

AirScoop



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Massachusetts Air National Guard

104th Fighter Wing

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From the Command Team

Barnestormers,

As the days get longer and warmer, and our people start on new and important tasks, I want to take a moment to look back on all we have recently accomplished.

The Westfield Aviation Museum opened and hosted a great day where Barnestormer families and community members could get up in the air and see our proud aviation history. Thank you to them for dedicating their lobby to us and our achievements.

Tons of community groups have come onto the base for our tour season, and they always leave impressed with the dedication and professionalism that you all showcase. A special thanks to the pilot team and ammo for going the extra mile for all our visitors.

And, if you needed even more proof that we like to raise up our community and invest in our future, the Chief's Council awarded two scholarships to outstanding students from Westfield schools. We are proud to be a part of their journey and contribute to their success.

Operationally, we still maintain world class mission ability, even as we continue to wind down the F-15. Recent praise from Air Force leadership, the results from Barnestormers sent to compete in military challenges, and successful night flying operations all send the same message to our adversaries: There is nothing to gain from testing us - we are always ready.

Finally, Memorial Day may have come and gone, but we never truly stop honoring and appreciating the sacrifices made by our brothers and sisters - the heroes of our nation. Annual traditions like the F-100 rededication are good opportunities for us to come together, but I charge each and all of you to continue the fight for freedom that our predecessors gave so much for.

Continue to make us proud,

Chris Riga

Christopher Riga, U.S. Army Col. (Ret.)
Chief of Staff, 104th Fighter Wing



Go Sox!



WE REMEMBER

STORY BY JAY HEWITT | PHOTOS BY MELANIE CASINEAU

Barnestormers gathered to honor the 13 Airmen fallen in flight from the 104th Fighter Wing who made the ultimate sacrifice in the performance of their duties during the annual F-100 Memorial Rededication Ceremony, May 16, 2025, at Barnes Air National Guard Base, Westfield, Mass.

The F-100 monument was originally dedicated to the wing on May 17, 1987 by the 104FW Chief Master Sergeant's Council, and continues to serve as a reminder of the impact that the fallen Guardsmen have with the unit. Since then, the wing continues to gather each May to hold the ceremony, honoring the service of the fallen unit members with the placement of a wreath, a 21-gun salute, and the playing of taps followed by an F-15 flyover.

This year's rededication ceremony marks the final year that the flyover will be conducted in the F-15 Eagle, with the wing's upcoming conversion to the F-35A Lightning. 104th Operations Group commander Col. Michael 'Shot' Glass and fighter pilot 1LT Eric 'Gronk' Flynn, conducted the flyover for the ceremony, and spoke on the significance of participating in the ceremony.

"This is my second year in a row leading the F-100 Rededication flyby, and it is always a privilege to get to represent the 104th Fighter Wing in such a way, especially for this event," said Glass. "As we prepare for the arrival of the F-35A, using the F-15 for the last time during this event is especially significant for me. Lt Col Morris 'Moose' Fontenot was a close friend and colleague. Honoring him and all the other fallen 104th members one last time with the Eagle is a true honor."

Flynn further emphasized the personal significance and impact of performing the flyover for the ceremony for the final time in the F-15.

"This will be my first time flying the F-100 rededication which has been a truly important tradition to me at Barnes over the years," said Flynn. "Being able to take part in honoring the fallen heroes who gave their lives in service of this country is something that I will remember forever, and having the privilege of executing it in the F-15 one last time before we transition to the F-35 makes it even more special."

During the ceremony, 104th Fighter Wing Commander Col. David 'Moon' Halasi-Kun delivered a powerful speech on the importance of remembering the generations of the wing's brave predecessors who stood strong for democracy with unyielding courage.

"Our Nation's fallen each has a name. That name was given to them by their family, and for the family that name is an unbreakable connection that forever binds them to love, to loss, and to pain. We have thirteen of those names. We may not have known them all personally, but know this – their life, their death has meaning. So I ask you - how will you honor them? How will you remember all of the fallen on this Memorial Day and take the memory of the individuals on this monument beyond today and beyond next week and inspire your service to this nation; to strengthen your relationship with your friends and family, and to live each day like the gift that it is?"

Engraved upon the memorial where the wreath is placed, are the names of unit members who passed away in aviation related events:

1st Lt. Edward W. Meacham, Monomoy Point, Massachusetts, Aug. 17, 1948
Maj. Robert Anderstrom, Granby, Connecticut, May 7, 1954
1st Lt. Richard Brown, Granville, Massachusetts, Oct. 19, 1954
Tech. Sgt. Austin A. Cooper, Granville, Massachusetts, Oct. 19, 1954
Capt. Frank A. Gibe, Westfield, Massachusetts, July 28, 1956
Maj. Richard W. Mahoney, New Orleans, Louisiana, April 22, 1961
1st Lt. Joseph F. Crehore, Chalons, France March 21, 1962
Capt. Hugh M. Lavalle, Upstate New York, Nov. 16 1963
Capt. John H. Paris, Westfield, Massachusetts, July 17, 1964
Maj. James Romanowicz, Granby, Massachusetts, Feb. 1, 1965
Capt. Leonard E. Bannish, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, May 30, 1968
Maj. John S. Southrey, Wells, New York, Sept. 17, 1986
Lt. Col. Morris "Moose" Fontenot Jr., Deerfield Valley, Virginia, Aug. 27, 2014

[VIEW THE GALLERY HERE](#)



HEADLINES & HIGHLIGHTS



HEADLINES & HIGHLIGHTS



FROM PA TSGT TO PA 1LT



LIFE CYCLE MANAGEMENT



WAM OPENING

BARNESTORMER COMMUNITY



CADRE'S CORNER

Happy June Drill!

Neither the heat nor a busy schedule can slow our student flight down. While we will personally be absent, a big shout-out to the recruiting team for stepping up to run the student flight over the coming weekend.

We also want to send best wishes to our Barnestormers who arrived at BMT in May and are headed there in June:

Christopher Wamugunda

Adil Dusunur

Lillie Pendleton

Oguz Erkan

K Figueroa Bonilla

Christopher Phelps

William Connors

Richard Benjamin

Eve Bartlett

George Quartey

Aim High!
SSgt Ryan Carvalho
SSgt Mykel Potter



PROMOTIONS

SMSgt. CMSgt. Kristin Martin	COMM
MSgt. SMSgt. Patrick Greany	MXG
TSgt. MSgt. David Avalone	MSG
TSgt. MSgt. Taran Savoie	CE
TSgt. MSgt. Cameron Farrell	LRS
TSgt. MSgt. Jason Edinger	XXX
SrA SSgt. Zachary Coderre	CE
Amn A1C Spencer Bates	MXG
Amn A1C Gabrielle Petlock	SFS
Amn A1C Prince Afram	FSS

Congratulations!

RETIREMENTS AND DEPARTURES

SMSgt. Christopher Hagar
LRS | 32 Years

MSgt. Keith Mudgett
COMM | 32 Years

SMSgt. Anthony Cruz
AMXS | 30 Years

SMSgt. Todd Collins
AMXS | 25 Years

Maj. Levina St. Jean
Heading to 102 IW | 15 Years

SSgt. Christopher Penniman
Heading to CT ANG | 6 Years

SSgt. Kathleen Comeau
Heading to AF RES | 7 Years

SrA Patrick DeFreitas
6 Years

Best Wishes!

HISTORIC HIGHLIGHTS

A REGULAR COLUMN BY KINDA-HISTORIAN MELANIE CASINEAU

HAPPENING RIGHT NOW!

BARNES AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Westfield, Mass. — The F-15 Eagle displayed outside the gate of the 104th Fighter Wing on Southampton Road recently received a restoration by Ponsford Ltd., a Georgia-based conservation company.

Ponsford Ltd., the largest conservation group in the Southeast, employs 17 specialists who travel internationally to restore historic and cultural artifacts. The company has worked with museums, parks and municipalities worldwide.

Founder and owner Gordon Ponsford, a third-generation conservator, previously served for more than 50 years at Arlington National Cemetery. Under his leadership, the company restores tanks, guns, rockets, aircraft and helicopters.

“Everything done by our staff is performed with the same professional standards upon which Ponsford was founded, serving as protectors, guardians and custodians of fine art and antiques,” Ponsford said.

The F-15 Eagle restoration took five days and was completed by a four-person team.

Ponsford Ltd. also restored the F-84 in 2020 and the F-100 in 2023, both displayed within the base gates. The team has also completed conservation work on sculptures in downtown Westfield.

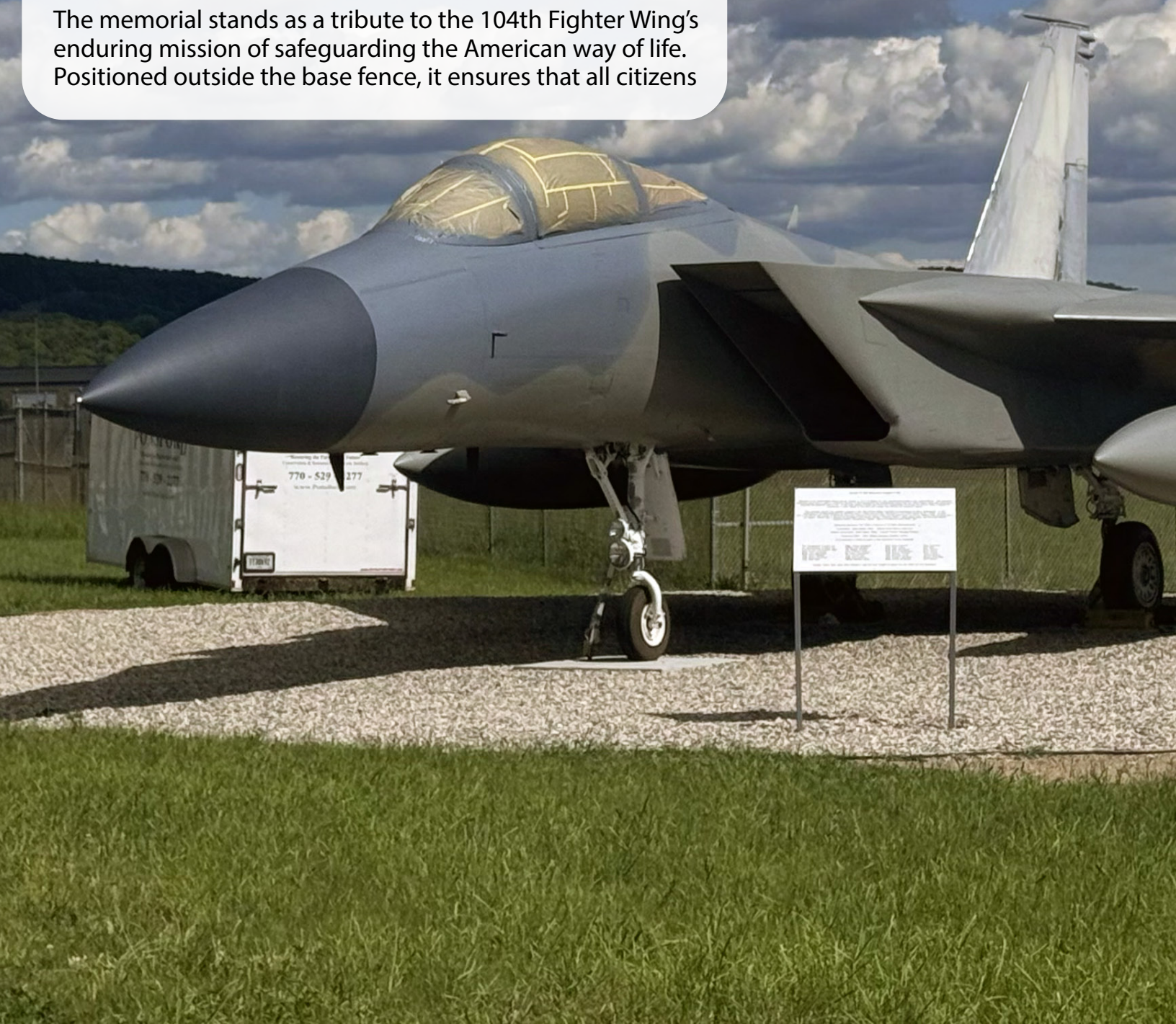
Following the restoration, the 104th Fighter Wing’s Aircraft Structural Maintenance team finalized the project by applying decals, including squadron patches, the minuteman logo, lightning bolts and the names of honored service members.



This particular F-15 was originally assigned to the 32nd Tactical Fighter Squadron in the Netherlands. It was transferred to the Massachusetts Air National Guard in 1989 and reassigned to the 104th Fighter Wing in 2008. This F-15 Eagle is recognized as the only undefeated aircraft of its kind, with a combat record of 104-0.

The names displayed on each side of the aircraft honor two fallen Barnestormers: Lt. Col. Morris "Moose" Fontenot, who died in 2014 in Shenandoah Valley, Virginia, and Chief Master Sgt. Patrick Shaughnessy, who died in 2006 at Barnes Air National Guard Base.

The memorial stands as a tribute to the 104th Fighter Wing's enduring mission of safeguarding the American way of life. Positioned outside the base fence, it ensures that all citizens





Eagles Over New England

The History of the
F-15 at Barnes
2007-2025



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book celebrating the
legacy of the 104th
Fighter Wing and its
iconic era with the F-15
Eagle.

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August 15, 2025

GOLF

TOURNAMENT

SCHEDULE

REGISTRATION START: 9:00 AM
SHOTGUN START: 10:00 AM
COCKTAIL HOUR: 3:00 PM
DINNER: 4:30 PM

PRICE: \$125

PER PERSON

INCL. LUNCH ON TURN AND DINNER

DINNER ONLY: \$30

Raffles, Contests,
Prizes, live music

Jim Kelley
@Jim-Kelley-19



venmo

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Sponsored by 104th FW Chief Council



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