



148TH FIGHTER WING

MINNESOTA AIR NATIONAL GUARD



IN MEMORIALIZATION

**of those who have given the ultimate sacrifice
in the line of duty...**

- » 1st Lt. John Bergman *(November 13, 1949)*
- » Staff Sgt. Arthur Welin *(November 13, 1949)*
- » 1st Lt. Wayne Tahtinen *(August 3, 1951)*
- » Staff Sgt. Allen Christensen *(May 31, 1954)*
- » Capt. Victor Graboski *(May 31, 1954)*
- » Tech. Sgt. Elmer Haas *(May 31, 1954)*
- » 2nd Lt. John Hughes *(May 31, 1954)*
- » Maj. Frederick Kemp *(May 31, 1954)*
- » Airman 1st Class William Lange *(May 31, 1954)*
- » Staff Sgt. Donald Marty *(May 31, 1954)*
- » Staff Sgt. Charles Stewart *(May 31, 1954)*
- » Airman 1st Class James Stewart *(May 31, 1954)*
- » Airman 1st Class Ralph Nelson *(October 25, 1955)*
- » 2nd Lt. Malcom Jerome Brown *(April 29, 1958)*
- » 1st Lt. Herbert Rowe *(April 29, 1958)*
- » Capt. Sherman Gonyea *(December 17, 1971)*
- » Capt. James Verville *(December 17, 1971)*
- » 1st Lt. Wayne Vine *(March 06, 1973)*
- » Master Sgt. George Ion *(July 16, 1975)*
- » Lt. Col. Jeff Dennis *(December 19, 1991)*
- » Staff Sgt. Christopher Ford *(December 19, 1991)*
- » Maj. Peter Woodbury *(January 7, 1997)*





STEP

CAUTION
DO NOT USE REAR TABLE OR REAR STEP WHEN
AN A-10 20 TARGET DESIGNATOR IS INSTALLED
IN THE REAR TARGET DESIGNATOR STATION



THE AIRMAN'S CREED

I am an American Airman.
I am a Warrior.
I have answered my Nation's call.

I am an American Airman.
My mission is to Fly, Fight and Win.
I am faithful to a Proud Heritage,
A Tradition of Honor,
And a Legacy of Valor.

I am an American Airman.
Guardian of Freedom and Justice,
My Nation's Sword and Shield,
Its Sentry and Avenger.
I defend my Country with my Life.

I am an American Airman.
Wingman, Leader, Warrior.
I will never leave an Airman behind.
I will never falter.
And I will not fail.



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FOREWORD

As the Wing Commander of the 148th Fighter Wing, it is both an honor and a privilege to reflect on the remarkable journey we have undertaken over the past 75 years. This milestone offers a moment to pause and celebrate the profound accomplishments that have defined the 148th Fighter Wing legacy.

From our humble beginnings to the present day, the 148th Fighter Wing has exemplified the unwavering commitment, dedication and resilience of its members. Our shared pursuit of excellence has fueled a history rich with achievements that span generations. Through challenges and triumphs we have grown not only as a military unit, but as a close-knit family bound by a common purpose.

From the crucible of conflict to the heights of peacetime service, our Wing has embraced every mission with a steadfast determination that continues to inspire all who serve. We have safeguarded our skies, defended our values and stood as a symbol of strength in times of need. Each deployment, each training exercise and each mission has contributed to the tapestry of our success.

As we commemorate our 75th anniversary, we not only celebrate our past but also set our sights on the future. The legacy we carry forward is a testament to the sacrifices made by those who came before us, and the responsibility we bear for those who will follow. Our story is one of service, courage and innovation, and it serves as a guiding light for the challenges that lie ahead.

I extend my deepest gratitude to the dedicated men and women who have shaped the 148th Fighter Wing into what it is today. Your tireless efforts, unwavering loyalty and unyielding spirit have brought us to this momentous milestone. Let us continue to stand together, united in purpose, as we chart a course for the next chapter of our legacy.

In the spirit of the past, the present and the future - here's to the next 75 years of excellence.



MISSION

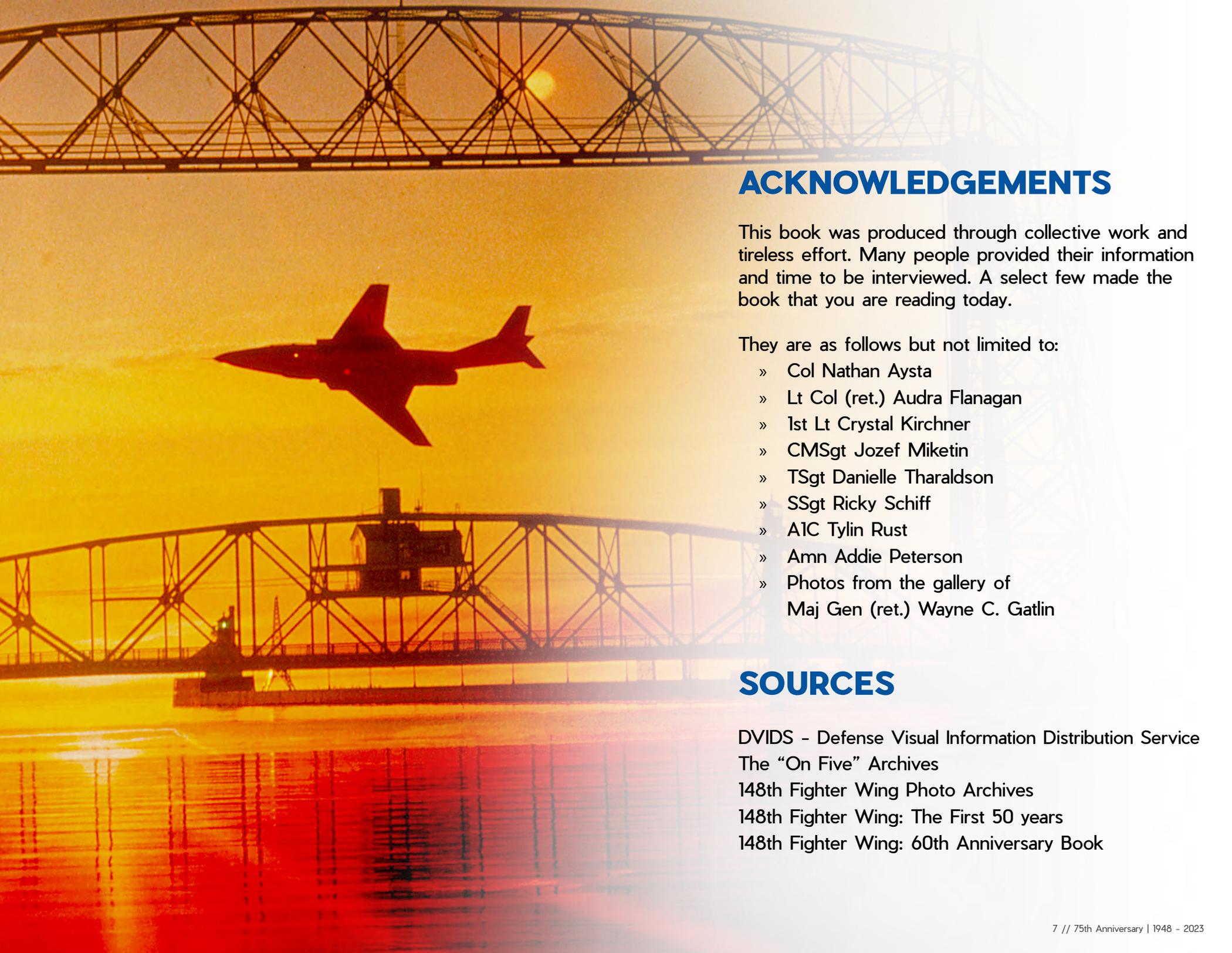
Provide mission ready Airmen and equipment to meet state and federal taskings while promoting critical partnerships.

VISION

Build a resilient Bulldog team reflective of our community, trained and equipped with modernized aircraft and infrastructure, ready to succeed against current and future threats.

VALUES

Positive attitude, customer focused, transparency, continuous improvement and loyalty.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book was produced through collective work and tireless effort. Many people provided their information and time to be interviewed. A select few made the book that you are reading today.

They are as follows but not limited to:

- » Col Nathan Aysta
- » Lt Col (ret.) Audra Flanagan
- » 1st Lt Crystal Kirchner
- » CMSgt Jozef Miketin
- » TSgt Danielle Tharaldson
- » SSgt Ricky Schiff
- » AIC Tylin Rust
- » Amn Addie Peterson
- » Photos from the gallery of
Maj Gen (ret.) Wayne C. Gatlin

SOURCES

DVIDS - Defense Visual Information Distribution Service
The "On Five" Archives
148th Fighter Wing Photo Archives
148th Fighter Wing: The First 50 years
148th Fighter Wing: 60th Anniversary Book



WING COMMANDERS

- » Capt Earl W. Johnson (1948-1949)
- » Col Ralph M. Jerome (1949-1966)
- » Col Wayne C. Gatlin (1966-1978)
- » Col William W. Carr (1978-1981)
- » Col John H. Spencer Sr. (1981-1985)
- » Col Jon D. Broman (1985-1989)
- » Col Raymond T. Klosowski (1989-1996)
- » Col Kenneth J. Stromquist (1997-1998)
- » Col Timothy J. Cossalter (1998-2004)
- » Col Mark R. Johnson (2004-2009)
- » Col Frank H. Stokes (2009-2015)
- » Col Jon S. Safstrom (2015-2017)
- » Col Christopher M. Blomquist (2017-2022)
- » Col Nathan P. Aysta (2022- Present)

WING COMMAND CHIEFS

- » CMSgt John W. Huntsberger (1988-1994)
- » CMSgt Roger G. Brummer (1994-2000)
- » CMSgt Dennis R. Jindra (2000-2004)
- » CMSgt John J. Bucsko (2004-2007)
- » CMSgt Jodi L. Stauber (2007-2010)
- » CMSgt Michael D. Layman (2010-2011)
- » CMSgt Mark S. Rukavina (2011-2017)
- » CMSgt Lisa K. Erikson (2017-2021)
- » CMSgt Jozef K. Miketin (2021-Present)

SEPTEMBER 17TH, 1948 | THE INAUGURAL FORMATION

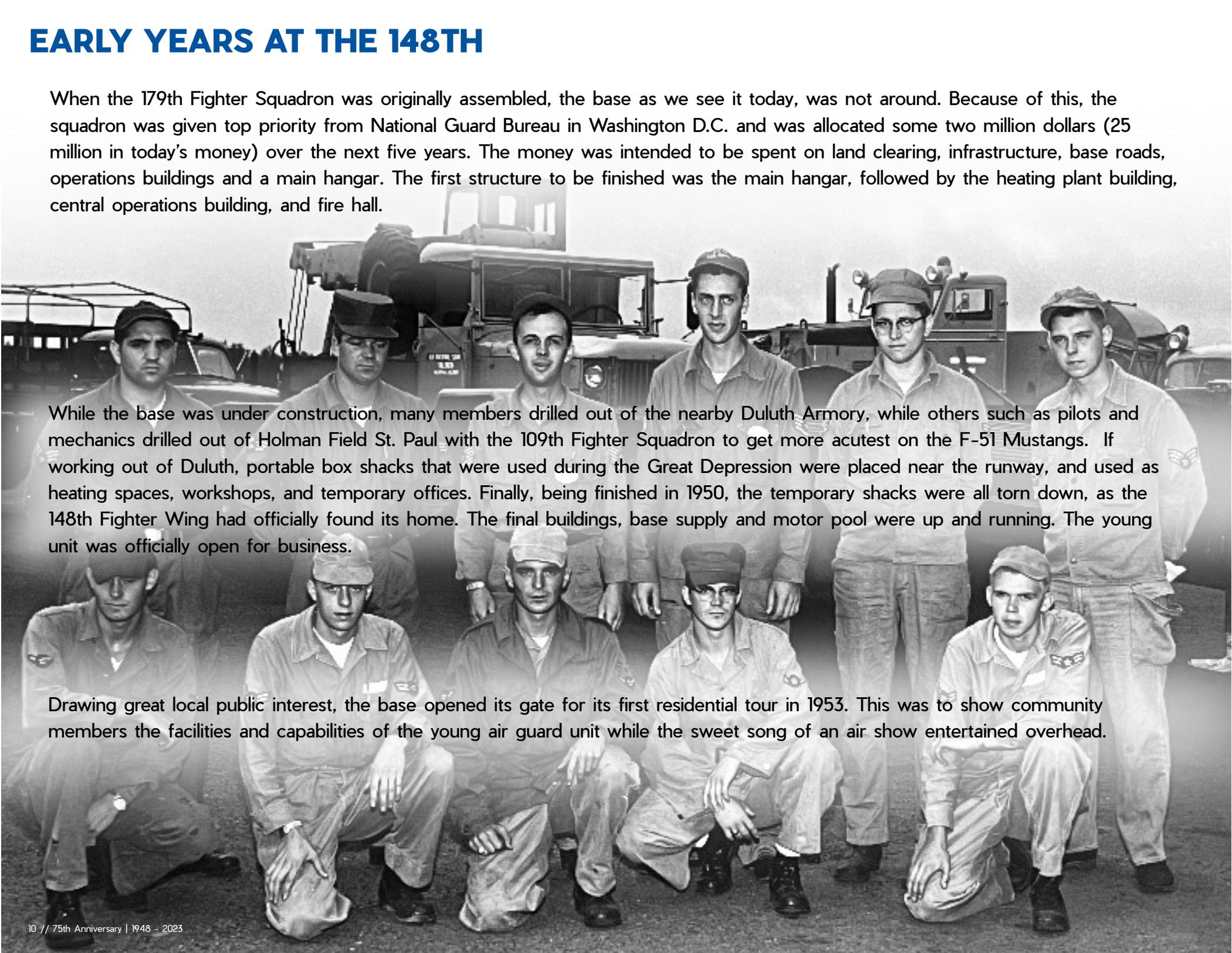
During the final days of summer in 1948, amid the Berlin Airlift, 50 local Duluth men, most of whom served their country in the Pacific and European theaters of World War II, gathered at the Duluth Municipal Airport for the activation of the 179th Fighter Squadron.

Due to the Post-War new world order, a power and ideological struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union came to fruition. This global rivalry commonly is known as the Cold War. With Joseph Stalin dictating the Soviet Union and their Satellite Nations, an Iron Curtain was decadent across Eastern Europe, while the United States and NATO casted their spear of influence across the West, the world was in a tense period. With the emergence of espionage, technological advances, and the stockpile of tactical nuclear weapons, it was increasingly evident that the United States required a military unit to defend the skies over northern Minnesota.



EARLY YEARS AT THE 148TH

When the 179th Fighter Squadron was originally assembled, the base as we see it today, was not around. Because of this, the squadron was given top priority from National Guard Bureau in Washington D.C. and was allocated some two million dollars (25 million in today's money) over the next five years. The money was intended to be spent on land clearing, infrastructure, base roads, operations buildings and a main hangar. The first structure to be finished was the main hangar, followed by the heating plant building, central operations building, and fire hall.



While the base was under construction, many members drilled out of the nearby Duluth Armory, while others such as pilots and mechanics drilled out of Holman Field St. Paul with the 109th Fighter Squadron to get more acutest on the F-51 Mustangs. If working out of Duluth, portable box shacks that were used during the Great Depression were placed near the runway, and used as heating spaces, workshops, and temporary offices. Finally, being finished in 1950, the temporary shacks were all torn down, as the 148th Fighter Wing had officially found its home. The final buildings, base supply and motor pool were up and running. The young unit was officially open for business.

Drawing great local public interest, the base opened its gate for its first residential tour in 1953. This was to show community members the facilities and capabilities of the young air guard unit while the sweet song of an air show entertained overhead.

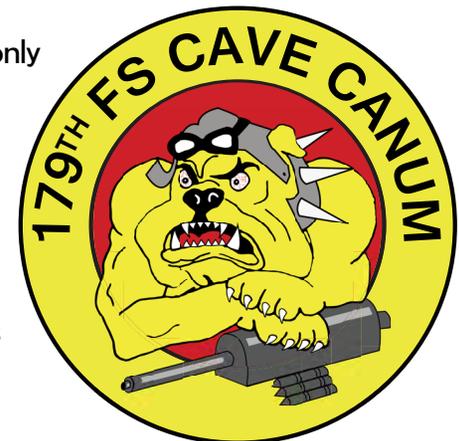
MASCOT HISTORY- TINY THE BRINDLE BOMBER

In 1953 a contest was held to design a squadron insignia. Airman Third Class Thomas Rybak submitted a bulldog wearing an aviator's helmet armed with a gun. Shortly after the design won the contest, Frank Barran (the 179th Fighter Squadron Executive Officer) brought a pedigree English Bulldog "Tiny" to the Unit. His arrival on base in 1954 proved to be a memorable stay.

Tiny the Brindle Bomber had an identity of his own. Loved by some and feared by others, especially the mailman. Tiny established free roam of the base and was known to venture across the runway and charm passengers at the air terminal building. "The tower would watch for him and tell airplanes - dog on the runway, he will be off shortly," recalled Al Amatuzio, a former 179th pilot.

Maintenance personnel were not so charmed by the bulldog, stepping in deposits he'd leave behind, making extra work they'd have to clean up. Guards recall being stalked by Tiny while on night duty, reminiscing of the eerie sound the bulldog's nails would create clicking on the floor of a blacked out hangar. The mascot was fond of secretaries and was loved and adored by kids.

Tiny was with the Unit for only a short time, but his image remains a fixture on the 179th Fighter Squadron's patch. Today 148th Fighter Wing members are coined "The Bulldogs," keeping Tiny a key part of the Unit's history.



179TH UNFORGOTTEN IN THE “FORGOTTEN WAR”

Backed by the Soviets the Communist Republic of North Korea’s Army advanced across the 38th Parallel invading their neighboring Democratic Republic of South Korea on June 25, 1950. Due to President Harry Truman’s policy on containment and Cold War calculations, the United States was quick to respond as they pushed the U.N. Security Council to intervene.

After passing Resolution 84 in early July, the U.S. and 15 other nations were off to war in the Korean peninsula. Members of the 148th were activated for the first time since World War II on January 18, 1951. In total 395 Airmen and 47 Officers were activated as the base assumed air defense status.

Most Airmen either supported the home mission on base, went to a technical school, or supported the greater mission overseas while activated. Many Airmen supported the main war effort in Korea, such as armament specialist Dave McIntosh, and 1st Lieutenant Thomas McQuade who downed two North Korean Mig-29s while piloting an F-89 Sabre above the infamous “MIG Alley” near the Yalu River.

Three others saw action over Korean skies, Bobb Rutherford flew 25 missions, Howard Ramstad earned the Distinguished Flying Cross, and Rudy Lehto worked as a spotter flying T-6 observation aircraft.



WILLIAM TELL WEAPONS MEET

In October of 1970, the 148th competed in the highly coveted William Tell Weapons Meet. This four-day competition took place at Tyndall Air Force Base in Southwest Florida. Three years prior to competition, the wing switched aircraft from the F-89J Scorpion to the F-102 Delta Deuce. 179th Fighter Squadron pilots, aircrew, and maintainers quickly mastered the machine. In the four-day event, where each unit was only allowed to enter four aircraft, Duluth came away with the top honors out of 102 others, earning 11,832 out of 14,800 points. On top of winning first place as a flying unit, Major Ray Sahlstrom was recognized as the “top pilot” of the entire event, gaining 2,000 out of 2,200 points.



THE FIRST FEMALES OF THE 148TH

In 1968, after the passage of Public Law 90-130, women were officially allowed to enlist in the Air National Guard. Ushering in a new age, the first female to enlist at the 148th was Marlene E. Young in February of 1972 when she transferred from active duty as a personnelist. Later that year on August 13th, 1972, Sandra Larson, Lynn Kephart and Susan Churchill raised their right hand, becoming the first females to enlist as a group at the Duluth Air Guard.

Upon graduating from local Duluth area high schools, the three attended Basic Military Training in Texas in the fall of 1972. While at basic training, the women learned facing movements, marching, saluting and reporting procedures, military laws and customs and Air Force history. The physical fitness test consisted of six push-ups, 18 sit-ups, and a one-mile run. Larson was assigned to the transportation section serving in base supply, Kephart worked in administration, while Churchill initially worked as a photographer before rising to become a First Sergeant.

At the time of their enlistment, the base had roughly 800 personnel, making them .0003% of the Wings service members. Today the Wing sits around 23% of female force, paving the way for many future female Wing leaders.



Sandra Larson, Lynn Kephart and Susan Churchill reading an article of the "ON FIVE" after returning from six-weeks of basic training in November 1972.

HISTORY OF 148TH FIGHTER WING AIRFRAMES

The 148th Fighter Wing's aircraft history boasts a total of 11 different airframes, each with different missions. The first aircraft assigned was the F-51 "Mustang." Local residents and unit members alike eagerly awaited the arrival of 25 F-51's in the spring of 1949. According to former 148th Fighter Group Commander, Maj Gen Wayne Gatlin, "it was the greatest little bird there ever was, as far as props go." Later in 1954, the jet age arrived at the 179th. The F-51 "Mustang" was replaced with the F-94 "Starfire," which was described in an aviation journal as "beautiful in flight, hot on landing and owning a reliable engine."

The first F-89 "Scorpion" arrived in 1959, and was initially coined the "lead sled" by maintenance personnel and pilots for its large size and awkward appearance. On July 1, 1960 the 148th Fighter Group was created. This change in status from a squadron to a group expanded the 148th's mission, budget and scope. New buildings emerged and the unit now maintained round-the-clock runway alert status. The 148th became a full-time air defense unit, and with the new tasking came increased recognition and responsibility. Beginning in 1960 the 148th Fighter Group (now called the 148th Fighter Wing) has had several aircraft changes, including the F-102 "Deuce," flown from 1966 to 1971, and the F-101 "Voodoo," flown from 1971 to 1976. This supersonic jet-interceptor was designed to get to a high altitude as fast as possible and as Col John Spencer, Sr. described, "it was like lighting a fuse on a rocket and holding on."

In 1976 the 148th took on a new mission: Reconnaissance. The RF-4C "Phantom II" was their new aircraft which was the reconnaissance version of a twin-engine fighter already in widespread use by the Air Force, Marines and Navy. In 1983 the 148th received the F4-D "Phantom II" and once again returned to an air defense mission. Since 1990, the 148th has flown the F-16 "Fighting Falcon." Most F-16's are a single-seat, single-engine fighter and quite versatile. This airframe plays many roles for America's national defense, including air-to-air and air-to-ground missions. In 2010 the F-16's were upgraded to Block 50's, which included significant upgrades to avionic systems and the aircraft engine. The 148th's current mission is the suppression of enemy air defense.

- » North American F-51 **MUSTANG** (1948 - 1954)
- » Lockheed F-94A&B **STARFIRE** (1954 - 1957)
- » Lockheed F-94C **STARFIRE** (1957 - 1959)
- » Northrop F-89J **SCORPION** (1959 - 1966)
- » Convair F-102 **DEUCE** (1966- 1971)
- » McDonnell F-101 **VOODOO** (1971 - 1976)
- » McDonnell Douglas RF-4C **PHANTOM II** (1976 - 1983)
- » McDonnell Douglas F-4D **PHANTOM II** (1983-1990)
- » Lockheed Martin F-16A&B **FIGHTING FALCON** (1990 - 2003)
- » Lockheed Martin F-16C Block 25 **FIGHTING FALCON** (2003 - 2010)
- » Lockheed Martin F-16D Block 50 **FIGHTING FALCON** (2010 - Present)

**North American F-51
“MUSTANG”
(1948-1954)**



Lockheed F-94
“STARFIRE”
(1954-1959)



Northrop F-89J
“SCORPION”
(1959-1966)



Convair F-102

“DEUCE”

(1966-1971)



McDonnell F-101

“VOODOO”

(1971-1976)



McDonnell Douglas RF-4C
“PHANTOM II”
(1976-1983)



McDonnell Douglas F-4D

“PHANTOM II”

(1983-1990)



Lockheed Martin F-16C Block-25

“FIGHTING FALCON”

(2003-2010)



Lockheed Martin F-16D Block 50
“FIGHTING FALCON”
(2010-Present)



MODERNIZATION

The wing continues to invest in sustainable infrastructure to ensure its facilities are economically and environmentally sound, and provide the safest, most mission-effective working environments. Some of the most notable infrastructure updates during the past fifteen years include:

- » **New Maintenance Facility (broke ground in 2005) completed in 2006**
- » **Modern Fire Station (2006)**
- » **New Front Gate & Entrance to the Base (2007)**
- » **New Fuels Cell Building (2010)**
- » **Petroleum, Oils & Lubricant (POL) Facilities (2012)**
- » **Renovated Precision Measurement Electronics Laboratory (PMEL) (2018)**
- » **Weapons Load Training Facility (2019)**
- » **Wing's Mission Training Center (MTC) (2020)**
- » **STARBASE-Duluth State-of-the-Art Classroom Facility (2020)**
- » **Taxiway and Aircraft Apron Repairs (2022)**
- » **Indoor Small Arms Range (2023)**
- » **Consolidated Logistics Readiness Facility (2023)**
- » **Domestic Operations Storage Facility (2024)**
- » **Aircraft upgrades to include: Active Electronic Scanned Array (AESA) radar, ASQ-236 radar pod, structural modifications through the F-16 Service Life Extension Program (SLEP), CDU-213 installation**





(page 26) Maintenance Facility - 2006

(top, middle) Front Gate & Entrance - 2007 (top, right) upgraded F-16, and (above) the Modern Fire Station - 2006



(top L-R) STARBASE state-of-the-art campus, breaking ground on the Security Forces shooting range.
(bottom L-R) the Mission Training Center (MTC) and the Logistics Readiness Squadron building and warehouse.

BLOCK-50 CONVERSION

On April 27, 2010 the 148th received the first of 20 Block-50 F-16 Fighting Falcons from Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany replacing Block-25 F-16s which they had operated since 2003. Acquiring these planes, the 148th became one of two Air National Guard Units to convert to the Block-50 aircraft from the active-duty Air Force. When the first Block-50 F-16 touched down on the Duluth runway, past and present members of the unit along with state and local political officials celebrated the arrival of the new aircraft during a ceremony at the Wing's maintenance hangar on Friday April 30, 2010. Senator Amy Klobuchar being one of the key political advocates in the Block-50 conversion said, "No base is more deserving of these planes than this base, Duluth and the 148th. Time and time again they've won awards because they're one of the best bases in the nation. They may be small but they're mighty and we wanted to make sure they got these planes."

With the upgraded capabilities, including an improved engine with more thrust, enhancements to aircraft structure and a greater computing capacity for future upgrades and improvements, came a new mission called Suppression of Enemy Air Defense (SEAD).

Upon arrival of the aircraft, Bulldogs expediently trained to become fully qualified on the Block-50. In a span of 18 months, they became fully mission capable just in time to be prepared for an aviation deployment to Afghanistan in 2012.



148TH ACQUIRES AN/ASQ-236 RADAR

In February 2023, the 179th Fighter Squadron increased their mission capabilities through a software and hardware modification when acquiring the AN/ASQ-236 radar pod. The AN/ASQ-236 is an externally mounted Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) Pod that provides detailed maps for surveillance, coordinate generation, and bomb impact assessment purposes. The pod provides Combat Air Forces with the ability to geo-locate points of interest day or night, in adverse weather conditions and compliments the recent fielding of the APG-83 AESA Fire Control Radar (FCR) by the 148th Maintenance Group.

The 148th Fighter Wing, has been designated as the Air National Guard's Center for Excellence for the AN/ASQ-236. As the Center of Excellence, the 148th will retain expertise in the loading, distribution, training and employment of the AN/ASQ-236 and the capabilities it brings to the war-fighter.





The 179th Fighter Squadron acquired the AESA Radar pod upgrade in December 2022. This new equipment allows pilots to find targets on the ground more easily, making the squadron's F-16 fleet more lethal and survivable against potential near-peer threats. While also acquiring the CDU 213, an upgraded cockpit center display unit. The CDU 213 provides the pilot with an ability to control and display vital information, including data link messages, video and annotated imagery, from the aircraft to ground forces, enhancing lethality, while also minimizing fratricide, aircraft integration, airframe and wiring modifications.



OPERATIONAL DEPLOYMENTS (2001-2023)

- Iraq 2005
- 2007
- 2008
- Afghanistan 2012
- South Korea 2016
- Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait 2018
- Savannah, Georgia 2020
- Kuwait 2020
- Greenland 2021
- Canada 2021
- Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Niger 2022
- Saudi Arabia 2022
- Oman 2022
- Egypt 2022



OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM (2005, 2007, 2008)

In March, 2003 the United States led a coalition of forces in Operation Iraqi Freedom, to remove Iraqi President Saddam Hussein from power. In 2005, the 148th Fighter Wing's aviation package was mobilized for its first major deployment to a war zone. Approximately 300 personnel and the Wing's F-16 aircraft deployed to Balad Air Base, Iraq as part of an Air Expeditionary Force deployment. While deployed, the 148th was placed on the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) list by a congressionally authorized commission charged with reorganizing Department of Defense base structuring. Despite the adversity caused by the BRAC announcement, the Bulldogs of the 148th Fighter Wing successfully flew 632 sorties for 1,505 hours. The 148th aviation package deployed to Balad again in 2007 and 2008.

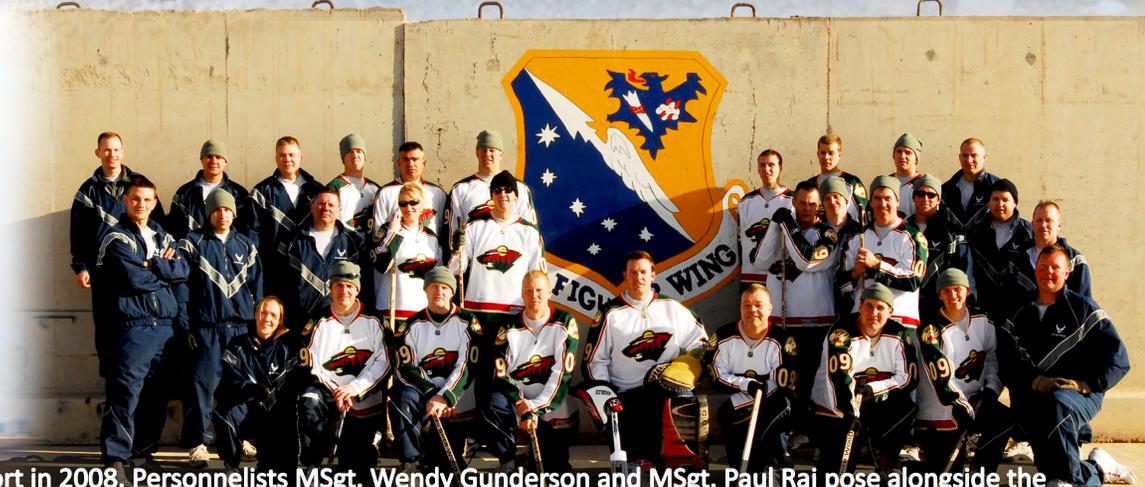
In addition to the aviation package deployments, several smaller groups and individuals deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Wing Commander, Col Mark Johnson assumed command of the 506th Air Expeditionary Group, Kirkuk, Iraq in February 2005. Explosive Ordnance Technicians to include MSgt Dale Rindahl and TSgt Wayne Kettlehut disposed of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) throughout Iraq.

Security Forces personnel patrolled Baghdad's International Zone in 2006, also called the Green Zone, during the Saddam Hussein trial. In 2008, Fire Protection personnel performed duties at the Baghdad International Airport. In 2009, 148th Fighter Wing Command Chief, CMSgt Jodi Stauber served as the 447th Expeditionary Group Chief at Sather Air Base, Baghdad, Iraq.



(top) CMSgt Jodi Stauber supported multiple humanitarian efforts while deployed.
(bottom) MSgt Dale Rindahl disposing projectiles in Iraq, keeping many out of harm's way.

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM (2005, 2007, 2008)



(top, L-R) Members of the 148th Fire Department at Iraq International Airport in 2008. Personnelists MSgt. Wendy Gunderson and MSgt. Paul Raj pose alongside the Balad Air Base mural in 2007. (bottom, L-R) A 148th Fighter Wing F-16 prepares to take off for a mission in 2007. Deployed members celebrate Hockey Day Minnesota while deployed to Iraq in 2008.

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM (2012)

In the weeks following the September 11 attacks, President George W. Bush launched Operation Enduring Freedom to hold the Al-Qaeda and Taliban terrorist groups responsible for their roles in the devastating attacks on American soil. Starting in October 2001 to the end of 2014, the United States and its allies deployed to the Middle Eastern country of Afghanistan. The goal was to eliminate the Al-Qaeda terrorist network, replacing the Taliban government who supported them, and ensuring another cataclysmic attack would never happen again here at home.

President Barack Obama announced the continuation of the war in Afghanistan campaign in January, 2015 launching Operation Freedom Sentinel. The mission was a continuation of counter-terrorism against Al-Qaeda while supporting Afghan security forces with intent to contribute to stability throughout the region.

During both military campaigns covering a 20-year period, the 148th Fighter Wing deployed to Afghanistan and 12 other neighboring countries countless times. There they flew many successful sorties against enemy air defense, trained Afghan Security Forces, disposed of Improvised Explosive Devices and maintained daily base operations while serving at an impeccable level.

(top) After 2 years of preparing, 179th Fighter Squadron Commander Lt. Col. Chris Blomquist announces the Wings future deployment to Afghanistan in June of 2012.
(bottom) 148th Fighter Wing members arrive at Kandahar Airfield in August of 2012.

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

(2012)

DULUTH



MISAWA

● EF 2012



(top L) A mural is painted to commemorate the “Rainbow Deployment”, partnership of the 179th Fighter Squadron and Misawa Air Base of Japan in 2012 while deployed to Afghanistan. (bottom) Group photo of an F-16D from Duluth and an F-16 from Misawa with personnel in Afghanistan. (top R) Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician SSgt Mark Jurakovich in Afghanistan, 2012. (middle) SMSgt Tony Beatrez being promoted to the rank of Chief Master Sergeant in Kandahar.



(top L-R) Deployed members of the Civil Engineer Squadron were treated to a visit from 44th President Barack Obama in Afghanistan in 2014. 179th Fighter Squadron pilots fill out after action reports following one of their many sorties flown while in country. (bottom L-R) CMSgt Lisa Erikson is introduced to her grandchild for the first time upon returning home. Lt Col Chris Blomquist leads the homecoming return after 4 months deployed.

THEATER SECURITY PACKAGE (TSP) TO THE PACIFIC

In April 2016, the 148th Fighter Wing deployed approximately 300 Airmen and 10 F-16's to Osan Air Base, South Korea for 4 months in support of the U.S. Pacific Air Command Security Package.

While deployed at Osan, members participated in Exercise Beverly Herd 16-01, which included more than 40 A-10 Thunderbolts and F-16s executing night flying capabilities. During this deployment, 179th Fighter Squadron pilots flew over 300 training sorties alongside Republic of Korea F-15s, Osan F-16s and A-10s.

After successfully completing their mission, Airmen returned home to Duluth the following July.



(top) Off-duty members of the Medical Squadron go on a day hike summiting a mountain outside Osan, Korea.
(bottom) F-16's from Duluth participate in an "Elephant March" with more than 40 A-10 Thunderbolts.

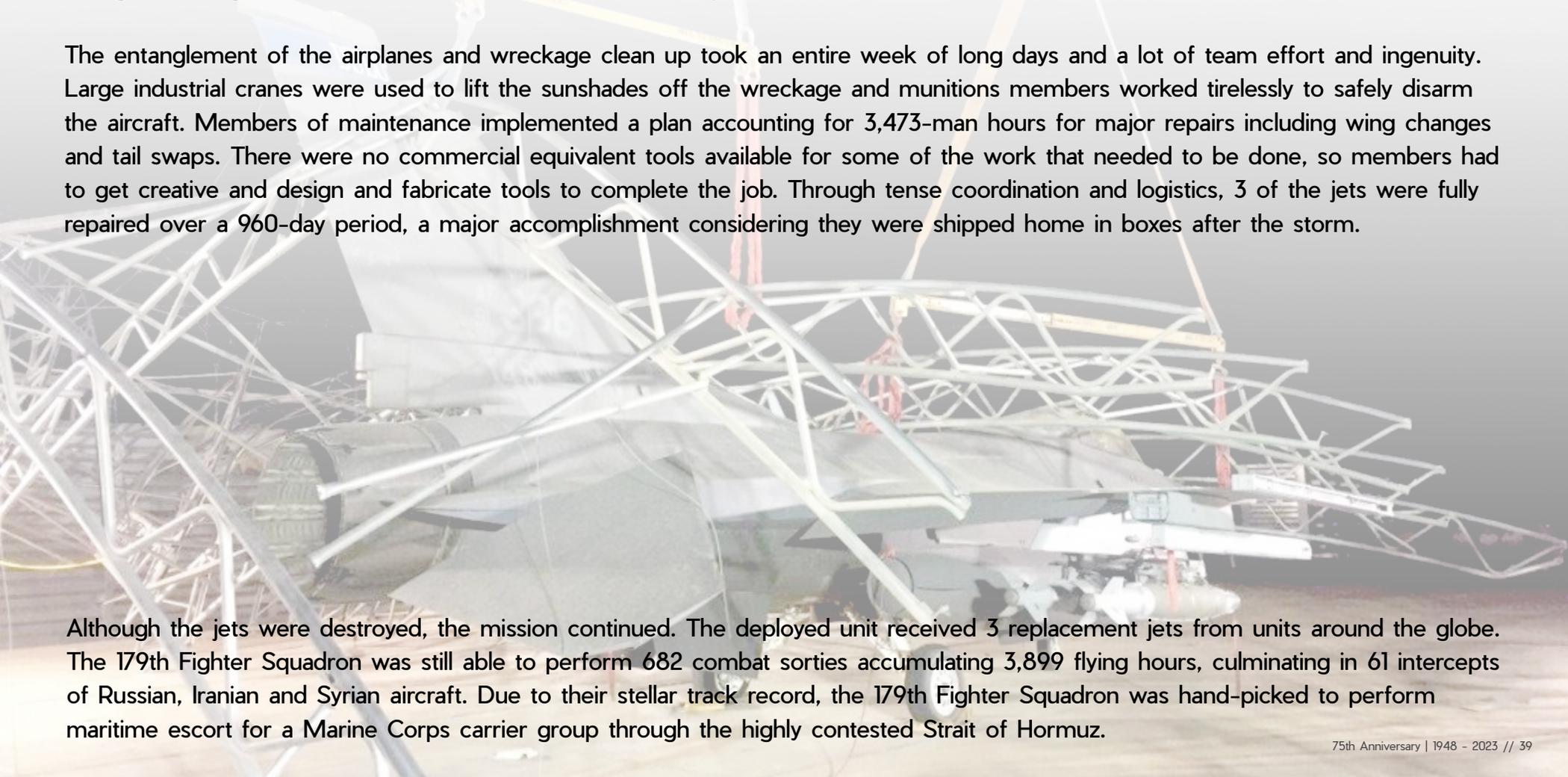
RESURRECTING JETS DAMAGED IN INHERENT RESOLVE SANDSTORM

While deployed to Ahmad Al-Jaber Air Base, Kuwait in 2018 as a part of Operation Inherent Resolve, airmen were exposed to significant wind and dust storms, referred to as “haboobs.” During a severe haboob, wind gusts got as high as 91 mph and visibility was reduced to almost zero. Due to the gusts of wind, 7 of the F-16’s were damaged when industrial sunshades came toppling down on the jets.



The morning after the storm, civil engineers and a crash recovery team inspected the damage, determined this was the worst battle damage caused to an Air Force or Air National Guard unit’s aircraft inventory since 1991. “It looked like a bomb went off,” said SMSgt Ryan Gigliotti, who worked as Aircraft Production Superintendent.

The entanglement of the airplanes and wreckage clean up took an entire week of long days and a lot of team effort and ingenuity. Large industrial cranes were used to lift the sunshades off the wreckage and munitions members worked tirelessly to safely disarm the aircraft. Members of maintenance implemented a plan accounting for 3,473-man hours for major repairs including wing changes and tail swaps. There were no commercial equivalent tools available for some of the work that needed to be done, so members had to get creative and design and fabricate tools to complete the job. Through tense coordination and logistics, 3 of the jets were fully repaired over a 960-day period, a major accomplishment considering they were shipped home in boxes after the storm.



Although the jets were destroyed, the mission continued. The deployed unit received 3 replacement jets from units around the globe. The 179th Fighter Squadron was still able to perform 682 combat sorties accumulating 3,899 flying hours, culminating in 61 intercepts of Russian, Iranian and Syrian aircraft. Due to their stellar track record, the 179th Fighter Squadron was hand-picked to perform maritime escort for a Marine Corps carrier group through the highly contested Strait of Hormuz.



OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE (2018)

More than 330 Airmen deployed in support of Operation Inherent Resolve to undisclosed locations across Southwest Asia. Assigned to the 407th Air Expeditionary Group, they served as part of Combined Joint Task Force - Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR) generating, executing and sustaining combat airpower across assigned regions.



SAVANNAH GEORGIA (2020)

In January 2020, the 148th was tasked with a state-side 60-day NORAD Homeland Defense deployment to Savannah, Georgia.

While here, 233 wing personnel conducted 24/7 air defense operations in support of National Special Security events and provided Presidential protection in F-16s along the eastern coast of the United States.

Due to the breakout of the Covid-19 pandemic, personnel were restricted to the base to reduce risk of exposure. Whenever cases of Covid-19 were confirmed in the local area, teams of Airmen were split into two shifts to better practice social distancing measures, and assigned specific times for individuals to use base facilities, such as the chow hall, base exchange and fitness center.

After being extended for an extra two weeks because of the pandemic, members returned back to Duluth on April 2, 2020.



OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE & SPARTAN SHIELD (2022)

In support of Operations Inherent Resolve and Spartan Shield during the spring of 2022, 350 Airmen along with 12 F-16s deployed to Prince Sultan Air Base in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. During this 115-day tour, Bulldogs successfully accumulated more than 4,700 flight hours while intercepting 79 aircraft under tasking as the 179th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron.

Additionally, the 148th conducted two Agile Combat Employment exercises with partner nation forces in Oman and Egypt where they demonstrated credible coalition airpower to enhance regional security.

After successfully completing their mission, all deployed personnel returned home safely in July.





RESERVE COMPONENT PERIOD (2022)

The Reserve Component Period deployment package consists of members from Administration, Civil Engineers, Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD), Force Support, Logistics, Public Affairs, Medical and Security Forces. Since 2010, Bulldogs have deployed to countries around the world during these taskings in support of global missions. These Airmen often deploy solo or in a small contingent for periods of six-months at a time.





(top L-R) Security Forces member is promoted while deployed to the Middle East. Three members of Security Forces reenlist while being deployed to Niger.
(bottom L-R) Fire Fighter MSgt Jon Redfield takes a look through his binoculars while deployed in the spring of 2022. Security Forces members pose for a photo while deployed to Niger.)

148TH BECOMES SKILLED IN AGILE COMBAT EMPLOYMENT (ACE)

During the most recent aviation package deployment, members conducted two Agile Combat Employment missions with partner nation forces in Oman and Egypt. These “ACE mission” concepts are a new direction the Air Force and the 148th will be prioritizing into the future. ACE missions are designed to increase survivability while generating combat power with the intention of creating operational dilemmas and complicating maneuverability for enemy combatants, thus giving flexibility to allied forces.

During these military operations a small efficient number of multi-capable troops and aircraft deploy to a remote location, with the intention of leaving less of a footprint while surviving and operating in a contested environment while performing capabilities outside of their traditional Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC).

Starting in 2021, the 148th has conducted ACE missions in Canada, Egypt, Greenland and Oman.





STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS



(top) Mission Support Group Commander Col Penny Dieryck with Norwegian Generals during an official visit as a part of the 2014 NOREX exchange. (bottom) Croatian Ambassador Pjer Šimunovic, Croatian Generals and Maj Gen Jensen, the Adjutant General of the Minn. National Guard are given a tour of the main hangar by Wing leadership in December of 2019.



NORWEGIAN RECIPROCAL TROOP EXCHANGE

For 50 years (officially becoming the longest running troop exchange in the Defense Department) the Minnesota National Guard has had a long-standing training relationship with the Norwegian Home Guard. Referred to as NOREX, Minnesota National Guard troops annually adventure to the far Northeast European country to become fully immersed in foreign military tactics, winter survival skills, and experience the greater Norwegian culture. Survival skills include sled dog racing, cross country skiing, cold water training, building snow-shelters to sleep in, and how to fight in frigid temperatures, all culminating with a 3-day end of the week exercise. After field training troops are treated to “Buddy Weekend,” immersing themselves in the Norwegian culture while living with a host family for a day. This is the longest standing relationship any state National Guard has had with another country.





NORWEGIAN EXCHANGE OFFICIAL STATE PARTNERSHIP

On February 15, 2023 the Minnesota National Guard made the State Partnership with the country of Norway official, continuing their 50-year long relationship. In attendance in Norway to commemorate, approve and sign the agreement were (first three pictured left to right) the Adjutant General of the Minnesota National Guard, Army Maj Gen Shawn Manke, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, Army Gen Daniel R. Hokanson, Chief of Defense of Norway, Eirik Kristoffersen, (not pictured) His Excellency U.S. Ambassador to Norway, Ambassador Marc Nathanson and Norwegian Minister of Defense, Bjorn Arlid Gram.



CROATIAN STATE PARTNERSHIP

Since 1996, the Minnesota National Guard and the nation of Croatia have been collaborating through the National Guard Bureau's State Partnership Program. For 27 years, many exchanges of service members from Croatia and Minnesota have taken place. In 2016, Airmen of the 148th Fighter Wing Civil Engineer Squadron traveled to Karlovac, Croatia in support of a humanitarian civic assistance project building a local elementary school.

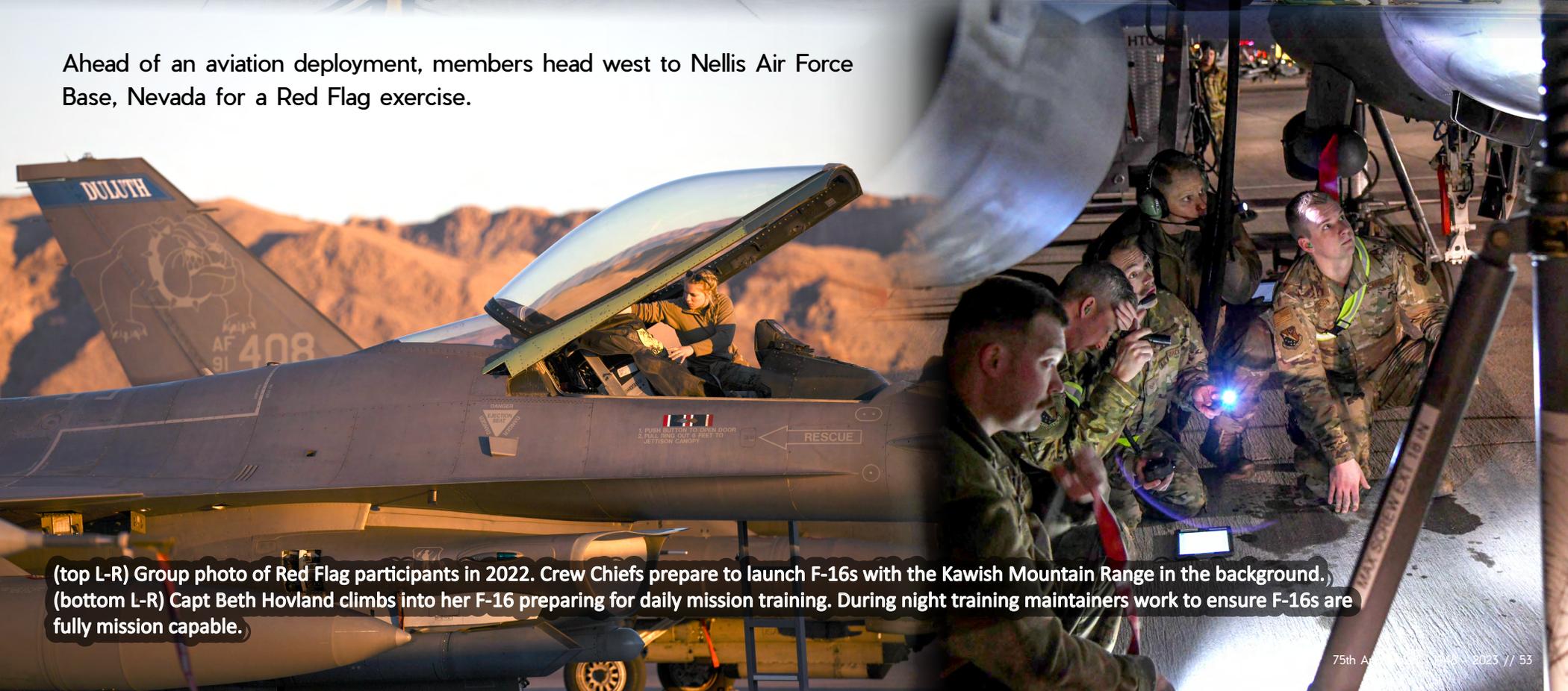
For the first time in 2019, two 148th F-16 pilots flew alongside two Croatian MiG-21 fighters out of the new Zagreb International Airport.



TRAINING DEPLOYMENTS



Ahead of an aviation deployment, members head west to Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada for a Red Flag exercise.



(top L-R) Group photo of Red Flag participants in 2022. Crew Chiefs prepare to launch F-16s with the Kawish Mountain Range in the background. (bottom L-R) Capt Beth Hovland climbs into her F-16 preparing for daily mission training. During night training maintainers work to ensure F-16s are fully mission capable.

Bulldogs have trained all over the country preparing for aviation deployments. For the past 15 years, they've trained during Combat Archer at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., Bayou Weasel at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Air Base, La., Northern Lightning at Volk Field, Wis., Sentry Aloha at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, Combat Hammer at Hill Air Force Base, Utah and Red Flag at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska.





(top) Red Flag in Alaska, 2015. (bottom) Bulldogs train at Combat Hammer at Hill Air Force Base in Utah.

FOREIGN TRAINING EXERCISES

The 148th trains stateside and internationally. In 2014 Bulldogs traveled to Bulgaria and Estonia where Estonia Ambassador Jeffrey Levine received an incentive flight. In 2018 Airmen participated in the North American Partnership with Canada. Bulldogs participated in the largest deployment exercise in NATO history at “Air Defender” in Germany in June 2023.



SERVING AMERICA AT HOME

An F-16 standing alert following the 9/11 terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.



9/11 AND OPERATION NOBLE EAGLE

This information was obtained via MN National Guard remembers 9/11 20-year Anniversary titled “We remember 9/11”

Tuesday morning of September 11, 2001 was labeled “a regular morning at work” by Vice Wing Commander Col Frank Stokes. However, this morning would change the lives of all 148th personnel and their families.

After the attacks, Base Commanders Col Timothy Cossalter and Stokes made the call to start arming airplanes. One challenge was the munitions shop was severely undermanned. Charlie Zobitz, who was only an Airman at the time, was filling in as the Non-Commissioned Officer In-Charge (NCOIC) that day. Zobitz and a group of five others worked at a break-neck pace, arming F-16’s, switching from pilot simulation rounds to air-to-air missiles. Originally the task seemed daunting, as this mission would require 15 Airmen, however the six munitions Airmen rose to the moment. When finally being relieved after reinforcements arrived, Zobitz and the others had worked a 15-hour shift they felt “lasted 10 minutes.”



Members of the Munitions shop were able to rise to the challenge in the wake of the September 11th attacks, even being understaffed and overworked, Munitions Airmen pulling a 15-hour shift were still able to complete their mission.

In the weeks following the attacks, over 500 Airmen were activated as part of Operation Noble Eagle. Homeland Security was now the Wings top priority. The 148th was no longer in training mode, members were being activated routinely. As a part of Operation Noble Eagle, the 148th was activated for constant Air Superiority Alert missions. Being one of seven fighter wings across the nation to scramble their jets flying Combat Air Patrols (CAPS) at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., Langley Air Force Base, Va., and at home in Duluth. Being alert required pre-flight checks in advance, being fully fueled, armed, and manned for two F-16s to take off

within five-minutes notice. Many 148th pilots flew CAPS over cities flying in a racetrack like pattern, being on the lookout for any unrecognizable aircraft coming in, and nothing unusual being detected on the radar. Col Curt Grayson remembers the “very eerie feeling” during the CAPS missions: as all non-military aircraft were grounded. There was no radio chatter, and no radar traffic. Being all alone in the skies, he called it “just a weird time to fly.”

From September 24, 2001 to March 30, 2002 148th pilots, maintainers and operators received orders to place their aircraft at Minneapolis/ St. Paul International Airport on alert status.





For nearly seven months, members lived and worked in a decommissioned 50-year-old hangar, similar to being in a fire department on-call 24/7. During this time members flew CAPS out of the airport, while Security Forces members acted as augmentees assisting TSA agents and airport security to ensure safety on civilian aircraft.

When all was said and done, the credibility of the 148th was cemented. Before 9/11, the Air Guard was seen as a part-time service, whose mission had changed from a strategic to an operational one. During the first year following the attacks, the 148th had more flight hours than any other Fighter Wing in the nation, increasing their hours from just under 3,000 to over 5,000 hours. In total over 500 members were activated to support the flying of 428 Combat Air Patrols at 26 different locations including guarding the President on Air Force One.



Reflecting on the early years after 9/11, Brig Gen Cossalter got emotional about the efforts put forth by the 148th Airmen. "Because the airplanes were equipped with the people and training we had, and the "can-do attitude," it was the proudest and best moment of my career."

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11

148th Fighter Wing F-16s flew over the Minnesota Capital building on September 11, 2021 to commemorate the 20-year anniversary of the 9/11 Terrorist Attacks.



AEROSPACE CONTROL ALERT STATUS

One of the main reasons for the activation of the Duluth Air National Guard was the need to be alert for protection over the Minnesota skies during the Cold War against potential Russian invasive aircraft. All these years later, the 148th is still executing their alert mission today.

After the 9/11 attacks, the Wing assumed alert status as a part of Operation Noble Eagle at Langley Air Force Base, Va., Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., and at the Minneapolis International Airport.

The next alert was tasked at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii for three months when the Air Force grounded the units F-15's in November 2007. Then in February of 2008 while on alert status at Elmendorf Air Base in Alaska, Lt. Col. Shawn Higgins and Capt.

Curtis Grayson became the first F-16 pilots to intercept a Russian Bear Bomber.

Bulldogs have also conducted Presidential support missions, protected the skies at multiple locations throughout the country for short- and long-term durations, and recently shot down an unidentified flying object over Lake Huron.



Governor Tim Walz

@GovTimWalz

I'm proud of the airmen in the [@148FW](#), based out of Duluth, who earlier today took off from Madison, WI to shoot down a flying object over Lake Huron as part of a federal mission. The Bulldogs executed their mission flawlessly, protected the homeland, and got the birds home safe.

8:20 PM · Feb 12, 2023 · 174.1K Views



FLOOD FIGHT

During the flood fights of 2009, 2010, and 2011 the 148th Communications Flight deployed the Remote Communications Platform (RCP) in support of the Minnesota National Guard Task Force 2-136. The team provided a retransmit of SINCGARS radio capability, extended radio support for UHF handheld radios, and expertise in reprogramming radios as needed.

These efforts were in conjunction with the 210th Engineering and Installation Squadron to link two 106' towers together, forming a larger footprint for communications on the ground.



(upper left) The RCP, a modified Ford F-750, is deployed to provide radio patching and repeater capability near Moorhead MN during the 2010 flood response.
(bottom) MSgt Bryan Druar checks radio communications from a tactical repeater while on State Active Duty for the flood fight near Moorhead MN in 2010.
(right) SSgt Troy Tretter, MSgt Bryan Druar, & SrA Jeff Lanska support Flood Fighting in Western Minnesota in 2010.

MEMBERS HELP IN HURRICANE HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS

In the wake of Hurricane Maria that devastated the shores of Puerto Rico in September of 2017, 11 Services Flight members along with SMSgt Mark Wasserbauer sprang into action to support the people of the ravaged island. Stationed at Camp Santiago and Fort Allen as a part of Operation Hurricane Maria Disaster Response. Members fed Soldiers out of a refrigerated reefer trailer truck, who were tasked with the recovery and clean-up after the hurricane hit. Soldiers across Puerto Rico were fed Meals Ready to Eat (MRE's) for weeks prior to Services arrival. Encountering morale at an all-time low, "We were able to give them better, more well-rounded meals and fresh food" said TSgt Jessica Smart. This enhanced morale and continued the effort for this important mission. In their off-duty times, services members volunteered handing out food and toiletries to locals displaced by the hurricane.



LIFELONG FRIEND MET IN MIDST OF HURRICANE CLEAN-UP

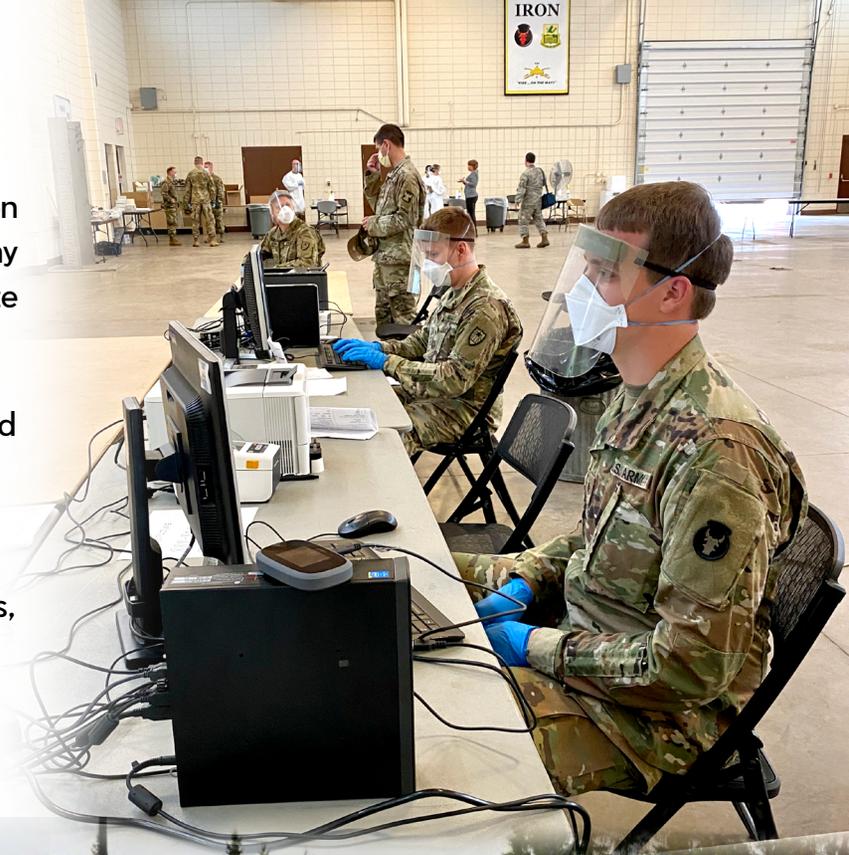
AIC Krishnia Baltazar returned home from Puerto Rico with a little more than she packed; a one-eyed dog named Juan. While feeding soldiers at Camp Santiago, a friendly stray would frequently come visit service members in hopes of snagging a bit to eat. One day the dog came back with a head wound from being kicked in the eye by a wild horse. Feeling bad, Baltazar cared for the dog during her stay in Puerto Rico, and got in contact with local veterinarians. She was able to adopt and bring Juan back to Minnesota with her, where six years later they remain best friends.



COVID-19 RESPONSE

On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization officially declared the Coronavirus a Global Pandemic. While much of the world's workplace was put on hold, the base remained operational. For the 148th and their members, day-to-day operations changed, but all were still able to perform their duties to both the state and nation.

A mask shortage was solved by Airmen making their own. One drill was canceled and enlistments were held virtually. The Wing conducted a salute to American Health Care workers in May, 2020 recognizing their tremendous efforts during this challenging time. Many members were placed on State Active Duty (SAD) orders performing duty at testing and storage facilities in Hibbing and Minneapolis, working to ensure a safe Minnesota.





(top L-R) Medical Group members were some of the first activated, assisting at local hospitals and nursing homes. SSgt Tim Anderson works at a testing warehouse in Hibbing, Minnesota, one of many Bulldogs activated for Covid-19 on SAD orders. (bottom L-R) Col Shidla becomes one of the first members to receive a COVID-19 vaccination. Although most of the world was shut down, basic military training continued as many new Bulldog recruits had a much different basic training experience than previous years.

148th Fighter Wing pilots conduct flyovers across greater Northern Minnesota and Wisconsin skies on May 6, 2020 as a part of Operation American Resolve honoring healthcare workers during the early months of the COVID-19 Pandemic.



A SALUTE TO MINNESOTA HEALTH CARE WORKERS

Locations of Minnesota Air National Guard Flyovers

MINNESOTA

- » Abbot Northwestern Hospital
- » Alomere Health Douglas County Hospital
- » Bigfork Valley Hospital
- » Children's Specialty Center
- » Cloquet Memorial Hospital
- » Cook County North Shore Hospital
- » Cook Hospital
- » Coon Rapids Mercy Hospital
- » Cuyuna Regional Medical Center
- » Ely Bloomenson Community Hospital
- » Essentia Health Duluth
- » Essentia Health St. Marys Detroit Lakes
- » Essentia Health Virginia
- » Essentia Hermantown Clinic
- » Fairview Range Medical Center
- » Grand Itasca Hospital
- » Hastings Veteran's Home
- » Hennepin Healthcare Hospital
- » Lake Region Health Care
- » Lakeview Hospital
- » Lakewood Health Center
- » Lifecare Medical Center
- » M Health Fairview St. John's Hospital
- » M Health Fairview Woodwinds Hospital
- » M Health St. Joseph's Hospital
- » Maple Grove Hospital
- » Mayo Clinic Hilton Building
- » Mayo Clinic Methodist Campus
- » Mayo St. Mary's Campus
- » Mercy Unity Hospital
- » Methodist Hospital
- » Miller Creek Clinic
- » Minneapolis VA Health Care System
- » Minnesota Veterans Home
- » Monticello Centra Care Health
- » North Memorial Health Hospital
- » Northern Memorial Hospital
- » Rainy Lake Medical Center
- » Regions Hospital
- » Riverwood Healthcare Center Hospital
- » St. Cloud Hospital
- » St. Cloud VA Hospital
- » St. Gabriel's Hospital
- » St. Joseph's Medical Center
- » St. Lukes Laurentian Medical Clinic
- » St. Lukes Regional Healthcare System
- » Sanford Bemidji Medical Center
- » Sanford Thief River Falls Medical Center
- » Silver Bay Veterans Home
- » State Capitol/Bethesda
- » Two Harbors Lakeview
- » UMN Medical, Riverside (Fairview)
- » United/Children's Hospital

WISCONSIN

- » Ascension Eagle River Hospital
- » Ashland Memorial Medical Center
- » Essentia Health Superior
- » Florence County Government Building
- » Superior Essentia Health
- » Twin Ports VA Clinic

MICHIGAN

- » Aspirus Ironwood Hospital
- » Aspirus Ontonagon Hospital
- » Iron County Medical Care Center

59TH PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION SUPPORT

Events transpired at the National Capital Building on January 6, 2021 activating 15,000 National Guard troops to secure a peaceful transition of power to President Elect Joseph R. Biden during the 59th Presidential Inauguration.

Over 100 Bulldogs (regardless of Air Force Specialty Code) answered the Nations call by being sworn in and augmented as Special Duty Police Officers. Trained in riot control, they traveled to Washington D.C. to provide services for seven days performing sweeps and patrols at historical sites and national monuments. They provided protection to the public and sacred pieces of American history.



(top) Personnelists SrA Sarah Urban and SSgt Lexi Smalley protect, defend and patrol the streets of Washington. D.C. as Special Duty Police Officers. (bottom L-R) Security Forces members pose for a picture in front of the Washington Monument. Representative Pete Stauber greets 148th Fighter Wing Airmen at the foot of the U.S. Capital.

SERVICES FEEDING THE AUGMENTEES

Due to the heightened security measures of the Presidential Inauguration, more troops were requested to secure the transition of power and protect the peace, requiring additional food needed to feed all the augmentees. 148th Services members who had previously planned on coming to the Inauguration for minor food service and lodging operations support were in for a much bigger mission than expected. During their seven-day stay in nearby Alexandria Virginia, they prepped and delivered 15,000 meals three times-a-day, ensuring no Soldier or Airmen was left hungry or eating a MRE. Members of the group earned the highest award in their career field, the SMSgt Kenneth W. Disney Award, due to their stellar efforts.



MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL STATE ACTIVATION JUNE 2020

Due to civil unrest and racial based riots in the Minneapolis/ St. Paul area the summer of 2020, the 148th Fighter Wing was part of the largest National Guard activation in history when the entire Minnesota National Guard was called to serve to protect Minnesota citizens and public property. Most base personnel were stationed in Duluth, a select few from Security Forces, Communications, Intel, and Civil Engineering went to support the mission in the Twin Cities. Members of Security Forces were stationed at a variety of checkpoints around the city, performing security and peacekeeping duties while Communications Flight personnel set-up secure communication throughout the city for civilian law enforcement and military personnel to keep in contact.



OPERATION SAFETY NET

As a part of public safety precautions ahead of the trial for former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin in April 2021, Governor Tim Walz preemptively activated the Minnesota National Guard to perform security details. Many Airmen of the 148th Fighter Wing volunteered to serve their state and local communities by assisting in security in Brooklyn Center and at the Minnesota State Capital in St. Paul.



OPERATION ALLIES WELCOME

In August 2021, the withdrawal of U.S. military forces in Afghanistan left many supportive Afghans of the 20-year campaign in grave danger. Those who got out of Afghanistan were now considered refugees.

At eight different locations throughout the U.S., over a six-month period, the Department of Homeland Security employed the support of the Department of Defense and other organizations to safely resettle over 70,000 Afghan Refugees. This mission resulted from one of the largest non-combatant evacuations (NEO) in U.S. history. 26 Bulldogs supported the mission, providing aid in lodging, food service, medical, health, welfare and childcare needs.



(top) Sam Meaux assists Afghan refugees during medical processing.
(bottom L-R) 148th Members of one rotation deployed to Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. The Task Force Liberty patch worn by deployed personnel.

SERVING THE NORTHLAND COMMUNITY

The 148th has a long history of serving the Northland community through volunteerism. You can find them handing out meals on Thanksgiving, collecting and donating toys during the holiday season, or picking up trash on the side of the road among many other volunteer efforts. Bulldogs can always be counted on to lend a helping hand in the community.

Members are extra busy during the winter holiday season and annually offer time volunteering with the Christmas City of the North Parade, packaging and delivering Thanksgiving meals, and collecting donations for the Ryan Ewald Memorial Toy Drive.



Members are frequently seen throughout the year offering helpful hands to build with Habitat for Humanity, working with the Adopt a Highway program picking up trash in area ditches, volunteering with local Boy Scout troops and giving base tours to local youth organizations.



SQUADRON RECOGNITION

The 148th Fighter Wing can trace its roots to World War II flying P-38Js as the 393rd Fighter Squadron, deactivated in 1945. The Unit has since grown into five key functional areas including Headquarters, Maintenance Group, Medical Group, Mission Support Group, and Operations Group with Squadrons as follows:

MAINTENANCE GROUP

- » Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- » Maintenance Squadron
- » Maintenance Operations Flight

MISSION SUPPORT GROUP

- » Communications Flight
- » Civil Engineer Squadron
- » Force Support Squadron
- » Logistics Readiness Squadron
- » Security Forces Squadron

OPERATIONS GROUP

- » 179th Fighter Squadron
- » Operations Support Squadron





SECURITY FORCES DEPLOYMENT EXTENDED BY COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Information submitted by MSgt. Chad Johnson

In January of 2020 seven members of the Security Forces Squadron were expecting to return home in June, however the COVID-19 pandemic kept them in country for an extra six weeks. “It was a very unique experience,” said MSgt Chad Johnson. There were many things to be anxious about in the early days of the pandemic, wondering how everyone’s family was back home and rumors of being extended because of airline closures. There were a lot of unknowns - when would we go home, would the mission change, would we be stuck eating MRE’S? Luckily all turned out well, where the mission proceeded as planned. “Arguably we had a better circumstance than the rest of the world, gyms were open, we were able to go to work and live a pretty much normal life with limited restrictions. When finally returning home later that August, it was weird seeing the United States pretty much on lock down.”



SECURITY FORCES AIRMAN COMPLETES WEAPONS AND TACTICS INSTRUCTOR COURSE

On May 26, 2023 Security Forces “Defender” and local Duluth Police Officer, TSgt Reid Erickson graduated from the highly coveted 12-week U.S. Air Force’s Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course at Fort Bliss, Texas.

The course objective is making war fighters more lethal and prepared for all missions by having a better understanding of Doctrine, while being more tactically proficient and able to provide viable solutions to any situation. Erickson spent time conducting basic and advance weapons firing using a wide variety of weapons and ammunition, taught and tested on instructional methods, tactical communications, fire teams, squad movements, mounted operations, close quarters combat and urban operations.

Upon graduating Erickson remembers, “the hardest part of the course was the academic rigor necessary to be credible tactical advisors to our commanders.” His favorite part of the course was creating a full mission profile field training exercise and having the opportunity to incorporate the 54th Helicopter Squadron from Minot Air Force Base, N.D. into their exercises, which provided value.

All of the information, experiences and tactics gained by Erickson are valuable as he now will be able to teach similar courses at his home station and be able to execute impeccably on future Agile Combat Employment missions.



FORCE SUPPORT SQUADRON HEADS WEST

Information submitted by SMSgt. Melanie Kuklis

Members of the Force Support Squadron traveled in June 2022 with the 128th Refueling Wing of Milwaukee, Wis., to March Air Reserve Base, Calif. During this two week extravaganza, members participated in their home station readiness training. They set up deployment style tents they were required to sleep in, trained to become forklift certified, learned new fitness examination practices, and mortuary affairs where they had to simulate recovering remains from a downed aircraft. After daily training, members enjoyed team morale events including hiking and swimming along the Pacific shores.



FATALITY SEARCH & RESCUE TEAM (FSRT) TAKES THEIR TALENTS TO SOUTH BEACH

Eight members of the Fatality Search and Recovery Team (FSRT) traveled in August of 2021 to the Dr. Joseph H. Davis Center for Forensic Pathology in Miami, Fla. for on-the-job training for roles and responsibilities with mortuary affairs, while also seeing the site of the Surfside Condo Collapse that killed 98 people earlier that June. The small group was able to tour the facility and shadow medical examiners observing them through their process.

The experience was a new effort for the unit, as opportunity was discovered by a pre-existing relationship with the Florida Air National Guard. The group took advantage of the trip to train at a facility attached to the University of Miami-Dade, where area faculty is accustomed to instruction and student oversight.

“How do you really practice doing what we do?” said 1st Lt. Otha Tillery, officer in charge of FSRT. “We do a lot of training, but how do you really duplicate what it smells like, looks like, and feels like? Trainings like these provide so many opportunities we can’t offer at home station, like education and actually handling the deceased and decomposed, having in-depth instruction on what a medical examiner is looking for, and more we just can’t offer during a drill weekend,” said Tillery.



MEDICAL GROUP DEPLOYS TO GERMANY

Information submitted by SMSgt Christine Sawyer

In August 2011, 20 Airmen from the Medical Support Group deployed to Ramstein Air Force Base, Germany for three weeks. Medical Airmen job shadowed at the local base medical center, trained and integrated with local German healthcare providers, trained in self-aid buddy care and Comprehensive Medical Readiness programs, and volunteered to do medical support for the local base airshow.

After duty hours, members immersed themselves in the greater European Culture by taking the opportunity to travel and tour around the whole Germany countryside, Luxembourg, and Iceland.



Every two years the 148th Medical Readiness Group travels to Camp Ripley for joint integrated training with the Minnesota Army National Guard. They participate in Tactical Combat Casualty Care training requiring them to exercise medical evacuations from Blackhawk helicopters. This training is also a part of their Comprehensive Medical Readiness Training, filled with home station readiness training, and affords many team bonding and morale events.



“WARS ARE WON AND LOST BY LOGISTICS”

Information submitted by CMSgt Brian Jackson

The shoulder patches on the 148th Logistics Readiness Squadron (LRS) Airmen reads “Anything, Anytime, Anywhere.” This motto rings true in every recent Aviation and RCP deployment as members of LRS have played a crucial role in mission completion.

Since 2010, during 46 different military movements, the LRS Squadron has transported 5,455 passengers carrying 2,163.2 tons of cargo around the world. Operational deployments are the busiest time for LRS personnel as members work in many diverse settings. When tasked to deploy, all personnel usually need new uniforms, “A and C bag,” or weapons distributed which is the responsibility of LRS. In a pre-deployment setting, LRS personnel are busy doing manual labor for cargo prep, passenger load planning, and ensuring everything gets to its destination securely. While deployed LRS Airmen’s role is equally critical, as they order airplane parts, working in supply operations, or work in a Centralized Repair Facility.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower once said, “Wars have been won or lost primarily because of logistics.” CMSgt Brian Jackson said, “In LRS we truly believe that we are multi-dialectal Airmen that can do anything, anytime and anyplace.”





(top L-R) Ground Transportation airman loads a pallet of cargo inbound for Washington D.C. ahead of the Presidential Inauguration. Members are issued riot control gear before Operation Safety Net (OSN) in April 2021.

(bottom L-R) A pile of "A bags" sit ready to go for the Presidential Inauguration. Supply airmen went down to Minneapolis for Operation Safety Net with MRE's.

CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON: VAST AND ADVENTUROUS INFORMATION

Information submitted by CMSgt Doug Ion

The 148th Fighter Wing Civil Engineer Squadron (CES) is composed of Civil Engineers, Firefighters and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) personnel.

For the past 15 years they have traveled far and wide serving their nation and state. This includes deployments to Afghanistan in 2009-10 and 2014, where engineers maintained and improved Bagram Air Base's runways, taxiways, flightline facilities and bed down areas.

Serving on RCP deployments in 2018 to Al Udeid, Qatar then again in 2021-2022 to Stuttgart, Germany, Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, PSAB Saudi Arabia, Al Dhafra, United Arab Emirates, Al Jaber, Kuwait, Al Udeid, Qatar, Ali Al Salem, Kuwait, Muwaffaq, Jordan, Diori Hammani, Niger, Chebelley, Djibouti and Mano Dayak, Niger.

EOD technicians have supported operations world-wide and assist with a variety of responses in local and surrounding communities.

CES served on State Partnership Programs in Croatia in 2013 and 2016, during humanitarian deployments where members renovated and remodeled a local elementary school kitchen and storage area with new electrical, plumbing, ventilation, tile and equipment.

CES Airmen have also served their nation at home during Individual Readiness and Annual Trainings in Fort Greely, Alaska creating a Conoy training site, Tucson, Ariz. working for the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol, Helemano Plantation, Hawaii building a housing unit for the elderly and at Youth Camp Kamassa, Crystal Springs, Miss. building facilities for a local youth special needs camp.

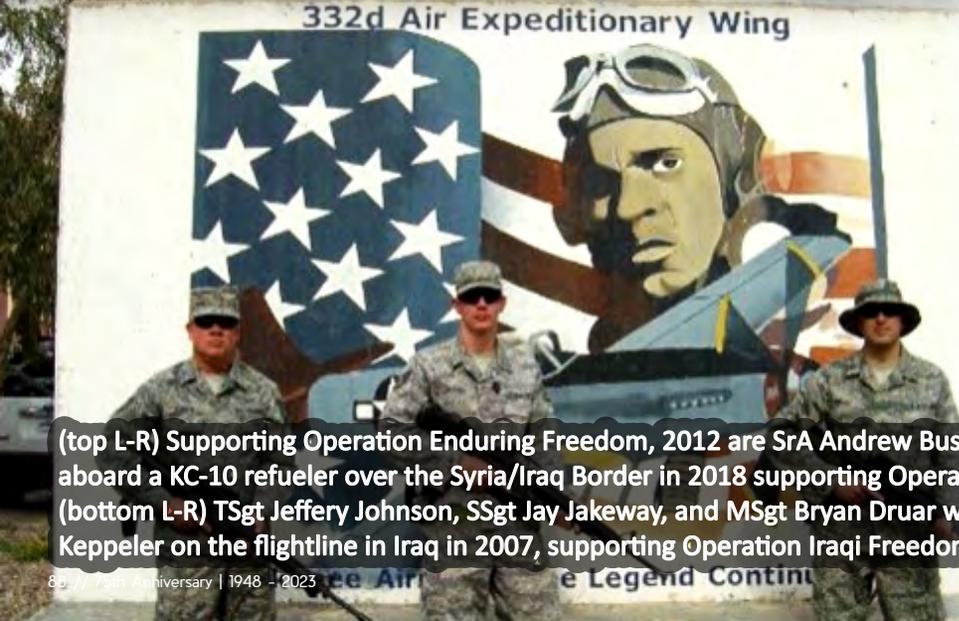




COMMUNICATIONS FLIGHT AROUND THE WORLD

Information submitted by Capt Andrew Busam

Communications Flight members are always ready to go when and where needed. The mission demands supporting mobile assets, laptops, radios and more including cybersecurity, account management and software support; whatever is needed when integrating with existing networks or building up from bare bones. The 148th Communications Flight even stands up in house tech, like a Communications Flyaway Kit, to get the mission done and keep our forces plugged into the Global Information Grid.



(top L-R) Supporting Operation Enduring Freedom, 2012 are SrA Andrew Busam and MSgt Richard Kaufman en route to Kandahar, Afghanistan. TSgt Derrick Tuomi aboard a KC-10 refueler over the Syria/Iraq Border in 2018 supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.
(bottom L-R) TSgt Jeffery Johnson, SSgt Jay Jakeway, and MSgt Bryan Druar while deployed in Balad, Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2011. SrA Jacob Keppeler on the flightline in Iraq in 2007, supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

COMMUNICATING IN THE COLD

In 2023 the 148th Communications Flight marked 30 years of winter deployment exercises in conjunction with the John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon. Deploying remote communications technology to a gravel pit near Grand Marais, flight members and augmentees have stress tested both technology and personnel under harsh real-world conditions including wind, snow, and freezing cold. By linking communications with county and emergency response entities, the exercises provide both safety to the mushers, and practice for any real world deployment. The 148th Communications Flight is truly ready to engage anytime, anywhere.



(top L-R) The Communications Flight (CF) remotely deployed. Approximately eight CF members live out of the mobile shelter, and utilize the capabilities of the Joint Communications Platform (mounted on the Ford F-650) as a command post. Voice, video, radio, and data services are made available even where commercial services are degraded or non-existent. The Compact Rapid Deployable kit can also be seen providing LTE coverage for the area. (bottom) The 2018 team, Kiefer Higgins, Tyler Stodola, Justin Pederson, Hannah Race, Hannah Garvey, Tom Walden, Derrick Tuomi, and Erik Saice pose in front of the Joint Communications Platform.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The 148th Fighter Wing has outstanding partnerships with many civilian counterparts throughout the community. This includes base Fire Fighters who frequently respond to off-base incidents, Airfield Management whom the 148th shares the runway with Duluth Airport Authority (DAA), and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) who frequently has been called on active alerts.

Since 2010 EOD has responded to 33 Defense Support to Civil Authority (DSCA) calls from local civil authorities. These primarily consist of recovering old military munitions recovered or turned in to local authorities. These instances include children playing with a live mortar at the Nimrod Days Jubilee festival, a WWI shrapnel round converted to store methamphetamine in Long Prairie, WWII Japanese Mortar that fell out of the wall of a bar in Virginia, Minn., and a live anti-tank rocket recovered from the Mississippi River.

148th Airfield Manager, Civil Engineer Squadron and the Wing Safety Office worked hand-in-hand with DAA, Federal Aviation Administration and Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc (SEH) since 2014 on several airport re-alignment and reconstruction projects supporting DAA's 2040 vision statement.

The main KDLH runway (9/27) was completely reconstructed with new concrete, adding in a displaced threshold which increased the overall runway length from 10,162' to 10,591'. During this reconstruction phase, new BAK-12H arresting gear systems were installed replacing old outdated systems. New runway/taxiway LED lighting was incorporated into the many phases of the total project. DAA worked with base Civil Engineering and Airfield Management to ensure minimum Class B requirements were considered and incorporated as part of the Airfield Joint Use Agreement (AJUA) to provide 148th Fighter Wing capabilities for daily unit training requirements while also supporting larger transient aircraft supporting unit deployments and large force exercise (LFE) scenarios.



Duluth Airport Authority tours the 148th in 2015.

MAJOR ACCIDENT RESPONSE EXERCISE (MARE)



(top) 148th Fighter Wing Firefighters participate in an aircraft crash disaster drill.

(bottom) First Responders from the 148th work with local, state and federal emergency response agencies to test and validate emergency response capabilities.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT- BEYOND THE YELLOW RIBBON

Minnesota's Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program (BTYR) was established in 2008. Through its community and corporate partnerships, BTYR provides service members, veterans and their families from all branches of the military a wide range of support, including deployment readiness, family assistance and resources, youth programs, education and career opportunities, and more. These partnerships are invaluable and work hand in hand to raise awareness, recognize, celebrate, and meet the needs of Minnesota's military community.

The first Duluth BTYR company was Allete/Minnesota Power who became a recognized BTYR company in 2016. Supporting military employees and military families is a huge part of their culture and they were excited to serve the brave men and women in their local community to a broader extent. Although Allete/Minnesota Power was the first in Duluth, as of July 2023, there are more than 80 active Minnesota BTYR companies and organizations. Communities near and far have sent care packages, custom coffee, donations for smoke fests and other morale building events such as pheasant hunts, fishing tournaments, youth activities, and assisted with family support while members' are deployed or facing a hardship. The contributions have touched our service members hearts and the Bulldogs feel grateful to serve in this great state with so much support.



BTYR Hibbing-Chisholm Area Chapter: Members participated in the Hibbing Jubilee parade in July where they handed out candy. They also thanked veterans for their service and gave out information about upcoming veterans' events.



GRANDMA'S MARATHON SUPPORT

Every June many Bulldog runners lace up their running shoes with the goal of completing one of the multiple races during Grandma's Marathon weekend in Duluth. In turn Grandma's Marathon has created an outstanding relationship with the 148th Fighter Wing. They allow the Wing to annually have a recruiting booth at the runners expo, allow extra runners bibs to wing members, allow the Wing to start the race off with an F-16 flyover followed by the national anthem sang by Wing members. Grandma's Marathon allowed deployed members in Southwest Asia in 2022 to run the William A. Irvin 5k, sending finisher t-shirts to the deployed location. Upon returning home from deployment, Grandma's Marathon volunteers were some of the first to welcome them back, handing out snacks, drinks and finisher medals. In gratitude of their support, members presented Grandma's Marathon board members with a flag flown in the cockpit of an F-16 during a combat mission supporting Operation Inherent Resolve.



(top) SSgt's Sarah Urban and Ricky Schiff, Maj Liz Horngren and MSgt Kristi Aamodt are congratulated by fellow Force Support Squadron members after finishing the Gary Bjorklund Half Marathon in 2022.

(bottom L-R) Deployed members in Saudi Arabia run the William A. Irvin 5k at 6 a.m., while the temperature was a cool 90 degrees. The mission flown flag presented to Grandma's Marathon board members in 2022.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS - MINNESOTA PROFESSIONAL SPORTS

Over the years, four major professional Minnesota sports teams have supported the 148th Fighter Wing tremendously. The Minnesota Wild have allowed many Wing personnel to be “Guardian of the Game” during each home game. The Minnesota Vikings allow members to hold the flag during the national anthem. The Minnesota Timberwolves recognize the “Hero of the Pack” with their own custom jersey and picture with their mascot at center court. The most generous to Wing members are the Minnesota Twins, who have given free tickets to members for games, supported military family homecomings, granted members on-field access during military appreciation days, allowed members to sing and raise the pregame flag, and frequently request fly overs supporting our F-16 mission.



COMMUNITY RELATIONS - MINNESOTA PROFESSIONAL SPORTS



MILITARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE (MAC)

Since 2003, the Duluth Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee (MAC) has advocated to promote and support the economic impacts of local branches of the military. They have been strong advocates for the 148th Fighter Wing continuing its mission in the Northland and in helping acquire our current airframe the Block 50 F-16.

MAC's primary goal is to support military initiatives through legislative and governmental channels as well as through garnering community support.



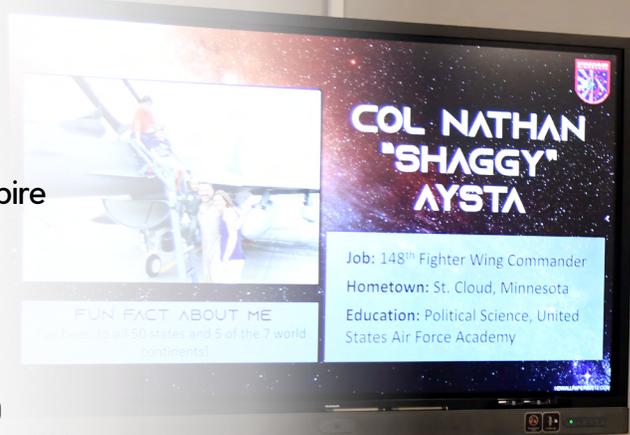
In 2019, members of the Military Affairs Committee were given a viewing of the F-35 Lightning II prior to the Duluth Air Show.

STARBASE PARTNERSHIP

STARBASE Minnesota is a nonprofit organization founded in 1993, whose mission is to educate and inspire youth in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

STARBASE Minnesota-Duluth provides programming on the 148th Fighter Wing and has served over 7,700 students since its opening in 2017. They started teaching out of the Civil Engineer conference rooms and in 2019 held a ground-breaking ceremony for four state-of-the-art classrooms. The classroom expansion allows them to serve an additional 1,000 kids per school year.

Bulldogs regularly volunteer to assist with registration, lunch buddies, graduation and tours.



EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE (ESGR)

Approximately 60% of Wing personnel at the 148th are considered traditional drill status guardsmen, meaning they also have careers outside the gate. Due to the ever-changing schedule, and ability to be activated at a moment's notice, civilian employers have sacrificed greatly and continue to be flexible for our Citizen-Airmen. To thank employers, the Department of Defense created the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve program (ESGR). The goal of this program is to foster a culture in which all employers support and value the employment and military service of members of the National Guard and Reserve in the United States.

To say "thank you," the 148th conducts an annual "boss lift" where Airmen nominate their civilian employers to spend a day experiencing what they do at work. This allows employers an in-depth peek at what a day in their Airman's military service consists of. Employers receive a mission brief, base tour, get to ask questions to top leaders in the organization and culminates with flying in a KC-135 while viewing an F-16 refuel in the air.



SPECIAL MENTIONS - MAJOR UNIT AWARDS

Over the years, the 148th Fighter Wing has earned many prestigious national awards for its members' extraordinary efforts. Nine times, as recently as 2021, the Wing has earned the top honor of the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.

The 148th Fighter Wing took home the Raytheon Trophy in June 2009 for their top scale efforts in flying air superiority and defense missions as the best flying unit throughout the entire Air Force. During the 2008 calendar year, the 179th completed no notice deployments at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii and Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska where they intercepted a Russian Bear bomber while simultaneously receiving an "Excellent" rating in the Phase II Operational Readiness Inspection and "Mission Ready" rating in Alert Force Evaluations.

The base earned the title of OSHA VPP Distinction, an outstanding accomplishment as it was the first time a Wing in Air National Guard history received this distinction. The 148th has held it for many years and was recertified in 2023.

Other national awards include:

- » 2012 TAG's Outstanding Safety Office
- » 2012 ANG Ground Safety Office of the Year
- » 2012 NGB Winston P. Trophy
- » 2012 AFA Outstanding ANG Flying Unit (3rd Award)
- » 2016 NGAUS Distinguished Flying Unit
- » 2017 DOD RAPIDS Site Excellence Award
- » 2017 ANG Safety Office of the Year
- » 2019 AFA Outstanding ANG Flying Unit
- » 2019 Spaatz Trophy
- » 2021 Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (9th Award)
- » 2023 NGAUS Distinguished Flying Unit (4th Award)



A TRADITION OF FAMILY SERVICE

A snapshot of the generations of legacy that exist at the 148th Fighter Wing and are all part of a faithful heritage of service.



(top L-R) SMSgt Jill Haapala, TSgt Emma Erkkila, MSgt Kelsey Renier, SSgt Mikayla Newman, SrA Ava Welch and SMSgt (ret.) Keith Erickson are all a part of one of the largest serving families at the 148th. Baltazar sisters Krishia and Kristel before Kristel's incentive flight. The Erickson siblings Rylie, Reid and Caden returning from deployment in 2022.

(bottom L-R) Michael, Nicholas and Patrick Sirois at Sentry Savannah, 2014. CSMgt Wendy Gunderson and her daughter Skylar. Brothers Beau and Luke Davidson with fellow Proctor graduates and sisters Whitney Olson and Alex Holm.

FLIGHT OF HONOR

On October 9, 2022 the 148th Fighter Wing held a Flight of Honor induction ceremony commemorating the military service of 11 outstanding individuals.

The Flight of Honor Memorialization Program honors past and present Minnesota Air National Guard and Joint Force Headquarters members who have distinguished themselves both during and after service with notable professional achievement and service or heroism.

Their special acts have left the Minnesota Air National Guard with a long-standing impact and have honored the greater mission and communities. The enshrinement of these inductees is located on a memorial wall outside the Headquarters building.



2022 Honor Flight Inductee's (L-R) include SSgt Thomas W. Lyons, MSgt George R. Ion (represented by son CMSgt William Ion), CMSgt Bruce D. Graham, CMSgt James A. Armstrong (represented by grandson MSgt Chris Armstrong), Capt James L. Verville, (represented by sons Jeff, Scott & Kurt Verville), Lt. Col Kou B. Vang, CMSgt Steve P. Campos, Lt Col Darlene (Darcy) A. Anderson, Brig Gen Raymond T. Klosowski, Brig Gen John P. Silliman, and (not pictured) Lt Col Henry T. Capiz.

ON FIVE NEWSLETTER - THE ULTIMATE IN READINESS

In the air defense business the term "On Five" declares the ultimate in readiness. Aircraft, pilots and mechanics are poised for action at a moments notice. When the phrase was selected to be the official name of the base newsletter in the fall of 1960, editor MSgt. W. R. "Bud" Horngren and his staff were applying the same meaning to the mission of this publication. "The ultimate state of readiness of the 148th Fighter Group in the defense of their nation and freedom."

The newsletter can be traced back to 1952 with the "One Seventy Niner." The weekly publication contained news and scuttlebutt from around the base, including rapid changes taking place during the Korean War as well as the "Cockpit Chatter" column. Today, the newsletter has published over 522 editions and is still reporting on Bulldog activities digitally each quarter at: 148fw.ang.af.mil/News/ONFIVE.



VOL 1 No. 3 DULUTH, MINNESOTA July 1956

VOL. NO. XIV "Best Paper in the Wing" 1 FEB 52

YWCA SPONSORS DANCES FOR BASE

Refreshments, dancing and plenty of girls is promised by the YWCA to all air men who are interested in having good times. When the YWCA found out about lack of entertainment on the 179th base they lined up six square dance parties for the next six weeks.

Presently the parties are tentatively planned as the YWCA has seventy-five attractive young ladies but no men for their escorts.

The parties will be held either on Friday or Saturday nights at the YWCA. There will be a small cost of \$5 for air men interested in attending the parties.

It figures out to one dollar a dance and girl each airman escorts may pay her way depending on the airman.

Anyone interested in having a good time should contact Special Services. They have names, descriptions, ages, etc of all girls who will be at the dance.

OPEN HOUSE IN DAYROOM

It's "Open House" today at the Airmen's Dayroom from 1000 hours to noon. Refreshments are being served through the hospitality of the Duluth USO. The library is expected to be in operation in the near future as soon as sufficient shelves are built to house the books. It is a free, so attend the gala opening.

MAJOR HED WILL BE ACTING C.O.

Tentatively filling the shoes of Maj. Markham is Major John R. Hed, who has assumed the role of squadron and base CO pending the arrival of a full Air Force colonel.

Major Hed was instrumental in forming the Duluth air national guard unit in September, 1948.

From September of 1948 until last September he served as Maintenance officer of the 133rd Maintenance & Supply Group in St. Paul and Minneapolis as commanding officer.

During the war Major Hed served on Shemya and Attu Islands. He was recalled to active duty as a major when the 179th was federalized March 1, 1951.

Colonel Paul Fojtik is expected momentarily to take over as Air Base Commander. Prior to being assigned to this base Colonel Fojtik was Commanding Officer of the 128th Ftr Incpt Group, Truxex AFB, Wisconsin. An air national guard officer now on active duty, the colonel is expected here before Feb. 6.

Remember Wednesday Feb. 6 is the last day you can enroll for night college extension courses at UND. You may look at the bulletin in the I&E Office.

OUR QUEEN CANDIDATE



In keeping with the Centennial Spirit, the 179th is sponsoring a Centennial Queen Candidate.

She is Leola (Tootie) Engman, Rt. 2 Box 898B. Miss Engman is 18 years old 5 feet 4 1/2 inches, 112 lbs, which, combined with light brown hair and sparkling blue eyes, makes her a more than qualified queen candidate.

"Tootie" graduated from Proctor HS in 1955 and she is employed at the 1st and American National Bank in Duluth. She was selected as "Sweetheart" of the Future Farmers of America of this area in 1954.

Miss Engman's hobbies include skating, swimming and dancing. Her favorite pastime is horseback riding and she even owns her own riding horse.

Here's wishing "Tootie" a lot of good luck in her quest for selection as Centennial Queen.

By the way, she's single, boys!!!!

WING WINS GUNNERY MEET

The 133rd Air Defense Wing Gunnery Team won the Area II Gunnery Meet held at Camp Williams, Wisconsin 18 - 22 June 1956.

The meet was to have consisted of 10 missions. However, adverse weather prevented firing all of them and we finished up with a total of 4 record fire missions at 20,000 feet and 2 practice missions. Team average for each of the 4 record fire missions was #1 - 17.5%; #2 - 25.625%; #3 - 27.2% and #4 - 26.2%. The team average for the event was 24.1%.

This win means that our team will represent the Western U.S. in the 1956 ANG world-wide meet at Casper, Wyoming in September for the All-Weather Fighter Gunnery Championship as well as the Over-all Team Championship.

(Cont'd on Page 3)



SEE STORY - PAGE 3

Vol. 15, No. 1 Duluth, Minnesota Jan - Feb 1970

Gooney Bird Retired

After more than 20 years of faithful service to the State of Minnesota, C-47 #620 left Duluth International Airport January 7th on its retirement flight to Davis-Monthan AFB, Tucson, Arizona.

The three man crew of Col John R Hed, Lt Col John H Vaughn, pilots and TSgt Howard F Gustafson, flight engineer, flew the "Goon" to the military aircraft storage site at Davis-Monthan, where it will be "moth-balled." The flight took nine flying hours with stops at Minneapolis, where its passenger seats were removed and at Amarillo, Texas for refueling. Each of the crew members were allowed to take a suitable souvenir of the "Goon's" last flight.

Col Hed, who piloted the last flight of #620 from the State of Minnesota, also piloted its first flight into Minnesota as a member of the 109th Fighter Squadron in 1947. Number 620 became attached to the 148th Fighter Group in 1960 and during its stay here logged approximately 10,000 flying hours.

Although the "Goon" has left the 148th, it will long be remembered by the many airmen who received their first introduction to flight while a passenger on it.

Maybe it's just coincidence, but the C-54 which replaces it, bears the same last three digits in its number - 620.

FT - 11-25 April



"Gooney Bird" 620 leaves Duluth-International Airport and 148th Fighter Group for the last time.

Productive Encampment in January

When 250 Air Guardsmen of the 148th Fighter Group attended January Field Training at the Duluth ANG Base, it was one of the largest groups assembled there since the advent of the "Texas Plan" some nine years ago. The Camp Commander, Lt Col Charles Bennett, praised the men and their supervisors for an encampment which was both productive and without incident.

The large congingent called for General Military Training in two groups, which met on alternate days because of space limitations in the dining hall. Following GMT was two weeks of section training in forms of OTJ, CDC, and "book

(Continued Page 3)

HONORING A LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE

In the main hangar on June 25, 2023 the 148th Fighter Wing officially unveiled the 75th Anniversary Heritage Jet. This project took weeks to accomplish by a stellar team of Airmen working in the maintenance squadron. This jet will be operational with the current paint scheme for up to one year. It was designed to represent the historical legacy of the Wing. The designs on the jet include the Ursa Minor constellation as Minnesota is referred to as the “North Star State,” lightning bolts as an ode to the patterns flown on the 1948 original units F-51, a phoenix displaying a bomb with a nuclear symbol denoting one of the Wings early missions, and the Minuteman signifying citizen-soldiers ready to answer their nations call. Painted designs are all in the Air Force colors of golden yellow and ultramarine blue.



NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU
WAR DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON

BY AUTHORITY OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Utility Flight, 179th Fighter Squadron (SE)

Minnesota National Guard

having conformed to the requirements prescribed by National Guard Regulations, and in accordance with the provisions of Section 60, National Defense Act, approved June 3, 1916, as amended, is extended federal recognition.

Effective:

17 September 1948

Station:

Duluth Airport, Duluth, Minnesota

Letter of allotment:

WDSNG 3254 (Air)(PWP) Gen.-31, dated 24 May 1946

For the Chief, National Guard Bureau:



W. A. R. ROBERTSON, Colonel, NGB
Deputy Chief and Executive Officer

NGB Form 4.



75 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

1948 - 2023

