patrol member and unit founding member, Diane Wyser, Capt DuRall's wife Lynn, Group VI Senior NCO Master Sgt Michael McDade, and Pastor Lee Sipe of First Baptist Church Azle.

Outgoing commander DuRall reflected upon the changes in the unit during his time as Squadron Commander - from a declining squadron to a thriving group within the community. He credited the turn-around of the squadron to its relocation to the church facility, the implementation of the Cadet Great Start program, and the work of the entire senior member staff who volunteer together to run the squadron. "As a commander, I am only as good as my staff", DuRall acknowledged before thanking them for their assistance. DuRall encouraged the cadets to set and work towards goals within CAP and in life. The squadron rendered Capt DuRall a final salute before he relinquished command. Capt DuRall will remain active in the squadron building the unit's Emergency Services program and leading as Communications Officer.



*Major Jason Quick, Cadet Jordan Ritcherson, Major Brian Kilian*

Major Kilian accepted command of the unit with the ceremonial passing of the unit guidon. Major Kilian joined Civil Air Patrol in 1985 as a cadet and achieved the rank of Cadet Capt. before joining the United States Air Force and serving his country for over 20 years as a decorated pilot and instructor. Kilian rejoined Civil Air Patrol in 2014 as a senior member and transferred to the Azle Composite Squadron in 2017. Kilian has most recently served the unit as Deputy Commander for Cadets. Under his leadership, the cadet program has grown substantially with the implementation of the Cadet Great Start program which is currently holding its sixth class which will culminate with their first promotion on 14 September 2021.

Major Kilian initiated his command of the squadron by recognizing the senior member staff for their continued dedication and support. He thanked Pastor Sipe for allowing the unit to utilize the church as a meeting place and expressed appreciation for the outpouring of support the church has shown for the squadron. Before casting his vision and goals for Azle Composite Squadron, Major Kilian characterized his leadership style by stating he was there to serve and mentor everyone in the unit. He challenged the unit to become a squadron of "professional volunteers", "servant leaders that master and mentor their replacements", so it can become a "vibrant senior mentored cadet led cadet program". He further acknowledged, "we are a young squadron, but we will grow and mature" and put forth "learning through failure is expected, but lack of effort is not" He chartered the path forward as one of education and growth overall and of community service. He challenged the cadets to believe in themselves, to work hard, and to strive for achievements within the program even if it seems difficult or out of reach. "Take pride in yourself; take pride in being a member of Civil Air Patrol," he charged. "We give you our time and dedication. I implore you to take advantage of this so you can grow and learn and become the future great leaders of our nation," he continued. Major Kilian will not only command the squadron, but will also remain in the primary

leadership position of the cadet program.



*Azle Composite Squadron, TX456*

Azle Composite Squadron is an active squadron of 45 members serving the community of Azle and surrounding areas through a youth leadership and mentoring program with a focus on Aerospace, Cyber, STEM, and Emergency Services. The unit hosts the local Wreaths Across America ceremony held at Azleland Memorial Park each December with the mission of “Remember, Honor, and Teach” as a way of honoring the military veterans buried there. The Azle unit also has resources available to any educator who wishes to bring Aerospace/STEM into their classroom.

*Civil Air Patrol is the longtime auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force and as such is a valued member of its Total Force. In its auxiliary role, CAP operates a fleet of 560 single-engine aircraft and more than 2,000 small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (sUAS). It performs about 90% 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 54,000 members also perform homeland security, disaster relief and drug interdiction missions at the request of federal, state and local agencies. Operating as a nonprofit organization, CAP also plays a leading role in STEM/aerospace education, and its members serve as mentors to more than 20,000 young people participating in CAP’s Cadet Programs..*

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**CAP Contact Info**

Ronda Kilian – [ronda.kilian@txwg.cap.gov](mailto:ronda.kilian@txwg.cap.gov) 817-778-0778

