



70TH ANNIVERSARY
115TH FIGHTER WING // TRUAX FIELD, MADISON, WIS.

OUR VISION To achieve that mission, the 115FW vision is to be the premier fighter wing; outstanding Airmen who are trained, ready and dedicated.





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THE 115TH FIGHTER WING
TRUAX FIELD, MADISON, WISCONSIN

Truax Field is located at the Dane County Regional Airport, on the northeast side of Madison, Wisconsin. Truax Field was activated as an Army base in June of 1942. It was deactivated as an active military base in 1968, when it was taken over by the Wisconsin Air National Guard. It was named in honor of Lieutenant Thomas L. Truax, a Wisconsin native, who was killed in a P-40 Warhawk training accident in November 1941.

Truax Field is currently home to the 115th Fighter Wing, which flies the F-16 Fighting Falcon. It is approximately 130 acres in size and has 44 buildings with a square foot total of approximately 400,000. The weekday workforce is approximately 400 persons, increasing to about 1,200 on Unit Training Assembly weekends.

The 115th Fighter Wing has been identified as one of the first locations to integrate active-duty Airmen into the Air National Guard (ANG). The unit will leverage highly experienced ANG Airmen to train their active-duty counterparts, re-capitalizing force structure and enhancing our overall combat capability. Decades of training and combat experience provide a highly trained, combat ready force.



COLONEL ERIK A. PETERSON
115TH FIGHTER WING COMMANDER

Colonel Erik A. Peterson is the commander of the 115th Fighter Wing, Wisconsin Air National Guard, Truax Field, Madison, Wisconsin. As commander, he is responsible for the organization, training and equipping of nearly 1,200 active-guard and traditional forces serving the dual mission of state and federal responsibility falling under the governor of Wisconsin and the president of the United States of America. The 115th Fighter Wing operates the F-16 Fighting Falcon as its primary weapon system, as well as the RC-26B aircraft in the global Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance mission.



COLONEL KEVIN D. PHILPOT
115TH FIGHTER WING VICE COMMANDER

Colonel Kevin D. Philpot is the vice wing commander of the 115th Fighter Wing, Wisconsin Air National Guard, Truax Field, Madison, Wisconsin. As vice commander he assists in ensuring that corporation objectives, policies, and operational directives are effectively executed within the wing. The 115th Fighter Wing operates the F-16 Fighting Falcon as its primary weapons system, and is home to over 1,000 personnel authorized in direct support of its global mission.

REPUTATION OF EXCELLENCE

COMBAT PROVEN

- 2013 Operation Enduring Freedom, Horn of Africa
- 2009 Operation Iraqi Freedom, Balad AB, Iraq
- 2008 Operation Iraqi Freedom, Balad AB, Iraq
- 2006 Operation Iraqi Freedom, Balad AB, Iraq
- 2004 Operation Iraqi Freedom, Al Udeid AB, Qatar

HOMELAND DEFENSE BENCHMARK UNIT

- 2017 NORAD Alert Forces Evaluation Mission Ready
- 2015 NORAD Alert Forces Evaluation Mission Ready
- 2014 NORAD Alert Forces Evaluation Mission Ready
- 2012 NORAD Alert Forces Evaluation Mission Ready
- 2009 NORAD Alert Forces Evaluation Mission Ready
- 2005 NORAD Alert Forces Evaluation Outstanding
- 2002 Operation Noble Eagle, National Command Region, Wash. D.C.
- 2001 Steady State NORAD Alert Site, Nationwide Combat Air Patrols

EXCELLENCE VALIDATED

- | | | |
|------|--|--------------------|
| 2015 | 12th Air Force Standardization Evaluation Inspection | EXCELLENT |
| 2007 | 12th Air Force Standardization Evaluation Inspection | OUTSTANDING |
| 2007 | Health Services Inspection | OUTSTANDING |
| 2005 | Unit Compliance Inspection | BEST IN AF HISTORY |

UNIT DISTINCTION

- 2015 Winston P. Wilson Trophy (Outstanding ANG Fighter Unit)
- 2015 Maj. Gen. John J. Pesch Flight Safety Award
- 2015 ANG Recipient Maintenance effectiveness Award
- 2014 4th Williams W. Spruance Safety Award
- 2009 Maj. Gen. John J. Pesch Flight Safety Award
- 2008 Distinguished Flying Unit Award
- 2005 Winston P. Wilson Trophy (Outstanding ANG Fighter Unit)
- 2005 Maj. Gen. John J. Pesch Flight Safety Award

Truax Field flawlessly executed five combat deployments over the past 10 years with a 100% mission success rate, and consistently produces outstanding results during Air Combat Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command inspections.



NINE TIME OUTSTANDING
UNIT AWARD RECIPIENT:

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 2015 | 2013 | 2011 | 2006 | 2005 |
| 1998 | 1991 | 1984 | 1980 | |

1940s

115TH FIGHTER WING

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The 115th Fighter Wing (FW) traces its lineage from the 128th Fighter Wing (FW) and then even further back to the 176th Fighter Squadron (FS), whose roots were in the 306th Fighter Squadron (FS). This lineage is critical to a complete understanding and appreciation of the unit's history as it establishes an official and traceable record that is unique to the organization. Without this record, the historical timeline of the wing (lineage), the honors it earned throughout its permanent existence, and the official emblem(s) that branded its heritage, would be broken and perhaps lost to history.

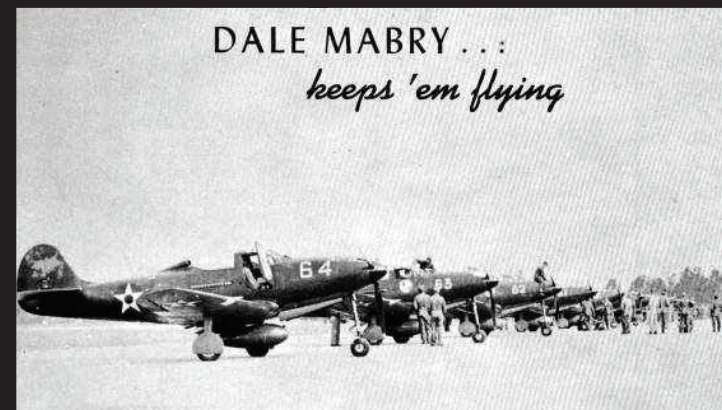
The history of the 115 FW truly begins on July 16, 1942, when the 306 FS was constituted and then later activated on July 22, 1942. The 306 FS fell under the 338th Fighter Group (FG), Third Air Force (3 AF), Dale Mabry Field, Florida. The group would later be reconstituted and redesignated, the 338th Bombardment Group (Very Heavy) and assigned to the Reserves on May 5, 1947, where it remained as an administrative organization until inactivation in June 1949. The 306 FS remained an operational squadron, performing replacement training from September 25, 1942, through May 1, 1944. Their mission was to provide combat training to new pilots before their overseas deployments in World War II.

Units like the 306 FS that fell under the 3 AF, were also termed Operational Training Units or Replacement Training Units, and generally were the final training stop for new pilots and crews before deployment. These replacement crews trained in a variety of aircraft, which included P-39s (1942-1943), P-40s (1942-1944), P-47s (1943-1944), and P-51s (1943). Coincidentally, the P-51 would be redesignated the F-51 and assigned to the 176 FS.

The 306 FS inactivated on May 1, 1944. More than two years later, on May 24, 1946, the 306 FS was reconstituted and redesignated the 176 FS, and allotted to the Air National Guard (ANG), which would be officially established as a reserve component of the United States Air Force as part of the National Security Act of 1947—the same act that implemented the modern day AF. On October 6, 1948, the 176 FS (SE); Utility Flight, 176 FS; 176th Weather Station (Type A), and Detachment "B," 228th Air Service Group, Truax Field, Madison, Wisconsin, received federal recognition. At this time, the unit was comprised of 13 officers and 20 enlisted men.

The very first commander of the newly established 176 FS was Major Charles Hinn. During his tenure from 1948 to 1949, the unit continued to grow in strength and equipment. The 176th Utility Flight received three T-6s, a C-47 Gooney Bird, a B-26 and 14 F-51s, all traveling from Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The focus was on preparing the newly assigned aircraft for flight operations, the retaining of pilots, and recruiting new members to join the ranks. By 1949, the unit's second commander, Major Paul Fojik had arrived from the 126th Fighter Squadron (FS) based in Milwaukee, where he had commanded Detachment A. In July of 1949, the unit participated in its first Annual Training (Summer Camp) at Volk Field, Camp Douglas, Wisconsin.

By the close of 1949, tensions were mounting on the Korean Peninsula, and in less than a year the U.S. would find itself embroiled in another conflict, a mere five years after Victory Over Japan Day, or VJ Day, and the end of WWII. The Korean War represented the first significant test of the training, experience, and vigilance of the members of the newly established 176 FS.



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1950s

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As the 1950s kicked off, unit members were eagerly waiting for their annual training at Oscoda, Michigan, taking place from July 22 through August 5, 1950. However, the Korean War put the brakes on their plans, as the unit was ordered to provide ten F-51s for shipment to Korea. Despite the setback, personnel worked diligently to procure aircraft from other ANG units temporarily. The venture was a success, helping to ensure that the unit capitalized on the good weather and that personnel achieved numerous gunner sorties and high flying hours throughout the training evolution.

Concern about activation and what that could mean for unit personnel and their families lingered during early 1951. On February 1, uncertainty was met with reality when the 176 FS was activated in-place at Truax Field and assigned to the Air Defense Command (ADC) to harden its continental U.S. fighter interceptor force. Personnel numbers were at full strength and volunteers had to be turned away. It was also during this time that the 176 FS became the first ANG unit to fly the modern jet fighter, the F-89 Scorpion, having converted during its active duty tour. However, the conversion to the F-89 only lasted seven months before the unit returned to the F-51. The unit's transition from civilian to full-time military life went off without a hitch, and 21 months later the 176 FS was placed back on inactive status. On October 31, 1952, the 176 FS was officially released from active duty and began a daunting rebuilding program.

Post-Korean War, the 176 FS witnessed most of its members choosing to remain with the unit, while others stayed on active duty or separated entirely from the ANG. Even a small shortage of qualified personnel meant the need for the execution of an aggressive recruiting program. Pilot training remained the primary focus, and a new program began where the 176 FS could send its pilots directly through training, provided they remain contractually obligated to the unit upon graduation. The first "Summer Camp" since the unit's involvement in Korea was at Volk Field in 1952. Pilots and crews received ample training and integration opportunities into the unit.

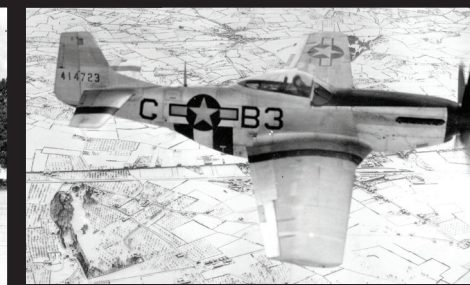
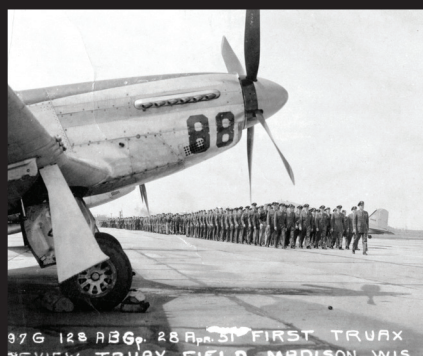
By October 1953, the 176 FS began getting F-86As and converted to 176th Fighter Interceptor Squadron (FIS). The new fighter had earned the title, "MIG Killer" during the Korean War. The swept wing aircraft was a counter to the Soviet MIG-15 and functioned as a fighter-interceptor and a fighter-bomber, taking part in some of the first jet-on-jet dogfights in history.

A year later, in October of 1954, the 176 FIS converted back to the F-89 Scorpion. The Scorpions slowly replaced a mix of F-51Hs and F-86As, and the last Mustang departed when the final F-89 arrived. Over the course of the next 12 years, the unit added each model of the F-89. The F-89 was an all-weather fighter-interceptor under the ADC. Each aircraft had a Radar Intercept Officer (RIO), who sat behind the pilot and performed navigation. With the F-89s arrival, recruiting RIOs was critical, as the unit initially only had one RIO.

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On April 15, 1956, the structure of guard units changed to the concept of a self-sufficient group that had all the functions necessary to operate a base. The 115th Fighter Interceptor Group (FIG) was formed with all the 115 FW squadrons, flights, and assets you see today. The 176 FS was the flying portion of this organization. In 1956, the 115 FIG along with the 128th Fighter Interceptor Group in Milwaukee, became the embodiment of the 128th Air Defense Wing (ADW), with its headquarters in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This 62-year-old reference point serves as the foundation for the future 115th Fighter Wing, Truax Field, Madison, WI.

By 1957, ADC took over responsibility for training and integrating Air Guard units into the air defense system. Prior to this, the 176 FIS had been under the command of the Tenth Air Force. As a supplement to the active duty Air Force, the "Air National Guard interceptor squadrons provided a first-line, Category I, augmentation force." The 1950s closed out with the 176 FIS under ADC, where the unit's mission went from that of a standby force to an active alert mission, set for the air defense of North America.



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1960s

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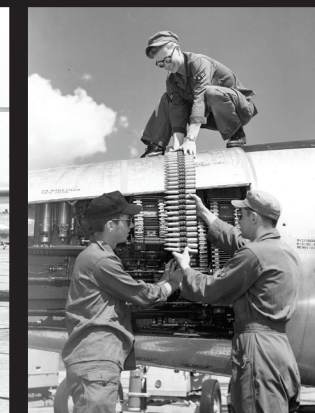
In early 1960, the 176 FIS began manning for the air defense alert mission. This mission would continue for the next 14 years and represented a noticeable increase in operations tempo. Alert pilots and crews stood ready on 14-hour shifts, from early evening to early morning the next day. This schedule facilitated the participation of students and those with civilian careers in the local community. By the close of 1960, the Milwaukee-based 128th Fighter Interceptor Group had transitioned to the KC-97L Stratofreighter and changed their designation to the 128th Air Refueling Group (ARG). This left the Madison-based 115 FIG under the command of the 128th Air Defense Wing. The 176 FIS continued its mission, growing in numbers and stature, and by October 1963 the unit was celebrating its 15th anniversary.

Throughout the 1960s, the two aircraft that participated in the alert mission where the F-89 Scorpion, assigned to the unit from 1955 to 1966, and the F-102 Delta Dagger, assigned from 1966 to 1974. The F-89 was an all-weather fighter-interceptor designed by Northrop for the ADC. The aircraft had a radar operator who sat behind the pilot, helping to detect, intercept, and terminate enemy aircraft. The F-102's primary mission was similar to that of the F-89, to intercept and destroy enemy aircraft. A marked difference between the two aircraft was that the F-102 was the world's first supersonic all-weather jet interceptor and the AF's first operational delta-wing aircraft.

The transition from the F-89 to the F-102 was a complicated matter that involved finding homes for personnel from the recently inactivated 325th Fighter Interceptor Squadron (FIS), the Air Force unit on base, and the retraining of maintenance personnel, radar operators, and pilots on the new aircraft. It was a steep learning curve, but the challenge was met head-on, with the outcome being a squadron ready for air defense.

Typical air defense exercises began at around 2200 hours and concluded at 0300 or later, and drills operated out of K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base Michigan, Duluth, Minnesota, or Canadian bases. The Guard drills evolved into practice for future Operational Readiness Inspections (ORIs), establishing familiarity with equipment and procedures. A test of the 176 FIS's training came in August 1969, when, at the time, the second strongest tropical cyclone to strike the U.S., Hurricane Camille, made landfall along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. The unit responded quickly with clothing and food to the devastated area.

A significant milestone occurred a year earlier on July 1, 1968, when Congress made effective, under Public Law 90-130, the ability for women to enlist in the Guard. Since 1967, Congress had authorized the enlistment of prior-service. By September 1970, the first woman had joined the 176 FIS, Captain Nanette Goupil. Then, on May 25, 1972, Staff Sergeant Janet E. Hattleberg became the first enlisted female and first female technician later that year. Women had been allowed to serve in the National Guard since August 1, 1956, but only as nurses. Today, the 115 FW, the successor to the 176 FIS, has female ranks that represent roughly a third of the unit's end strength, and all career fields at the 115 FW are open to women—a marked improvement since the early 1970s.



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1970s

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The 176 FIS' reputation as a fighter intercept unit continued to grow throughout the early 1970s. A real test of the unit's capabilities came in September 1972 when it participated, under the 115 FG, in the newly redesignated Aerospace Defense Command (formerly Air Defense Command) F-102 competition, the prestigious William Tell meet at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida. Participants in the event came from the ANG, Air Force active duty, and Canadian ADC flying units. Lieutenant Colonel Ron Skinvik, 176 FIS commander, guided the unit through the competition. When the dust settled, the 115 FG and 176 FIS were champions of the William Tell meet. The 176 FIS would go on to win other numerous awards throughout the year and into 1973, culminating with the awarding of the Spaatz Trophy as the outstanding ANG flying unit in October of 1973, and the American Fighter Pilots Association coveted Winston P. Wilson Trophy for the best ANG fighter/reconnaissance unit that same year.

As part of ADC, the 176 FIS was on 24-hour alert status—intercepting any attack that might come from the north, via Canada. The new alert status was all part of the air defense of the Continental U.S., which had been established by the War Department on February 26, 1940, with the creation of the ADC. This command vacillated in size and assignment throughout the 1940s, and in 1946, was assigned as a major command of the Army Air Forces (AAF). It experienced a decline when the ANG and Air Force Reserve increasingly took on more of its missions in the latter part of the 1940s. The ADC was inactivated on October 1, 1986, but today the 115 FW continues the tradition of the air defense mission by delivering, as stated in its mission statement,

“dominant combat airpower and providing agile support for domestic operations.” The unit does this operating under dual state and federal mission, supporting the State of Wisconsin, and two Air Force Major Commands.

On February 4, 1974, as part of defense cuts to ADC, it was announced that the 176 FIS would be inactivated, along with four other units: the 163rd Fighter Interceptor Group (FIG), Ontario, California; the 196th Fighter Interceptor Group (FIG) Suffolk County, New York; the 112th Fighter Interceptor Group (FIG), Pittsburg, Pennsylvania; and the 129th Special Operations Group (SOG), Hayward, California. With the unit's survival on the line, state headquarters and members of the wing staff, and others executed a highly successful congressional information campaign to keep the wing active. In the end, none of the units were inactivated.

As a result of the 176 FIS remaining active, the unit experienced changes in aircraft, mission, and designation that same year. The 176 FIS went from a fighter squadron to a support squadron, converting to the O-2A Skymaster observation aircraft and the Forward Air Control (FAC) mission and re-designating to the 176th Tactical Air Support Squadron (TASS), under the Tactical Air Command. The role of the O-2A was to act as a forward air controller, identifying and marking enemy targets with smoke rockets, coordinating air strikes, and reporting target damage. The aircraft also played a role in psychological warfare operations, blasting recorded messages and dispensing propaganda.

On July 1, 1978, the Tactical Air Command executed a reorganization plan for inactivating all group headquarters co-located with wing headquarters. This step resulted in the inactivation of the 115th Tactical Air Support Group, replaced by the 128th Tactical Air Support Wing. It was at this point when the 115th designation disappeared from the unit's history for the next 17 years.

By 1979, the unit transitioned aircraft yet again, becoming one of the first to be Jet Forward Air Control with the arrival of the OA-37 Dragonfly. The mission of this aircraft was primarily close air support (CAS), night interdiction, and forward air control (FAC). The OA-37 would phase out of the 176 TASS inventory two years later, and the unit would transition to another legendary airframe.



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1980s

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The year was 1981 and with it came numerous changes for the nation and 176 TASS. In January, Ronald Reagan was sworn in as the 40th President of the U.S., the Iran Hostage Crisis came to an end that same month, the 176 TASS was redesignated yet again to the 128th Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW) in October, and converted aircraft from the OA-37 Dragonfly to the A-10 Thunderbolt II.

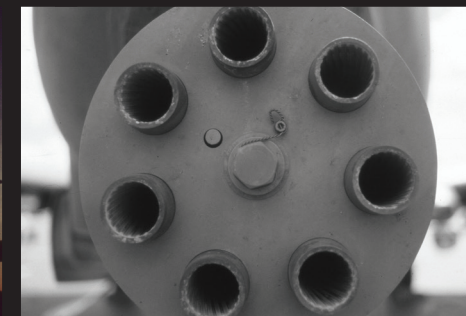
The Fairchild Republic A-10 Thunderbolt II was a single-seat, straight wing jet with a turbofan engine. Personnel fondly referred to the aircraft as the "Warthog" or "Hog." The primary mission of the A-10 was to provide CAS for friendly ground forces, attacking enemy tanks and armored vehicles, while assaulting enemy ground forces from the air. The A-10's secondary mission was to operate as a forward air controller—airborne (FAC-A), directing other airborne assets on enemy ground positions and targets. Over the next 11 years, the 128 TFW would provide CAS for Army units at home and abroad.

As the unit had done with previous changes in mission, aircraft, and designations, personnel continued to strive for excellence as they trained on the A-10. The unit's Checkered Flag base, which supported large-scale aerial exercises, was now located in the European Theater. The change in location led to "Coronet" deployments,

the first being Operation CORONET GIANT from April 28 through May 18, 1984. More than 300 support personnel and 12 A-10 aircraft deployed to Lechfeld Air Base near the Bavarian city of Munich, Germany and was the first time the entire wing had deployed to an overseas base. CORONET GIANT was also the first joint overseas non-stop deployment from Syracuse to Lechfeld.

During the interim between exercises Operation CORONET GIANT and Operation CORONET MERCURY, the 128 TFW deployed to defend the Panama Canal. The unit was tasked with providing air defense for the Panama Canal Zone. The A-7 Corsair, typically used by the Army and Navy forces defending the Panama Canal, was grounded due to runway construction. The A-10 could take off and land on shorter runways, so the 128 TFW and other A-10 units rotated their aircraft into the region. Sorties were flown twice per day, and in one instance, the unit flew 35 out of 36 scheduled sorties in a 14-hour period.

Again in 1985 and once more in 1987, six A-10s and around 50 support personnel deployed to the tropics of Central America for Operation CORONET COVE. Two years later, in the summer of 1987, the 128 TFW was involved in Operation CORONET MERCURY. This exercise familiarized Guard units with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the United States Air Force Europe (USAFE) practices as they relate to flight and ground operations. The unit airlifted 275 personnel to Europe in C-141s and KC-135s, along with 12 A-10s. The exercise boosted the confidence of 128 TFW members that they could operate and excel in a NATO environment. This confidence would carry the unit into the 1990s and through another mission and aircraft change and challenge.



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1990s

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On January 31, 1990, Operation CORONET COVE, a 12-year volunteer rotation to defend the Panama Canal ended. The 128 TFW had participated in this operation in 1985 and 1987. By mid-1990, the 115th Civil Engineer Squadron (CES) deployed 45 personnel to Royal Air Force (RAF) Chicksands, United Kingdom for their annual training from May 23 through June 7, 1990. By July 1990, the first Wisconsin ANG Non-Commissioned Officer Preparatory Course was held at Volk Field. July continued to be a busy month when Operation CORONET LARIAT began a new route, new host nation, and new Checkered Flag base. RAF Sculthorpe in England became home for the 320 personnel deployed during the July 14-29, 1990 exercise. All of this training would prove critical, as world affairs would rapidly change in the following month.

On August 2, 1990, the tiny nation of Kuwait was seized by Iraqi forces. The next day, the Air Force notified the National Guard Bureau (NGB) Air Directorate to be ready for a 24-hour response. Colonel Fred R. Sloan, Commander 128 TFW, discussed the unit's focus in response to hostilities in the Middle East, "We trained year in and year out for possible outbreak of hostilities in Europe, and now within months a new threat has emerged, and we must shift our focus and maximize our readiness in support of the current crisis." That focus on training paid off when Operation DESERT SHIELD officially kicked off on August 7, 1990.

A C-130B crew from the 128 TFW was an active participant in Operation DESERT SHIELD. The six-man team, led by Lieutenant Colonel Dave Thompson, logged more than 200 hours and 120 missions transporting 300 tons of equipment. During the initial 5-6 weeks, the crew moved cargo to the primary staging areas, Dover Air Force Base, Delaware, and McGuire Air

Force Base, New Jersey, for eventual ferrying to Saudi Arabia. Beyond cargo, the crew transported Soldiers from the famed 101st Airborne, who were quiet and reflective as they used the flight to mentally prepare for potential combat. The last C-130B conducted its final flight from Truax Field on December 19, 1991. As with other flyers and non-flyers at the unit, the C-130B team sacrificed time away from careers, school, and family to accomplish their mission.

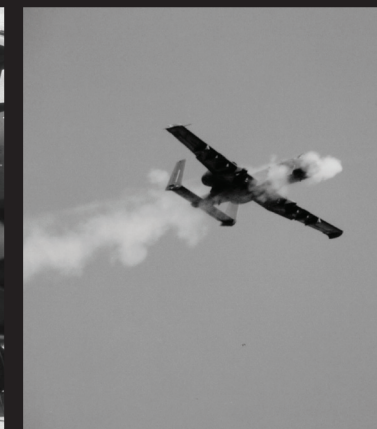
Excellence and dedication to duty continued at the 128 TFW beyond real-world events, parlaying itself into readiness inspections. On November 13, 1991, the unit received the first "OUTSTANDING" rating ever given to any fighter unit for a Unit Effectiveness Inspection (UEI). This monumental accomplishment was a first for any active or Reserve unit in the history of the Tactical Air Command.

On January 12, 1992, the 128 TFW officially received a new support aircraft, the Fairchild C-26B "Metroliner." A ceremony was held in hangar 406 on the February UTA, where company representatives from the Fairchild Aircraft Corporation passed the "keys" to Colonel Fred R. Sloan, Commander, 128 TFW. The aircraft could transport 14 passengers and 50 pounds of baggage and light cargo per person. In 1996, the C-26B shifted missions and began to support counterdrug operations—a function that continues through to today. The RC-26B acted as a bridge between the Department of Defense and law enforcement agencies by providing accurate and safe intelligence and surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) from an altitude of 10,000 feet. Through its use of surveillance and photographic equipment, the RC-26B provided law enforcement agencies full motion video, ground-to-air communication capabilities, and the ability to execute day and night reconnaissance. The aircraft

also supplied "eyes in the sky" during natural disasters, aiding relief efforts by providing real-time assessments of flooded areas, including dams, bridges, and highways.

On March 16, 1992, the 128 TFW faced another monumental change when the unit was redesignated the 128th Fighter Wing (FW) under the newly formed Air Combat Command and began transitioning to the F-16 Fighting Falcons. The characteristics of the new mission include aerospace control and force application. Typical missions included counter air, strategic attack, interdiction, and close air support. September 12th marked the last flight for the A-10 by pilots of the 128 FW. By October of the following year, the unit would become part of the Eighth Air Force. Three years later on October 1, 1995, the 128 FW was re-designated the 115th Fighter Wing (FW) with no change in mission or aircraft. This re-designation returned the 115 FW to its original command structure with all its supporting 115 FW designated squadrons and flights that were first established on April 15, 1956.

In March 1997, 12 F-16s from the 115 FW and 178th Fighter Wing (FW) plus the Air Force Reserve's 419th Fighter Wing (FW) deployed to Incirlik AB, Turkey to form a "rainbow unit" of fighters to support Operation NORTHERN WATCH to help maintain a no-fly zone over the northern portion of Iraq. Near the close of 1997, the 115 FW deployed 100 personnel and six F-16 aircraft to the Gulf region in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH, flying missions as part of the 4406th Operations Group (Provisional) team. The 1990s had been a decade in flux, with various changes, challenges, and real-world wartime operations. Tragically, events of the subsequent decade would drive further military operations and conflicts throughout the globe.



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2000s

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The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, had a profound impact on the defensive and offensive posturing of the U.S. It set the tone for military deployments and commitments from the time of the attacks through today. In the days and weeks following the terrorist attacks, and with the inception of Operation NOBLE EAGLE, F-16 Fighting Falcons from the 115 FW were either in the air or on the tarmac, always on the alert, round-the-clock, 365 days a year. This alert status came into play on October 8, when the unit assisted NORAD with an emergency situation in Midwest airspace.

Operation NOBLE EAGLE was a reaction to the September 11 attacks and was defined by a focused and concerted defense of the U.S. homeland. Thousands of Airmen from the active duty Air Force, Air Force Reserve, and ANG participated in this mission. On October 23, 2001, the 115 FW mobilized 62 personnel. That same month, personnel from the 115th Security Forces Squadron (SFS) were mobilized and deployed to various Air Force bases throughout the continental U.S. to support Operation NOBLE EAGLE. The deployments would last 1-2 years. Members from the 115 SFS would also deploy worldwide, filling spots with high operational tempo at locations throughout the globe.

In January 2002, two members of the 115 CES deployed stateside, and six of the Wing's firefighters headed for the CENTCOM area of operations. In March, six more Airmen deployed overseas for a 180-day rotation. In early 2002, Brigadier General Fred R. Sloan, 115 FW Commander, related, "This has been the largest single call-up of men and women from the 115 FW since the Korean conflict. To date, we have had over half of this unit called to active duty in support of Operation NOBLE EAGLE (ONE), Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF), or one of the Expeditionary Combat Support (ECS) deployments in support of Operations SOUTHERN and NORTHERN WATCH (OSW/ONW)." The dedication to duty, displayed by the Airmen of the 115 FW, was exemplified outside of Air Expeditionary Force (AEF) rotations and volunteer deployments.

In December of 2005, the Wing received an "Outstanding" rating for its Unit Compliance Inspection (UCI). The 115 FW compliance rate was 99.4% and the highest rating to date. As of 2000, no Air Force base, active, Guard, or Reserve had garnered a rating higher than 98.8%. In September 2005, the 115 FW provided support to Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. The 128th Air

Refueling Wing (ARW) based out of Milwaukee airlifted ten members from the 115 FW, 41 members of the WI ANG 32nd Infantry Brigade Military Police, and 17 tons of cargo to Naval Air Station (NAS) Belle Chase, New Orleans, Louisiana, on three KC-135 aircraft. Further missions to the affected areas would be carried out by unit personnel throughout the month.

As the decade closed out, roughly 350 members of the 115 FW deployed to Balad Air Base, Iraq, from January to March 2007. This included 12 F-16Cs, assigned to the 176 FS. Two years later, in September of 2009, the 115 FW deployed 14 F-16s and around 200 Airmen to Iraq as part of the wing's scheduled AEF rotation. The mission was to support ground forces in Iraq with CAS and other capabilities. September was truly a historic month, as the Wisconsin Army National Guard had over 3,200 Soldiers on the ground in Iraq and a large contingent of Wisconsin ANG personnel supporting those boots on the ground. Contingency deployments for unit personnel would continue into the next decade, even as operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, declined, while other hotspots emerged.



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2010s

115TH FIGHTER WING

DEDICATED TO EXCELLENCE

Starting in January of 2010, the final wave of Airmen, around 30 in all from the 115 SFS, returned from a six-month deployment at Transit Center at Manas, Kyrgyz Republic, in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. The Airmen of the 115 FW that volunteered to support the 376th Expeditionary Security Squadron, performing airbase ground defense, were able to put their local training to the test in a real-world environment, where daily operations supported the war in Afghanistan. The following month, the Air Force announced that the 115 FW was one of only 31 units to earn the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (AFOUA), a notable achievement that demonstrated the unit's focus on excellence. A little over a year later, the 128th Air Control Squadron, an attached unit of the 115 FW, was also awarded an AFOUA. The 115 FW would attain another AFOUA in 2013. This focus on excellence was further emphasized when the 115 FW earned a near-perfect rating during a Unit Compliance Inspection in December of that same year, with a 99.5 percent compliance rating.

In March of 2010, close to 145 Airmen from the 115 FW participated in a joint 2-week exercise at NAS Key West, Florida. F-16s from the 115 FW went head-to-head with the Navy's F-18 Super Hornet and F-5 Tigers. The training proved invaluable, as it tested the pilot's dogfighting ability, air combat maneuvers skills, and provided air combat training in an airspace with favorable flying conditions year-round and adjacent aerial ranges. The unit would return for the same training in January of 2012. As the summer of 2010 rolled around, over 130 Airmen took part in the two-week Red Flag exercise at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska. Pilots from the 115 FW took to the skies against two active duty F-16 flying squadrons from Misawa Air Base, Japan, and Osan Air Base, Korea. The environment and leadership were unfamiliar, as one of the goals of Red Flag was to create a "deployment like" experience that tests the pilots and maintainers. The 115 FW would return to Red Flag in August of 2014.

In October of 2012, the 115 FW experienced a real-world leadership challenge when the reins of command passed from Brigadier General Joseph J. Brandemuehl to Colonel Jeffrey J. Wiegand. In a packed ceremony on October 14th, the retiring commander was honored for his dedication to the men and women of the 115 FW in his over eight years as commander and more than 33 years of service. The wing's new commander laid down the vision for the future, "Our nation, now more than ever, will depend upon the National Guard. We are a strategic reserve, but we are being utilized as an operation force. That alone presents challenges. We must continue to fight and win today's wars and be prepared for future conflicts."

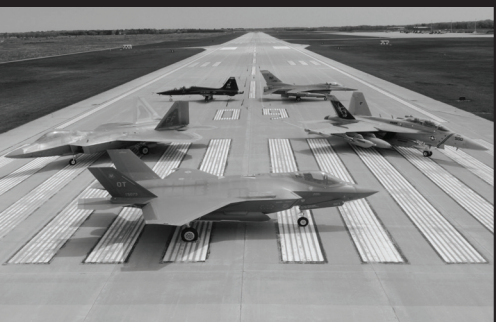
This fighting spirit and dedication to duty were on full display when 26 Airmen from the 115 FW returned home in March of 2014 from a deployment to the United Arab Emirates, where they supported Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, Combined Joint Task Force, Horn of Africa. Two squads of 13 Airmen provided security for the base during the six-month deployment. By the close of their deployment, these dedicated teams had overseen 35,000 vehicles searches, conducted 78,000 personnel searches, and defended a 16-mile perimeter. In February 2015, 40 active duty personnel became a part of Truax Field when the 495th Fighter Group, Detachment 176, joined the ranks of the 115 FW. That same month, 39 members of the 115th Force Support Squadron (FSS) would deploy to Mildenhall Air Force Base, England, where they trained along Air Force active duty. This partnership highlighted the Air Force's Total Force Integration (TFI) policy, further strengthening the bonds between the active, Reserve, and ANG components, while simultaneously providing Airmen valuable training experiences.

Four years after assuming command of the 115 FW, Colonel Wiegand relinquished his leadership role, passing the flag to Colonel Erik A. Peterson in a ceremony held on October 1, 2016. As part of his introductory speech, Colonel Peterson encapsulated his vision for

the future of the 115 FW with a quote from former President John F. Kennedy stating, "change is the law of life, and those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future." This vision of embracing change, and the challenges inherent therein, would come full circle when threats from the Korean peninsula and the 2017 hurricane season emerged.

In 2017, tensions on the Korean peninsula were at levels not seen since the close of hostilities in the Korean War. Approximately 270 Airmen and 12 F-16s from the 115 FW deployed to Kunsan Air Base, Korea in support of U.S. Pacific Command's Theater Security Package. The four-month deployment rotation provided ample opportunities for training while demonstrating the full capability of the National Guard and the United States' commitment to peace and security in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. The Honorable Scott Walker, Governor of Wisconsin, and U.S. Air Force Maj Gen Donald Dunbar, Wisconsin's adjutant general, visited Kunsan AB, September 16, 2017, to show support for the Wisconsin Air National Guard's 115 FW Airmen.

During the hurricane season of 2017, the U.S. colony of Puerto Rico experienced two devastating storms, Hurricane Irma and Maria, only two weeks apart. Numerous National Guard units, both stationed on the island and others from stateside locations, were assisting the island nation when the storm hit and aided clean-up efforts in the aftermath. The 115 FW Communications Flight set up an additional Joint Incident Site Communications Capability (JISCC) at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) communications center at San Juan. This partnership facilitated the San Juan Center to receive direct communications with inbound and outbound aircraft again, and demonstrated the varied skillsets Airmen of the 115 FW bring to the fight. Also providing aide in the aftermath of the hurricane were approximately 16 Airmen from the 115 FW and 128 ARW, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who setup mobile kitchens that provided meals to civilian and military members who were involved in relief efforts.

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[F-51 MUSTANG]



ARMAMENT: Six .50-cal. machine guns and 10 5-in. rockets or 2,000 lbs. of bombs

ENGINE: Packard-built Rolls-Royce Merlin V-1650 of 1,695 hp

MAXIMUM SPEED: 437 mph

CRUISING SPEED: 275 mph

RANGE: 1,000 miles

CEILING: 41,900 ft.

WINGSPAN: 37 ft.

LENGTH: 32 ft. 3 in.

HEIGHT: 13 ft. 8 in.

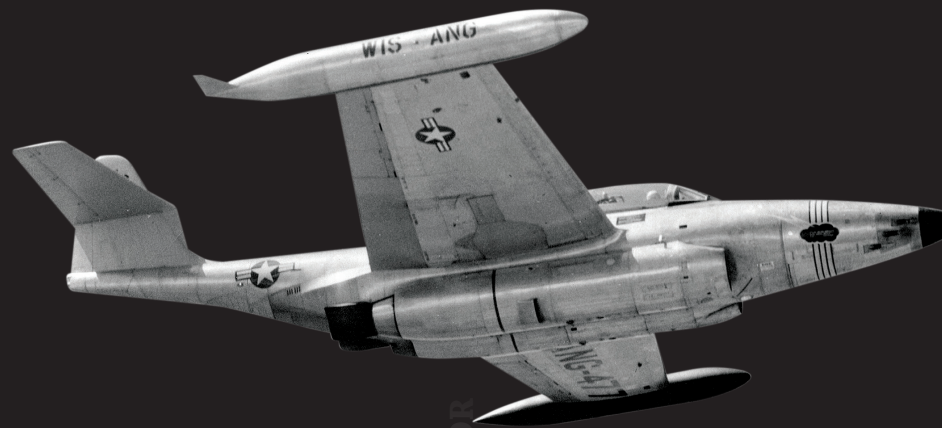
WEIGHT: 12,100 lbs. maximum

MANUFACTURER: North American Aviation



TRUAX FIELD : 1948 - 1953 In 1948, the 176th Fighter Squadron (FS) received three T-6s, a C-47 Gooney Bird, a B-26 and, most importantly, 14 F-51 Mustangs, all traveling from Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The Mustang was one of the finest and most recognized fighters used by the U.S. Army Air Forces during World War II. The aircraft had excellent range and maneuverability, operating primarily as a long-range escort fighter and ground attack fighter-bomber. The focus at the 176 FS was on preparing the newly assigned aircraft for flight operations, the retaining of pilots, and recruiting new members to join the ranks. At the outset of the 1950s and the Korean War, the 176 FS was ordered to provide ten Mustangs to support the conflict in Korea. The legendary fighter would depart the 176 FS by the close of 1953.

[F-89 SCORPION]



ARMAMENT: Two AIR-2A Genie air-to-air rockets with nuclear warheads plus four AIM-4C Falcon missiles

ENGINE: Two Allison J35s of 7,200 lbs. thrust each (with afterburner)

MAXIMUM SPEED: 627 mph

CRUISING SPEED: 465 mph

RANGE: 1,600 miles

CEILING: 45,000 ft.

WINGSPAN: 59 ft. 10 in.

LENGTH: 53 ft. 8 in.

HEIGHT: 17 ft. 6 in.

WEIGHT: 47,700 lbs. maximum

MANUFACTURER: North American



TRUAX FIELD : 1952, 1954 - 1966 On February 1, 1951, the 176th Fighter Squadron (FS) was activated in-place at Truax Field and assigned to the Air Defense Command (ADC) to harden its continental U.S. fighter interceptor force. During this stint on active duty the 176 FS received the F-89 Scorpion, becoming the first Air National Guard unit to fly the modern jet fighter. Within seven months, the fighter would depart the 176 FS, only to return in October of 1955 to the re-designated 176th Fighter Intercept Squadron (FIS), formerly 176 FS. The F-89 was an all-weather fighter-interceptor under the ADC. Each aircraft had a Radar Intercept Officer (RO), who sat behind the pilot and performed navigation. Over the course of the next 12 years, the 176 FIS added each model of the F-89.

[F-86 SABRE]



- ARMAMENT:** Six .50-cal. machine guns
- ENGINE:** General Electric J47 of 5,200 lbs. thrust
- MAXIMUM SPEED:** 685 mph
- RANGE:** 1,200 miles
- CEILING:** 49,000 ft.
- WINGSPAN:** 37 ft. 1 in.
- LENGTH:** 37 ft. 6 in.
- HEIGHT:** 14 ft. 8 in.
- WEIGHT:** 13,791 lbs. loaded
- MANUFACTURER:** North American Aviation



TRUAX FIELD : 1953 - 1954 In October 1953, the 176th Fighter Squadron (FS) began getting F-86As and converted to 176th Fighter Interceptor Squadron (FIS). The new fighter had earned the title, “MIG Killer” during the Korean War. The swept wing aircraft was a counter to the Soviet MIG-15 and functioned as a fighter-interceptor and a fighter-bomber, taking part in some of the first jet-on-jet dogfights in history. A year later, in October of 1954, the 176 FIS converted back to the F-89 Scorpion. The Scorpions slowly replaced a mix of F-51Hs and F-86As, and the last Mustang departed when the final F-89 arrived.

[F-102 DELTA DAGGER]



- ARMAMENT:** 24 unguided 2.75-in. rockets and six guided missiles
- ENGINE:** One Pratt & Whitney J57 of 16,000 lbs. thrust with afterburner
- MAXIMUM SPEED:** 810 mph
- CRUISING SPEED:** 600 mph
- RANGE:** 1,000 miles
- CEILING:** 55,000 ft.
- WINGSPAN:** 38 ft. 1 in.
- LENGTH:** 68 ft. 4 in. (including boom)
- HEIGHT:** 21 ft. 2 in.
- WEIGHT:** 31,559 lbs. maximum
- MANUFACTURER:** Convair



TRUAX FIELD : 1966 - 1974 Throughout the 1960s, the two aircraft that participated in the 176th Fighter Interceptor Squadron (FIS) alert mission were the F-89 Scorpion, assigned to the unit from 1954 to 1966, and then the F-102 Delta Dagger, assigned from 1966 to 1974. The F-102’s primary mission was similar to that of the F-89, to intercept and destroy enemy aircraft. The F-102 was the world’s first supersonic all-weather jet interceptor and the Air Forces’ first operational delta-wing aircraft. In September 1972, F-102 pilots and aircrews from the 115 FG and 176 FIS became champions of the prestigious William Tell meet at Tyndall AFB, FL, beating participants from the ANG, Air Force active duty, and Canadian ADC flying units.

[O-2 SKYMASTER]



ARMAMENT: Rockets, flares, 7.62mm mini-gun pods or other light ordnance hung on four wing pylons

ENGINES: Two 210-hp Continental 10-360s

MAXIMUM SPEED: 199 mph

CRUISING SPEED: 144 mph

RANGE: 1,060 miles

CEILING: 19,300 ft.

WINGSPAN: 38 ft.

LENGTH: 29 ft. 2 in.

HEIGHT: 9 ft. 5 in.

WEIGHT: 4,900 lbs. loaded

MANUFACTURER: Cessna



TRUAX FIELD : 1974 - 1979 On February 4, 1974, as part of defense cuts to Aerospace Defense Command (formerly Air Defense Command), it was announced that the 176 Fighter Interceptor Squadron (FIS) would be inactivated. With the unit’s survival on the line, State Headquarters, members of the Wing Staff, and others executed a highly successful congressional information campaign to keep the wing active. As a result, the 176 FIS remained active, but experienced changes in aircraft, mission, and designation. The 176 FIS went from a fighter squadron to a support squadron, converting to the O-2A Skymaster observation aircraft and the Forward Air Control (FAC) mission and re-designating to the 176th Tactical Air Support Squadron (TASS). The role of the O-2A was to act as a forward air controller, identifying and marking enemy targets with smoke rockets, coordinating air strikes, and reporting target damage.

[OA-37 DRAGONFLY]



ARMAMENT: Rockets, hardpoints, 7.62mm mini-gun, AIM-9, bombs, Napalm tanks, flare

ENGINES: General Electric J85 turbojet

MAXIMUM SPEED: 507 mph

CRUISING SPEED: 489 mph

RANGE: 920 miles

CEILING: 41,765 ft.

WINGSPAN: 35 ft 10in.

LENGTH: 28 ft 3in.

HEIGHT: 8 ft. 10 in.

WEIGHT: 11,994 lbs. loaded

MANUFACTURER: Cessna



TRUAX FIELD : 1979 - 1981 By 1979, the 176th Tactical Air Support Squadron (TASS) transitioned aircraft yet again, becoming one of the first units to be Jet Forward Air Control with the arrival of the OA-37 Dragonfly. The mission of this aircraft was primarily close air support (CAS), night interdiction, and forward air control (FAC). The OA-37 would phase out of the 176 TASS inventory two years later, and the unit would transition to another legendary airframe. The Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard would continue to utilize the aircraft for observation and attack up until 1992.

DEDICATED TO EXCELLENCE

MADISON, WISCONSIN

[A-10 THUNDERBOLT II]



ARMAMENT: One GAU-8/A 30mm Gatling gun and 16,000 lbs. of mixed ordnance
ENGINES: Two General Electric TF34-GE-100 turbofans of 9,000 lbs. thrust each
MAXIMUM SPEED: 450 nautical mph
RANGE: 800 miles
WINGSPAN: 57 ft. 6 in.
LENGTH: 53 ft. 4 in.
HEIGHT: 14 ft. 8 in.
WEIGHT: 47,000 lbs.
SPEED: 439 mph
MANUFACTURERS: Fairchild Aircraft



TRUAX FIELD : 1981 - 1992 In October of 1981, the 176th Tactical Air Support Squadron (TASS) was re-designated to the 128th Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW) and converted aircraft from the OA-37 Dragonfly to the A-10 Thunderbolt II. The primary mission of the A-10 was to provide close air support (CAS) for friendly ground forces, attacking enemy tanks and armored vehicles, while assaulting enemy ground forces from the air. The A-10's secondary mission was to operate as a forward air controller—airborne (FAC-A), directing other airborne assets on enemy ground positions and targets. Over the next 11 years, the 128 TFW would provide CAS for Army units at home and abroad, in exercise Operations CORONET GIANT, CORONET MERCURY, CORONET COVE, and CORONET LARIAT and deployments to places like the Panama Canal Zone, where the 128 TFW provided air defense.

[F-16 FIGHTING FALCON]



ARMAMENT: One M-61A1 20mm multi-barrel cannon; up to six air-to-air missiles, conventional air-to-air and air-to-surface munitions and electronic countermeasure pods
ENGINE: General Electric F110, Turbofan
MAXIMUM SPEED: 1,500 mph
THRUST: F-16C/D, 27,000 pounds
RANGE: More than 2,002 miles ferry range
CEILING: Above 50,000 feet
WINGSPAN: 32 feet, 8 inches
LENGTH: 49 feet, 5 inches
HEIGHT: 16 feet
WEIGHT: 19,700 pounds without fuel
MANUFACTURERS: Lockheed Martin



TRUAX FIELD : 1992 - PRESENT On March 16, 1992, the 128th Tactical Fighter Wing was re-designated the 128th Fighter Wing (FW) under the newly formed Air Combat Command and began transitioning to the F-16 Fighting Falcons. The characteristics of the new mission include aerospace control and force application. Typical missions included counter air, strategic attack, interdiction, and close air support. Three years later on October 1, 1995, the 128 FW was re-designated the 115 FW with no change in mission or aircraft. In the days and weeks following the terrorist attacks of 9/11, and with the inception of Operation NOBLE EAGLE, F-16 Fighting Falcons from the 115 FW were either in the air or on the tarmac, always on the alert, round-the-clock, 365 days a year. The fighters of the 115 FW have participated in Operations NORTHERN and SOUTHERN WATCH, NOBLE EAGLE, ENDURING FREEDOM, and numerous other operations and exercises through to the present day.

[C-130 HERCULES]



ENGINES: Four Allison T56 turboprop engines
MAXIMUM SPEED: 366mph
CRUISING SPEED:
RANGE: 2,361 miles
CEILING: 23,000 ft
WINGSPAN: 132ft 7in
LENGTH: 97ft 9 in
HEIGHT: 38ft 10in
WEIGHT: 75,840 lbs
MANUFACTURER: Lockheed Martin

TRUAX FIELD : 1979 - 1991 On August 2, 1990, Iraqi forces seized the tiny nation of Kuwait. The next day, the Air Force notified the National Guard Bureau (NGB) Air Directorate to be ready for a 24-hour response. By August 7, 1990, Operation DESERT SHIELD had commenced. A C-130B crew from the 128th Tactical Fighter Wing was an active participant in that operation. The six-man team, led by Lieutenant Colonel Dave Thompson, logged more than 200 hours and 120 missions transporting 300 tons of equipment. During the initial 5-6 weeks, the crew moved cargo to the primary staging areas, Dover Air Force Base, Delaware, and McGuire Air Force Base, New Jersey, for eventual ferrying to Saudi Arabia. Beyond cargo, the crew transported Soldiers from the famed 101st Airborne. The last C-130B conducted its final flight from Truax Field on December 19, 1991.

[R-26 METROLINER]



ENGINES: Two Allied Signal Garrett Turboprops
MAXIMUM SPEED: 331mph
CRUISING SPEED: 300mph
RANGE: 2,331 miles
CEILING: 31,000ft
WINGSPAN: 46ft 3in
LENGTH: 42ft 2in
HEIGHT: 16ft
MANUFACTURER: Fairchild Aircraft



TRUAX FIELD : 1979 - PRESENT On January 12, 1992, the 128th Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW) officially received a new support aircraft, the Fairchild C-26B “Metroliner.” A ceremony was held in Hanger 406 on the February UTA, where company representatives from the Fairchild Aircraft corporation passed the “keys” to Colonel Fred R. Sloan, Commander, 128 TFW. The aircraft could transport 14 passengers and 50 pounds of baggage and light cargo per person. In 1996, the C-26B shifted missions and began to support counterdrug operations a function that continues through to today. The RC-26B acts as a bridge between the Department of Defense and law enforcement agencies by providing accurate and safe intelligence and surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) from an altitude of 10,000 feet. Through its use of surveillance and photographic equipment, the RC-26B can provide law enforcement agencies full motion video, ground-to-air communication capabilities, and the ability to execute day and night reconnaissance. The aircraft also supplies “eyes in the sky” during natural disasters, aiding relief efforts by providing real-time assessments of flooded areas, including dams, bridges, and highways.

