

ON FIVE



Summer 2022

Commanders Corner

Bulldogs,

This has been an intense year of deployments for our Wing. This busy year was on the tail end of years of executing state, local and national level support for Covid and Civil Unrest. We also had our airmen caring for our Operation Enduring Freedom refugees throughout the U.S. While all of these missions were occurring, our multi-capable airmen were trying hard to tune out distractions and fine-tune our AFSC skills to deploy in support of our federal mission.

You had less time and less resources to train with than I can recollect in my 30 years in the ANG. You simultaneously executed more stateside missions in the last few years than we've done in the history of the Wing combined over our 74 years. Despite these challenges, we were able to deploy a historically high number of you around the world to execute our federal Title 10 missions. Roughly 500 deployers served in over ten countries from 120 to 180 days, along with sending 375 short tons of cargo to deployed locations and back to home station. Many of our RCP deployers ended up serving over 200 days due to COVID protocols and complications. Our major deployments this year were Air Expeditionary Force, Reserve Component Period, Operation Allies Welcome and Red Flag.

The demand for the National Guard has never been higher than it is today. Remember all that you've done and be proud to talk about how much you've contributed to the fight, wherever it was. It is important to share your experience to those in your sphere of influence. Here is a partial snapshot of the AEF contribution to the worldwide joint fight: Over 340 personnel, 12 of our F-16s and 750 short tons of cargo deployed to/from and around PSAB in support of operations in the middle east. Unlike previous deployments this AEF was nearly 120 days boots on ground. Over the past 15 years this has grown from 45 to 60 to 90 days. This is the first time we've deployed the AEF package for this long.

During the AEF deployment, the unit also executed our first ever agile combat employment (ACE) while simultaneously executing the AEF mission at PSAB. The ACE mission forward deployed with a small contingent of multi-capable airmen to Oman and Egypt for a few weeks at a time. During their ACE deployments they executed many firsts to include being refueled on the ground by a tanker aircraft. Multi-national and coalition training and interoperability were greatly enhanced along with significantly increased security in the Arabian Gulf.

Preceding the AEF we had another 90 support personnel deploy to six different countries supporting the Reserve Component Period (RCP) requirements. Many of our RCP folks were extended and dealt with a lot of adversity that arises as a result of crowd sourcing the talent we have to augment active Army and USAF units. They excelled in their mission, taskings and continued the Bulldog legacy of excellence. Thank you to all of our deployers and to everyone that enabled them to support our deployments. We couldn't do it without our great support network of family, friends, employers and the greatest mission enablers back at the Wing.

While roughly half of our Wing has been deployed we have been planning another deployment. After nearly a decade of concentrating on missions outside the US, the 148th is preparing to pick up a deployed Alert mission at Madison for the next two plus years as they begin their transition to the F-35. We are as busy as we've ever been and our Bulldogs continue to excel like we've always done. Change is inevitable and those that can adapt will continue to win. I'm very proud of this team and all you have accomplished over this deployment cycle and more! Your future is bright and I look forward to seeing the challenges you conquer next.



National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Launches 9-8-8

BY: 1st Lt. Amelia Leonard-Hanscom AFB, Mass.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline hotline is launching a new quick-dial option nationwide starting July 16.

Anyone located within the United States can call or text 9-8-8 any time of day, seven days a week to receive support for suicidal, mental health, and substance use crisis. The line will connect callers to trained crisis counselors.

People can also call or text 9-8-8 if worried about a loved one who may be in need of crisis support.

“What we want to do is make it as easy as possible for someone to reach help when they need it,” said Colleen Carr, director of the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention, in a 2022 interview. “It’s not a new network being established. It’s a new way to access that network in a way that’s easier to remember.”

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration website, callers will be routed to a local crisis center based on their area code. A local, trained counselor will listen, provide support and share resources, if needed. If there is no one available at a local crisis center, the caller will be re-routed to a national center for assistance.

If needed, the counselor on the call can activate a local mobile mental health crisis team to be dispatched to the caller to provide therapeutic interventions and make referrals for outpatient services or transportation for further evaluation, according to SAMHSA.

In the U.S., 45,979 people died by suicide in 2020. That is an average of one person every 11 minutes, according to the Centers for Disease Control website. In addition, 12.2 million adults thought about suicide, 3.2 million adults made a plan to die by suicide, and 1.2 million adults attempted suicide.

The creation of 9-8-8 not only helps everyone living in America, but it also has the potential to make a significant impact on the active military and veteran community.

“These mental health professionals are trained on helping the military population and addressing the unique issues they encounter,” said Kristin Wright, violence prevention integrator and suicide prevention program manager at Hanscom Air Force Base. “Veterans, service members and military families face distinctive challenges in multiple aspects of their lives.”

If a veteran calls 9-8-8, they have the additional option of being connected to the Veteran’s Crisis Line instead of a local crisis center. The Veteran’s Crisis Line is a free, confidential and secure resource for military members and veterans. Veteran suicide accounted for 6,261 suicides in 2019, which represented 13.7% of suicides among U.S. adults that year, according to data from the Veteran’s Administration.

Nearly 600 members of the military, among active duty, reserves and National Guard, died by suicide in 2020 according to data provided in the annual suicide report from the Department of Defense. The report also shows 202 military family members died by suicide in 2019.

“The findings are troubling. Suicide rates among our service members and military families are still too high, and the trends are not going in the right direction,” said Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin in a statement in September 2021.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Launches 9-8-8 (Cont.)

By calling 9-8-8 instead of 9-1-1 when a behavioral health or mental crisis may not be life-threatening, the response provided by public services, such as law enforcement and EMS, can be reserved for life-threatening emergencies requiring their assistance.

“We have a three-digit number for medical emergencies; we need a three-digit number for psychological emergencies — and that’s what this is,” said John Draper, executive director for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline in a 2022 interview.

The Federal Communication Commission is requiring all phone service providers in the U.S. to direct 9-8-8 calls and texts to the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline by July 16. However, the National Suicide Prevention Hotline number, 1-800-273-8255 will not go away. People will still receive the same services whether dialing 9-8-8 or 1-800-273-8255.

The new 9-8-8 quick-dial came about after The National Suicide Hotline Designation Act was passed by Congress and signed into law by former President Donald Trump in 2020.

“It can be taxing to remember the digits in a 1-800 number, especially during a crisis, but remembering a three-digit number is a simpler solution for everyone. The 9-8-8 rollout allows any individual to receive assistance for not only suicidal ideation and prevention, but for substance use and other mental health crises. It is the beginning of making mental health a priority and reducing the stigma surrounding mental health in our country,” said Wright.

If you are thinking about harming yourself or attempting suicide, tell someone who can help right away. Call your doctor’s office, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline or 9-1-1 for emergency services, or go to the nearest hospital emergency room.



Duluth leaves it's mark on PSAB

By Staff Sgt. Noah Tancer Published on Aug. 11, 2022.

PRINCE SULTAN AIR BASE, SAUDI ARABIA -- The U.S. Air National Guard's 148th Fighter Wing, deployed their 179th Fighter Squadron to AFCENT's area of responsibility in mid-April of 2022. Under the command of the 378th Air Expeditionary Wing, the 179th adopted the expeditionary moniker as they operated out of Prince Sultan Air Base in the heart of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

During their activation, the 179th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron flew over 730 sorties with more than 4,600 flight hours, conducted two Agile Combat Employment exercises with Partner Nation forces in Oman and Egypt, and demonstrated credible coalition airpower to enhance regional security.

"Our mission was to stabilize the region, advance multinational interoperability and deter potential adversaries," said Senior Master Sgt. Glen Flanagan, the senior enlisted member of 179th EFS's deployment. "Day in and day out we met the air-tasking order objectives almost flawlessly. To pull off two ACE missions in the middle of that and have the opportunity to operate how we train was awesome to see."

Back home in the northern U.S. climate of Duluth, Minnesota, the Guardsmen operate primarily during the day, focusing on training and alert operations in support of Homeland Defense missions. In the KSA they worked a high operations tempo, launching and recovering Block 50 F-16CM Fighting Falcons to deliver safe and effective combat airpower at all hours of the day or night.

"At PSAB our focus was on the mission," said Flanagan. "We took on more risk because there were real adversaries to deal with. So it was a pretty intense assignment the whole time they were up there."

While the fighter pilots forged partnerships and deterred aggressors in the air, the Guardsmen on the ground enhanced intratheater interoperability.

"Having some of our specialists learn how to be a crew chief and doing those functions well was really good to see," said Flanagan. "We also had a couple of different groups come down from the 379th out of Al Udeid. We trained their weapons guys on how to do integrated combat turns on F-16s and their crew chiefs how to do hot pit refueling."

The joint base multi-capability training conducted by Duluth has increased fighter sortie range and longevity throughout the AOR as the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing in Qatar now has Airmen capable of reloading and refueling F-16s still running for quick turn take-offs.

"We had a high number of first-time deployers and personnel in leadership positions this deployment," said Flanagan. "We relied on them to perform the way we trained them and they came through."

The 179th EFS has since redeployed home, replaced by the 79th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron from Shaw Air Force Base, South Carolina.



RCP Deployment - 2021-2022



Bulldogs did not have a “White Christmas” at the 380th Air Expeditionary Wing.



Defenders from the 148th Security Forces Squadron pose for a photo while deployed to the 409th Air Expeditionary Group, Air Base 201, Niger, Africa.



A soldier from the Nigerien Armed Forces disarms explosive ordnance assisted by 148th Explosive Ordnance Disposal specialist, TSgt Jack Thibodeau (in civilian clothes), who was assigned to the 409th Air Expeditionary Group, Niger, Africa May 19, 2022. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Chloe Ochs)



SSgt Lexi Smalley deployed to the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing as the PERSCO Customer Support NCOIC



Senator Amy Klobuchar met with Minnesota Airmen in February while at the 380th Air Expeditionary Wing.



148th Fighter Wing Tech Sgt. John Redfield, deployed to the 332d Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, emergency management incident commander, uses binoculars to better identify what type of hazardous material during a hazardous materials training exercise Southwest Asia March 24, 2022. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Christopher Parr)

AVI- 2022 Photos by: SMSgt. Glen Flanagan and MSgt. Tom Krob



Suzi Hartwick selected as new Airman Family Readiness Programs Manager

By: Audra Flanagan

Suzi Hartwick began her journey supporting service members and their families eight years ago. “As a teacher and the spouse of a service member, who had just finished our first deployment, I wanted to know if there was something more, we as teachers, could do to support children of service members in our classrooms,” said Hartwick. As a result, “I reached out to the Airmen and Family Readiness Programs Manager at the time, who connected me with the National Guard Youth and Family Programs Manager for the state of Minnesota,” she added. Soon afterward, she started Proctor’s Military Kids Club program with her cousin, retired Master Sgt. Jill Miller.



After starting the Military Kids Club program, Hartwick started a new adventure as a Key Volunteer where she helped communicate with military families in Maintenance during deployment. Hartwick, the wife of Master Sgt. Sterling Hartwick, was often seen planning family events and volunteering to support deployment departure and returns. She was so active as a Key Volunteer, she was honored by the Air National Guard as the 2016 Key Spouse of the Year.

“Suzi’s years of experience working as a Key Spouse made her a natural candidate for the position,” said Capt. Liz Horngren, Director of Personnel. “She has already developed relationships with unit members and their families,” Horngren added.

The Air National Guard Family Readiness provides assistance guidance and support that enhances the quality of life for service members and their families during peacetime and deployment. This includes personal, financial, family and community readiness, deployment cycle support, crisis intervention, transition assistant, outreach, life skills education and volunteer program management.

Hartwick has outlined a few specific goals for his first year in the position:

1. Identify the needs of service members and families.
2. Grow the Key Volunteer Program.
3. Build up the existing community outreach and support for service members and families.

If you or someone you know could benefit from meeting with the new Airman and Family Readiness Program manager or would like to volunteer as a Key Spouse, please reach out to Suzi.

Suzi Hartwick
(218) 788-7833

Suzanne.hartwick@us.af.mil

Wing App – 148th FW Airman and Family Readiness: Group Code 148af

148th Fighter Wing 2nd Annual Career Fair



The 148th Fighter Wing hosted its 2nd Annual Career Fair on Wednesday, June 22nd, 2022. The low-pressure event allowed potential applicants and their families to view equipment, talk with personnel and learn more about the diverse careers at the 148th Fighter Wing.

STARBASE Celebrates Grand Opening



STARBASE Minnesota Duluth held its expansion celebration today at the 148th Fighter Wing. In 2017, STARBASE broke ground on a new state of the art facility that doubled its classroom size. STARBASE has been using the new facility for the last two academic years but did not host a grand opening event due to COVID. Today, Col Grayson, STARBASE Board members, sponsors, Duluth Mayor Emily Larson, 148th members, former STARBASE students and volunteers gathered to celebrate the partnerships that came together to build this learning facility.

148th Fighter Wing Openings

- *Airfield Management Apprentice
- *Network Systems Operations Apprentice
- *Cyber Security Apprentice
- *Client Systems Apprentice
- *Knowledge Operations
- *Weather Apprentice
- *Avionics test station and components
- *Aerospace propulsion
- *Aerospace Ground Equipment Apprentice
- *Aircraft Electrical and Environmental Systems Apprentice
- *Fuels Apprentice
- *Logistics Plans
- *Maintenance Management Production Apprentice
- *Vehicle Operator/Dispatcher Apprentice
- *Munitions Systems Apprentice
- *Aircraft Armament Systems Apprentice
- *Water and Fuel Systems Maintenance Apprentice
- *Operations Management Apprentice
- *Explosive Ordnance Disposal Apprentice

Questions and referrals can be sent to MSgt Denise Owen, TSgt Casey Underdahl or TSgt Chris Armstrong
Recruiting Office: 218-788-7818

William A Irvin fun Run - 2022



The staff at Grandma's Marathon sent t-shirts and socks to the 378th Air Expeditionary Wing to host a remote William A. Irvin 5K fun run for our deployed aviation package members. Approximately 100 members ran on June 12, 2022.

The fastest finishers were: **1st Place** – Staff Sgt. Paul Shol (AMXS),
2nd Place – Staff Sgt. Jon Laughlin (LRS)
3rd Place – Staff Sgt. Nick Johnson (AMXS)

June- Egypt



A team of F-16s traveled to Egypt in June where they trained with the Egyptian air force during exercise Agile Phoenix 22. The exercise focused on regional security and enhancing Agile Combat Employment.

Accurate Test 22: tests US, Oman air forces Agile Combat Employment capabilities

By Capt. Melissa Heintz, 86th Air Expeditionary Wing



THUMRAIT AIR BASE, OMAN – Airmen from 9th Air Force (U.S. Air Forces Central) and the Royal Air Force of Oman participated in Accurate Test 22 at Thumrait Air Base, Oman, May 15 – 19, 2022. AT-22 is an Agile Combat Employment military training exercise that improves proficiency, as well as increases integration between US and Omani military forces.

“AFCENT is committed to working with our regional allies and partners and supporting integrated theater security cooperation events,” said AT-22 Detachment Commander Col. Erik Johnson. “AT-22 provided our multi-capable Airmen with the opportunity to exchange information, techniques, tactics and procedures with our Omani partners to meet the demands and challenges of a rapidly changing, complex and dynamic area of responsibility.”

AT-22 focused on the bilateral ability to share information, conduct command and control operations, counter unmanned aerial system threats, and perform close air support and aerial refueling with assets that included U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcons, KC-135 Stratotankers and a C-130J Super Hercules aircraft, along with RAFO F-16 Fighting Falcons, Eurofighter Typhoons, BAE System Hawks, C-130J Super Hercules and NH90 aircraft.



Accurate Test-22 is an ACE exercise that recurs every two years and is intended to strengthen military-to-military relationships, encourage the exchange of tactics, techniques and procedures, improve combined tactical air operations, enhance interoperability of forces and equipment, and promote regional security of the Arabian Gulf.

The 2nd Annual commander's Fishing Tournament

The 2nd Annual Commander's Fishing Tournament was held on the St. Louis River on June 17th, 2022. The biggest walleye photo and release contest featured 20 people.

Top honors go to: **1st Place** – Gavin Gimpel (son of MSgt Grant Gimpel) 26”
2nd Place – SMSgt Brian Brown 25.75”
3rd Place – Pat Walsh 25”



Around the Base

