

119th FIGHTER WING



LINEAGE

119th Fighter Group (Air Defense)
119th Fighter Group (Air Defense)
119th Fighter Interceptor Group
119th Fighter Wing
119th Wing

STATIONS

Fargo, ND

ASSIGNMENTS

WEAPON SYSTEMS

Mission Aircraft

Support Aircraft

C-130B

COMMANDERS

Homer Goebel
Maj Robert M. Johnson
Col Alexander MacDonald, Feb 1968
Col Robert Becklund, #2007
Colonel Richard J. Utecht Jan 2001
Col Michael J. Haugen June 1996 - April 1999
Col Ricky D. Gibney, 2009
Col. Kent R. Olson March 2013
Col Robert Becklund

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

In the spring of 1956, the North Dakota Air National Guard reorganized under the Air Defense structure. The new organizational structure provided the 119th Fighter Group with subordinate units which included the 178th FIS, the 119th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, the 119th Air Base Squadron, and the 119th USAF Dispensary. In a short period of time the units were manned at 98% strength with over 820 men assigned.

Mostly Happy in North Dakota: The Air Force has formally assigned a new flying mission to the North Dakota Air National Guard's Happy Hooligans, cementing an agreement the service made with the state's Congressional delegation that will put C-27 with the Hooligans in addition to their new unmanned aerial vehicle mission. In a joint release July 29, Sen. Byron Dorgan (D) called the news a "strong statement" that USAF intends to have the unit "keep playing a central role in military operations around the world." Between now and the time the Hooligans can expect to begin receiving the new C-27, the unit is flying C-21. Sen. Kent Conrad (D) noted that the unit's airmen "have long been recognized as some of the finest pilots anywhere in the world," and added, "I applaud the Air Force's commitment to keeping the Hooligans in the air, flying vital missions." The unit, now known as the 119th Wing, had flown various fighter aircraft for more than 50 years until stripped of its F-16s by BRAC 2005. Both Dorgan and Conrad met separately on July 29 with Acting Air Force Secretary Michael Donley to discuss the USAF vision for North Dakota bases, including plans to activate an additional B-52 squadron at Minot Air Force Base and assign the new tanker to Grand Forks Air Force Base, in addition to its new UAV mission.

C-21s bound for the 119th Fighter Wing, Hector Arpt., N.D., arrived in Fargo Jan. 10. Personnel have been training for the last several years to prepare for the new mission. The C-21 is a bridge mission until about 2010, when the unit is expected to take on the Joint Cargo Aircraft. The 119th will also be receiving Predator unmanned aerial vehicles as their fighters go to other units or are retired. 2007

The Air National Guard's three operational MQ-1 units in Arizona, California, and North Dakota are providing at least seven overseas combat air patrols around the clock for operations in Southwest Asia. Under the Air Force's initial plans for this new Air Guard mission, each ANG unit would have flown one CAP, but increasing demand (see above) for the Predator's dual long-

loiter reconnaissance and attack capability has led the Air Force to increase the Predator workload, put every available UAV pilot at a console, and up training. That has prompted, for instance, Lt. Col. Rick Gibney, commander of the North Dakota ANG's 178th Reconnaissance Squadron in Fargo, to put himself back in the MQ-1 aircrew rotation so that the other pilots in his squadron can have some time off. According to Col. Robert Becklund, commander of the NDANG's 119th Wing, which oversees the Predator operations, some two-thirds of his wing's former F-16 pilots opted to retrain for the UAV role. Despite the hectic pace and not flying in an actual cockpit, Becklund said, "We know that Predator is critical to the nation's defense." The 178th RS flew its first CAP in June 2007 and added a second earlier this year. The California ANG's 196th RS flew the Air Guard's first Predator CAP in 2006 and now maintains three CAPs from its March ARB, Calif., facility. The Arizona ANG's 214th Recon Group began flying CAPs in July 2007.

7/3/2007 - FARGO, N.D. (AFPN) - Members of the 119th Wing flew its first unmanned aircraft system mission as an MQ-1 Predator flew July 2 from Fargo. Airmen of the North Dakota Air National Guard squadron is flying the Predator after converting in January to new missions of unmanned aircraft and the C-21 cargo aircraft. The Predator is a medium-altitude, long-endurance, remotely piloted aircraft primarily used for interdiction and reconnaissance. The 119th Wing converted from the F-16 Fighting Falcon jet mission to Predators and C-21s. The C-21 is an interim aircraft leading up to the joint cargo aircraft, expected to be available by 2011. "This is an example of how truly incredible the members of the North Dakota National Guard are," said North Dakota Gov. John Hoeven. "Our Soldiers and Airmen continue to make significant contributions on the frontlines in Iraq and Afghanistan, and now they are able to do it right from Fargo." "This week marks the beginning of a new era and an exciting future for the North Dakota Air National Guard. The 119th Wing is at the forefront of future unmanned aircraft systems," said North Dakota National Guard Adjutant General Army Maj. Gen. David A. Sprynczynatyk. "The hard work and dedication of the Happy Hooligans have made this a very successful transition. The 119th Wing is leading the way and will stay relevant for years to come." "The North Dakota Air National Guard has flown fighters for 60 years, but now, we're bringing all of the skills from the fighter mission into the Predator mission," said Col. Robert Becklund, the 119th Wing commander. "This is a dramatic and cultural change for our unit and we're proud to be a part of this new and exciting mission." Members of the wing have been training for the new positions of the Predator mission. "It is great to be a part of this air and space power mission," said Lt. Col. Rick Gibney, the commander the reconnaissance squadron. "It is exciting and rewarding to be a part of this mission that involves the war on terrorism, homeland security and domestic contingencies."

Yankees Replace Hooligans: Airmen of the Connecticut Air National Guard's 103rd Airlift Wing, the Flying Yankees, at Bradley ANG Base in East Granby left last month on a deployment to Southwest Asia, the unit's first overseas stint with its new C-21 transports. The Connecticut Air Guardsmen, all of whom volunteered for the two-month tour, relieved members of the North Dakota ANG's 119th Wing, the Happy Hooligans, who spent two months performing their own inaugural C-21 rotation in the combat theater. Just as the 119th Wing did, the 103rd AW dispatched its own mechanics with the C-21s from its 118th Airlift Squadron and is not relying on contractors in theater to keep these aircraft flying. "We've proven that we can effectively provide maintenance at home station and now have the opportunity to demonstrate our

capabilities in a deployed location," said Lt. Col. Jerry McDonald, commander of the 103rd Maintenance Group One Notch in the Belt: Members of the North Dakota Air National Guard's 119th Wing, the "Happy Hooligans," on July 27 completed the final sortie of their first rotation in the combat theater with their C-21. "It's the first time the Happy Hooligan tail flash has flown in combat," said 1st Lt. Lee Teigen, one of the C-21 pilots. These Air Guardsmen carried out more than 200 sorties during 90 missions, moving more than 400 persons during this two-month tour, during which they operated from an air base in Southwest Asia as part of the 379th Expeditionary Operations Group. "One of the interesting things about flying into Afghanistan is seeing the buildup of troops and resources in the country," said Maj. Caleb Christopherson, a C-21 pilot from the wing's 177th Airlift Squadron. The Happy Hooligans have flown the C-21 since 2006. The wing, which is based at Hector International Airport, in Fargo, N.D., relinquished the last of its F-16s in 2007 courtesy of BRAC 2005.

In another unprecedented win, the N.D. Air National Guard's 119th Wing has again been named one of the best in the nation. The Wing was presented with the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award at the N.D. Air National Guard base in Fargo, N.D., Aug. 6. It is the 14th time the unit has taken home the award, a nearly unheard of feat with other units earning an average of three to five such designations. Each year, the 119th Wing competes with similar units across the nation for the distinction, and only four out of 31 units earn the honor annually. "Having witnessed all of your accomplishments, I'm not surprised to be here again today to present the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award," said Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, North Dakota adjutant general. "Your flying record alone is outstanding, having surpassed 206,000 flying hours in 2010, and I know you've grown that even more this year." The Air Force Outstanding Unit Award is presented to units that have made achievements of national or international significance, including successful involvement with combat and military operations or exposure to hostile actions by an opposing foreign force. Among the many accomplishments cited in the 119th Wing receiving the award for the 2010 fiscal year are its combat and support operations for Air Combat Command, Air Mobility Command and Air Force Global Strike Command. During 2010, 36 of North Dakota's citizen-Airmen deployed in support of the Global War on Terrorism, homeland defense missions and stateside emergency support. The 119th Wing also extended its exemplary flying record to more than 38 years encompassing 206,667 flying hours and 108,811 mishap-free sorties. Additionally, the 177th Airlift Squadron was named the 2009 Joint Operational Support Airlift Squadron of the Year while the Minot-based 219th Security Forces Squadron became the first unit to receive nuclear certification for securing Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles. Gov. Jack Dalrymple, Sprynczynatyk and Col. Rick Gibney, 119th Wing commander, spoke at the ceremony and placed a streamer on the unit flag to signify the accomplishment. All unit members will receive the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award ribbon to wear on their dress uniforms, as well, and the 14th such ribbon will be added to 119th Wing aircraft. The 119th Wing earned the same honor in 1973, 1974, 1979, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2010. 2011 Above, Gov. Jack Dalrymple presents the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award plaque to Col. Rick Gibney, 119th Wing commander, as Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, N.D. adjutant general, stands by his side at the N.D. Air National Guard, Fargo, N.D., Aug. 6. Below, Sprynczynatyk, left, places an Outstanding Unit Award streamer on the 119th Wing flag as Gibney lowers the flag into place while Brig. Gen. Cecil "Bud" Hensel, N.D. National Guard Joint Force Headquarters air component commander,

center, and Chief Master Sgt. David Harmon, 119th Wing command chief, far right, look on.
2011

VT-29D 53-3528 of the 119th. FIG, North Dakota ANG, in the grey and white scheme.

An electrical system failure led to the crash of an MQ-1B Predator remotely piloted aircraft during a mission over Afghanistan last August, announced Air Combat Command. The RPA switched to battery power after a dual alternator failure crippled its main electrical power source during the Aug. 22, 2012, sortie, states ACC's Jan. 10 release summarizing the findings in the report from the command's abbreviated accident investigation board. The Predator continued flying despite the malfunction, but its onboard recovery system failed to reboot the electrical system and controllers operating from Creech AFB, Nev., and Fargo ANGB, N.D., twice lost contact with the RPA before launch and recovery controllers in theater were able to take over. However, the stateside aircrews failed to follow the battery-conservation checklist, so the aircraft ran out of power and crashed short of the runway despite the efforts of the local controllers, according to the release. The Predator and a single Hellfire missile were destroyed in the incident, for an estimated loss of \$4.6 million. 2013

5/20/2009 - **119th WING PHOTO RELEASE: -- 090520-F-0681L-020:** Maj. Jason Newham, of the 177th Airlift Squadron, North Dakota Air National Guard does a pre-flight inspection of a C-21 at the North Dakota Air National Guard May 20, Fargo, N.D. This is the first time that the North Dakota Air National Guard C-21s have deployed to southwest Asia in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The Airmen will be supporting the mission in alternating shifts throughout the summer. The 119th Wing began flying the C-21 Lear Jets after the unit lost their F-16 Fighting Falcons in January 2007. (DoD photo by Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp) (Released)

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Lt. Col. Rick Omang and 1 Lt. Gregory Ames, both of the 177th Airlift Squadron, North Dakota Air National Guard pilot a C-21 aircraft as they maneuver down the taxi-way prior to launch at Hector International Airport, Fargo, N.D. May 20. This is the first time that the North Dakota Air National Guard C-21s have deployed to southwest Asia in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The Airmen will be supporting the mission in alternating shifts throughout the summer. The 119th Wing began flying the C-21 Lear Jets after the unit lost their F-16 Fighting Falcons in January 2007.

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8/3/2009 - **SOUTHWEST ASIA** -- The Happy Hooligans, who operate C-21 missions across U.S. Central Command's area of responsibility, completed the final combat sortie of their rotation here July 27. This marks the completion of the first deployment into a combat zone for the North Dakota Air National Guard. The Hooligans, officially the 177th Airlift Squadron and part of the 119th Wing, transported more than 400 servicemembers during their two-month-long rotation in theater. They accomplished this by flying more than 200 sorties during 90 missions, as part of the 379th Expeditionary Operations Group. "A third of the time we haul DVs around and the other portion of the time we're flying around the worker bees," said Lt. Col. Rick Omang, 379th Expeditionary Operations Group C-21 pilot and squadron commander. The Happy Hooligans have flown the C-21 since 2006. The squadron, based at Hector International Airport, in Fargo, N.D., picked up the executive transport and homeland defense mission following recommendations from the 2005 base realignment and closure commission. "It's the first time the Happy Hooligan tail flash has flown in combat," said 1st Lt. Lee Teigen, 379th EOG C-21 pilot. The squadron traces its origin back to 1947, when it began operations in the F-51D. The Hooligans were mobilized on April 1, 1951, duty during the Korean conflict for bomber escort duty at Moody AFB, Ga. Throughout their history they have flown the F-51D, F-94, F-89, F-102, F-101, F-4 and F-16. "Yet this is the first aircraft we have ever flown into combat," added Captain Hayden, another squadron pilot, "which is interesting, to fly our combat Learjet into war." Squadron members are proud of the contributions they made and places they travelled while deployed. "As a primary source for DV airlift, we get to travel to quite a few different places," said Capt. Chris Hayden, 379th EOG C-21 pilot. During this deployment, the pilots supported the recent surge of servicemembers in Afghanistan and witnessed the continuing reconstruction efforts across the theater. "One of the interesting things about flying into Afghanistan is seeing the buildup of troops and resources in the country," said Maj. Caleb Christopherson, 379th EOG C-21 pilot. "A lot of work is going into rebuilding the country which is (evident) each time we fly somewhere." For Major Christopherson, this deployment gave him a different perspective than he had from his last tour here. "Before, when I was deployed as a tanker pilot, I never got to set foot on the ground," said Major Christopherson. "But as a C-21 pilot, I get to interact with the soldiers on the ground and see the places that we're supporting."

Flying the C-21 in contingency operations seems like a natural fit to the pilots, even with the special considerations of weather and terrain. "The heat and altitude play a huge factor for us," said 1st Lt. Ed Crary, 379th EOG C-21 pilot. "We also have to take into account the airfield tactical situations and procedures when landing on certain airstrips. Taking all that into account, it's a pretty capable aircraft to fly over here." As the Happy Hooligans wrap up their deployment here, a pilot reflected on one of the best reasons for serving in a deployed location: helping out fellow servicemembers. It's nice to give people a ride who have been to who knows where for who knows how long. Getting them where they need to go or on their way home is one of the most gratifying things about this deployment, Major Christopherson said. Displaying the incredible range of contributions made by Airmen from the Air National Guard both in the United States and abroad, many of the squadron's members recall filling sandbags to protect Fargo, N.D., from devastating floods prior to deploying here to support a war-time mission. "It's interesting how in a few months time, we have gone from sand to sand," said Captain Hayden. "Being here allowed us a better appreciation for what we have and I will be happy to get back home."

3/10/2010 - **Fargo, N.D.** -- A prominent Department of Defense award was recently bestowed on the North Dakota Air National Guard. The Happy Hooligans' 177th Airlift Squadron received the 2009 Joint Operational Support Airlift Center (JOSAC) Squadron of the Year award for the U.S. Air Force in the small aircraft category. "This is a prestigious award and speaks volumes about the talents and abilities of the Happy Hooligans. These Airmen were the best in the world when they flew fighters, and now, after only a couple of years into their new mission of the C-21 Lear Jet, they have once again proven that they are the best in the nation," said N.D. Gov. John Hoeven. JOSAC is the airlift branch of the U.S. Transportation Command, headquartered at Scott Air Force Base, Ill, that specializes in air transportation of senior defense officials within the continental U.S. Currently, 89 units support JOSAC, with the Happy Hooligans being one of them. Units are comprised of aircraft squadrons from all branches, to include the Marine Corps, Army, Navy and Air Force. "The Happy Hooligans continue to excel in all their missions," said Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, N.D. adjutant general. "The 119th Wing, through a multitude of aircraft, continues to demonstrate superior performance worthy of Department of Defense recognition. These Airmen ensure that the North Dakota National Guard leads the way in excellence for the entire nation." After the Happy Hooligans ended their 60-year fighter mission in January 2007, they started the new mission of the C-21A Lear Jet. In 2008 they began supporting missions for JOSAC, providing airlift to dignitaries all over the U.S. "JOSAC is a unique mission for us because our pilots get to interact with so many individuals on a daily basis. You can be sure that the Happy Hooligans and the great state of North Dakota are recognized by our customers," said Lt. Col. Rick Omang, 177th Airlift Squadron commander. The Happy Hooligans have been in the lead since October 2009 for the number of missions they have flown for JOSAC. From October to February, they flew 997 hours, which is 141 hours more than any other unit in their category flying for JOSAC in the nation. "Our customers often request us to fly for them because we keep our aircraft in excellent condition, we're well-trained at what we do, and we treat our passengers with the Midwest hospitality that the Happy Hooligans are known for," said Omang. In a letter announcing the JOSAC Squadron of the Year award, Navy Capt. Peter R. Davenport, chief of JOSAC, stated, "The 177th Airlift Squadron's dedication and professionalism set the mark for all other C-21 units in the Department of Defense. We sincerely appreciate the superior effort of your Happy Hooligans, crews and

support personnel alike, while performing the OSA (operational support airlift) mission."

The N.D. Air Guard has embraced the C-21 mission and made it their own. The Happy Hooligans made Air Force history by creating a military maintenance program for the C-21 aircraft at the 119th Wing. This was the first of its kind program for the entire Air Force since the maintenance of C-21s had previously been done by civilian contractors. Because of this program, N.D. Airmen were able to keep their maintenance jobs while waiting for the new C-27J Spartan aircraft mission that is expected to arrive in about 2012. In addition, last summer the Happy Hooligans deployed several of their C-21 Lear Jets, to include pilots and maintenance personnel, to Qatar, which was another first for the 119th Wing. Never before had the Happy Hooligans deployed their aircraft into a theater of war. Within two months of being deployed, they won 'Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Unit of the Month' in June 2009. The Happy Hooligans have been making a name for themselves from the start with the C-21 mission and they don't plan on stopping anytime soon, leaders say. "Regardless of what we're flying, whether it's the current mission of the C-21 or our future mission of the C-27, we will do everything we can to ensure that we are the best at it. That's what being a Happy Hooligan is all about," said Omang. "It's still early, but we're already ahead for the most JOSAC flying hours for March. Hopefully we'll keep it up and take the lead for the sixth month in a row." The JOSAC Squadron of the Year award will be formally presented at the N.D. National Guard Professional Development Workshop taking place at the Holiday Inn on Friday in the Great Hall at approximately 11 a.m. Distinguished visitors expected to attend the award presentation include N.D. Gov. John Hoeven; Lt. Gen. Harry M. Wyatt III, director of the Air National Guard; Lt. Gen. Robert R. Allardice, 18th Air Force commander at Scott Air Force Base; Maj. Gen. Raymond W. Carpenter, acting director of the Army National Guard; Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, N.D. adjutant general; and Brig. Gen. Patrick Martin, N.D. deputy adjutant general. For more information about this news release, please contact Penny Ripperger at 701-451-2194. Media is invited to attend the ceremony presentation. C-21A Lear Jet b-roll and high-resolution photographs are also available upon request.

FARGO, N.D. — For the first time in about 11 years, no North Dakota Air National Guard Airmen are deployed overseas. Last night, Capt. Nathan Lagred, with the 119th Medical Group, returned to Fargo from a nine-month deployment to Afghanistan. With his return, North Dakota Air Guardsmen begin a short break in overseas missions for the unit known as the Happy Hooligans. While leaders expect the hiatus to be brief, it offers time to pause and reflect on what the numerous overlapping deployments have meant for the North Dakota Airmen and their families. "Our Happy Hooligans have been serving with pride and distinction in the Global War on Terrorism, starting with some of the first missions on 9/11 and continuing through today," said Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, North Dakota adjutant general. "Through it all, their families have served, too. While challenging for our Guard families, these missions have made a major impact on our state, nation and world." Within hours of the terrorist attacks on America on Sept. 11, 2001, North Dakota Air Guardsmen were in the skies over Washington, D.C., providing a damage assessment of the Pentagon and patrolling other areas along the East Coast in an effort to prevent any other potential attacks. The alert missions continued around the clock for months to come. Before long, overseas missions began in earnest, too. In 2001, 688 North Dakota Air National Guardsmen mobilized stateside for 30 days or longer. Firefighters with the unit, which was the 119th Fighter Wing at that time, were the first to deploy overseas after 9/11,

leaving in January 2002 for Afghanistan. After six months there, they were sent to the Minot Air Force Base for another six months of active-duty service, rounding out a yearlong mobilization. Since 2001, about 2,400 North Dakota Air National Guard members have served in the Global War on Terrorism. Their roles varied, from coordinating security for Iraq's prime minister to helping establish the Iraqi Air Force. Some brought medical aid to coalition forces while others helped process the remains of fallen warriors on their way home for the last time. "We train our entire careers to practice in a combat setting, and there I was actually in a tent hospital," Capt. Karin Halverson recalled of her deployment to Iraq. "Our base took fire. We saw helicopters dropping off wounded all day long. And, I met a lot of amazing people." Other missions have included defusing bombs as explosive ordnance disposal technicians and providing fuel to the numerous aircraft in the area of operations. "I was there during the surge, and we were constantly breaking fuel consumption records," Chief Master Sgt. John Nordquist recalled of his time in Iraq. In 2009, the Guard's 177th Airlift Squadron deployed pilots, maintenance personnel and several of the unit's C-21 Lear jets to Qatar, marking the first time the North Dakota Air National Guard deployed aircraft to a theater of war. Their experience and dedication came through, and after just two months of performing the mission, North Dakota Airmen accepted the Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Unit of the Month Award in June 2009. "Our Airmen's duties have been varied and distinct," said Col. Rick Gibney, 119th Wing commander. "The nation knows when they need the best, that North Dakota will out-perform any expectations." Some Airmen have served time and time again; 108 North Dakota National Guard Airmen have served on five or more mobilizations exceeding 30 days since 9/11. Even today, as a break in Airmen overseas is observed, the missions continue. Airmen fly MQ-1 Predator remotely piloted aircraft that operate in other countries from here in North Dakota. Others maintain security of the nation's nuclear arsenal near Minot, N.D., while serving with the Guard's 219th Security Forces Squadron. Air Guardsmen remain on duty 24/7 in Fargo, as well, for security as well as aircraft and maintenance missions. Even when stateside, some celebrate holidays while on duty, sharing meals with their military "family" in a dining facility on base rather than with their own families at home. All Airmen know and expect the sacrifices that come with serving one's communities, state and nation. Of those serving today, 422 have enlisted since 9/11. The remaining members of the North Dakota Air National Guard — a force that exceeds 1,000 Airmen — have chosen to remain in uniform since that fateful day by extending their service contracts. As it dug into the process, the Air Guard learned to work with FAA technical data far less detailed than Air Force Technical Orders (TOs). It learned to blend original equipment manufacturer (OEM) service bulletins and FAA Airworthiness Directives into a system of Air Force publications. It found sources for technical data not available through the SPO or OEM (like brake component manuals and emergency avionics battery data) and created methods to ensure the data was current. It gained electronic versions of tech data to accommodate Air Force electronic tech data initiatives (see sidebar). This dynamic process continues to be monitored and refined. The Happy Hooligans created, from scratch and through conversations with engineers and Lear mechanics across the nation, the means of accomplishing Air Force-mandated processes never seen on a Learjet. Making an aircraft "Safe for Maintenance," for instance, grew from nothing to a training class and new tech data. Phase inspections were broken down into work cards, assigning shop areas of responsibility in comprehensive, detailed steps and constructed directly from OEM maintenance manuals. Thousands of pages were written, organized, reviewed, and published to meet Air Force requirements, training goals, and to clarify processes for maintainers. On the way, they found and corrected literally hundreds of technical data errors discovered in the FAA

approved maintenance publications, reporting both to tech data monitors at the SPO and at the OEM. The technicians determined many improved methods of conducting inspections and repairs, always with an eye toward safety first and cost savings when possible. And you know what? The process works ... well. To be sure, "Blue Suit" maintenance has been a success. Supported by a military maintenance team, the Happy Hooligans have excelled while operating in 20 countries on missions for Air Mobility Command, USCENTCOM (Middle East Operations), JOSAC (Domestic Airlift, including VIPs, humanitarian, and air ambulance) and the National Guard Bureau (NGB) in Washington, D.C. Evidence includes the 2009 JOSAC Unit of the Year Award, a record of 100 percent mission accomplishment while deployed in the Middle East, NGB Pilot Qualification Training for other C-21 units.

IRAQ (8/3/09) -- The "Happy Hooligans," who operate C-21 missions across U.S. Central Command's area of responsibility, completed the final combat sortie of their rotation here July 27. This marks the completion of the first deployment into a combat zone for the North Dakota Air National Guard. The Hooligans, officially the 177th Airlift Squadron and part of the 119th Wing, transported more than 400 service members during their two-month-long rotation in theater. They accomplished this by flying more than 200 sorties during 90 missions, as part of the 379th Expeditionary Operations Group. "A third of the time we haul DVs (distinguished visitors) around and the other portion of the time we're flying around the worker bees," said Lt. Col. Rick Omang, 379th Expeditionary Operations Group C-21 pilot and squadron commander. The Happy Hooligans have flown the C-21 since 2006. The squadron, based at Hector International Airport, Fargo, N.D., picked up the executive transport and homeland defense mission following recommendations from the 2005 base realignment and closure commission. "It's the first time the Happy Hooligan tail flash has flown in combat," said 1st Lt. Lee Teigen, 379th EOG, C-21 pilot. The squadron traces its origin back to 1947, when it began operations in the F-51D. The Hooligans were mobilized on April 1, 1951, during the Korean Conflict for bomber escort duty at Moody AFB, Ga. Throughout their history they have flown the F-51D, F-94, F-89, F-102, F-101, F-4 and F-16. "Yet this is the first aircraft we have ever flown into combat," added Capt. Hayden, another squadron pilot, "which is interesting, to fly our combat Learjet into war." Squadron members are proud of the contributions they made and places they travelled while deployed. "As a primary source for DV airlift, we get to travel to quite a few different places," said Hayden, 379th EOG, C-21 pilot. During this deployment, the pilots supported the recent surge of service members in Afghanistan and witnessed the continuing reconstruction efforts across the theater. "One of the interesting things about flying into Afghanistan is seeing the buildup of troops and resources in the country," said Maj. Caleb Christopherson, 379th EOG, C-21 pilot. "A lot of work is going into rebuilding the country which is [evident] each time we fly somewhere." For Christopherson, this deployment gave him a different perspective than he had from his last tour here. "Before, when I was deployed as a tanker pilot, I never got to set foot on the ground," said Christopherson. "But as a C-21 pilot, I get to interact with the Soldiers on the ground and see the places that we're supporting." Flying the C-21 in contingency operations seems like a natural fit to the pilots, even with the special considerations of weather and terrain. "The heat and altitude play a huge factor for us," said 1st Lt. Ed Crary, 379th EOG, C-21 pilot. "We also have to take into account the airfield tactical situations and procedures when landing on certain airstrips. Taking all that into account, it's a pretty capable aircraft to fly over here." As the Happy Hooligans wrap up their deployment here, a pilot reflected on one of the best reasons for serving in a deployed location: helping out fellow

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"It's interesting how in a few months time, we have gone from sand to sand," said Hayden. "Being here allowed us a better appreciation for what we have and I will be happy to get back home."

As of Jan. 4, the N.D. Air National Guard had 343 full-time members and 669 traditional members 142 officers and 870 enlisted, said Capt. Penny Ripperger, with 119th Wing Public Affairs.

The 119th Wing, better known as the "Happy Hooligans," flew fighter planes for many years. "We stopped flying the F-16s in January 2007," Ripperger said. "The day we flew the last F-16 off our base, it was also the 60th anniversary of us flying fighter aircraft so it has been quite a transition for us. We've flown other aircraft in the past, but it has always been fighter aircraft until we received our current mission," she said. The primary mission of the 119th Wing is the 177th Airlift Squadron with the C-21 Lear Jet, 178th Reconnaissance Squadron (MQ-1 Predator operations) and the 219th Security Forces Squadron which is at Minot Air Force Base.

N.D. Adjutant General Maj. Gen. David Spryncynatyk places a ribbon on the unit flag signifying the 119th Wing's award for Outstanding Unit for the 11th time Above, the 119th Wing has won the Hughes Trophy twice.

Possibly no other Air National Guard has a nickname as well known as the "Happy Hooligans." Where did that nickname come from? The North Dakota Air National Guard's 178th Fighter Squadron commander in the mid 1950's was Brig. Gen. Duane S. Larson (retired). Because of his fatherly instincts, (then major) Larson became known as "Pappy" to his entire squadron. His men were dubbed "Hooligans" for their mischievous antics. Locally, they became known as "Pappy and his Hooligans." Because of his striking resemblance to the Steve Canyon comic strip character, "Happy Easter," the squadron was soon known as "Happy and his Hooligans," and later shortened to the "Happy Hooligans" (around 1958). Soon everyone around the base was using the nickname "Happy Hooligans" to describe the squadron. According to unit lore, the name really took hold because of events at a 1950s summer camp at Volk Field. Legend has it the 178 Fighter Squadron had to march on the ramp to make up for the late night shenanigans of throwing all the "brass" out of bed after the club closed for the night. While marching on the ramp the next day with their 178th FS commander at their side, Maj. Duane Pappy Larson, the 119th Group Commander, Lt. Col. Marsh Johnson, called the Squadron a bunch of Hooligans to which someone answered "we might be Hooligans but we are happy Hooligans." In the early 1960's, the North Dakota Air National Guard was searching for a motto to set them apart from other units (similar to the Pittsburgh motto: "Have no fear, a Sam is near"). A contest was held to choose an official nickname; no names received topped "Happy Hooligans," so it was officially adopted as our unit's nickname. In 1964, during the ANG Rick's Trophy competition, "Happy

Hooligans” was painted on the unit’s F-89J aircraft. This was the first time it appeared on the aircraft, but since then, each North Dakota Air National Guard aircraft has carried that motto/logo prominently displayed on the tail. After our nickname gained national renown, the question was raised concerning a cartoon character bearing the same name. Some investigating turned up the following facts: The comic strip “Happy Hooligan” was created by Frederick Burr Opper and made its debut in Hearst’s Sunday comic sections in New York and San Francisco on March 26, 1900, and ran intermittently until 1932, when Happy Hooligan had to be abandoned by its creator because of his failing eyesight. Happy Hooligan was Fred Opper’s classic Irish tramp with a tin-can hat and distinctly ruddy nose. He was portrayed as the simple innocent whose impulsive undertakings nearly always landed him in the hands of the law. Despite his continued ill-luck, Hooligan lived up to his name by remaining always optimistic, and his enormous smile became a quick symbol of the new comic strip art form to millions of readers.

Welcome to the 119th Wing, home of the Happy Hooligans, North Dakota Air National Guard. This guide is intended to provide you with a look at our history and some interesting facts about our unit. Our Wing consists of the 177th Airlift Squadron, currently flying the C-21A, and the 178th Reconnaissance Squadron, currently flying the MQ-1 Predator UAS, both located at Hector Field in Fargo N.D.

The C-21A mission is multifaceted and includes the transport of distinguished visitors and space available passengers, aeromedical airlift, pilot seasoning and global readiness.

The C-21 is serving as a bridge mission until we receive the joint cargo aircraft mission. The primary mission of the MQ-1 Predator is conducting interdiction and armed reconnaissance against critical, perishable targets. The first Predator mission was flown remotely from our base in June 2007. The airmen of the 119th Wing are leading the way in intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and target acquisition. We hope that your visit to Fargo is interesting and informative. I am certain that not only will you experience the Midwest hospitality of North Dakota, but you will also see first-hand the hard work and Hooligan pride that our unit is known for.

ROBERT BECKLUND, Colonel, NDANG
Commander, 119th Wing
Our Flying Missions

The 119th Wing is comprised of two squadrons, the newly created 177th Airlift Squadron and the 178th Reconnaissance Squadron, formerly the 178th Fighter Squadron.

The 177th Airlift Squadron accomplishes several missions including Operational Support Airlift (OSA), transportation of distinguished visitors, and a responsive aeromedical airlift system to move eligible patients. The 178th Reconnaissance Squadron includes operations of the MQ-1 Predator. The MQ-1 Predator is a medium-altitude, long-endurance, remotely piloted aircraft. The MQ-1’s primary mission is interdiction and conducting armed reconnaissance against critical, perishable targets. When the MQ-1 is not actively pursuing its primary mission, it acts as the Joint Forces Air Component Commander-owned theater asset for reconnaissance, surveillance and target acquisition in support of the Joint Forces commander.

Left, A life-sized model of an MQ-1 Predator sits on the hanger floor at the North Dakota Air National Guard Jan. 16, 2007 signifying the beginning of the new mission for the 119th Wing.

Right, Maj. Jon R. Wutzke, 177th Airlift Squadron, pilots a North Dakota Air National Guard C-21 aircraft during a typical take-off at Hector International Airport, Fargo, N.D. Mar. 16.

The North Dakota Air National Guard officially became a National Guard on January 16, 1947, at Hector Airport, Fargo, North Dakota. The newly established Air National Guard units formed in the 1947 – 1949 period were commonly assigned the history and accomplishments of a deactivated World War II flying unit. The 367th Fighter Group, made up of the 392nd Fighter Squadron (FS), 393rd FS and 394th FS was one such unit. Known as the “The Dynamite Gang”, 367th Fighter Group pilots flew 14,175 combat sorties in P-38’s and P-47’s during WWII, destroying 432 enemy aircraft. The unit received two Presidential Unit Citations and two Belgium Army Order of the Day Citations.

The leading ace of the 367th Fighter Group, Capt. Larry (Scrappy) Blumer from Kindred, North Dakota, became known as the “Fastest Ace in the West”, when, as a member of the 393rd FS, he shot down five German fighters (FW 190’s) in fifteen minutes on August 25, 1944. Scrappy commanded the 393rd FS from November 10, 1944 until he completed his combat tour in mid January 1945. Upon inactivation of the 367th Fighter Group, the 178th Fighter Squadron, North Dakota Air National Guard, received the heritage of the 392nd Fighter Squadron, one of three fighter squadrons of the 367th Fighter Group. North Dakota Air National Guard members from left to right, Robert Olwin, Duane ‘Pappy’ Larson, and Thornton E. Becklund gather in front of a P-51 in 1953.

The first fighter aircraft was the P-51D “Mustang,” which the unit flew from February 1947 to 1954. The unit was called to active duty status in April of 1951 for the Korean War and assigned to Strategic Air Command at Moody AFB, Georgia in a bomber escort role. The unit was later transferred to George AFB, California in an air to ground and air to air role. On December 31, 1952 the unit was released from active duty and returned to Fargo, ND. The 178th, which left Fargo as the 178th Fighter-Bomber Squadron, became the 178th Fighter Interceptor Squadron and given an Air Defense Mission upon its return to Fargo in January of 1953. In September of 1953 the runway alert program began with two P-51’s on alert 14 hours a day. In 1954, the unit was assigned to the Air Defense Command and entered the jet age when the unit converted to the F-94 which it flew until 1958. Since then, the Hooligans have flown the F-89 “Scorpion” from 1958 to 1966, the F-102 “Delta Dagger” from 1966 to 1969, and the F-101 “Voodoo” from 1969-1977. Starting in 1977, the unit flew the F-4 “Phantom” until 1990 and the F-16 “Fighting Falcon” from 1990 to 2007. Since 1973, the 119th Fighter Wing has flown more than 115,000 hours in fighter aircraft without a Class A Mishap, unprecedented in any U. S. fighter unit. In Jan 2007, the unit officially retired the F-16 mission after 60 years of successful fighter jet missions. The 119th Wing now pilots C-21A aircraft and performs MQ-1 Predator operations.

The mission of the North Dakota Air National Guard is two-fold. Its state mission, under the command of the Governor, is to support state and local authorities in civil emergencies. Under the federal mission, the unit is available for mobilization and immediate integration into the U.S. Air Force. The unit has been tasked to perform its state mission on many occasions. Prominent

examples include Operation Haylift in 1949, providing relief to blizzard-bound farms and ranches, and more recently, Operation Snowball and Operation Good Neighbor in 1997, to combat unprecedented winter snowfall and spring flooding conditions throughout North Dakota. Federalization of the North Dakota Air National Guard occurred during the Korean Conflict, with the unit mobilized and ordered to active duty in 1951, returning to Fargo and state control in 1953. It also occurred following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 when hundreds of airmen were voluntarily recalled to active duty status for Operation Noble Eagle, under the North American Aerospace Defense Command and the “all States agreement.”

Air Defense alert has been a major part of the North Dakota Air National Guard’s tasking since September 1953. The unit provided alert coverage at Fargo, with either two or four aircraft continuously on status, until March 1990 when home station alert was discontinued. Other alert sites include March Air Reserve Base, California, and Kingsley Field, near Klamath Falls, Oregon. The most recent permanent alert detachment was at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia with 36 full-time personnel operating aircraft maintenance, munitions, supply, administrative and operational command responsibilities. The detachment closed in October 2006 due to the new C-21 mission of the North Dakota Air National Guard.

The first overseas deployment of the North Dakota Air Guard occurred in 1983, with six F-4s and 120 support personnel deploying to Keflavik, Iceland. Eight Russian TU-95 Bear bombers were intercepted by Hooligan pilots during the deployment. In 1986, the 119th Fighter Group became the first core unit to assume the USAF Zulu alert mission at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. Referred to as “Creek Klaxon,” the 119th and other Air Defense units stood continuous alert for one year providing air sovereignty in Europe for NATO. During Desert Storm, 107 Happy Hooligans were mobilized and deployed in support of operations at numerous CONUS locations. The C-130 support aircraft assigned to the North Dakota Air National Guard and aircrew also provided stateside airlift of crucial, war-related personnel and equipment to support Desert Storm. Most recently, after Hurricane Katrina destroyed the gulf coast, the 119th Fighter Wing answered the call for assistance, responding with less than forty-eight hours notice and deployed 64 personnel from the Civil Engineering Squadron, prepared 251.5 short tons of equipment and supplies and loaded three C-5A and one C-130H transport aircraft for deployment to Gulfport, Mississippi, to build and support the tent city required to house over 2,000 National Guard relief workers. The Services Flight also prepared over 210,000 meals over a 60 day period for the relief workers.

Happy Hooligans have a proud record of accomplishments over the years. Among the many unit awards, the Hughes Trophy and the USAF Daedalian Maintenance Trophy are special standouts, presented on the basis of an Air Force wide competition to the single most deserving unit. In 1994, the Hooligans won the Hughes Trophy for the second time. The only F-16 unit to win the award, the 119th is one of only two Air National Guard units to have captured the Hughes Trophy, and the only Air National Guard unit to win the award twice, winning it for the first time in 1975. In addition to the Hughes Trophy in 1975, the unit was also presented the USAF Daedalian Maintenance Trophy (which the unit has won twice). It was the first time the two awards were presented to the same unit, and the first time either of these trophies had been awarded to a Reserve Component unit. The 119th has performed impressively in the William Tell competition, a world-wide weapons meet at Tyndall AFB, Florida. The unit’s most recent

win occurred in October 1994. This was the third time the Hooligans had won the overall tournament, winning it in 1970 and 1972. The unit also won the F-4 division in 1986. The 119th has competed in the event a total of nine times, including the combined Air National Guard team in 1996, merging both F-15's and F-16's into a unified combat unit, drawn from the North Dakota and Oregon Air National Guard units. The 119th Wing has won the U.S. Air Force Outstanding Unit Award 11 times, most recently for continuing actions of Operation Noble Eagle, Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. The award is given for exceptionally meritorious service or outstanding achievement that clearly sets the recipient above and apart from similar units. In addition, the following are recent awards presented to the Hooligans: The John J. Pesch Flying safety award 6 times; the U.S. Air Force Flight Safety Award 26 times; the 1994 Winston P. Wilson Trophy for the most outstanding ANG unit with jet fighters or reconnaissance aircraft (the second time in the unit's history); the 1994 Air National Guard Supply Effectiveness Award for promoting maximum supply efficiency and outstanding supply activities; the 1994 William W. Spruance Safety Award for the Air National Guard unit which makes the most significant contributions towards accident prevention; the American Petroleum Institute Award three times for the Air National Guard's top fuels element in, 1995, 2002 and 2004; and an incredible flying safety record of 145,000 flight hours in fighters without a class A accident dating back over 33 years.

A C-21A aircraft arrived on Wednesday at the National Museum of the US Air Force at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, its new home. The now-retired aircraft will go on display in the museum's Southeast Asia war gallery starting this fall, states the museum's release. "The C-21 gives us the opportunity to better interpret the diversity of the Air Force's airlift mission," said Jack Hudson, museum director. "The popular airlift image is heavy-lift, large cargo aircraft, like the C-5 or C-17, but the C-21 represents the other end of the mission spectrum," he said. This aircraft, tail number 84-0064, was one of the first C-21s to enter the Air Force's inventory in the mid-1980s, according to the Aug. 28 release. The North Dakota Air National Guard's 119th Wing in Fargo operated it most recently. The aircraft served in Iraq and Afghanistan. Col. Kent Olson, 119th WG commander, piloted the C-21 on its flight to the museum. 2013

North Dakota Air Guard Bids Adieu to C-21A Members of the North Dakota Air National Guard's 119th Wing in Fargo bid farewell to their last C-21A as it flew to its new home, the National Museum of the US Air Force. Aircraft No. 84-0064 departed on Aug. 28, leaving the Happy Hooligans without a manned flying mission for the first time in the wing's 66-year history, according to the unit's release. This also makes North Dakota the only state whose Air Guard does not currently have a manned flying mission, states the release. The wing is transitioning to an intelligence mission, the details of which are still in the works. Meanwhile, "efforts continue to pursue a new mission that includes aircraft," states the release. The wing's first C-21 arrived in January 2007; it operated eight of them. The unit was preparing to switch to flying C-27J transports, but those plans fell through with the Air Force's decision to divest the C-27J fleet. 2013

Sources

Unit History. The Happy Hooligans. 119 FG. North Dakota Air National Guard: 1947-1977.