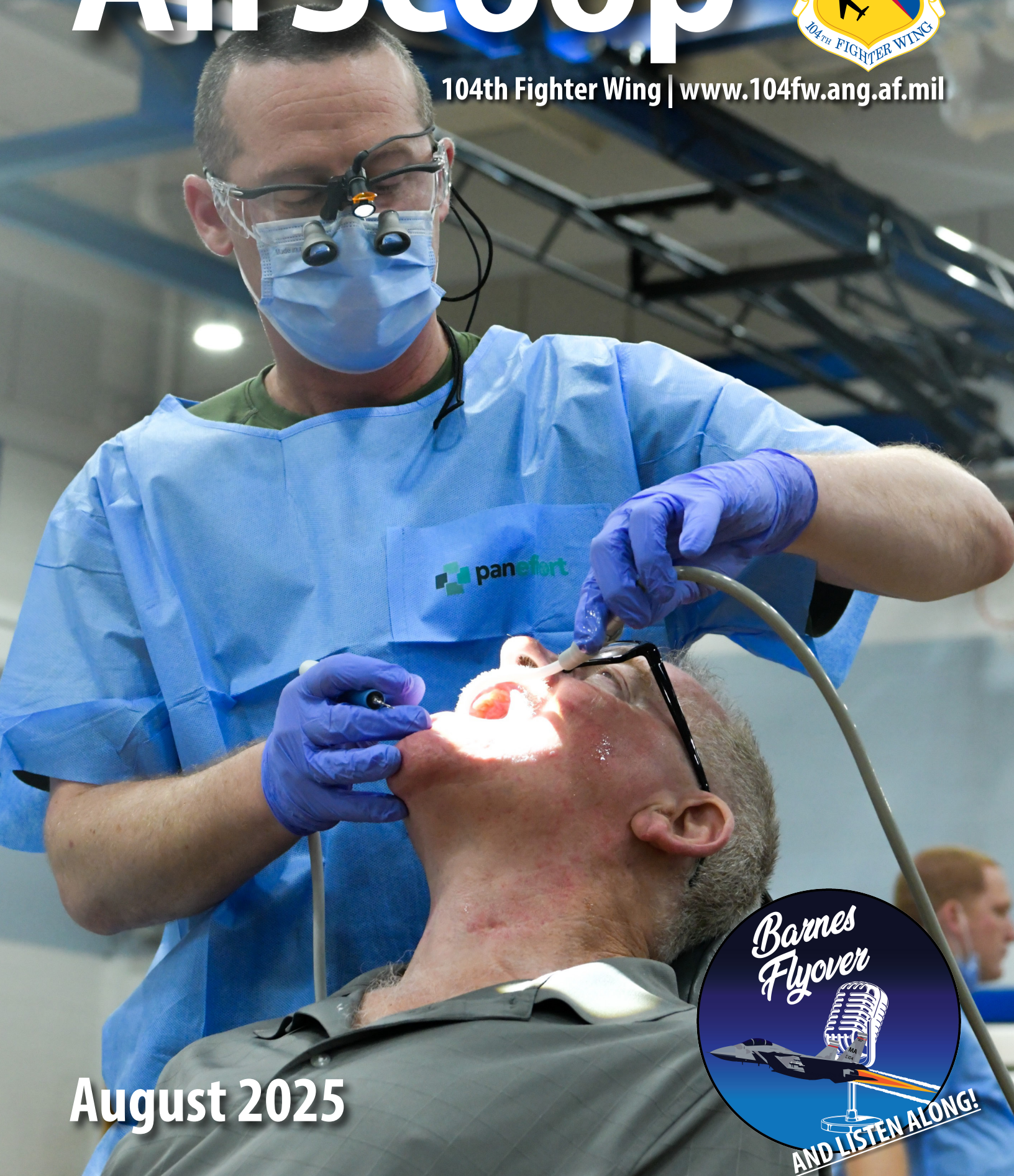


AirScoop



104th Fighter Wing | www.104fw.ang.af.mil



August 2025



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Massachusetts Air National Guard

104th Fighter Wing

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THIS PUBLICATION IS INTERACTIVE

CLICK OR TAP TO VISIT THE
FULL STORY ON DVIDS

TRY CLICKING ME



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@104thfighterwing

From the Command Team

Barnestormers,

We're already half-way through summer, and it is flying by! Typically, this time of year, between June and August drill, our DSGs have a couple month hiatus from military duty, and our full-time force takes advantage of leave opportunities and time with family. While command teams have done a great job ensuring our people seize the opportunity to catch our breath, invest in family, and enjoy the weather, the great work that our Barnes team is known for has continued without pause. Active divestment of the F-15C, the MDG and FSS Innovative Readiness Trainings, RCP deployments, Core Cadre assignments around the United States, and posturing for successful transition to F-35 operations have required tremendous discipline, focus, and commitment to our current mission, future mission, community, and each other. Here at Barnes, we see the great work we do as normal ops, and therefore neglect the opportunity to simply tell our folks, good job! So, that's what this quick article is.. An opportunity to acknowledge the work, commitment, and successes we have become so used to enjoying here at Barnes and say thank you to the men and women who make the magic happen.

Chief Gardner

Michael W. Gardner, Chief Master Sergeant, MA ANG
Command Chief, 104th Fighter Wing



A hand with a black beaded bracelet points at a medical monitor. The monitor displays a blue-toned eye scan with a red rectangular box highlighting a specific area. The background is dark and out of focus.

Operation Healthy Ellwood

STORY BY Staff. Sgt. John Rossi, 512th Airlift Wing

More than 160 joint service members from four branches and 33 different units came together to provide no-cost medical care to a local community while sharpening mission-essential skills as a part of the Operation Healthy Ellwood Innovative Readiness Training.

From July 23 to August 1, 2025, Operation Healthy Ellwood set up a clinic in Lincoln Junior Senior High School, offering medical, dental, optometry, veterinary and mental health care.

The mission saved the community more than \$1.2 million in fair market value costs after service members evaluated over 2,400 patients over ten days. The Naval Ophthalmic Readiness Activity team fabricated 1,056 eyeglasses. The pharmacy saw 300 patients and dispensed nearly \$7,000 worth of items.

Five years ago, a local hospital closed in Ellwood City, forcing residents to travel elsewhere for urgent medical care. U.S. Air Force Col. Nicole Hurley, the command nurse for Air Force Reserve Command, said she sprung into action to get her hometown the help it needed as soon as she could.

"We've been working on this mission for two years," said Hurley. "You have an idea of what it will be like, but then you see all of these amazing people doing such great things for the community, and I'm just happy to be here to witness it."

Judy Magill, an Ellwood City resident, said the operation was a relief for her small town.

"Ever since the hospital shut down, resources have been limited," said Magill. "An ambulance ride to the nearest hospital can take well over an hour. So events like this are amazing for our community."

Patients traveled from across the region to visit the clinic. Mary Kay Hagenbuch grew up in Ellwood City before moving to Florida, and said she came back to take her autistic brother to the clinic in hopes that the service members here would be able to connect with him.

"My sister, who is in the service, told me about the operation," said Hagenbuch. "She told me what an amazing opportunity this was, and not to miss out."

Hagenbuch said she met U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Patrick LaFond, 104th Medical Group physician assistant, who has a son with autism. He said after noticing Hagenbuch was distraught, he was able to relate to her through his own experiences and share resources to assist her and her brother.

"As the father of an autistic son, this was very important to me," said LaFond. "It makes me really proud to be here, and proud to serve."

LaFond introduced Hagenbuch and her brother to U.S. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Mark Warner, 4th Dental Battalion dentist, who made the patient feel comfortable enough to agree to dental care. Hagenbuch said that it was the connection to the providers that made all the difference.

"My brother told me very passionately he would never have anyone look in his mouth," said Hagenbuch. "This is a miracle. I am praising all of you for your kindness, your competence and your care in getting my brother one step further where I couldn't."

U.S. Air Force Maj. Zachary Callahan, the IRT officer-in-charge, praised the hard work of all service members involved in the operation, and told them their actions have made an impact on the community.

"You've shown that when we unite across units, branches and specialties, there's no limit to what we can achieve together," said Callahan. "Lives in this community are better today than they were when we first set foot here."





While the IRT mission is to provide key services to American communities, it's also about the training opportunities for the military to become mission-ready. Service members completed 869 tasks over 2,031 total training hours.

In order to simulate a real-world scenario involving local mission partners, Operation Healthy Ellwood orchestrated a Mass Casualty Incident. 41 service members, six local fire departments, two local emergency service agencies, seven local news outlets and more than 60 nursing students came together to accomplish the training event.

Chief Master Sgt. Timothy Mutti, 104th MDG noncommissioned officer in-charge of training, said that the skills developed on the IRT are key to developing service members.

"It's not just medical here, we have agencies like administration, services and logistics that also need this readiness training," said Mutti. "We're training them to be able to deploy and defend this country, because at the end of the day, we're all one team and we're going to work together."

Over the clinic's 10-day operating period, several local businesses in the area posted signs on their front doors stating they were closed due to volunteering at Operation Healthy Ellwood. A total of 116 volunteers assisted service members in a variety of roles for 209 hours.

Mutti, choking back tears, said the support from the local community was paramount to mission success.

"They fought for us to be here," said Mutti. "We can't do what we're doing here without the city of Ellwood."

[VIEW THE GALLERY HERE](#)

HEADLINES & HIGHLIGHTS

MAJOR GENERAL GEORGE W. KEEFE
LOGISTICS COMPLEX



KENYA AVIATION VISIT



ICT CAPSTONE EXERCISE



MED GROUP IRT

BARNESTORMER COMMUNITY



JULY 4TH CELEBRATION



STARFIRES GAME

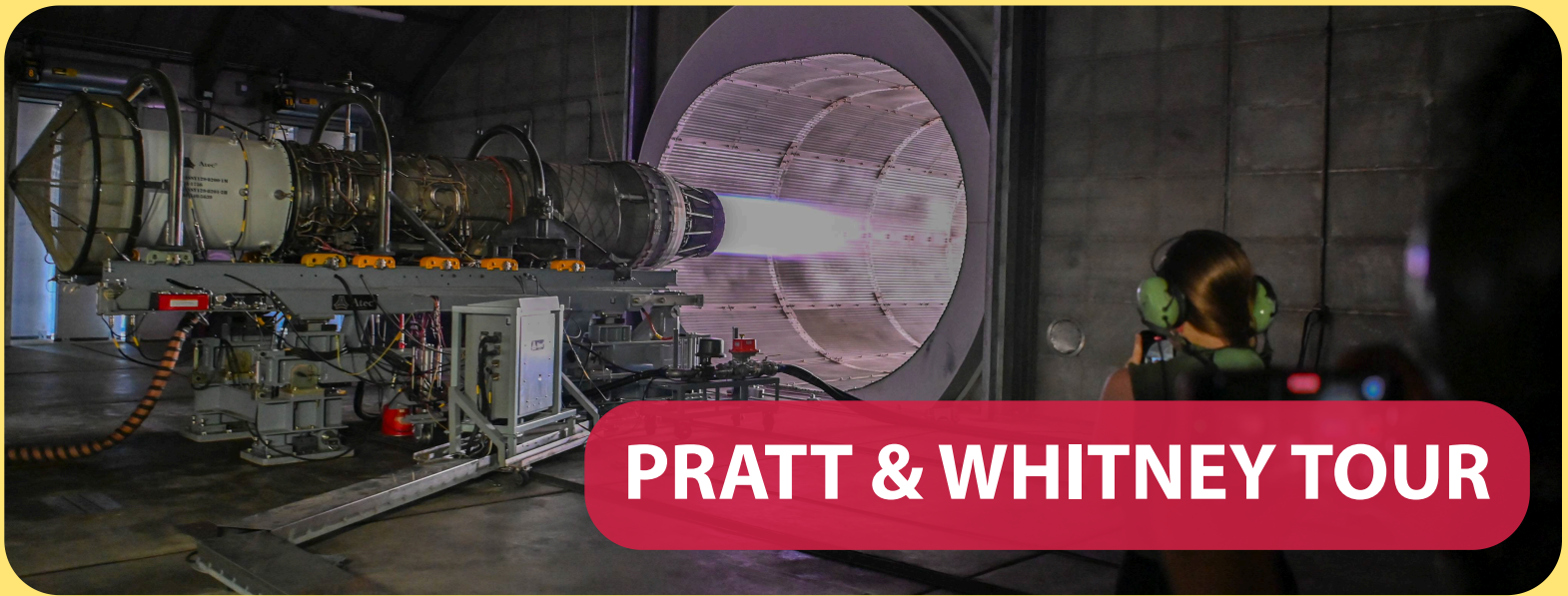


GOLF TOURNAMENT

BARNESTORMER COMMUNITY



INTERN PROGRAM



PRATT & WHITNEY TOUR



AFFF REMOVAL

CADRE'S CORNER

Happy August Drill!

Neither the heat nor a busy schedule can slow our student flight down. We are continuing to send off recruits!

Best wishes to our Barnestormers who are headed to BMT in August:

Alexis McNally
Hernandez Gonzalez
Jordan Wetherell
Savanah Chapman
Kylee Merchant
Joel Figueroa
Nicholas Stackhouse
Nicholas Jolicouer
Britto Magalhaes
Mackensi Goncalves

Mary NDwiga
Kyle Taylor
Jaden St Pierre
Bergeona Alcin
Sophia Strand
Thomas Nuesslein
Hermann Abalo
William Pramberger

Aim High!
SSgt Ryan Carvalho
SSgt Mykel Potter



PROMOTIONS

1st Lt. Capt. Vincent Zotto	MDG
MSgt. SMSgt. Andrew Fredette	CF
TSgt. MSgt. Tristan Flynn	MSG
TSgt. MSgt. John Kadlewicz	LRS
TSgt. MSgt. Jean Santiago Reyes	FSS
SSgt. TSgt. Brandon Ewing	LRS
SSgt. TSgt. Nadia Katana	FSS
SSgt. TSgt. Emily Heeter	MXS
SrA SSgt. Alexander Becker	AMXS
SrA SSgt. Andrew Newman	CES
A1C SrA Nealon Derosier	MXS
A1C SrA Jaden Torres	FS
Amn A1C Isaiah Bermudez	LRS
Amn A1C Abbigail Borrego	MDG

Congratulations!

RETIREMENTS AND DEPARTURES

SMSgt. Andrew Everett
MXS | 22 Years

MSgt. Morgan Trede
CES | 21 Years

SMSgt. Jennifer Rodriguez
OSF | 20 Years

MSgt. Joseph Lamour
CES | 20 Years

Col. Andrew St. Jean
Heading to 102nd | 23 Years

SSgt. Matthew Collier
7 Years

SSgt. Hannah Jones Trudeau
6 Years

SSgt. Joshua Paquette
6 Years

SrA Nhat Phan
6 Years

SrA Joshua Gath
6 Years

Best Wishes!

HISTORIC HIGHLIGHTS

A REGULAR COLUMN BY KINDA-HISTORIAN MELANIE CASINEAU

The Spaatz Trophy and the 104th Fighter Wing's Historic Achievement

In 1950, the 104th Fighter Wing, then known as the 131st Fighter Squadron, earned its first major recognition, the prestigious General Carl A. Spaatz Trophy. The award was based on performance metrics from 1949, including personnel strength, aircraft and equipment maintenance, ground school training, flying proficiency, flight safety, supply conditions, and overall unit readiness. At the time, only 12 Air National Guard (ANG) units existed across the United States, making this distinction especially significant.

Conditions at the 131st Fighter Squadron in 1949 were far from ideal. The base of operations was a cleared area in the north corner of Barnes Airport. There were no permanent hangars or buildings; instead, there were just tents and a makeshift lean-to serving as a hangar. The area was alternately extremely hot and cold, muddy and dusty, and always windy and dirty.

Despite this, the unit achieved a remarkable 97.5% in personnel strength, the highest score among all ANG units nationwide. Their exceptional performance led to the unit being selected for the Spaatz Trophy, which recognizes outstanding achievement under demanding circumstances.

The General Carl A. Spaatz Trophy, named in honor of General Carl A. Spaatz, the first Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force and a World War II commander, is one of the most coveted honors for Air National Guard flying units. The trophy is a globe mounted on a pedestal and topped by a jet fighter. The award is still presented annually to this day.

Squadrons that wish to compete for the Spaatz Trophy are evaluated in seven key areas: personnel strength, maintenance, ground training, flight training, safety, supply, and overall unit proficiency.

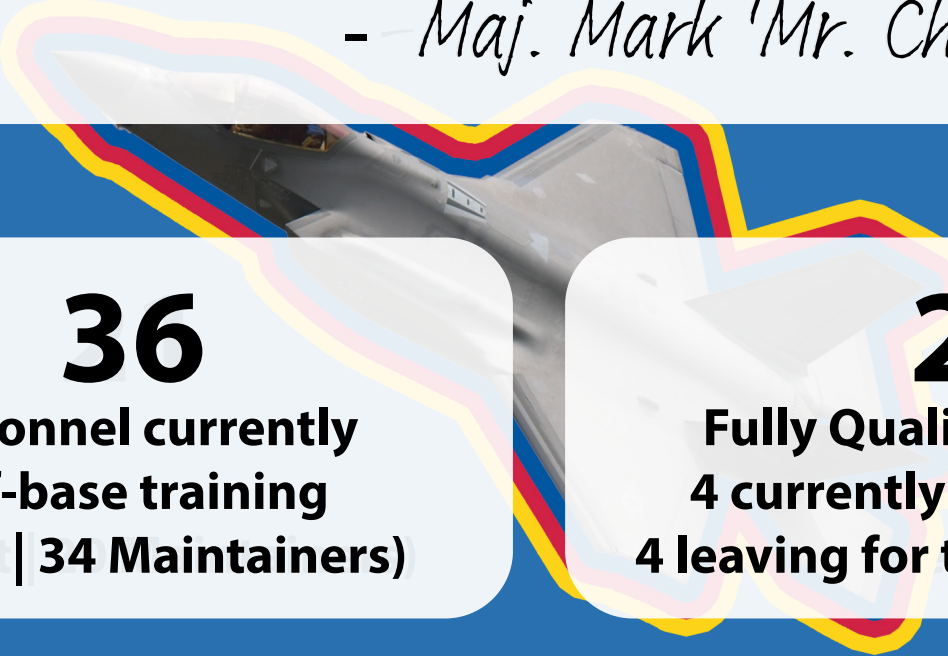
Despite operating out of tents for half the year, the 131st met or exceeded all criteria, demonstrating extraordinary dedication and operational excellence. In 1950, Col. Stefanik, 131st Fighter Squadron Commander, predicted that the Spaatz Trophy would become a permanent fixture and that they would receive it three times in a row. Today, the 104th Fighter Wing is one of the most decorated units in the Air National Guard. They have won the Spaatz Trophy three times, in 1950, 1960, and 1995, and nine Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards, a testament to their enduring commitment to mission success, readiness, and service excellence.



F-35 CONVERSION CORNER

The conversion journey began in Spring of 2023 when the secretary of the Air Force approved Barnes ANGB as the preferred location for a new fleet of F-35s. This selection drove the requirement for favorable completion of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which was achieved in November 2024. Upon favorable completion of the EIS, the Secretary of the Air Force signed and reported to Congress the Record of Decision (ROD). The ROD was approved in December 2024, which means that the decision to station the F-35 at Barnes is official! We have already begun divesting F-15s and will continue divesting through September of this year in preparation for the arrival of our first F-35s in June 2026.

- Maj. Mark 'Mr. Chow' Silvers



36

**Personnel currently
off-base training
(2 LRS | 34 Maintainers)**

2

**Fully Qualified Pilots
4 currently in training
4 leaving for training- OCT**

15

**New construction projects
scheduled throughout the
conversion - starting with OPS**

20

**The number of F-35s
scheduled to be delivered
by Summer 2026**



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