DCN 4097

RECEIVED
06302005

June 27, 2005

General Lloyd Newton
c/o BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street
Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Subject: The removal of the C-130-H's from the 179th Air Wing; Lahm Field; Mansfield, Ohio

Subject: The lack of factual infomation about the 179th and othe Air Guard, National Guard, and Reservist personell or their facilities.

Dear Sir,
I have done quite a lot of research on the subject of the 179th Air Wing, based at Lahm Field; Mansfield, Ohio. Also have spent time in composing this letter. Please, please, sir; do me the courtesy of reading what I have provided for your enlightenment. Enclosed is much information regarding the past and present of the 179th. It is a very active Air Guard Unit. Their planes and the personell have been deployed to many places in the world for both Military and Humanitarian missions, all successfully completed.
Inspections of the 179th have always been completed with the highest possible ratings. All the years the 179th Air Guard has been at Lahm Field it has always been carefully and pridefully maintained. The runway at Lahm Field is one of the longest in the US and can accomodate the largest planes now flying. It is also an emergency landing strip for a shuttle. Why give up the use of this runway for Military use, just to spend billions on another airstrip at some other Air Base?
Guard Units were <u>never</u> meant to be moved around. They were supposed to be locally based, and the members of these Guard Units were to train at their facilities twice a month, then to have 2 weeks of more concentrated training

at a regular, or "standing" military facility.
By closing these Guard and Reserve facilities you are defeating the very purpose for which they were created.
By going forward with your plans in Ohio you are destroying our faith and trust in the purpose and structure of our Guard system, and betraying the people who serve in them.
You will force the retirement of many Senior Offfecers and staff, with many years of experience and great depth of knowledges. Young people who have homes and families will not re-new their contracts. They will not up-root their families
Currently, there is a short-fall in signing up new recruits for some branches of service. If you forge ahead with closing of so many Milititary bases, especially Guard and Reserve forces, you will have a MAJOR in recruiting over-all, short-fall.
The ENTIRE BRAC needs to review their short-sighted thinking while we still have a civilian-military. Since about 40 per cent of our fighting man power now in the war zones is civilian-military, BRAC needs to use more thought before taking <u>any</u> action. Taking into account at the last "closing" it was to save 19 billion dollars. It cost 22 billion to close the bases. I don't see any money saved

The professional or career Military expects to move around frequently. They know this will happen upon signing contracts to serve. Both they, and their families expect this. Many resources at their disposal will help and render advice and much financial aid to make their transitions easy as possible.
Guard and Reserve Units are not prepared for such change. Neither are their personnell. Nothing is in place to move them from one location to the next. Especially not financially.
BRAC seems to have no regard or compassion for what ever hardships or problems might arise for Reserve or Guard, or any one else, for that matter.
The 179th has an enviable safety record. They have not had a lost time accident in many years. Let alone a formal "Stand Down" to consider or re-evaluate a problem. It has always been, and still is a very well-run facilety.
Lahm Field is one of the newer Air Guard bases. It has been well-maintained and up-graded. It is a Military Installation to be proud of. Instead of taking away the C-130-H's, bring more of them here. If you must close an Air Wing, bring the F-16's here, there is plenty of room.
Also, the 706th Transportation Company from Marion, Ohio could be based at Lahm, plus the Guard Units from Mansfield and Ashland.

That makes more sense to most people around here.
Contrary to what BRAC states that we have no room to expand, we have a LOT more land to expand to if it becomes necessary.
BRAC also states it is difficult to activate smaller Units. Apparently, they are ignorant of computers, fax machines, all kinds of telephones, radio, and good-old-fashioned written orders.
I think Ohio may have lost more people in Iraq than any other state, not too mention many horribly wounded. Their lives, and their families lives will never be the same again. More Ohioans are still being deployed, some from the 179th.
How can BRAC think of doing away with such an active Air Wing?
Here in Ohio we have great caring, reverance, and respect for our Military people, living and dead. We take great pride in what our hero's, past and present have sacrificed for us and the rest of the nation. BRAC's highhandedness is an insult to all of our service people, living or dead, and their families and people who loved them, also.
BRAC withholds information from the very people most affected by their decisions. Even their address and telephone numbers are not available to us, the "common people". The "common masses" who pay their salaries one way or another.

Many of us, the citizens of Ohio believe the Air Force is commiting legal robbery, and getting BRAC to do it for them. Our Air Guard planes are newer, better equiped, and much better maintained than the Cargo planes the Air Force now has at their disposal.

So where to acquire planes, the quickest and with the least cost?

Not a problem. We will just remove them from the Air Guard Units. Get them under our control and our command.

That will make the Air Force look better to the US Congress when we ask them for money for some "pet project".

The 179th is an Air Wing. How can they be an Air Wing without planes?

Ruth Ann Welch R#12 705 Pinkney Road
Mansfield, Ohio 44903 1(419) 468-1253

The above "Cartoon" is the way many of our citizens feel about closing the 179th Air Base. We in Ohio have no large military base as do many other states. We have no Eglin Air Field, No Camp Le June, No Fort Wood, No May Port, No Fort Leonard Wood etc.

The people of Ohio have in the past sacrificed many of our fine National Guard, Reservists, Air Guard personell for generations, and we are still doing so. We feel betrayed by what BRAC wishes to do. It is a direct insult to all who have died and many who have been so terribly wounded. A "slap in the face" to all of those who have given so much and to everyone who loved them

Vietnam Memorial stirs emotions

By John Jarvis
Gannett News Service

UPPER SANDUSKY — A wool stocking cap pulled halfway down on his head, the man in the red-and-black flannel jacket ran his fingers slowly across the letters.

W-I-L-L-I-A-M E F-O-L-L-O-N.

A grimace wrinkled the 58-year-old's expression, and he lowered his hand from the white name on the black wall to rub the salt-and-pepper whiskers on his face.

"William E. Follon. ... He got killed on the day we were supposed to leave," said Tom Gottfried of Carey. Members of the Air Force's 37th Combat Engineers, they had already turned in their battle gear and were at an airfield in Binh Dinh province "waiting for a ride out of the country."

Before their flight arrived, an enemy rocket attack killed the sergeant from Iowa, one of Gottfried's "best buddies."

"It killed him pretty much outright," Gottfried said.

Follon's is one of about 58,000 names of men and women killed in the Vietnam War commemorated on the Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall & Museum just outside of Upper Sandusky. The display will be at Thiel's Wheels on Tarhe Trail at U.S. 23 and Ohio 53 through Sunday.

Gottfried spent 13 months in Vietnam, from the end of 1968 through Feb. 2, 1970.

"It was good to be home, but it was kind of a letdown," because of the ill will some had for the war and those who fought in it, he said.

Gottfried said he'd feel better about his experience in Southeast Asia "if we'd won the war. ... There are a lot of good people on this wall who probably wouldn't be on there if we'd kept on."

Working security for the event, former Marion-area resident Mark Sigler of Harpster helped students find names on the wall.

"It lets you know the costs of war," said Sigler, an Army sergeant in the transportation corps during the Vietnam War era. He served in Korea, unlike his friend, Medard A.J. Ruehle.

Ruehle was one of 11 Wyandot County residents who died in Southeast Asia.

"He got out of a helicopter to help some wounded and in the process got killed himself," Sigler said.

Visiting the Upper Sandusky wall event from Findlay was Frederick Adams, who helped set up a similar tribute in his city.

"There's a bunch of guys from Findlay I went to school with who are on the wall," Adams said. "It's hard to just come here and not feel something for all these people."

Gary Cox of Marion, who helped provide computer information to assist visitors in locating their loved ones' names on the wall last fall in Marion, helped with the Upper Sandusky event as well.

If you go

- **What:** The Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall & Museum
- **When:** Through Sunday
  Today: 1 p.m., Veterans tribute ceremony; 6 p.m., musical and flag tribute
  Sunday: 2 p.m., closing ceremony
- **Where:** Thiel's Wheels, Tarhe Trail at U.S. 23 and Ohio 53, Upper Sandusky.

"I pay tribute to the 58,000 names that are on that wall."
Gary Cox
veteran

"I pay tribute to the 58,000 names that are on the wall," said Cox, a former Marine who didn't see combat. "As a Vietnam-era veteran I wasn't able to participate, but I can give back to the guys that did."

The people of Ohio Honor their military dead, I believe more than any other state. We have hundreds if not thousands of Memorials to our beloved dead from our largest towns to our smallest villages. On Memorial Day our cemeteries are a mass of color because all of the Stars and Stripes flying over every veterans grave. The BRAC is going to dis-honor some of these veterans. They were deployed from our Reserve and Guard Units. Now, you want to "change the Rules" in the middle of the war, and make a "hardship" for those who still are under contract to the military.

Local war hero honored in new museum display

News Journal
staff reports

MANSFIELD — A Memorial Day military display featuring the late Albert Allen of Mansfield, who is a member of Ohio's Military Hall of Fame, will open Saturday and run through the Memorial Day weekend at the Mansfield Museum at 35 Park Avenue West.

Allen, who died last year, was a lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserves and a survivor of the Bataan Death March and year's spent in Japanese prisoner of war camps during World War II.

Museum Curator Scott Schaut said the items were donated by Allen's wife, Nancy. He said the display includes memorabilia from Allen's father, Albert L "Cap" Allen Sr., who was commander of Mansfield's Company M, 145th Infantry, 37th Division in France during World War I.

Also on display will be "broadside" advertisements for previous Memorial Day services held in this city during the 1880s when Civil War veterans were the only ex-soldiers available to be honored.

Schaut said displays concerning World War II and home-front industry in Mansfield, as well as a history of the 179th Airlift Wing, are still up.

He said one of the oddities of military history in Richland County is that while there are many displays concerning the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War and the two World Wars, there are almost no items connected with the Mexican-American War of 1845 or the Spanish-American War of 1898.

"Both of those wars have been totally overshadowed by the bigger wars," Schaut said. "Mansfield sent troops to fight Mexico in 1845 and many more to Cuba in 1898.

"Commander Edward Parker Wood of Mansfield was commander of the U.S.S. Petrel at the battle of Manila Bay."

The museum is open Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. and on Memorial Day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Lately our local Newspaper has been "featuring" a World War II milet ary person, with a long article about them.
Their service in the second World War, their lives after Military service, and other interesting stories the servicemen may tell.
We do revere our military people.
Although, a number of the BRAC have been military, I don't believe they hold our more humb Reserve and Guard people in the same high esteem as we do.

Ohio squad takes heavy hit in Iraq

COLUMBUS (AP) — Six Marines were killed and another 15 were wounded from one central Ohio squad in a major U.S. offensive near Iraq's border with Syria, a newspaper reported.

The squad was one of three belonging to the 1st Platoon of Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment, according to The Washington Post, which has a reporter embedded with Operation Matador.

The military has confirmed five Marine deaths so far and says about 100 insurgents have been killed in the operation — one of the largest U.S. offensives since Fallujah was reclaimed from militants.

Chief Warrant Officer Orrin Bowman, the site commander for the Columbus-based company, confirmed Thursday the company was participating in the operation and had taken casualties. He declined to say how many from the Marine reserve unit had been killed or release any names.

The military has identified two Ohio Marines with the 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment who have died in Iraq since Sunday. Lance Cpl. Wesley G. Davids, 20, of Dublin, was killed in an explosion in Karabilah on Wednesday and Cpl. Dustin A. Derga, 24, of Columbus, was killed by small arms fire in Ubaydi on Sunday, according to the Department of Defense.

Bowman said the unit is in the process of contacting and helping the affected families.

Lima is a rifle company that has four platoons, Bowman said. Each platoon has three squads that normally have 13 people but can be reinforced depending on a mission, he said.

Davids left for Iraq in January, last talked to his family four weeks ago and was scheduled to come home in October, his mother said.

"While his death is a tragic loss, he died doing something he felt passionately about," Jody Davids said. "He was the best that this country has to offer."

Her son loved working on cars and graduated in 2003 from Dublin Scioto High School, where he was on the crew team.

"He was just a very impressive, strong young man," said Russ Merritt, his high school coach. "Wes was kind of an inspiration to all of us. You just had no doubt that he would give 100 percent."

The operation was launched after U.S. intelligence showed large numbers of insurgents had moved into the northern Jazirah Desert following losses in Fallujah and Ramadi, further east. The area is believed to be a staging ground for foreign fighters crossing into Iraq from Syria along ancient smuggling routes.

The offensive started Saturday night and is aimed at rooting out followers of Iraq's most wanted militant leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

Two Ohio soldiers killed in grenade attack in Ramadi, Iraq

The Associated Press

Two Ohio soldiers were killed in Iraq when their military vehicle came under a grenade attack, the Department of Defense said Wednesday.

Army Sgt. Larry R. Kuhns Jr., 24, of Austintown, and Spc. Anthony D. Kinslow, 21, of Westerville, died Monday in Ramadi, the volatile town 70 miles west of Baghdad.

Both were assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division from Fort Carson, Colo. The brigade has lost 65 soldiers in Iraq.

It was the second time in as many weeks that more than one serviceman from Ohio was killed in the same attack in Iraq. Three Marines from an Akron-based unit died in an explosion last Thursday during fighting in Haqlaniyah, 90 miles north of Baghdad.

Kuhns worked at the Army recruiting office in Boardman for a time in late 2003, said Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Catrucco, who works at the office.

"He was an awesome guy. He was very professional," Catrucco said. "He was the type of soldier any sergeant would love to have."

Kuhns, whose wife lives in Fort Carson, recently had been promoted to sergeant, Catrucco said. He began his military career as a reservist with the 319th Engineer Company in Butler, Pa.

Kinslow's mother declined comment Wednesday.

Ohio has lost a lot of people, and nobody seems to care, certainly not BRAC, positively not the politicians. As far as I can tell the military isn't much interested in our losses. We may have more dead than any other state.

Where do you think the next generation of Civilian - Military is comming from? Who is going to join a Guard or Reserve Unit if they know in advance that they may spend more time traveling than training twice a month? You already have a short fall of new recruits in the Regular Military. You are conducting this war with 40% CIVILIAN - Military.

How do you propose to recruit more people for any kind of military duty? Your short-sightness is going to make us a "traveling reserve unit" [illegible]

Lexington family has three sons in Iraq

By Ron Simon
News Journal

LEXINGTON — Like his father before him, James Andrews, 58, chose to be a soldier.

He served first in the Air Force and then the Army Reserves with the 1486th Transportation Company. He capped off a long military career by driving a truck during Operation Desert Storm and serving as his unit's first sergeant.

"I think if I hadn't retired there's no doubt I'd have already been over in Iraq and back by this time," Andrews said.

Instead, his three sons, Kyle, 24, Kraig, 22 and Kolby, 20, are in Iraq and Kyle is there for the second time.

Like their father before them, they chose to be soldiers. With a difference. All three are Marines. Kyle is a second lieutenant. Kraig is a lance corporal and Kolby is a private first class.

All three are, as their e-mail photos show, deep in harm's way.

"Have a wonderful Father's Day and thanks for all the things you do for me," Kyle wrote in a card last week. He is the only son, right now, who is able to stay in touch. "They come and go in operations," James explained.

"This is such a different war from the one I was in," James said. "Back then, it was letters and postcards. Today, it's tech messages, cell phone calls and e-mail. I was a driver and never was shot at. They are being shot at."

And three blue stars are in the window at the Andrews home on Steam Corners Road.

"I know they're doing a good job," James said of his sons. "They're really into what they do. Two of them have talked about making the Marine Corps a career. I'd like to think they are doing this because I was in the service."

Unspoken are any fears James and Renee Andrews may have about their sons being hurt in the midst of war. They know the dates down to the day when each of their boys will rotate home.

Lt. Kyle Andrews, with his brothers Pfc. Kolby Andrews and Lance Cpl. Kraig Andrews. *(Submitted photos)*

Lt. Kyle Andrews, 24, whose wife's name is Lauren, is doing his second tour in Iraq. When he comes home later this year, he will be a basic infantry instructor at Camp LeJeune. "He's guaranteed to be home for three years," his father said.

Lance Cpl. Kraig Andrews, 22, whose wife's name is Albra, would be home next but he might have to rotate to Afghanistan a few more years down the road, James said. "They plan that far ahead these days."

Pfc. Kolby Andrews, 20, unmarried, plans to leave the Corps perhaps temporarily to attend college. "If he ever wants to be an officer he has to have some college," his father said.

Kraig and Kolby are Lexington High School graduates and Kyle is a St. Peter's graduate. James thinks his youngest son was the one who first checked into the idea of a military career. "Then Kraig got interested and he joined," James said. One Marine became two Marines became three Marines.

There is a lot of military background in the Andrews clan. James' late father, James Sr., was a captain in the Army Air Force in World War II.

ANDREWS SR.

Renee's father, Joseph S. Krebs, was a corpsman and ambulance driver with the Army in Europe during World War II.

KREBS

A native of Pennsylvania, James met Renee in California while he was in the Air Force. They were married for 20 years before divorcing. For now they are staying together.

James Jr.'s day job, the one he has held for 32 years, is postal carrier. He works out of the Ashland Post Office and his route covers the west side, mostly along Sandusky Street.

Nine years after he left service he joined the Army Reserves. With three boys to raise a little extra cash wouldn't hurt. But a war came along with it.

James was a squad leader as well as a driver during the Gulf War and finally rose to First Sergeant. When he reached 20 years he called it quits. "It was fun being a driver and moving equipment, but I really wasn't that happy with all the paperwork a first sergeant has," he said.

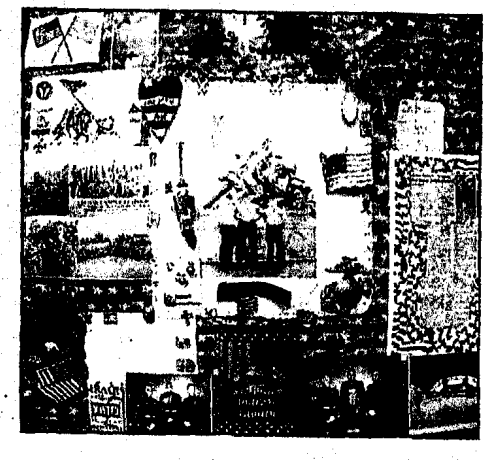
Now he and Renee stay in contact via all the new technology that links soldiers in the field with their families. And they wait. It's Father's Day.

And the boys are far away.

rsimon@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7230

Kolby Andrews, front row on the right, in Iraq.

Kyle and Kraig Andrews in Iraq.



A collage of the Andrews boys hangs in their home. *(Daniel Melograna/ News Journal)*

Another family of local Hero's you will note the father of these fine young men, was an Army Reservist.
The quality of people BRAC wants to shuffle around.

Closings could hurt Guard, some fear

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — Some members of the panel deciding which U.S. military bases to close worry the Pentagon's plans to reshuffle National Guard and Reserve installations are too radical and could discourage recruitment.

The Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure plan, released Friday, proposes consolidating 387 Reserve and National Guard installations into about 125.

Those recommendations are part of a larger plan to close 33 major bases and restructure 29 others to streamline and modernize the military.

The Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing's base at Mansfield Lahm Airport is among

■ More on the effort to keep the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield, **see page 3A.**

those to be closed.

The Guard and Reserve changes could affect hundreds of thousands of people who serve in the part-time forces while holding down full-time jobs. The main concern is that consolidating installations will mean longer travel times for reservists and Guard members.

"You're going to have real enlistment problems," said former Rep. James Bilbray of Nevada, one of the nine members of the president-appointed base closing commission.

The base closure panel will review the Pentagon's recommendations and make any changes it deems necessary before submitting its list to the president by Sept 8. If Bush approves, it goes to Congress for an all-or-nothing vote.

The panel began its work Monday by questioning Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and senior Pentagon officials about how they formulated their recommendations.

Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the Guard and Reserve consolidations were done to enhance capability, cut costs and integrate the part-time forces more closely with active-duty units.

Members of the heavily stressed Guard and Reserves make up about 40 percent of the roughly 138,000 U.S. troops in Iraq.

Myers acknowledged that "there will be some inconvenience" for people serving in the Guard and Reserves if the Pentagon's recommendations are followed.

Recruitment numbers for the Guard and Army reserves are already lagging this year. Guard recruitment was 24 percent behind in the first four months of the current recruiting year, which runs from October 2004 through September 2005.

"Anybody who looks at retention issues would have to be concerned about this," said John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a defense Web site. "This was one of the first things that really popped out at me."

a lot of people are very concerned about possible greater short falls in recruitment for any branch or any part of the military.

Guard, Reserve death toll matches highest total

WASHINGTON (AP) — Thirty members of the Army National Guard, Army Reserve and Marine Corps Reserve died in the Iraq war in May, matching the highest toll for any month of the war, according to Pentagon figures.

The overall U.S. death toll last month was 80, the highest since 107 in January. There were 52 deaths in April and 36 in March, when it appeared the insurgency was waning.

Iraqis bore the brunt of the insurgent violence in May, but it also took a heavy toll on the approximately 140,000 U.S. troops there. The 80 deaths compares with a monthly average of 70 over the previous 12 months.

The Guard and Reserve, which make up nearly half the force in Iraq, have generally had fewer than 20 deaths per month during the war, and it's not clear why their losses spiked to 30 in May. That matched the 30 deaths among the Guard and Reserve in January, and it compared with 11 in April, 13 in March and 16 in February.

The May total reached 30 when the Pentagon announced on Friday that Sgt. Miguel A. Ramos, 39, of Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, died May 31 in Baghdad when a rocket struck near his position. He was assigned to the Army Reserve's 807th Signal Company, 35th Signal Battalion, based at Juana Diaz, Puerto Rico.

One of the month's 30 fatalities died in the United States. Staff Sgt. Tommy S. Little, 47, of Aliceville, Ala., died May 2 at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, of injuries sustained on April 19 near Iskandariyah, Iraq, when a roadside bomb detonated near his Humvee utility vehicle. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 114th Field Artillery Regiment of the Mississippi Army National Guard at Columbus, Miss.

May also was a costly month for the Army's 3rd Infantry Division, which had 10 reported fatalities. Since it arrived in Iraq in February to become the first Army division to return for a second combat tour, the 3rd Infantry has lost 34 of its soldiers, according to Pentagon figures. During its previous tour, which included the initial invasion in March 2003 and lasted about eight months, the division lost 44 soldiers.

Closing the base makes no sense

I am writing this letter to rge everyone to write their ate politicians and help stop ne closing of the 179th Airlift ing in Mansfield. The airbase rovides about 1,000 full- and art-time jobs and has an estiated $70 million annual effect n the area economy. The Base ealignment and Closure 3RAC) threatens not only Iansfield's Air National Guard ase but nearly a third of all Air ational Guard Units. It will rastically change the military s we know it. Our Mansfield nit has credentials that far exeed the criteria to stay open. (It ompares to the best units out here). This is why the closing of makes no sense. The money aved does not offset the beneits to the nation's defense.

The 179th Airlift Wing reprenents the core of patriotism. hey are the heart and soul of merica. They are the small own people; they are our riends, neighbors, brothers, nd co-workers, most of which ave deep roots in our commuity. Many of these people may ust leave the military. They ave families here. They can't ommute in some cases, hunreds of miles to go to drill. My amily will no doubt have to nove, possibly out of state. I vas born and raised in the beauiful town of Bellville. My famiy is here. My friends are here. Ay life is here. I would like my hildren to go to school here.

Don't get me wrong, there are lot of people also going hrough this. My point is that ur base is different because here is no compelling reason to lose it down. When you add up he numbers, it doesn't save the nilitary that much money. If it nade sense, I would support it. Ve need to write letters to Taft/Voinovich/Dewine and your listrict congressman. Thank ou for supporting our troops!

Jolie McCue
Bellville

Birthdays under fire

I would never have imagined that my three sons would be serving in the Marine Corps in Iraq at the same time. Half my heart is in Iraq.

On May 13, my son, 2nd Lt. Kyle J. Andrews turned 24 under fire in Iraq. He is with the 2nd AA BN, stationed at Camp Fallujah, Iraq. Recently he spent more than 10 days on a mission with no shower facilities available. Just a week later, he e-mailed us a copy of "The Desert Marine" which is a 2nd Marine Division publication that carried stories about Marines at Fallujah and also at Hadithah Dam, Iraq.

My middle son CPL Kraig L. Andrews serves with 3/8 Lima Co. and is also stationed at Fallujah. Kraig and Kyle have been able to share some time together at the chow hall and also working out.

On June 26, my youngest son, PFC Kolby J. Andrews, who is a member of 3/25 Scout-Sniper Platoon will celebrate his 20th birthday involved in Operation Iraqi Freedom at Hadithah Dam. As a mother of three sons who are serving in the United States Marine Corps, I could not be more proud of their commitment and accomplishments.

I feel fortunate we are able to correspond by phone, e-mail or text message on my cell phone almost weekly. Sometimes it is hard to say good-bye to them, but I always let them know that I am proud of them, miss them, love them, and that everyone is praying for their safe return.

Renee Andrews
Lexington

Fight for the 179th

First of all, I would like to start off by saying thank you and how proud I am of all the U.S. military and the 179th Ohio Air National Guard unit here in Mansfield, of which I have two sons who are members.

I have had many people throw in my face that the National Guardsmen are just weekend warriors. My answer to them is at least they are warriors and they believe in our country and what it stands for. Most people probably don't know that at the present time the U.S. has 60 percent National Guardsmen serving overseas due to the decline in recruitment of the regular branches of the military.

I am appalled with Mayor Lydia Reid and other community businessmen saying it would be a "win-win situation" for the city of Mansfield if the 179th were to close. It sounds like instead of fighting to keep the 179th and its annual $30 million payroll here in Richland County, they would rather have another white elephant on their hands (just look around the Mansfield area) and see all that they have brought in — not too much. At least once a month the hotels are being occupied with guardsmen on drill weekend.

I keep hearing it's a political decision, so who is getting rich off this? Rep. Michael Oxley, please step forward and fight to keep the 179th here in Mansfield; after all you are in a position to use your clout, and people do listen to you.

Candace Zeger
Lucas

Letters

Let's save the 179th

We hope you will all take the time to attend the rallies being planned to save our 179th Airlif wing of the Ohio Air National Guard. This unit is heavily involved in our community.

The fire department that is maintained at Mansfield Lahm is also counted on to provide mutual aid with the surrounding fire departments, at times when no C-130s are in the air. This service would be badly missed.

So wear your "We Love the 179th pins," put your "Save the 179th" magnets on your cars and go to these events Saturday in Bellville and Wednesday on the square in downtown Mansfield. Let's show our state leaders we as a community do care and want to prevent the closure of our base.

Our thanks to the REDEC/BRAC Steering committee here for all the work and time involved in fighting this closure.

Joyce and Jerry Duff
Mansfield

The above are just a few peoples' thoughts on closing the 179 Air Wing based at Lahm Field, Mansfield Ohio. Everyone is totally against this idea. If anything we would like to see more C-130-H's brought here. Possibly, a Jet Fighter Wing also. Something BRAC can't understand, or care about, is the pride we all share for these big planes, along with the military who fly and maintain them, as well as their support people. Indeed, we all have great affection for both the planes and the personell.

SAVE the 179th

.ook for special L79th poster in 'uesday's paper

It's time for area residents to ıke up pens, e-mails, phones nd letters in defense of the 79th Airlift Wing of the Ohio ir National Guard.

The local military unit at lansfield Lahm Airport has een recommended for clo- ıre by the Pentagon as part f the 2005 Base Realignment nd Closure process.

The BRAC commission is ıudying those recommenda- ɔns and will offer a list of facili- ɜs to be closed or realigned to resident Bush this fall. But this ɔmmunity is not about to go ıway quietly as our economy ses 1,000 full and part-time bs and a facility worth $70 illion annually to the local ɔnomy.

We are not going to let go ɜsily of a unit that's been a ırt of this community's fabric r more than 50 years.

On Tuesday, the News Jour- ıl will publish a full-page color ɔster aimed at sending a ɜar message to Washington at area residents want to ave the 179th."

We urge you to put that ɔster in your home and busi- ɜss windows as a sign of your ıpport. We also urge you to ing it to the community rally downtown Mansfield on ıne 22 aimed at saving the it.

On the back of the poster ll be content helping to ex- ɜin why the decision to close ɜ unit is flawed. On the back ll be names, addresses and ıone numbers of key elected icials and also the BRAC ɔmmission. We urge you to ntact these officials and mmission and send them a py of the poster to make ur feelings known.

It's time to let Washington derstand how important the 9th is to Richland County, rth central Ohio, the nation d the world.

Look for this special poster Tuesday's print edition.

Here is who to contact:

If you would like to offer ɔdback directly to the Base ıalignment and Closure ɔmmission, an e-mail form available at p://www.brac.gov/feed- ck.aspx.

Letters can be mailed to 05 Defense Base Closure d Realignment Commission, 21 S. Clark St., Ste. 600, Ar- ɣton, Va., 22202.

Community must fight hard to retain 179th

The issue:
Local committee committed to waging battle over Airlift Wing

Our opinion:
Loss of the base, a valuable asset to north central Ohio, is not acceptable

It would be easy to give up the fight for the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

But Mike Greene and others won't let that happen.

Earlier this week Ohio Adjutant General Greg Wayt met with Greene and other members of the REDeC/BRAC steering committee and the All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs.

"The 179th is on a list recommended for closure," Wayt said during his visit. "But in the two previous rounds, about 30 percent of the bases on the recommended list were able to change the commission's mind."

That means Greene and others in the community must press forward, making the argument for the value of the unit to the city, the state and the nation.

Despite a strong effort spearheaded by Greene, co-chairman of the Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee, the 179th Airlift Wing was on the Pentagon's list announced this month, putting 1,000 local jobs in peril.

Now Greene is leading a rally called "Save Our 179th Day" at 5:30 p.m. June 22 on the downtown square. He hopes to attract 10,000 people as well as national media coverage.

And he wants everyone in the area to get involved, encouraging community residents to make signs for their cars, homes and businesses. He promises speakers, bands and cheerleaders for next month's event.

And for good reason.

The 179th is more than just a military unit to this community. It's more than just 1,000 full and part-time jobs. It's more than $70 million annually to the local economy.

It is an integral part of the fabric of this community.

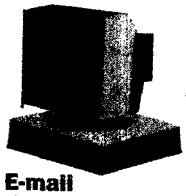
The unit's military growth and success during the past 57 years has been mirrored by its networking and immersion with the north central Ohio communities it represents.

The fight to keep it is important. Rep. Michael Oxley has joined the fight, pledging to use his political clout to bring base closure commission officials to town in hopes of getting the 179th off the list.

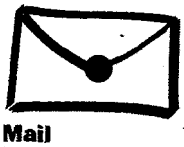
We hope others in the community see the need for the base to remain open and join the ReDEC/BRAC Steering Committee in making noise. Losing the 179th Airlift Wing would be a huge blow to our city and our region.

We won't go down without a fight.

Send us your thoughts



E-mail
chunnell@
nncogannett.com



Mail
Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 25
Mansfield, OH 44901

Fax
(419) 521-7415

Again, our citizens have found a way to both honor our veterans and finance one of our Mansfield memorials to show proper respect to our heros.

Commemorative bricks available for veterans

MANSFIELD — The Korean War Veterans Association plans to install more commemorative bricks at the Korean War Memorial in Mansfield's Central Park in June.

About 300 bricks have been placed and dedicated by families and friends of veterans who served in all of America's wars or in peacetime.

Association member Bill Woodrow said each brick is inscribed with the words "Duty, Honor, Country." All are embedded in the walkway in front of the memorial.

There are two kinds of bricks; 4-by-8-inch bricks on which three lines of 13 characters each may be inscribed for $50, and 8-by-8-inch bricks on which five lines of 13 characters each may be inscribed for $100.

Applications for commemorative bricks or gift certificates can be obtained by calling Frank J. Russo at (419) 756-1468. The deadline is June 1.

The veterans plan to install the next set of bricks June 25.

Bellville crowd rallies to save 179th

By Mark Caudill
News Journal

BELLVILLE — Maj. Steve McLaughlin joined the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard when he was a senior in high school.

The 37-year-old Shelby man is focused on keeping it open.

"I'm not thinking about closure right now," McLaughlin said. "I'm thinking about what pressure we can put on the politicians to save this base."

The 179th is on the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission list of facilities recommended to be shut down to reduce overall military expenses. McLaughlin, an intelligence officer, and hundreds of other people turned out Saturday afternoon at the bandstand on Main Street for a rally to save the 179th. AmVets Post 43 hosted the event.

Jolie McCue organized Saturday's rally.

"My husband works out there full-time," she said. "I think, from my heart, they're closing it for the wrong reasons."

The rally included a popcorn stand manned by Boy Scouts, face-painting, a lemonade stand and music from the Clear Fork High School marching band. "We love the 179th" buttons were the fashion accessory of the day, and form letters to be signed and mailed to designated legislators were circulated throughout the throng.

U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley, R-Findlay, doesn't need convincing. He will speak at a June 27 BRAC hearing in Buffalo, N.Y.

"We have a tremendous story to tell," Oxley said. "I feel comfortable going to Buffalo and presenting our case. We have the facts."

Oxley seemed confident the 179th ultimately would be taken off the closure list.

"The message we are sending loud and clear from Bellville is, 'Keep your hands off our C-130s. They're doing their jobs, and the people are doing their jobs,' " he said.

Mansfield Mayor Lydia Reid addressed members of the 179th.

"You are an integral part of this community," she said. "We don't know what in the world we would do without you. That's why we are fighting so hard."

Reid encouraged everyone to attend Wednesday's rally in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

"This is just a prelude to our big rally in Mansfield," she said. "We will see you at 5:30 Wednesday in downtown, sunny Mansfield."

McCue will be there.

"I hope they keep having rallies," she said. "Right now, this is all the public can do."

mcaudill@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7219

Dan O'Hara attended Saturday's "Save the 179th" rally with poster in hand. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

All of us really do care about the 179th Air Wing, as well as other Reserve and Guard Units.

Rallying 'round the 179th

Jackie Beilstein passes out balloons at Saturday's "Save the 179th" rally in Bellville. The rally was a prelude to the larger event planned to start at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday in the square in downtown Mansfield. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Big rally for 179th planned for next month

By Mark Caudill
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Mike Greene wants the community to unite behind the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

GREENE

"Let our voices be heard all the way to Washington," said Greene, co-chairman of the Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee that worked for more than a year to keep the base off the recommended

See RALLY, back page

About the 179th

- **What:** 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard
- **Based:** Mansfield Lahm Airport
- **Airmen:** Roughly 1,000 full- and part-time airmen. The 179th is the seventh-largest employer in north central Ohio.
- **Awards:** The 179th has received many awards, decorations and recognitions, including the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. Recently, the 179th received the Alan P. Tappan Memorial Trophy, which designates the outstanding Air National Guard unit in Ohio; and the Rusty Metcalf Award, which acknowledges the unit as one of the best in the entire Air Force.

Rally

From page 1A

closure list.

Despite the efforts, the 179th Airlift Wing was on the Pentagon's list announced this month, putting 1,000 local jobs in peril.

Greene is spearheading a rally called "Save Our 179th Day" at 5:30 p.m. June 22 on the downtown square. He hopes to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

"This isn't going to be just our group preaching to the choir. I really want to make this a huge, huge event," Greene said. "I want them to understand that this is serious business."

Greene encourages community residents to make signs for their cars, homes and businesses. He promises speakers, bands and cheerleaders for next month's event.

Greene said if the rally is as big as planned, he hopes BRAC members, who are scheduled to be in Cleveland on June 23, will visit Mansfield. This week, BRAC members will begin visiting bases slated for closure.

The 179th Airlift Wing, which has 230 full-time positions, was not on the list for a visit.

"If you had less than 300 full-timers, you would not get a visit," Greene said.

But local leaders aren't waiting for June 22 to do something. They will meet at 1 p.m. today at Gorman-Rupp's north plant with an All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs. Representatives from other affected communities, including Cleveland and Springfield, will be at the meeting.

"The idea was, 'What could we do to help each other?' " Greene said.

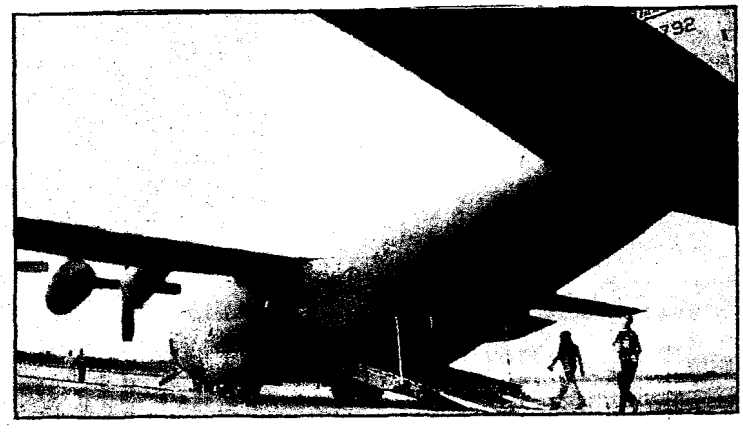
Greene fears the Air Force wants the 179th Airlift Wing's C-130s.

"If they're going to take our planes away, we would prefer that the Army not come in and maybe prevent civilian aviation possibilities," he said.

But that's only a fallback plan.

"Our main priority is getting us off the list," Greene said.

mcaudill@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7219



Guests head inside a C-130 for a tour April 19, 2004, during the Mansfield-Richland County Chamber of Commerce after-hours event at the 179th Airlift Wing. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Rep. Oxley hopes t sway commission's decision about 179t

By Greg Wright
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — Rep. Michael Oxley said Monday he would urge base closure commission officials come to Mansfield so he and local officials can persuade them to keep the 179th Airlift Wing open.

The 179th Airlift Wing was one of 13 facilities in Ohio the Pentagon put on its recommended Base Realignment and Closure list May 13. But the commission's nine-member, independent panel must review the Pentagon picks and could remove some from the list.

"I never give up," Oxley said.

OXLEY

Gov. Bob Taft sent a letter to commission chairman Anthony Principi on May 17 asking commissioners to come to Mansfield, as well bases in Springfield a Cleveland.

The Pentagon propos moving eight C-13(cargo planes from t 179th to airfields in Alat ma and Arkansas. This r flects the Pentagon's mo

See OXLEY, back page

Oxley

From page 1A

to consolidate military bases and reserve units.

Oxley met Monday in Columbus with Army National Guard Maj. Gen. Gregory Wayt, Ohio's

a meeting in the Buckeye State.

Oxley said he also could use his clout to try to persuade commissioners to come to the 179th. He said he knows about half of the commissioners, including former Utah Republican Rep. James Hansen, former Nevada Democratic Rep. James Bilbray and former White House Chief

strategy to keep the 179th open.

The commission will visit major bases on the proposed closure and realignment list. The commission also announced 16 regional hearings in California, Texas and other states to get community input on the Pentagon recommendations.

Ohio is not on the regional meeting list. Oxley said he and

Budget item for 179th show of commitment

House bill includes funds for base scheduled to close

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — The U.S. House of Representatives passed a spending bill Thursday that includes $1.3 million for a fire station project at Mansfield Lahm Airport.

What that budget item means as far as the future of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at the airport remains unclear.

"Unless we manage to get off the (Base Realignment and Closure) list, it's kind of a moot point," said Mike Greene, who is leading local efforts to keep the 179th in Mansfield. "As of right now, the plan is to send that firefighting unit to Toledo."

The 179th Airlift Wing base is on the Pentagon's list of bases recommended for closing.

But U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley (R-Findlay), who asked for the fire station funding, said it shows that the fight to preserve the 179th is not over.

"By this, we are showing our commitment to keeping our base in Mansfield one of

See BRAC, back page

Details

The 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, is one of 13 facilities in Ohio the Pentagon put on its recommended Base Realignment and Closure list May 13.

About 1,000 full- and part-time airmen are assigned to the 179th, which is the seventh-largest employer in north central Ohio.

The Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee is leading the fight to remove the 179th from the recommended closure list before a decision is made this year.

A "Save Our 179th Day" rally is set for June 22 at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

News Journal staff report

Groups fight to keep 179th in Mansfield

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — It's not over yet.

No one is giving up on keeping the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at Lahm Airport.

That was the message from Ohio Adjutant Gen. Greg Wayt after a Tuesday meeting of the REDeC/BRAC steering committee and the All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs.

"The 179th is on a list recommended for closure," Wayt said. "But in the two previous rounds, about 30 percent of the bases on the recommended list were able to change the commission's mind."

Mansfield learned this month the 179th is on the list compiled as part of the Base Realignment and Closure process, which could mean the loss of 1,000 local jobs.

Mike Greene, who has led the local effort to keep the 179th open, said there is plenty area residents can do to help change the BRAC commission's mind.

"Write letters," he said. "It sounds trite. But that's one thing we can all do. Write to your senator. Write to your representative. Write to the president.

"Our goal is to get off the list. It's happened before. Springfield was on the last two lists and managed to get off."

Greene hopes a huge public show of suppo helps sway some minds.

"Show up at our ral June 22," he said. "We like to get between 10,0 and 15,000 people togeth on the square to sho Washington what we thi of the 179th."

Greene is spearheadi plans for the 5:30 p.m. ral which will coincide with "Save Our 179th Day." I is hoping to draw sor statewide and natior news coverage to he Mansfield plead its case.'

BRAC officials have s not made public all the formation used to make cisions about which m tary bases to close.

"We're still not sure actly what criteria th used," said Da Williamson, the governo regional economic devel ment representative an member of the local BR committee. "We're waiti for that information to published so we know wl issues we need to addres

Tuesday's meeti brought together repres tatives of other commu ties in Ohio affected by most-recent BRAC nouncement.

"We're trying to see w we can do to help e other," Greene said. "Ri now, I think Cleveland the most well-organi group. We're hoping to ate some synergy with t group and help one an er."

rkent@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7274

BRAC

From page 1A

the most modern in the Guard system," Oxley said. "This would raise our investment in the 179th Airlift Wing unit to more than $20 million over the last eight years."

Greene said any effort in support of the 179th can only help efforts to save the Guard base.

"I still think the best thing we can do is to show community support for the base," Greene said. "That's why I think that rally is so important. We want as many people on the square June 22 as possible to show Washington what the 179th means to all of us."

Greene said Ret. Brig. Gen. Steve Koper, president of the National Guard Association of the United States, has committed to attend the rally.

"We've invited the governor and, hopefully, we'll have some other supporters here from Washington and Columbus," Greene said.

In the meantime, efforts are ongoing to entice members of the BRAC commission to visit Mansfield. Because the 179th has only about 250 full-time not mandatory.

Oxley released a letter he sent to Commission Chairman Anthony Principi in which he wrote, "I believe you will find the 179th represents a compelling case due to the active role it plays in homeland defense and the global war on terror."

In a letter to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Oxley urged the Pentagon to release "installation-specific data" used to make the closing list.

Greene has said the information is important so 179th supporters can better make a case to remain open.

Economic Development Corp.), which has diligently prepared for the BRAC process for more than a year, is now preparing its presentation to the commission in an effort to reverse (the closing)," Oxley wrote.

"Without access to this important data, REDeC cannot properly make its case that this guard unit, which has seen 35 deployments in support of our national defense in just the last four years, should remain open and operational."

rkent@nncogannett.com

Air Force just wants to have the C-130s

Six former Ohio Air National Guard generals visit area to share history

By Ron Simon
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Retired Brig. General Fred Larson calls the possible closure of his old unit, the 179th Airlift Wing, "a grab for the iron."

The "iron" being the unit's fairly well kept fleet of eight C-130H cargo planes.

"The Air Force has not been a very good steward of their C-130s," said the former 179th commander. "A lot of them have aged and a lot are grounded. So there are squadron holes. So this is a grab. It doesn't matter what a unit like the 179th has done or the skills and military value it has. All the Air Force wants is the iron."

Larson was one of six former Ohio Air National Guard generals, all with ties to the 179th, in Mansfield on Thursday. All but one were pilots with the 179th and two were commanders.

They were brought together by Master Sgt. Rod Togliatti, the 179th's historian, for a day of history at the base at Lahm Airport.

Togliatti said the men represent 190 years of combined service, 45,000 hours of flying time and a large piece of memory.

"How many times do you get six generals together to talk about history?" he asked.

Afterward, the generals stopped at the Mansfield Museum on Park Avenue West to meet the public.

Some, like retired Brig. Gen. Myron Ashcraft, go back to the days when the unit was a jet fighter squadron. Ashcraft, who now flies for United Airlines, made the switch from fighter cockpits to the lumbering C-130s. It was the right training for those commercial planes he flies today, he said.

Other generals included Major Gen. Francis Hazard, Brig. Gen. Ray Weber and Brig. Gen. Richard Green, who commanded the unit until his recent promotion and later retirement.

LARSON

ASHCRAFT

HAZARD

WEBER

GREEN

LATTIMORE

Brig. Gen. Vergel Lattimore was the 179th chaplain and the Air National Guard Assistant to the Air Force Chief of Chaplains, and is still active.

"I travel all over the country. I'm the chaplain's chaplain," he said.

Green, like Larson, doesn't care to see his old unit broken up.

"This is a tough blow," he said of the closure threat. "The Air Force simply wants our new planes. No matter what the unit has done, the planes are all they want."

Ashcraft agreed.

"They are stealing our airplanes. That's wrong, ethically and morally. It's a shame," he said.

Larson said a major study taken under his command in the early 1990s proved the unit could expand to double its size at Mansfield Lahm Airport. He said arguments that there is no room to expand are simply wrong.

"I think the 179th is not set for closure. We're going to fight this tooth and nail," he said.

rsimon@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7230

Some Guard bases may lose planes

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — What happens when you take away all the airplanes from an Air National Guard facility?

It's a question being asked at more than a dozen bases ever since the Pentagon announced that it wants the Air Force to consolidate its planes at fewer locations.

Under a military restructuring plan announced Friday, the Pentagon proposed shifting hundreds of planes and thousands of jobs away from Air National Guard bases.

For example:

- Reno-Tahoe International Airport Air Guard Station in Nevada would lose its eight C-130H planes.
- Bradley International Airport Air Guard Station in Connecticut would see all of its A-10s fly away.
- Nashville International Air Guard Station in Tennessee would lose its C-130H aircraft.

"How can you be an airlift wing without any airlift?" asked April Conway, a spokeswoman for the Nevada Air National Guard.

The recommendations now go to a president-appointed commission that will spend the summer holding hearings before sending its recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 8.

Compared with four previous Base Realignment and Closure rounds that began in 1988, National Guard and Reserve bases would be hit hard this time. The Pentagon proposes consolidating about 387 Reserve and National Guard installations into about 125, many to be located at or near active-duty bases.

Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the base closing commission Monday that the Air Force wants more planes in fewer units to more quickly fulfill missions.

"What they have right now are pockets of small numbers of aircraft that are at various locations," Myers said. "And it makes it unwieldy when you try to access them for missions, particularly the kind of missions we're in today in Iraq and Afghanistan and for that matter, around the world."

a lot of citizens are certain in their own minds that the Air Force wants our newer, better C-130. That this is a legal case of Air Piracy. The C-130-H's of the 179th have more up-dated equipment, as well as being much better maintained. Where in this article, General Richard Myers, says it more difficult to deploy planes in smaller groups. That is a mis-representation of the truth. In this day of radio, telephones and computers, not to mention signed letters of orders, fax etc. Any and all orders can be transmitted in a matter of seconds. The Air Force is being very heavy-handed in "robbing" the Air Guard Units of their C-130-H's. "Robbing" is how the peoples of these units feel, not to mention our citizens.

Pentagon: 179th too crowded

Lack of expansion room among reasons for recommended closing

By Greg Wright
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — About 1,000 full and part-time military jobs in Mansfield are in danger primarily because the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield has less room to grow than its rivals in Toledo, Arkansas and Alabama, according to Pentagon documents.

■ TV show explains BRAC process, page 6A.

One of several major criteria the Pentagon considered while determining which military bases to close or realign is whether the facility can accommodate growth. The base also must fit into the Pentagon's future defense strategy.

The Pentagon proposed disbanding the local Ohio Air National Guard last month and moving its eight C-130H transport planes to

See 179th, page 6A

179th

From page 1A

Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base in Alabama and the 314th Airlift Wing at Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas.

Other support services now at Mansfield would go to the Louisville International Airport Air Guard Station in Kentucky and the Toledo Express Airport Air Guard Station.

However, local officials said Monday the ratings are wrong, since city officials offered the Pentagon access to 168 additional acres when military officials indicated expansion might be considered a factor. The 179th Airlift Wing currently is located on 227 acres.

Rep. Michael Oxley, R-Findlay, and local officials have said they would fight to keep transport planes at the 179th at Mansfield Lahm Airport. Gov. Bob Taft announced Monday he will give the Richland Economic Development Corp. $50,000 to promote the 179th.

But it's unlikely the independent Base Realignment and Closure commission would overturn the Pentagon's decision because of the facility's size, a military expert said.

"It's too small to worry about," said John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a defense analysis firm.

While some bases on the closure list could lose thousands of jobs, Pike said, the 179th has just 234 full time military and civilian workers. Still, local officials argue, the base is the seventh largest employer in north central Ohio, including around 650 part-time jobs held by "traditional" National Guard members.

The Pentagon claimed in environmental documents released this weekend the 179th has no room for growth. Little Rock can develop another 1,783 acres; Maxwell an additional 264 acres and Toledo has 45 acres, the Pentagon said. Only Louisville had zero acreage available, the Pentagon said.

Another factor in the Defense Department's base closing considerations was military value. Mansfield ranked lower in military value and capacity than other airlift bases, according to the Pentagon.

The top ranked airlift base is Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. Mansfield ranked 119th out of 154 airlift bases behind Little Rock in 17th place; Maxwell, 21st; Louisville, 79th; and Toledo, 100th.

Local officials contend the 179th is still busy in the war on terrorism with its 35 deployments since Sept. 11, 2001. The facility is modern and there is room to house up to a dozen C-130H planes at the base, said retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Fred Larson, co-chair of the group fighting to save the 179th.

The Pentagon argues it has too many small Air National Guard units; its goal is to merge many with active-duty facilities, said Loren Thompson, a military expert at the Lexington Institute.

But the base closure panel, which is reviewing the Pentagon recommendations, could disagree and decide to keep national guard units such as the 179th open, Thompson said.

The nine-member commission must come up with a final closure list by Sept. 8.

The information that Lahm Field can't expand is absolutely in error. Lahm Field and 179th base there can be expanded greatly any time that becomes necessary. It already has one of the longest runways in the US and can accomodate the largest planes in the world. Lahm Field is an emergency landing strip, if necessary, for the space shuttle. Why spend Millions on increasing the length of a runway some place else, when Lahm Field has everything necessary.

Bad data led to decision, officials say

By Linda Martz
News Journal

MANSFIELD — The Pentagon used flawed data and left major questions unanswered in recommending the 179th Airlift Wing be closed, former base officials say.

Local officials plan to correct those issues in hope of keeping the Ohio Air National Guard unit and its 1,000 full- and part-time jobs in Mansfield, where it's been for more than 50 years.

Retired Brig. Gen. Myron Ashcraft, now a

See DATA, page 6A

Data

From page 1A

United Airlines pilot, said the thing that "jumped right out" when he looked at criteria released Monday is the Pentagon inaccurately said Mansfield Lahm Airport doesn't have enough land available to expand the wing's fleet from eight to 16 C-130H transport planes.

The military considers larger bases more efficient, the Lexington resident said.

Once the Pentagon documents said additional land was not available — an incorrect claim — other questions, such as what it would cost to expand, were left unanswered, he said.

"Once they say that we don't have the land, everything else is out the window," Ashcraft said. "They don't even evaluate how much it would cost to have a full squadron.

"That's the kind of stuff we have to fight it on — is the data," he said Monday night. "I don't see any other shortfall in the criteria that we would fail to meet."

Local officials said Monday they're frustrated by Pentagon documents showing the military meted out low scores to Lahm in areas such as room to expand, military value and capacity. The 179th, which has had 35 deployments since Sept. 11, 2001, generates about $70 million annually to the local economy.

Mayor Lydia Reid said local officials offered the Pentagon 168 additional acres — the city-owned Bradley and Kissell farms north of the airport — when military officials indicated expansion opportunities could be considered. The 179th Airlift Wing now takes up 227 acres.

"Certainly, if they need space to build on, they can build a hell of a lot on 168 acres," the mayor said Monday. "We have said 'whatever it takes, we'll do it.' We're willing to do whatever they want."

Reid said Lahm has a lot more going for it than acknowledged by the Pentagon rankings. "We've got the second longest runway in the state. Also, we've got an airport that is underutilized" — meaning military planes don't need to compete with a lot of other air traffic, she said.

"Some of the places that weren't on that list (to be closed) do not have the capability we do," Reid said.

Mike Greene, co-chairman of the Richland County Economic Development Corp./BRAC Steering Committee, which worked for more than a year to avoid a recommendation that the base be closed, said the Pentagon claims Mansfield doesn't have enough space for a large fleet.

But the master plan outlined in the early 1990s by former base commander Brig. Gen. Fred Larson anticipated constructing more ramps to store planes, Greene said.

"It's easily accomplished simply by putting down more pads," at much less cost than the $33 million the Department of Defense said it would save by closing down Mansfield's base, Greene said.

Ashcraft said the Air Force appears to want to shut down Guard and Reserve units so it can acquire their equipment. "They have a very old, tired, beat up fleet. The way to get airplanes without buying them is just to steal them from the Guard and Reserve," he said.

Larson said, "It doesn't matter to them that they gain no military value (to the country overall) from our airplanes," Larson said. "They're just moving planes from one location to another, at a cost of $33 million."

Local officials are still trying to arrange for a visit to Mansfield by a member of the BRAC commission before a decision is made — but may get only a visit from a staff member, Larson said.

Ohio has been allotted two hours at an upcoming regional base closure hearing in Buffalo — and Mansfield must share that time with Cleveland and Springfield, Larson said. "We're asking for half an hour, but we may get 15 minutes."

lmartz@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7229

With so much at stake for so many people, in so many parts of the United States, how could BRAC not have up-to-date information? How could they take their duty to the people of this country so lightly? If they failed to have the correct facts about the 179th and Lahm Field, how many errors are they making about other bases? They don't go to these military facilities, and God Forbid they should consult with anyone whose future is mightily affected by their decisions.

Editorial

Closing 179th would be a mistake

The Issue:
Today's special section devoted to the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

Our Opinion:
The message is simple: Save the 179th.

You should notice a little something extra in the News Journal today.

It's a four-page section aimed at sending a loud and clear message to the Base Realignment and Closure commission and lawmakers in Washington.

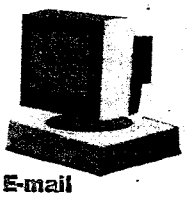
North central Ohio believes the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard should remain open and in operation at Lahm Airport in Mansfield.

The first page is a color poster with a simple message. "Save the 179th" is in huge letters, visible from a distance.

We urge you to put this poster in the window of your home, business or other locale that will be seen by the public. We want you to save it and bring it to the community-wide rally June 22. We then want you to mail it to the BRAC commission or lawmakers, and urge them to stop the planned closure of this vital military unit.

The second page is a message from retired Brig. Gen. Richard Green, a former commander of the 179th, who lays out a clear argument why the Pentagon wants the 179th closed and why it should remain open.

Send us your thoughts



E-mail
chunnell@
nncogannett.com

Mail
Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 25
Mansfield, OH 44901

Fax
(419) 521-7415

The third and fourth pages are messages from local businesses and residents in support of the unit, which has been a part of north central Ohio for more than 50 years.

Make no mistake. Closing the 179th is a mistake. The Pentagon simply wants the unit's eight C-130H aircraft, which would bolster the aging Active Duty and Reserve fleet for the Air Force.

But it would not be good public relations to make public that need for the planes. Instead, the Pentagon cited in its recommendation that there is no room for expansion at the local unit, a claim not supported by the facts. The City of Mansfield has offered another 168 acres for potential base expansion.

We urge the BRAC commission to look deeply into the Pentagon's flawed logic and look instead at the real reason for its closure recommendation — eight aircraft that Congress purchased explicitly for use by the Ohio Air National Guard.

We urge local residents to join the fight by posting today's posters all over the community. Bring them to the public rally. And then mail them to the people who will help keep the 179th open.

It's not to late. This fight has really just begun. We urge you to join in today.

This editorial states that there is plenty of room for expansion for the 179th Air Wing and Lahm Field in general.

Editorial

Pentagon has slapped part-time soldiers

The Issue:
Reserve and National Guard bases were hit hard in the latest round of BRAC Commission recommendations.

Our opinion:
This is a funny way to thank the soldiers who have put so much on the line in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Pentagon has a unique way of thanking the Reserve and National Guard forces for their great contributions during the war on terror.

The thanks is a cold slap in the face with Pentagon reality.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, want to shuffle, cut and otherwise consolidate 387 National Guard and Reserve installations into about 125.

This convoluted thinking is again proof that active duty military leaders a.) don't understand the Guard and Reserve lifestyle or appreciate the needs of part-time soldiers, sailors and airmen; and/or b.) don't care about the future of either segment of the nation's military.

Their plan would include closing the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard in Mansfield, one of the best flying units in the country today.

Myers said these Guard and Reserve moves are being made to enhance capability, cut costs and integrate the part-time forces more closely with active-duty units.

We would argue this plan would accomplish few of the goals outlined above, save for cutting costs.

Myers admitted "there will be some inconvenience" for people serving in the Guard and Reserve if the Pentagon's recommendations to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission are followed.

Some inconvenience? That's like saying Noah needed to build a bit of a boat when the rains came. The understatement is that severe.

How about the fact it will add hundreds or even thousands of miles, and the accompanying expenses for members to meet monthly military obligations? How about the fact it will force Guard or Reserve troops, some of whom may be nearly qualified for retirement, out of the service who simply cannot make long-range trips once a month?

The economic effect on the communities like Mansfield scheduled to lose these units is one thing. But the effect on the individual who has devoted much of his or her life in service to the country is even worse. Lahm Airport will survive and perhaps even flourish with the influx of private business should the 179th close its doors.

But the 1,000 full and part-time airmen who made up the unit, hundreds of which have served around the nation and the world since Sept. 11, 2001, will never be the same. The 179th, for example, has gone on 35 deployments in the last four years.

At a time when recruiting for the National Guard is down 24 percent from last year, it seems sheer folly to slap the face of the people who make the Guard and Reserve the success story the part-time military is today.

Without the Guard and Reserve, the Bush administration could not have fought its war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, about 40 percent of the 138,000 troops in Iraq are Guard and Reserve forces. The Pentagon's reward is to make their career in the military even tougher to maintain.

We urge the members of the BRAC Commission to take a hard look at what the Pentagon has in mind for the Guard and Reserve. We think when they do they will see the security of this nation will be severely weakened with Rumsfeld's plans for the nation's citizen soldiers.

This editorial will give you more information about the 179th, and the opinions of many are the same.

Bush defends base closings, says money being wasted

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP) — Speaking out for the first time in favor of controversial base closings, President Bush said Friday the nation is wasting billions of dollars on unnecessary military facilities and needs the money for the war on terrorism.

Bush, who faces opposition from many states to shutting down bases, tried to be reassuring. He said the bases would be chosen fairly and the government would do all it could

See BUSH, back page

Bush

From page 1A

to help affected communities recover.

But he made clear that the process — however painful — could not be avoided.

In a speech to graduates of the Naval Academy, he said the closings and realignments "will result in a military that is more efficient and better prepared so you can better protect the American people against the dangers of this new century."

"In this war, there is only one option and that is victory," he said, to cheers from midshipmen, relatives and faculty at the academy on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay.

When Bush last spoke at a Naval Academy commencement, it was four months before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and his focus was his administration's effort to reshape the military into a faster, lighter and more flexible — but not larger — fighting force.

Since the attacks, and amid a global anti-terror campaign and wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, a top-to-bottom military transformation is even more necessary, Bush said.

Keys to the success are new technology, repositioning of global forces, new weapons and realigned bases at home, he said.

Bush said he understands the fears in cities where bases have been marked for changes or closure. The first round of closings in a decade has members of Congress and local officials working hard to protect the 33 major bases slated for closure and the 29 others proposed for downsizing.

"I know firsthand how hard base closings can be on local communities," said the former Texas governor who saw facilities shut down in his state.

Members of the congressionally chartered Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) will visit bases and hold hearings on the Pentagon proposal. The plan aims to save $48.8 billion over 20 years by eliminating redundant and inefficient facilitates and promoting cooperation among the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps.

The panel will decide on changes to the Pentagon plan and give a list to Bush and Congress this fall for approval or rejection.

Commission chairman Anthony Principi on Friday joined a growing chorus of lawmakers demanding that the Defense Department quickly release the thousands of pages of data backing up each of its recommendations.

Briefly

More work for 179th

MANSFIELD — Twenty-nine members of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard will leave Monday in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, the U.S. military initiative in Afghanistan.

Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the 179th has flown more than 2,600 sorties, moved 35,000 passengers and transported 5,600 cargo tons of material in combat theaters, according to a unit news release.

The airlift wing, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, was recommended for closure this month by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission. An area campaign is under way to remove the 179th from the closure list before a final decision is made later this year.

No, Mr. Bush, we are not wasting money on our personell at our Military facilities or our personell. Maybe other places are, Ohio is not. We have had terrible losses. My grandson has served a tour of duty in Bosnia, and Iraq in one of the most dangerous missions in Iraq. Transportation of fuel. Now BRAC wants to do what ever with the 706th Transportation Company.

AmVets Post 43 joins fight for 179th

Rally planned for June 18 in Bellville

By David Benson
News Journal

BELLVILLE — A second major rally to keep the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard in Mansfield is in the works.

AmVets Post 43 in Bellville will host a Rally to Save the 179th Airlift Wing on June 18 at 3 p.m. at the bandstand on Main Street.

The 179th, based on Mansfield Lahm Airport, is on the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission list of facilities recommended to be shut down to reduce overall military expenses.

A separate Save Our 179th Day rally is set for June 22 at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage for that event.

Joli McCue is organizing the Bellville rally.

"When Post 43 called me and asked me if I would do it, I said I would be glad to. Somebody's got to do something," said McCue, the wife of a 179th member.

"If we get a big turnout it will show how much community support the 179th has. Our legislators will see we're not going to take this closing lying down," she said.

The other purpose of the rally is to provide information to those who have questions about the BRAC process and what individuals can do to try to prevent the closure, McCue said.

"So far, the support for the base and for this rally has just poured in. It's been phenomenal," she said.

Speakers at the Bellville rally will include Mayor Carolynn Studenmund, REDeC/BRAC steering committee co-chairman Brig. Gen.(r) Fred Larson, Brig. Gen.(r) Myron Ashcraft, Brig. Gen.(r) Rich Green, Richland County Commissioner Ed Olson, county Veteran Services Commission President Larry Moore and state Rep. Bill Hartnett.

In addition, form letters supporting the 179th will be available at the rally, which will need to be signed and mailed to designated legislators.

The AmVets and American Legion Color Guards and the Clear Fork High School marching band will participate. For children, there will be face painting, lemonade and popcorn stands and balloons.

Food and music will be featured after the rally at the AmVets Ron Boyce Hall located north of the bandstand on Main Street. Music will be provided by AmVets' Steve Stephenson, Dave King, & Westwind and by the Jo Kidd Outfit, comprised of 179th members.

For additional information, call McCue at (419) 886-4283. To donate food or supplies, contact the AmVets at (419) 886-2658.

dbenson@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7272

Tech Sgt. Ken Schonauer of Mansfield works on the tail section of a C-130 at Lahm Airport earlier this month. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal)*

Family and friends placed flags Sunday to honor veterans, soldiers and emergency personnel at a Healing Field ceremony in Fredericktown. The field will stand through Wednesday. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal photos)*

A place to honor many sacrifices

By Jennifer Kowalewski
News Journal

FREDERICKTOWN — Charles Blanchette served his country in World War I, World War II and the Korean War.

His granddaughter, Denise Needles, honored his memory by flying a flag Sunday in the Healing Fields at Kokosing Construction Co. The Exchange Club of Mount Vernon and Knox County sponsored the event to honor veterans, current soldiers and emergency personnel.

"It's pretty neat," the Mount Vernon woman said after buying a flag. "I saw all the flags and thought he has to have a flag."

Healing Fields began in Sandy, Utah, in 2002, when Colonial Flag Co. owner Paul Swenson wanted to honor those who lost their lives in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Volunteer Jane Engle said Swenson flew 3,000 flags in Utah to show how many victims were killed.

While residents walked among the flags, many felt a sense of healing, and Healing Fields have sprung up across the country, Engle said.

Chairwoman Melody Brent has worked to bring the Healing Field to Fredericktown since November 2004. Residents purchased flags to fly in a 2-acre field in honor of their loved ones, Exchange Club President Diane Collier said. Residents from Richland, Morrow, Ashland, Knox and Licking counties participated.

Residents can visit the field for the next few days

See FLAGS, back page

Ann Eing leans on her son, Jeff, as they look at the flag they placed to honor Ann's husband, John, a World War II Navy veteran.

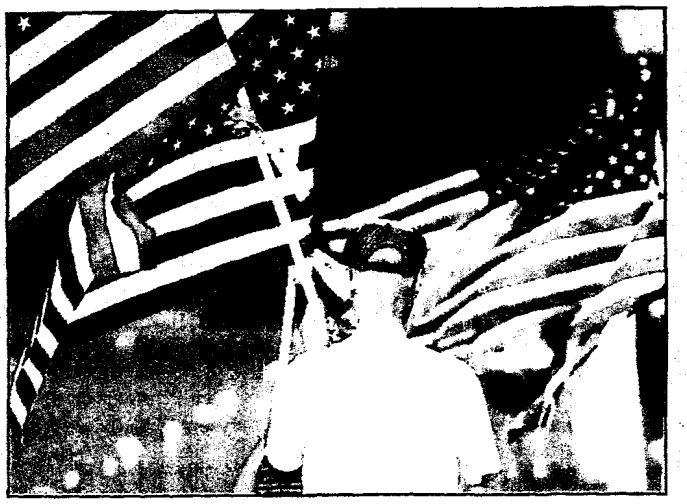
If you go

Residents can visit the Healing Field at Kokosing Construction Co. in Fredericktown through Wednesday evening. Kokosing Construction is on Ohio 13, near the Ohio 95 interchange. The flags honor and remember veterans, those serving in the military and emergency personnel. The program includes:

- **Today**, 3 p.m: Ohio Highway Patrol helicopter land; 4 p.m: The Petty Group (Knox County singers); 5 p.m: singers and speakers, including state Sen. Bill Harris, R-Mansfield.
- **Tuesday**, 4 p.m: Apple Valley Singers; 5 p.m: music and speakers including state Rep. Thom Collier, R-Mount Vernon.
- **Wednesday**, 4 p.m: Color Guard from Knox County Veterans; 4:30 p.m: speeches and closing remarks.

News Journal staff report

HEALING FIELD



A man walks among the memorial flags in the Healing Field at Fredericktown on Sunday. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal)*

Flags

From page 1A

to walk among the flags, Collier said.

"It's an experience you may never be a part of again," she said, as names were called over a loudspeaker to indicate whose turn it was to place a flag. "It's amazing to see all the red, white and blue. You can't imagine when the breeze blows, hearing 1,000 flags flapping in the breeze."

Collier, whose father-in-law stormed the beaches of Normandy, said she has participated in Healing Fields in Dallas and Findlay.

Volunteer Jim Tharp, a U.S. Navy veteran, said field coordinator Steve Murphy and the crew has worked since Friday to get the field ready. Poles were placed in the ground to support the flags, spaced 10 feet apart.

The crew installed lights so people could visit the field at night.

Denise Hess of Mount Vernon plans to visit again before it closes Wednesday. The Mount Vernon woman took her granddaughter, Shayla Ingram, 2, to the field.

"I just think it's going to be a unique experience," she said, waiting for her father's name to be called. "It's going to be emotional."

The Healing Field means more to her because her nephew, Travis Hess, is serving in Iraq with the Ohio National Guard 211th Maintenance Company of Newark.

"It's an experience you may never be part of again. It's amazing to see all the red, white and blue."

Diane Collier
Exchange Club president

U.S. Army Korean War veteran David A. Munk flew a flag in honor of his son, Rick L. Munk, a 23-year-old veteran of the Ohio Highway Patrol.

"It's great," David Munk said, watching the flags go up. "It's the best thing to happen to this little community. If it weren't for them, we wouldn't be here."

As residents drove into the field, a flag that had flown in Iraq hung between two fire engines to greet them. Bobby and Lisa Folden took their 9-month-old girl, Mackenzie, under the flags to honor veterans Bobby knows at the Station Break Senior Citizen Center in Mount Vernon.

Many of the clients at the center helped with the Healing Field by making ribbons with the names of those honored.

"You really respect what they did for the country," Bobby Folden said.

jkowalewsk@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7232

Concert to raise money for family of Galion soldier killed in Iraq

By Jennifer Kowalewski
News Journal

GALION — The Galion Community Band will remember a hero.

A combined band and choral concert to benefit the Lee Anne Ivy Fund is scheduled Sunday at 7 p.m. at Galion High School. Residents are asked to donate to assist the family of Marine Staff Sgt. Kendall Ivy II, 28, the Galion native killed in action in Iraq earlier this month.

"We hope that the community will support this effort," community band organizer Brian Treisch said. "The concert was suggested to us as a way to generate funds for the Ivy family.

"We have been able to move rapidly to put this concert together. Many of the band members were classmates, former teachers, and friends of Kendall."

The concert will feature patriotic music, combined band and choral works and pieces to honor Sgt. Ivy. Details are still being arranged.

"We are sure that 'Semper Fidelis,' 'The Stars & Stripes, Forever' and "Battle Hymn of the Republic' will be performed," Treisch said. "Rick Walker is working to complete the concert lineup and I am working to complete the band roster."

The Galion Community Band has performed since 1976, including annually at the Fourth of July concert before the fireworks display.

Any interested instrumental musician or choir member not already contacted is welcome to join the band for a rehearsal at 6 p.m. today.

"We have a solid band set at this time, but we welcome any musician," Treisch said.

According to a military report issued to his family, Ivy died May 11 in western Iraq from a severe leg wound suffered when the vehicle in which he was riding struck a roadside bomb.

Ivy, who went to Iraq in February, is the sixth member of the military from north central Ohio to die in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Ivy played football and baseball at Galion High School. He joined the Marine Corps after graduating in 1995. He is survived by his widow, Lee Anne, who lives in Camp LeJeune, N.C., and is four-months pregnant, two sons and a daughter.

The Lee Anne Ivy Fund has been established at First Federal Bank to assist the family.

jkowalewsk@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7232

If you go

What: Galion Community Band concert.
Where: Galion High School auditorium.
When: 7 p.m. Sunday.
Why: To benefit the family of Kendall Ivy, a soldier killed while serving his country in Iraq.
For information, call Brian Treisch at (419) 462-2209.

News Journal

Just one of our many lost service men in Iraq. Also, what is being done to aid and support his widow and family.

Lt. Col. William Schock and Col. Bill Roberts present a "My Boss Is a Patriot" certificate to Crestview Middle School Principal John McNeely at a school assembly Wednesday. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Patriotic Crestview principal honored

By Lou Whitmire
News Journal

OLIVESBURG — John McNeely, principal of Crestview Middle School, got quite a surprise Wednesday afternoon.

He received a "My Boss is a Patriot" certificate of appreciation from the Office of the Secretary of Defense at a school assembly.

McNeely is a strong supporter of the Ohio National Guard and Army Reserve. He was nominated for the honor by teacher Linda Roney, a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve.

Roney's military boss, 10th Battalion commander Lt. Col. William Schock, and Schock's boss, 6th Brigade commander Col. Bill Roberts, traveled from the 100th Division at Louisville, Ky., to present the award.

McNeely, surprised and emotional as he stood at the podium, said he was almost speechless.

"I'm honored to receive this award. ... You people in the military are

After the assembly, Roney said McNeely is supportive of everyone at the school who has relatives in the military.

"We're honoring him not for what he gives me, but for his patriotism," Roney said.

Fellow teacher Joyce Galloway thanked McNeely for supporting her when her son Daniel was deployed to Iraq with the Army Reserve's 1486th Transportation Co.

McNeely said he was being honored for something he ought to be doing anyway.

"When Mrs. Roney was deployed (after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks) I told Mrs. Roney your job will be here when you get back," he said.

Even when she is not deployed, Roney's job in the military requires travel and days off from her job as a seventh- and eighth-grade teacher.

She teaches a course in the Army Reserve called "combined arms exercise," and she is area coordinator for Kentucky. Her military job most recently took her out of the classroom April 29 to May 4 to participate in weapons training.

Schock said Roney couldn't do her job without employers like Crestview Schools.

"She is responsible for all instructors in Kentucky who teach the course," he said.

Roney trains people in eight states — Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Schock, 57, who leaves in June for Iraq to assist the Iraqi people with veterans affairs, said the award presentation was his first and called it a proud moment. He is a human resources director for the regional veteran's affairs office in Louisville.

Roberts, an attorney in Kentucky, lauded McNeely for his willingness to share Roney with her other job.

"We as Army Reserve soldiers depend on two groups of people — our families and employers. We're here to recognize someone who is a patriot to us," Roberts said.

McNeely said his uncle John was drafted into World War II and landed in the Normandy invasion. McNeely's father, Bryon McNeely, served in World War II and received a Purple Heart, a Bronze Star and other honors — and survived being shot twice in the back of the head.

The principal said the award ranked with the birth of his daughter. "It's a moment I will remember," he said.

Roney said she first met her principal on the telephone.

"He made it clear he was very patriotic and me being in the Reserve would not be a detriment," she recalled.

"I have a wonderful lady who is my sub. I just have the best of all worlds."

Sarah Jenkins, 12, a sixth-grader, applauded her principal.

"He runs the school well," she said.

Classmate Connor Plemens, 12, said McNeely is nice.

"He is very deserving of this," he added.

lwhitmire@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7223

Another Civilian - Military person, who is a wonderful asset to our Community. The 179th Also has a choir that sings at special local events.

Remembering the soldiers

Above, Gary Johnson, a member of the Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing for 10 years, stands beside his father, Glenn Johnson, a World War II Army veteran, during the "America, we must not forget" service Sunday at the Berean Baptist Church on Middle Bellville Road. Glenn Johnson has another son, Randy, in the service in Uzbekistan. Glenn's wife, Phyllis, is sitting to his right.

Right, Marine Tim Crumbliss sings "O' God, Our Help in Ages Past" during the service Sunday. Backing up Crumbliss is the church choir, led by the Rev. Bryan Moak.

(Walt Butler/ News Journal photos)

The people who are in our Civilian-Military units, are not just Military personell. They are part of our lives in every way. Our fathers and mothers, Sons and daughters, our friends, whom we love. Now BRAC wants to dis-respect them.

BRAC staff member to visit 179th

But BRAC/REDeC steering committee not sure if they are even allowed to attend

Program on WMFD-TV lays out story of 179th, BRAC commission

News Journal staff report

MANSFIELD — Mike Greene and Ret. Brig. Gen. Fred Larson, the former commander of the 179th, who together are leading efforts to save the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, have taped a program that will air on WMFD-TV at 7:30 p.m. each evening through Sunday.

"It pretty much lays out the entire story of the 179th and the BRAC commission and why it is so vital that the air base remains here in Mansfield," Greene said. "I hope everyone in Mansfield will watch it and come down and support us at our rally on June 22."

A "Save Our 179th Day" rally is set that day at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract a crowd of 10,000 and national media coverage. Greene hopes a huge public show of support helps sway some minds.

Ret. Brig. Gen. Steve Koper, president of the National Guard Association of the United States, has committed to attend the rally. Greene said he expects U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley and Ohio Adjutant Gen. Greg Wayt to be on hand. He's confident that Gov. Bob Taft will also be in Mansfield that day.

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Local officials haven't been successful in arranging a visit to Mansfield by a member of the Base Realignment and Closure commission but they haven't given up efforts to argue their case.

A BRAC commission staff member — not an actual commissioner — will be in Mansfield on Tuesday to visit the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at Mansfield Lahm Airport, which last month was placed on a list of military bases to be closed by the Pentagon.

Call it a second-tier visit.

"He will meet with staff at the air base," said Mike Greene, of the Richland Economic Development Corporation, which is spearheading efforts to keep the 179th in Mansfield.

GREENE

"I don't even know if our committee will be allowed to attend. If we are, we won't be able to ask questions or present our case.

"The briefing will be 100 percent presented and produced by the 179th. It will not be open to the public. My hope is that staffer comes here with an open mind."

In the meantime the BRAC/REDeC steering committee is continuing its efforts to get the 179th off the closure list. It now has another $50,000 to work with.

The State Controlling Board released the money, promised by Gov. Bob Taft, on Wednesday.

"It certainly will help," Greene said. "It will help pay for our trip to Buffalo. It could pay for other trips. It could pay for a trip to Washington, D.C."

Greene said such a trip to Washington could be for the purpose of arguing the Mansfield case before a BRAC commission member.

"If they won't come to us, we'll go to them," he said.

Efforts have intensified in the weeks since the 179th was placed on the Pentagon's closure list. A lobbying group is still active in Washington, D.C., and the local steering committee has hired a consultant in Columbus to help draft its presentation for a regional hearing in Buffalo on June 27.

Ohio, which had three bases on the list, will get a chance to argue its case at that hearing. The state has been allotted a total of two hours. Greene hopes Mansfield gets at least 30 minutes.

"We'll attend some hearings prior to that so we can check out the format and see what some of the other arguments have been and how they've been presented," Greene said.

"I wouldn't say that's our last effort to present our case, but the style and substance of our presentation will be important."

rkent@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7274

Former 179th generals will meet the public

Six generals, former members of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, will be together for the first time Thursday for a "Meet the Generals Day" at Mansfield Memorial Museum, 34 Park Avenue West.

They will greet the public from 4 to 6 p.m.

Scheduled to participate are Francis Hazard, Ray Weber, Fred Larson, Myron Ashcraft, Rich Green and Vergel Lattimore.

The 179th, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, has been recommended for closing by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission. Public rallies to have the 179th removed from the closure list are planned for June 18 in Bellville and June 22 on the square in Mansfield.

As you can see we are doing everything we can possibly do to convince the BRAC that we really want to keep all of Civilian-Military facilities and personell in place. Even to producing a TV program to inform all of our citizens about our Civilian-Military.

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

1. Mission/Military Value

- Primary Aircraft Weapons System: (8) C-130H2+ Hercules (Distinguishing Operational and Technical highlights are detailed in attachment 1.); Valued at $240,000,000.

- Major Command: Air Mobility Command (AMC), Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.

- The proud home to one the most highly trained, combat-tested, veteran, C-130 forces in the United States Air Force. Since Vietnam, we have led the way in the C-130 community in both combat hours and sorties.

- Our air crews have been decorated with over 116 Air Medals and 16 Aerial Achievement Medals since Operations Joint Guard (1996-1998, Sarajevo), and Joint Forge (1998-1999, Sarajevo); these medals recognize meritorious service and/or valor in aerial flight.

- We make significant airlift contributions to the USAF mission and have an enviable safety record. Flying an accident-free average of over 3,400 hours from FY 2003 to FY 2005 (projected), we have accumulated a total of over 134,000 safe flying hours.

- We are a vital component of the Total Force (with the ANG providing nearly 50% of the USAF's tactical airlift capability, the fight can't be fought without us) and have supported combat and humanitarian operations and exercises around the world. Some examples:

  Volant Oak (Panama); 1979 - 1999.
  Volant Partner (Germany); 1987 - 1992
  Reforger (Alaska); 1983
  Desert Shield Desert Storm; 1990 - 1991.
  Operation Restore Hope (Somalia); 1992 – 1993.
  Operation Provide Promise (Bosnia); 1993 – 1994.
  Operation Joint Endeavor (Bosnia); 1996 – 1998.
  Operation Joint Guard (Bosnia); 1998 – 1999.
  Operation Joint Forge (Bosnia); 1999 – 2002.
  Operation Southern Watch (Mid-East); 1996 – 1999.
  Operation Uphold Democracy (Haiti); 1994.
  Operation Shining Hope (Kosovo); 1999.

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

- Since 9/11, the inception of the Global War on Terror, and Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom, the 179th has been engaged like never before. Some key statistics:

2001		
	Operations Supported	Coronet Oak, Deep Freeze, Noble Eagle
	Participating units	Airlift Squadron, Medical Squadron, Logistics Support, Airlift Squadron, Aerial Port Squadron
	Days served	13,842
2002		
	Operations Supported	Southern Watch, Deep Freeze, Noble Eagle, Israeli support, Enduring Freedom, Joint Forge, Northern Watch
	Participating units	Aircraft maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Civil engineering squadron, Services
	Days served	56,912
2003		
	Operations Supported	Deep Freeze, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, Israeli Support
	Participating units	Aircraft Operations, Aircraft Maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Civil engineering squadron, Services, Intelligence
	Days served	35,971
2004		
	Operations Supported	Deep Freeze, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom
	Participating units	Aircraft Operations, Aircraft Maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Intelligence
	Days served	64,052

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

Combat Aerial Operations Totals for OEF and OIF:

	HOURS	SORTIES	PAX	CARGO TONS
OIF AL JABER	1,219.3	878	9,735	1287.2
OIF TALLIL, AL SALEM, AL UDIED	1,839.4	1,222	19,755	2,429
OEF AL SALEM, AL UDIED, CURRENT AOR	898.6	550	5490	1852.6
TOTALS	3957.3	2650	34980	5568.8

- Our Proposed $8.0 M Fire/Crash Rescue Station will accommodate **JOINT** Air National Guard/Army National Guard firefighting missions.

- In addition to the flying mission, we are home to a wide range of expeditionary combat and homeland security support units, capable of delivering many invaluable capabilities. Some examples:

  Civil Engineering
  - Engineering force to maintain facilities and infrastructure
  - Fire Department and Power Production team

  Logistics Readiness Squadron
  - Supply of materiel and fuels, maintenance of the vehicle fleet, traffic management services and planning and management of the mobilization process to ensure an accurate and rapid response in the event of contingency moves or national emergency.

  Aerial Port Squadron
  - Coordinate missions with Base Operations and the affected work centers of the squadron
  - Plan, schedule and process air cargo, passengers, and mail
  - Prepare load plans, manifests and air movement reports using automated or manual tools
  - Prepare/Inspect and Process Cargo for onward movement

  Security Forces Squadron
  - Point of entry control to the installation
  - Armed response to the installation

- Presidential Aircraft support at remote locations upon request
- Support to the Governor for natural or man-made disasters

Communications Flight
- Maintenance and support to computers and crypto equipment.
- Maintenance and support to telephone switch and outside telephone plant.
- Maintenance and support to land mobile radio (LMR), Ground to Air radio (VHF/UHF), state emergency radio (HF) and tactical mobility radio.
- Visual information support

Services Flight
- Food Service, Lodging, Wartime Mortuary Affairs, Search & Recovery Operations, Morale, Welfare & Recreation, Tactical Field Exchange

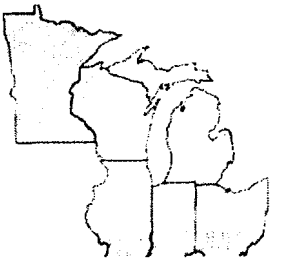
Mission Support Flight
- Personnel services to the Wing and surrounding retired military community, including recruiting, retention, enlistment, retirements, Separations, Force Deployment and sustainment, ID Cards and health care Enrollment, support.

Environmental Management Office
- Programs to reduce hazardous and solid waste generation
- Increase recycling and Green Purchasing efforts
- Maintain compliance with all applicable EPA, Air Force, and Air National Guard regulations

Expeditionary Medical Support (EMEDS)
- Mobile and highly capable clinical disaster response/assessment

- Because the ANG is also the State Governors' asset (The Guard is the only military force immediately available to a governor in times of emergency, including civil unrest and natural or manmade disasters), we are uniquely positioned to support a host of Homeland Security missions. Some examples:

Expeditionary Medical Support
- Forward deployed trauma resuscitation/surgical capability including critical care
- Multi-functional team composition decreases number of medics required to deploy
    - 179MDG is only MDG in FEMA Region 5 with Surgical capabilities
    - Region Five Consists of:
        - Ohio



- Michigan
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Wisconsin
- Minnesota

Security Forces

- Conduct anti-terror assessments and provide threat information to the Governor
- Coordinate local anti-terrorism intelligence sharing with local police agencies

Readiness

- Provide trained and equipped Nuclear Biologic Chemical (NBC) Readiness Personnel

Communication Flight

- Provide critical command and control with State Emergency Management Agency via the State HF radio net. Additionally the 179th CF has direct radio contact and support agreements with local fire and law enforcement agencies, which would enable us to coordinate a Homeland Defense emergency response with the rest of the State.

2. Land, Facilities, Infrastructure, Air Space

- Mansfield's 9000-foot, Instrument Flight Rule (IFR)-equipped runway is one of the longest in Ohio (only 6 of 168 are longer.)

- No commercial carriers compete for Mansfield-Lahm's airspace.

- We enjoy exceptional mission support facilities:
  - 33 Buildings: 292,863 Sq. Ft.
  - Total Acres: 230
  - Value: $92,928,000.
  - Main Cantonment Area: 67 Acres
  - Drop Zone: 157 Acres
  - **Airport Costs**: $49,904

  - Military Construction Investments:
    1997 - Medical Training/Dining Hall: $3.1M
    1998 - Jet Fuel Storage Complex: $4.1 M
    1998 - Headquarters Building: $4.7 M
    2001 - Security Forces Operations Building: $2.7 M

2003 - Air Operations/Communications Building: $6.6 M
2004 - Transportation Complex: $3.3 M
2005 – Upgraded/Hardened Main Gate Facility: $690 K

- Planned Improvements
  Fire Station: $8.0 M (FY '06)
  Civil Engineering Facility: $5.9 M (FY '09)

- Ample room for expansion (see attachment 2)

3. **Economic Impact**

Employees

Full-time	293
Duty Status Guardsmen	767
Total	**1060**

Impact on Local Economy

Annual Payroll	$ 25.5M
Operating Funds	$ 16.6M
Total	**$ 42.1M**

Operating Funds

Operations & Maintenance	$ 114,300
Ohio National Guard Tuition Assistance Program	$ 160,000
State Income Tax	$ 995,160
Profit for the State	**$ 720,860**

Benefit to Mansfield

Mansfield City Income Tax	$174,000
Income from Property Lease	$ 49,905
Profit for Mansfield	**$ 223,905**

4. **Community Infrastructure Support**
   - Large, talented, and supportive recruiting community with a radius reaching as far as Columbus and Cleveland, resulting in unit strength of 104.7%, 5th in the entire ANG (91 units.)

- Robust relationships with the City of Mansfield, Richland and surrounding counties, especially civic and legislative leaders.

- Property lease from City of Mansfield only ≈ $50K / year

- Over 1500 sleeping rooms within easy driving distance of the base could accommodate much larger traditional force, or surge requirements (we use only 80 double-occupied rooms now, with a strength of 767 traditional Guardsmen)

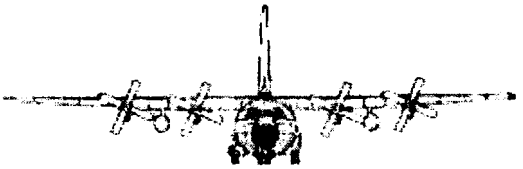
5. **Environmental Impact:**
   - The 179th has a proud record of Environmental Stewardship, e.g.,
     - Installation Restoration Program (IRP):
       - 5 of 8 sites are officially closed.
       - All will be closed by mid-2006.
     - No underground storage tank issues
     - Current small arms firing range will require soil remediation when it is ordered closed. Estimated cost $ 0.5M.

6. **Awards and Accomplishments:**

Year	Inspection/Award	Reason or Results
2005	Environmental, Safety, Occupational, Health Compliance Assessment & Management Program (ESOHCAMP)	Outstanding and Best Ever Seen
2004	Health Services Inspection (HSI)	Excellent Rating
2003	Deneke Award	Outstanding ANG Civil Engineer
2002	CMSgt Edward Wilbert Award	Outstanding Fire Dept of the Year
2002	James D. Weaver Award	Outstanding Fulltime Medical Technician
2002	ANG Environmental Quality Award For Recycling	
2002	ANG Services Flt of the Year	Superior Performance
2002	Initial Readiness Inspection	Excellent
2002	Unit Compliance Inspection	Excellent
2002	Aircrew Stan/Eval Inspection	Excellent
2001	AF Outstanding Unit Award	Outstanding Performance
2001	ANG Metcalf Trophy	Outstanding Mission Accomplishment
2000	Tappan Award	Outstanding Ohio Flying Unit
2000	EORI @ Ramstein AB, GE	Top rating
2000	Health Services Inspection	Highest Air Force rating
2000	IG Exercise (IGX)	Top rating
1999	Tappan Award	Outstanding Ohio Flying Unit

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

Attachment 1



C-130 HERCULES

The C-130 Hercules primarily performs the tactical intra-theater portion of the airlift mission. The aircraft is capable of operating from rough; dirt strips and is the prime transport for para-dropping troops and equipment into hostile areas. Basic and specialized versions perform a diversity of roles, including airlift support, aero medical missions, and natural disaster relief missions.

The C-130 Hercules has unsurpassed versatility, performance, and mission effectiveness. The flexible design of the Hercules enables it to be configured for many different missions, allowing for one aircraft to perform the role of many. Much of the special mission equipment added to the Hercules is removable, allowing the aircraft to revert back to its cargo delivery role if desired. Additionally, the C-130 can be rapidly reconfigured for the various types of cargo

The C-130's design maximum gross weight is 155,000 pounds (175,000 pounds wartime) with a normal landing weight of 130,000 pounds. The airplane is capable of airlifting 6 pallets or 74 litters or 16 CDS bundles or 92 combat troops or 64 paratroopers. It can also carry 45,000 pounds of cargo or a combination of any of these up to the cargo compartment capacity or maximum allowable weight.

Conduct aero medical evacuation operations. Movement of casualties by air transportation under the supervision of qualified aero medical evacuation crew members to/between medical treatment facilities

Support psychological operations. Support of operations targeted against the minds of the enemy civilian population and combat forces. Speaker operations and leaflet airdrops can be used to influence and demoralize hostile forces prior to and during offensive operations

The mission of the C-130 is to provide rapid transportation of personnel or cargo for delivery by parachute to a designated drop zone, or by landing at austere locations within the theater of operations.

The C-130 provides long range, day or night capability. C-130 combat delivery assets can perform airdrops in visual conditions; AWADS C-130s are additionally capable of executing airdrops in IMC (Instrument Meteorological Conditions) independent of external navigation aids

The C-130 can deliver personnel, equipment or supplies either by landing or by various aerial delivery modes.

In the first, parachutes pull the load, weighing up to 42,000 pounds, from the aircraft. When the load is clear of the plane, cargo parachutes inflate and lower the load to the ground.

The second method, called the Container Delivery System, uses the force of gravity to pull from one to 16 bundles of supplies from the aircraft. When the bundles, weighing up to 2,200 pounds each, are out of the aircraft, parachutes inflate and lower them to the ground.

MANSFIELD AIRCRAFT UPGRADES

AWADS (Adverse Weather Aerial Delivery System) - The precise delivery of personnel, equipment, and supplies during adverse weather, using a self-contained aircraft instrumentation system without artificial ground assistance or the use of ground navigational aids.

SCNS (Self-Contained Navigation System) - SCNS provides the flight crew an integrated navigation system, with four independent navigation solutions, including GPS, flight guidance and advisory information to fly a variety of missions. SCNS also provides control of communication and navigation radios, flight planning and calculation, and control of troop/cargo airdrops, as well as processing of radar data on some models.

ESKE (Enhanced Station Keeping Equipment)

GPWS (Ground Proximity Warning System)

GPS (Global Positioning System) - Installs a space-based all-weather radio navigation system into all SCNS-equipped C-130s to allow autonomous navigation capabilities. Eliminates reliance upon ground-based stations to provide navigational inputs to aircraft systems

MLS (Microwave Landing System) - Allows precision approaches and landings. MLS will allow elimination of ILS, which suffers from frequency congestion.

NVG (Night Vision Goggles)

NVIS (Night Vision Imaging System)

SATCOM (Satellite Communication) - Installs a permanent SATCOM antenna, interface cabling, preamplifier, and control panel for portable SATCOM radios required by joint users of combat delivery aircraft

GCAS (Ground Collision Avoidance System)

TCAS (Traffic Collision Avoidance System)

Threat Avoidance.

Improved capability to detect/degrade/defeat threats.

Chaff Flare Dispensers, Radar Jammers

MWS (Missile Warning System)

RWS (Radar Warning System)

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

OTHER DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF MANSFIELD'S C-130 FLEET

- Flying Hours (average equivalent baseline) on our aircraft place them at less than half of their useful life span.

- **Enhanced Cargo Delivery** capability via the Canary Slide Ramp System (ideal for Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Defense Team rapid movement requirement)

- Our **record of excellence and innovation in aircraft maintenance** has involved us in important, mission-enhancing research and development (often for the entire C-130 fleet):

  - **(BCEM) Battery Control Electronic Module** test aircraft for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center

  - **Corrosion Sensor Test Aircraft** for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center (administered by Battelle Labs in Columbus) to aid in determining corrosion impact from world wide environmental conditions on entire ANG and Air Force C-130 fleet. This evaluation will also help to re-evaluate C-130 aircraft frequency for wash intervals and corrosion inspections

  - **SATCOM Form Fit And Function Evaluation** (C-130 aircraft) for Wright Patterson AFB to help refine the Satellite Secure Communications System for CENTAF operations

  - Potential **Deicing Fluid Evaluation Site** for the Air Force Research Laboratory

  - **Main Landing Gear Torque Tube Coupling Safety Test Aircraft** for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center and Air Mobility Command (AMC)

  - Evaluator for the **Airdrop Ballistic Winds / Gps Tracker Test** for Wright Patterson, AFB

RECEIVED
06302005

June 27, 2005

Mr. James H. Bilbray
c/o BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street
Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Subject: The removal of the C-130-H's from the 179th Air Wing; Lahm Field; Mansfield, Ohio

Subject: The lack of factual information about the 179th and other Air Guard, National Guard, and Reservist personell or their facilities.

Dear Sir,

I have done quite a lot of research on the subject of the 179th Air Wing, based at Lahm Field; Mansfield, Ohio. Also have spent time in composing this letter. Please, please, sir; do me the courtesy of reading what I have provided for your enlightenment. Enclosed is much information regarding the past and present of the 179th. It is a very active Air Guard Unit. Their planes and the personell have been deployed to many places in the world for both Military and Humanitarian missions, all successfully completed.

Inspections of the 179th have always been completed with the highest possible ratings. All the years the 179th Air Guard has been at Lahm Field it has always been carefully and prudefully maintained. The runway at Lahm Field is one of the longest in the US and can accomodate the largest planes now flying. It is also an emergency landing strip for a shuttle. Why give up the use of this runway for Military use, just to spend billions on another airstrip at some other Air Base?

Guard Units were <u>never</u> meant to be moved around. They were supposed to be locally based, and the members of these Guard Units were to train at their facilities twice a month, then to have 2 weeks of more concentrated training

at a regular, or "standing" military facility.
By closing these Guard and Reserve facilities you are defeating the very purpose for which they were created.
By going forward with your plans in Ohio you are destroying our faith and trust in the purpose and structure of our Guard system, and betraying the people who serve in them.
You will force the retirement of many Senior Officers and staff, with many years of experience and great depths of knowledge. Young people who have homes and families will not re-new their contracts. They will not up-root their families
Currently, there is a short fall in signing up new recruits for some branches of service. If you forge ahead with closing of so many Militi'tary bases, especially Guard and Reserve forces, you will have a MAJOR in recruiting over-all, short-fall.
The ENTIRE BRAC needs to review their short-sighted thinking while we still have a civilian-military. Since about 40 per cent of our fighting man power now in the war zones is civilian-military, BRAC needs to use more thought before taking any action. Taking into account at the last "closing" it was to save 19 billion dollars. It cost 22 billion to close the bases. I don't see any money saved

The professional or career Military expects to move around frequently. They know this will happen upon signing contracts to serve. Both they, and their families expect this. Many resources at their disposal will help and render advice and much financial aid to make their transitions easy as possible.
Guard and Reserve Units are not prepared for such change. Neither are their personnell. Nothing is in place to move them from one location to the next. Especially not financially.
BRAC seems to have no regard or compassion for what ever hardships or problems might arise for Reserve or Guard, or any one else, for that matter.
The 179th has an enviable safety record. They have not had a lost time accident in many years. Let alone a formal "Stand Down" to consider or re-evaluate a problem. It has always been, and still is a very well-run facilety.
Lahm Field is one of the newer Air Guard bases. It has been well-maintained and up-graded. It is a Military Installation to be proud of. Instead of taking away the C-130-H's, bring more of them here. If you must close an Air Wing, bring the F-16's here, there is plenty of room.
Also, the 706th Transportation Company from Marion, Ohio could be based at Lahm, plus the Guard Units from Mansfield and Ashland.

That makes more sense to most people around here.
Contrary to what BRAC states that we have no room to expand, we have a LOT more land to expand to if it becomes necessary.
BRAC also states it is difficult to activate smaller Units. Apparently, they are ignorant of computers, fax machines, all kinds of telephones, radio, and good-old-fashioned written orders.
I think Ohio may have lost more people in Iraq than any other state, not too mention many horribly wounded. Their lives, and their families lives will never be the same again. More Ohioans are still being deployed, some from the 179th.
How can BRAC think of doing away with such an active Air Wing?
Here in Ohio we have great caring, reverance, and respect for our Military people, living and dead. We take great pride in what our hero's, past and present have sacrificed for us and the rest of the nation. BRAC's high handedness is an insult to all of our service people, living or dead, and their families and people who loved them, also.
BRAC withholds information from the very people most affected by their decisions. Even their address and telephone numbers are not available to us, the "common people". The "common masses" who pay their salaries one way or another.

Many of us, the citizens of Ohio believe the Air Force is commiting legal robbery, and getting BRAC to do it for them. Our Air Guard planes are newer, better equiped, and much better maintained than the Cargo planes the Air Force now has at their disposal.

So when to acquire planes, the quickest and with the least cost?

Not a problem. We will just remove them from the Air Guard Units. Get them under our control and our command.

That will make the Air Force look better to the US Congress when we ask them for money for some "pet project".

The 179th is an Air Wing. How can they be an Air Wing without planes.

Ruth Ann Wehl R#12 705 Pinkney Road
Mansfield, Ohio 44903 1 (419) 468-1253

The above "Cartoon" is the way many of our citizens feel about closing the 179th Air Base. We in Ohio have no large military base as do many other states. We have no Eglin Air Field, No Camp Le June, No Fort Wood, No May Port, No Fort Leonard Wood etc.

The people of Ohio have in the past sacrificed many of our fine National Guard, Reservists, Air Guard personell for generations, and we are still doing so. We feel betrayed by what BRAC wishes to do. It is a direct insult to all who have died and many who have been so terribly wounded. A "slap in the face" to all of those who have given so much and to everyone who loved them

Vietnam Memorial stirs emotions

By John Jarvis
Gannett News Service

UPPER SANDUSKY — A wool stocking cap pulled halfway down on his head, the man in the red-and-black flannel jacket ran his fingers slowly across the letters.

W-I-L-L-I-A-M E F-O-L-L-O-N.

A grimace wrinkled the 58-year-old's expression, and he lowered his hand from the white name on the black wall to rub the salt-and-pepper whiskers on his face.

"William E. Follon. ... He got killed on the day we were supposed to leave," said Tom Gottfried of Carey. Members of the Air Force's 37th Combat Engineers, they had already turned in their battle gear and were at an airfield in Binh Dinh province "waiting for a ride out of the country."

Before their flight arrived, an enemy rocket attack killed the sergeant from Iowa, one of Gottfried's "best buddies."

"It killed him pretty much outright," Gottfried said.

Follon's is one of about 58,000 names of men and women killed in the Vietnam War commemorated on the Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall & Museum just outside of Upper Sandusky. The display will be at Thiel's Wheels on Tarhe Trail at U.S. 23 and Ohio 53 through Sunday.

Gottfried spent 13 months in Vietnam, from the end of 1968 through Feb. 2, 1970.

"It was good to be home, but it was kind of a letdown," because of the ill will some had for the war and those who fought in it, he said.

Gottfried said he'd feel better about his experience in Southeast Asia "if we'd won the war. ... There are a lot of good people on this wall who probably wouldn't be on there if we'd kept on."

Working security for the event, former Marion-area resident Mark Sigler of Harpster helped students find names on the wall.

"It lets you know the costs of war," said Sigler, an Army sergeant in the transportation corps during the Vietnam War era. He served in Korea, unlike his friend, Medard A.J. Ruehle.

Ruehle was one of 11 Wyandot County residents who died in Southeast Asia.

"He got out of a helicopter to help some wounded and in the process got killed himself," Sigler said.

Visiting the Upper Sandusky wall event from Findlay was Frederick Adams, who helped set up a similar tribute in his city.

"There's a bunch of guys from Findlay I went to school with who are on the wall," Adams said. "It's hard to just come here and not feel something for all these people."

Gary Cox of Marion, who helped provide computer information to assist visitors in locating their loved ones' names on the wall last fall in Marion, helped with the Upper Sandusky event as well.

If you go

- **What:** The Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall & Museum
- **When:** Through Sunday
  Today: 1 p.m., Veterans tribute ceremony; 6 p.m., musical and flag tribute
  Sunday: 2 p.m., closing ceremony
- **Where:** Thiel's Wheels, Tarhe Trail at U.S. 23 and Ohio 53, Upper Sandusky.

"I pay tribute to the 58,000 names that are on that wall."

Gary Cox
veteran

"I pay tribute to the 58,000 names that are on the wall," said Cox, a former Marine who didn't see combat. "As a Vietnam-era veteran I wasn't able to participate, but I can give back to the guys that did."

The people of Ohio Honor their military dead, I believe more than any other state. We have hundreds if not thousands of Memorials to our beloved dead from our largest towns to our smallest villages. On Memorial Day our cemeteries are a mass of color because all of the Star and Stripes flying over every veterans grave. The BRAC is going to dis-Honor some of these veterans. They were deployed from our Reserve and Guard Units. Now, you want to "change the Rules" in the middle of the war, and make a "hardship" for those who still are under contract to the military.

Local war hero honored in new museum display

News Journal
staff reports

MANSFIELD — A Memorial Day military display featuring the late Albert Allen of Mansfield, who is a member of Ohio's Military Hall of Fame, will open Saturday and run through the Memorial Day weekend at the Mansfield Museum at 35 Park Avenue West.

Allen, who died last year, was a lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserves and a survivor of the Bataan Death March and year's spent in Japanese prisoner of war camps during World War II.

Museum Curator Scott Schaut said the items were donated by Allen's wife, Nancy. He said the display includes memorabilia from Allen's father, Albert L "Cap" Allen Sr., who was commander of Mansfield's Company M, 145th Infantry, 37th Division in France during World War I.

Also on display will be "broadside" advertisements for previous Memorial Day services held in this city during the 1880s when Civil War veterans were the only ex-soldiers available to be honored.

Schaut said displays concerning World War II and home-front industry in Mansfield, as well as a history of the 179th Airlift Wing, are still up.

He said one of the oddities of military history in Richland County is that while there are many displays concerning the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War and the two World Wars, there are almost no items connected with the Mexican-American War of 1845 or the Spanish-American War of 1898.

"Both of those wars have been totally overshadowed by the bigger wars," Schaut said. "Mansfield sent troops to fight Mexico in 1845 and many more to Cuba in 1898.

"Commander Edward Parker Wood of Mansfield was commander of the U.S.S. Petrel at the battle of Manila Bay."

The museum is open Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. and on Memorial Day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Lately our local Newspaper has been "featuring" a World War II milet ary person, with a long article about them.
Their service in the second World War, their lives after Military service, and other interesting stories the servicemen may tell.
We do revere our military people.
Although, a number of the BRAC have been milet ary, I don't believe they hold our more humb Reserve and Guard people in the same high esteem as we do.

Ohio squad takes heavy hit in Iraq

COLUMBUS (AP) — Six Marines were killed and another 15 were wounded from one central Ohio squad in a major U.S. offensive near Iraq's border with Syria, a newspaper reported.

The squad was one of three belonging to the 1st Platoon of Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment, according to The Washington Post, which has a reporter embedded with Operation Matador.

The military has confirmed five Marine deaths so far and says about 100 insurgents have been killed in the operation — one of the largest U.S. offensives since Fallujah was reclaimed from militants.

Chief Warrant Officer Orrin Bowman, the site commander for the Columbus-based company, confirmed Thursday the company was participating in the operation and had taken casualties. He declined to say how many from the Marine reserve unit had been killed or release any names.

The military has identified two Ohio Marines with the 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment who have died in Iraq since Sunday. Lance Cpl. Wesley G. Davids, 20, of Dublin, was killed in an explosion in Karabilah on Wednesday and Cpl. Dustin A. Derga, 24, of Columbus, was killed by small arms fire in Ubaydi on Sunday, according to the Department of Defense.

Bowman said the unit is in the process of contacting and helping the affected families.

Lima is a rifle company that has four platoons, Bowman said. Each platoon has three squads that normally have 13 people but can be reinforced depending on a mission, he said.

Davids left for Iraq in January, last talked to his family four weeks ago and was scheduled to come home in October, his mother said.

"While his death is a tragic loss, he died doing something he felt passionately about," Jody Davids said. "He was the best that this country has to offer."

Her son loved working on cars and graduated in 2003 from Dublin Scioto High School, where he was on the crew team.

"He was just a very impressive, strong young man," said Russ Merritt, his high school coach. "Wes was kind of an inspiration to all of us. You just had no doubt that he would give 100 percent."

The operation was launched after U.S. intelligence showed large numbers of insurgents had moved into the northern Jazirah Desert following losses in Fallujah and Ramadi, further east. The area is believed to be a staging ground for foreign fighters crossing into Iraq from Syria along ancient smuggling routes.

The offensive started Saturday night and is aimed at rooting out followers of Iraq's most wanted militant leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

Two Ohio soldiers killed in grenade attack in Ramadi, Iraq

The Associated Press

Two Ohio soldiers were killed in Iraq when their military vehicle came under a grenade attack, the Department of Defense said Wednesday.

Army Sgt. Larry R. Kuhns Jr., 24, of Austintown, and Spc. Anthony D. Kinslow, 21, of Westerville, died Monday in Ramadi, the volatile town 70 miles west of Baghdad.

Both were assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division from Fort Carson, Colo. The brigade has lost 65 soldiers in Iraq.

It was the second time in as many weeks that more than one serviceman from Ohio was killed in the same attack in Iraq. Three Marines from an Akron-based unit died in an explosion last Thursday during fighting in Haqlaniyah, 90 miles north of Baghdad.

Kuhns worked at the Army recruiting office in Boardman for a time in late 2003, said Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Catrucco, who works at the office.

"He was an awesome guy. He was very professional," Catrucco said. "He was the type of soldier any sergeant would love to have."

Kuhns, whose wife lives in Fort Carson, recently had been promoted to sergeant, Catrucco said. He began his military career as a reservist with the 319th Engineer Company in Butler, Pa.

Kinslow's mother declined comment Wednesday.

Ohio has lost a lot of people, and nobody seems to care, certainly not BRAC, positively not the politicians. As far as I can tell the military isn't much interested in our losses. We may have more dead than any other state. Where do you think the next generation of Civilian - Military is comming from? Who is going to join a Guard or Reserve Unit if they know in advance that they may spend more time traveling than training twice a month? You already have a shortfall of new recruits in the Regular Military. You are conducting this war with 40% CIVILIAN - Military. How do you purpose to recruit more people for any kind of military duty? Your short-sightness is going to make us a "target of opportunity" [illegible]

Lexington family has three sons in Iraq

By Ron Simon
News Journal

LEXINGTON — Like his father before him, James Andrews, 58, chose to be a soldier.

He served first in the Air Force and then the Army Reserves with the 1486th Transportation Company. He capped off a long military career by driving a truck during Operation Desert Storm and serving as his unit's first sergeant.

"I think if I hadn't retired there's no doubt I'd have already been over in Iraq and back by this time," Andrews said.

Instead, his three sons, Kyle, 24, Kraig, 22 and Kolby, 20, are in Iraq and Kyle is there for the second time.

Like their father before them, they chose to be soldiers. With a difference. All three are Marines. Kyle is a second lieutenant. Kraig is a lance corporal and Kolby is a private first class.

All three are, as their e-mail photos show, deep in harm's way.

"Have a wonderful Father's Day and thanks for all the things you do for me," Kyle wrote in a card last week. He is the only son, right now, who is able to stay in touch. "They come and go in operations," James explained.

"This is such a different war from the one I was in," James said. "Back then, it was letters and postcards. Today, it's tech messages, cell phone calls and e-mail. I was a driver and never was shot at. They are being shot at."

And three blue stars are in the window at the Andrews home on Steam Corners Road.

"I know they're doing a good job," James said of his sons. "They're really into what they do. Two of them have talked about making the Marine Corps a career. I'd like to think they are doing this because I was in the service."

Unspoken are any fears James and Renee Andrews may have about their sons being hurt in the

Lt. Kyle Andrews, with his brothers Pfc. Kolby Andrews and Lance Cpl. Kraig Andrews. *(Submitted photos)*

midst of war. They know the dates down to the day when each of their boys will rotate home.

Lt. Kyle Andrews, 24, whose wife's name is Lauren, is doing his second tour in Iraq. When he comes home later this year, he will be a basic infantry instructor at Camp LeJeune. "He's guaranteed to be home for three years," his father said.

Lance Cpl. Kraig Andrews, 22, whose wife's name is Albra, would be home next but he might have to rotate to Afghanistan a few more years down the road, James said. "They plan that far ahead these days."

Pfc. Kolby Andrews, 20, unmarried, plans to leave the Corps perhaps temporarily to attend college. "If he ever wants to be an officer he has to have some college," his father said.

Kraig and Kolby are Lexington High School graduates and Kyle is a St. Peter's graduate. James thinks his youngest son was the one who first checked into the idea of a military career. "Then Kraig got interested and he joined," James said. One Marine became two Marines became three Marines.

There is a lot of military background in the Andrews clan. James' late father, James Sr., was a captain in the Army Air Force in World War II.

ANDREWS SR.

Renee's father, Joseph S. Krebs, was a corpsman and ambulance driver with the Army in Europe during World War II.

KREBS

A native of Pennsylvania, James met Renee in California while he was in the Air Force. They were married for 20 years before divorcing. For now they are staying together.

James Jr.'s day job, the one he has held for 32 years, is postal carrier. He works out of the Ashland Post Office and his route covers the west side, mostly along Sandusky Street.

Nine years after he left service he joined the Army Reserves. With three boys to raise a little extra cash wouldn't hurt. But a war came along with it.

James was a squad leader as well as a driver during the Gulf War and finally rose to First Sergeant. When he reached 20 years he called it quits. "It was fun being a driver and moving equipment, but I really wasn't that happy with all the paperwork a first sergeant has," he said.

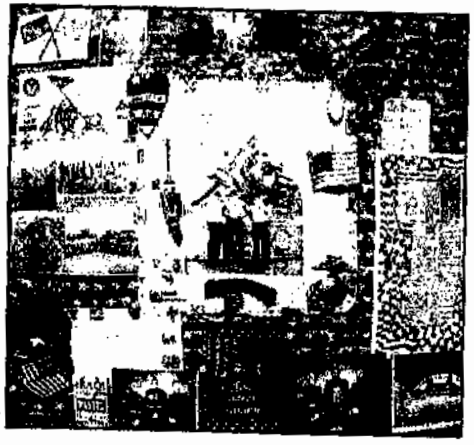
Now he and Renee stay in contact via all the new technology that links soldiers in the field with their families. And they wait. It's Father's Day.

And the boys are far away.

rsimon@nncogannett.com
(419) 621-7230

Kolby Andrews, front row on the right, in Iraq.

Kyle and Kraig Andrews in Iraq.



A collage of the Andrews boys hangs in their home. *(Daniel Melograna/ News Journal)*

Another family of local Heroes! You will note the father of these fine young men, was an Army Reservist. The quality of people BRAC wants to shuffle around.

Closings could hurt Guard, some fear

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — Some members of the panel deciding which U.S. military bases to close worry the Pentagon's plans to reshuffle National Guard and Reserve installations are too radical and could discourage recruitment.

The Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure plan, released Friday, proposes consolidating 387 Reserve and National Guard installations into about 125.

Those recommendations are part of a larger plan to close 33 major bases and restructure 29 others to streamline and modernize the military.

The Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing's base at Mansfield Lahm Airport is among those to be closed.

More on the effort to keep the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield, see page 3A.

The Guard and Reserve changes could affect hundreds of thousands of people who serve in the part-time forces while holding down full-time jobs. The main concern is that consolidating installations will mean longer travel times for reservists and Guard members.

"You're going to have real enlistment problems," said former Rep. James Bilbray of Nevada, one of the nine members of the president-appointed base closing commission.

The base closure panel will review the Pentagon's recommendations and make any changes it deems necessary before submitting its list to the president by Sept 8. If Bush approves, it goes to Congress for an all-or-nothing vote.

The panel began its work Monday by questioning Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and senior Pentagon officials about how they formulated their recommendations.

Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the Guard and Reserve consolidations were done to enhance capability, cut costs and integrate the part-time forces more closely with active-duty units.

Members of the heavily stressed Guard and Reserves make up about 40 percent of the roughly 138,000 U.S. troops in Iraq.

Myers acknowledged that "there will be some inconvenience" for people serving in the Guard and Reserves if the Pentagon's recommendations are followed.

Recruitment numbers for the Guard and Army reserves are already lagging this year. Guard recruitment was 24 percent behind in the first four months of the current recruiting year, which runs from October 2004 through September 2005.

"Anybody who looks at retention issues would have to be concerned about this," said John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a defense Web site. "This was one of the first things that really popped out at me."

a lot of people are very concerned about possible greater short falls in recruitment for any branch or any part of the military.

Guard, Reserve death toll matches highest total

WASHINGTON (AP) — Thirty members of the Army National Guard, Army Reserve and Marine Corps Reserve died in the Iraq war in May, matching the highest toll for any month of the war, according to Pentagon figures.

The overall U.S. death toll last month was 80, the highest since 107 in January. There were 52 deaths in April and 36 in March, when it appeared the insurgency was waning.

Iraqis bore the brunt of the insurgent violence in May, but it also took a heavy toll on the approximately 140,000 U.S. troops there. The 80 deaths compares with a monthly average of 70 over the previous 12 months.

The Guard and Reserve, which make up nearly half the force in Iraq, have generally had fewer than 20 deaths per month during the war, and it's not clear why their losses spiked to 30 in May. That matched the 30 deaths among the Guard and Reserve in January, and it compared with 11 in April, 13 in March and 16 in February.

The May total reached 30 when the Pentagon announced on Friday that Sgt. Miguel A. Ramos, 39, of Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, died May 31 in Baghdad when a rocket struck near his position. He was assigned to the Army Reserve's 807th Signal Company, 35th Signal Battalion, based at Juana Diaz, Puerto Rico.

One of the month's 30 fatalities died in the United States. Staff Sgt. Tommy S. Little, 47, of Aliceville, Ala., died May 2 at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, of injuries sustained on April 19 near Iskandariyah, Iraq, when a roadside bomb detonated near his Humvee utility vehicle. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 114th Field Artillery Regiment of the Mississippi Army National Guard at Columbus, Miss.

May also was a costly month for the Army's 3rd Infantry Division, which had 10 reported fatalities. Since it arrived in Iraq in February to become the first Army division to return for a second combat tour, the 3rd Infantry has lost 34 of its soldiers, according to Pentagon figures. During its previous tour, which included the initial invasion in March 2003 and lasted about eight months, the division lost 44 soldiers.

Closing the base makes no sense

I am writing this letter to rge everyone to write their ate politicians and help stop ie closing of the 179th Airlift ing in Mansfield. The airbase rovides about 1,000 full- and art-time jobs and has an estiated $70 million annual effect a the area economy. The Base ealignment and Closure 3RAC) threatens not only Iansfield's Air National Guard ase but nearly a third of all Air ational Guard Units. It will rastically change the military s we know it. Our Mansfield nit has credentials that far exeed the criteria to stay open. (It ompares to the best units out ere). This is why the closing of makes no sense. The money aved does not offset the beneits to the nation's defense.

The 179th Airlift Wing repreents the core of patriotism. hey are the heart and soul of merica. They are the small own people; they are our riends, neighbors, brothers, nd co-workers, most of which ave deep roots in our commuity. Many of these people may ust leave the military. They ave families here. They can't ommute in some cases, hunreds of miles to go to drill. My amily will no doubt have to nove, possibly out of state. I vas born and raised in the beauiful town of Bellville. My famiy is here. My friends are here. Ay life is here. I would like my hildren to go to school here.

Don't get me wrong, there are lot of people also going hrough this. My point is that ur base is different because here is no compelling reason to lose it down. When you add up he numbers, it doesn't save the nilitary that much money. If it nade sense, I would support it. Ve need to write letters to Taft/Voinovich/Dewine and your listrict congressman. Thank 'ou for supporting our troops!

Jolie McCue
Bellville

Birthdays under fire

I would never have imagined that my three sons would be serving in the Marine Corps in Iraq at the same time. Half my heart is in Iraq.

On May 13, my son, 2nd Lt. Kyle J. Andrews turned 24 under fire in Iraq. He is with the 2nd AA BN, stationed at Camp Fallujah, Iraq. Recently he spent more than 10 days on a mission with no shower facilities available. Just a week later, he e-mailed us a copy of "The Desert Marine" which is a 2nd Marine Division publication that carried stories about Marines at Fallujah and also at Hadithah Dam, Iraq.

My middle son CPL Kraig L. Andrews serves with 3/8 Lima Co. and is also stationed at Fallujah. Kraig and Kyle have been able to share some time together at the chow hall and also working out.

On June 26, my youngest son, PFC Kolby J. Andrews, who is a member of 3/25 Scout-Sniper Platoon will celebrate his 20th birthday involved in Operation Iraqi Freedom at Hadithah Dam. As a mother of three sons who are serving in the United States Marine Corps, I could not be more proud of their commitment and accomplishments.

I feel fortunate we are able to correspond by phone, e-mail or text message on my cell phone almost weekly. Sometimes it is hard to say good-bye to them, but I always let them know that I am proud of them, miss them, love them, and that everyone is praying for their safe return.

Renee Andrews
Lexington

Fight for the 179th

First of all, I would like to start off by saying thank you and how proud I am of all the U.S. military and the 179th Ohio Air National Guard unit here in Mansfield, of which I have two sons who are members.

I have had many people throw in my face that the National Guardsmen are just weekend warriors. My answer to them is at least they are warriors and they believe in our country and what it stands for. Most people probably don't know that at the present time the U.S. has 60 percent National Guardsmen serving overseas due to the decline in recruitment of the regular branches of the military.

I am appalled with Mayor Lydia Reid and other community businessmen saying it would be a "win-win situation" for the city of Mansfield if the 179th were to close. It sounds like instead of fighting to keep the 179th and its annual $30 million payroll here in Richland County, they would rather have another white elephant on their hands (just look around the Mansfield area) and see all that they have brought in — not too much. At least once a month the hotels are being occupied with guardsmen on drill weekend.

I keep hearing it's a political decision, so who is getting rich off this? Rep. Michael Oxley, please step forward and fight to keep the 179th here in Mansfield; after all you are in a position to use your clout, and people do listen to you.

Candace Zeger
Lucas

Letters

Let's save the 179th

We hope you will all take the time to attend the rallies being planned to save our 179th Airlif wing of the Ohio Air National Guard. This unit is heavily involved in our community.

The fire department that is maintained at Mansfield Lahm is also counted on to provide mutual aid with the surrounding fire departments, at times when no C-130s are in the air. This service would be badly missed.

So wear your "We Love the 179th pins," put your "Save the 179th" magnets on your cars and go to these events Saturday in Bellville and Wednesday on the square in downtown Mansfield. Let's show our state leaders we as a community do care and want to prevent the closure of our base.

Our thanks to the REDEC/BRAC Steering committee here for all the work and time involved in fighting this closure.

Joyce and Jerry Duff
Mansfield

The above are just a few peoples' thoughts on closing the 179 Air Wing based at Lahm Field, Mansfield, Ohio. Everyone is totally against this idea. If anything we would like to see more C-130-H's brought here. Possibly, a Jet Fighter Wing also. Something BRAC can't understand, or care about, is the pride we all share for these big planes, along with the military who fly and maintain them, as well as their support people. Indeed, we all have great affection for both the planes and the personell.

SAVE the 179th

.ook for special 179th poster in Tuesday's paper

It's time for area residents to ake up pens, e-mails, phones nd letters in defense of the 79th Airlift Wing of the Ohio ir National Guard.

The local military unit at lansfield Lahm Airport has een recommended for closure by the Pentagon as part f the 2005 Base Realignment nd Closure process.

The BRAC commission is udying those recommendaons and will offer a list of facilies to be closed or realigned to resident Bush this fall. But this ommunity is not about to go way quietly as our economy ses 1,000 full and part-time bs and a facility worth $70 illion annually to the local conomy.

We are not going to let go asily of a unit that's been a art of this community's fabric r more than 50 years.

On Tuesday, the News Jourl will publish a full-page color oster aimed at sending a ear message to Washington at area residents want to ave the 179th."

We urge you to put that oster in your home and busiess windows as a sign of your pport. We also urge you to ing it to the community rally downtown Mansfield on ne 22 aimed at saving the it.

On the back of the poster ll be content helping to exain why the decision to close e unit is flawed. On the back ll be names, addresses and one numbers of key elected ficials and also the BRAC ommission. We urge you to ntact these officials and mmission and send them a py of the poster to make ur feelings known.

It's time to let Washington derstand how important the 9th is to Richland County, rth central Ohio, the nation d the world.

Look for this special poster Tuesday's print edition.

Here is who to contact:

If you would like to offer edback directly to the Base alignment and Closure ommission, an e-mail form available at p://www.brac.gov/feedck.aspx.

Letters can be mailed to 05 Defense Base Closure d Realignment Commission, 21 S. Clark St., Ste. 600, Argton, Va., 22202.

Community must fight hard to retain 179th

The issue:
Local committee committed to waging battle over Airlift Wing

Our opinion:
Loss of the base, a valuable asset to north central Ohio, is not acceptable

It would be easy to give up the fight for the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

But Mike Greene and others won't let that happen.

Earlier this week Ohio Adjutant General Greg Wayt met with Greene and other members of the REDeC/BRAC steering committee and the All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs.

"The 179th is on a list recommended for closure," Wayt said during his visit. "But in the two previous rounds, about 30 percent of the bases on the recommended list were able to change the commission's mind."

That means Greene and others in the community must press forward, making the argument for the value of the unit to the city, the state and the nation.

Despite a strong effort spearheaded by Greene, co-chairman of the Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee, the 179th Airlift Wing was on the Pentagon's list announced this month, putting 1,000 local jobs in peril.

Now Greene is leading a rally called "Save Our 179th Day" at 5:30 p.m. June 22 on the downtown square. He hopes to attract 10,000 people as well as national media coverage.

And he wants everyone in the area to get involved, encouraging community residents to make signs for their cars, homes and businesses. He promises speakers, bands and cheerleaders for next month's event.

And for good reason.

The 179th is more than just a military unit to this community. It's more than just 1,000 full and part-time jobs. It's more than $70 million annually to the local economy.

It is an integral part of the fabric of this community.

The unit's military growth and success during the past 57 years has been mirrored by its networking and immersion with the north central Ohio communities it represents.

The fight to keep it is important. Rep. Michael Oxley has joined the fight, pledging to use his political clout to bring base closure commission officials to town in hopes of getting the 179th off the list.

We hope others in the community see the need for the base to remain open and join the ReDEC/BRAC Steering Committee in making noise. Losing the 179th Airlift Wing would be a huge blow to our city and our region.

We won't go down without a fight.

Send us your thoughts

E-mail
chunnell@
nnoogannett.com

Mail
Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 25
Mansfield, OH 44901

Fax
(419) 521-7416

again, our citizens have found a way to both honor our veterans and finance one of our Mansfield memorials to show proper respect to our heros.

Commemorative bricks available for veterans

MANSFIELD — The Korean War Veterans Association plans to install more commemorative bricks at the Korean War Memorial in Mansfield's Central Park in June.

About 300 bricks have been placed and dedicated by families and friends of veterans who served in all of America's wars or in peacetime.

Association member Bill Woodrow said each brick is inscribed with the words "Duty, Honor, Country." All are embedded in the walkway in front of the memorial.

There are two kinds of bricks; 4-by-8-inch bricks on which three lines of 13 characters each may be inscribed for $50, and 8-by-8-inch bricks on which five lines of 13 characters each may be inscribed for $100.

Applications for commemorative bricks or gift certificates can be obtained by calling Frank J. Russo at (419) 756-1468. The deadline is June 1.

The veterans plan to install the next set of bricks June 25.

Bellville crowd rallies to save 179th

By Mark Caudill
News Journal

BELLVILLE — Maj. Steve McLaughlin joined the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard when he was a senior in high school.

The 37-year-old Shelby man is focused on keeping it open.

"I'm not thinking about closure right now," McLaughlin said. "I'm thinking about what pressure we can put on the politicians to save this base."

The 179th is on the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission list of facilities recommended to be shut down to reduce overall military expenses. McLaughlin, an intelligence officer, and hundreds of other people turned out Saturday afternoon at the bandstand on Main Street for a rally to save the 179th. AmVets Post 43 hosted the event.

Jolie McCue organized Saturday's rally.

"My husband works out there full-time," she said. "I think, from my heart, they're closing it for the wrong reasons."

The rally included a popcorn stand manned by Boy Scouts, face-painting, a lemonade stand and music from the Clear Fork High School marching band. "We love the 179th" buttons were the fashion accessory of the day, and form letters to be signed and mailed to designated legislators were circulated throughout the throng.

U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley, R-Findlay, doesn't need convincing. He will speak at a June 27 BRAC hearing in Buffalo, N.Y.

"We have a tremendous story to tell," Oxley said. "I feel comfortable going to Buffalo and presenting our case. We have the facts."

Oxley seemed confident the 179th ultimately would be taken off the closure list.

"The message we are sending loud and clear from Bellville is, 'Keep your hands off our C-130s. They're doing their jobs, and the people are doing their jobs,' " he said.

Mansfield Mayor Lydia Reid addressed members of the 179th.

"You are an integral part of this community," she said. "We don't know what in the world we would do without you. That's why we are fighting so hard."

Reid encouraged everyone to attend Wednesday's rally in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

"This is just a prelude to our big rally in Mansfield," she said. "We will see you at 5:30 Wednesday in downtown, sunny Mansfield."

McCue will be there.

"I hope they keep having rallies," she said. "Right now, this is all the public can do."

mcaudill@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7219

Dan O'Hara attended Saturday's "Save the 179th" rally with poster in hand. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

All of us really do care about the 179th Air Wing, as well as other Reserve and Guard Units.

Rallying 'round the 179th

Jackie Bellstein passes out balloons at Saturday's "Save the 179th" rally in Bellville. The rally was a prelude to the larger event planned to start at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday in the square in downtown Mansfield. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Big rally for 179th planned for next month

By Mark Caudill
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Mike Greene wants the community to unite behind the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

GREENE

"Let our voices be heard all the way to Washington," said Greene, co-chairman of the Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee that worked for more than a year to keep the base off the recommended

See RALLY, back page

About the 179th

- **What:** 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard
- **Based:** Mansfield Lahm Airport
- **Airmen:** Roughly 1,000 full- and part-time airmen. The 179th is the seventh-largest employer in north central Ohio.
- **Awards:** The 179th has received many awards, decorations and recognitions, including the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. Recently, the 179th received the Alan P. Tappan Memorial Trophy, which designates the outstanding Air National Guard unit in Ohio; and the Rusty Metcalf Award, which acknowledges the unit as one of the best in the entire Air Force.

Rally

From page 1A

closure list.

Despite the efforts, the 179th Airlift Wing was on the Pentagon's list announced this month, putting 1,000 local jobs in peril.

Greene is spearheading a rally called "Save Our 179th Day" at 5:30 p.m. June 22 on the downtown square. He hopes to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

"This isn't going to be just our group preaching to the choir. I really want to make this a huge, huge event," Greene said. "I want them to understand that this is serious business."

Greene encourages community residents to make signs for their cars, homes and businesses. He promises speakers, bands and cheerleaders for next month's event.

Greene said if the rally is as big as planned, he hopes BRAC members, who are scheduled to be in Cleveland on June 23, will visit Mansfield. This week, BRAC members will begin visiting bases slated for closure.

The 179th Airlift Wing, which has 230 full-time positions, was not on the list for a visit.

"If you had less than 300 full-timers, you would not get a visit," Greene said.

But local leaders aren't waiting for June 22 to do something. They will meet at 1 p.m. today at Gorman-Rupp's north plant with an All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs. Representatives from other affected communities, including Cleveland and Springfield, will be at the meeting.

"The idea was, 'What could we do to help each other?' " Greene said.

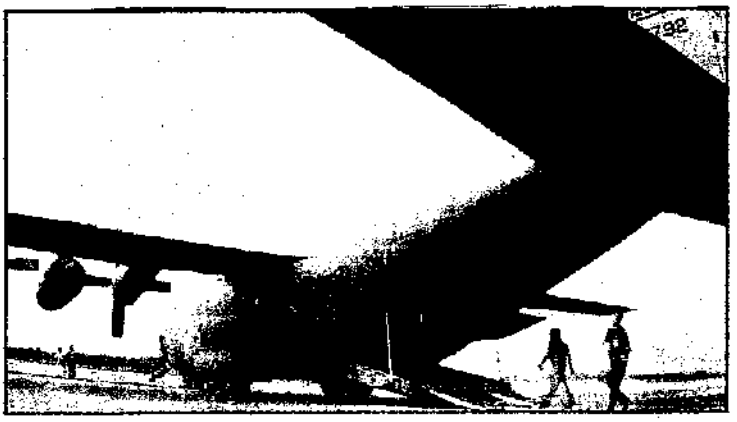
Greene fears the Air Force wants the 179th Airlift Wing's C-130s.

"If they're going to take our planes away, we would prefer that the Army not come in and maybe prevent civilian aviation possibilities," he said.

But that's only a fallback plan.

"Our main priority is getting us off the list," Greene said.

mcaudill@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7219



Guests head inside a C-130 for a tour April 19, 2004, during the Mansfield-Richland County Chamber of Commerce after-hours event at the 179th Airlift Wing. *(Daniel Malagrana/News Journal)*

Rep. Oxley hopes to sway commission's decision about 179th

By Greg Wright
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — Rep. Michael Oxley said Monday he would urge base closure commission officials come to Mansfield so he and local officials can persuade them to keep the 179th Airlift Wing open.

The 179th Airlift Wing was one of 13 facilities in Ohio the Pentagon put on its recommended Base Realignment and Closure list May 13. But the commission's nine-member, independent panel must review the Pentagon picks and could remove some from the list.

"I never give up," Oxley said.

OXLEY

Gov. Bob Taft sent a letter to commission chairman Anthony Principi on May 17 asking commissioners to come to Mansfield, as well bases in Springfield a Cleveland.

The Pentagon propos moving eight C-13(cargo planes from t 179th to airfields in Alat ma and Arkansas. This r flects the Pentagon's mo

See OXLEY, back page

Oxley

From page 1A

to consolidate military bases and reserve units.

Oxley met Monday in Columbus with Army National Guard Maj. Gen. Gregory Wayt, Ohio's

a meeting in the Buckeye State.

Oxley said he also could use his clout to try to persuade commissioners to come to the 179th. He said he knows about half of the commissioners, including former Utah Republican Rep. James Hansen, former Nevada Democratic Rep. James Bilbray and former White House Chief

strategy to keep the 179th open.

The commission will visit major bases on the proposed closure and realignment list. The commission also announced 16 regional hearings in California, Texas and other states to get community input on the Pentagon recommendations.

Ohio is not on the regional meeting list. Oxley said he and

Budget item for 179th show of commitment

House bill includes funds for base scheduled to close

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — The U.S. House of Representatives passed a spending bill Thursday that includes $1.3 million for a fire station project at Mansfield Lahm Airport.

What that budget item means as far as the future of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at the airport remains unclear.

"Unless we manage to get off the (Base Realignment and Closure) list, it's kind of a moot point," said Mike Greene, who is leading local efforts to keep the 179th in Mansfield. "As of right now, the plan is to send that firefighting unit to Toledo."

The 179th Airlift Wing base is on the Pentagon's list of bases recommended for closing.

But U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley (R-Findlay), who asked for the fire station funding, said it shows that the fight to preserve the 179th is not over.

"By this, we are showing our commitment to keeping our base in Mansfield one of

See BRAC, back page

Details

The 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, is one of 13 facilities in Ohio the Pentagon put on its recommended Base Realignment and Closure list May 13.

About 1,000 full- and part-time airmen are assigned to the 179th, which is the seventh-largest employer in north central Ohio.

The Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee is leading the fight to remove the 179th from the recommended closure list before a decision is made this year.

A "Save Our 179th Day" rally is set for June 22 at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

News Journal staff report

Groups fight to keep 179th in Mansfield

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — It's not over yet.

No one is giving up on keeping the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at Lahm Airport.

That was the message from Ohio Adjutant Gen. Greg Wayt after a Tuesday meeting of the REDeC/BRAC steering committee and the All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs.

"The 179th is on a list recommended for closure," Wayt said. "But in the two previous rounds, about 30 percent of the bases on the recommended list were able to change the commission's mind."

Mansfield learned this month the 179th is on the list compiled as part of the Base Realignment and Closure process, which could mean the loss of 1,000 local jobs.

Mike Greene, who has led the local effort to keep the 179th open, said there is plenty area residents can do to help change the BRAC commission's mind.

"Write letters," he said. "It sounds trite. But that's one thing we can all do. Write to your senator. Write to your representative. Write to the president.

"Our goal is to get off the list. It's happened before. Springfield was on the last two lists and managed to get off."

Greene hopes a huge public show of suppo helps sway some minds.

"Show up at our ral June 22," he said. "We like to get between 10,0 and 15,000 people togeth on the square to sho Washington what we thi of the 179th."

Greene is spearheadi plans for the 5:30 p.m. ral which will coincide with "Save Our 179th Day." I is hoping to draw sor statewide and natio news coverage to he Mansfield plead its case.'

BRAC officials have s not made public all the formation used to make cisions about which m tary bases to close.

"We're still not sure actly what criteria th used," said Da Williamson, the governo regional economic devel ment representative an member of the local BR committee. "We're wait for that information to published so we know w issues we need to addres

Tuesday's meeti brought together repres tatives of other commu ties in Ohio affected by most-recent BRAC nouncement.

"We're trying to see w we can do to help e other," Greene said. "Ri now, I think Cleveland the most well-organi group. We're hoping to ate some synergy with t group and help one an er."

rkent@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7274

BRAC

From page 1A

the most modern in the Guard system," Oxley said. "This would raise our investment in the 179th Airlift Wing unit to more than $20 million over the last eight years."

Greene said any effort in support of the 179th can only help efforts to save the Guard base.

"I still think the best thing we can do is to show community support for the base," Greene said. "That's why I think that rally is so important. We want as many people on the square June 22 as possible to show Washington what the 179th means to all of us."

Greene said Ret. Brig. Gen. Steve Koper, president of the National Guard Association of the United States, has committed to attend the rally.

"We've invited the governor and, hopefully, we'll have some other supporters here from Washington and Columbus," Greene said.

In the meantime, efforts are ongoing to entice members of the BRAC commission to visit Mansfield. Because the 179th has only about 250 full-time not mandatory.

Oxley released a letter he sent to Commission Chairman Anthony Principi in which he wrote, "I believe you will find the 179th represents a compelling case due to the active role it plays in homeland defense and the global war on terror."

In a letter to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Oxley urged the Pentagon to release "installation-specific data" used to make the closing list.

Greene has said the information is important so 179th supporters can better make a case to remain open.

Economic Development Corp.), which has diligently prepared for the BRAC process for more than a year, is now preparing its presentation to the commission in an effort to reverse (the closing)," Oxley wrote.

"Without access to this important data, REDeC cannot properly make its case that this guard unit, which has seen 35 deployments in support of our national defense in just the last four years, should remain open and operational."

rkent@nncogannett.com

Air Force just wants to have the C-130s

Six former Ohio Air National Guard generals visit area to share history

By Ron Simon
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Retired Brig. General Fred Larson calls the possible closure of his old unit, the 179th Airlift Wing, "a grab for the iron."

The "iron" being the unit's fairly well kept fleet of eight C-130H cargo planes.

"The Air Force has not been a very good steward of their C-130s," said the former 179th commander. "A lot of them have aged and a lot are grounded. So there are squadron holes. So this is a grab. It doesn't matter what a unit like the 179th has done or the skills and military value it has. All the Air Force wants is the iron."

Larson was one of six former Ohio Air National Guard generals, all with ties to the 179th, in Mansfield on Thursday. All but one were pilots with the 179th and two were commanders.

They were brought together by Master Sgt. Rod Togliatti, the 179th's historian, for a day of history at the base at Lahm Airport.

Togliatti said the men represent 190 years of combined service, 45,000 hours of flying time and a large piece of memory.

"How many times do you get six generals together to talk about history?" he asked.

Afterward, the generals stopped at the Mansfield Museum on Park Avenue West to meet the public.

Some, like retired Brig. Gen. Myron Ashcraft, go back to the days when the unit was a jet fighter squadron. Ashcraft, who now flies for United Airlines, made the switch from fighter cockpits to the lumbering C-130s. It was the right training for those commercial planes he flies today, he said.

Other generals included Major Gen. Francis Hazard, Brig. Gen. Ray Weber and Brig. Gen. Richard Green, who commanded the unit until his recent promotion and later retirement.

LARSON

ASHCRAFT

HAZARD

WEBER

GREEN

LATTIMORE

Brig. Gen. Vergel Lattimore was the 179th chaplain and the Air National Guard Assistant to the Air Force Chief of Chaplains, and is still active.

"I travel all over the country. I'm the chaplain's chaplain," he said.

Green, like Larson, doesn't care to see his old unit broken up.

"This is a tough blow," he said of the closure threat. "The Air Force simply wants our new planes. No matter what the unit has done, the planes are all they want."

Ashcraft agreed.

"They are stealing our airplanes. That's wrong, ethically and morally. It's a shame," he said.

Larson said a major study taken under his command in the early 1990s proved the unit could expand to double its size at Mansfield Lahm Airport. He said arguments that there is no room to expand are simply wrong.

"I think the 179th is not set for closure. We're going to fight this tooth and nail," he said.

rsimon@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7230

Some Guard bases may lose planes

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — What happens when you take away all the airplanes from an Air National Guard facility?

It's a question being asked at more than a dozen bases ever since the Pentagon announced that it wants the Air Force to consolidate its planes at fewer locations.

Under a military restructuring plan announced Friday, the Pentagon proposed shifting hundreds of planes and thousands of jobs away from Air National Guard bases.

For example:

- Reno-Tahoe International Airport Air Guard Station in Nevada would lose its eight C-130H planes.
- Bradley International Airport Air Guard Station in Connecticut would see all of its A-10s fly away.
- Nashville International Air Guard Station in Tennessee would lose its C-130H aircraft.

"How can you be an airlift wing without any airlift?" asked April Conway, a spokeswoman for the Nevada Air National Guard.

The recommendations now go to a president-appointed commission that will spend the summer holding hearings before sending its recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 8.

Compared with four previous Base Realignment and Closure rounds that began in 1988, National Guard and Reserve bases would be hit hard this time. The Pentagon proposes consolidating about 387 Reserve and National Guard installations into about 125, many to be located at or near active-duty bases.

Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the base closing commission Monday that the Air Force wants more planes in fewer units to more quickly fulfill missions.

"What they have right now are pockets of small numbers of aircraft that are at various locations," Myers said. "And it makes it unwieldy when you try to access them for missions, particularly the kind of missions we're in today in Iraq and Afghanistan and for that matter, around the world."

A lot of citizens are certain in their own minds that the Air Force wants our newer, better C-130+. That this is a legal case of Air Piracy. The C-130-H's of the 179th have more up-dated equipment, as well as being much better maintained. Where in this article General Richard Myers says it more difficult to deploy planes in smaller groups. That is a mis-representation of the truth. In this day of radio, telephones and computers, not to mention signed letters of orders, fax etc. Any and all orders can be transmitted in a matter of seconds. The Air Force is being very heavy-handed in "robbing" the Air Guard units of their C-130-H's. Robbing is how the people of these units feel, not too mention our citizens.

Pentagon: 179th too crowded

Lack of expansion room among reasons for recommended closing

By Greg Wright
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — About 1,000 full and part-time military jobs in Mansfield are in danger primarily because the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield has less room to grow than its rivals in Toledo, Arkansas and Alabama, according to Pentagon documents.

■ TV show explains BRAC process, page 6A.

One of several major criteria the Pentagon considered while determining which military bases to close or realign is whether the facility can accommodate growth. The base also must fit into the Pentagon's future defense strategy.

The Pentagon proposed disbanding the local Ohio Air National Guard last month and moving its eight C-130H transport planes to

See 179th, page 6A

179th

From page 1A

Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base in Alabama and the 314th Airlift Wing at Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas.

Other support services now at Mansfield would go to the Louisville International Airport Air Guard Station in Kentucky and the Toledo Express Airport Air Guard Station.

However, local officials said Monday the ratings are wrong, since city officials offered the Pentagon access to 168 additional acres when military officials indicated expansion might be considered a factor. The 179th Airlift Wing currently is located on 227 acres.

Rep. Michael Oxley, R-Findlay, and local officials have said they would fight to keep transport planes at the 179th at Mansfield Lahm Airport. Gov. Bob Taft announced Monday he will give the Richland Economic Development Corp. $50,000 to promote the 179th.

But it's unlikely the independent Base Realignment and Closure commission would overturn the Pentagon's decision because of the facility's size, a military expert said.

"It's too small to worry about," said John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a defense analysis firm.

While some bases on the closure list could lose thousands of jobs, Pike said, the 179th has just 234 full time military and civilian workers. Still, local officials argue, the base is the seventh largest employer in north central Ohio, including around 650 part-time jobs held by "traditional" National Guard members.

The Pentagon claimed in environmental documents released this weekend the 179th has no room for growth. Little Rock can develop another 1,783 acres; Maxwell an additional 264 acres and Toledo has 45 acres, the Pentagon said. Only Louisville had zero acreage available, the Pentagon said.

Another factor in the Defense Department's base closing considerations was military value. Mansfield ranked lower in military value and capacity than other airlift bases, according to the Pentagon.

The top ranked airlift base is Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. Mansfield ranked 119th out of 154 airlift bases behind Little Rock in 17th place; Maxwell, 21st; Louisville, 79th; and Toledo, 100th.

Local officials contend the 179th is still busy in the war on terrorism with its 35 deployments since Sept. 11, 2001. The facility is modern and there is room to house up to a dozen C-130H planes at the base, said retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Fred Larson, co-chair of the group fighting to save the 179th.

The Pentagon argues it has too many small Air National Guard units; its goal is to merge many with active-duty facilities, said Loren Thompson, a military expert at the Lexington Institute.

But the base closure panel, which is reviewing the Pentagon recommendations, could disagree and decide to keep national guard units such as the 179th open, Thompson said.

The nine-member commission must come up with a final closure list by Sept. 8.

The information that Lahm Field can't expand is absolutely in error. Lahm Field and 179th base there can be expanded greatly any time that becomes necessary. It already has one of the longest runways in the US and can accomodate the largest planes in the world. Lahm Field is an emergency landing strip, if necessary, for the space shuttle. Why spend Millions on increasing the length of a runway some place else, when Lahm Field has everything necessary.

Bad data led to decision, officials say

By Linda Martz
News Journal

MANSFIELD — The Pentagon used flawed data and left major questions unanswered in recommending the 179th Airlift Wing be closed, former base officials say.

Local officials plan to correct those issues in hope of keeping the Ohio Air National Guard unit and its 1,000 full- and part-time jobs in Mansfield, where it's been for more than 50 years.

Retired Brig. Gen. Myron Ashcraft, now a

See DATA, page 6A

Data

From page 1A

United Airlines pilot, said the thing that "jumped right out" when he looked at criteria released Monday is the Pentagon inaccurately said Mansfield Lahm Airport doesn't have enough land available to expand the wing's fleet from eight to 16 C-130H transport planes.

The military considers larger bases more efficient, the Lexington resident said.

Once the Pentagon documents said additional land was not available — an incorrect claim — other questions, such as what it would cost to expand, were left unanswered, he said.

"Once they say that we don't have the land, everything else is out the window," Ashcraft said. "They don't even evaluate how much it would cost to have a full squadron.

"That's the kind of stuff we have to fight it on — is the data," he said Monday night. "I don't see any other shortfall in the criteria that we would fail to meet."

Local officials said Monday they're frustrated by Pentagon documents showing the military meted out low scores to Lahm in areas such as room to expand, military value and capacity. The 179th, which has had 35 deployments since Sept. 11, 2001, generates about $70 million annually to the local economy.

Mayor Lydia Reid said local officials offered the Pentagon 168 additional acres — the city-owned Bradley and Kissell farms north of the airport — when military officials indicated expansion opportunities could be considered. The 179th Airlift Wing now takes up 227 acres.

"Certainly, if they need space to build on, they can build a hell of a lot on 168 acres," the mayor said Monday. "We have said 'whatever it takes, we'll do it.' We're willing to do whatever they want."

Reid said Lahm has a lot more going for it than acknowledged by the Pentagon rankings. "We've got the second longest runway in the state. Also, we've got an airport that is underutilized" — meaning military planes don't need to compete with a lot of other air traffic, she said.

"Some of the places that weren't on that list (to be closed) do not have the capability we do," Reid said.

Mike Greene, co-chairman of the Richland County Economic Development Corp./BRAC Steering Committee, which worked for more than a year to avoid a recommendation that the base be closed, said the Pentagon claims Mansfield doesn't have enough space for a large fleet.

But the master plan outlined in the early 1990s by former base commander Brig. Gen. Fred Larson anticipated constructing more ramps to store planes, Greene said.

"It's easily accomplished simply by putting down more pads," at much less cost than the $33 million the Department of Defense said it would save by closing down Mansfield's base, Greene said.

Ashcraft said the Air Force appears to want to shut down Guard and Reserve units so it can acquire their equipment. "They have a very old, tired, beat up fleet. The way to get airplanes without buying them is just to steal them from the Guard and Reserve," he said.

Larson said, "It doesn't matter to them that they gain no military value (to the country overall) from our airplanes," Larson said. "They're just moving planes from one location to another, at a cost of $33 million."

Local officials are still trying to arrange for a visit to Mansfield by a member of the BRAC commission before a decision is made — but may get only a visit from a staff member, Larson said.

Ohio has been allotted two hours at an upcoming regional base closure hearing in Buffalo — and Mansfield must share that time with Cleveland and Springfield, Larson said. "We're asking for half an hour, but we may get 15 minutes."

lmartz@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7229

With so much at stake for so many people, in so many parts of the United States, how could BRAC not have up-to-date information? How could they take their duty to the people of this country so lightly? If they failed to have the correct facts about the 179th and Lahm Field, how many errors are they making about other bases? They don't go to these military facilities, and God Forbid they should consult with anyone whose future is mightly affected by their decisions.

Editorial

Closing 179th would be a mistake

The Issue:
Today's special section devoted to the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

Our Opinion:
The message is simple: Save the 179th.

You should notice a little something extra in the News Journal today.

It's a four-page section aimed at sending a loud and clear message to the Base Realignment and Closure commission and lawmakers in Washington.

North central Ohio believes the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard should remain open and in operation at Lahm Airport in Mansfield.

The first page is a color poster with a simple message. "Save the 179th" is in huge letters, visible from a distance.

We urge you to put this poster in the window of your home, business or other locale that will be seen by the public. We want you to save it and bring it to the community-wide rally June 22. We then want you to mail it to the BRAC commission or lawmakers, and urge them to stop the planned closure of this vital military unit.

The second page is a message from retired Brig. Gen. Richard Green, a former commander of the 179th, who lays out a clear argument why the Pentagon wants the 179th closed and why it should remain open.

Send us your thoughts

E-mail
chunnell@
nncogannett.com

Mail:
Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 26
Mansfield, OH 44901

Fax
(419) 521-7415

The third and fourth pages are messages from local businesses and residents in support of the unit, which has been a part of north central Ohio for more than 50 years.

Make no mistake. Closing the 179th is a mistake. The Pentagon simply wants the unit's eight C-130H aircraft, which would bolster the aging Active Duty and Reserve fleet for the Air Force.

But it would not be good public relations to make public that need for the planes. Instead, the Pentagon cited in its recommendation that there is no room for expansion at the local unit, a claim not supported by the facts. The City of Mansfield has offered another 168 acres for potential base expansion.

We urge the BRAC commission to look deeply into the Pentagon's flawed logic and look instead at the real reason for its closure recommendation — eight aircraft that Congress purchased explicitly for use by the Ohio Air National Guard.

We urge local residents to join the fight by posting today's posters all over the community. Bring them to the public rally. And then mail them to the people who will help keep the 179th open.

It's not to late. This fight has really just begun. We urge you to join in today.

This editorial states that there is plenty of room for expansion for the 179th Air Wing and Lahm Field in general.

Editorial

Pentagon has slapped part-time soldiers

The Issue:
Reserve and National Guard bases were hit hard in the latest round of BRAC Commission recommendations.

Our opinion:
This is a funny way to thank the soldiers who have put so much on the line in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Pentagon has a unique way of thanking the Reserve and National Guard forces for their great contributions during the war on terror.

The thanks is a cold slap in the face with Pentagon reality.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, want to shuffle, cut and otherwise consolidate 387 National Guard and Reserve installations into about 125.

This convoluted thinking is again proof that active duty military leaders a.) don't understand the Guard and Reserve lifestyle or appreciate the needs of part-time soldiers, sailors and airmen; and/or b.) don't care about the future of either segment of the nation's military.

Their plan would include closing the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard in Mansfield, one of the best flying units in the country today.

Myers said these Guard and Reserve moves are being made to enhance capability, cut costs and integrate the part-time forces more closely with active-duty units.

We would argue this plan would accomplish few of the goals outlined above, save for cutting costs.

Myers admitted "there will be some inconvenience" for people serving in the Guard and Reserve if the Pentagon's recommendations to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission are followed.

Some inconvenience? That's like saying Noah needed to build a bit of a boat when the rains came. The understatement is that severe.

How about the fact it will add hundreds or even thousands of miles, and the accompanying expenses for members to meet monthly military obligations? How about the fact it will force Guard or Reserve troops, some of whom may be nearly qualified for retirement, out of the service who simply cannot make long-range trips once a month?

The economic effect on the communities like Mansfield scheduled to lose these units is one thing. But the effect on the individual who has devoted much of his or her life in service to the country is even worse. Lahm Airport will survive and perhaps even flourish with the influx of private business should the 179th close its doors.

But the 1,000 full and part-time airmen who made up the unit, hundreds of which have served around the nation and the world since Sept. 11, 2001, will never be the same. The 179th, for example, has gone on 35 deployments in the last four years.

At a time when recruiting for the National Guard is down 24 percent from last year, it seems sheer folly to slap the face of the people who make the Guard and Reserve the success story the part-time military is today.

Without the Guard and Reserve, the Bush administration could not have fought its war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, about 40 percent of the 138,000 troops in Iraq are Guard and Reserve forces. The Pentagon's reward is to make their career in the military even tougher to maintain.

We urge the members of the BRAC Commission to take a hard look at what the Pentagon has in mind for the Guard and Reserve. We think when they do they will see the security of this nation will be severely weakened with Rumsfeld's plans for the nation's citizen soldiers.

This editorial will give you more information about the 179th, and the opinions of many are the same.

Bush defends base closings, says money being wasted

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP) — Speaking out for the first time in favor of controversial base closings, President Bush said Friday the nation is wasting billions of dollars on unnecessary military facilities and needs the money for the war on terrorism.

Bush, who faces opposition from many states to shutting down bases, tried to be reassuring. He said the bases would be chosen fairly and the government would do all it could

See BUSH, back page

Bush

From page 1A

to help affected communities recover.

But he made clear that the process — however painful — could not be avoided.

In a speech to graduates of the Naval Academy, he said the closings and realignments "will result in a military that is more efficient and better prepared so you can better protect the American people against the dangers of this new century."

"In this war, there is only one option and that is victory," he said, to cheers from midshipmen, relatives and faculty at the academy on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay.

When Bush last spoke at a Naval Academy commencement, it was four months before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and his focus was his administration's effort to reshape the military into a faster, lighter and more flexible — but not larger — fighting force.

Since the attacks, and amid a global anti-terror campaign and wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, a top-to-bottom military transformation is even more necessary, Bush said.

Keys to the success are new technology, repositioning of global forces, new weapons and realigned bases at home, he said.

Bush said he understands the fears in cities where bases have been marked for changes or closure. The first round of closings in a decade has members of Congress and local officials working hard to protect the 33 major bases slated for closure and the 29 others proposed for downsizing.

"I know firsthand how hard base closings can be on local communities," said the former Texas governor who saw facilities shut down in his state.

Members of the congressionally chartered Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) will visit bases and hold hearings on the Pentagon proposal. The plan aims to save $48.8 billion over 20 years by eliminating redundant and inefficient facilitates and promoting cooperation among the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps.

The panel will decide on changes to the Pentagon plan and give a list to Bush and Congress this fall for approval or rejection.

Commission chairman Anthony Principi on Friday joined a growing chorus of lawmakers demanding that the Defense Department quickly release the thousands of pages of data backing up each of its recommendations.

Briefly

More work for 179th

MANSFIELD — Twenty-nine members of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard will leave Monday in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, the U.S. military initiative in Afghanistan.

Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the 179th has flown more than 2,600 sorties, moved 35,000 passengers and transported 5,600 cargo tons of material in combat theaters, according to a unit news release.

The airlift wing, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, was recommended for closure this month by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission. An area campaign is under way to remove the 179th from the closure list before a final decision is made later this year.

No, Mr. Bush, we are not wasting money on our personell at our Military facilities or our personell. Maybe other places are, Ohio is not. We have had terrible losses. My grandson has served a tour of duty in Bosnia, and Iraq in one of the most dangerous missions in Iraq. Transportation of fuel. Now BRAC wants to do what ever with the 706th Transportation Company.

AmVets Post 43 joins fight for 179th

Rally planned for June 18 in Bellville

By David Benson
News Journal

BELLVILLE — A second major rally to keep the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard in Mansfield is in the works.

AmVets Post 43 in Bellville will host a Rally to Save the 179th Airlift Wing on June 18 at 3 p.m. at the bandstand on Main Street.

The 179th, based on Mansfield Lahm Airport, is on the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission list of facilities recommended to be shut down to reduce overall military expenses.

A separate Save Our 179th Day rally is set for June 22 at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage for that event.

Joli McCue is organizing the Bellville rally.

"When Post 43 called me and asked me if I would do it, I said I would be glad to. Somebody's got to do something," said McCue, the wife of a 179th member.

"If we get a big turnout it will show how much community support the 179th has. Our legislators will see we're not going to take this closing lying down," she said.

The other purpose of the rally is to provide information to those who have questions about the BRAC process and what individuals can do to try to prevent the closure, McCue said.

"So far, the support for the base and for this rally has just poured in. It's been phenomenal," she said.

Speakers at the Bellville rally will include Mayor Carolynn Studenmund, REDeC/BRAC steering committee co-chairman Brig. Gen.(r) Fred Larson, Brig. Gen.(r) Myron Ashcraft, Brig. Gen.(r) Rich Green, Richland County Commissioner Ed Olson, county Veteran Services Commission President Larry Moore and state Rep. Bill Hartnett.

In addition, form letters supporting the 179th will be available at the rally, which will need to be signed and mailed to designated legislators.

The AmVets and American Legion Color Guards and the Clear Fork High School marching band will participate. For children, there will be face painting, lemonade and popcorn stands and balloons.

Food and music will be featured after the rally at the AmVets Ron Boyce Hall located north of the bandstand on Main Street. Music will be provided by AmVets' Steve Stephenson, Dave King, & Westwind and by the Jo Kidd Outfit, comprised of 179th members.

For additional information, call McCue at (419) 886-4283. To donate food or supplies, contact the AmVets at (419) 886-2658.

dbenson@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7272

Tech Sgt. Ken Schonauer of Mansfield works on the tail section of a C-130 at Lahm Airport earlier this month. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal)*

Family and friends placed flags Sunday to honor veterans, soldiers and emergency personnel at a Healing Field ceremony in Fredericktown. The field will stand through Wednesday. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal photos)*

A place to honor many sacrifices

By Jennifer Kowalewski
News Journal

FREDERICKTOWN — Charles Blanchette served his country in World War I, World War II and the Korean War.

His granddaughter, Denise Needles, honored his memory by flying a flag Sunday in the Healing Fields at Kokosing Construction Co. The Exchange Club of Mount Vernon and Knox County sponsored the event to honor veterans, current soldiers and emergency personnel.

"It's pretty neat," the Mount Vernon woman said after buying a flag. "I saw all the flags and thought he has to have a flag."

Healing Fields began in Sandy, Utah, in 2002, when Colonial Flag Co. owner Paul Swenson wanted to honor those who lost their lives in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Volunteer Jane Engle said Swenson flew 3,000 flags in Utah to show how many victims were killed.

While residents walked among the flags, many felt a sense of healing, and Healing Fields have sprung up across the country, Engle said.

Chairwoman Melody Brent has worked to bring the Healing Field to Fredericktown since November 2004. Residents purchased flags to fly in a 2-acre field in honor of their loved ones, Exchange Club President Diane Collier said. Residents from Richland, Morrow, Ashland, Knox and Licking counties participated.

Residents can visit the field for the next few days

See FLAGS, back page

Ann Eing leans on her son, Jeff, as they look at the flag they placed to honor Ann's husband, John, a World War II Navy veteran.

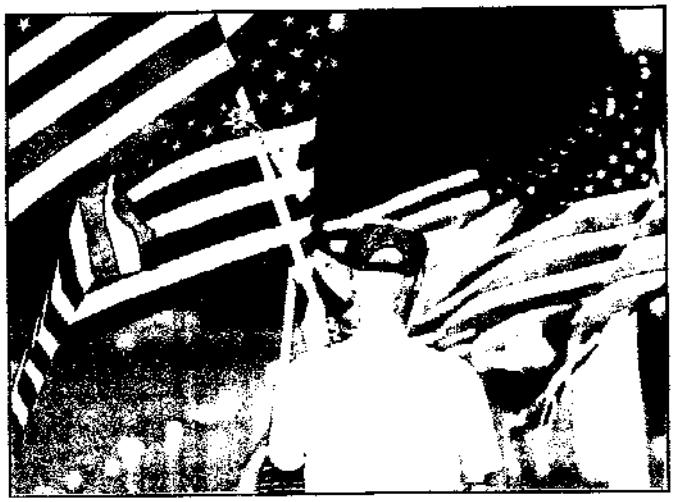
If you go

Residents can visit the Healing Field at Kokosing Construction Co. in Fredericktown through Wednesday evening. Kokosing Construction is on Ohio 13, near the Ohio 95 interchange. The flags honor and remember veterans, those serving in the military and emergency personnel. The program includes:

- **Today**, 3 p.m: Ohio Highway Patrol helicopter land; 4 p.m: The Petty Group (Knox County singers); 5 p.m: singers and speakers, including state Sen. Bill Harris, R-Mansfield.
- **Tuesday**, 4 p.m: Apple Valley Singers; 5 p.m: music and speakers including state Rep. Thom Collier, R-Mount Vernon.
- **Wednesday**, 4 p.m: Color Guard from Knox County Veterans; 4:30 p.m: speeches and closing remarks.

News Journal staff report

HEALING FIELD



A man walks among the memorial flags in the Healing Field at Fredericktown on Sunday. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal)*

Flags

From page 1A

to walk among the flags, Collier said.

"It's an experience you may never be a part of again," she said, as names were called over a loudspeaker to indicate whose turn it was to place a flag. "It's amazing to see all the red, white and blue. You can't imagine when the breeze blows, hearing 1,000 flags flapping in the breeze."

Collier, whose father-in-law stormed the beaches of Normandy, said she has participated in Healing Fields in Dallas and Findlay.

Volunteer Jim Tharp, a U.S. Navy veteran, said field coordinator Steve Murphy and the crew has worked since Friday to get the field ready. Poles were placed in the ground to support the flags, spaced 10 feet apart.

The crew installed lights so people could visit the field at night.

Denise Hess of Mount Vernon plans to visit again before it closes Wednesday. The Mount Vernon woman took her granddaughter, Shayla Ingram, 2, to the field.

"I just think it's going to be a unique experience," she said, waiting for her father's name to be called. "It's going to be emotional."

The Healing Field means more to her because her nephew, Travis Hess, is serving in Iraq with the Ohio National Guard 211th Maintenance Company of Newark.

"It's an experience you may never be part of again. It's amazing to see all the red, white and blue."

Diane Collier,
Exchange Club president

U.S. Army Korean War veteran David A. Munk flew a flag in honor of his son, Rick L. Munk, a 23-year-old veteran of the Ohio Highway Patrol.

"It's great," David Munk said, watching the flags go up. "It's the best thing to happen to this little community. If it weren't for them, we wouldn't be here."

As residents drove into the field, a flag that had flown in Iraq hung between two fire engines to greet them. Bobby and Lisa Folden took their 9-month-old girl, Mackenzie, under the flags to honor veterans Bobby knows at the Station Break Senior Citizen Center in Mount Vernon.

Many of the clients at the center helped with the Healing Field by making ribbons with the names of those honored.

"You really respect what they did for the country," Bobby Folden said.

jkowalewsk@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7232

Concert to raise money for family of Galion soldier killed in Iraq

By Jennifer Kowalewski
News Journal

GALION — The Galion Community Band will remember a hero.

A combined band and choral concert to benefit the Lee Anne Ivy Fund is scheduled Sunday at 7 p.m. at Galion High School. Residents are asked to donate to assist the family of Marine Staff Sgt. Kendall Ivy II, 28, the Galion native killed in action in Iraq earlier this month.

"We hope that the community will support this effort," community band organizer Brian Treisch said. "The concert was suggested to us as a way to generate funds for the Ivy family.

"We have been able to move rapidly to put this concert together. Many of the band members were classmates, former teachers, and friends of Kendall."

The concert will feature patriotic music, combined band and choral works and pieces to honor Sgt. Ivy. Details are still being arranged.

"We are sure that 'Semper Fidelis,' 'The Stars & Stripes, Forever' and "Battle Hymn of the Republic' will be performed," Treisch said. "Rick Walker is working to complete the concert lineup and I am working to complete the band roster."

The Galion Community Band has performed since 1976, including annually at the Fourth of July concert before the fireworks display.

Any interested instrumental musician or choir member not already contacted is welcome to join the band for a rehearsal at 6 p.m. today.

"We have a solid band set at this time, but we welcome any musician," Treisch said.

According to a military report issued to his family, Ivy died May 11 in western Iraq from a severe leg wound suffered when the vehicle in which he was riding struck a roadside bomb.

Ivy, who went to Iraq in February, is the sixth member of the military from north central Ohio to die in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Ivy played football and baseball at Galion High School. He joined the Marine Corps after graduating in 1995. He is survived by his widow, Lee Anne, who lives in Camp LeJeune, N.C., and is four-months pregnant, two sons and a daughter.

The Lee Anne Ivy Fund has been established at First Federal Bank to assist the family.

jkowalewski@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7232

If you go

What: Galion Community Band concert.
Where: Galion High School auditorium.
When: 7 p.m. Sunday.
Why: To benefit the family of Kendall Ivy, a soldier killed while serving his country in Iraq.
For information, call Brian Treisch at (419) 462-2209.

News Journal

Just one of our many lost service men in Iraq. Also, what is being done to aid and support his widow and family.

Lt. Col. William Schock and Col. Bill Roberts present a "My Boss Is a Patriot" certificate to Crestview Middle School Principal John McNeely at a school assembly Wednesday. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Patriotic Crestview principal honored

By Lou Whitmire
News Journal

OLIVESBURG — John McNeely, principal of Crestview Middle School, got quite a surprise Wednesday afternoon.

He received a "My Boss is a Patriot" certificate of appreciation from the Office of the Secretary of Defense at a school assembly.

McNeely is a strong supporter of the Ohio National Guard and Army Reserve. He was nominated for the honor by teacher Linda Roney, a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve.

Roney's military boss, 10th Battalion commander Lt. Col. William Schock, and Schock's boss, 6th Brigade commander Col. Bill Roberts, traveled from the 100th Division at Louisville, Ky., to present the award.

McNeely, surprised and emotional as he stood at the podium, said he was almost speechless.

"I'm honored to receive this award. ... You people in the military are

After the assembly, Roney said McNeely is supportive of everyone at the school who has relatives in the military.

"We're honoring him not for what he gives me, but for his patriotism," Roney said.

Fellow teacher Joyce Galloway thanked McNeely for supporting her when her son Daniel was deployed to Iraq with the Army Reserve's 1486th Transportation Co.

McNeely said he was being honored for something he ought to be doing anyway.

"When Mrs. Roney was deployed (after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks) I told Mrs. Roney your job will be here when you get back," he said.

Even when she is not deployed, Roney's job in the military requires travel and days off from her job as a seventh- and eighth-grade teacher.

She teaches a course in the Army Reserve called "combined arms exercise," and she is area coordinator for Kentucky. Her military job most recently took her out of the classroom April 29 to May 4 to participate in weapons training.

Schock said Roney couldn't do her job without employers like Crestview Schools.

"She is responsible for all instructors in Kentucky who teach the course," he said.

Roney trains people in eight states — Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Schock, 57, who leaves in June for Iraq to assist the Iraqi people with veterans affairs, said the award presentation was his first and called it a proud moment. He is a human resources director for the regional veteran's affairs office in Louisville.

Roberts, an attorney in Kentucky, lauded McNeely for his willingness to share Roney with her other job.

"We as Army Reserve soldiers depend on two groups of people — our families and employers. We're here to recognize someone who is a patriot to us," Roberts said.

McNeely said his uncle John was drafted into World War II and landed in the Normandy invasion. McNeely's father, Bryon McNeely, served in World War II and received a Purple Heart, a Bronze Star and other honors — and survived being shot twice in the back of the head.

The principal said the award ranked with the birth of his daughter. "It's a moment I will remember," he said.

Roney said she first met her principal on the telephone.

"He made it clear he was very patriotic and me being in the Reserve would not be a detriment," she recalled.

"I have a wonderful lady who is my sub. I just have the best of all worlds."

Sarah Jenkins, 12, a sixth-grader, applauded her principal.

"He runs the school well," she said.

Classmate Connor Plemens, 12, said McNeely is nice.

"He is very deserving of this," he added.

lwhitmire@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7223

Another Civilian Military person, who is a wonderful asset to our Community. The 179th also has a choir that sings at special local events.

Remembering the soldiers

Above, Gary Johnson, a member of the Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing for 10 years, stands beside his father, Glenn Johnson, a World War II Army veteran, during the "America, we must not forget" service Sunday at the Berean Baptist Church on Middle Bellville Road. Glenn Johnson has another son, Randy, in the service in Uzbekistan. Glenn's wife, Phyllis, is sitting to his right.

Right, Marine Tim Crumbliss sings "O' God, Our Help in Ages Past" during the service Sunday. Backing up Crumbliss is the church choir, led by the Rev. Bryan Moak.

(Walt Butler/ News Journal photos)

The people who are in our Civilian-Military units, are not just Military personell. They are part of our lives in every way. Our fathers and mothers, Sons and daughters, our friends, whom we love. Now BRAC wants to dis-respect them.

BRAC staff member to visit 179th

But BRAC/REDeC steering committee not sure if they are even allowed to attend

Program on WMFD-TV lays out story of 179th, BRAC commission

News Journal staff report

MANSFIELD — Mike Greene and Ret. Brig. Gen. Fred Larson, the former commander of the 179th, who together are leading efforts to save the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, have taped a program that will air on WMFD-TV at 7:30 p.m. each evening through Sunday.

"It pretty much lays out the entire story of the 179th and the BRAC commission and why it is so vital that the air base remains here in Mansfield," Greene said. "I hope everyone in Mansfield will watch it and come down and support us at our rally on June 22."

A "Save Our 179th Day" rally is set that day at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract a crowd of 10,000 and national media coverage. Greene hopes a huge public show of support helps away some minds.

Ret. Brig. Gen. Steve Koper, president of the National Guard Association of the United States, has committed to attend the rally. Greene said he expects U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley and Ohio Adjutant Gen. Greg Wayt to be on hand. He's confident that Gov. Bob Taft will also be in Mansfield that day.

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Local officials haven't been successful in arranging a visit to Mansfield by a member of the Base Realignment and Closure commission but they haven't given up efforts to argue their case.

A BRAC commission staff member — not an actual commissioner — will be in Mansfield on Tuesday to visit the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at Mansfield Lahm Airport, which last month was placed on a list of military bases to be closed by the Pentagon.

Call it a second-tier visit.

"He will meet with staff at the air base," said Mike Greene, of the Richland Economic Development Corporation, which is spearheading efforts to keep the 179th in Mansfield.

GREENE

"I don't even know if our committee will be allowed to attend. If we are, we won't be able to ask questions or present our case.

"The briefing will be 100 percent presented and produced by the 179th. It will not be open to the public. My hope is that staffer comes here with an open mind."

In the meantime the BRAC/REDeC steering committee is continuing its efforts to get the 179th off the closure list. It now has another $50,000 to work with.

The State Controlling Board released the money, promised by Gov. Bob Taft, on Wednesday.

"It certainly will help," Greene said. "It will help pay for our trip to Buffalo. It could pay for other trips. It could pay for a trip to Washington, D.C."

Greene said such a trip to Washington could be for the purpose of arguing the Mansfield case before a BRAC commission member.

"If they won't come to us, we'll go to them," he said.

Efforts have intensified in the weeks since the 179th was placed on the Pentagon's closure list. A lobbying group is still active in Washington, D.C., and the local steering committee has hired a consultant in Columbus to help draft its presentation for a regional hearing in Buffalo on June 27.

Ohio, which had three bases on the list, will get a chance to argue its case at that hearing. The state has been allotted a total of two hours. Greene hopes Mansfield gets at least 30 minutes.

"We'll attend some hearings prior to that so we can check out the format and see what some of the other arguments have been and how they've been presented," Greene said.

"I wouldn't say that's our last effort to present our case, but the style and substance of our presentation will be important."

rkent@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7274

Former 179th generals will meet the public

Six generals, former members of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, will be together for the first time Thursday for a "Meet the Generals Day" at Mansfield Memorial Museum, 34 Park Avenue West.

They will greet the public from 4 to 6 p.m.

Scheduled to participate are Francis Hazard, Ray Weber, Fred Larson, Myron Ashcraft, Rich Green and Vergel Lattimore.

The 179th, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, has been recommended for closing by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission. Public rallies to have the 179th removed from the closure list are planned for June 18 in Bellville and June 22 on the square in Mansfield.

As you can see we are doing everything we can possibly do to convince the BRAC that we really want to keep all of Civilian-Military facilities and personell in place. Even to producing a TV program to inform all of our citizens about our Civilian-Military.

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

1. Mission/Military Value

- Primary Aircraft Weapons System: (8) C-130H2+ Hercules (Distinguishing Operational and Technical highlights are detailed in attachment 1.); Valued at $240,000,000.

- Major Command: Air Mobility Command (AMC), Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.

- The proud home to one the most highly trained, combat-tested, veteran, C-130 forces in the United States Air Force. Since Vietnam, we have led the way in the C-130 community in both combat hours and sorties.

- Our air crews have been decorated with over 116 Air Medals and 16 Aerial Achievement Medals since Operations Joint Guard (1996-1998, Sarajevo), and Joint Forge (1998-1999, Sarajevo); these medals recognize meritorious service and/or valor in aerial flight.

- We make significant airlift contributions to the USAF mission and have an enviable safety record. Flying an accident-free average of over 3,400 hours from FY 2003 to FY 2005 (projected), we have accumulated a total of over 134,000 safe flying hours.

- We are a vital component of the Total Force (with the ANG providing nearly 50% of the USAF's tactical airlift capability, the fight can't be fought without us) and have supported combat and humanitarian operations and exercises around the world. Some examples:

  Volant Oak (Panama); 1979 - 1999.
  Volant Partner (Germany); 1987 - 1992
  Reforger (Alaska); 1983
  Desert Shield Desert Storm; 1990 - 1991.
  Operation Restore Hope (Somalia); 1992 – 1993.
  Operation Provide Promise (Bosnia); 1993 – 1994.
  Operation Joint Endeavor (Bosnia); 1996 – 1998.
  Operation Joint Guard (Bosnia); 1998 – 1999.
  Operation Joint Forge (Bosnia); 1999 – 2002.
  Operation Southern Watch (Mid-East); 1996 – 1999.
  Operation Uphold Democracy (Haiti); 1994.
  Operation Shining Hope (Kosovo); 1999.

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

- Since 9/11, the inception of the Global War on Terror, and Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom, the 179th has been engaged like never before. Some key statistics:

2001		
	Operations Supported	Coronet Oak, Deep Freeze, Noble Eagle
	Participating units	Airlift Squadron, Medical Squadron, Logistics Support, Airlift Squadron, Aerial Port Squadron
	Days served	13,842
2002		
	Operations Supported	Southern Watch, Deep Freeze, Noble Eagle, Israeli support, Enduring Freedom, Joint Forge, Northern Watch
	Participating units	Aircraft maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Civil engineering squadron, Services
	Days served	56,912
2003		
	Operations Supported	Deep Freeze, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, Israeli Support
	Participating units	Aircraft Operations, Aircraft Maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Civil engineering squadron, Services, Intelligence
	Days served	35,971
2004		
	Operations Supported	Deep Freeze, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom
	Participating units	Aircraft Operations, Aircraft Maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Intelligence
	Days served	64,052

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

Combat Aerial Operations Totals for OEF and OIF:

	HOURS	SORTIES	PAX	CARGO TONS
OIF AL JABER	1,219.3	878	9,735	1287.2
OIF TALIL, AL SALEM, AL UDIED	1,839.4	1,222	19,755	2,429
OEF AL SALEM, AL UDIED, CURRENT AOR	898.6	550	5490	1852.6
TOTALS	3957.3	2650	34980	5568.8

- Our Proposed $8.0 M Fire/Crash Rescue Station will accommodate **JOINT** Air National Guard/Army National Guard firefighting missions.

- In addition to the flying mission, we are home to a wide range of expeditionary combat and homeland security support units, capable of delivering many invaluable capabilities. Some examples:

Civil Engineering
- Engineering force to maintain facilities and infrastructure
- Fire Department and Power Production team

Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Supply of materiel and fuels, maintenance of the vehicle fleet, traffic management services and planning and management of the mobilization process to ensure an accurate and rapid response in the event of contingency moves or national emergency.

Aerial Port Squadron
- Coordinate missions with Base Operations and the affected work centers of the squadron
- Plan, schedule and process air cargo, passengers, and mail
- Prepare load plans, manifests and air movement reports using automated or manual tools
- Prepare/Inspect and Process Cargo for onward movement

Security Forces Squadron
- Point of entry control to the installation
- Armed response to the installation

- Presidential Aircraft support at remote locations upon request
- Support to the Governor for natural or man-made disasters

Communications Flight
- Maintenance and support to computers and crypto equipment.
- Maintenance and support to telephone switch and outside telephone plant.
- Maintenance and support to land mobile radio (LMR), Ground to Air radio (VHF/UHF), state emergency radio (HF) and tactical mobility radio.
- Visual information support

Services Flight
- Food Service, Lodging, Wartime Mortuary Affairs, Search & Recovery Operations, Morale, Welfare & Recreation, Tactical Field Exchange

Mission Support Flight
- Personnel services to the Wing and surrounding retired military community, including recruiting, retention, enlistment, retirements, Separations, Force Deployment and sustainment, ID Cards and health care Enrollment, support.

Environmental Management Office
- Programs to reduce hazardous and solid waste generation
- Increase recycling and Green Purchasing efforts
- Maintain compliance with all applicable EPA, Air Force, and Air National Guard regulations

Expeditionary Medical Support (EMEDS)
- Mobile and highly capable clinical disaster response/assessment

- Because the ANG is also the State Governors' asset (The Guard is the only military force immediately available to a governor in times of emergency, including civil unrest and natural or manmade disasters), we are uniquely positioned to support a host of Homeland Security missions. Some examples:

Expeditionary Medical Support
- Forward deployed trauma resuscitation/surgical capability including critical care
- Multi-functional team composition decreases number of medics required to deploy
    - 179MDG is only MDG in FEMA Region 5 with Surgical capabilities
    - Region Five Consists of:
        - Ohio

- Michigan
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Wisconsin
- Minnesota

Security Forces

- Conduct anti-terror assessments and provide threat information to the Governor
- Coordinate local anti-terrorism intelligence sharing with local police agencies

Readiness

- Provide trained and equipped Nuclear Biologic Chemical (NBC) Readiness Personnel

Communication Flight

- Provide critical command and control with State Emergency Management Agency via the State HF radio net. Additionally the 179th CF has direct radio contact and support agreements with local fire and law enforcement agencies, which would enable us to coordinate a Homeland Defense emergency response with the rest of the State.

2. Land, Facilities, Infrastructure, Air Space

- Mansfield's 9000-foot, Instrument Flight Rule (IFR)-equipped runway is one of the longest in Ohio (only 6 of 168 are longer.)

- No commercial carriers compete for Mansfield-Lahm's airspace.

- We enjoy exceptional mission support facilities:
  - 33 Buildings: 292,863 Sq. Ft.
  - Total Acres: 230
  - Value: $92,928,000.
  - Main Cantonment Area: 67 Acres
  - Drop Zone: 157 Acres
  - **Airport Costs**: $49,904

  - Military Construction Investments:
    1997 - Medical Training/Dining Hall: $3.1M
    1998 - Jet Fuel Storage Complex: $4.1 M
    1998 - Headquarters Building: $4.7 M
    2001 - Security Forces Operations Building: $2.7 M

2003 - Air Operations/Communications Building: $6.6 M
2004 - Transportation Complex: $3.3 M
2005 – Upgraded/Hardened Main Gate Facility: $690 K

- Planned Improvements
  Fire Station: $8.0 M (FY '06)
  Civil Engineering Facility: $5.9 M (FY '09)

- Ample room for expansion (see attachment 2)

3. Economic Impact

Employees

Full-time	293
Duty Status Guardsmen	767
Total	**1060**

Impact on Local Economy

Annual Payroll	$ 25.5M
Operating Funds	$ 16.6M
Total	**$ 42.1M**

Operating Funds

Operations & Maintenance	$ 114,300
Ohio National Guard Tuition Assistance Program	$ 160,000
State Income Tax	$ 995,160
Profit for the State	**$ 720,860**

Benefit to Mansfield

Mansfield City Income Tax	$174,000
Income from Property Lease	$ 49,905
Profit for Mansfield	**$ 223,905**

4. Community Infrastructure Support

- Large, talented, and supportive recruiting community with a radius reaching as far as Columbus and Cleveland, resulting in unit strength of 104.7%, 5th in the entire ANG (91 units.)

- Robust relationships with the City of Mansfield, Richland and surrounding counties, especially civic and legislative leaders.

- Property lease from City of Mansfield only ≈ $50K / year

- Over 1500 sleeping rooms within easy driving distance of the base could accommodate much larger traditional force, or surge requirements (we use only 80 double-occupied rooms now, with a strength of 767 traditional Guardsmen)

5. **Environmental Impact:**
   - The 179th has a proud record of Environmental Stewardship, e.g.,
     - Installation Restoration Program (IRP):
       - 5 of 8 sites are officially closed.
       - All will be closed by mid-2006.
     - No underground storage tank issues
     - Current small arms firing range will require soil remediation when it is ordered closed. Estimated cost $ 0.5M.

6. **Awards and Accomplishments:**

Year	Inspection/Award	Reason or Results
2005	Environmental, Safety, Occupational, Health Compliance Assessment & Management Program (ESOHCAMP)	Outstanding and Best Ever Seen
2004	Health Services Inspection (HSI)	Excellent Rating
2003	Deneke Award	Outstanding ANG Civil Engineer
2002	CMSgt Edward Wilbert Award	Outstanding Fire Dept of the Year
2002	James D. Weaver Award	Outstanding Fulltime Medical Technician
2002	ANG Environmental Quality Award For Recycling	
2002	ANG Services Flt of the Year	Superior Performance
2002	Initial Readiness Inspection	Excellent
2002	Unit Compliance Inspection	Excellent
2002	Aircrew Stan/Eval Inspection	Excellent
2001	AF Outstanding Unit Award	Outstanding Performance
2001	ANG Metcalf Trophy	Outstanding Mission Accomplishment
2000	Tappan Award	Outstanding Ohio Flying Unit
2000	EORI @ Ramstein AB, GE	Top rating
2000	Health Services Inspection	Highest Air Force rating
2000	IG Exercise (IGX)	Top rating
1999	Tappan Award	Outstanding Ohio Flying Unit

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

Attachment 1

C-130 HERCULES

The C-130 Hercules primarily performs the tactical intra-theater portion of the airlift mission. The aircraft is capable of operating from rough; dirt strips and is the prime transport for para-dropping troops and equipment into hostile areas. Basic and specialized versions perform a diversity of roles, including airlift support, aero medical missions, and natural disaster relief missions.

The C-130 Hercules has unsurpassed versatility, performance, and mission effectiveness. The flexible design of the Hercules enables it to be configured for many different missions, allowing for one aircraft to perform the role of many. Much of the special mission equipment added to the Hercules is removable, allowing the aircraft to revert back to its cargo delivery role if desired. Additionally, the C-130 can be rapidly reconfigured for the various types of cargo

The C-130's design maximum gross weight is 155,000 pounds (175,000 pounds wartime) with a normal landing weight of 130,000 pounds. The airplane is capable of airlifting 6 pallets or 74 litters or 16 CDS bundles or 92 combat troops or 64 paratroopers. It can also carry 45,000 pounds of cargo or a combination of any of these up to the cargo compartment capacity or maximum allowable weight.

Conduct aero medical evacuation operations. Movement of casualties by air transportation under the supervision of qualified aero medical evacuation crew members to/between medical treatment facilities

Support psychological operations. Support of operations targeted against the minds of the enemy civilian population and combat forces. Speaker operations and leaflet airdrops can be used to influence and demoralize hostile forces prior to and during offensive operations

The mission of the C-130 is to provide rapid transportation of personnel or cargo for delivery by parachute to a designated drop zone, or by landing at austere locations within the theater of operations.

The C-130 provides long range, day or night capability. C-130 combat delivery assets can perform airdrops in visual conditions; AWADS C-130s are additionally capable of executing airdrops in IMC (Instrument Meteorological Conditions) independent of external navigation aids

The C-130 can deliver personnel, equipment or supplies either by landing or by various aerial delivery modes.

In the first, parachutes pull the load, weighing up to 42,000 pounds, from the aircraft. When the load is clear of the plane, cargo parachutes inflate and lower the load to the ground.

The second method, called the Container Delivery System, uses the force of gravity to pull from one to 16 bundles of supplies from the aircraft. When the bundles, weighing up to 2,200 pounds each, are out of the aircraft, parachutes inflate and lower them to the ground.

MANSFIELD AIRCRAFT UPGRADES

AWADS (Adverse Weather Aerial Delivery System) - The precise delivery of personnel, equipment, and supplies during adverse weather, using a self-contained aircraft instrumentation system without artificial ground assistance or the use of ground navigational aids.

SCNS (Self-Contained Navigation System) - SCNS provides the flight crew an integrated navigation system, with four independent navigation solutions, including GPS, flight guidance and advisory information to fly a variety of missions. SCNS also provides control of communication and navigation radios, flight planning and calculation, and control of troop/cargo airdrops, as well as processing of radar data on some models.

ESKE (Enhanced Station Keeping Equipment)

GPWS (Ground Proximity Warning System)

GPS (Global Positioning System) - Installs a space-based all-weather radio navigation system into all SCNS-equipped C-130s to allow autonomous navigation capabilities. Eliminates reliance upon ground-based stations to provide navigational inputs to aircraft systems

MLS (Microwave Landing System) - Allows precision approaches and landings. MLS will allow elimination of ILS, which suffers from frequency congestion.

NVG (Night Vision Goggles)

NVIS (Night Vision Imaging System)

SATCOM (Satellite Communication) - Installs a permanent SATCOM antenna, interface cabling, preamplifier, and control panel for portable SATCOM radios required by joint users of combat delivery aircraft

GCAS (Ground Collision Avoidance System)

TCAS (Traffic Collision Avoidance System)

Threat Avoidance.

Improved capability to detect/degrade/defeat threats.

Chaff Flare Dispensers, Radar Jammers

MWS (Missile Warning System)

RWS (Radar Warning System)

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

OTHER DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF MANSFIELD'S C-130 FLEET

- Flying Hours (average equivalent baseline) on our aircraft place them at less than half of their useful life span.

- **Enhanced Cargo Delivery** capability via the Canary Slide Ramp System (ideal for Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Defense Team rapid movement requirement)

- Our **record of excellence and innovation in aircraft maintenance** has involved us in important, mission-enhancing research and development (often for the entire C-130 fleet):

  - **(BCEM) Battery Control Electronic Module** test aircraft for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center

  - **Corrosion Sensor Test Aircraft** for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center (administered by Battelle Labs in Columbus) to aid in determining corrosion impact from world wide environmental conditions on entire ANG and Air Force C-130 fleet. This evaluation will also help to re-evaluate C-130 aircraft frequency for wash intervals and corrosion inspections

  - **SATCOM Form Fit And Function Evaluation** (C-130 aircraft) for Wright Patterson AFB to help refine the Satellite Secure Communications System for CENTAF operations

  - Potential **Deicing Fluid Evaluation Site** for the Air Force Research Laboratory

  - **Main Landing Gear Torque Tube Coupling Safety Test Aircraft** for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center and Air Mobility Command (AMC)

  - Evaluator for the **Airdrop Ballistic Winds / Gps Tracker Test** for Wright Patterson, AFB

RECEIVED
06 30 2005

June 27, 2005

Mr. Philip Coyle
& BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street
Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Subject: The removal of the C 130-H's from the 179th Air Wing, Lahm Field, Mansfield, Ohio

Subject: The lack of factual information about the 179th and other Air Guard, National Guard, and Reservist personnel or their facilities.

Dear Sir,
I have done quite a lot of research on the subject of the 179th Air Wing, based at Lahm Field; Mansfield, Ohio. Also have spent time in composing this letter. Please, please, sir, do me the courtesy of reading what I have provided for your enlightenment. Enclosed is much infomation regarding the past and present of the 179th. It is a very active Air Guard Unit. Their planes and the personell have been deployed to many places in the world for both Military and Humanitarian missions, all successfully completed.
Inspections of the 179th have always been completed with the highest possible ratings. All the years the 179th Air Guard has been at Lahm Field it has always been carefully and prudefully maintained. The runway at Lahm Field is one of the longest in the US and can accomodate the largest planes now flying. It is also an emergency landing strip for a shuttle. Why give up the use of this runway for Military use, just to spend billions on another airstrip at some other Air Base?
Guard Units were <u>never</u> meant to be moved around. They were supposed to be locally based, and the members of these Guard Units were to train at their facilities twice a month, then to have 2 weeks of more concentrated training

at a regular, or "standing" military facility.
By closing these Guard and Reserve facilities you are defeating the very purpose for which they were created.
By going forward with your plans in Ohio you are destroying our faith and trust in the purpose and structure of our Guard system, and betraying the people who serve in them.
You will force the retirement of many Senior Officers and staff, with many years of experience and great depth of knowledge. Young people who have homes and families will not re-new their contracts. They will not up-root their families
Currently, there is a short fall in signing up new recruits for some branches of service. If you forge ahead with closing of so many Militilary bases, especially Guard and Reserve forces, you will have a MAJOR in recruiting over-all, short-fall.
The ENTIRE BRAC needs to review their short-sighted thinking while we still have a civilian-military. Since about 40 per cent of our fighting man power now in the war zones is civilian-military, BRAC needs to use more thought before taking any action. Taking into account at the last "closing" it was to save 19 billion dollars. It cost 22 billion to close the bases. I don't see any money saved

The professional or career Military expects to move around frequently. They know this will happen upon signing contracts to serve. Both they, and their families expect this. Many resources at their disposal will help and render advice and much financial aid to make their transitions easy as possible.
Guard and Reserve Units are not prepared for such change. Neither are their personnell. Nothing is in place to move them from one location to the next. Especially not financially.
BRAC seems to have no regard or compassion for what ever hardships or problems might arise for Reserve or Guard, or any one else, for that matter.
The 179th has an enviable safety record. They have not had a lost time accident in many years. Let alone a formal "Stand Down" to consider or re-evaluate a problem. It has always been, and still is a very well-run facilety.
Lahm Field is one of the newer Air Guard bases. It has been well-maintained and up-graded. It is a Military Installation to be proud of. Instead of taking away the C-130-H's, bring more of them here. If you must close an Air Wing, bring the F-16's here, there is plenty of room.
Also, the 706th Transportation Company from Marion, Ohio could be based at Lahm, plus the Guard Units from Mansfield and Ashland.

That makes more sense to most people around here.
Contrary to what BRAC states that we have no room to expand, we have a LOT more land to expand to if it becomes necessary.
BRAC also states it is difficult to activate smaller Units. Apparently, they are ignorant of computers, fax machines, all kinds of telephones, radio, and good-old-fashioned written orders.
I think Ohio may have lost more people in Iraq than any other state, not too mention many horribly wounded. Their lives, and their families lives will never be the same again. More Ohioans are still being deployed, some from the 179th.
How can BRAC think of closing away with such an active Air Wing?
Here in Ohio we have great caring, reverance, and respect for our Military people, living and dead. We take great pride in what our hero's, past and present have sacrificed for us and the rest of the nation. BRAC's high handedness is an insult to all of our service people, living or dead, and their families and people who loved them, also.
BRAC withholds information from the very people most affected by their decisions. Even their address and telephone numbers are not available to us, the "common people". The "common masses" who pay their salaries one way or another.

Many of us, the citizens of Ohio believe the Air Force is commiting legal robbery, and getting BRAC to do it for them. Our Air Guard planes are newer, better equipped, and much better maintained than the Cargo planes the Air Force now has at their disposal.

So where to acquire planes, the quickest and with the least cost?

Not a problem. We will just remove them from the Air Guard Units. Get them under our control and our command.

That will make the Air Force look better to the US Congress when we ask them for money for some "pet project".

The 179th is an Air Wing. How can they be an Air Wing without planes?

Ruth Ann Welch R#12 705 Pinkney Road
Mansfield, Ohio 44903 1(419) 768-1253

The above "Cartoon" is the way many of our citizens feel about closing the 179th Air Base. We in Ohio have no large military base as do many other states. We have no Eglin Air Field, No Camp Le June, No Fort Wood, No May Pat, No Fort Leonard Wood etc.

The people of Ohio have in the past sacrificed many of our fine National Guard, Reservists, Air Guard personell for generations, and we are still doing so. We feel betrayed by what BRAC wishes to do. It is a direct insult to all who have died and many who have been so terribly wounded. A "slap in the face" to all of those who have given so much and to everyone who loved them

Vietnam Memorial stirs emotions

By John Jarvis
Gannett News Service

UPPER SANDUSKY — A wool stocking cap pulled halfway down on his head, the man in the red-and-black flannel jacket ran his fingers slowly across the letters.

W-I-L-L-I-A-M E F-O-L-L-O-N.

A grimace wrinkled the 58-year-old's expression, and he lowered his hand from the white name on the black wall to rub the salt-and-pepper whiskers on his face.

"William E. Follon. ... He got killed on the day we were supposed to leave," said Tom Gottfried of Carey. Members of the Air Force's 37th Combat Engineers, they had already turned in their battle gear and were at an airfield in Binh Dinh province "waiting for a ride out of the country."

Before their flight arrived, an enemy rocket attack killed the sergeant from Iowa, one of Gottfried's "best buddies."

"It killed him pretty much outright," Gottfried said.

Follon's is one of about 58,000 names of men and women killed in the Vietnam War commemorated on the Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall & Museum just outside of Upper Sandusky. The display will be at Thiel's Wheels on Tarhe Trail at U.S. 23 and Ohio 53 through Sunday.

Gottfried spent 13 months in Vietnam, from the end of 1968 through Feb. 2, 1970.

"It was good to be home, but it was kind of a letdown," because of the ill will some had for the war and those who fought in it, he said.

Gottfried said he'd feel better about his experience in Southeast Asia "if we'd won the war. ... There are a lot of good people on this wall who probably wouldn't be on there if we'd kept on."

Working security for the event, former Marion-area resident Mark Sigler of Harpster helped students find names on the wall.

"It lets you know the costs of war," said Sigler, an Army sergeant in the transportation corps during the Vietnam War era. He served in Korea, unlike his friend, Medard A.J. Ruehle.

Ruehle was one of 11 Wyandot County residents who died in Southeast Asia.

"He got out of a helicopter to help some wounded and in the process got killed himself," Sigler said.

Visiting the Upper Sandusky wall event from Findlay was Frederick Adams, who helped set up a similar tribute in his city.

"There's a bunch of guys from Findlay I went to school with who are on the wall," Adams said. "It's hard to just come here and not feel something for all these people."

Gary Cox of Marion, who helped provide computer information to assist visitors in locating their loved ones' names on the wall last fall in Marion, helped with the Upper Sandusky event as well.

If you go

- **What:** The Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall & Museum
- **When:** Through Sunday
  Today: 1 p.m., Veterans tribute ceremony; 8 p.m., musical and flag tribute
  Sunday: 2 p.m., closing ceremony
- **Where:** Thiel's Wheels, Tarhe Trail at U.S. 23 and Ohio 53, Upper Sandusky.

"I pay tribute to the 58,000 names that are on that wall."

Gary Cox
veteran

"I pay tribute to the 58,000 names that are on the wall," said Cox, a former Marine who didn't see combat. "As a Vietnam-era veteran I wasn't able to participate, but I can give back to the guys that did."

The people of Ohio Honor their military dead, I believe more than any other state. We have hundreds if not thousands of Memorials to our beloved dead from our largest towns to our smallest villages. On Memorial Day our cemeteries are a mass of color because all of the Star and Stripes flying over every veterans grave. The BRAC is going to dis-honor some of these veterans. They were deployed from our Reserve and Guard Units. Now, you want to "change the Rules" in the middle of the war, and make a "hardship" for those who still are under contract to the military.

Local war hero honored in new museum display

News Journal
staff reports

MANSFIELD — A Memorial Day military display featuring the late Albert Allen of Mansfield, who is a member of Ohio's Military Hall of Fame, will open Saturday and run through the Memorial Day weekend at the Mansfield Museum at 35 Park Avenue West.

Allen, who died last year, was a lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserves and a survivor of the Bataan Death March and years spent in Japanese prisoner of war camps during World War II.

Museum Curator Scott Schaut said the items were donated by Allen's wife, Nancy. He said the display includes memorabilia from Allen's father, Albert L. "Cap" Allen Sr., who was commander of Mansfield's Company M, 145th Infantry, 37th Division in France during World War I.

Also on display will be "broadside" advertisements for previous Memorial Day services held in this city during the 1880s when Civil War veterans were the only ex-soldiers available to be honored.

Schaut said displays concerning World War II and home-front industry in Mansfield, as well as a history of the 179th Airlift Wing, are still up.

He said one of the oddities of military history in Richland County is that while there are many displays concerning the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War and the two World Wars, there are almost no items connected with the Mexican-American War of 1845 or the Spanish-American War of 1898.

"Both of those wars have been totally overshadowed by the bigger wars," Schaut said. "Mansfield sent troops to fight Mexico in 1845 and many more to Cuba in 1898.

"Commander Edward Parker Wood of Mansfield was commander of the U.S.S. Petrel at the battle of Manila Bay."

The museum is open Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. and on Memorial Day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Lately our local Newspaper has been "featuring" a World War II milet ary person, with a long article about them.
Their service in the second World War, their lives after Military service, and other interesting stories the servicemen may tell.
We do revere our military people.
Although, a number of the BRAC have been military, I don't believe they hold our more humb- Reserve and Guard people in the same high esteem as we do.

Ohio squad takes heavy hit in Iraq

COLUMBUS (AP) — Six Marines were killed and another 15 were wounded from one central Ohio squad in a major U.S. offensive near Iraq's border with Syria, a newspaper reported.

The squad was one of three belonging to the 1st Platoon of Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment, according to The Washington Post, which has a reporter embedded with Operation Matador.

The military has confirmed five Marine deaths so far and says about 100 insurgents have been killed in the operation — one of the largest U.S. offensives since Fallujah was reclaimed from militants.

Chief Warrant Officer Orrin Bowman, the site commander for the Columbus-based company, confirmed Thursday the company was participating in the operation and had taken casualties. He declined to say how many from the Marine reserve unit had been killed or release any names.

The military has identified two Ohio Marines with the 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment who have died in Iraq since Sunday. Lance Cpl. Wesley G. Davids, 20, of Dublin, was killed in an explosion in Karabilah on Wednesday and Cpl. Dustin A. Derga, 24, of Columbus, was killed by small arms fire in Ubaydi on Sunday, according to the Department of Defense.

Bowman said the unit is in the process of contacting and helping the affected families.

Lima is a rifle company that has four platoons, Bowman said. Each platoon has three squads that normally have 13 people but can be reinforced depending on a mission, he said.

Davids left for Iraq in January, last talked to his family four weeks ago and was scheduled to come home in October, his mother said.

"While his death is a tragic loss, he died doing something he felt passionately about," Jody Davids said. "He was the best that this country has to offer."

Her son loved working on cars and graduated in 2003 from Dublin Scioto High School, where he was on the crew team.

"He was just a very impressive, strong young man," said Russ Merritt, his high school coach. "Wes was kind of an inspiration to all of us. You just had no doubt that he would give 100 percent."

The operation was launched after U.S. intelligence showed large numbers of insurgents had moved into the northern Jazirah Desert following losses in Fallujah and Ramadi, further east. The area is believed to be a staging ground for foreign fighters crossing into Iraq from Syria along ancient smuggling routes.

The offensive started Saturday night and is aimed at rooting out followers of Iraq's most wanted militant leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

Two Ohio soldiers killed in grenade attack in Ramadi, Iraq

The Associated Press

Two Ohio soldiers were killed in Iraq when their military vehicle came under a grenade attack, the Department of Defense said Wednesday.

Army Sgt. Larry R. Kuhns Jr., 24, of Austintown, and Spc. Anthony D. Kinslow, 21, of Westerville, died Monday in Ramadi, the volatile town 70 miles west of Baghdad.

Both were assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division from Fort Carson, Colo. The brigade has lost 65 soldiers in Iraq.

It was the second time in as many weeks that more than one serviceman from Ohio was killed in the same attack in Iraq. Three Marines from an Akron-based unit died in an explosion last Thursday during fighting in Haqlaniyah, 90 miles north of Baghdad.

Kuhns worked at the Army recruiting office in Boardman for a time in late 2003, said Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Catrucco, who works at the office.

"He was an awesome guy. He was very professional," Catrucco said. "He was the type of soldier any sergeant would love to have."

Kuhns, whose wife lives in Fort Carson, recently had been promoted to sergeant, Catrucco said. He began his military career as a reservist with the 319th Engineer Company in Butler, Pa.

Kinslow's mother declined comment Wednesday.

Ohio has lost a lot of people, and nobody seems to care, certainly not BRAC, positively not the politicians. As far as I can tell the military isn't much interested in our losses. We may have more dead than any other state.
Where do you think the next generation of Civilian - Military is comming from? Who is going to join a Guard or Reserve Unit if they know in advance that they may spend more time traveling than training twice a month? You already have a shortfall of new recruits in the Regular Military. You are conducting this war with 40% CIVILIAN - Military.
How do you purpose to recruit more people for any kind of military duty? Your short-sightness is going to make us a "target of report unit" [illegible]

Lexington family has three sons in Iraq

By Ron Simon
News Journal

LEXINGTON — Like his father before him, James Andrews, 58, chose to be a soldier.

He served first in the Air Force and then the Army Reserves with the 1486th Transportation Company. He capped off a long military career by driving a truck during Operation Desert Storm and serving as his unit's first sergeant.

"I think if I hadn't retired there's no doubt I'd have already been over in Iraq and back by this time," Andrews said.

Instead, his three sons, Kyle, 24, Kraig, 22 and Kolby, 20, are in Iraq and Kyle is there for the second time.

Like their father before them, they chose to be soldiers. With a difference. All three are Marines. Kyle is a second lieutenant. Kraig is a lance corporal and Kolby is a private first class.

All three are, as their e-mail photos show, deep in harm's way.

"Have a wonderful Father's Day and thanks for all the things you do for me," Kyle wrote in a card last week. He is the only son, right now, who is able to stay in touch. "They come and go in operations," James explained.

"This is such a different war from the one I was in," James said. "Back then, it was letters and postcards. Today, it's tech messages, cell phone calls and e-mail. I was a driver and never was shot at. They are being shot at."

And three blue stars are in the window at the Andrews home on Steam Corners Road.

"I know they're doing a good job," James said of his sons. "They're really into what they do. Two of them have talked about making the Marine Corps a career. I'd like to think they are doing this because I was in the service."

Unspoken are any fears James and Renee Andrews may have about their sons being hurt in the

Lt. Kyle Andrews, with his brothers Pfc. Kolby Andrews and Lance Cpl. Kraig Andrews. *(Submitted photos)*

midst of war. They know the dates down to the day when each of their boys will rotate home.

Lt. Kyle Andrews, 24, whose wife's name is Lauren, is doing his second tour in Iraq. When he comes home later this year, he will be a basic infantry instructor at Camp LeJeune. "He's guaranteed to be home for three years," his father said.

Lance Cpl. Kraig Andrews, 22, whose wife's name is Albra, would be home next but he might have to rotate to Afghanistan a few more years down the road, James said. "They plan that far ahead these days."

Pfc. Kolby Andrews, 20, unmarried, plans to leave the Corps perhaps temporarily to attend college. "If he ever wants to be an officer he has to have some college," his father said.

Kraig and Kolby are Lexington High School graduates and Kyle is a St. Peter's graduate. James thinks his youngest son was the one who first checked into the idea of a military career. "Then Kraig got interested and he joined," James said. One Marine became two Marines became three Marines.

There is a lot of military background in the Andrews clan. James' late father, James Sr., was a captain in the Army Air Force in World War II.

ANDREWS SR.

Renee's father, Joseph S. Krebs, was a corpsman and ambulance driver with the Army in Europe during World War II.

KREBS

A native of Pennsylvania, James met Renee in California while he was in the Air Force. They were married for 20 years before divorcing. For now they are staying together.

James Jr.'s day job, the one he has held for 32 years, is postal carrier. He works out of the Ashland Post Office and his route covers the west side, mostly along Sandusky Street.

Nine years after he left service he joined the Army Reserves. With three boys to raise a little extra cash wouldn't hurt. But a war came along with it.

James was a squad leader as well as a driver during the Gulf War and finally rose to First Sergeant. When he reached 20 years he called it quits. "It was fun being a driver and moving equipment, but I really wasn't that happy with all the paperwork a first sergeant has," he said.

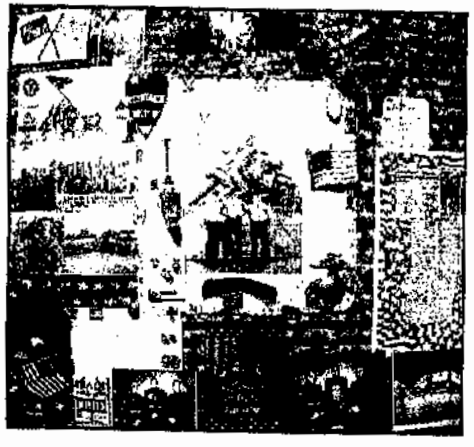
Now he and Renee stay in contact via all the new technology that links soldiers in the field with their families. And they wait. It's Father's Day.

And the boys are far away.

rsimon@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7230

Kolby Andrews, front row on the right, in Iraq.

Kyle and Kraig Andrews in Iraq.



A collage of the Andrews boys hangs in their home. *(Daniel Melograna/ News Journal)*

Another family of local Vets you will note the father of these fine young men, was an Army Reservist. The quality of people BRAC wants to shuffle around.

Closings could hurt Guard, some fear

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — Some members of the panel deciding which U.S. military bases to close worry the Pentagon's plans to reshuffle National Guard and Reserve installations are too radical and could discourage recruitment.

The Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure plan, released Friday, proposes consolidating 387 Reserve and National Guard installations into about 125.

Those recommendations are part of a larger plan to close 33 major bases and restructure 29 others to streamline and modernize the military.

The Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing's base at Mansfield Lahm Airport is among

■ More on the effort to keep the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield, see page 3A.

those to be closed.

The Guard and Reserve changes could affect hundreds of thousands of people who serve in the part-time forces while holding down full-time jobs. The main concern is that consolidating installations will mean longer travel times for reservists and Guard members.

"You're going to have real enlistment problems," said former Rep. James Bilbray of Nevada, one of the nine members of the president-appointed base closing commission.

The base closure panel will review the Pentagon's recommendations and make any changes it deems necessary before submitting its list to the president by Sept 8. If Bush approves, it goes to Congress for an all-or-nothing vote.

The panel began its work Monday by questioning Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and senior Pentagon officials about how they formulated their recommendations.

Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the Guard and Reserve consolidations were done to enhance capability, cut costs and integrate the part-time forces more closely with active-duty units.

Members of the heavily stressed Guard and Reserves make up about 40 percent of the roughly 138,000 U.S. troops in Iraq.

Myers acknowledged that "there will be some inconvenience" for people serving in the Guard and Reserves if the Pentagon's recommendations are followed.

Recruitment numbers for the Guard and Army reserves are already lagging this year. Guard recruitment was 24 percent behind in the first four months of the current recruiting year, which runs from October 2004 through September 2005.

"Anybody who looks at retention issues would have to be concerned about this," said John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a defense Web site. "This was one of the first things that really popped out at me."

a lot of people are very concerned about possible greater short falls in recruitment for any branch or any part of the military.

Guard, Reserve death toll matches highest total

WASHINGTON (AP) — Thirty members of the Army National Guard, Army Reserve and Marine Corps Reserve died in the Iraq war in May, matching the highest toll for any month of the war, according to Pentagon figures.

The overall U.S. death toll last month was 80, the highest since 107 in January. There were 52 deaths in April and 36 in March, when it appeared the insurgency was waning.

Iraqis bore the brunt of the insurgent violence in May, but it also took a heavy toll on the approximately 140,000 U.S. troops there. The 80 deaths compares with a monthly average of 70 over the previous 12 months.

The Guard and Reserve, which make up nearly half the force in Iraq, have generally had fewer than 20 deaths per month during the war, and it's not clear why their losses spiked to 30 in May. That matched the 30 deaths among the Guard and Reserve in January, and it compared with 11 in April, 13 in March and 16 in February.

The May total reached 30 when the Pentagon announced on Friday that Sgt. Miguel A. Ramos, 39, of Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, died May 31 in Baghdad when a rocket struck near his position. He was assigned to the Army Reserve's 807th Signal Company, 35th Signal Battalion, based at Juana Diaz, Puerto Rico.

One of the month's 30 fatalities died in the United States. Staff Sgt. Tommy S. Little, 47, of Aliceville, Ala., died May 2 at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, of injuries sustained on April 19 near Iskandariyah, Iraq, when a roadside bomb detonated near his Humvee utility vehicle. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 114th Field Artillery Regiment of the Mississippi Army National Guard at Columbus, Miss.

May also was a costly month for the Army's 3rd Infantry Division, which had 10 reported fatalities. Since it arrived in Iraq in February to become the first Army division to return for a second combat tour, the 3rd Infantry has lost 34 of its soldiers, according to Pentagon figures. During its previous tour, which included the initial invasion in March 2003 and lasted about eight months, the division lost 44 soldiers.

Closing the base makes no sense

I am writing this letter to
rge everyone to write their
ate politicians and help stop
ne closing of the 179th Airlift
Ving in Mansfield. The airbase
rovides about 1,000 full- and
art-time jobs and has an esti-
nated $70 million annual effect
n the area economy. The Base
ealignment and Closure
3RAC) threatens not only
Iansfield's Air National Guard
ase but nearly a third of all Air
ational Guard Units. It will
rastically change the military
s we know it. Our Mansfield
'nit has credentials that far ex-
eed the criteria to stay open. (It
ompares to the best units out
here). This is why the closing of
makes no sense. The money
aved does not offset the bene-
its to the nation's defense.

The 179th Airlift Wing repre-
ents the core of patriotism.
'hey are the heart and soul of
merica. They are the small
own people; they are our
riends, neighbors, brothers,
nd co-workers, most of which
ave deep roots in our commu-
ity. Many of these people may
ust leave the military. They
ave families here. They can't
ommute in some cases, hun-
reds of miles to go to drill. My
amily will no doubt have to
nove, possibly out of state. I
vas born and raised in the beau-
iful town of Bellville. My fami-
y is here. My friends are here.
Ay life is here. I would like my
hildren to go to school here.

Don't get me wrong, there are
lot of people also going
hrough this. My point is that
ur base is different because
here is no compelling reason to
lose it down. When you add up
he numbers, it doesn't save the
nilitary that much money. If it
nade sense, I would support it.
Ve need to write letters to
Taft/Voinovich/Dewine and your
listrict congressman. Thank
'ou for supporting our troops!

Jolie McCue
Bellville

Birthdays under fire

I would never have imagined that my three sons would be serving in the Marine Corps in Iraq at the same time. Half my heart is in Iraq.

On May 13, my son, 2nd Lt. Kyle J. Andrews turned 24 under fire in Iraq. He is with the 2nd AA BN, stationed at Camp Fallujah, Iraq. Recently he spent more than 10 days on a mission with no shower facilities available. Just a week later, he e-mailed us a copy of "The Desert Marine" which is a 2nd Marine Division publication that carried stories about Marines at Fallujah and also at Hadithah Dam, Iraq.

My middle son CPL Kraig L. Andrews serves with 3/8 Lima Co. and is also stationed at Fallujah. Kraig and Kyle have been able to share some time together at the chow hall and also working out.

On June 26, my youngest son, PFC Kolby J. Andrews, who is a member of 3/25 Scout-Sniper Platoon will celebrate his 20th birthday involved in Operation Iraqi Freedom at Hadithah Dam. As a mother of three sons who are serving in the United States Marine Corps, I could not be more proud of their commitment and accomplishments.

I feel fortunate we are able to correspond by phone, e-mail or text message on my cell phone almost weekly. Sometimes it is hard to say good-bye to them, but I always let them know that I am proud of them, miss them, love them, and that everyone is praying for their safe return.

Renee Andrews
Lexington

Fight for the 179th

First of all, I would like to start off by saying thank you and how proud I am of all the U.S. military and the 179th Ohio Air National Guard unit here in Mansfield, of which I have two sons who are members.

I have had many people throw in my face that the National Guardsmen are just weekend warriors. My answer to them is at least they are warriors and they believe in our country and what it stands for. Most people probably don't know that at the present time the U.S. has 60 percent National Guardsmen serving overseas due to the decline in recruitment of the regular branches of the military.

I am appalled with Mayor Lydia Reid and other community businessmen saying it would be a "win-win situation" for the city of Mansfield if the 179th were to close. It sounds like instead of fighting to keep the 179th and its annual $30 million payroll here in Richland County, they would rather have another white elephant on their hands (just look around the Mansfield area) and see all that they have brought in — not too much. At least once a month the hotels are being occupied with guardsmen on drill weekend.

I keep hearing it's a political decision, so who is getting rich off this? Rep. Michael Oxley, please step forward and fight to keep the 179th here in Mansfield, after all you are in a position to use your clout, and people do listen to you.

Candace Zeger
Lucas

Letters

Let's save the 179th

We hope you will all take the time to attend the rallies being planned to save our 179th Airlif wing of the Ohio Air National Guard. This unit is heavily involved in our community.

The fire department that is maintained at Mansfield Lahm is also counted on to provide mutual aid with the surrounding fire departments, at times when no C-130s are in the air. This service would be badly missed.

So wear your "We Love the 179th pins," put your "Save the 179th" magnets on your cars and go to these events Saturday in Bellville and Wednesday on the square in downtown Mansfield. Let's show our state leaders we as a community do care and want to prevent the closure of our base.

Our thanks to the REDEC/BRAC Steering committee here for all the work and time involved in fighting this closure.

Joyce and Jerry Duff
Mansfield

The above are just a few peoples' thoughts on closing the 179 Air Wing based at Lahm Field, Mansfield, Ohio. Everyone is totally against this idea. If anything we would like to see more C-130-H's brought here. Possibly, a Jet Fighter Wing also. Something BRAC can't understand, or care about, is the pride we all share for these big planes, along with the military who fly and maintain them, as well as their support people. Indeed, we all have great affection for both the planes and the personell.

SAVE the 179th

.ook for special 179th poster in 'uesday's paper

It's time for area residents to ıke up pens, e-mails, phones nd letters in defense of the 79th Airlift Wing of the Ohio ir National Guard.

The local military unit at lansfield Lahm Airport has een recommended for closure by the Pentagon as part f the 2005 Base Realignment nd Closure process.

The BRAC commission is udying those recommendaons and will offer a list of facilies to be closed or realigned to resident Bush this fall. But this ommunity is not about to go way quietly as our economy ses 1,000 full and part-time bs and a facility worth $70 illion annually to the local conomy.

We are not going to let go asily of a unit that's been a art of this community's fabric r more than 50 years.

On Tuesday, the News Jourıl will pubfish a full-page color oster almed at sending a ear message to Washington at area residents want to ave the 179th."

We urge you to put that oster in your home and busess windows as a sign of your pport. We also urge you to ing it to the community rally downtown Mansfield on ne 22 aimed at saving the it.

On the back of the poster ll be content helping to exain why the decision to close unit is flawed. On the back ll be names, addresses and one numbers of key elected icials and also the BRAC ommission. We urge you to ntact these officials and mmission and send them a py of the poster to make ur feelings known.

It's time to let Washington derstand how important the 9th is to Richland County, rth central Ohio, the nation d the world.

Look for this special poster Tuesday's print edition.

Here is who to contact:

If you would like to offer edback directly to the Base alignment and Closure ommission, an e-mail form available at p://www.brac.gov/feedck.aspx.

Letters can be mailed to 05 Defense Base Closure d Realignment Commission, 21 S. Clark St., Ste. 600, Arlgton, Va., 22202.

Community must fight hard to retain 179th

The issue:
Local committee committed to waging battle over Airlift Wing

Our opinion:
Loss of the base, a valuable asset to north central Ohio, is not acceptable

It would be easy to give up the fight for the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

But Mike Greene and others won't let that happen.

Earlier this week Ohio Adjutant General Greg Wayt met with Greene and other members of the REDeC/BRAC steering committee and the All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs.

"The 179th is on a list recommended for closure," Wayt said during his visit. "But in the two previous rounds, about 30 percent of the bases on the recommended list were able to change the commission's mind."

That means Greene and others in the community must press forward, making the argument for the value of the unit to the city, the state and the nation.

Despite a strong effort spearheaded by Greene, co-chairman of the Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee, the 179th Airlift Wing was on the Pentagon's list announced this month, putting 1,000 local jobs in peril.

Now Greene is leading a rally called "Save Our 179th Day" at 5:30 p.m. June 22 on the downtown square. He hopes to attract 10,000 people as well as national media coverage.

And he wants everyone in the area to get involved, encouraging community residents to make signs for their cars, homes and businesses. He promises speakers, bands and cheerleaders for next month's event.

And for good reason.

The 179th is more than just a military unit to this community. It's more than just 1,000 full and part-time jobs. It's more than $70 million annually to the local economy.

It is an integral part of the fabric of this community.

The unit's military growth and success during the past 57 years has been mirrored by its networking and immersion with the north central Ohio communities it represents.

The fight to keep it is important. Rep. Michael Oxley has joined the fight, pledging to use his political clout to bring base closure commission officials to town in hopes of getting the 179th off the list.

We hope others in the community see the need for the base to remain open and join the ReDEC/BRAC Steering Committee in making noise. Losing the 179th Airlift Wing would be a huge blow to our city and our region.

We won't go down without a fight.

Send us your thoughts

E-mail
chunnell@
nncogannett.com

Mail
Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 25
Mansfield, OH 44901

Fax
(419) 521-7415

Again, our citizens have found a way to both honor our veterans and finance one of our Mansfield memorials to show proper respect to our heros.

Commemorative bricks available for veterans

MANSFIELD — The Korean War Veterans Association plans to install more commemorative bricks at the Korean War Memorial in Mansfield's Central Park in June.

About 300 bricks have been placed and dedicated by families and friends of veterans who served in all of America's wars or in peacetime.

Association member Bill Woodrow said each brick is inscribed with the words "Duty, Honor, Country." All are embedded in the walkway in front of the memorial.

There are two kinds of bricks; 4-by-8-inch bricks on which three lines of 13 characters each may be inscribed for $50, and 8-by-8-inch bricks on which five lines of 13 characters each may be inscribed for $100.

Applications for commemorative bricks or gift certificates can be obtained by calling Frank J. Russo at (419) 756-1468. The deadline is June 1.

The veterans plan to install the next set of bricks June 25.

Bellville crowd rallies to save 179th

By Mark Caudill
News Journal

BELLVILLE — Maj. Steve McLaughlin joined the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard when he was a senior in high school.

The 37-year-old Shelby man is focused on keeping it open.

"I'm not thinking about closure right now," McLaughlin said. "I'm thinking about what pressure we can put on the politicians to save this base."

The 179th is on the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission list of facilities recommended to be shut down to reduce overall military expenses. McLaughlin, an intelligence officer, and hundreds of other people turned out Saturday afternoon at the bandstand on Main Street for a rally to save the 179th. AmVets Post 43 hosted the event.

Jolie McCue organized Saturday's rally.

"My husband works out there full-time," she said. "I think, from my heart, they're closing it for the wrong reasons."

The rally included a popcorn stand manned by Boy Scouts, face-painting, a lemonade stand and music from the Clear Fork High School marching band. "We love the 179th" buttons were the fashion accessory of the day, and form letters to be signed and mailed to designated legislators were circulated throughout the throng.

U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley, R-Findlay, doesn't need convincing. He will speak at a June 27 BRAC hearing in Buffalo, N.Y.

"We have a tremendous story to tell," Oxley said. "I feel comfortable going to Buffalo and presenting our case. We have the facts."

Oxley seemed confident the 179th ultimately would be taken off the closure list.

"The message we are sending loud and clear from Bellville is, 'Keep your hands off our C-130s. They're doing their jobs, and the people are doing their jobs,'" he said.

Mansfield Mayor Lydia Reid addressed members of the 179th.

"You are an integral part of this community," she said. "We don't know what in the world we would do without you. That's why we are fighting so hard."

Reid encouraged everyone to attend Wednesday's rally in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

"This is just a prelude to our big rally in Mansfield," she said. "We will see you at 5:30 Wednesday in downtown, sunny Mansfield."

McCue will be there.

"I hope they keep having rallies," she said. "Right now, this is all the public can do."

mcaudill@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7219

Dan O'Hara attended Saturday's "Save the 179th" rally with poster in hand. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

All of us really do care about the 179th Air Wing, as well as other Reserve and Guard Units.

Rallying 'round the 179th

Jackie Bellstein passes out balloons at Saturday's "Save the 179th" rally in Bellville. The rally was a prelude to the larger event planned to start at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday in the square in downtown Mansfield. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Big rally for 179th planned for next month

By Mark Caudill
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Mike Greene wants the community to unite behind the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

GREENE

"Let our voices be heard all the way to Washington," said Greene, co-chairman of the Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee that worked for more than a year to keep the base off the recommended

See RALLY, back page

About the 179th

- **What:** 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard
- **Based:** Mansfield Lahm Airport
- **Airmen:** Roughly 1,000 full- and part-time airmen. The 179th is the seventh-largest employer in north central Ohio.
- **Awards:** The 179th has received many awards, decorations and recognitions, including the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. Recently, the 179th received the Alan P. Tappan Memorial Trophy, which designates the outstanding Air National Guard unit in Ohio; and the Rusty Metcalf Award, which acknowledges the unit as one of the best in the entire Air Force.

Rally

From page 1A

closure list.

Despite the efforts, the 179th Airlift Wing was on the Pentagon's list announced this month, putting 1,000 local jobs in peril.

Greene is spearheading a rally called "Save Our 179th Day" at 5:30 p.m. June 22 on the downtown square. He hopes to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

"This isn't going to be just our group preaching to the choir. I really want to make this a huge, huge event," Greene said. "I want them to understand that this is serious business."

Greene encourages community residents to make signs for their cars, homes and businesses. He promises speakers, bands and cheerleaders for next month's event.

Greene said if the rally is as big as planned, he hopes BRAC members, who are scheduled to be in Cleveland on June 23, will visit Mansfield. This week, BRAC members will begin visiting bases slated for closure.

The 179th Airlift Wing, which has 230 full-time positions, was not on the list for a visit.

"If you had less than 300 full-timers, you would not get a visit," Greene said.

But local leaders aren't waiting for June 22 to do something. They will meet at 1 p.m. today at Gorman-Rupp's north plant with an All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs. Representatives from other affected communities, including Cleveland and Springfield, will be at the meeting.

"The idea was, 'What could we do to help each other?' " Greene said.

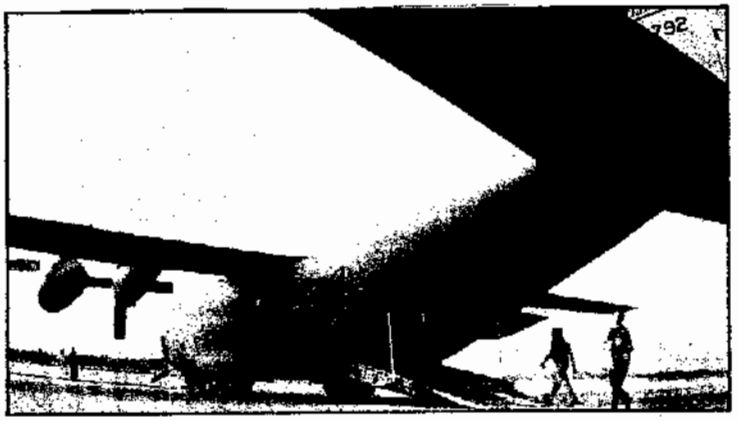
Greene fears the Air Force wants the 179th Airlift Wing's C-130s.

"If they're going to take our planes away, we would prefer that the Army not come in and maybe prevent civilian aviation possibilities," he said.

But that's only a fallback plan.

"Our main priority is getting us off the list," Greene said.

mcaudill@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7219



Guests head inside a C-130 for a tour April 19, 2004, during the Mansfield-Richland County Chamber of Commerce after-hours event at the 179th Airlift Wing. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Rep. Oxley hopes t sway commission's decision about 179t

By Greg Wright
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — Rep. Michael Oxley said Monday he would urge base closure commission officials come to Mansfield so he and local officials can persuade them to keep the 179th Airlift Wing open.

The 179th Airlift Wing was one of 13 facilities in Ohio the Pentagon put on its recommended Base Realignment and Closure list May 13. But the commission's nine-member, independent panel must review the Pentagon picks and could remove some from the list.

"I never give up," Oxley said.

OXLEY

Gov. Bob Taft sent a letter to commission chairman Anthony Principi on May 17 asking commissioners to come to Mansfield, as well bases in Springfield a Cleveland.

The Pentagon propos moving eight C-13 cargo planes from t 179th to airfields in Alab ma and Arkansas. This r flects the Pentagon's mo

See OXLEY, back page

Oxley

From page 1A

to consolidate military bases and reserve units.

Oxley met Monday in Columbus with Army National Guard Maj. Gen. Gregory Wayt, Ohio's

a meeting in the Buckeye State.

Oxley said he also could use his clout to try to persuade commissioners to come to the 179th. He said he knows about half of the commissioners, including former Utah Republican Rep. James Hansen, former Nevada Democratic Rep. James Bilbray and former White House Chief

strategy to keep the 179th open.

The commission will visit major bases on the proposed closure and realignment list. The commission also announced 16 regional hearings in California, Texas and other states to get community input on the Pentagon recommendations.

Ohio is not on the regional meeting list. Oxley said he and

Budget item for 179th show of commitment

House bill includes funds for base scheduled to close

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — The U.S. House of Representatives passed a spending bill Thursday that includes $1.3 million for a fire station project at Mansfield Lahm Airport.

What that budget item means as far as the future of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at the airport remains unclear.

"Unless we manage to get off the (Base Realignment and Closure) list, it's kind of a moot point," said Mike Greene, who is leading local efforts to keep the 179th in Mansfield. "As of right now, the plan is to send that firefighting unit to Toledo."

The 179th Airlift Wing base is on the Pentagon's list of bases recommended for closing.

But U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley (R-Findlay), who asked for the fire station funding, said it shows that the fight to preserve the 179th is not over.

"By this, we are showing our commitment to keeping our base in Mansfield one of

See BRAC, back page

Details

The 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, is one of 13 facilities in Ohio the Pentagon put on its recommended Base Realignment and Closure list May 13.

About 1,000 full- and part-time airmen are assigned to the 179th, which is the seventh-largest employer in north central Ohio.

The Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee is leading the fight to remove the 179th from the recommended closure list before a decision is made this year.

A "Save Our 179th Day" rally is set for June 22 at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

News Journal staff report

Groups fight to keep 179th in Mansfield

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — It's not over yet.

No one is giving up on keeping the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at Lahm Airport.

That was the message from Ohio Adjutant Gen. Greg Wayt after a Tuesday meeting of the REDeC/BRAC steering committee and the All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs.

"The 179th is on a list recommended for closure," Wayt said. "But in the two previous rounds, about 30 percent of the bases on the recommended list were able to change the commission's mind."

Mansfield learned this month the 179th is on the list compiled as part of the Base Realignment and Closure process, which could mean the loss of 1,000 local jobs.

Mike Greene, who has led the local effort to keep the 179th open, said there is plenty area residents can do to help change the BRAC commission's mind.

"Write letters," he said. "It sounds trite. But that's one thing we can all do. Write to your senator. Write to your representative. Write to the president.

"Our goal is to get off the list. It's happened before. Springfield was on the last two lists and managed to get off."

Greene hopes a huge public show of suppo helps sway some minds.

"Show up at our ral June 22," he said. "We like to get between 10,0 and 15,000 people togeth on the square to sho Washington what we thi of the 179th."

Greene is spearheadi plans for the 5:30 p.m. ral which will coincide with "Save Our 179th Day." I is hoping to draw sor statewide and natio news coverage to he Mansfield plead its case.'

BRAC officials have s not made public all the formation used to make cisions about which m tary bases to close.

"We're still not sure actly what criteria th used," said Da Williamson, the governo regional economic devel ment representative an member of the local BR committee. "We're waiti for that information to published so we know wl issues we need to addres

Tuesday's meet brought together repres tatives of other commu ties in Ohio affected by most-recent BRAC nouncement.

"We're trying to see w we can do to help e other," Greene said. "Ri now, I think Cleveland the most well-organi group. We're hoping to ate some synergy with t group and help one an er."

rkent@rncogannett.com
(419) 521-7274

BRAC

From page 1A

the most modern in the Guard system," Oxley said. "This would raise our investment in the 179th Airlift Wing unit to more than $20 million over the last eight years."

Greene said any effort in support of the 179th can only help efforts to save the Guard base.

"I still think the best thing we can do is to show community support for the base," Greene said. "That's why I think that rally is so important. We want as many people on the square June 22 as possible to show Washington what the 179th means to all of us."

Greene said Ret. Brig. Gen. Steve Koper, president of the National Guard Association of the United States, has committed to attend the rally.

"We've invited the governor and, hopefully, we'll have some other supporters here from Washington and Columbus," Greene said.

In the meantime, efforts are ongoing to entice members of the BRAC commission to visit Mansfield. Because the 179th has only about 250 full-time not mandatory.

Oxley released a letter he sent to Commission Chairman Anthony Principi in which he wrote, "I believe you will find the 179th represents a compelling case due to the active role it plays in homeland defense and the global war on terror."

In a letter to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Oxley urged the Pentagon to release "installation-specific data" used to make the closing list.

Greene has said the information is important so 179th supporters can better make a case to remain open.

Economic Development Corp.), which has diligently prepared for the BRAC process for more than a year, is now preparing its presentation to the commission in an effort to reverse (the closing)," Oxley wrote.

"Without access to this important data, REDeC cannot properly make its case that this guard unit, which has seen 35 deployments in support of our national defense in just the last four years, should remain open and operational."

rkent@rncogannett.com

Air Force just wants to have the C-130s

Six former Ohio Air National Guard generals visit area to share history

By Ron Simon
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Retired Brig. General Fred Larson calls the possible closure of his old unit, the 179th Airlift Wing, "a grab for the iron."

The "iron" being the unit's fairly well kept fleet of eight C-130H cargo planes.

"The Air Force has not been a very good steward of their C-130s," said the former 179th commander. "A lot of them have aged and a lot are grounded. So there are squadron holes. So this is a grab. It doesn't matter what a unit like the 179th has done or the skills and military value it has. All the Air Force wants is the iron."

Larson was one of six former Ohio Air National Guard generals, all with ties to the 179th, in Mansfield on Thursday. All but one were pilots with the 179th and two were commanders.

They were brought together by Master Sgt. Rod Togliatti, the 179th's historian, for a day of history at the base at Lahm Airport.

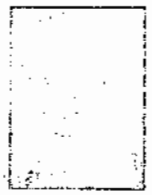
Togliatti said the men represent 190 years of combined service, 45,000 hours of flying time and a large piece of memory.

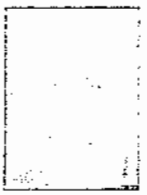
"How many times do you get six generals together to talk about history?" he asked.

Afterward, the generals stopped at the Mansfield Museum on Park Avenue West to meet the public.

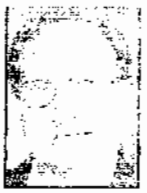
Some, like retired Brig. Gen. Myron Ashcraft, go back to the days when the unit was a jet fighter squadron. Ashcraft, who now flies for United Airlines, made the switch from fighter cockpits to the lumbering C-130s. It was the right training for those commercial planes he flies today, he said.

Other generals included Major Gen. Francis Hazard, Brig. Gen. Ray Weber and Brig. Gen. Richard Green, who commanded the unit until his recent promotion


LARSON


ASHCRAFT

HAZARD


WEBER

GREEN

LATTIMORE

and later retirement.

Brig. Gen. Vergel Lattimore was the 179th chaplain and the Air National Guard Assistant to the Air Force Chief of Chaplains, and is still active.

"I travel all over the country. I'm the chaplain's chaplain," he said.

Green, like Larson, doesn't care to see his old unit broken up.

"This is a tough blow," he said of the closure threat. "The Air Force simply wants our new planes. No matter what the unit has done, the planes are all they want."

Ashcraft agreed.

"They are stealing our airplanes. That's wrong, ethically and morally. It's a shame," he said.

Larson said a major study taken under his command in the early 1990s proved the unit could expand to double its size at Mansfield Lahm Airport. He said arguments that there is no room to expand are simply wrong.

"I think the 179th is not set for closure. We're going to fight this tooth and nail," he said.

rsimon@noogeanew.com
(413) 521-7235

Some Guard bases may lose planes

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — What happens when you take away all the airplanes from an Air National Guard facility?

It's a question being asked at more than a dozen bases ever since the Pentagon announced that it wants the Air Force to consolidate its planes at fewer locations.

Under a military restructuring plan announced Friday, the Pentagon proposed shifting hundreds of planes and thousands of jobs away from Air National Guard bases.

For example:

- Reno-Tahoe International Airport Air Guard Station in Nevada would lose its eight C-130H planes.
- Bradley International Airport Air Guard Station in Connecticut would see all of its A-10s fly away.
- Nashville International Air Guard Station in Tennessee would lose its C-130H aircraft.

"How can you be an airlift wing without any airlift?" asked April Conway, a spokeswoman for the Nevada Air National Guard.

The recommendations now go to a president-appointed commission that will spend the summer holding hearings before sending its recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 8.

Compared with four previous Base Realignment and Closure rounds that began in 1988, National Guard and Reserve bases would be hit hard this time. The Pentagon proposes consolidating about 387 Reserve and National Guard installations into about 125, many to be located at or near active-duty bases.

Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the base closing commission Monday that the Air Force wants more planes in fewer units to more quickly fulfill missions.

"What they have right now are pockets of small numbers of aircraft that are at various locations," Myers said. "And it makes it unwieldy when you try to access them for missions, particularly the kind of missions we're in today in Iraq and Afghanistan and for that matter, around the world."

a lot of citizens are certain in their own minds that the Air Force wants our newer, better C-130 That this is a legal case of Air Piracy. The C-130-H's of the 179th have more up-dated equipment, as well as being much better maintained. Where in this article, General Richard Myers, says it more difficult to deploy planes in smaller groups. That is a mis-representat of the truth. In this day of radio, telephones and computers, not to mention signed letters of orders, fax etc. Any and all orders can be transmitted in a matter of seconds. The Air Force is being very heavy-handed in "robbing" the Air Guard Units of their C-130-H's. Robbing is how the pegs of these units feel, not too mention our citizens.

Pentagon: 179th too crowded

Lack of expansion room among reasons for recommended closing

By Greg Wright
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — About 1,000 full and part-time military jobs in Mansfield are in danger primarily because the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield has less room to grow than its rivals in Toledo, Arkansas and Alabama, according to Pentagon documents.

■ TV show explains BRAC process, page 6A.

One of several major criteria the Pentagon considered while determining which military bases to close or realign is whether the facility can accommodate growth. The base also must fit into the Pentagon's future defense strategy.

The Pentagon proposed disbanding the local Ohio Air National Guard last month and moving its eight C-130H transport planes to

See 179th, page 6A

179th

From page 1A

Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base in Alabama and the 314th Airlift Wing at Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas.

Other support services now at Mansfield would go to the Louisville International Airport Air Guard Station in Kentucky and the Toledo Express Airport Air Guard Station.

However, local officials said Monday the ratings are wrong, since city officials offered the Pentagon access to 168 additional acres when military officials indicated expansion might be considered a factor. The 179th Airlift Wing currently is located on 227 acres.

Rep. Michael Oxley, R-Findlay, and local officials have said they would fight to keep transport planes at the 179th at Mansfield Lahm Airport. Gov. Bob Taft announced Monday he will give the Richland Economic Development Corp. $50,000 to promote the 179th.

But it's unlikely the independent Base Realignment and Closure commission would overturn the Pentagon's decision because of the facility's size, a military expert said.

"It's too small to worry about," said John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a defense analysis firm.

While some bases on the closure list could lose thousands of jobs, Pike said, the 179th has just 234 full time military and civilian workers. Still, local officials argue, the base is the seventh largest employer in north central Ohio, including around 650 part-time jobs held by "traditional" National Guard members.

The Pentagon claimed in environmental documents released this weekend the 179th has no room for growth. Little Rock can develop another 1,783 acres; Maxwell an additional 264 acres and Toledo has 45 acres, the Pentagon said. Only Louisville had zero acreage available, the Pentagon said.

Another factor in the Defense Department's base closing considerations was military value. Mansfield ranked lower in military value and capacity than other airlift bases, according to the Pentagon.

The top ranked airlift base is Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. Mansfield ranked 119th out of 154 airlift bases behind Little Rock in 17th place; Maxwell, 21st; Louisville, 79th; and Toledo, 100th.

Local officials contend the 179th is still busy in the war on terrorism with its 35 deployments since Sept. 11, 2001. The facility is modern and there is room to house up to a dozen C-130H planes at the base, said retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Fred Larson, co-chair of the group fighting to save the 179th.

The Pentagon argues it has too many small Air National Guard units; its goal is to merge many with active-duty facilities, said Loren Thompson, a military expert at the Lexington Institute.

But the base closure panel, which is reviewing the Pentagon recommendations, could disagree and decide to keep national guard units such as the 179th open, Thompson said.

The nine-member commission must come up with a final closure list by Sept. 8.

The information that Lahm Field can't expand is absolutely in error. Lahm Field and 179th base there can be expanded greatly any time that becomes necessary. It already has one of the longest runways in the US and can accomodate the largest planes in the world. Lahm Field is an emergency landing strip, if necessary, for the space shuttle. Why spend Millions on increasing the length of a runway some place else, when Lahm Field has everything necessary.

Bad data led to decision, officials say

By Linda Martz
News Journal

MANSFIELD — The Pentagon used flawed data and left major questions unanswered in recommending the 179th Airlift Wing be closed, former base officials say.

Local officials plan to correct those issues in hope of keeping the Ohio Air National Guard unit and its 1,000 full- and part-time jobs in Mansfield, where it's been for more than 50 years.

Retired Brig. Gen. Myron Ashcraft, now a

See DATA, page 6A

Data

From page 1A

United Airlines pilot, said the thing that "jumped right out" when he looked at criteria released Monday is the Pentagon inaccurately said Mansfield Lahm Airport doesn't have enough land available to expand the wing's fleet from eight to 16 C-130H transport planes.

The military considers larger bases more efficient, the Lexington resident said.

Once the Pentagon documents said additional land was not available — an incorrect claim — other questions, such as what it would cost to expand, were left unanswered, he said.

"Once they say that we don't have the land, everything else is out the window," Ashcraft said. "They don't even evaluate how much it would cost to have a full squadron.

"That's the kind of stuff we have to fight it on — is the data," he said Monday night. "I don't see any other shortfall in the criteria that we would fail to meet."

Local officials said Monday they're frustrated by Pentagon documents showing the military meted out low scores to Lahm in areas such as room to expand, military value and capacity. The 179th, which has had 35 deployments since Sept. 11, 2001, generates about $70 million annually to the local economy.

Mayor Lydia Reid said local officials offered the Pentagon 168 additional acres — the city-owned Bradley and Kissell farms north of the airport — when military officials indicated expansion opportunities could be considered. The 179th Airlift Wing now takes up 227 acres.

"Certainly, if they need space to build on, they can build a hell of a lot on 168 acres," the mayor said Monday. "We have said 'whatever it takes, we'll do it.' We're willing to do whatever they want."

Reid said Lahm has a lot more going for it than acknowledged by the Pentagon rankings. "We've got the second longest runway in the state. Also, we've got an airport that is underutilized" — meaning military planes don't need to compete with a lot of other air traffic, she said.

"Some of the places that weren't on that list (to be closed) do not have the capability we do," Reid said.

Mike Greene, co-chairman of the Richland County Economic Development Corp./BRAC Steering Committee, which worked for more than a year to avoid a recommendation that the base be closed, said the Pentagon claims Mansfield doesn't have enough space for a large fleet.

But the master plan outlined in the early 1990s by former base commander Brig. Gen. Fred Larson anticipated constructing more ramps to store planes, Greene said.

"It's easily accomplished simply by putting down more pads," at much less cost than the $33 million the Department of Defense said it would save by closing down Mansfield's base, Greene said.

Ashcraft said the Air Force appears to want to shut down Guard and Reserve units so it can acquire their equipment. "They have a very old, tired, beat up fleet. The way to get airplanes without buying them is just to steal them from the Guard and Reserve," he said.

Larson said, "It doesn't matter to them that they gain no military value (to the country overall) from our airplanes," Larson said. "They're just moving planes from one location to another, at a cost of $33 million."

Local officials are still trying to arrange for a visit to Mansfield by a member of the BRAC commission before a decision is made — but may get only a visit from a staff member, Larson said.

Ohio has been allotted two hours at an upcoming regional base closure hearing in Buffalo — and Mansfield must share that time with Cleveland and Springfield, Larson said. "We're asking for half an hour, but we may get 15 minutes."

lmartz@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7229

With so much at stake for so many people, in so many parts of the United States, how could BRAC not have up-to-date information? How could they take their duty to the people of this country so lightly? If they failed to have the correct facts about the 179th and Lahm Field, how many errors are they making about other bases? They don't go to these military facilities, and God Forbid they should consult with anyone whose future is mightly affected by their decisions.

Editorial

Closing 179th would be a mistake

The Issue:
Today's special section devoted to the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

Our Opinion:
The message is simple: Save the 179th.

You should notice a little something extra in the News Journal today.

It's a four-page section aimed at sending a loud and clear message to the Base Realignment and Closure commission and lawmakers in Washington.

North central Ohio believes the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard should remain open and in operation at Lahm Airport in Mansfield.

The first page is a color poster with a simple message. "Save the 179th" is in huge letters, visible from a distance.

We urge you to put this poster in the window of your home, business or other locale that will be seen by the public. We want you to save it and bring it to the community-wide rally June 22. We then want you to mail it to the BRAC commission or lawmakers, and urge them to stop the planned closure of this vital military unit.

The second page is a message from retired Brig. Gen. Richard Green, a former commander of the 179th, who lays out a clear argument why the Pentagon wants the 179th closed and why it should remain open.

Send us your thoughts

E-mail
chunnell@
nncogannett.com

Mail
Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 25
Mansfield, OH 44901

Fax
(419) 521-7415

The third and fourth pages are messages from local businesses and residents in support of the unit, which has been a part of north central Ohio for more than 50 years.

Make no mistake. Closing the 179th is a mistake. The Pentagon simply wants the unit's eight C-130H aircraft, which would bolster the aging Active Duty and Reserve fleet for the Air Force.

But it would not be good public relations to make public that need for the planes. Instead, the Pentagon cited in its recommendation that there is no room for expansion at the local unit, a claim not supported by the facts. The City of Mansfield has offered another 168 acres for potential base expansion.

We urge the BRAC commission to look deeply into the Pentagon's flawed logic and look instead at the real reason for its closure recommendation — eight aircraft that Congress purchased explicitly for use by the Ohio Air National Guard.

We urge local residents to join the fight by posting today's posters all over the community. Bring them to the public rally. And then mail them to the people who will help keep the 179th open.

It's not to late. This fight has really just begun. We urge you to join in today.

This editorial states that there is plenty of room for expansion for the 179th Air Wing and Lahm Field in general.

Editorial

Pentagon has slapped part-time soldiers

The issue:
Reserve and National Guard bases were hit hard in the latest round of BRAC Commission recommendations.

Our opinion:
This is a funny way to thank the soldiers who have put so much on the line in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Pentagon has a unique way of thanking the Reserve and National Guard forces for their great contributions during the war on terror.

The thanks is a cold slap in the face with Pentagon reality.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, want to shuffle, cut and otherwise consolidate 387 National Guard and Reserve installations into about 125.

This convoluted thinking is again proof that active duty military leaders a.) don't understand the Guard and Reserve lifestyle or appreciate the needs of part-time soldiers, sailors and airmen; and/or b.) don't care about the future of either segment of the nation's military.

Their plan would include closing the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard in Mansfield, one of the best flying units in the country today.

Myers said these Guard and Reserve moves are being made to enhance capability, cut costs and integrate the part-time forces more closely with active-duty units.

We would argue this plan would accomplish few of the goals outlined above, save for cutting costs.

Myers admitted "there will be some inconvenience" for people serving in the Guard and Reserve if the Pentagon's recommendations to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission are followed.

Some inconvenience? That's like saying Noah needed to build a bit of a boat when the rains came. The understatement is that severe.

How about the fact it will add hundreds or even thousands of miles, and the accompanying expenses for members to meet monthly military obligations? How about the fact it will force Guard or Reserve troops, some of whom may be nearly qualified for retirement, out of the service who simply cannot make long-range trips once a month?

The economic effect on the communities like Mansfield scheduled to lose these units is one thing. But the effect on the individual who has devoted much of his or her life in service to the country is even worse. Lahm Airport will survive and perhaps even flourish with the influx of private business should the 179th close its doors.

But the 1,000 full and part-time airmen who made up the unit, hundreds of which have served around the nation and the world since Sept. 11, 2001, will never be the same. The 179th, for example, has gone on 35 deployments in the last four years.

At a time when recruiting for the National Guard is down 24 percent from last year, it seems sheer folly to slap the face of the people who make the Guard and Reserve the success story the part-time military is today.

Without the Guard and Reserve, the Bush administration could not have fought its war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, about 40 percent of the 138,000 troops in Iraq are Guard and Reserve forces. The Pentagon's reward is to make their career in the military even tougher to maintain.

We urge the members of the BRAC Commission to take a hard look at what the Pentagon has in mind for the Guard and Reserve. We think when they do they will see the security of this nation will be severely weakened with Rumsfeld's plans for the nation's citizen soldiers.

This editorial will give you more information about the 179th, and the opinions of many are the same.

Bush defends base closings, says money being wasted

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP) — Speaking out for the first time in favor of controversial base closings, President Bush said Friday the nation is wasting billions of dollars on unnecessary military facilities and needs the money for the war on terrorism.

Bush, who faces opposition from many states to shutting down bases, tried to be reassuring. He said the bases would be chosen fairly and the government would do all it could

See BUSH, back page

Bush

From page 1A

to help affected communities recover.

But he made clear that the process — however painful — could not be avoided.

In a speech to graduates of the Naval Academy, he said the closings and realignments "will result in a military that is more efficient and better prepared so you can better protect the American people against the dangers of this new century."

"In this war, there is only one option and that is victory," he said, to cheers from midshipmen, relatives and faculty at the academy on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay.

When Bush last spoke at a Naval Academy commencement, it was four months before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and his focus was his administration's effort to reshape the military into a faster, lighter and more flexible — but not larger — fighting force.

Since the attacks, and amid a global anti-terror campaign and wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, a top-to-bottom military transformation is even more necessary, Bush said.

Keys to the success are new technology, repositioning of global forces, new weapons and realigned bases at home, he said.

Bush said he understands the fears in cities where bases have been marked for changes or closure. The first round of closings in a decade has members of Congress and local officials working hard to protect the 33 major bases slated for closure and the 29 others proposed for downsizing.

"I know firsthand how hard base closings can be on local communities," said the former Texas governor who saw facilities shut down in his state.

Members of the congressionally chartered Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) will visit bases and hold hearings on the Pentagon proposal. The plan aims to save $48.8 billion over 20 years by eliminating redundant and inefficient facilitates and promoting cooperation among the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps.

The panel will decide on changes to the Pentagon plan and give a list to Bush and Congress this fall for approval or rejection.

Commission chairman Anthony Principl on Friday joined a growing chorus of lawmakers demanding that the Defense Department quickly release the thousands of pages of data backing up each of its recommendations.

Briefly

More work for 179th

MANSFIELD — Twenty-nine members of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard will leave Monday in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, the U.S. military initiative in Afghanistan.

Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the 179th has flown more than 2,600 sorties, moved 35,000 passengers and transported 5,600 cargo tons of material in combat theaters, according to a unit news release.

The airlift wing, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, was recommended for closure this month by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission. An area campaign is under way to remove the 179th from the closure list before a final decision is made later this year.

No, Mr. Bush, we are not wasting money on our personell at our Military facilities or our personell. Maybe other places are, Ohio is not. We have had terrible losses. My grandson has served a tour of duty in Bosnia, and Iraq in one of the most dangerous missions in Iraq. Transportation of fuel. Now BRAC wants to do whatever with the 706th Transportation Company

AmVets Post 43 joins fight for 179th

Rally planned for June 18 in Bellville

By David Benson
News Journal

BELLVILLE — A second major rally to keep the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard in Mansfield is in the works.

AmVets Post 43 in Bellville will host a Rally to Save the 179th Airlift Wing on June 18 at 3 p.m. at the bandstand on Main Street.

The 179th, based on Mansfield Lahm Airport, is on the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission list of facilities recommended to be shut down to reduce overall military expenses.

A separate Save Our 179th Day rally is set for June 22 at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage for that event.

Joli McCue is organizing the Bellville rally.

"When Post 43 called me and asked me if I would do it, I said I would be glad to. Somebody's got to do something," said McCue, the wife of a 179th member.

"If we get a big turnout it will show how much community support the 179th has. Our legislators will see we're not going to take this closing lying down," she said.

The other purpose of the rally is to provide information to those who have questions about the BRAC process and what individuals can do to try to prevent the closure, McCue said.

"So far, the support for the base and for this rally has just poured in. It's been phenomenal," she said.

Speakers at the Bellville rally will include Mayor Carolynn Studenmund, REDeC/BRAC steering committee co-chairman Brig. Gen.(r) Fred Larson, Brig. Gen.(r) Myron Ashcraft, Brig. Gen.(r) Rich Green, Richland County Commissioner Ed Olson, county Veteran Services Commission President Larry Moore and state Rep. Bill Hartnett.

In addition, form letters supporting the 179th will be available at the rally, which will need to be signed and mailed to designated legislators.

The AmVets and American Legion Color Guards and the Clear Fork High School marching band will participate. For children, there will be face painting, lemonade and popcorn stands and balloons.

Food and music will be featured after the rally at the AmVets Ron Boyce Hall located north of the bandstand on Main Street. Music will be provided by AmVets' Steve Stephenson, Dave King, & Westwind and by the Jo Kidd Outfit, comprised of 179th members.

For additional information, call McCue at (419) 886-4283. To donate food or supplies, contact the AmVets at (419) 886-2658.

dbenson@mncgannett.com
(419) 521-7272

Tech Sgt. Ken Schonauer of Mansfield works on the tail section of a C-130 at Lahm Airport earlier this month. *(Jason J. Molyei/News Journal)*

Family and friends placed flags Sunday to honor veterans, soldiers and emergency personnel at a Healing Field ceremony in Fredericktown. The field will stand through Wednesday. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal photos)*

A place to honor many sacrifices

By Jennifer Kowalewski
News Journal

FREDERICKTOWN — Charles Blanchette served his country in World War I, World War II and the Korean War.

His granddaughter, Denise Needles, honored his memory by flying a flag Sunday in the Healing Fields at Kokosing Construction Co. The Exchange Club of Mount Vernon and Knox County sponsored the event to honor veterans, current soldiers and emergency personnel.

"It's pretty neat," the Mount Vernon woman said after buying a flag. "I saw all the flags and thought he has to have a flag."

Healing Fields began in Sandy, Utah, in 2002, when Colonial Flag Co. owner Paul Swenson wanted to honor those who lost their lives in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Volunteer Jane Engle said Swenson flew 3,000 flags in Utah to show how many victims were killed.

While residents walked among the flags, many felt a sense of healing, and Healing Fields have sprung up across the country, Engle said.

Chairwoman Melody Brent has worked to bring the Healing Field to Fredericktown since November 2004. Residents purchased flags to fly in a 2-acre field in honor of their loved ones, Exchange Club President Diane Collier said. Residents from Richland, Morrow, Ashland, Knox and Licking counties participated.

Residents can visit the field for the next few days

See FLAGS, back page

Ann Eing leans on her son, Jeff, as they look at the flag they placed to honor Ann's husband, John, a World War II Navy veteran.

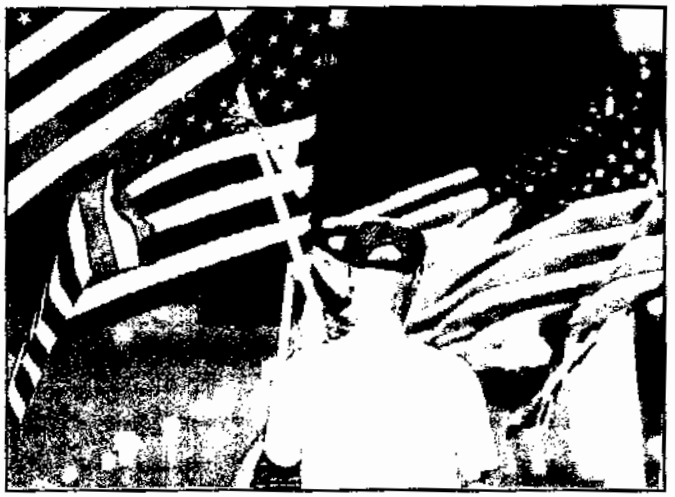
If you go

Residents can visit the Healing Field at Kokosing Construction Co. in Fredericktown through Wednesday evening. Kokosing Construction is on Ohio 13, near the Ohio 95 interchange. The flags honor and remember veterans, those serving in the military and emergency personnel. The program includes:

- **Today**, 3 p.m: Ohio Highway Patrol helicopter land; 4 p.m: The Petty Group (Knox County singers); 5 p.m: singers and speakers, including state Sen. Bill Harris, R-Mansfield.
- **Tuesday**, 4 p.m: Apple Valley Singers; 5 p.m: music and speakers including state Rep. Thom Collier, R-Mount Vernon.
- **Wednesday**, 4 p.m: Color Guard from Knox County Veterans; 4:30 p.m: speeches and closing remarks.

News Journal staff report

HEALING FIELD



A man walks among the memorial flags in the Healing Field at Fredericktown on Sunday. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal)*

Flags

From page 1A

to walk among the flags, Collier said.

"It's an experience you may never be a part of again," she said, as names were called over a loudspeaker to indicate whose turn it was to place a flag. "It's amazing to see all the red, white and blue. You can't imagine when the breeze blows, hearing 1,000 flags flapping in the breeze."

Collier, whose father-in-law stormed the beaches of Normandy, said she has participated in Healing Fields in Dallas and Findlay.

Volunteer Jim Tharp, a U.S. Navy veteran, said field coordinator Steve Murphy and the crew has worked since Friday to get the field ready. Poles were placed in the ground to support the flags, spaced 10 feet apart.

The crew installed lights so people could visit the field at night.

Denise Hess of Mount Vernon plans to visit again before it closes Wednesday. The Mount Vernon woman took her granddaughter, Shayla Ingram, 2, to the field.

"I just think it's going to be a unique experience," she said, waiting for her father's name to be called. "It's going to be emotional."

The Healing Field means more to her because her nephew, Travis Hess, is serving in Iraq with the Ohio National Guard 211th Maintenance Company of Newark.

"It's an experience you may never be part of again. It's amazing to see all the red, white and blue."

Diane Collier
Exchange Club president

U.S. Army Korean War veteran David A. Munk flew a flag in honor of his son, Rick L. Munk, a 23-year-old veteran of the Ohio Highway Patrol.

"It's great," David Munk said, watching the flags go up. "It's the best thing to happen to this little community. If it weren't for them, we wouldn't be here."

As residents drove into the field, a flag that had flown in Iraq hung between two fire engines to greet them. Bobby and Lisa Folden took their 9-month-old girl, Mackenzie, under the flags to honor veterans Bobby knows at the Station Break Senior Citizen Center in Mount Vernon.

Many of the clients at the center helped with the Healing Field by making ribbons with the names of those honored.

"You really respect what they did for the country," Bobby Folden said.

jkowalewsk@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7232

Concert to raise money for family of Galion soldier killed in Iraq

By Jennifer Kowalewski
News Journal

GALION — The Galion Community Band will remember a hero.

A combined band and choral concert to benefit the Lee Anne Ivy Fund is scheduled Sunday at 7 p.m. at Galion High School. Residents are asked to donate to assist the family of Marine Staff Sgt. Kendall Ivy II, 28, the Galion native killed in action in Iraq earlier this month.

"We hope that the community will support this effort," community band organizer Brian Treisch said. "The concert was suggested to us as a way to generate funds for the Ivy family.

"We have been able to move rapidly to put this concert together. Many of the band members were classmates, former teachers, and friends of Kendall."

The concert will feature patriotic music, combined band and choral works and pieces to honor Sgt. Ivy. Details are still being arranged.

"We are sure that 'Semper Fidelis,' 'The Stars & Stripes, Forever' and "Battle Hymn of the Republic' will be performed," Treisch said. "Rick Walker is working to complete the concert lineup and I am working to complete the band roster."

The Galion Community Band has performed since 1976, including annually at the Fourth of July concert before the fireworks display.

Any interested instrumental musician or choir member not already contacted is welcome to join the band for a rehearsal at 6 p.m. today.

"We have a solid band set at this time, but we welcome any musician," Treisch said.

According to a military report issued to his family, Ivy died May 11 in western Iraq from a severe leg wound suffered when the vehicle in which he was riding struck a roadside bomb.

Ivy, who went to Iraq in February, is the sixth member of the military from north central Ohio to die in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Ivy played football and baseball at Galion High School. He joined the Marine Corps after graduating in 1995. He is survived by his widow, Lee Anne, who lives in Camp LeJeune, N.C., and is four-months pregnant, two sons and a daughter.

The Lee Anne Ivy Fund has been established at First Federal Bank to assist the family.

jkowalewski@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7232

If you go

What: Galion Community Band concert.
Where: Galion High School auditorium.
When: 7 p.m. Sunday.
Why: To benefit the family of Kendall Ivy, a soldier killed while serving his country in Iraq.
For information, call Brian Treisch at (419) 462-2209.

News Journal

Just one of our many lost service men in Iraq. Also, what is being done to aid and support his widow and family.

Lt. Col. William Schock and Col. Bill Roberts present a "My Boss Is a Patriot" certificate to Crestview Middle School Principal John McNeely at a school assembly Wednesday. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Patriotic Crestview principal honored

By Lou Whitmire
News Journal

OLIVESBURG — John McNeely, principal of Crestview Middle School, got quite a surprise Wednesday afternoon.

He received a "My Boss is a Patriot" certificate of appreciation from the Office of the Secretary of Defense at a school assembly.

McNeely is a strong supporter of the Ohio National Guard and Army Reserve. He was nominated for the honor by teacher Linda Roney, a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve.

Roney's military boss, 10th Battalion commander Lt. Col. William Schock, and Schock's boss, 6th Brigade commander Col. Bill Roberts, traveled from the 100th Division at Louisville, Ky., to present the award.

McNeely, surprised and emotional as he stood at the podium, said he was almost speechless.

"I'm honored to receive this award. ... You people in the military are

After the assembly, Roney said McNeely is supportive of everyone at the school who has relatives in the military.

"We're honoring him not for what he gives me, but for his patriotism," Roney said.

Fellow teacher Joyce Galloway thanked McNeely for supporting her when her son Daniel was deployed to Iraq with the Army Reserve's 1486th Transportation Co.

McNeely said he was being honored for something he ought to be doing anyway.

"When Mrs. Roney was deployed (after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks) I told Mrs. Roney your job will be here when you get back," he said.

Even when she is not deployed, Roney's job in the military requires travel and days off from her job as a seventh- and eighth-grade teacher.

She teaches a course in the Army Reserve called "combined arms exercise," and she is area coordinator for Kentucky. Her military job most recently took her out of the classroom April 29 to May 4 to participate in weapons training.

Schock said Roney couldn't do her job without employers like Crestview Schools.

"She is responsible for all instructors in Kentucky who teach the course," he said.

Roney trains people in eight states — Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Schock, 57, who leaves in June for Iraq to assist the Iraqi people with veterans affairs, said the award presentation was his first and called it a proud moment. He is a human resources director for the regional veteran's affairs office in Louisville.

Roberts, an attorney in Kentucky, lauded McNeely for his willingness to share Roney with her other job.

"We as Army Reserve soldiers depend on two groups of people — our families and employers. We're here to recognize someone who is a patriot to us," Roberts said.

McNeely said his uncle John was drafted into World War II and landed in the Normandy invasion. McNeely's father, Bryon McNeely, served in World War II and received a Purple Heart, a Bronze Star and other honors — and survived being shot twice in the back of the head.

The principal said the award ranked with the birth of his daughter. "It's a moment I will remember," he said.

Roney said she first met her principal on the telephone.

"He made it clear he was very patriotic and me being in the Reserve would not be a detriment," she recalled.

"I have a wonderful lady who is my sub. I just have the best of all worlds."

Sarah Jenkins, 12, a sixth-grader, applauded her principal.

"He runs the school well," she said.

Classmate Connor Plemens, 12, said McNeely is nice.

"He is very deserving of this," he added.

lwhitmire@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7223

Another Civilian - Military person, who is a wonderful asset to our Community. The 179th blog has a choir that sings at special local events.

Remembering the soldiers

Above, Gary Johnson, a member of the Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing for 10 years, stands beside his father, Glenn Johnson, a World War II Army veteran, during the "America, we must not forget" service Sunday at the Berean Baptist Church on Middle Bellville Road. Glenn Johnson has another son, Randy, in the service in Uzbekistan. Glenn's wife, Phyllis, is sitting to his right.

Right, Marine Tim Crumbliss sings "O' God, Our Help in Ages Past" during the service Sunday. Backing up Crumbliss is the church choir, led by the Rev. Bryan Moak.

(Walt Butler/ News Journal photos)

The people who are in our Civilian-Military units, are not just Military personell. They are part of our lives in every way. Our fathers and mothers, Sons and daughters, our friends, whom we love. Now BRAC wants to dis-respect them.

BRAC staff member to visit 179th

But BRAC/REDeC steering committee not sure if they are even allowed to attend

Program on WMFD-TV lays out story of 179th, BRAC commission

News Journal staff report

MANSFIELD — Mike Greene and Ret. Brig. Gen. Fred Larson, the former commander of the 179th, who together are leading efforts to save the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, have taped a program that will air on WMFD-TV at 7:30 p.m. each evening through Sunday.

"It pretty much lays out the entire story of the 179th and the BRAC commission and why it is so vital that the air base remains here in Mansfield," Greene said. "I hope everyone in Mansfield will watch it and come down and support us at our rally on June 22."

A "Save Our 179th Day" rally is set that day at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract a crowd of 10,000 and national media coverage. Greene hopes a huge public show of support helps sway some minds.

Ret. Brig. Gen. Steve Koper, president of the National Guard Association of the United States, has committed to attend the rally. Greene said he expects U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley and Ohio Adjutant Gen. Greg Wayt to be on hand. He's confident that Gov. Bob Taft will also be in Mansfield that day.

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Local officials haven't been successful in arranging a visit to Mansfield by a member of the Base Realignment and Closure commission but they haven't given up efforts to argue their case.

A BRAC commission staff member — not an actual commissioner — will be in Mansfield on Tuesday to visit the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at Mansfield Lahm Airport, which last month was placed on a list of military bases to be closed by the Pentagon.

Call it a second-tier visit.

"He will meet with staff at the air base," said Mike Greene, of the Richland Economic Development Corporation, which is spearheading efforts to keep the 179th in Mansfield.

GREENE

"I don't even know if our committee will be allowed to attend. If we are, we won't be able to ask questions or present our case.

"The briefing will be 100 percent presented and produced by the 179th. It will not be open to the public. My hope is that staffer comes here with an open mind."

In the meantime the BRAC/REDeC steering committee is continuing its efforts to get the 179th off the closure list. It now has another $50,000 to work with.

The State Controlling Board released the money, promised by Gov. Bob Taft, on Wednesday.

"It certainly will help," Greene said. "It will help pay for our trip to Buffalo. It could pay for other trips. It could pay for a trip to Washington, D.C."

Greene said such a trip to Washington could be for the purpose of arguing the Mansfield case before a BRAC commission member.

"If they won't come to us, we'll go to them," he said.

Efforts have intensified in the weeks since the 179th was placed on the Pentagon's closure list. A lobbying group is still active in Washington, D.C., and the local steering committee has hired a consultant in Columbus to help draft its presentation for a regional hearing in Buffalo on June 27.

Ohio, which had three bases on the list, will get a chance to argue its case at that hearing. The state has been allotted a total of two hours. Greene hopes Mansfield gets at least 30 minutes.

"We'll attend some hearings prior to that so we can check out the format and see what some of the other arguments have been and how they've been presented," Greene said.

"I wouldn't say that's our last effort to present our case, but the style and substance of our presentation will be important."

rkent@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7274

As you can see we are doing everything we can possibly do to convince the BRAC that we really want to keep all of Civilian-Military facilities and personell in place. Even to producing a TV program to inform all of our citizens about our Civilian-Military.

Former 179th generals will meet the public

Six generals, former members of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, will be together for the first time Thursday for a "Meet the Generals Day" at Mansfield Memorial Museum, 34 Park Avenue West.

They will greet the public from 4 to 6 p.m.

Scheduled to participate are Francis Hazard, Ray Weber, Fred Larson, Myron Ashcraft, Rich Green and Verpel Latimore.

The 179th, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, has been recommended for closing by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission. Public rallies to have the 179th removed from the closure list are planned for June 18 in Bellville and June 22 on the square in Mansfield.

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

1. Mission/Military Value

- Primary Aircraft Weapons System: (8) C-130H2+ Hercules (Distinguishing Operational and Technical highlights are detailed in attachment 1.); Valued at $240,000,000.

- Major Command: Air Mobility Command (AMC), Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.

- The proud home to one the most highly trained, combat-tested, veteran, C-130 forces in the United States Air Force. Since Vietnam, we have led the way in the C-130 community in both combat hours and sorties.

- Our air crews have been decorated with over 116 Air Medals and 16 Aerial Achievement Medals since Operations Joint Guard (1996-1998, Sarajevo), and Joint Forge (1998-1999, Sarajevo); these medals recognize meritorious service and/or valor in aerial flight.

- We make significant airlift contributions to the USAF mission and have an enviable safety record. Flying an accident-free average of over 3,400 hours from FY 2003 to FY 2005 (projected), we have accumulated a total of over 134,000 safe flying hours.

- We are a vital component of the Total Force (with the ANG providing nearly 50% of the USAF's tactical airlift capability, the fight can't be fought without us) and have supported combat and humanitarian operations and exercises around the world. Some examples:

  Volant Oak (Panama); 1979 - 1999.
  Volant Partner (Germany); 1987 - 1992
  Reforger (Alaska); 1983
  Desert Shield Desert Storm; 1990 - 1991.
  Operation Restore Hope (Somalia); 1992 – 1993.
  Operation Provide Promise (Bosnia); 1993 – 1994.
  Operation Joint Endeavor (Bosnia); 1996 – 1998.
  Operation Joint Guard (Bosnia); 1998 – 1999.
  Operation Joint Forge (Bosnia); 1999 – 2002.
  Operation Southern Watch (Mid-East); 1996 – 1999.
  Operation Uphold Democracy (Haiti); 1994.
  Operation Shining Hope (Kosovo); 1999.

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

- Since 9/11, the inception of the Global War on Terror, and Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom, the 179th has been engaged like never before. Some key statistics:

2001		
	Operations Supported	Coronet Oak, Deep Freeze, Noble Eagle
	Participating units	Airlift Squadron, Medical Squadron, Logistics Support, Airlift Squadron, Aerial Port Squadron
	Days served	13,842
2002		
	Operations Supported	Southern Watch, Deep Freeze, Noble Eagle, Israeli support, Enduring Freedom, Joint Forge, Northern Watch
	Participating units	Aircraft maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Civil engineering squadron, Services
	Days served	56,912
2003		
	Operations Supported	Deep Freeze, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, Israeli Support
	Participating units	Aircraft Operations, Aircraft Maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Civil engineering squadron, Services, Intelligence
	Days served	35,971
2004		
	Operations Supported	Deep Freeze, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom
	Participating units	Aircraft Operations, Aircraft Maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Intelligence
	Days served	64,052

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

Combat Aerial Operations Totals for OEF and OIF:

	HOURS	SORTIES	PAX	CARGO TONS
OIF AL JABER	1,219.3	878	9,735	1287.2
OIF TALLIL, AL SALEM, AL UDIED	1,839.4	1,222	19,755	2,429
OEF AL SALEM, AL UDIED, CURRENT AOR	898.6	550	5490	1852.6
TOTALS	3957.3	2650	34980	5568.8

- Our Proposed $8.0 M Fire/Crash Rescue Station will accommodate **JOINT** Air National Guard/Army National Guard firefighting missions.

- In addition to the flying mission, we are home to a wide range of expeditionary combat and homeland security support units, capable of delivering many invaluable capabilities. Some examples:

  Civil Engineering
  - Engineering force to maintain facilities and infrastructure
  - Fire Department and Power Production team

  Logistics Readiness Squadron
  - Supply of materiel and fuels, maintenance of the vehicle fleet, traffic management services and planning and management of the mobilization process to ensure an accurate and rapid response in the event of contingency moves or national emergency.

  Aerial Port Squadron
  - Coordinate missions with Base Operations and the affected work centers of the squadron
  - Plan, schedule and process air cargo, passengers, and mail
  - Prepare load plans, manifests and air movement reports using automated or manual tools
  - Prepare/Inspect and Process Cargo for onward movement

  Security Forces Squadron
  - Point of entry control to the installation
  - Armed response to the installation

- Presidential Aircraft support at remote locations upon request
- Support to the Governor for natural or man-made disasters

Communications Flight
- Maintenance and support to computers and crypto equipment.
- Maintenance and support to telephone switch and outside telephone plant.
- Maintenance and support to land mobile radio (LMR), Ground to Air radio (VHF/UHF), state emergency radio (HF) and tactical mobility radio.
- Visual information support

Services Flight
- Food Service, Lodging, Wartime Mortuary Affairs, Search & Recovery Operations, Morale, Welfare & Recreation, Tactical Field Exchange

Mission Support Flight
- Personnel services to the Wing and surrounding retired military community, including recruiting, retention, enlistment, retirements, Separations, Force Deployment and sustainment, ID Cards and health care Enrollment, support.

Environmental Management Office
- Programs to reduce hazardous and solid waste generation
- Increase recycling and Green Purchasing efforts
- Maintain compliance with all applicable EPA, Air Force, and Air National Guard regulations

Expeditionary Medical Support (EMEDS)
- Mobile and highly capable clinical disaster response/assessment

- Because the ANG is also the State Governors' asset (The Guard is the only military force immediately available to a governor in times of emergency, including civil unrest and natural or manmade disasters), we are uniquely positioned to support a host of Homeland Security missions. Some examples:

Expeditionary Medical Support
- Forward deployed trauma resuscitation/surgical capability including critical care
- Multi-functional team composition decreases number of medics required to deploy
    - 179MDG is only MDG in FEMA Region 5 with Surgical capabilities
    - Region Five Consists of:
        - Ohio

- Michigan
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Wisconsin
- Minnesota

Security Forces

- Conduct anti-terror assessments and provide threat information to the Governor
- Coordinate local anti-terrorism intelligence sharing with local police agencies

Readiness

- Provide trained and equipped Nuclear Biologic Chemical (NBC) Readiness Personnel

Communication Flight

- Provide critical command and control with State Emergency Management Agency via the State HF radio net. Additionally the 179th CF has direct radio contact and support agreements with local fire and law enforcement agencies, which would enable us to coordinate a Homeland Defense emergency response with the rest of the State.

2. **Land, Facilities, Infrastructure, Air Space**

- Mansfield's 9000-foot, Instrument Flight Rule (IFR)-equipped runway is one of the longest in Ohio (only 6 of 168 are longer.)

- No commercial carriers compete for Mansfield-Lahm's airspace.

- We enjoy exceptional mission support facilities:
  - 33 Buildings: 292,863 Sq. Ft.
  - Total Acres: 230
  - Value: $92,928,000.
  - Main Cantonment Area: 67 Acres
  - Drop Zone: 157 Acres
  - **Airport Costs**: $49,904

  - Military Construction Investments:
    1997 - Medical Training/Dining Hall: $3.1M
    1998 - Jet Fuel Storage Complex: $4.1 M
    1998 - Headquarters Building: $4.7 M
    2001 - Security Forces Operations Building: $2.7 M

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

2003 - Air Operations/Communications Building: $6.6 M
2004 - Transportation Complex: $3.3 M
2005 – Upgraded/Hardened Main Gate Facility: $690 K

- Planned Improvements
  Fire Station: $8.0 M (FY '06)
  Civil Engineering Facility: $5.9 M (FY '09)

- Ample room for expansion (see attachment 2)

3. **Economic Impact**

Employees

Full-time	293
Duty Status Guardsmen	767
Total	**1060**

Impact on Local Economy

Annual Payroll	$ 25.5M
Operating Funds	$ 16.6M
Total	**$ 42.1M**

Operating Funds

Operations & Maintenance	$ 114,300
Ohio National Guard Tuition Assistance Program	$ 160,000
State Income Tax	$ 995,160
Profit for the State	**$ 720,860**

Benefit to Mansfield

Mansfield City Income Tax	$174,000
Income from Property Lease	$ 49,905
Profit for Mansfield	**$ 223,905**

4. **Community Infrastructure Support**
   - Large, talented, and supportive recruiting community with a radius reaching as far as Columbus and Cleveland, resulting in unit strength of 104.7%, 5th in the entire ANG (91 units.)

- Robust relationships with the City of Mansfield, Richland and surrounding counties, especially civic and legislative leaders.

- Property lease from City of Mansfield only ≈ $50K / year

- Over 1500 sleeping rooms within easy driving distance of the base could accommodate much larger traditional force, or surge requirements (we use only 80 double-occupied rooms now, with a strength of 767 traditional Guardsmen)

5. Environmental Impact:

- The 179th has a proud record of Environmental Stewardship, e.g.,
  - Installation Restoration Program (IRP):
    - 5 of 8 sites are officially closed.
    - All will be closed by mid-2006.
  - No underground storage tank issues
  - Current small arms firing range will require soil remediation when it is ordered closed. Estimated cost $ 0.5M.

6. Awards and Accomplishments:

Year	Inspection/Award	Reason or Results
2005	Environmental, Safety, Occupational, Health Compliance Assessment & Management Program (ESOHCAMP)	Outstanding and Best Ever Seen
2004	Health Services Inspection (HSI)	Excellent Rating
2003	Deneke Award	Outstanding ANG Civil Engineer
2002	CMSgt Edward Wilbert Award	Outstanding Fire Dept of the Year
2002	James D. Weaver Award	Outstanding Fulltime Medical Technician
2002	ANG Environmental Quality Award For Recycling	
2002	ANG Services Flt of the Year	Superior Performance
2002	Initial Readiness Inspection	Excellent
2002	Unit Compliance Inspection	Excellent
2002	Aircrew Stan/Eval Inspection	Excellent
2001	AF Outstanding Unit Award	Outstanding Performance
2001	ANG Metcalf Trophy	Outstanding Mission Accomplishment
2000	Tappan Award	Outstanding Ohio Flying Unit
2000	EORI @ Ramstein AB, GE	Top rating
2000	Health Services Inspection	Highest Air Force rating
2000	IG Exercise (IGX)	Top rating
1999	Tappan Award	Outstanding Ohio Flying Unit

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

Attachment 1

C-130 HERCULES

The C-130 Hercules primarily performs the tactical intra-theater portion of the airlift mission. The aircraft is capable of operating from rough; dirt strips and is the prime transport for para-dropping troops and equipment into hostile areas. Basic and specialized versions perform a diversity of roles, including airlift support, aero medical missions, and natural disaster relief missions.

The C-130 Hercules has unsurpassed versatility, performance, and mission effectiveness. The flexible design of the Hercules enables it to be configured for many different missions, allowing for one aircraft to perform the role of many. Much of the special mission equipment added to the Hercules is removable, allowing the aircraft to revert back to its cargo delivery role if desired. Additionally, the C-130 can be rapidly reconfigured for the various types of cargo

The C-130's design maximum gross weight is 155,000 pounds (175,000 pounds wartime) with a normal landing weight of 130,000 pounds. The airplane is capable of airlifting 6 pallets or 74 litters or 16 CDS bundles or 92 combat troops or 64 paratroopers. It can also carry 45,000 pounds of cargo or a combination of any of these up to the cargo compartment capacity or maximum allowable weight.

Conduct aero medical evacuation operations. Movement of casualties by air transportation under the supervision of qualified aero medical evacuation crew members to/between medical treatment facilities

Support psychological operations. Support of operations targeted against the minds of the enemy civilian population and combat forces. Speaker operations and leaflet airdrops can be used to influence and demoralize hostile forces prior to and during offensive operations

The mission of the C-130 is to provide rapid transportation of personnel or cargo for delivery by parachute to a designated drop zone, or by landing at austere locations within the theater of operations.

The C-130 provides long range, day or night capability. C-130 combat delivery assets can perform airdrops in visual conditions; AWADS C-130s are additionally capable of executing airdrops in IMC (Instrument Meteorological Conditions) independent of external navigation aids

The C-130 can deliver personnel, equipment or supplies either by landing or by various aerial delivery modes.

In the first, parachutes pull the load, weighing up to 42,000 pounds, from the aircraft. When the load is clear of the plane, cargo parachutes inflate and lower the load to the ground.

The second method, called the Container Delivery System, uses the force of gravity to pull from one to 16 bundles of supplies from the aircraft. When the bundles, weighing up to 2,200 pounds each, are out of the aircraft, parachutes inflate and lower them to the ground.

MANSFIELD AIRCRAFT UPGRADES

AWADS (Adverse Weather Aerial Delivery System) - The precise delivery of personnel, equipment, and supplies during adverse weather, using a self-contained aircraft instrumentation system without artificial ground assistance or the use of ground navigational aids.

SCNS (Self-Contained Navigation System) - SCNS provides the flight crew an integrated navigation system, with four independent navigation solutions, including GPS, flight guidance and advisory information to fly a variety of missions. SCNS also provides control of communication and navigation radios, flight planning and calculation, and control of troop/cargo airdrops, as well as processing of radar data on some models.

ESKE (Enhanced Station Keeping Equipment)

GPWS (Ground Proximity Warning System)

GPS (Global Positioning System) - Installs a space-based all-weather radio navigation system into all SCNS-equipped C-130s to allow autonomous navigation capabilities. Eliminates reliance upon ground-based stations to provide navigational inputs to aircraft systems

MLS (Microwave Landing System) - Allows precision approaches and landings. MLS will allow elimination of ILS, which suffers from frequency congestion.

NVG (Night Vision Goggles)

NVIS (Night Vision Imaging System)

SATCOM (Satellite Communication) - Installs a permanent SATCOM antenna, interface cabling, preamplifier, and control panel for portable SATCOM radios required by joint users of combat delivery aircraft

GCAS (Ground Collision Avoidance System)

TCAS (Traffic Collision Avoidance System)

Threat Avoidance.

Improved capability to detect/degrade/defeat threats.

Chaff Flare Dispensers, Radar Jammers

MWS (Missile Warning System)

RWS (Radar Warning System)

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

OTHER DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF MANSFIELD'S C-130 FLEET

- Flying Hours (average equivalent baseline) on our aircraft place them at less than half of their useful life span.

- **Enhanced Cargo Delivery** capability via the Canary Slide Ramp System (ideal for Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Defense Team rapid movement requirement)

- Our **record of excellence and innovation in aircraft maintenance** has involved us in important, mission-enhancing research and development (often for the entire C-130 fleet):

  - **(BCEM) Battery Control Electronic Module** test aircraft for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center

  - **Corrosion Sensor Test Aircraft** for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center (administered by Battelle Labs in Columbus) to aid in determining corrosion impact from world wide environmental conditions on entire ANG and Air Force C-130 fleet. This evaluation will also help to re-evaluate C-130 aircraft frequency for wash intervals and corrosion inspections

  - **SATCOM Form Fit And Function Evaluation** (C-130 aircraft) for Wright Patterson AFB to help refine the Satellite Secure Communications System for CENTAF operations

  - Potential **Deicing Fluid Evaluation Site** for the Air Force Research Laboratory

  - **Main Landing Gear Torque Tube Coupling Safety Test Aircraft** for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center and Air Mobility Command (AMC)

  - Evaluator for the **Airdrop Ballistic Winds / Gps Tracker Test** for Wright Patterson, AFB

RECEIVED
06302005

June 27, 2005

Adm. Harold W. Gehman, Jr.
c/o BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Subject: The removal of the C-130-H's from the 179th Air Wing; Lahm Field, Mansfield, Ohio

Subject: The lack of factual informational about the 179th and other Air Guard, National Guard and Reservest personell or their facilities.

Dear Sir,
I have done quite a lot of research on the subject of the 179th Air Wing, based at Lahm Field, Mansfield, Ohio. Also have spent time in composing this letter. Please, please, sir, do me the courtesy of reading what I have provided for your enlightenment. Enclosed is much information regarding the past and present of the 179th. It is a very active Air Guard Unit. Their planes and the personell have been deployed to many places in the world for both Military and Humanitarian missions, all successfully completed.
Inspections of the 179th have always been completed with the highest possible ratings. All the years the 179th Air Guard has been at Lahm Field it has always been carefully and pridefully maintained. The runway at Lahm Field is one of the longest in the US and can accomodate the largest planes now flying. It is also an emergency landing strip for a shuttle. Why give up the use of this runway for Military use, just to spend billions on another airstrip at some other Air Base?
Guard Units were never meant to be moved around. They were supposed to be locally based, and the members of these Guard Units were to train at their facilities twice a month, then to have 2 weeks of more concentrated training

at a regular, or "standing" military facility.
By closing these Guard and Reserve facilities you are defeating the very purpose for which they were created.
By going forward with your plans in Ohio you are destroying our faith and trust in the purpose and structure of our Guard system, and betraying the people who serve in them.
You will force the retirement of many Senior Officers and staff, with many years of experience and great depths of knowledges. Young people who have homes and families will not re-new their contracts. They will not up-root their families
Currently, there is a short fall in signing up new recruits for some branches of service. If you forge ahead with closing of so many Militilary bases, especially Guard and Reserve forces, you will have a MAJOR in recruiting over-all, short-fall.
The ENTIRE BRAC needs to review their short-sighted thinking while we still have a civilian-military. Since about 40 per cent of our fighting man power now in the war zones is civilian-military, BRAC needs to use more thought before taking any action. Taking into account at the last "closing" it was to save 19 billion dollars. It cost 22 billion to close the bases. I don't see any money saved.

The professional or career Military expects to move around frequently. They know this will happen upon signing contracts to serve. Both they, and their families expect this. Many resources at their disposal will help and render advice and much financial aid to make their transitions easy as possible.
Guard and Reserve Units are not prepared for such change. Neither are their personnell. Nothing is in place to move them from one location to the next. Especially not financially.
BRAC seems to have no regard or compassion for what ever hardships or problems might arise for Reserve or Guard, or any one else, for that matter.
The 179th has an enviable safety record. They have not had a lost time accident in many years. Let alone a formal "Stand Down" to consider or re-evaluate a problem. It has always been, and still is a very well-run facilety.
Lahm Field is one of the newer Air Guard bases. It has been well-maintained and up-graded. It is a Military Installation to be proud of. Instead of taking away the C-130-H's, bring more of them here. If you must close an Air Wing, bring the F-16's here, there is plenty of room.
Also, the 706th Transportation Company from Marion, Ohio could be based at Lahm, plus the Guard Units from Mansfield and Ashland.

That makes more sense to most people around here.
Contrary to what BRAC states that we have no room to expand, we have a LOT more land to expand to if it becomes necessary.
BRAC also states it is difficult to activate smaller Units. Apparently, they are ignorant of computers, fax machines, all kinds of telephones, radio, and good-old-fashioned written orders.
I think Ohio may have lost more people in Iraq than any other state, not too mention many horribly wounded. Their lives, and their families lives will never be the same again. More Ohioans are still being deployed, some from the 179th.
How can BRAC think of doing away with such an active Air Wing?
Here in Ohio we have great caring, reverance, and respect for our Military people, living and dead. We take great pride in what our hero's, past and present have sacrificed for us and the rest of the nation.
BRAC's high handedness is an insult to all of our service people, living or dead, and their families and people who loved them, also.
BRAC withholds information from the very people most affected by their decisions. Even their address and telephone numbers are not available to us, the "common people". The "common masses" who pay their salaries one way or another.

Many of us, the citizens of Ohio believe the Air Force is commiting legal robbery, and getting BRAC to do it for them. Our Air Guard planes are newer, better equiped, and much better maintained than the Cargo planes the Air Force now has at their disposal.

So when to acquire planes, the quickest and with the least cost?

Not a problem. We will just remove them from the Air Guard Units. Get them under our control and our command.

That will make the Air Force look better to the US Congress when we ask them for money for some "pet project".

The 179th is an Air Wing. How can they be an Air Wing without planes?

Ruth Ann Wolch R#12 705 Pinkney Road
Mansfield, Ohio 44903 1(419)468-1253

The above "Cartoon" is the way many of our citizens feel about closing the 179th Air Base. We in Ohio have no large military base as do many other states. We have no Eglin Air Field, No Camp Le June, No Fort Wood, No May Pat, No Fort Leonard Wood etc.

The people of Ohio have in the past sacrificed many of our fine National Guard, Reservists, Air Guard personell for generations, and we are still doing so. We feel betrayed by what BRAC wishes to do. It is a direct insult to all who have died and many who have been so terribly wounded. A "slap in the face" to all of those who have given so much and to everyone who loved them

Vietnam Memorial stirs emotions

By John Jarvis
Gannett News Service

UPPER SANDUSKY — A wool stocking cap pulled halfway down on his head, the man in the red-and-black flannel jacket ran his fingers slowly across the letters.

W-I-L-L-I-A-M E F-O-L-L-O-N.

A grimace wrinkled the 58-year-old's expression, and he lowered his hand from the white name on the black wall to rub the salt-and-pepper whiskers on his face.

"William E. Follon. ... He got killed on the day we were supposed to leave," said Tom Gottfried of Carey. Members of the Air Force's 37th Combat Engineers, they had already turned in their battle gear and were at an airfield in Binh Dinh province "waiting for a ride out of the country."

Before their flight arrived, an enemy rocket attack killed the sergeant from Iowa, one of Gottfried's "best buddies."

"It killed him pretty much outright," Gottfried said.

Follon's is one of about 58,000 names of men and women killed in the Vietnam War commemorated on the Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall & Museum just outside of Upper Sandusky. The display will be at Thiel's Wheels on Tarhe Trail at U.S. 23 and Ohio 53 through Sunday.

Gottfried spent 13 months in Vietnam, from the end of 1968 through Feb. 2, 1970.

"It was good to be home, but it was kind of a letdown," because of the ill will some had for the war and those who fought in it, he said.

Gottfried said he'd feel better about his experience in Southeast Asia "if we'd won the war. ... There are a lot of good people on this wall who probably wouldn't be on there if we'd kept on."

Working security for the event, former Marion-area resident Mark Sigler of Harpster helped students find names on the wall.

"It lets you know the costs of war," said Sigler, an Army sergeant in the transportation corps during the Vietnam War era. He served in Korea, unlike his friend, Medard A.J. Ruehle.

Ruehle was one of 11 Wyandot County residents who died in Southeast Asia.

"He got out of a helicopter to help some wounded and in the process got killed himself," Sigler said.

Visiting the Upper Sandusky wall event from Findlay was Frederick Adams, who helped set up a similar tribute in his city.

"There's a bunch of guys from Findlay I went to school with who are on the wall," Adams said. "It's hard to just come here and not feel something for all these people."

Gary Cox of Marion, who helped provide computer information to assist visitors in locating their loved ones' names on the wall last fall in Marion, helped with the Upper Sandusky event as well.

If you go

- **What:** The Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall & Museum
- **When:** Through Sunday
  Today: 1 p.m., Veterans tribute ceremony; 6 p.m., musical and flag tribute
  Sunday: 2 p.m., closing ceremony
- **Where:** Thiel's Wheels, Tarhe Trail at U.S. 23 and Ohio 53, Upper Sandusky.

"I pay tribute to the 58,000 names that are on that wall."

Gary Cox
veteran

"I pay tribute to the 58,000 names that are on the wall," said Cox, a former Marine who didn't see combat. "As a Vietnam-era veteran I wasn't able to participate, but I can give back to the guys that did."

The people of Ohio Honor their military dead, I believe more than any other state. We have hundreds if not thousands of Memorials to our beloved dead from our largest towns to our smallest villages. On Memorial Day our cemeteries are a mass of color because all of the Stars and Stripes flying over every veterans grave. The BRAC is going to dis-honor some of these veterans. They were deployed from our Reserve and Guard Units. Now, you want to "change the Rules" in the middle of the war, and make a "hardship" for those who still are under contract to the military.

Local war hero honored in new museum display

News Journal
staff reports

MANSFIELD — A Memorial Day military display featuring the late Albert Allen of Mansfield, who is a member of Ohio's Military Hall of Fame, will open Saturday and run through the Memorial Day weekend at the Mansfield Museum at 35 Park Avenue West.

Allen, who died last year, was a lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserves and a survivor of the Bataan Death March and years spent in Japanese prisoner of war camps during World War II.

Museum Curator Scott Schaut said the items were donated by Allen's wife, Nancy. He said the display includes memorabilia from Allen's father, Albert L. "Cap" Allen Sr., who was commander of Mansfield's Company M, 145th Infantry, 37th Division in France during World War I.

Also on display will be "broadside" advertisements for previous Memorial Day services held in this city during the 1880s when Civil War veterans were the only ex-soldiers available to be honored.

Schaut said displays concerning World War II and home-front industry in Mansfield, as well as a history of the 179th Airlift Wing, are still up.

He said one of the oddities of military history in Richland County is that while there are many displays concerning the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War and the two World Wars, there are almost no items connected with the Mexican-American War of 1845 or the Spanish-American War of 1898.

"Both of those wars have been totally overshadowed by the bigger wars," Schaut said. "Mansfield sent troops to fight Mexico in 1845 and many more to Cuba in 1898.

"Commander Edward Parker Wood of Mansfield was commander of the U.S.S. Petrel at the battle of Manila Bay."

The museum is open Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. and on Memorial Day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Lately our local Newspaper has been "featuring" a World War II milet ary person, with a long article about them.
Their service in the second World War, their lives after Military service, and other interesting stories the servicemen may tell.
We do revere our military people.
Although, a number of the BRAC have been milet ary, I don't believe they hold our now beemb Reserve and Guard people in the same high esteem as we do.

Ohio squad takes heavy hit in Iraq

COLUMBUS (AP) — Six Marines were killed and another 15 were wounded from one central Ohio squad in a major U.S. offensive near Iraq's border with Syria, a newspaper reported.

The squad was one of three belonging to the 1st Platoon of Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment, according to The Washington Post, which has a reporter embedded with Operation Matador.

The military has confirmed five Marine deaths so far and says about 100 insurgents have been killed in the operation — one of the largest U.S. offensives since Fallujah was reclaimed from militants.

Chief Warrant Officer Orrin Bowman, the site commander for the Columbus-based company, confirmed Thursday the company was participating in the operation and had taken casualties. He declined to say how many from the Marine reserve unit had been killed or release any names.

The military has identified two Ohio Marines with the 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment who have died in Iraq since Sunday. Lance Cpl. Wesley G. Davids, 20, of Dublin, was killed in an explosion in Karabilah on Wednesday and Cpl. Dustin A. Derga, 24, of Columbus, was killed by small arms fire in Ubaydi on Sunday, according to the Department of Defense.

Bowman said the unit is in the process of contacting and helping the affected families.

Lima is a rifle company that has four platoons, Bowman said. Each platoon has three squads that normally have 13 people but can be reinforced depending on a mission, he said.

Davids left for Iraq in January, last talked to his family four weeks ago and was scheduled to come home in October, his mother said.

"While his death is a tragic loss, he died doing something he felt passionately about," Jody Davids said. "He was the best that this country has to offer."

Her son loved working on cars and graduated in 2003 from Dublin Scioto High School, where he was on the crew team.

"He was just a very impressive, strong young man," said Russ Merritt, his high school coach. "Wes was kind of an inspiration to all of us. You just had no doubt that he would give 100 percent."

The operation was launched after U.S. intelligence showed large numbers of insurgents had moved into the northern Jazirah Desert following losses in Fallujah and Ramadi, further east. The area is believed to be a staging ground for foreign fighters crossing into Iraq from Syria along ancient smuggling routes.

The offensive started Saturday night and is aimed at rooting out followers of Iraq's most wanted militant leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

Two Ohio soldiers killed in grenade attack in Ramadi, Iraq

The Associated Press

Two Ohio soldiers were killed in Iraq when their military vehicle came under a grenade attack, the Department of Defense said Wednesday.

Army Sgt. Larry R. Kuhns Jr., 24, of Austintown, and Spc. Anthony D. Kinslow, 21, of Westerville, died Monday in Ramadi, the volatile town 70 miles west of Baghdad.

Both were assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division from Fort Carson, Colo. The brigade has lost 65 soldiers in Iraq.

It was the second time in as many weeks that more than one serviceman from Ohio was killed in the same attack in Iraq. Three Marines from an Akron-based unit died in an explosion last Thursday during fighting in Haqlaniyah, 90 miles north of Baghdad.

Kuhns worked at the Army recruiting office in Boardman for a time in late 2003, said Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Catrucco, who works at the office.

"He was an awesome guy. He was very professional," Catrucco said. "He was the type of soldier any sergeant would love to have."

Kuhns, whose wife lives in Fort Carson, recently had been promoted to sergeant, Catrucco said. He began his military career as a reservist with the 319th Engineer Company in Butler, Pa.

Kinslow's mother declined comment Wednesday.

Ohio has lost a lot of people, and nobody seems to care, certainly not BRAC, positively not the politicians. As far as I can tell the military isn't much interested in our losses. We may have more dead than any other state.
Where do you think the next generation of Civilian - Military is comming from? Who is going to join a Guard or Reserve Unit if they know in advance that they may spend more time traveling than training twice a month? You already have a shortfall of new recruits in the Regular Military. You are conducting this war with 40% CIVILIAN - Military.
How do you purpose to recruit more people for any kind of military duty? Your short-sightness is going to make us a "target of opportunity" [illegible]

Lexington family has three sons in Iraq

By Ron Simon
News Journal

LEXINGTON — Like his father before him, James Andrews, 58, chose to be a soldier.

He served first in the Air Force and then the Army Reserves with the 1486th Transportation Company. He capped off a long military career by driving a truck during Operation Desert Storm and serving as his unit's first sergeant.

"I think if I hadn't retired there's no doubt I'd have already been over in Iraq and back by this time," Andrews said.

Instead, his three sons, Kyle, 24, Kraig, 22 and Kolby, 20, are in Iraq and Kyle is there for the second time.

Like their father before them, they chose to be soldiers. With a difference. All three are Marines. Kyle is a second lieutenant. Kraig is a lance corporal and Kolby is a private first class.

All three are, as their e-mail photos show, deep in harm's way.

"Have a wonderful Father's Day and thanks for all the things you do for me," Kyle wrote in a card last week. He is the only son, right now, who is able to stay in touch. "They come and go in operations," James explained.

"This is such a different war from the one I was in," James said. "Back then, it was letters and postcards. Today, it's tech messages, cell phone calls and e-mail. I was a driver and never was shot at. They are being shot at."

And three blue stars are in the window at the Andrews home on Steam Corners Road.

"I know they're doing a good job," James said of his sons. "They're really into what they do. Two of them have talked about making the Marine Corps a career. I'd like to think they are doing this because I was in the service."

Unspoken are any fears James and Renee Andrews may have about their sons being hurt in the

Lt. Kyle Andrews, with his brothers Pfc. Kolby Andrews and Lance Cpl. Kraig Andrews. *(Submitted photos)*

midst of war. They know the dates down to the day when each of their boys will rotate home.

Lt. Kyle Andrews, 24, whose wife's name is Lauren, is doing his second tour in Iraq. When he comes home later this year, he will be a basic infantry instructor at Camp LeJeune. "He's guaranteed to be home for three years," his father said.

Lance Cpl. Kraig Andrews, 22, whose wife's name is Albra, would be home next but he might have to rotate to Afghanistan a few more years down the road, James said. "They plan that far ahead these days."

Pfc. Kolby Andrews, 20, unmarried, plans to leave the Corps perhaps temporarily to attend college. "If he ever wants to be an officer he has to have some college," his father said.

Kraig and Kolby are Lexington High School graduates and Kyle is a St. Peter's graduate. James thinks his youngest son was the one who first checked into the idea of a military career. "Then Kraig got interested and he joined," James said. One Marine became two Marines became three Marines.

There is a lot of military background in the Andrews clan. James' late father, James Sr., was a captain in the Army Air Force in World War II.

ANDREWS SR.

Renee's father, Joseph S. Krebs, was a corpsman and ambulance driver with the Army in Europe during World War II.

KREBS

A native of Pennsylvania, James met Renee in California while he was in the Air Force. They were married for 20 years before divorcing. For now they are staying together.

James Jr.'s day job, the one he has held for 32 years, is postal carrier. He works out of the Ashland Post Office and his route covers the west side, mostly along Sandusky Street.

Nine years after he left service he joined the Army Reserves. With three boys to raise a little extra cash wouldn't hurt. But a war came along with it.

James was a squad leader as well as a driver during the Gulf War and finally rose to First Sergeant. When he reached 20 years he called it quits. "It was fun being a driver and moving equipment, but I really wasn't that happy with all the paperwork a first sergeant has," he said.

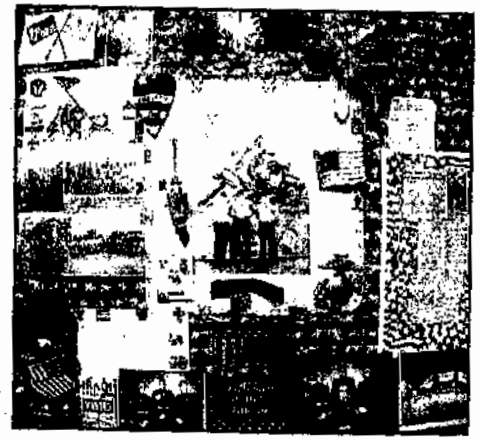
Now he and Renee stay in contact via all the new technology that links soldiers in the field with their families. And they wait. It's Father's Day.

And the boys are far away.

rsimon@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7230

Kolby Andrews, front row on the right, in Iraq.

Kyle and Kraig Andrews in Iraq.



A collage of the Andrews boys hangs in their home. *(Daniel Melograna/ News Journal)*

Another family of local Heroes you will note the father of these fine young men, was an Army Reservist. The quality of people BRAC wants to shuffle around.

Closings could hurt Guard, some fear

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — Some members of the panel deciding which U.S. military bases to close worry the Pentagon's plans to reshuffle National Guard and Reserve installations are too radical and could discourage recruitment.

The Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure plan, released Friday, proposes consolidating 387 Reserve and National Guard installations into about 125.

Those recommendations are part of a larger plan to close 33 major bases and restructure 29 others to streamline and modernize the military.

The Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing's base at Mansfield Lahm Airport is among

■ More on the effort to keep the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield, see page 3A.

those to be closed.

The Guard and Reserve changes could affect hundreds of thousands of people who serve in the part-time forces while holding down full-time jobs. The main concern is that consolidating installations will mean longer travel times for reservists and Guard members.

"You're going to have real enlistment problems," said former Rep. James Bilbray of Nevada, one of the nine members of the president-appointed base closing commission.

The base closure panel will review the Pentagon's recommendations and make any changes it deems necessary before submitting its list to the president by Sept 8. If Bush approves, it goes to Congress for an all-or-nothing vote.

The panel began its work Monday by questioning Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and senior Pentagon officials about how they formulated their recommendations.

Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the Guard and Reserve consolidations were done to enhance capability, cut costs and integrate the part-time forces more closely with active-duty units.

Members of the heavily stressed Guard and Reserves make up about 40 percent of the roughly 138,000 U.S. troops in Iraq.

Myers acknowledged that "there will be some inconvenience" for people serving in the Guard and Reserves if the Pentagon's recommendations are followed.

Recruitment numbers for the Guard and Army reserves are already lagging this year. Guard recruitment was 24 percent behind in the first four months of the current recruiting year, which runs from October 2004 through September 2005.

"Anybody who looks at retention issues would have to be concerned about this," said John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a defense Web site. "This was one of the first things that really popped out at me."

a lot of people are very concerned about possible greater short falls in recruitment for any branch or any part of the military.

Guard, Reserve death toll matches highest total

WASHINGTON (AP) — Thirty members of the Army National Guard, Army Reserve and Marine Corps Reserve died in the Iraq war in May, matching the highest toll for any month of the war, according to Pentagon figures.

The overall U.S. death toll last month was 80, the highest since 107 in January. There were 52 deaths in April and 36 in March, when it appeared the insurgency was waning.

Iraqis bore the brunt of the insurgent violence in May, but it also took a heavy toll on the approximately 140,000 U.S. troops there. The 80 deaths compares with a monthly average of 70 over the previous 12 months.

The Guard and Reserve, which make up nearly half the force in Iraq, have generally had fewer than 20 deaths per month during the war, and it's not clear why their losses spiked to 30 in May. That matched the 30 deaths among the Guard and Reserve in January, and it compared with 11 in April, 13 in March and 16 in February.

The May total reached 30 when the Pentagon announced on Friday that Sgt. Miguel A. Ramos, 39, of Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, died May 31 in Baghdad when a rocket struck near his position. He was assigned to the Army Reserve's 807th Signal Company, 35th Signal Battalion, based at Juana Diaz, Puerto Rico.

One of the month's 30 fatalities died in the United States. Staff Sgt. Tommy S. Little, 47, of Aliceville, Ala., died May 2 at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, of injuries sustained on April 19 near Iskandariyah, Iraq, when a roadside bomb detonated near his Humvee utility vehicle. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 114th Field Artillery Regiment of the Mississippi Army National Guard at Columbus, Miss.

May also was a costly month for the Army's 3rd Infantry Division, which had 10 reported fatalities. Since it arrived in Iraq in February to become the first Army division to return for a second combat tour, the 3rd Infantry has lost 34 of its soldiers, according to Pentagon figures. During its previous tour, which included the initial invasion in March 2003 and lasted about eight months, the division lost 44 soldiers.

Closing the base makes no sense

I am writing this letter to rge everyone to write their ate politicians and help stop e closing of the 179th Airlift ing in Mansfield. The airbase rovides about 1,000 full- and art-time jobs and has an estiated $70 million annual effect a the area economy. The Base ealignment and Closure BRAC) threatens not only Iansfield's Air National Guard ase but nearly a third of all Air ational Guard Units. It will rastically change the military s we know it. Our Mansfield nit has credentials that far exeed the criteria to stay open. (It ompares to the best units out here). This is why the closing of makes no sense. The money aved does not offset the beneits to the nation's defense.

The 179th Airlift Wing repreents the core of patriotism. hey are the heart and soul of merica. They are the small own people; they are our riends, neighbors, brothers, nd co-workers, most of which ave deep roots in our commuity. Many of these people may ust leave the military. They ave families here. They can't ommute in some cases, hunreds of miles to go to drill. My amily will no doubt have to nove, possibly out of state. I vas born and raised in the beauiful town of Bellville. My famiy is here. My friends are here. Ay life is here. I would like my hildren to go to school here.

Don't get me wrong, there are lot of people also going hrough this. My point is that ur base is different because here is no compelling reason to lose it down. When you add up he numbers, it doesn't save the nilitary that much money. If it nade sense, I would support it. Ve need to write letters to Taft/Voinovich/Dewine and your listrict congressman. Thank ou for supporting our troops!

Jolie McCue
Bellville

Birthdays under fire

I would never have imagined that my three sons would be serving in the Marine Corps in Iraq at the same time. Half my heart is in Iraq.

On May 13, my son, 2nd Lt. Kyle J. Andrews turned 24 under fire in Iraq. He is with the 2nd AA BN, stationed at Camp Fallujah, Iraq. Recently he spent more than 10 days on a mission with no shower facilities available. Just a week later, he e-mailed us a copy of "The Desert Marine" which is a 2nd Marine Division publication that carried stories about Marines at Fallujah and also at Hadithah Dam, Iraq.

My middle son CPL Kraig L. Andrews serves with 3/8 Lima Co. and is also stationed at Fallujah. Kraig and Kyle have been able to share some time together at the chow hall and also working out.

On June 26, my youngest son, PFC Kolby J. Andrews, who is a member of 3/25 Scout-Sniper Platoon will celebrate his 20th birthday involved in Operation Iraqi Freedom at Hadithah Dam. As a mother of three sons who are serving in the United States Marine Corps, I could not be more proud of their commitment and accomplishments.

I feel fortunate we are able to correspond by phone, e-mail or text message on my cell phone almost weekly. Sometimes it is hard to say good-bye to them, but I always let them know that I am proud of them, miss them, love them, and that everyone is praying for their safe return.

Renee Andrews
Lexington

Fight for the 179th

First of all, I would like to start off by saying thank you and how proud I am of all the U.S. military and the 179th Ohio Air National Guard unit here in Mansfield, of which I have two sons who are members.

I have had many people throw in my face that the National Guardsmen are just weekend warriors. My answer to them is at least they are warriors and they believe in our country and what it stands for. Most people probably don't know that at the present time the U.S. has 60 percent National Guardsmen serving overseas due to the decline in recruitment of the regular branches of the military.

I am appalled with Mayor Lydia Reid and other community businessmen saying it would be a "win-win situation" for the city of Mansfield if the 179th were to close. It sounds like instead of fighting to keep the 179th and its annual $30 million payroll here in Richland County, they would rather have another white elephant on their hands (just look around the Mansfield area) and see all that they have brought in — not too much. At least once a month the hotels are being occupied with guardsmen on drill weekend.

I keep hearing it's a political decision, so who is getting rich off this? Rep. Michael Oxley, please step forward and fight to keep the 179th here in Mansfield; after all you are in a position to use your clout, and people do listen to you.

Candace Zeger
Lucas

Letters

Let's save the 179th

We hope you will all take the time to attend the rallies being planned to save our 179th Airlif wing of the Ohio Air National Guard. This unit is heavily involved in our community.

The fire department that is maintained at Mansfield Lahm is also counted on to provide mutual aid with the surrounding fire departments, at times when no C-130s are in the air. This service would be badly missed.

So wear your "We Love the 179th pins," put your "Save the 179th" magnets on your cars and go to these events Saturday in Bellville and Wednesday on the square in downtown Mansfield. Let's show our state leaders we as a community do care and want to prevent the closure of our base.

Our thanks to the REDEC/BRAC Steering committee here for all the work and time involved in fighting this closure.

Joyce and Jerry Duff
Mansfield

The above are just a few peoples' thoughts on closing the 179 Air Wing based at Lahm Field, Mansfield, Ohio. Everyone is totally against this idea. If anything we would like to see more C-130-H's brought here. Possibly, a Jet Fighter Wing also. Something BRAC can't understand, or care about, is the pride we all share for these big planes, along with the military who fly and maintain them, as well as their support people. Indeed, we all have great affection for both the planes and the personell.

SAVE the 179th

.ook for special 179th poster in 'uesday's paper

It's time for area residents to ake up pens, e-mails, phones nd letters in defense of the 79th Airlift Wing of the Ohio ir National Guard.

The local military unit at lansfield Lahm Airport has een recommended for clo- ure by the Pentagon as part f the 2005 Base Realignment nd Closure process.

The BRAC commission is udying those recommenda- ons and will offer a list of facili- es to be closed or realigned to resident Bush this fall. But this ommunity is not about to go way quietly as our economy ses 1,000 full and part-time bs and a facility worth $70 illion annually to the local conomy.

We are not going to let go asily of a unit that's been a art of this community's fabric r more than 50 years.

On Tuesday, the News Jour- al will publish a full-page color oster aimed at sending a ear message to Washington at area residents want to ave the 179th."

We urge you to put that oster in your home and busi- ess windows as a sign of your pport. We also urge you to ing it to the community rally downtown Mansfield on ne 22 aimed at saving the it.

On the back of the poster ll be content helping to ex- ain why the decision to close e unit is flawed. On the back ll be names, addresses and one numbers of key elected ficials and also the BRAC ommission. We urge you to ntact these officials and mmission and send them a py of the poster to make ur feelings known.

It's time to let Washington derstand how important the 9th is to Richland County, rth central Ohio, the nation d the world.

Look for this special poster Tuesday's print edition.

Here is who to contact:

If you would like to offer edback directly to the Base alignment and Closure ommission, an e-mail form available at p://www.brac.gov/feed- ck.aspx.

Letters can be mailed to 05 Defense Base Closure d Realignment Commission, 21 S. Clark St., Ste. 600, Ar- gton, Va., 22202.

Community must fight hard to retain 179th

The issue:
Local committee committed to waging battle over Airlift Wing

Our opinion:
Loss of the base, a valuable asset to north central Ohio, is not acceptable

It would be easy to give up the fight for the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

But Mike Greene and others won't let that happen.

Earlier this week Ohio Adjutant General Greg Wayt met with Greene and other members of the REDeC/BRAC steering committee and the All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs.

"The 179th is on a list recommended for closure," Wayt said during his visit. "But in the two previous rounds, about 30 percent of the bases on the recommended list were able to change the commission's mind."

That means Greene and others in the community must press forward, making the argument for the value of the unit to the city, the state and the nation.

Despite a strong effort spearheaded by Greene, co-chairman of the Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee, the 179th Airlift Wing was on the Pentagon's list announced this month, putting 1,000 local jobs in peril.

Now Greene is leading a rally called "Save Our 179th Day" at 5:30 p.m. June 22 on the downtown square. He hopes to attract 10,000 people as well as national media coverage.

And he wants everyone in the area to get involved, encouraging community residents to make signs for their cars, homes and businesses. He promises speakers, bands and cheerleaders for next month's event.

Send us your thoughts

E-mail
chunnell@
mncogannett.com

Mail
Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 25
Mansfield, OH 44901

Fax
(419) 521-7415

And for good reason.

The 179th is more than just a military unit to this community. It's more than just 1,000 full and part-time jobs. It's more than $70 million annually to the local economy.

It is an integral part of the fabric of this community.

The unit's military growth and success during the past 57 years has been mirrored by its networking and immersion with the north central Ohio communities it represents.

The fight to keep it is important. Rep. Michael Oxley has joined the fight, pledging to use his political clout to bring base closure commission officials to town in hopes of getting the 179th off the list.

We hope others in the community see the need for the base to remain open and join the ReDEC/BRAC Steering Committee in making noise. Losing the 179th Airlift Wing would be a huge blow to our city and our region.

We won't go down without a fight.

again, our citizens have found a way to both honor our veterans and finance one of our Mansfield memorials to show proper respect to our heros.

Commemorative bricks available for veterans

MANSFIELD — The Korean War Veterans Association plans to install more commemorative bricks at the Korean War Memorial in Mansfield's Central Park in June.

About 300 bricks have been placed and dedicated by families and friends of veterans who served in all of America's wars or in peacetime.

Association member Bill Woodrow said each brick is inscribed with the words "Duty, Honor, Country." All are embedded in the walkway in front of the memorial.

There are two kinds of bricks; 4-by-8-inch bricks on which three lines of 13 characters each may be inscribed for $50, and 8-by-8-inch bricks on which five lines of 13 characters each may be inscribed for $100.

Applications for commemorative bricks or gift certificates can be obtained by calling Frank J. Russo at (419) 756-1468. The deadline is June 1.

The veterans plan to install the next set of bricks June 25.

Bellville crowd rallies to save 179th

By Mark Caudill
News Journal

BELLVILLE — Maj. Steve McLaughlin joined the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard when he was a senior in high school.

The 37-year-old Shelby man is focused on keeping it open.

"I'm not thinking about closure right now," McLaughlin said. "I'm thinking about what pressure we can put on the politicians to save this base."

The 179th is on the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission list of facilities recommended to be shut down to reduce overall military expenses. McLaughlin, an intelligence officer, and hundreds of other people turned out Saturday afternoon at the bandstand on Main Street for a rally to save the 179th. AmVets Post 43 hosted the event.

Jolie McCue organized Saturday's rally.

"My husband works out there full-time," she said. "I think, from my heart, they're closing it for the wrong reasons."

The rally included a popcorn stand manned by Boy Scouts, face-painting, a lemonade stand and music from the Clear Fork High School marching band. "We love the 179th" buttons were the fashion accessory of the day, and form letters to be signed and mailed to designated legislators were circulated throughout the throng.

U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley, R-Findlay, doesn't need convincing. He will speak at a June 27 BRAC hearing in Buffalo, N.Y.

"We have a tremendous story to tell," Oxley said. "I feel comfortable going to Buffalo and presenting our case. We have the facts."

Oxley seemed confident the 179th ultimately would be taken off the closure list.

"The message we are sending loud and clear from Bellville is, 'Keep your hands off our C-130s. They're doing their jobs, and the people are doing their jobs,'" he said.

Mansfield Mayor Lydia Reid addressed members of the 179th.

"You are an integral part of this community," she said. "We don't know what in the world we would do without you. That's why we are fighting so hard."

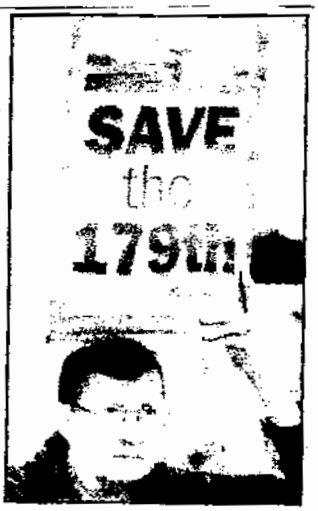
Reid encouraged everyone to attend Wednesday's rally in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

"This is just a prelude to our big rally in Mansfield," she said. "We will see you at 5:30 Wednesday in downtown, sunny Mansfield."

McCue will be there.

"I hope they keep having rallies," she said. "Right now, this is all the public can do."

mcaudill@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7219



Dan O'Hara attended Saturday's "Save the 179th" rally with poster in hand. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

All of us really do care about the 179th Air Wing, as well as other Reserve and Guard Units.

Rallying 'round the 179th

Jackie Beilstein passes out balloons at Saturday's "Save the 179th" rally in Bellville. The rally was a prelude to the larger event planned to start at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday in the square in downtown Mansfield. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Big rally for 179th planned for next month

By Mark Caudill
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Mike Greene wants the community to unite behind the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

GREENE

"Let our voices be heard all the way to Washington," said Greene, co-chairman of the Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee that worked for more than a year to keep the base off the recommended

See RALLY, back page

About the 179th

- **What:** 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard
- **Based:** Mansfield Lahm Airport
- **Airmen:** Roughly 1,000 full- and part-time airmen. The 179th is the seventh-largest employer in north central Ohio.
- **Awards:** The 179th has received many awards, decorations and recognitions, including the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. Recently, the 179th received the Alan P. Tappan Memorial Trophy, which designates the outstanding Air National Guard unit in Ohio; and the Rusty Metcalf Award, which acknowledges the unit as one of the best in the entire Air Force.

Rally

From page 1A

closure list.

Despite the efforts, the 179th Airlift Wing was on the Pentagon's list announced this month, putting 1,000 local jobs in peril.

Greene is spearheading a rally called "Save Our 179th Day" at 5:30 p.m. June 22 on the downtown square. He hopes to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

"This isn't going to be just our group preaching to the choir. I really want to make this a huge, huge event," Greene said. "I want them to understand that this is serious business."

Greene encourages community residents to make signs for their cars, homes and businesses. He promises speakers, bands and cheerleaders for next month's event.

Greene said if the rally is as big as planned, he hopes BRAC members, who are scheduled to be in Cleveland on June 23, will visit Mansfield. This week, BRAC members will begin visiting bases slated for closure.

The 179th Airlift Wing, which has 230 full-time positions, was not on the list for a visit.

"If you had less than 300 full-timers, you would not get a visit," Greene said.

But local leaders aren't waiting for June 22 to do something. They will meet at 1 p.m. today at Gorman-Rupp's north plant with an All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs. Representatives from other affected communities, including Cleveland and Springfield, will be at the meeting.

"The idea was, 'What could we do to help each other?' " Greene said.

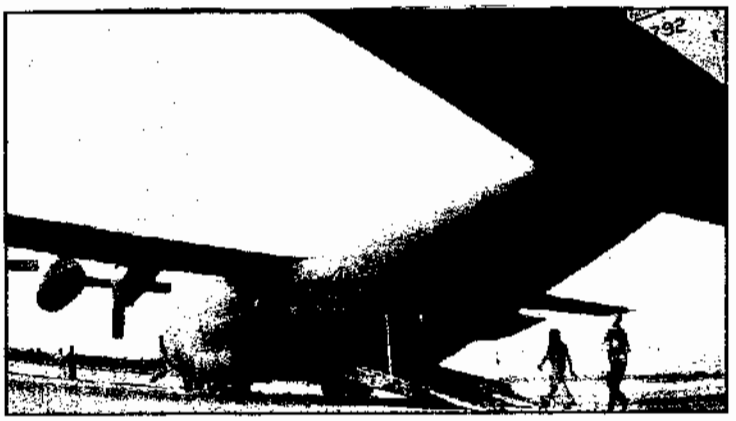
Greene fears the Air Force wants the 179th Airlift Wing's C-130s.

"If they're going to take our planes away, we would prefer that the Army not come in and maybe prevent civilian aviation possibilities," he said.

But that's only a fallback plan.

"Our main priority is getting us off the list," Greene said.

mcaudill@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7219



Guests head inside a C-130 for a tour April 19, 2004, during the Mansfield-Richland County Chamber of Commerce after-hours event at the 179th Airlift Wing. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Rep. Oxley hopes t sway commission's decision about 179t

By Greg Wright
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — Rep. Michael Oxley said Monday he would urge base closure commission officials come to Mansfield so he and local officials can persuade them to keep the 179th Airlift Wing open.

The 179th Airlift Wing was one of 13 facilities in Ohio the Pentagon put on its recommended Base Realignment and Closure list May 13. But the commission's nine-member, independent panel must review the Pentagon picks and could remove some from the list.

"I never give up," Oxley said.

OXLEY

Gov. Bob Taft sent a letter to commission chairman Anthony Principi on May 17 asking commissioners to come to Mansfield, as well bases in Springfield a Cleveland.

The Pentagon propos moving eight C-13(cargo planes from t 179th to airfields in Alat ma and Arkansas. This r flects the Pentagon's mo

See OXLEY, back page

Oxley

From page 1A

to consolidate military bases and reserve units.

Oxley met Monday in Columbus with Army National Guard Maj. Gen. Gregory Wayt, Ohio's strategy to keep the 179th open.

The commission will visit major bases on the proposed closure and realignment list. The commission also announced 16 regional hearings in California, Texas and other states to get community input on the Pentagon recommendations.

Ohio is not on the regional meeting list. Oxley said he and a meeting in the Buckeye State.

Oxley said he also could use his clout to try to persuade commissioners to come to the 179th. He said he knows about half of the commissioners, including former Utah Republican Rep. James Hansen, former Nevada Democratic Rep. James Bilbray and former White House Chief

Budget item for 179th show of commitment

House bill includes funds for base scheduled to close

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — The U.S. House of Representatives passed a spending bill Thursday that includes $1.3 million for a fire station project at Mansfield Lahm Airport.

What that budget item means as far as the future of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at the airport remains unclear.

"Unless we manage to get off the (Base Realignment and Closure) list, it's kind of a moot point," said Mike Greene, who is leading local efforts to keep the 179th in Mansfield. "As of right now, the plan is to send that firefighting unit to Toledo."

The 179th Airlift Wing base is on the Pentagon's list of bases recommended for closing.

But U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley (R-Findlay), who asked for the fire station funding, said it shows that the fight to preserve the 179th is not over.

"By this, we are showing our commitment to keeping our base in Mansfield one of

See BRAC, back page

Details

The 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, is one of 13 facilities in Ohio the Pentagon put on its recommended Base Realignment and Closure list May 13.

About 1,000 full- and part-time airmen are assigned to the 179th, which is the seventh-largest employer in north central Ohio.

The Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee is leading the fight to remove the 179th from the recommended closure list before a decision is made this year.

A "Save Our 179th Day" rally is set for June 22 at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

News Journal staff report

Groups fight to keep 179th in Mansfield

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — It's not over yet.

No one is giving up on keeping the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at Lahm Airport.

That was the message from Ohio Adjutant Gen. Greg Wayt after a Tuesday meeting of the REDeC/BRAC steering committee and the All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs.

"The 179th is on a list recommended for closure," Wayt said. "But in the two previous rounds, about 30 percent of the bases on the recommended list were able to change the commission's mind."

Mansfield learned this month the 179th is on the list compiled as part of the Base Realignment and Closure process, which could mean the loss of 1,000 local jobs.

Mike Greene, who has led the local effort to keep the 179th open, said there is plenty area residents can do to help change the BRAC commission's mind.

"Write letters," he said. "It sounds trite. But that's one thing we can all do. Write to your senator. Write to your representative. Write to the president.

"Our goal is to get off the list. It's happened before. Springfield was on the last two lists and managed to get off."

Greene hopes a huge public show of suppo helps sway some minds.

"Show up at our ral June 22," he said. "We like to get between 10,0 and 15,000 people togeth on the square to sho Washington what we thi of the 179th."

Greene is spearheadi plans for the 5:30 p.m. ral which will coincide with "Save Our 179th Day." I is hoping to draw sor statewide and natior news coverage to he Mansfield plead its case.'

BRAC officials have s not made public all the formation used to make cisions about which m tary bases to close.

"We're still not sure actly what criteria th used," said Da Williamson, the governo regional economic devel ment representative an member of the local BR committee. "We're waiti for that information to published so we know wi issues we need to addres

Tuesday's meet brought together repres tatives of other commu ties in Ohio affected by most-recent BRAC nouncement.

"We're trying to see w we can do to help e other," Greene said. "Ri now, I think Cleveland the most well-organi group. We're hoping to ate some synergy with t group and help one an er."

rkent@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7274

BRAC

From page 1A

the most modern in the Guard system," Oxley said. "This would raise our investment in the 179th Airlift Wing unit to more than $20 million over the last eight years."

Greene said any effort in support of the 179th can only help efforts to save the Guard base.

"I still think the best thing we can do is to show community support for the base," Greene said. "That's why I think that rally is so important. We want as many people on the square June 22 as possible to show Washington what the 179th means to all of us."

Greene said Ret. Brig. Gen. Steve Koper, president of the National Guard Association of the United States, has committed to attend the rally.

"We've invited the governor and, hopefully, we'll have some other supporters here from Washington and Columbus," Greene said.

In the meantime, efforts are ongoing to entice members of the BRAC commission to visit Mansfield. Because the 179th has only about 250 full-time not mandatory.

Oxley released a letter he sent to Commission Chairman Anthony Principi in which he wrote, "I believe you will find the 179th represents a compelling case due to the active role it plays in homeland defense and the global war on terror."

In a letter to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Oxley urged the Pentagon to release "installation-specific data" used to make the closing list.

Greene has said the information is important so 179th supporters can better make a case to remain open.

Economic Development Corp.), which has diligently prepared for the BRAC process for more than a year, is now preparing its presentation to the commission in an effort to reverse (the closing)," Oxley wrote.

"Without access to this important data, REDeC cannot properly make its case that this guard unit, which has seen 35 deployments in support of our national defense in just the last four years, should remain open and operational."

rkent@nncogannett.com

Air Force just wants to have the C-130s

Six former Ohio Air National Guard generals visit area to share history

By Ron Simon
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Retired Brig. General Fred Larson calls the possible closure of his old unit, the 179th Airlift Wing, "a grab for the iron."

The "iron" being the unit's fairly well kept fleet of eight C-130H cargo planes.

"The Air Force has not been a very good steward of their C-130s," said the former 179th commander. "A lot of them have aged and a lot are grounded. So there are squadron holes. So this is a grab. It doesn't matter what a unit like the 179th has done or the skills and military value it has. All the Air Force wants is the iron."

Larson was one of six former Ohio Air National Guard generals, all with ties to the 179th, in Mansfield on Thursday. All but one were pilots with the 179th and two were commanders.

They were brought together by Master Sgt. Rod Togliatti, the 179th's historian, for a day of history at the base at Lahm Airport.

Togliatti said the men represent 190 years of combined service, 45,000 hours of flying time and a large piece of memory.

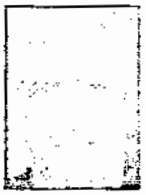
"How many times do you get six generals together to talk about history?" he asked.

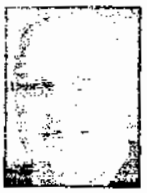
Afterward, the generals stopped at the Mansfield Museum on Park Avenue West to meet the public.

Some, like retired Brig. Gen. Myron Ashcraft, go back to the days when the unit was a jet fighter squadron. Ashcraft, who now flies for United Airlines, made the switch from fighter cockpits to the lumbering C-130s. It was the right training for those commercial planes he flies today, he said.

Other generals included Major Gen. Francis Hazard, Brig. Gen. Ray Weber and Brig. Gen. Richard Green, who commanded the unit until his recent promotion

LARSON


ASHCRAFT


HAZARD

WEBER

GREEN

LATTIMORE

and later retirement.

Brig. Gen. Vergel Lattimore was the 179th chaplain and the Air National Guard Assistant to the Air Force Chief of Chaplains, and is still active.

"I travel all over the country. I'm the chaplain's chaplain," he said.

Green, like Larson, doesn't care to see his old unit broken up.

"This is a tough blow," he said of the closure threat. "The Air Force simply wants our new planes. No matter what the unit has done, the planes are all they want."

Ashcraft agreed.

"They are stealing our airplanes. That's wrong, ethically and morally. It's a shame," he said.

Larson said a major study taken under his command in the early 1990s proved the unit could expand to double its size at Mansfield Lahm Airport. He said arguments that there is no room to expand are simply wrong.

"I think the 179th is not set for closure. We're going to fight this tooth and nail," he said.

rsimon@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7230

Some Guard bases may lose planes

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — What happens when you take away all the airplanes from an Air National Guard facility?

It's a question being asked at more than a dozen bases ever since the Pentagon announced that it wants the Air Force to consolidate its planes at fewer locations.

Under a military restructuring plan announced Friday, the Pentagon proposed shifting hundreds of planes and thousands of jobs away from Air National Guard bases.

For example:

- Reno-Tahoe International Airport Air Guard Station in Nevada would lose its eight C-130H planes.
- Bradley International Airport Air Guard Station in Connecticut would see all of its A-10s fly away.
- Nashville International Air Guard Station in Tennessee would lose its C-130H aircraft.

"How can you be an airlift wing without any airlift?" asked April Conway, a spokeswoman for the Nevada Air National Guard.

The recommendations now go to a president-appointed commission that will spend the summer holding hearings before sending its recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 8.

Compared with four previous Base Realignment and Closure rounds that began in 1988, National Guard and Reserve bases would be hit hard this time. The Pentagon proposes consolidating about 387 Reserve and National Guard installations into about 125, many to be located at or near active-duty bases.

Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the base closing commission Monday that the Air Force wants more planes in fewer units to move quickly fulfill missions.

"What they have right now are pockets of small numbers of aircraft that are at various locations," Myers said. "And it makes it unwieldy when you try to access them for missions, particularly the kind of missions we're in today in Iraq and Afghanistan and for that matter, around the world."

a lot of citizens are certain in their own minds that the Air Force wants our newer, better C-130. That this is a legal case of Air Piracy. The C-130-H's of the 179th have more up-dated equipment, as well as being much better maintained. Where in this article, General Richard Myers, says it more difficult to deploy planes in smaller groups. That is a mis-represental of the truth. In this day of radio, telephones and computers, not to mention signed letters of orders, fax etc. Any and all orders can be transmitted in a matter of seconds. The Air Force is being very heavy-handed in "robbing" the Air Guard units of their C-130-H's. Robbing is how the peoples of these units feel, not too mention our citizens.

Pentagon: 179th too crowded

Lack of expansion room among reasons for recommended closing

By Greg Wright
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — About 1,000 full and part-time military jobs in Mansfield are in danger primarily because the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield has less room to grow than its rivals in Toledo, Arkansas and Alabama, according to Pentagon documents.

■ TV show explains BRAC process, page 6A.

One of several major criteria the Pentagon considered while determining which military bases to close or realign is whether the facility can accommodate growth. The base also must fit into the Pentagon's future defense strategy.

The Pentagon proposed disbanding the local Ohio Air National Guard last month and moving its eight C-130H transport planes to

See 179th, page 6A

179th

From page 1A

Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base in Alabama and the 314th Airlift Wing at Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas.

Other support services now at Mansfield would go to the Louisville International Airport Air Guard Station in Kentucky and the Toledo Express Airport Air Guard Station.

However, local officials said Monday the ratings are wrong, since city officials offered the Pentagon access to 168 additional acres when military officials indicated expansion might be considered a factor. The 179th Airlift Wing currently is located on 227 acres.

Rep. Michael Oxley, R-Findlay, and local officials have said they would fight to keep transport planes at the 179th at Mansfield Lahm Airport. Gov. Bob Taft announced Monday he will give the Richland Economic Development Corp. $50,000 to promote the 179th.

But it's unlikely the independent Base Realignment and Closure commission would overturn the Pentagon's decision because of the facility's size, a military expert said.

"It's too small to worry about," said John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a defense analysis firm.

While some bases on the closure list could lose thousands of jobs, Pike said, the 179th has just 234 full time military and civilian workers. Still, local officials argue, the base is the seventh largest employer in north central Ohio, including around 650 part-time jobs held by "traditional" National Guard members.

The Pentagon claimed in environmental documents released this weekend the 179th has no room for growth. Little Rock can develop another 1,783 acres; Maxwell an additional 264 acres and Toledo has 45 acres, the Pentagon said. Only Louisville had zero acreage available, the Pentagon said.

Another factor in the Defense Department's base closing considerations was military value. Mansfield ranked lower in military value and capacity than other airlift bases, according to the Pentagon.

The top ranked airlift base is Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. Mansfield ranked 119th out of 154 airlift bases behind Little Rock in 17th place; Maxwell, 21st; Louisville, 79th; and Toledo, 100th.

Local officials contend the 179th is still busy in the war on terrorism with its 35 deployments since Sept. 11, 2001. The facility is modern and there is room to house up to a dozen C-130H planes at the base, said retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Fred Larson, co-chair of the group fighting to save the 179th.

The Pentagon argues it has too many small Air National Guard units; its goal is to merge many with active-duty facilities, said Loren Thompson, a military expert at the Lexington Institute.

But the base closure panel, which is reviewing the Pentagon recommendations, could disagree and decide to keep national guard units such as the 179th open, Thompson said.

The nine-member commission must come up with a final closure list by Sept. 8.

The information that Lahm Field can't expand is absolutely in error. Lahm Field and 179th base there can be expanded greatly any time that becomes necessary. It already has one of the longest runways in the US and can accomodate the largest planes in the world. Lahm Field is an emergency landing strip, if necessary, for the space shuttle. Why spend Millions on increasing the length of a runway some place else, when Lahm Field has everything necessary.

Bad data led to decision, officials say

By Linda Martz
News Journal

MANSFIELD — The Pentagon used flawed data and left major questions unanswered in recommending the 179th Airlift Wing be closed, former base officials say.

Local officials plan to correct those issues in hope of keeping the Ohio Air National Guard unit and its 1,000 full- and part-time jobs in Mansfield, where it's been for more than 50 years.

Retired Brig. Gen. Myron Ashcraft, now a

See DATA, page 6A

Data

From page 1A

United Airlines pilot, said the thing that "jumped right out" when he looked at criteria released Monday is the Pentagon inaccurately said Mansfield Lahm Airport doesn't have enough land available to expand the wing's fleet from eight to 16 C-130H transport planes.

The military considers larger bases more efficient, the Lexington resident said.

Once the Pentagon documents said additional land was not available — an incorrect claim — other questions, such as what it would cost to expand, were left unanswered, he said.

"Once they say that we don't have the land, everything else is out the window," Ashcraft said. "They don't even evaluate how much it would cost to have a full squadron.

"That's the kind of stuff we have to fight it on — is the data," he said Monday night. "I don't see any other shortfall in the criteria that we would fail to meet."

Local officials said Monday they're frustrated by Pentagon documents showing the military meted out low scores to Lahm in areas such as room to expand, military value and capacity. The 179th, which has had 35 deployments since Sept. 11, 2001, generates about $70 million annually to the local economy.

Mayor Lydia Reid said local officials offered the Pentagon 168 additional acres — the city-owned Bradley and Kissell farms north of the airport — when military officials indicated expansion opportunities could be considered. The 179th Airlift Wing now takes up 227 acres.

"Certainly, if they need space to build on, they can build a hell of a lot on 168 acres," the mayor said Monday. "We have said 'whatever it takes, we'll do it.' We're willing to do whatever they want."

Reid said Lahm has a lot more going for it than acknowledged by the Pentagon rankings. "We've got the second longest runway in the state. Also, we've got an airport that is underutilized" — meaning military planes don't need to compete with a lot of other air traffic, she said.

"Some of the places that weren't on that list (to be closed) do not have the capability we do," Reid said.

Mike Greene, co-chairman of the Richland County Economic Development Corp./BRAC Steering Committee, which worked for more than a year to avoid a recommendation that the base be closed, said the Pentagon claims Mansfield doesn't have enough space for a large fleet.

But the master plan outlined in the early 1990s by former base commander Brig. Gen. Fred Larson anticipated constructing more ramps to store planes, Greene said.

"It's easily accomplished simply by putting down more pads," at much less cost than the $33 million the Department of Defense said it would save by closing down Mansfield's base, Greene said.

Ashcraft said the Air Force appears to want to shut down Guard and Reserve units so it can acquire their equipment. "They have a very old, tired, beat up fleet. The way to get airplanes without buying them is just to steal them from the Guard and Reserve," he said.

Larson said, "It doesn't matter to them that they gain no military value (to the country overall) from our airplanes," Larson said. "They're just moving planes from one location to another, at a cost of $33 million."

Local officials are still trying to arrange for a visit to Mansfield by a member of the BRAC commission before a decision is made — but may get only a visit from a staff member, Larson said.

Ohio has been allotted two hours at an upcoming regional base closure hearing in Buffalo — and Mansfield must share that time with Cleveland and Springfield, Larson said. "We're asking for half an hour, but we may get 15 minutes."

lmartz@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7229

With so much at stake for so many people, in so many parts of the United States, how could BRAC not have up-to-date information? How could they take their duty to the people of this country so lightly? If they failed to have the correct facts about the 179th and Lahm Field, how many errors are they making about other bases? They don't go to these military facilities, and God Forbid they should consult with anyone whose future is mightly affected by their decisions.

Editorial

Closing 179th would be a mistake

The Issue:
Today's special section devoted to the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

Our Opinion:
The message is simple: Save the 179th.

You should notice a little something extra in the News Journal today.

It's a four-page section aimed at sending a loud and clear message to the Base Realignment and Closure commission and lawmakers in Washington.

North central Ohio believes the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard should remain open and in operation at Lahm Airport in Mansfield.

The first page is a color poster with a simple message. "Save the 179th" is in huge letters, visible from a distance.

We urge you to put this poster in the window of your home, business or other locale that will be seen by the public. We want you to save it and bring it to the community-wide rally June 22. We then want you to mail it to the BRAC commission or lawmakers, and urge them to stop the planned closure of this vital military unit.

The second page is a message from retired Brig. Gen. Richard Green, a former commander of the 179th, who lays out a clear argument why the Pentagon wants the 179th closed and why it should remain open.

Send us your thoughts

E-mail
chunnell@
nncogannett.com

Mail
Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 25
Mansfield, OH 44901

Fax
(419) 521-7415

The third and fourth pages are messages from local businesses and residents in support of the unit, which has been a part of north central Ohio for more than 50 years.

Make no mistake. Closing the 179th is a mistake. The Pentagon simply wants the unit's eight C-130H aircraft, which would bolster the aging Active Duty and Reserve fleet for the Air Force.

But it would not be good public relations to make public that need for the planes. Instead, the Pentagon cited in its recommendation that there is no room for expansion at the local unit, a claim not supported by the facts. The City of Mansfield has offered another 168 acres for potential base expansion.

We urge the BRAC commission to look deeply into the Pentagon's flawed logic and look instead at the real reason for its closure recommendation — eight aircraft that Congress purchased explicitly for use by the Ohio Air National Guard.

We urge local residents to join the fight by posting today's posters all over the community. Bring them to the public rally. And then mail them to the people who will help keep the 179th open.

It's not to late. This fight has really just begun. We urge you to join in today.

This editorial states that there is plenty of room for expansion for the 179th Air Wing and Lahm Field in general.

Editorial

Pentagon has slapped part-time soldiers

The Issue:
Reserve and National Guard bases were hit hard in the latest round of BRAC Commission recommendations.

Our opinion:
This is a funny way to thank the soldiers who have put so much on the line in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Pentagon has a unique way of thanking the Reserve and National Guard forces for their great contributions during the war on terror.

The thanks is a cold slap in the face with Pentagon reality.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, want to shuffle, cut and otherwise consolidate 387 National Guard and Reserve installations into about 125.

This convoluted thinking is again proof that active duty military leaders a.) don't understand the Guard and Reserve lifestyle or appreciate the needs of part-time soldiers, sailors and airmen; and/or b.) don't care about the future of either segment of the nation's military.

Their plan would include closing the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard in Mansfield, one of the best flying units in the country today.

Myers said these Guard and Reserve moves are being made to enhance capability, cut costs and integrate the part-time forces more closely with active-duty units.

We would argue this plan would accomplish few of the goals outlined above, save for cutting costs.

Myers admitted "there will be some inconvenience" for people serving in the Guard and Reserve if the Pentagon's recommendations to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission are followed.

Some inconvenience? That's like saying Noah needed to build a bit of a boat when the rains came. The understatement is that severe.

How about the fact it will add hundreds or even thousands of miles, and the accompanying expenses for members to meet monthly military obligations? How about the fact it will force Guard or Reserve troops, some of whom may be nearly qualified for retirement, out of the service who simply cannot make long-range trips once a month?

The economic effect on the communities like Mansfield scheduled to lose these units is one thing. But the effect on the individual who has devoted much of his or her life in service to the country is even worse. Lahm Airport will survive and perhaps even flourish with the influx of private business should the 179th close its doors.

But the 1,000 full and part-time airmen who made up the unit, hundreds of which have served around the nation and the world since Sept. 11, 2001, will never be the same. The 179th, for example, has gone on 35 deployments in the last four years.

At a time when recruiting for the National Guard is down 24 percent from last year, it seems sheer folly to slap the face of the people who make the Guard and Reserve the success story the part-time military is today.

Without the Guard and Reserve, the Bush administration could not have fought its war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, about 40 percent of the 138,000 troops in Iraq are Guard and Reserve forces. The Pentagon's reward is to make their career in the military even tougher to maintain.

We urge the members of the BRAC Commission to take a hard look at what the Pentagon has in mind for the Guard and Reserve. We think when they do they will see the security of this nation will be severely weakened with Rumsfeld's plans for the nation's citizen soldiers.

This editorial will give you more information about the 179th, and the opinions of many are the same.

Bush defends base closings, says money being wasted

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP) — Speaking out for the first time in favor of controversial base closings, President Bush said Friday the nation is wasting billions of dollars on unnecessary military facilities and needs the money for the war on terrorism.

Bush, who faces opposition from many states to shutting down bases, tried to be reassuring. He said the bases would be chosen fairly and the government would do all it could

See BUSH, back page

Bush

From page 1A

to help affected communities recover.

But he made clear that the process — however painful — could not be avoided.

In a speech to graduates of the Naval Academy, he said the closings and realignments "will result in a military that is more efficient and better prepared so you can better protect the American people against the dangers of this new century."

"In this war, there is only one option and that is victory," he said, to cheers from midshipmen, relatives and faculty at the academy on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay.

When Bush last spoke at a Naval Academy commencement, it was four months before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and his focus was his administration's effort to reshape the military into a faster, lighter and more flexible — but not larger — fighting force.

Since the attacks, and amid a global anti-terror campaign and wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, a top-to-bottom military transformation is even more necessary, Bush said.

Keys to the success are new technology, repositioning of global forces, new weapons and realigned bases at home, he said.

Bush said he understands the fears in cities where bases have been marked for changes or closure. The first round of closings in a decade has members of Congress and local officials working hard to protect the 33 major bases slated for closure and the 29 others proposed for downsizing.

"I know firsthand how hard base closings can be on local communities," said the former Texas governor who saw facilities shut down in his state.

Members of the congressionally chartered Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) will visit bases and hold hearings on the Pentagon proposal. The plan aims to save $48.8 billion over 20 years by eliminating redundant and inefficient facilitates and promoting cooperation among the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps.

The panel will decide on changes to the Pentagon plan and give a list to Bush and Congress this fall for approval or rejection.

Commission chairman Anthony Principi on Friday joined a growing chorus of lawmakers demanding that the Defense Department quickly release the thousands of pages of data backing up each of its recommendations.

Briefly

More work for 179th

MANSFIELD — Twenty-nine members of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard will leave Monday in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, the U.S. military initiative in Afghanistan.

Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the 179th has flown more than 2,600 sorties, moved 35,000 passengers and transported 5,600 cargo tons of material in combat theaters, according to a unit news release.

The airlift wing, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, was recommended for closure this month by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission. An area campaign is under way to remove the 179th from the closure list before a final decision is made later this year.

No, Mr. Bush, we are not wasting money on our personell at our Military facilities or our personell. Maybe other places are, Ohio is not. We have had terrible losses. My grandson has served a tour of duty in Bosnia, and Iraq in one of the most dangerous missions in Iraq. Transportation of fuel. Now BRAC wants to do whatever with the 706th Transportation Company.

AmVets Post 43 joins fight for 179th

Rally planned for June 18 in Bellville

By David Benson
News Journal

BELLVILLE — A second major rally to keep the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard in Mansfield is in the works.

AmVets Post 43 in Bellville will host a Rally to Save the 179th Airlift Wing on June 18 at 3 p.m. at the bandstand on Main Street.

The 179th, based on Mansfield Lahm Airport, is on the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission list of facilities recommended to be shut down to reduce overall military expenses.

A separate Save the 179th Day rally is set for June 22 at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage for that event.

Joli McCue is organizing the Bellville rally.

"When Post 43 called me and asked me if I would do it, I said I would be glad to. Somebody's got to do something," said McCue, the wife of a 179th member.

"If we get a big turnout it will show how much community support the 179th has. Our legislators will see we're not going to take this closing lying down," she said.

The other purpose of the rally is to provide information to those who have questions about the BRAC process and what individuals can do to try to prevent the closure, McCue said.

"So far, the support for the base and for this rally has just poured in. It's been phenomenal," she said.

Speakers at the Bellville rally will include Mayor Carolynn Studenmund, REDeC/BRAC steering committee co-chairman Brig. Gen.(r) Fred Larson, Brig. Gen.(r) Myron Ashcraft, Brig. Gen.(r) Rich Green, Richland County Commissioner Ed Olson, county Veteran Services Commission President Larry Moore and state Rep. Bill Hartnett.

In addition, form letters supporting the 179th will be available at the rally, which will need to be signed and mailed to designated legislators.

The AmVets and American Legion Color Guards and the Clear Fork High School marching band will participate. For children, there will be face painting, lemonade and popcorn stands and balloons.

Food and music will be featured after the rally at the AmVets Ron Boyce Hall located north of the bandstand on Main Street. Music will be provided by AmVets' Steve Stephenson, Dave King, & Westwind and by the Jo Kidd Outfit, comprised of 179th members.

For additional information, call McCue at (419) 886-4283. To donate food or supplies, contact the AmVets at (419) 886-2658.

dbenson@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7272

Tech Sgt. Ken Schonauer of Mansfield works on the tail section of a C-130 at Lahm Airport earlier this month. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal)*

Family and friends placed flags Sunday to honor veterans, soldiers and emergency personnel at a Healing Field ceremony in Fredericktown. The field will stand through Wednesday. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal photos)*

A place to honor many sacrifices

By Jennifer Kowalewski
News Journal

FREDERICKTOWN — Charles Blanchette served his country in World War I, World War II and the Korean War.

His granddaughter, Denise Needles, honored his memory by flying a flag Sunday in the Healing Fields at Kokosing Construction Co. The Exchange Club of Mount Vernon and Knox County sponsored the event to honor veterans, current soldiers and emergency personnel.

"It's pretty neat," the Mount Vernon woman said after buying a flag. "I saw all the flags and thought he has to have a flag."

Healing Fields began in Sandy, Utah, in 2002, when Colonial Flag Co. owner Paul Swenson wanted to honor those who lost their lives in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Volunteer Jane Engle said Swenson flew 3,000 flags in Utah to show how many victims were killed.

While residents walked among the flags, many felt a sense of healing, and Healing Fields have sprung up across the country, Engle said.

Chairwoman Melody Brent has worked to bring the Healing Field to Fredericktown since November 2004. Residents purchased flags to fly in a 2-acre field in honor of their loved ones, Exchange Club President Diane Collier said. Residents from Richland, Morrow, Ashland, Knox and Licking counties participated.

Residents can visit the field for the next few days

See FLAGS, back page

Ann Eing leans on her son, Jeff, as they look at the flag they placed to honor Ann's husband, John, a World War II Navy veteran.

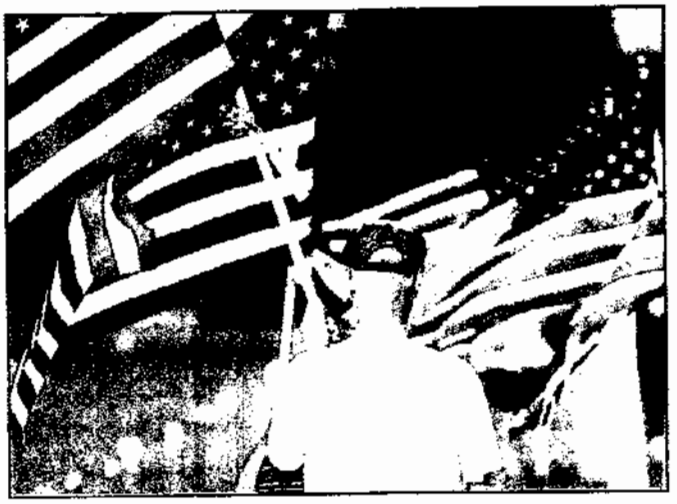
If you go

Residents can visit the Healing Field at Kokosing Construction Co. in Fredericktown through Wednesday evening. Kokosing Construction is on Ohio 13, near the Ohio 95 interchange. The flags honor and remember veterans, those serving in the military and emergency personnel. The program includes:

- **Today**, 3 p.m: Ohio Highway Patrol helicopter land; 4 p.m: The Petty Group (Knox County singers); 5 p.m: singers and speakers, including state Sen. Bill Harris, R-Mansfield.
- **Tuesday**, 4 p.m: Apple Valley Singers; 5 p.m: music and speakers including state Rep. Thom Collier, R-Mount Vernon.
- **Wednesday**, 4 p.m: Color Guard from Knox County Veterans; 4:30 p.m: speeches and closing remarks.

News Journal staff report

HEALING FIELD



A man walks among the memorial flags in the Healing Field at Fredericktown on Sunday. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal)*

Flags

From page 1A

to walk among the flags, Collier said.

"It's an experience you may never be a part of again," she said, as names were called over a loudspeaker to indicate whose turn it was to place a flag. "It's amazing to see all the red, white and blue. You can't imagine when the breeze blows, hearing 1,000 flags flapping in the breeze."

Collier, whose father-in-law stormed the beaches of Normandy, said she has participated in Healing Fields in Dallas and Findlay.

Volunteer Jim Tharp, a U.S. Navy veteran, said field coordinator Steve Murphy and the crew has worked since Friday to get the field ready. Poles were placed in the ground to support the flags, spaced 10 feet apart.

The crew installed lights so people could visit the field at night.

Denise Hess of Mount Vernon plans to visit again before it closes Wednesday. The Mount Vernon woman took her granddaughter, Shayla Ingram, 2, to the field.

"I just think it's going to be a unique experience," she said, waiting for her father's name to be called. "It's going to be emotional."

The Healing Field means more to her because her nephew, Travis Hess, is serving in Iraq with the Ohio National Guard 211th Maintenance Company of Newark.

"It's an experience you may never be part of again. It's amazing to see all the red, white and blue."

Diane Collier
Exchange Club president

U.S. Army Korean War veteran David A. Munk flew a flag in honor of his son, Rick L. Munk, a 23-year-old veteran of the Ohio Highway Patrol.

"It's great," David Munk said, watching the flags go up. "It's the best thing to happen to this little community. If it weren't for them, we wouldn't be here."

As residents drove into the field, a flag that had flown in Iraq hung between two fire engines to greet them. Bobby and Lisa Folden took their 9-month-old girl, Mackenzie, under the flags to honor veterans Bobby knows at the Station Break Senior Citizen Center in Mount Vernon.

Many of the clients at the center helped with the Healing Field by making ribbons with the names of those honored.

"You really respect what they did for the country," Bobby Folden said.

jkowalewsk@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7232

Concert to raise money for family of Galion soldier killed in Iraq

By Jennifer Kowalewski
News Journal

GALION — The Galion Community Band will remember a hero.

A combined band and choral concert to benefit the Lee Anne Ivy Fund is scheduled Sunday at 7 p.m. at Galion High School. Residents are asked to donate to assist the family of Marine Staff Sgt. Kendall Ivy II, 28, the Galion native killed in action in Iraq earlier this month.

"We hope that the community will support this effort," community band organizer Brian Treisch said. "The concert was suggested to us as a way to generate funds for the Ivy family.

"We have been able to move rapidly to put this concert together. Many of the band members were classmates, former teachers, and friends of Kendall."

The concert will feature patriotic music, combined band and choral works and pieces to honor Sgt. Ivy. Details are still being arranged.

"We are sure that 'Semper Fidelis,' 'The Stars & Stripes, Forever' and "Battle Hymn of the Republic' will be performed," Treisch said. "Rick Walker is working to complete the concert lineup and I am working to complete the band roster."

The Galion Community Band has performed since 1976, including annually at the Fourth of July concert before the fireworks display.

Any interested instrumental musician or choir member not already contacted is welcome to join the band for a rehearsal at 6 p.m. today.

"We have a solid band set at this time, but we welcome any musician," Treisch said.

According to a military report issued to his family, Ivy died May 11 in western Iraq from a severe leg wound suffered when the vehicle in which he was riding struck a roadside bomb.

Ivy, who went to Iraq in February, is the sixth member of the military from north central Ohio to die in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Ivy played football and baseball at Galion High School. He joined the Marine Corps after graduating in 1995. He is survived by his widow, Lee Anne, who lives in Camp LeJeune, N.C., and is four-months pregnant, two sons and a daughter.

The Lee Anne Ivy Fund has been established at First Federal Bank to assist the family.

jkowalewski@mncogannett.com
(419) 521-7232

If you go

What: Galion Community Band concert.
Where: Galion High School auditorium.
When: 7 p.m. Sunday.
Why: To benefit the family of Kendall Ivy, a soldier killed while serving his country in Iraq.
For information, call Brian Treisch at (419) 462-2209.

News Journal

Just one of our many lost service men in Iraq. Also, what is being done to aid and support his widow and family.

Lt. Col. William Schock and Col. Bill Roberts present a "My Boss Is a Patriot" certificate to Crestview Middle School Principal John McNeely at a school assembly Wednesday. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Patriotic Crestview principal honored

By Lou Whitmire
News Journal

OLIVESBURG — John McNeely, principal of Crestview Middle School, got quite a surprise Wednesday afternoon.

He received a "My Boss is a Patriot" certificate of appreciation from the Office of the Secretary of Defense at a school assembly.

McNeely is a strong supporter of the Ohio National Guard and Army Reserve. He was nominated for the honor by teacher Linda Roney, a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve.

Roney's military boss, 10th Battalion commander Lt. Col. William Schock, and Schock's boss, 6th Brigade commander Col. Bill Roberts, traveled from the 100th Division at Louisville, Ky., to present the award.

McNeely, surprised and emotional as he stood at the podium, said he was almost speechless.

"I'm honored to receive this award. ... You people in the military are

After the assembly, Roney said McNeely is supportive of everyone at the school who has relatives in the military.

"We're honoring him not for what he gives me, but for his patriotism," Roney said.

Fellow teacher Joyce Galloway thanked McNeely for supporting her when her son Daniel was deployed to Iraq with the Army Reserve's 1486th Transportation Co.

McNeely said he was being honored for something he ought to be doing anyway.

"When Mrs. Roney was deployed (after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks) I told Mrs. Roney your job will be here when you get back," he said.

Even when she is not deployed, Roney's job in the military requires travel and days off from her job as a seventh- and eighth-grade teacher.

She teaches a course in the Army Reserve called "combined arms exercise," and she is area coordinator for Kentucky. Her military job most recently took her out of the classroom April 29 to May 4 to participate in weapons training.

Schock said Roney couldn't do her job without employers like Crestview Schools.

"She is responsible for all instructors in Kentucky who teach the course," he said.

Roney trains people in eight states — Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Schock, 57, who leaves in June for Iraq to assist the Iraqi people with veterans affairs, said the award presentation was his first and called it a proud moment. He is a human resources director for the regional veteran's affairs office in Louisville.

Roberts, an attorney in Kentucky, lauded McNeely for his willingness to share Roney with her other job.

"We as Army Reserve soldiers depend on two groups of people — our families and employers. We're here to recognize someone who is a patriot to us," Roberts said.

McNeely said his uncle John was drafted into World War II and landed in the Normandy invasion. McNeely's father, Bryon McNeely, served in World War II and received a Purple Heart, a Bronze Star and other honors — and survived being shot twice in the back of the head.

The principal said the award ranked with the birth of his daughter. "It's a moment I will remember," he said.

Roney said she first met her principal on the telephone.

"He made it clear he was very patriotic and me being in the Reserve would not be a detriment," she recalled.

"I have a wonderful lady who is my sub. I just have the best of all worlds."

Sarah Jenkins, 12, a sixth-grader, applauded her principal.

"He runs the school well," she said.

Classmate Connor Plemens, 12, said McNeely is nice.

"He is very deserving of this," he added.

lwhitmire@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7223

Another Civilian-Military person, who is a wonderful asset to our Community. The 179th Also has a Choir that sings at special local events.

Remembering the soldiers

Above, Gary Johnson, a member of the Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing for 10 years, stands beside his father, Glenn Johnson, a World War II Army veteran, during the "America, we must not forget" service Sunday at the Berean Baptist Church on Middle Bellville Road. Glenn Johnson has another son, Randy, in the service in Uzbekistan. Glenn's wife, Phyllis, is sitting to his right.

Right, Marine Tim Crumbliss sings "O' God, Our Help in Ages Past" during the service Sunday. Backing up Crumbliss is the church choir, led by the Rev. Bryan Moak.

(Walt Butler/ News Journal photos)

The people who are in our Civilian-Military units, are not just Military personell. They are part of our lives in every way. Our fathers and mothers, Sons and daughters, our friends, whom we love. Now BRAC wants to dis-respect them.

BRAC staff member to visit 179th

But BRAC/REDeC steering committee not sure if they are even allowed to attend

Program on WMFD-TV lays out story of 179th, BRAC commission

News Journal staff report

MANSFIELD — Mike Greene and Ret. Brig. Gen. Fred Larson, the former commander of the 179th, who together are leading efforts to save the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, have taped a program that will air on WMFD-TV at 7:30 p.m. each evening through Sunday.

"It pretty much lays out the entire story of the 179th and the BRAC commission and why it is so vital that the air base remains here in Mansfield," Greene said. "I hope everyone in Mansfield will watch it and come down and support us at our rally on June 22."

A "Save Our 179th Day" rally is set that day at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract a crowd of 10,000 and national media coverage. Greene hopes a huge public show of support helps sway some minds.

Ret. Brig. Gen. Steve Koper, president of the National Guard Association of the United States, has committed to attend the rally. Greene said he expects U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley and Ohio Adjutant Gen. Greg Wayt to be on hand. He's confident that Gov. Bob Taft will also be in Mansfield that day.

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Local officials haven't been successful in arranging a visit to Mansfield by a member of the Base Realignment and Closure commission but they haven't given up efforts to argue their case.

A BRAC commission staff member — not an actual commissioner — will be in Mansfield on Tuesday to visit the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at Mansfield Lahm Airport, which last month was placed on a list of military bases to be closed by the Pentagon.

Call it a second-tier visit.

"He will meet with staff at the air base," said Mike Greene, of the Richland Economic Development Corporation, which is spearheading efforts to keep the 179th in Mansfield.

GREENE

"I don't even know if our committee will be allowed to attend. If we are, we won't be able to ask questions or present our case.

"The briefing will be 100 percent presented and produced by the 179th. It will not be open to the public. My hope is that staffer comes here with an open mind."

In the meantime the BRAC/REDeC steering committee is continuing its efforts to get the 179th off the closure list. It now has another $50,000 to work with.

The State Controlling Board released the money, promised by Gov. Bob Taft, on Wednesday.

"It certainly will help," Greene said. "It will help pay for our trip to Buffalo. It could pay for other trips. It could pay for a trip to Washington, D.C."

Greene said such a trip to Washington could be for the purpose of arguing the Mansfield case before a BRAC commission member.

"If they won't come to us, we'll go to them," he said.

Efforts have intensified in the weeks since the 179th was placed on the Pentagon's closure list. A lobbying group is still active in Washington, D.C., and the local steering committee has hired a consultant in Columbus to help draft its presentation for a regional hearing in Buffalo on June 27.

Ohio, which had three bases on the list, will get a chance to argue its case at that hearing. The state has been allotted a total of two hours. Greene hopes Mansfield gets at least 30 minutes.

"We'll attend some hearings prior to that so we can check out the format and see what some of the other arguments have been and how they've been presented," Greene said.

"I wouldn't say that's our last effort to present our case, but the style and substance of our presentation will be important."

rkent@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7274

Former 179th generals will meet the public

Six generals, former members of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, will be together for the first time Thursday for a "Meet the Generals Day" at Mansfield Memorial Museum, 34 Park Avenue West.

They will greet the public from 4 to 6 p.m.

Scheduled to participate are Francis Hazard, Ray Weber, Fred Larson, Myron Ashcraft, Rich Green and Vergel Latimore.

The 179th, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, has been recommended for closing by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission. Public rallies to have the 179th removed from the closure list are planned for June 18 in Bellville and June 22 on the square in Mansfield.

As you can see we are doing everything we can possibly do to convince the BRAC that we really want to keep all of Civilian-Military facilities and personell in place. Even to producing a TV program to inform all of our citizens about our Civilian-Military.

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

1. Mission/Military Value

- Primary Aircraft Weapons System: (8) C-130H2+ Hercules (Distinguishing Operational and Technical highlights are detailed in attachment 1.); Valued at $240,000,000.

- Major Command: Air Mobility Command (AMC), Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.

- The proud home to one the most highly trained, combat-tested, veteran, C-130 forces in the United States Air Force. Since Vietnam, we have led the way in the C-130 community in both combat hours and sorties.

- Our air crews have been decorated with over 116 Air Medals and 16 Aerial Achievement Medals since Operations Joint Guard (1996-1998, Sarajevo), and Joint Forge (1998-1999, Sarajevo); these medals recognize meritorious service and/or valor in aerial flight.

- We make significant airlift contributions to the USAF mission and have an enviable safety record. Flying an accident-free average of over 3,400 hours from FY 2003 to FY 2005 (projected), we have accumulated a total of over 134,000 safe flying hours.

- We are a vital component of the Total Force (with the ANG providing nearly 50% of the USAF's tactical airlift capability, the fight can't be fought without us) and have supported combat and humanitarian operations and exercises around the world. Some examples:

  Volant Oak (Panama); 1979 - 1999.
  Volant Partner (Germany); 1987 - 1992
  Reforger (Alaska); 1983
  Desert Shield Desert Storm; 1990 - 1991.
  Operation Restore Hope (Somalia); 1992 – 1993.
  Operation Provide Promise (Bosnia); 1993 – 1994.
  Operation Joint Endeavor (Bosnia); 1996 – 1998.
  Operation Joint Guard (Bosnia); 1998 - 1999.
  Operation Joint Forge (Bosnia); 1999 – 2002.
  Operation Southern Watch (Mid-East); 1996 – 1999.
  Operation Uphold Democracy (Haiti); 1994.
  Operation Shining Hope (Kosovo); 1999.

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

- Since 9/11, the inception of the Global War on Terror, and Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom, the 179th has been engaged like never before. Some key statistics:

2001		
	Operations Supported	Coronet Oak, Deep Freeze, Noble Eagle
	Participating units	Airlift Squadron, Medical Squadron, Logistics Support, Airlift Squadron, Aerial Port Squadron
	Days served	13,842
2002		
	Operations Supported	Southern Watch, Deep Freeze, Noble Eagle, Israeli support, Enduring Freedom, Joint Forge, Northern Watch
	Participating units	Aircraft maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Civil engineering squadron, Services
	Days served	56,912
2003		
	Operations Supported	Deep Freeze, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, Israeli Support
	Participating units	Aircraft Operations, Aircraft Maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Civil engineering squadron, Services, Intelligence
	Days served	35,971
2004		
	Operations Supported	Deep Freeze, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom
	Participating units	Aircraft Operations, Aircraft Maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Intelligence
	Days served	64,052

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

Combat Aerial Operations Totals for OEF and OIF:

	HOURS	SORTIES	PAX	CARGO TONS
OIF AL JABER	1,219.3	878	9,735	1287.2
OIF TALLIL, AL SALEM, AL UDIED	1,839.4	1,222	19,755	2,429
OEF AL SALEM, AL UDIED, CURRENT AOR	898.6	550	5490	1852.6
TOTALS	3957.3	2650	34980	5568.8

- Our Proposed $8.0 M Fire/Crash Rescue Station will accommodate **JOINT** Air National Guard/Army National Guard firefighting missions.

- In addition to the flying mission, we are home to a wide range of expeditionary combat and homeland security support units, capable of delivering many invaluable capabilities. Some examples:

Civil Engineering
- Engineering force to maintain facilities and infrastructure
- Fire Department and Power Production team

Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Supply of materiel and fuels, maintenance of the vehicle fleet, traffic management services and planning and management of the mobilization process to ensure an accurate and rapid response in the event of contingency moves or national emergency.

Aerial Port Squadron
- Coordinate missions with Base Operations and the affected work centers of the squadron
- Plan, schedule and process air cargo, passengers, and mail
- Prepare load plans, manifests and air movement reports using automated or manual tools
- Prepare/Inspect and Process Cargo for onward movement

Security Forces Squadron
- Point of entry control to the installation
- Armed response to the installation

- Presidential Aircraft support at remote locations upon request
- Support to the Governor for natural or man-made disasters

Communications Flight
- Maintenance and support to computers and crypto equipment.
- Maintenance and support to telephone switch and outside telephone plant.
- Maintenance and support to land mobile radio (LMR), Ground to Air radio (VHF/UHF), state emergency radio (HF) and tactical mobility radio.
- Visual information support

Services Flight
- Food Service, Lodging, Wartime Mortuary Affairs, Search & Recovery Operations, Morale, Welfare & Recreation, Tactical Field Exchange

Mission Support Flight
- Personnel services to the Wing and surrounding retired military community, including recruiting, retention, enlistment, retirements, Separations, Force Deployment and sustainment, ID Cards and health care Enrollment, support.

Environmental Management Office
- Programs to reduce hazardous and solid waste generation
- Increase recycling and Green Purchasing efforts
- Maintain compliance with all applicable EPA, Air Force, and Air National Guard regulations

Expeditionary Medical Support (EMEDS)
- Mobile and highly capable clinical disaster response/assessment

- Because the ANG is also the State Governors' asset (The Guard is the only military force immediately available to a governor in times of emergency, including civil unrest and natural or manmade disasters), we are uniquely positioned to support a host of Homeland Security missions. Some examples:

Expeditionary Medical Support
- Forward deployed trauma resuscitation/surgical capability including critical care
- Multi-functional team composition decreases number of medics required to deploy
    - 179MDG is only MDG in FEMA Region 5 with Surgical capabilities
    - Region Five Consists of:
        - Ohio

- Michigan
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Wisconsin
- Minnesota

Security Forces

- Conduct anti-terror assessments and provide threat information to the Governor
- Coordinate local anti-terrorism intelligence sharing with local police agencies

Readiness

- Provide trained and equipped Nuclear Biologic Chemical (NBC) Readiness Personnel

Communication Flight

- Provide critical command and control with State Emergency Management Agency via the State HF radio net. Additionally the 179th CF has direct radio contact and support agreements with local fire and law enforcement agencies, which would enable us to coordinate a Homeland Defense emergency response with the rest of the State.

2. Land, Facilities, Infrastructure, Air Space

- Mansfield's 9000-foot, Instrument Flight Rule (IFR)-equipped runway is one of the longest in Ohio (only 6 of 168 are longer.)

- No commercial carriers compete for Mansfield-Lahm's airspace.

- We enjoy exceptional mission support facilities:
  - 33 Buildings: 292,863 Sq. Ft.
  - Total Acres: 230
  - Value: $92,928,000.
  - Main Cantonment Area: 67 Acres
  - Drop Zone: 157 Acres
  - **Airport Costs**: $49,904

  - Military Construction Investments:
    1997 - Medical Training/Dining Hall: $3.1M
    1998 - Jet Fuel Storage Complex: $4.1 M
    1998 - Headquarters Building: $4.7 M
    2001 - Security Forces Operations Building: $2.7 M

- Michigan
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Wisconsin
- Minnesota

Security Forces

- Conduct anti-terror assessments and provide threat information to the Governor
- Coordinate local anti-terrorism intelligence sharing with local police agencies

Readiness

- Provide trained and equipped Nuclear Biologic Chemical (NBC) Readiness Personnel

Communication Flight

- Provide critical command and control with State Emergency Management Agency via the State HF radio net. Additionally the 179th CF has direct radio contact and support agreements with local fire and law enforcement agencies, which would enable us to coordinate a Homeland Defense emergency response with the rest of the State.

2. Land, Facilities, Infrastructure, Air Space

- Mansfield's 9000-foot, Instrument Flight Rule (IFR)-equipped runway is one of the longest in Ohio (only 6 of 168 are longer.)

- No commercial carriers compete for Mansfield-Lahm's airspace.

- We enjoy exceptional mission support facilities:
  - 33 Buildings: 292,863 Sq. Ft.
  - Total Acres: 230
  - Value: $92,928,000.
  - Main Cantonment Area: 67 Acres
  - Drop Zone: 157 Acres
  - **Airport Costs**: $49,904

  Military Construction Investments:
  1997 - Medical Training/Dining Hall: $3.1M
  1998 - Jet Fuel Storage Complex: $4.1 M
  1998 - Headquarters Building: $4.7 M
  2001 - Security Forces Operations Building: $2.7 M

2003 - Air Operations/Communications Building: $6.6 M
2004 - Transportation Complex: $3.3 M
2005 – Upgraded/Hardened Main Gate Facility: $690 K

- Planned Improvements
  Fire Station: $8.0 M (FY '06)
  Civil Engineering Facility: $5.9 M (FY '09)

- Ample room for expansion (see attachment 2)

3. Economic Impact

Employees

Full-time	293
Duty Status Guardsmen	767
Total	**1060**

Impact on Local Economy

Annual Payroll	$ 25.5M
Operating Funds	$ 16.6M
Total	**$ 42.1M**

Operating Funds

Operations & Maintenance	$ 114,300
Ohio National Guard Tuition Assistance Program	$ 160,000
State Income Tax	$ 995,160
Profit for the State	**$ 720,860**

Benefit to Mansfield

Mansfield City Income Tax	$174,000
Income from Property Lease	$ 49,905
Profit for Mansfield	**$ 223,905**

4. Community Infrastructure Support

- Large, talented, and supportive recruiting community with a radius reaching as far as Columbus and Cleveland, resulting in unit strength of 104.7%, 5th in the entire ANG (91 units.)

- Robust relationships with the City of Mansfield, Richland and surrounding counties, especially civic and legislative leaders.

- Property lease from City of Mansfield only ≈ $50K / year

- Over 1500 sleeping rooms within easy driving distance of the base could accommodate much larger traditional force, or surge requirements (we use only 80 double-occupied rooms now, with a strength of 767 traditional Guardsmen)

5. **Environmental Impact:**
   - The 179th has a proud record of Environmental Stewardship, e.g.,
     - Installation Restoration Program (IRP):
       - 5 of 8 sites are officially closed.
       - All will be closed by mid-2006.
     - No underground storage tank issues
     - Current small arms firing range will require soil remediation when it is ordered closed. Estimated cost $ 0.5M.

6. **Awards and Accomplishments:**

Year	Inspection/Award	Reason or Results
2005	Environmental, Safety, Occupational, Health Compliance Assessment & Management Program (ESOHCAMP)	Outstanding and Best Ever Seen
2004	Health Services Inspection (HSI)	Excellent Rating
2003	Deneke Award	Outstanding ANG Civil Engineer
2002	CMSgt Edward Wilbert Award	Outstanding Fire Dept of the Year
2002	James D. Weaver Award	Outstanding Fulltime Medical Technician
2002	ANG Environmental Quality Award For Recycling	
2002	ANG Services Flt of the Year	Superior Performance
2002	Initial Readiness Inspection	Excellent
2002	Unit Compliance Inspection	Excellent
2002	Aircrew Stan/Eval Inspection	Excellent
2001	AF Outstanding Unit Award	Outstanding Performance
2001	ANG Metcalf Trophy	Outstanding Mission Accomplishment
2000	Tappan Award	Outstanding Ohio Flying Unit
2000	EORI @ Ramstein AB, GE	Top rating
2000	Health Services Inspection	Highest Air Force rating
2000	IG Exercise (IGX)	Top rating
1999	Tappan Award	Outstanding Ohio Flying Unit

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

Attachment 1

C-130 HERCULES

The C-130 Hercules primarily performs the tactical intra-theater portion of the airlift mission. The aircraft is capable of operating from rough; dirt strips and is the prime transport for para-dropping troops and equipment into hostile areas. Basic and specialized versions perform a diversity of roles, including airlift support, aero medical missions, and natural disaster relief missions.

The C-130 Hercules has unsurpassed versatility, performance, and mission effectiveness. The flexible design of the Hercules enables it to be configured for many different missions, allowing for one aircraft to perform the role of many. Much of the special mission equipment added to the Hercules is removable, allowing the aircraft to revert back to its cargo delivery role if desired. Additionally, the C-130 can be rapidly reconfigured for the various types of cargo

The C-130's design maximum gross weight is 155,000 pounds (175,000 pounds wartime) with a normal landing weight of 130,000 pounds. The airplane is capable of airlifting 6 pallets or 74 litters or 16 CDS bundles or 92 combat troops or 64 paratroopers. It can also carry 45,000 pounds of cargo or a combination of any of these up to the cargo compartment capacity or maximum allowable weight.

Conduct aero medical evacuation operations. Movement of casualties by air transportation under the supervision of qualified aero medical evacuation crew members to/between medical treatment facilities

Support psychological operations. Support of operations targeted against the minds of the enemy civilian population and combat forces. Speaker operations and leaflet airdrops can be used to influence and demoralize hostile forces prior to and during offensive operations

The mission of the C-130 is to provide rapid transportation of personnel or cargo for delivery by parachute to a designated drop zone, or by landing at austere locations within the theater of operations.

The C-130 provides long range, day or night capability. C-130 combat delivery assets can perform airdrops in visual conditions; AWADS C-130s are additionally capable of executing airdrops in IMC (Instrument Meteorological Conditions) independent of external navigation aids

The C-130 can deliver personnel, equipment or supplies either by landing or by various aerial delivery modes.

In the first, parachutes pull the load, weighing up to 42,000 pounds, from the aircraft. When the load is clear of the plane, cargo parachutes inflate and lower the load to the ground.

The second method, called the Container Delivery System, uses the force of gravity to pull from one to 16 bundles of supplies from the aircraft. When the bundles, weighing up to 2,200 pounds each, are out of the aircraft, parachutes inflate and lower them to the ground.

MANSFIELD AIRCRAFT UPGRADES

AWADS (Adverse Weather Aerial Delivery System) - The precise delivery of personnel, equipment, and supplies during adverse weather, using a self-contained aircraft instrumentation system without artificial ground assistance or the use of ground navigational aids.

SCNS (Self-Contained Navigation System) - SCNS provides the flight crew an integrated navigation system, with four independent navigation solutions, including GPS, flight guidance and advisory information to fly a variety of missions. SCNS also provides control of communication and navigation radios, flight planning and calculation, and control of troop/cargo airdrops, as well as processing of radar data on some models.

ESKE (Enhanced Station Keeping Equipment)

GPWS (Ground Proximity Warning System)

GPS (Global Positioning System) - Installs a space-based all-weather radio navigation system into all SCNS-equipped C-130s to allow autonomous navigation capabilities. Eliminates reliance upon ground-based stations to provide navigational inputs to aircraft systems

MLS (Microwave Landing System) - Allows precision approaches and landings. MLS will allow elimination of ILS, which suffers from frequency congestion.

NVG (Night Vision Goggles)

NVIS (Night Vision Imaging System)

SATCOM (Satellite Communication) - Installs a permanent SATCOM antenna, interface cabling, preamplifier, and control panel for portable SATCOM radios required by joint users of combat delivery aircraft

GCAS (Ground Collision Avoidance System)

TCAS (Traffic Collision Avoidance System)

Threat Avoidance.

Improved capability to detect/degrade/defeat threats.

Chaff Flare Dispensers, Radar Jammers

MWS (Missile Warning System)

RWS (Radar Warning System)

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

OTHER DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF MANSFIELD'S C-130 FLEET

- Flying Hours (average equivalent baseline) on our aircraft place them at less than half of their useful life span.

- **Enhanced Cargo Delivery** capability via the Canary Slide Ramp System (ideal for Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Defense Team rapid movement requirement)

- Our **record of excellence and innovation in aircraft maintenance** has involved us in important, mission-enhancing research and development (often for the entire C-130 fleet):

  - **(BCEM) Battery Control Electronic Module** test aircraft for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center

  - **Corrosion Sensor Test Aircraft** for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center (administered by Battelle Labs in Columbus) to aid in determining corrosion impact from world wide environmental conditions on entire ANG and Air Force C-130 fleet. This evaluation will also help to re-evaluate C-130 aircraft frequency for wash intervals and corrosion inspections

  - **SATCOM Form Fit And Function Evaluation** (C-130 aircraft) for Wright Patterson AFB to help refine the Satellite Secure Communications System for CENTAF operations

  - Potential **Deicing Fluid Evaluation Site** for the Air Force Research Laboratory

  - **Main Landing Gear Torque Tube Coupling Safety Test Aircraft** for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center and Air Mobility Command (AMC)

  - Evaluator for the **Airdrop Ballistic Winds / Gps Tracker Test** for Wright Patterson, AFB

RECEIVED
06302005

June 27, 2005

Mr. Samuel Knox Skinner
c/o BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street
Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Subject: The removal of the C-130-H's from the 179th Air Wing, Lahm Field, Mansfield, Ohio

Subject: The lack of factual information about the 179th and other Air Guard, National Guard, and Reservist personnel or their facilities.

Dear Sir,
I have done quite a lot of research on the subject of the 179th Air Wing, based at Lahm Field, Mansfield, Ohio. Also have spent time in composing this letter. Please, please, sir, do me the courtesy of reading what I have provided for your enlightenment. Enclosed is much information regarding the past and present of the 179th. It is a very active Air Guard Unit. Their planes and the personell have been deployed to many places in the world for both Military and Humanitarian missions, all successfully completed.
Inspections of the 179th have always been completed with the highest possible ratings. All the years the 179th Air Guard has been at Lahm Field it has always been carefully and pridefully maintained. The runway at Lahm Field is one of the longest in the US and can accomodate the largest planes now flying. It is also an emergency landing strip for a shuttle. Why give up the use of this runway for Military use, just to spend billions on another airstrip at some other Air Base?
Guard Units were never meant to be moved around. They were supposed to be locally based, and the members of these Guard Units were to train at their facilities twice a month, then to have 2 weeks of more concentrated training

at a regular, or "standing" military facility.
By closing these Guard and Reserve facilities you are defeating the very purpose for which they were created.
By going forward with your plans in Ohio you are destroying our faith and trust in the purpose and structure of our Guard system, and betraying the people who serve in them.
You will force the retirement of many Senior Officers and staff, with many years of experience and great depth of knowledge. Young people who have homes and families will not re-new their contracts. They will not up-root their families
Currently, there is a short fall in signing up new recruits for some branches of service. If you forge ahead with closing of so many Militilary bases, especially Guard and Reserve forces, you will have a MAJOR in recruiting over-all, short-fall.
The ENTIRE BRAC needs to review their short-sighted thinking while we still have a civilian-military. Since about 40 per cent of our fighting man power now in the war; Zones is civilian-military, BRAC needs to use more thought before taking any action. Taking into account at the last "closing" it was to save 19 billion dollars. It cost 22 billion to close the bases. I don't see any money saved

The professional or career Military expects to move around frequently. They know this will happen upon signing contracts to serve. Both they, and their families expect this. Many resources at their disposal will help and render advice and much financial aid to make their transitions easy as possible.
Guard and Reserve Units are not prepared for such change. Neither are their personnell. Nothing is in place to move them from one location to the next. Especially not financially.
BRAC seems to have no regard or compassion for what ever hardships or problems might arise for Reserve or Guard, or any one else, for that matter.
The 179th has an enviable safety record. They have not had a lost time accident in many years. Let alone a formal "Stand Down" to consider or re-evaluate a problem. It has always been, and still is a very well-run facilety.
Lahm Field is one of the newer Air Guard bases. It has been well-maintained and up-graded. It is a Military Installation to be proud of. Instead of taking away the C-130-H's, bring more of them here. If you must close an Air Wing, bring the F-16's here, there is plenty of room.
Also, the 706th Transportation Company from Marion, Ohio could be based at Lahm, plus the Guard Units from Mansfield and Ashland.

That makes more sense to most people around here.
Contrary to what BRAC states that we have no room to expand, we have a LOT more land to expand to if it becomes necessary.
BRAC also states it is difficult to activate smaller Units. Apparently, they are ignorant of computers, fax machines, all kinds of telephones, radio, and good-old-fashioned written orders.
I think Ohio may have lost more people in Iraq than any other state, not too mention many horribly wounded. Their lives, and their families lives will never be the same again. More Ohioans are still being deployed, some from the 179th.
How can BRAC think of closing away with such an active Air Wing?
Here in Ohio we have great caring, reverance, and respect for our Military people, living and dead. We take great pride in what our hero's, past and present have sacrificed for us and the rest of the nation. BRAC's high handedness is an insult to all of our service people, living or dead, and their families and people who loved them, also.
BRAC withholds information from the very people most affected by their decisions. Even their address and telephone numbers are not available to us, the "common people". The "common masses" who pay their salaries one way or another.

Many of us, the citizens of Ohio believe the Air Force is commiting legal robbery, and getting BRAC to do it for them. Our Air Guard planes are newer, better equipped, and much better maintained than the Cargo planes the Air Force now has at their disposal.

So where to acquire planes, the quickest and with the least cost?

Not a problem. We will just remove them from the Air Guard Units. Get them under our control and our command.

That will make the Air Force look better to the US Congress when we ask them for money for some "pet project".

The 179th is an Air Wing. How can they be an Air Wing without planes?

Ruth Ann Welch R#12 705 Pinkney Road
Mansfield, Ohio 44903 1(419)468-1253

The above "Cartoon" is the way many of our citizens feel about Closing the 179th Air Base. We in Ohio have no large military base as do many other states. We have no Eglin Air Field, No Camp Le June, No Fort Wood, No May Port, No Fort Leonard Wood etc.

The people of Ohio have in the past sacrificed many of our fine National Guard, Reservists, Air Guard personell for generations, and we are still doing so. We feel betrayed by what BRAC wishes to do. It is a direct insult to all who have died and many who have been so terribly wounded. A "slap in the face" to all of those who have given so much and to every one who loved them

Vietnam Memorial stirs emotions

By John Jarvis
Gannett News Service

UPPER SANDUSKY — A wool stocking cap pulled halfway down on his head, the man in the red-and-black flannel jacket ran his fingers slowly across the letters.

W-I-L-L-I-A-M E F-O-L-L-O-N.

A grimace wrinkled the 58-year-old's expression, and he lowered his hand from the white name on the black wall to rub the salt-and-pepper whiskers on his face.

"William E. Follon. ... He got killed on the day we were supposed to leave," said Tom Gottfried of Carey. Members of the Air Force's 37th Combat Engineers, they had already turned in their battle gear and were at an airfield in Binh Dinh province "waiting for a ride out of the country."

Before their flight arrived, an enemy rocket attack killed the sergeant from Iowa, one of Gottfried's "best buddies."

"It killed him pretty much outright," Gottfried said.

Follon's is one of about 58,000 names of men and women killed in the Vietnam War commemorated on the Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall & Museum just outside of Upper Sandusky. The display will be at Thiel's Wheels on Tarhe Trail at U.S. 23 and Ohio 53 through Sunday.

Gottfried spent 13 months in Vietnam, from the end of 1968 through Feb. 2, 1970.

"It was good to be home, but it was kind of a letdown," because of the ill will some had for the war and those who fought in it, he said.

Gottfried said he'd feel better about his experience in Southeast Asia "If we'd won the war. ... There are a lot of good people on this wall who probably wouldn't be on there if we'd kept on."

Working security for the event, former Marion-area resident Mark Sigler of Harpster helped students find names on the wall.

"It lets you know the costs of war," said Sigler, an Army sergeant in the transportation corps during the Vietnam War era. He served in Korea, unlike his friend, Medard A.J. Ruehle.

Ruehle was one of 11 Wyandot County residents who died in Southeast Asia.

"He got out of a helicopter to help some wounded and in the process got killed himself," Sigler said.

Visiting the Upper Sandusky wall event from Findlay was Frederick Adams, who helped set up a similar tribute in his city.

"There's a bunch of guys from Findlay I went to school with who are on the wall," Adams said. "It's hard to just come here and not feel something for all these people."

Gary Cox of Marion, who helped provide computer information to assist visitors in locating their loved ones' names on the wall last fall in Marion, helped with the Upper Sandusky event as well.

If you go

- **What:** The Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall & Museum
- **When:** Through Sunday
  Today: 1 p.m., Veterans tribute ceremony; 6 p.m., musical and flag tribute
  Sunday: 2 p.m., closing ceremony
- **Where:** Thiel's Wheels, Tarhe Trail at U.S. 23 and Ohio 53, Upper Sandusky.

"I pay tribute to the 58,000 names that are on that wall."

Gary Cox
veteran

"I pay tribute to the 58,000 names that are on the wall," said Cox, a former Marine who didn't see combat. "As a Vietnam-era veteran I wasn't able to participate, but I can give back to the guys that did."

The people of Ohio Honor their military dead, I believe more than any other state. We have hundreds if not thousands of Memorials to our beloved dead from our largest towns to our smallest villages. On Memorial Day our Cemeteries are a mass of color because all of the Star and Stripes flying over every veterans grave. The BRAC is going to dis-honor some of these veterans. They were deployed from our Reserve and Guard Units. Now, you want to "change the Rules" in the middle of the war, and make a "hardship" for those who still are under contract to the military.

Local war hero honored in new museum display

News Journal
staff reports

MANSFIELD — A Memorial Day military display featuring the late Albert Allen of Mansfield, who is a member of Ohio's Military Hall of Fame, will open Saturday and run through the Memorial Day weekend at the Mansfield Museum at 35 Park Avenue West.

Allen, who died last year, was a lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserves and a survivor of the Bataan Death March and year's spent in Japanese prisoner of war camps during World War II.

Museum Curator Scott Schaut said the items were donated by Allen's wife, Nancy. He said the display includes memorabilia from Allen's father, Albert L "Cap" Allen Sr., who was commander of Mansfield's Company M, 145th Infantry, 37th Division in France during World War I.

Also on display will be "broadside" advertisements for previous Memorial Day services held in this city during the 1880s when Civil War veterans were the only ex-soldiers available to be honored.

Schaut said displays concerning World War II and home-front industry in Mansfield, as well as a history of the 179th Airlift Wing, are still up.

He said one of the oddities of military history in Richland County is that while there are many displays concerning the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War and the two World Wars, there are almost no items connected with the Mexican-American War of 1845 or the Spanish-American War of 1898.

"Both of those wars have been totally overshadowed by the bigger wars," Schaut said. "Mansfield sent troops to fight Mexico in 1845 and many more to Cuba in 1898.

"Commander Edward Parker Wood of Mansfield was commander of the U.S.S. Petrel at the battle of Manila Bay."

The museum is open Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. and on Memorial Day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Lately our local Newspaper has been "featuring" a World War II milet ary person, with a long article about them.
Their service in the second World War, their lives after Military service, and other interesting stories the servicemen may tell.
We do revere our military people.
Although, a number of the BRAC have been military, I don't believe they hold our now Reserve and Guard people in the same high esteem as we do.

Ohio squad takes heavy hit in Iraq

COLUMBUS (AP) — Six Marines were killed and another 15 were wounded from one central Ohio squad in a major U.S. offensive near Iraq's border with Syria, a newspaper reported.

The squad was one of three belonging to the 1st Platoon of Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment, according to The Washington Post, which has a reporter embedded with Operation Matador.

The military has confirmed five Marine deaths so far and says about 100 insurgents have been killed in the operation — one of the largest U.S. offensives since Fallujah was reclaimed from militants.

Chief Warrant Officer Orrin Bowman, the site commander for the Columbus-based company, confirmed Thursday the company was participating in the operation and had taken casualties. He declined to say how many from the Marine reserve unit had been killed or release any names.

The military has identified two Ohio Marines with the 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment who have died in Iraq since Sunday. Lance Cpl. Wesley G. Davids, 20, of Dublin, was killed in an explosion in Karabilah on Wednesday and Cpl. Dustin A. Derga, 24, of Columbus, was killed by small arms fire in Ubaydi on Sunday, according to the Department of Defense.

Bowman said the unit is in the process of contacting and helping the affected families.

Lima is a rifle company that has four platoons, Bowman said. Each platoon has three squads that normally have 13 people but can be reinforced depending on a mission, he said.

Davids left for Iraq in January, last talked to his family four weeks ago and was scheduled to come home in October, his mother said.

"While his death is a tragic loss, he died doing something he felt passionately about," Jody Davids said. "He was the best that this country has to offer."

Her son loved working on cars and graduated in 2003 from Dublin Scioto High School, where he was on the crew team.

"He was just a very impressive, strong young man," said Russ Merritt, his high school coach. "Wes was kind of an inspiration to all of us. You just had no doubt that he would give 100 percent."

The operation was launched after U.S. intelligence showed large numbers of insurgents had moved into the northern Jazirah Desert following losses in Fallujah and Ramadi, further east. The area is believed to be a staging ground for foreign fighters crossing into Iraq from Syria along ancient smuggling routes.

The offensive started Saturday night and is aimed at rooting out followers of Iraq's most wanted militant leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

Two Ohio soldiers killed in grenade attack in Ramadi, Iraq

The Associated Press

Two Ohio soldiers were killed in Iraq when their military vehicle came under a grenade attack, the Department of Defense said Wednesday.

Army Sgt. Larry R. Kuhns Jr., 24, of Austintown, and Spc. Anthony D. Kinslow, 21, of Westerville, died Monday in Ramadi, the volatile town 70 miles west of Baghdad.

Both were assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division from Fort Carson, Colo. The brigade has lost 65 soldiers in Iraq.

It was the second time in as many weeks that more than one serviceman from Ohio was killed in the same attack in Iraq. Three Marines from an Akron-based unit died in an explosion last Thursday during fighting in Haqlaniyah, 90 miles north of Baghdad.

Kuhns worked at the Army recruiting office in Boardman for a time in late 2003, said Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Catrucco, who works at the office.

"He was an awesome guy. He was very professional," Catrucco said. "He was the type of soldier any sergeant would love to have."

Kuhns, whose wife lives in Fort Carson, recently had been promoted to sergeant, Catrucco said. He began his military career as a reservist with the 319th Engineer Company in Butler, Pa.

Kinslow's mother declined comment Wednesday.

Ohio has lost a lot of people, and nobody seems to care, certainly not BRAC, positively not the politicians. As far as I can tell the military isn't much interested in our losses. We may have more dead than any other state. When do you think the next generation of Civilian - Military is comming from? Who is going to join a Guard or Reserve Unit if they know in advance that they may spend more time traveling than training twice a month? You already have a short fall of new recruits in the Regular Military. You are conducting this war with 40% Civilian - Military. How do you propose to recruit more people for any kind of military duty? Your short-sightness is going to make us a "[illegible]"

Lexington family has three sons in Iraq

By Ron Simon
News Journal

LEXINGTON — Like his father before him, James Andrews, 58, chose to be a soldier.

He served first in the Air Force and then the Army Reserves with the 1486th Transportation Company. He capped off a long military career by driving a truck during Operation Desert Storm and serving as his unit's first sergeant.

"I think if I hadn't retired there's no doubt I'd have already been over in Iraq and back by this time," Andrews said.

Instead, his three sons, Kyle, 24, Kraig, 22 and Kolby, 20, are in Iraq and Kyle is there for the second time.

Like their father before them, they chose to be soldiers. With a difference. All three are Marines. Kyle is a second lieutenant. Kraig is a lance corporal and Kolby is a private first class.

All three are, as their e-mail photos show, deep in harm's way.

"Have a wonderful Father's Day and thanks for all the things you do for me," Kyle wrote in a card last week. He is the only son, right now, who is able to stay in touch. "They come and go in operations," James explained.

"This is such a different war from the one I was in," James said. "Back then, it was letters and postcards. Today, it's tech messages, cell phone calls and e-mail. I was a driver and never was shot at. They are being shot at."

And three blue stars are in the window at the Andrews home on Steam Corners Road.

"I know they're doing a good job," James said of his sons. "They're really into what they do. Two of them have talked about making the Marine Corps a career. I'd like to think they are doing this because I was in the service."

Unspoken are any fears James and Renee Andrews may have about their sons being hurt in the midst of war. They know the dates down to the day when each of their boys will rotate home.

Lt. Kyle Andrews, with his brothers Pfc. Kolby Andrews and Lance Cpl. Kraig Andrews. *(Submitted photos)*

Lt. Kyle Andrews, 24, whose wife's name is Lauren, is doing his second tour in Iraq. When he comes home later this year, he will be a basic infantry instructor at Camp LeJeune. "He's guaranteed to be home for three years," his father said.

Lance Cpl. Kraig Andrews, 22, whose wife's name is Albra, would be home next but he might have to rotate to Afghanistan a few more years down the road, James said. "They plan that far ahead these days."

Pfc. Kolby Andrews, 20, unmarried, plans to leave the Corps perhaps temporarily to attend college. "If he ever wants to be an officer he has to have some college," his father said.

Kraig and Kolby are Lexington High School graduates and Kyle is a St. Peter's graduate. James thinks his youngest son was the one who first checked into the idea of a military career. "Then Kraig got interested and he joined," James said. One Marine became two Marines became three Marines.

There is a lot of military background in the Andrews clan. James' late father, James Sr., was a captain in the Army Air Force in World War II. Renee's father, Joseph S. Krebs, was a corpsman and ambulance driver with the Army in Europe during World War II.

ANDREWS SR.

KREBS

A native of Pennsylvania, James met Renee in California while he was in the Air Force. They were married for 20 years before divorcing. For now they are staying together.

James Jr.'s day job, the one he has held for 32 years, is postal carrier. He works out of the Ashland Post Office and his route covers the west side, mostly along Sandusky Street.

Nine years after he left service he joined the Army Reserves. With three boys to raise a little extra cash wouldn't hurt. But a war came along with it.

James was a squad leader as well as a driver during the Gulf War and finally rose to First Sergeant. When he reached 20 years he called it quits. "It was fun being a driver and moving equipment, but I really wasn't that happy with all the paperwork a first sergeant has," he said.

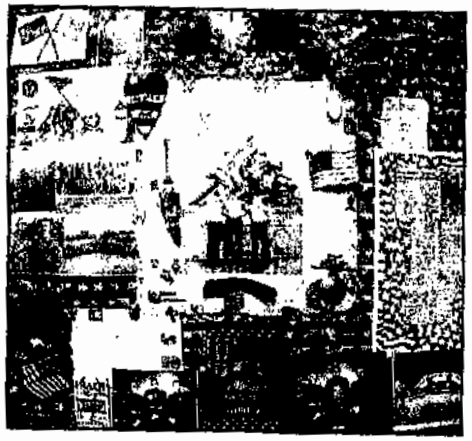
Now he and Renee stay in contact via all the new technology that links soldiers in the field with their families. And they wait. It's Father's Day.

And the boys are far away.

rsimon@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7230

Kolby Andrews, front row on the right, in Iraq.

Kyle and Kraig Andrews in Iraq.



A collage of the Andrews boys hangs in their home. *(Daniel Melograna/ News Journal)*

Another family of local Hero's you will note the father of these fine young men, was an Army Reservist.
The quality of people BRAC wants to shuffle around.

Closings could hurt Guard, some fear

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — Some members of the panel deciding which U.S. military bases to close worry the Pentagon's plans to reshuffle National Guard and Reserve installations are too radical and could discourage recruitment.

The Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure plan, released Friday, proposes consolidating 387 Reserve and National Guard installations into about 125.

Those recommendations are part of a larger plan to close 33 major bases and restructure 29 others to streamline and modernize the military.

The Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing's base at Mansfield Lahm Airport is among those to be closed.

■ More on the effort to keep the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield, **see page 3A.**

The Guard and Reserve changes could affect hundreds of thousands of people who serve in the part-time forces while holding down full-time jobs. The main concern is that consolidating installations will mean longer travel times for reservists and Guard members.

"You're going to have real enlistment problems," said former Rep. James Bilbray of Nevada, one of the nine members of the president-appointed base closing commission.

The base closure panel will review the Pentagon's recommendations and make any changes it deems necessary before submitting its list to the president by Sept 8. If Bush approves, it goes to Congress for an all-or-nothing vote.

The panel began its work Monday by questioning Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and senior Pentagon officials about how they formulated their recommendations.

Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the Guard and Reserve consolidations were done to enhance capability, cut costs and integrate the part-time forces more closely with active-duty units.

Members of the heavily stressed Guard and Reserves make up about 40 percent of the roughly 138,000 U.S. troops in Iraq.

Myers acknowledged that "there will be some inconvenience" for people serving in the Guard and Reserves if the Pentagon's recommendations are followed.

Recruitment numbers for the Guard and Army reserves are already lagging this year. Guard recruitment was 24 percent behind in the first four months of the current recruiting year, which runs from October 2004 through September 2005.

"Anybody who looks at retention issues would have to be concerned about this," said John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a defense Web site. "This was one of the first things that really popped out at me."

a lot of people are very concerned about possible greater short falls in recruitment for any branch or any part of the military.

Guard, Reserve death toll matches highest total

WASHINGTON (AP) — Thirty members of the Army National Guard, Army Reserve and Marine Corps Reserve died in the Iraq war in May, matching the highest toll for any month of the war, according to Pentagon figures.

The overall U.S. death toll last month was 80, the highest since 107 in January. There were 52 deaths in April and 36 in March, when it appeared the insurgency was waning.

Iraqis bore the brunt of the insurgent violence in May, but it also took a heavy toll on the approximately 140,000 U.S. troops there. The 80 deaths compares with a monthly average of 70 over the previous 12 months.

The Guard and Reserve, which make up nearly half the force in Iraq, have generally had fewer than 20 deaths per month during the war, and it's not clear why their losses spiked to 30 in May. That matched the 30 deaths among the Guard and Reserve in January, and it compared with 11 in April, 13 in March and 16 in February.

The May total reached 30 when the Pentagon announced on Friday that Sgt. Miguel A. Ramos, 39, of Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, died May 31 in Baghdad when a rocket struck near his position. He was assigned to the Army Reserve's 807th Signal Company, 35th Signal Battalion, based at Juana Diaz, Puerto Rico.

One of the month's 30 fatalities died in the United States. Staff Sgt. Tommy S. Little, 47, of Aliceville, Ala., died May 2 at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, of injuries sustained on April 19 near Iskandariyah, Iraq, when a roadside bomb detonated near his Humvee utility vehicle. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 114th Field Artillery Regiment of the Mississippi Army National Guard at Columbus, Miss.

May also was a costly month for the Army's 3rd Infantry Division, which had 10 reported fatalities. Since it arrived in Iraq in February to become the first Army division to return for a second combat tour, the 3rd Infantry has lost 34 of its soldiers, according to Pentagon figures. During its previous tour, which included the initial invasion in March 2003 and lasted about eight months, the division lost 44 soldiers.

Closing the base makes no sense

I am writing this letter to rge everyone to write their ate politicians and help stop ie closing of the 179th Airlift ing in Mansfield. The airbase rovides about 1,000 full- and art-time jobs and has an estiated $70 million annual effect n the area economy. The Base ealignment and Closure 3RAC) threatens not only Iansfield's Air National Guard ase but nearly a third of all Air ational Guard Units. It will rastically change the military s we know it. Our Mansfield nit has credentials that far exeed the criteria to stay open. (It ompares to the best units out here). This is why the closing of makes no sense. The money aved does not offset the beneits to the nation's defense.

The 179th Airlift Wing reprenents the core of patriotism. hey are the heart and soul of merica. They are the small own people; they are our riends, neighbors, brothers, nd co-workers, most of which ave deep roots in our commuity. Many of these people may ust leave the military. They ave families here. They can't ommute in some cases, hunreds of miles to go to drill. My amily will no doubt have to nove, possibly out of state. I as born and raised in the beauiful town of Bellville. My famiy is here. My friends are here. Ay life is here. I would like my hildren to go to school here.

Don't get me wrong, there are lot of people also going hrough this. My point is that ur base is different because here is no compelling reason to lose it down. When you add up he numbers, it doesn't save the nilitary that much money. If it nade sense, I would support it. Ve need to write letters to Taft/Voinovich/Dewine and your listrict congressman. Thank ou for supporting our troops!

Jolie McCue
Bellville

Birthdays under fire

I would never have imagined that my three sons would be serving in the Marine Corps in Iraq at the same time. Half my heart is in Iraq.

On May 13, my son, 2nd Lt. Kyle J. Andrews turned 24 under fire in Iraq. He is with the 2nd AA BN, stationed at Camp Fallujah, Iraq. Recently he spent more than 10 days on a mission with no shower facilities available. Just a week later, he e-mailed us a copy of "The Desert Marine" which is a 2nd Marine Division publication that carried stories about Marines at Fallujah and also at Hadithah Dam, Iraq.

My middle son CPL Kraig L. Andrews serves with 3/8 Lima Co. and is also stationed at Fallujah. Kraig and Kyle have been able to share some time together at the chow hall and also working out.

On June 26, my youngest son, PFC Kolby J. Andrews, who is a member of 3/25 Scout-Sniper Platoon will celebrate his 20th birthday involved in Operation Iraqi Freedom at Hadithah Dam. As a mother of three sons who are serving in the United States Marine Corps, I could not be more proud of their commitment and accomplishments.

I feel fortunate we are able to correspond by phone, e-mail or text message on my cell phone almost weekly. Sometimes it is hard to say good-bye to them, but I always let them know that I am proud of them, miss them, love them, and that everyone is praying for their safe return.

Renee Andrews
Lexington

Fight for the 179th

First of all, I would like to start off by saying thank you and how proud I am of all the U.S. military and the 179th Ohio Air National Guard unit here in Mansfield, of which I have two sons who are members.

I have had many people throw in my face that the National Guardsmen are just weekend warriors. My answer to them is at least they are warriors and they believe in our country and what it stands for. Most people probably don't know that at the present time the U.S. has 60 percent National Guardsmen serving overseas due to the decline in recruitment of the regular branches of the military.

I am appalled with Mayor Lydia Reid and other community businessmen saying it would be a "win-win situation" for the city of Mansfield if the 179th were to close. It sounds like instead of fighting to keep the 179th and its annual $30 million payroll here in Richland County, they would rather have another white elephant on their hands (just look around the Mansfield area) and see all that they have brought in — not too much. At least once a month the hotels are being occupied with guardsmen on drill weekend.

I keep hearing it's a political decision, so who is getting rich off this? Rep. Michael Oxley, please step forward and fight to keep the 179th here in Mansfield; after all you are in a position to use your clout, and people do listen to you.

Candace Zeger
Lucas

Letters

Let's save the 179th

We hope you will all take the time to attend the rallies being planned to save our 179th Airlif wing of the Ohio Air National Guard. This unit is heavily involved in our community.

The fire department that is maintained at Mansfield Lahm is also counted on to provide mutual aid with the surrounding fire departments, at times when no C-130s are in the air. This service would be badly missed.

So wear your "We Love the 179th pins," put your "Save the 179th" magnets on your cars and go to these events Saturday in Bellville and Wednesday on the square in downtown Mansfield. Let's show our state leaders we as a community do care and want to prevent the closure of our base.

Our thanks to the REDEC/BRAC Steering committee here for all the work and time involved in fighting this closure.

Joyce and Jerry Duff
Mansfield

The above are just a few peoples' thoughts on closing the 179 Air Wing based at Lahm Field, Mansfield, Ohio. Everyone is totally against this idea. If anything we would like to see more C-130-H's brought here. Possibly, a Jet Fighter Wing also. Something BRAC can't understand, or care about, is the pride we all share for these big planes, along with the military who fly and maintain them, as well as their support people. Indeed, we all have great affection for both the planes and the personell.

SAVE the 179th

.ook for special 179th poster in 'uesday's paper

It's time for area residents to ıke up pens, e-mails, phones nd letters in defense of the 79th Airlift Wing of the Ohio ir National Guard.

The local military unit at lansfield Lahm Airport has een recommended for clo- ıre by the Pentagon as part f the 2005 Base Realignment nd Closure process.

The BRAC commission is ıudying those recommenda- ons and will offer a list of facili- es to be closed or realigned to resident Bush this fall. But this ommunity is not about to go way quietly as our economy ses 1,000 full and part-time bs and a facility worth $70 illion annually to the local conomy.

We are not going to let go asily of a unit that's been a art of this community's fabric r more than 50 years.

On Tuesday, the News Jour- al will publish a full-page color oster aimed at sending a ear message to Washington at area residents want to ave the 179th."

We urge you to put that oster in your home and busi- ess windows as a sign of your pport. We also urge you to ing it to the community rally downtown Mansfield on ne 22 aimed at saving the it.

On the back of the poster ll be content helping to ex- ain why the decision to close e unit is flawed. On the back ll be names, addresses and one numbers of key elected ficials and also the BRAC ommission. We urge you to ntact these officials and mmission and send them a py of the poster to make ur feelings known.

It's time to let Washington derstand how important the 9th is to Richland County, rth central Ohio, the nation d the world.

Look for this special poster Tuesday's print edition.

Here is who to contact:

If you would like to offer edback directly to the Base alignment and Closure mmission, an e-mail form available at p://www.brac.gov/feed- ck.aspx.

Letters can be mailed to 05 Defense Base Closure d Realignment Commission, 21 S. Clark St., Ste. 600, Ar- ton, Va. 22202.

Community must fight hard to retain 179th

The issue:
Local committee committed to waging battle over Airlift Wing

Our opinion:
Loss of the base, a valuable asset to north central Ohio, is not acceptable

It would be easy to give up the fight for the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

But Mike Greene and others won't let that happen.

Earlier this week Ohio Adjutant General Greg Wayt met with Greene and other members of the REDeC/BRAC steering committee and the All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs.

"The 179th is on a list recommended for closure," Wayt said during his visit. "But in the two previous rounds, about 30 percent of the bases on the recommended list were able to change the commission's mind."

That means Greene and others in the community must press forward, making the argument for the value of the unit to the city, the state and the nation.

Despite a strong effort spearheaded by Greene, co-chairman of the Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee, the 179th Airlift Wing was on the Pentagon's list announced this month, putting 1,000 local jobs in peril.

Now Greene is leading a rally called "Save Our 179th Day" at 5:30 p.m. June 22 on the downtown square. He hopes to attract 10,000 people as well as national media coverage.

And he wants everyone in the area to get involved, encouraging community residents to make signs for their cars, homes and businesses. He promises speakers, bands and cheerleaders for next month's event.

And for good reason.

The 179th is more than just a military unit to this community. It's more than just 1,000 full and part-time jobs. It's more than $70 million annually to the local economy.

It is an integral part of the fabric of this community.

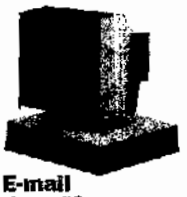
The unit's military growth and success during the past 57 years has been mirrored by its networking and immersion with the north central Ohio communities it represents.

The fight to keep it is important. Rep. Michael Oxley has joined the fight, pledging to use his political clout to bring base closure commission officials to town in hopes of getting the 179th off the list.

We hope others in the community see the need for the base to remain open and join the ReDEC/BRAC Steering Committee in making noise. Losing the 179th Airlift Wing would be a huge blow to our city and our region.

We won't go down without a fight.

Send us your thoughts



E-mail
chunnell@
nncogannett.com

Mail
Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 25
Mansfield, OH 44901

Fax
(419) 521-7415

again, our citizens have found a way to both honor our veterans and finance one of our Mansfield memorials to show proper respect to our heros.

Commemorative bricks available for veterans

MANSFIELD — The Korean War Veterans Association plans to install more commemorative bricks at the Korean War Memorial in Mansfield's Central Park in June.

About 300 bricks have been placed and dedicated by families and friends of veterans who served in all of America's wars or in peacetime.

Association member Bill Woodrow said each brick is inscribed with the words "Duty, Honor, Country." All are embedded in the walkway in front of the memorial.

There are two kinds of bricks; 4-by-8-inch bricks on which three lines of 13 characters each may be inscribed for $50, and 8-by-8-inch bricks on which five lines of 13 characters each may be inscribed for $100.

Applications for commemorative bricks or gift certificates can be obtained by calling Frank J. Russo at (419) 756-1468. The deadline is June 1.

The veterans plan to install the next set of bricks June 25.

Bellville crowd rallies to save 179th

By Mark Caudill
News Journal

BELLVILLE — Maj. Steve McLaughlin joined the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard when he was a senior in high school.

The 37-year-old Shelby man is focused on keeping it open.

"I'm not thinking about closure right now," McLaughlin said. "I'm thinking about what pressure we can put on the politicians to save this base."

The 179th is on the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission list of facilities recommended to be shut down to reduce overall military expenses. McLaughlin, an intelligence officer, and hundreds of other people turned out Saturday afternoon at the bandstand on Main Street for a rally to save the 179th. AmVets Post 43 hosted the event.

Jolie McCue organized Saturday's rally.

"My husband works out there full-time," she said. "I think, from my heart, they're closing it for the wrong reasons."

The rally included a popcorn stand manned by Boy Scouts, face-painting, a lemonade stand and music from the Clear Fork High School marching band. "We love the 179th" buttons were the fashion accessory of the day, and form letters to be signed and mailed to designated legislators were circulated throughout the throng.

U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley, R-Findlay, doesn't need convincing. He will speak at a June 27 BRAC hearing in Buffalo, N.Y.

"We have a tremendous story to tell," Oxley said. "I feel comfortable going to Buffalo and presenting our case. We have the facts."

Oxley seemed confident the 179th ultimately would be taken off the closure list.

"The message we are sending loud and clear from Bellville is, 'Keep your hands off our C-130s. They're doing their jobs, and the people are doing their jobs,'" he said.

Mansfield Mayor Lydia Reid addressed members of the 179th.

"You are an integral part of this community," she said. "We don't know what in the world we would do without you. That's why we are fighting so hard."

Reid encouraged everyone to attend Wednesday's rally in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

"This is just a prelude to our big rally in Mansfield," she said. "We will see you at 5:30 Wednesday in downtown, sunny Mansfield."

McCue will be there.

"I hope they keep having rallies," she said. "Right now, this is all the public can do."

mcaudill@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7219

Dan O'Hara attended Saturday's "Save the 179th" rally with poster in hand. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

All of us really do care about the 179th Air Wing, as well as other Reserve and Guard Units.

Rallying 'round the 179th

Jackie Beilstein passes out balloons at Saturday's "Save the 179th" rally in Bellville. The rally was a prelude to the larger event planned to start at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday in the square in downtown Mansfield. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Big rally for 179th planned for next month

By Mark Caudill
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Mike Greene wants the community to unite behind the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

GREENE

"Let our voices be heard all the way to Washington," said Greene, co-chairman of the Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee that worked for more than a year to keep the base off the recommended

See RALLY, back page

About the 179th

- **What:** 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard
- **Based:** Mansfield Lahm Airport
- **Airmen:** Roughly 1,000 full- and part-time airmen. The 179th is the seventh-largest employer in north central Ohio.
- **Awards:** The 179th has received many awards, decorations and recognitions, including the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. Recently, the 179th received the Alan P. Tappan Memorial Trophy, which designates the outstanding Air National Guard unit in Ohio; and the Rusty Metcalf Award, which acknowledges the unit as one of the best in the entire Air Force.

Rally

From page 1A

closure list.

Despite the efforts, the 179th Airlift Wing was on the Pentagon's list announced this month, putting 1,000 local jobs in peril.

Greene is spearheading a rally called "Save Our 179th Day" at 5:30 p.m. June 22 on the downtown square. He hopes to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

"This isn't going to be just our group preaching to the choir. I really want to make this a huge, huge event," Greene said. "I want them to understand that this is serious business."

Greene encourages community residents to make signs for their cars, homes and businesses. He promises speakers, bands and cheerleaders for next month's event.

Greene said if the rally is as big as planned, he hopes BRAC members, who are scheduled to be in Cleveland on June 23, will visit Mansfield. This week, BRAC members will begin visiting bases slated for closure.

The 179th Airlift Wing, which has 230 full-time positions, was not on the list for a visit.

"If you had less than 300 full-timers, you would not get a visit," Greene said.

But local leaders aren't waiting for June 22 to do something. They will meet at 1 p.m. today at Gorman-Rupp's north plant with an All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs. Representatives from other affected communities, including Cleveland and Springfield, will be at the meeting.

"The idea was, 'What could we do to help each other?' " Greene said.

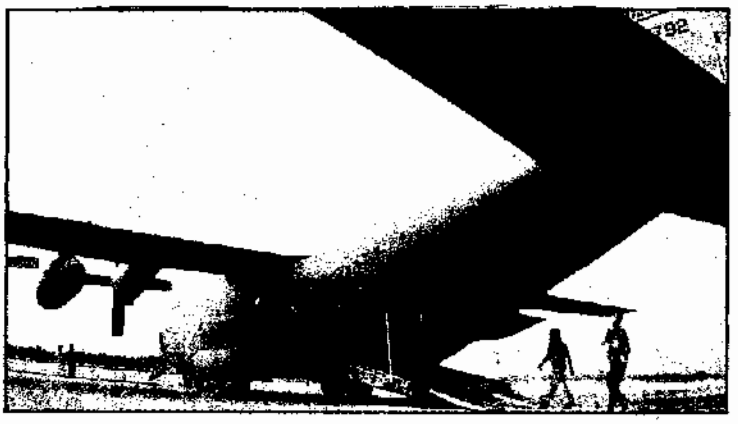
Greene fears the Air Force wants the 179th Airlift Wing's C-130s.

"If they're going to take our planes away, we would prefer that the Army not come in and maybe prevent civilian aviation possibilities," he said.

But that's only a fallback plan.

"Our main priority is getting us off the list," Greene said.

mcaudill@mcogannett.com
(419) 521-7219



Guests head inside a C-130 for a tour April 19, 2004, during the Mansfield-Richland County Chamber of Commerce after-hours event at the 179th Airlift Wing. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Rep. Oxley hopes to sway commission's decision about 179th

By Greg Wright
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — Rep. Michael Oxley said Monday he would urge base closure commission officials come to Mansfield so he and local officials can persuade them to keep the 179th Airlift Wing open.

The 179th Airlift Wing was one of 13 facilities in Ohio the Pentagon put on its recommended Base Realignment and Closure list May 13. But the commission's nine-member, independent panel must review the Pentagon picks and could remove some from the list.

"I never give up," Oxley said.

OXLEY

Gov. Bob Taft sent a letter to commission chairman Anthony Principi on May 17 asking commissioners to come to Mansfield, as well bases in Springfield a Cleveland.

The Pentagon propos moving eight C-13(cargo planes from t 179th to airfields in Alat ma and Arkansas. This r flects the Pentagon's mo

See OXLEY, back page

Oxley

From page 1A

to consolidate military bases and reserve units.

Oxley met Monday in Columbus with Army National Guard Maj. Gen. Gregory Wayt, Ohio's

a meeting in the Buckeye State.

Oxley said he also could use his clout to try to persuade commissioners to come to the 179th. He said he knows about half of the commissioners, including former Utah Republican Rep. James Hansen, former Nevada Democratic Rep. James Bilbray and former White House Chief

strategy to keep the 179th open.

The commission will visit major bases on the proposed closure and realignment list. The commission also announced 16 regional hearings in California, Texas and other states to get community input on the Pentagon recommendations.

Ohio is not on the regional meeting list. Oxley said he and

Budget item for 179th show of commitment

House bill includes funds for base scheduled to close

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — The U.S. House of Representatives passed a spending bill Thursday that includes $1.3 million for a fire station project at Mansfield Lahm Airport.

What that budget item means as far as the future of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at the airport remains unclear.

"Unless we manage to get off the (Base Realignment and Closure) list, it's kind of a moot point," said Mike Greene, who is leading local efforts to keep the 179th in Mansfield. "As of right now, the plan is to send that firefighting unit to Toledo."

The 179th Airlift Wing base is on the Pentagon's list of bases recommended for closing.

But U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley (R-Findlay), who asked for the fire station funding, said it shows that the fight to preserve the 179th is not over.

"By this, we are showing our commitment to keeping our base in Mansfield one of

See BRAC, back page

Details

The 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, is one of 13 facilities in Ohio the Pentagon put on its recommended Base Realignment and Closure list May 13.

About 1,000 full- and part-time airmen are assigned to the 179th, which is the seventh-largest employer in north central Ohio.

The Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee is leading the fight to remove the 179th from the recommended closure list before a decision is made this year.

A "Save Our 179th Day" rally is set for June 22 at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

News Journal staff report

Groups fight to keep 179th in Mansfield

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — It's not over yet.

No one is giving up on keeping the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at Lahm Airport.

That was the message from Ohio Adjutant Gen. Greg Wayt after a Tuesday meeting of the REDeC/BRAC steering committee and the All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs.

"The 179th is on a list recommended for closure," Wayt said. "But in the two previous rounds, about 30 percent of the bases on the recommended list were able to change the commission's mind."

Mansfield learned this month the 179th is on the list compiled as part of the Base Realignment and Closure process, which could mean the loss of 1,000 local jobs.

Mike Greene, who has led the local effort to keep the 179th open, said there is plenty area residents can do to help change the BRAC commission's mind.

"Write letters," he said. "It sounds trite. But that's one thing we can all do. Write to your senator. Write to your representative. Write to the president.

"Our goal is to get off the list. It's happened before. Springfield was on the last two lists and managed to get off."

Greene hopes a huge public show of suppo helps sway some minds.

"Show up at our ral June 22," he said. "We like to get between 10,0 and 15,000 people togeth on the square to sho Washington what we thi of the 179th."

Greene is spearheadi plans for the 5:30 p.m. ral which will coincide with "Save Our 179th Day." I is hoping to draw sor statewide and natio news coverage to he Mansfield plead its case.'

BRAC officials have s not made public all the formation used to make cisions about which m tary bases to close.

"We're still not sure actly what criteria th used," said Da Williamson, the governo regional economic devel ment representative an member of the local BR committee. "We're waiti for that information to published so we know wi issues we need to addres

Tuesday's meet brought together repres tatives of other commu ties in Ohio affected by most-recent BRAC nouncement.

"We're trying to see w we can do to help e other," Greene said. "Ri now, I think Cleveland the most well-organi group. We're hoping to ate some synergy with t group and help one an er."

rkent@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7274

BRAC

From page 1A

the most modern in the Guard system," Oxley said. "This would raise our investment in the 179th Airlift Wing unit to more than $20 million over the last eight years."

Greene said any effort in support of the 179th can only help efforts to save the Guard base.

"I still think the best thing we can do is to show community support for the base," Greene said. "That's why I think that rally is so important. We want as many people on the square June 22 as possible to show Washington what the 179th means to all of us."

Greene said Ret. Brig. Gen. Steve Koper, president of the National Guard Association of the United States, has committed to attend the rally.

"We've invited the governor and, hopefully, we'll have some other supporters here from Washington and Columbus," Greene said.

In the meantime, efforts are ongoing to entice members of the BRAC commission to visit Mansfield. Because the 179th has only about 250 full-time not mandatory.

Oxley released a letter he sent to Commission Chairman Anthony Principi in which he wrote, "I believe you will find the 179th represents a compelling case due to the active role it plays in homeland defense and the global war on terror."

In a letter to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Oxley urged the Pentagon to release "installation-specific data" used to make the closing list.

Greene has said the information is important so 179th supporters can better make a case to remain open.

Economic Development Corp.), which has diligently prepared for the BRAC process for more than a year, is now preparing its presentation to the commission in an effort to reverse (the closing)," Oxley wrote.

"Without access to this important data, REDeC cannot properly make its case that this guard unit, which has seen 35 deployments in support of our national defense in just the last four years, should remain open and operational."

rkent@nncogannett.com

Air Force just wants to have the C-130s

Six former Ohio Air National Guard generals visit area to share history

By Ron Simon
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Retired Brig. General Fred Larson calls the possible closure of his old unit, the 179th Airlift Wing, "a grab for the iron."

The "iron" being the unit's fairly well kept fleet of eight C-130H cargo planes.

"The Air Force has not been a very good steward of their C-130s," said the former 179th commander. "A lot of them have aged and a lot are grounded. So there are squadron holes. So this is a grab. It doesn't matter what a unit like the 179th has done or the skills and military value it has. All the Air Force wants is the iron."

Larson was one of six former Ohio Air National Guard generals, all with ties to the 179th, in Mansfield on Thursday. All but one were pilots with the 179th and two were commanders.

They were brought together by Master Sgt. Rod Togliatti, the 179th's historian, for a day of history at the base at Lahm Airport.

Togliatti said the men represent 190 years of combined service, 45,000 hours of flying time and a large piece of memory.

"How many times do you get six generals together to talk about history?" he asked.

Afterward, the generals stopped at the Mansfield Museum on Park Avenue West to meet the public.

Some, like retired Brig. Gen. Myron Ashcraft, go back to the days when the unit was a jet fighter squadron. Ashcraft, who now flies for United Airlines, made the switch from fighter cockpits to the lumbering C-130s. It was the right training for those commercial planes he flies today, he said.

Other generals included Major Gen. Francis Hazard, Brig. Gen. Ray Weber and Brig. Gen. Richard Green, who commanded the unit until his recent promotion and later retirement.

LARSON

ASHCRAFT

HAZARD

WEBER

GREEN

LATTIMORE

Brig. Gen. Vergel Lattimore was the 179th chaplain and the Air National Guard Assistant to the Air Force Chief of Chaplains, and is still active.

"I travel all over the country. I'm the chaplain's chaplain," he said.

Green, like Larson, doesn't care to see his old unit broken up.

"This is a tough blow," he said of the closure threat. "The Air Force simply wants our new planes. No matter what the unit has done, the planes are all they want."

Ashcraft agreed.

"They are stealing our airplanes. That's wrong, ethically and morally. It's a shame," he said.

Larson said a major study taken under his command in the early 1990s proved the unit could expand to double its size at Mansfield Lahm Airport. He said arguments that there is no room to expand are simply wrong.

"I think the 179th is not set for closure. We're going to fight this tooth and nail," he said.

rsimon@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7230

Some Guard bases may lose planes

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — What happens when you take away all the airplanes from an Air National Guard facility?

It's a question being asked at more than a dozen bases ever since the Pentagon announced that it wants the Air Force to consolidate its planes at fewer locations.

Under a military restructuring plan announced Friday, the Pentagon proposed shifting hundreds of planes and thousands of jobs away from Air National Guard bases.

For example:

- Reno-Tahoe International Airport Air Guard Station in Nevada would lose its eight C-130H planes.
- Bradley International Airport Air Guard Station in Connecticut would see all of its A-10s fly away.
- Nashville International Air Guard Station in Tennessee would lose its C-130H aircraft.

"How can you be an airlift wing without any airlift?" asked April Conway, a spokeswoman for the Nevada Air National Guard.

The recommendations now go to a president-appointed commission that will spend the summer holding hearings before sending its recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 8.

Compared with four previous Base Realignment and Closure rounds that began in 1988, National Guard and Reserve bases would be hit hard this time. The Pentagon proposes consolidating about 387 Reserve and National Guard installations into about 125, many to be located at or near active-duty bases.

Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the base closing commission Monday that the Air Force wants more planes in fewer units to more quickly fulfill missions.

"What they have right now are pockets of small numbers of aircraft that are at various locations," Myers said. "And it makes it unwieldy when you try to access them for missions, particularly the kind of missions we're in today in Iraq and Afghanistan and for that matter, around the world."

A lot of citizens are certain in their own minds that the Air Force wants our newer, better C-130. That this is a legal case of Air Piracy. The C-130-H's of the 179th have more up-dated equipment, as well as being much better maintained. Where in this article, General Richard Myers, says it more difficult to deploy planes in smaller groups. That is a mis-representation of the truth. In this day of radio, telephones and computers, not to mention signed letters of orders, fax etc. Any and all orders can be transmitted in a matter of seconds. The Air Force is being very heavy-handed in "robbing" the Air Guard units of their C-130-H's. Robbing is how the people that units feel, not too mention our citizens.

Pentagon: 179th too crowded

Lack of expansion room among reasons for recommended closing

By Greg Wright
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — About 1,000 full and part-time military jobs in Mansfield are in danger primarily because the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield has less room to grow than its rivals in Toledo, Arkansas and Alabama, according to Pentagon documents.

■ TV show explains BRAC process, page 6A.

One of several major criteria the Pentagon considered while determining which military bases to close or realign is whether the facility can accommodate growth. The base also must fit into the Pentagon's future defense strategy.

The Pentagon proposed disbanding the local Ohio Air National Guard last month and moving its eight C-130H transport planes to

See 179th, page 6A

179th

From page 1A

Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base in Alabama and the 314th Airlift Wing at Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas.

Other support services now at Mansfield would go to the Louisville International Airport Air Guard Station in Kentucky and the Toledo Express Airport Air Guard Station.

However, local officials said Monday the ratings are wrong, since city officials offered the Pentagon access to 168 additional acres when military officials indicated expansion might be considered a factor. The 179th Airlift Wing currently is located on 227 acres.

Rep. Michael Oxley, R-Findlay, and local officials have said they would fight to keep transport planes at the 179th at Mansfield Lahm Airport. Gov. Bob Taft announced Monday he will give the Richland Economic Development Corp. $50,000 to promote the 179th.

But it's unlikely the independent Base Realignment and Closure commission would overturn the Pentagon's decision because of the facility's size, a military expert said.

"It's too small to worry about," said John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a defense analysis firm.

While some bases on the closure list could lose thousands of jobs, Pike said, the 179th has just 234 full time military and civilian workers. Still, local officials argue, the base is the seventh largest employer in north central Ohio, including around 650 part-time jobs held by "traditional" National Guard members.

The Pentagon claimed in environmental documents released this weekend the 179th has no room for growth. Little Rock can develop another 1,783 acres; Maxwell an additional 264 acres and Toledo has 45 acres, the Pentagon said. Only Louisville had zero acreage available, the Pentagon said.

Another factor in the Defense Department's base closing considerations was military value. Mansfield ranked lower in military value and capacity than other airlift bases, according to the Pentagon.

The top ranked airlift base is Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. Mansfield ranked 119th out of 154 airlift bases behind Little Rock in 17th place; Maxwell, 21st; Louisville, 79th; and Toledo, 100th.

Local officials contend the 179th is still busy in the war on terrorism with its 35 deployments since Sept. 11, 2001. The facility is modern and there is room to house up to a dozen C-130H planes at the base, said retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Fred Larson, co-chair of the group fighting to save the 179th.

The Pentagon argues it has too many small Air National Guard units; its goal is to merge many with active-duty facilities, said Loren Thompson, a military expert at the Lexington Institute.

But the base closure panel, which is reviewing the Pentagon recommendations, could disagree and decide to keep national guard units such as the 179th open, Thompson said.

The nine-member commission must come up with a final closure list by Sept. 8.

The information that Lahm Field can't expand is absolutely in error. Lahm Field and 179th base there can be expanded greatly any time that becomes necessary. It already has one of the longest runways in the US and can accomodate the largest planes in the world. Lahm Field is an emergency landing strip, if necessary, for the space shuttle. Why spend Millions on increasing the length of a runway some place else, when Lahm Field has everything necessary.

Bad data led to decision, officials say

By Linda Martz
News Journal

MANSFIELD — The Pentagon used flawed data and left major questions unanswered in recommending the 179th Airlift Wing be closed, former base officials say.

Local officials plan to correct those issues in hope of keeping the Ohio Air National Guard unit and its 1,000 full- and part-time jobs in Mansfield, where it's been for more than 50 years.

Retired Brig. Gen. Myron Ashcraft, now a

See DATA, page 6A

Data

From page 1A

United Airlines pilot, said the thing that "jumped right out" when he looked at criteria released Monday is the Pentagon inaccurately said Mansfield Lahm Airport doesn't have enough land available to expand the wing's fleet from eight to 16 C-130H transport planes.

The military considers larger bases more efficient, the Lexington resident said.

Once the Pentagon documents said additional land was not available — an incorrect claim — other questions, such as what it would cost to expand, were left unanswered, he said.

"Once they say that we don't have the land, everything else is out the window," Ashcraft said. "They don't even evaluate how much it would cost to have a full squadron.

"That's the kind of stuff we have to fight it on — is the data," he said Monday night. "I don't see any other shortfall in the criteria that we would fail to meet."

Local officials said Monday they're frustrated by Pentagon documents showing the military meted out low scores to Lahm in areas such as room to expand, military value and capacity. The 179th, which has had 35 deployments since Sept. 11, 2001, generates about $70 million annually to the local economy.

Mayor Lydia Reid said local officials offered the Pentagon 168 additional acres — the city-owned Bradley and Kissell farms north of the airport — when military officials indicated expansion opportunities could be considered. The 179th Airlift Wing now takes up 227 acres.

"Certainly, if they need space to build on, they can build a hell of a lot on 168 acres," the mayor said Monday. "We have said 'whatever it takes, we'll do it.' We're willing to do whatever they want."

Reid said Lahm has a lot more going for it than acknowledged by the Pentagon rankings. "We've got the second longest runway in the state. Also, we've got an airport that is underutilized" — meaning military planes don't need to compete with a lot of other air traffic, she said.

"Some of the places that weren't on that list (to be closed) do not have the capability we do," Reid said.

Mike Greene, co-chairman of the Richland County Economic Development Corp./BRAC Steering Committee, which worked for more than a year to avoid a recommendation that the base be closed, said the Pentagon claims Mansfield doesn't have enough space for a large fleet.

But the master plan outlined in the early 1990s by former base commander Brig. Gen. Fred Larson anticipated constructing more ramps to store planes, Greene said.

"It's easily accomplished simply by putting down more pads," at much less cost than the $33 million the Department of Defense said it would save by closing down Mansfield's base, Greene said.

Ashcraft said the Air Force appears to want to shut down Guard and Reserve units so it can acquire their equipment. "They have a very old, tired, beat up fleet. The way to get airplanes without buying them is just to steal them from the Guard and Reserve," he said.

Larson said, "It doesn't matter to them that they gain no military value (to the country overall) from our airplanes," Larson said. "They're just moving planes from one location to another, at a cost of $33 million."

Local officials are still trying to arrange for a visit to Mansfield by a member of the BRAC commission before a decision is made — but may get only a visit from a staff member, Larson said.

Ohio has been allotted two hours at an upcoming regional base closure hearing in Buffalo — and Mansfield must share that time with Cleveland and Springfield, Larson said. "We're asking for half an hour, but we may get 15 minutes."

lmartz@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7229

With so much at stake for so many people, in so many parts of the United States, how could BRAC not have up-to-date information? How could they take their duty to the people of this country so lightly? If they failed to have the correct facts about the 179th and Lahm Field, how many errors are they making about other bases? They don't go to these military facilities, and God Forbid they should consult with anyone whose future is mightily affected by their decisions.

Editorial

Closing 179th would be a mistake

The Issue:
Today's special section devoted to the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

Our Opinion:
The message is simple: Save the 179th.

You should notice a little something extra in the News Journal today.

It's a four-page section aimed at sending a loud and clear message to the Base Realignment and Closure commission and lawmakers in Washington.

North central Ohio believes the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard should remain open and in operation at Lahm Airport in Mansfield.

The first page is a color poster with a simple message. "Save the 179th" is in huge letters, visible from a distance.

We urge you to put this poster in the window of your home, business or other locale that will be seen by the public. We want you to save it and bring it to the community-wide rally June 22. We then want you to mail it to the BRAC commission or lawmakers, and urge them to stop the planned closure of this vital military unit.

The second page is a message from retired Brig. Gen. Richard Green, a former commander of the 179th, who lays out a clear argument why the Pentagon wants the 179th closed and why it should remain open.

Send us your thoughts

E-mail
chunnell@
nncogannett.com

Mail:
Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 25
Mansfield, OH 44901

Fax
(419) 521-7415

The third and fourth pages are messages from local businesses and residents in support of the unit, which has been a part of north central Ohio for more than 50 years.

Make no mistake. Closing the 179th is a mistake. The Pentagon simply wants the unit's eight C-130H aircraft, which would bolster the aging Active Duty and Reserve fleet for the Air Force.

But it would not be good public relations to make public that need for the planes. Instead, the Pentagon cited in its recommendation that there is no room for expansion at the local unit, a claim not supported by the facts. The City of Mansfield has offered another 168 acres for potential base expansion.

We urge the BRAC commission to look deeply into the Pentagon's flawed logic and look instead at the real reason for its closure recommendation — eight aircraft that Congress purchased explicitly for use by the Ohio Air National Guard.

We urge local residents to join the fight by posting today's posters all over the community. Bring them to the public rally. And then mail them to the people who will help keep the 179th open.

It's not to late. This fight has really just begun. We urge you to join in today.

This editorial states that there is plenty of room for expansion for the 179th Air Wing and Lahm Field in general.

Editorial

Pentagon has slapped part-time soldiers

The issue:
Reserve and National Guard bases were hit hard in the latest round of BRAC Commission recommendations.

Our opinion:
This is a funny way to thank the soldiers who have put so much on the line in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Pentagon has a unique way of thanking the Reserve and National Guard forces for their great contributions during the war on terror.

The thanks is a cold slap in the face with Pentagon reality.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, want to shuffle, cut and otherwise consolidate 387 National Guard and Reserve installations into about 125.

This convoluted thinking is again proof that active duty military leaders a.) don't understand the Guard and Reserve lifestyle or appreciate the needs of part-time soldiers, sailors and airmen; and/or b.) don't care about the future of either segment of the nation's military.

Their plan would include closing the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard in Mansfield, one of the best flying units in the country today.

Myers said these Guard and Reserve moves are being made to enhance capability, cut costs and integrate the part-time forces more closely with active-duty units.

We would argue this plan would accomplish few of the goals outlined above, save for cutting costs.

Myers admitted "there will be some inconvenience" for people serving in the Guard and Reserve if the Pentagon's recommendations to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission are followed.

Some inconvenience? That's like saying Noah needed to build a bit of a boat when the rains came. The understatement is that severe.

How about the fact it will add hundreds or even thousands of miles, and the accompanying expenses for members to meet monthly military obligations? How about the fact it will force Guard or Reserve troops, some of whom may be nearly qualified for retirement, out of the service who simply cannot make long-range trips once a month?

The economic effect on the communities like Mansfield scheduled to lose these units is one thing. But the effect on the individual who has devoted much of his or her life in service to the country is even worse. Lahm Airport will survive and perhaps even flourish with the influx of private business should the 179th close its doors.

But the 1,000 full and part-time airmen who made up the unit, hundreds of which have served around the nation and the world since Sept. 11, 2001, will never be the same. The 179th, for example, has gone on 35 deployments in the last four years.

At a time when recruiting for the National Guard is down 24 percent from last year, it seems sheer folly to slap the face of the people who make the Guard and Reserve the success story the part-time military is today.

Without the Guard and Reserve, the Bush administration could not have fought its war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, about 40 percent of the 138,000 troops in Iraq are Guard and Reserve forces. The Pentagon's reward is to make their career in the military even tougher to maintain.

We urge the members of the BRAC Commission to take a hard look at what the Pentagon has in mind for the Guard and Reserve. We think when they do they will see the security of this nation will be severely weakened with Rumsfeld's plans for the nation's citizen soldiers.

This editorial will give you more information about the 179th, and the opinions of many are the same.

Bush defends base closings, says money being wasted

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP) — Speaking out for the first time in favor of controversial base closings, President Bush said Friday the nation is wasting billions of dollars on unnecessary military facilities and needs the money for the war on terrorism.

Bush, who faces opposition from many states to shutting down bases, tried to be reassuring. He said the bases would be chosen fairly and the government would do all it could

See BUSH, back page

Bush

From page 1A

to help affected communities recover.

But he made clear that the process — however painful — could not be avoided.

In a speech to graduates of the Naval Academy, he said the closings and realignments "will result in a military that is more efficient and better prepared so you can better protect the American people against the dangers of this new century."

"In this war, there is only one option and that is victory," he said, to cheers from midshipmen, relatives and faculty at the academy on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay.

When Bush last spoke at a Naval Academy commencement, it was four months before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and his focus was his administration's effort to reshape the military into a faster, lighter and more flexible — but not larger — fighting force.

Since the attacks, and amid a global anti-terror campaign and wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, a top-to-bottom military transformation is even more necessary, Bush said.

Keys to the success are new technology, repositioning of global forces, new weapons and realigned bases at home, he said.

Bush said he understands the fears in cities where bases have been marked for changes or closure. The first round of closings in a decade has members of Congress and local officials working hard to protect the 33 major bases slated for closure and the 29 others proposed for downsizing.

"I know firsthand how hard base closings can be on local communities," said the former Texas governor who saw facilities shut down in his state.

Members of the congressionally chartered Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) will visit bases and hold hearings on the Pentagon proposal. The plan aims to save $48.8 billion over 20 years by eliminating redundant and inefficient facilitates and promoting cooperation among the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps.

The panel will decide on changes to the Pentagon plan and give a list to Bush and Congress this fall for approval or rejection.

Commission chairman Anthony Principi on Friday joined a growing chorus of lawmakers demanding that the Defense Department quickly release the thousands of pages of data backing up each of its recommendations.

Briefly

More work for 179th

MANSFIELD — Twenty-nine members of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard will leave Monday in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, the U.S. military initiative in Afghanistan.

Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the 179th has flown more than 2,600 sorties, moved 35,000 passengers and transported 5,600 cargo tons of material in combat theaters, according to a unit news release.

The airlift wing, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, was recommended for closure this month by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission. An area campaign is under way to remove the 179th from the closure list before a final decision is made later this year.

No, Mr. Bush, we are not wasting money on our personell at our Military facilities or our personell. Maybe other places are, Ohio is not. We have had terrible losses. My grandson has served a tour of duty in Bosnia, and Iraq in one of the most dangerous missions in Iraq. Transportation of fuel. Now BRAC wants to do whatever with the 706th Transportation Company.

AmVets Post 43 joins fight for 179th

Rally planned for June 18 in Bellville

By David Benson
News Journal

BELLVILLE — A second major rally to keep the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard in Mansfield is in the works.

AmVets Post 43 in Bellville will host a Rally to Save the 179th Airlift Wing on June 18 at 3 p.m. at the bandstand on Main Street.

The 179th, based on Mansfield Lahm Airport, is on the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission list of facilities recommended to be shut down to reduce overall military expenses.

A separate save our 179th Day rally is set for June 22 at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage for that event.

Joli McCue is organizing the Bellville rally.

"When Post 43 called me and asked me if I would do it, I said I would be glad to. Somebody's got to do something," said McCue, the wife of a 179th member.

"If we get a big turnout it will show how much community support the 179th has. Our legislators will see we're not going to take this closing lying down," she said.

The other purpose of the rally is to provide information to those who have questions about the BRAC process and what individuals can do to try to prevent the closure, McCue said.

"So far, the support for the base and for this rally has just poured in. It's been phenomenal," she said.

Speakers at the Bellville rally will include Mayor Carolynn Studenmund, REDeC/BRAC steering committee co-chairman Brig. Gen.(r) Fred Larson, Brig. Gen.(r) Myron Ashcraft, Brig. Gen.(r) Rich Green, Richland County Commissioner Ed Olson, county Veteran Services Commission President Larry Moore and state Rep. Bill Hartnett.

In addition, form letters supporting the 179th will be available at the rally, which will need to be signed and mailed to designated legislators.

The AmVets and American Legion Color Guards and the Clear Fork High School marching band will participate. For children, there will be face painting, lemonade and popcorn stands and balloons.

Food and music will be featured after the rally at the AmVets Ron Boyce Hall located north of the bandstand on Main Street. Music will be provided by AmVets' Steve Stephenson, Dave King, & Westwind and by the Jo Kidd Outfit, comprised of 179th members.

For additional information, call McCue at (419) 886-4283. To donate food or supplies, contact the AmVets at (419) 886-2658.

dbenson@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7272

Tech Sgt. Ken Schonauer of Mansfield works on the tail section of a C-130 at Lahm Airport earlier this month. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal)*

Family and friends placed flags Sunday to honor veterans, soldiers and emergency personnel at a Healing Field ceremony in Fredericktown. The field will stand through Wednesday. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal photos)*

A place to honor many sacrifices

By Jennifer Kowalewski
News Journal

FREDERICKTOWN — Charles Blanchette served his country in World War I, World War II and the Korean War.

His granddaughter, Denise Needles, honored his memory by flying a flag Sunday in the Healing Fields at Kokosing Construction Co. The Exchange Club of Mount Vernon and Knox County sponsored the event to honor veterans, current soldiers and emergency personnel.

"It's pretty neat," the Mount Vernon woman said after buying a flag. "I saw all the flags and thought he has to have a flag."

Healing Fields began in Sandy, Utah, in 2002, when Colonial Flag Co. owner Paul Swenson wanted to honor those who lost their lives in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Volunteer Jane Engle said Swenson flew 3,000 flags in Utah to show how many victims were killed.

While residents walked among the flags, many felt a sense of healing, and Healing Fields have sprung up across the country, Engle said.

Chairwoman Melody Brent has worked to bring the Healing Field to Fredericktown since November 2004. Residents purchased flags to fly in a 2-acre field in honor of their loved ones, Exchange Club President Diane Collier said. Residents from Richland, Morrow, Ashland, Knox and Licking counties participated.

Residents can visit the field for the next few days

See FLAGS, back page

Ann Eing leans on her son, Jeff, as they look at the flag they placed to honor Ann's husband, John, a World War II Navy veteran.

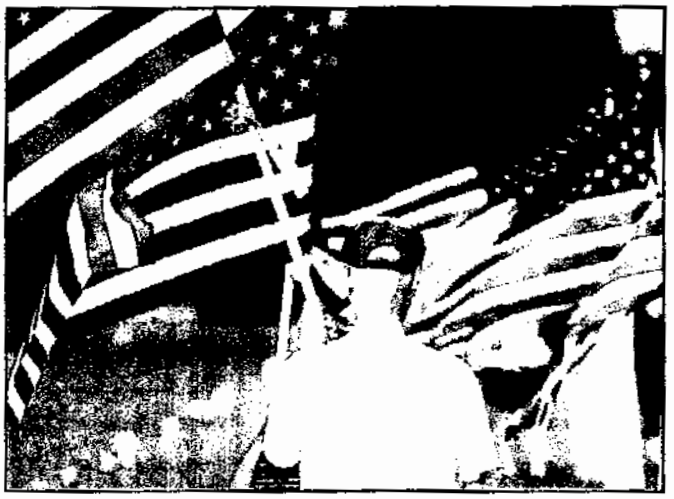
If you go

Residents can visit the Healing Field at Kokosing Construction Co. in Fredericktown through Wednesday evening. Kokosing Construction is on Ohio 13, near the Ohio 95 interchange. The flags honor and remember veterans, those serving in the military and emergency personnel. The program includes:

- **Today**, 3 p.m: Ohio Highway Patrol helicopter land; 4 p.m: The Petty Group (Knox County singers); 5 p.m: singers and speakers, including state Sen. Bill Harris, R-Mansfield.
- **Tuesday**, 4 p.m: Apple Valley Singers; 5 p.m: music and speakers including state Rep. Thom Collier, R-Mount Vernon.
- **Wednesday**, 4 p.m: Color Guard from Knox County Veterans; 4:30 p.m: speeches and closing remarks.

News Journal staff report

HEALING FIELD



A man walks among the memorial flags in the Healing Field at Fredericktown on Sunday. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal)*

Flags

From page 1A

to walk among the flags, Collier said.

"It's an experience you may never be a part of again," she said, as names were called over a loudspeaker to indicate whose turn it was to place a flag. "It's amazing to see all the red, white and blue. You can't imagine when the breeze blows, hearing 1,000 flags flapping in the breeze."

Collier, whose father-in-law stormed the beaches of Normandy, said she has participated in Healing Fields in Dallas and Findlay.

Volunteer Jim Tharp, a U.S. Navy veteran, said field coordinator Steve Murphy and the crew has worked since Friday to get the field ready. Poles were placed in the ground to support the flags, spaced 10 feet apart.

The crew installed lights so people could visit the field at night.

Denise Hess of Mount Vernon plans to visit again before it closes Wednesday. The Mount Vernon woman took her granddaughter, Shayla Ingram, 2, to the field.

"I just think it's going to be a unique experience," she said, waiting for her father's name to be called. "It's going to be emotional."

The Healing Field means more to her because her nephew, Travis Hess, is serving in Iraq with the Ohio National Guard 211th Maintenance Company of Newark.

"It's an experience you may never be part of again. It's amazing to see all the red, white and blue."

Diane Collier
Exchange Club president

U.S. Army Korean War veteran David A. Munk flew a flag in honor of his son, Rick L. Munk, a 23-year-old veteran of the Ohio Highway Patrol.

"It's great," David Munk said, watching the flags go up. "It's the best thing to happen to this little community. If it weren't for them, we wouldn't be here."

As residents drove into the field, a flag that had flown in Iraq hung between two fire engines to greet them. Bobby and Lisa Folden took their 9-month-old girl, Mackenzie, under the flags to honor veterans Bobby knows at the Station Break Senior Citizen Center in Mount Vernon.

Many of the clients at the center helped with the Healing Field by making ribbons with the names of those honored.

"You really respect what they did for the country," Bobby Folden said.

jkowalewsk@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7232

Concert to raise money for family of Galion soldier killed in Iraq

By Jennifer Kowalewski
News Journal

GALION — The Galion Community Band will remember a hero.

A combined band and choral concert to benefit the Lee Anne Ivy Fund is scheduled Sunday at 7 p.m. at Galion High School. Residents are asked to donate to assist the family of Marine Staff Sgt. Kendall Ivy II, 28, the Galion native killed in action in Iraq earlier this month.

"We hope that the community will support this effort," community band organizer Brian Treisch said. "The concert was suggested to us as a way to generate funds for the Ivy family.

"We have been able to move rapidly to put this concert together. Many of the band members were classmates, former teachers, and friends of Kendall."

The concert will feature patriotic music, combined band and choral works and pieces to honor Sgt. Ivy. Details are still being arranged.

"We are sure that 'Semper Fidelis,' 'The Stars & Stripes, Forever' and "Battle Hymn of the Republic' will be performed," Treisch said. "Rick Walker is working to complete the concert lineup and I am working to complete the band roster."

The Galion Community Band has performed since 1976, including annually at the Fourth of July concert before the fireworks display.

Any interested instrumental musician or choir member not already contacted is welcome to join the band for a rehearsal at 6 p.m. today.

"We have a solid band set at this time, but we welcome any musician," Treisch said.

According to a military report issued to his family, Ivy died May 11 in western Iraq from a severe leg wound suffered when the vehicle in which he was riding struck a roadside bomb.

Ivy, who went to Iraq in February, is the sixth member of the military from north central Ohio to die in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Ivy played football and baseball at Galion High School. He joined the Marine Corps after graduating in 1995. He is survived by his widow, Lee Anne, who lives in Camp LeJeune, N.C., and is four-months pregnant, two sons and a daughter.

The Lee Anne Ivy Fund has been established at First Federal Bank to assist the family.

jkowalewski@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7232

If you go

What: Galion Community Band concert.
Where: Galion High School auditorium.
When: 7 p.m. Sunday.
Why: To benefit the family of Kendall Ivy, a soldier killed while serving his country in Iraq.
For information, call Brian Treisch at (419) 462-2209.

News Journal

Just one of our many lost service men in Iraq. Also, what is being done to aid and support his widow and family.

Lt. Col. William Schock and Col. Bill Roberts present a "My Boss Is a Patriot" certificate to Crestview Middle School Principal John McNeely at a school assembly Wednesday. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Patriotic Crestview principal honored

By Lou Whitmire
News Journal

OLIVESBURG — John McNeely, principal of Crestview Middle School, got quite a surprise Wednesday afternoon.

He received a "My Boss is a Patriot" certificate of appreciation from the Office of the Secretary of Defense at a school assembly.

McNeely is a strong supporter of the Ohio National Guard and Army Reserve. He was nominated for the honor by teacher Linda Roney, a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve.

Roney's military boss, 10th Battalion commander Lt. Col. William Schock, and Schock's boss, 6th Brigade commander Col. Bill Roberts, traveled from the 100th Division at Louisville, Ky., to present the award.

McNeely, surprised and emotional as he stood at the podium, said he was almost speechless.

"I'm honored to receive this award. ... You people in the military are

After the assembly, Roney said McNeely is supportive of everyone at the school who has relatives in the military.

"We're honoring him not for what he gives me, but for his patriotism," Roney said.

Fellow teacher Joyce Galloway thanked McNeely for supporting her when her son Daniel was deployed to Iraq with the Army Reserve's 1486th Transportation Co.

McNeely said he was being honored for something he ought to be doing anyway.

"When Mrs. Roney was deployed (after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks) I told Mrs. Roney your job will be here when you get back," he said.

Even when she is not deployed, Roney's job in the military requires travel and days off from her job as a seventh- and eighth-grade teacher.

She teaches a course in the Army Reserve called "combined arms exercise," and she is area coordinator for Kentucky. Her military job most recently took her out of the classroom April 29 to May 4 to participate in weapons training.

Schock said Roney couldn't do her job without employers like Crestview Schools.

"She is responsible for all instructors in Kentucky who teach the course," he said.

Roney trains people in eight states — Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Schock, 57, who leaves in June for Iraq to assist the Iraqi people with veterans affairs, said the award presentation was his first and called it a proud moment. He is a human resources director for the regional veteran's affairs office in Louisville.

Roberts, an attorney in Kentucky, lauded McNeely for his willingness to share Roney with her other job.

"We as Army Reserve soldiers depend on two groups of people — our families and employers. We're here to recognize someone who is a patriot to us," Roberts said.

McNeely said his uncle John was drafted into World War II and landed in the Normandy invasion. McNeely's father, Bryon McNeely, served in World War II and received a Purple Heart, a Bronze Star and other honors — and survived being shot twice in the back of the head.

The principal said the award ranked with the birth of his daughter. "It's a moment I will remember," he said.

Roney said she first met her principal on the telephone.

"He made it clear he was very patriotic and me being in the Reserve would not be a detriment," she recalled.

"I have a wonderful lady who is my sub. I just have the best of all worlds."

Sarah Jenkins, 12, a sixth-grader, applauded her principal.

"He runs the school well," she said.

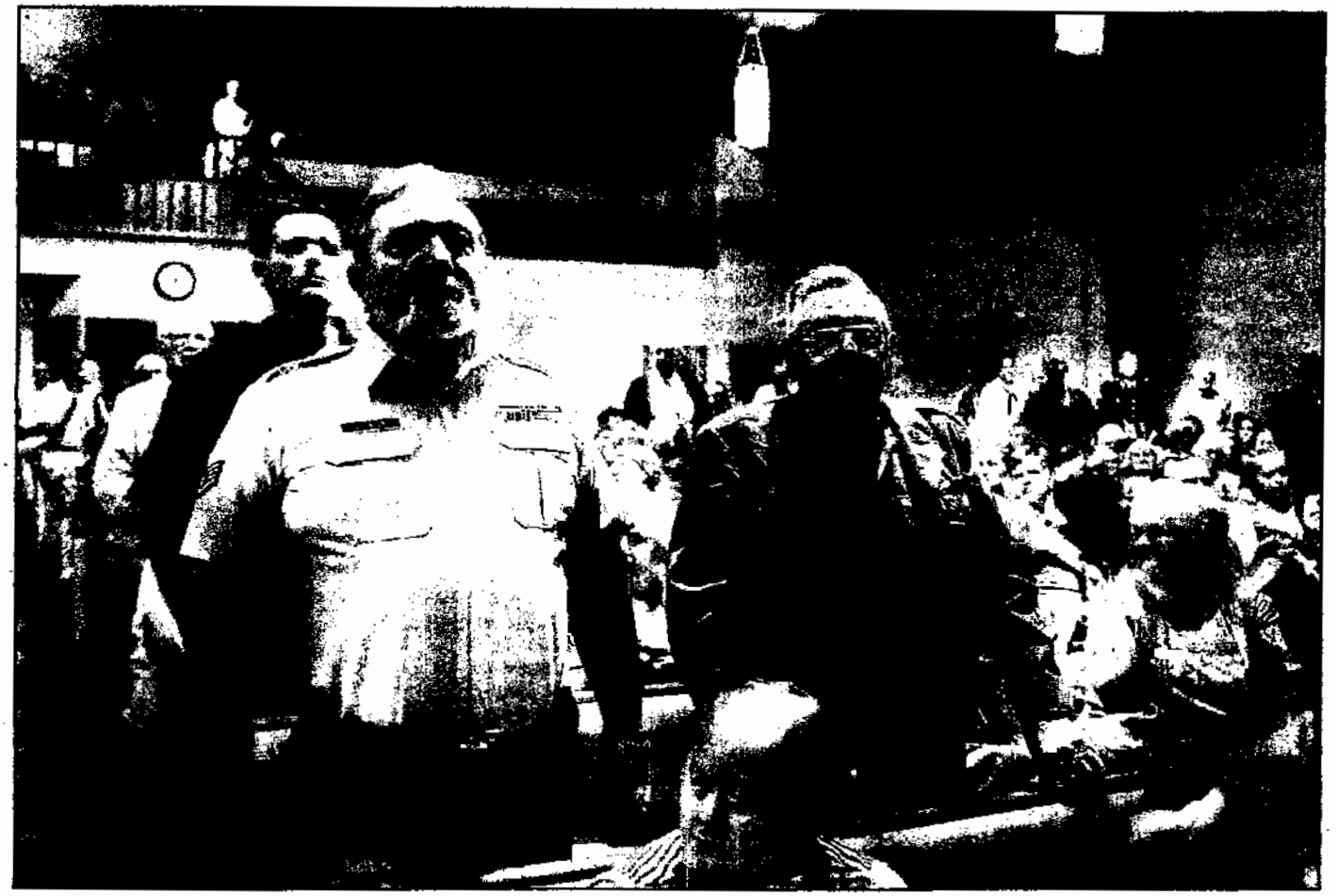
Classmate Connor Plemens, 12, said McNeely is nice.

"He is very deserving of this," he added.

lwhitmire@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7223

Another Civilian - Military person, who is a wonderful asset to our Community. The 179th also has a choir that sings at special local events.

Remembering the soldiers



Above, Gary Johnson, a member of the Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing for 10 years, stands beside his father, Glenn Johnson, a World War II Army veteran, during the "America, we must not forget" service Sunday at the Berean Baptist Church on Middle Bellville Road. Glenn Johnson has another son, Randy, in the service in Uzbekistan. Glenn's wife, Phyllis, is sitting to his right.

Right, Marine Tim Crumbliss sings "O' God, Our Help in Ages Past" during the service Sunday. Backing up Crumbliss is the church choir, led by the Rev. Bryan Moak.

(Walt Butler/ News Journal photos)

The people who are in our Civilian-Military units, are not just Military personell. They are part of our lives in every way. Our fathers and mothers, Sons and daughters, our friends, whom we love. Now BRAC wants to dis-respect them.

BRAC staff member to visit 179th

But BRAC/REDeC steering committee not sure if they are even allowed to attend

Program on WMFD-TV lays out story of 179th, BRAC commission

News Journal staff report

MANSFIELD — Mike Greene and Ret. Brig. Gen. Fred Larson, the former commander of the 179th, who together are leading efforts to save the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, have taped a program that will air on WMFD-TV at 7:30 p.m. each evening through Sunday.

"It pretty much lays out the entire story of the 179th and the BRAC commission and why it is so vital that the air base remains here in Mansfield," Greene said. "I hope everyone in Mansfield will watch it and come down and support us at our rally on June 22."

A "Save Our 179th Day" rally is set that day at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract a crowd of 10,000 and national media coverage. Greene hopes a huge public show of support helps sway some minds.

Ret. Brig. Gen. Steve Koper, president of the National Guard Association of the United States, has committed to attend the rally. Greene said he expects U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley and Ohio Adjutant Gen. Greg Wayt to be on hand. He's confident that Gov. Bob Taft will also be in Mansfield that day.

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Local officials haven't been successful in arranging a visit to Mansfield by a member of the Base Realignment and Closure commission but they haven't given up efforts to argue their case.

A BRAC commission staff member — not an actual commissioner — will be in Mansfield on Tuesday to visit the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at Mansfield Lahm Airport, which last month was placed on a list of military bases to be closed by the Pentagon.

Call it a second-tier visit.

"He will meet with staff at the air base," said Mike Greene, of the Richland Economic Development Corporation, which is spearheading efforts to keep the 179th in Mansfield.

GREENE

"I don't even know if our committee will be allowed to attend. If we are, we won't be able to ask questions or present our case.

"The briefing will be 100 percent presented and produced by the 179th. It will not be open to the public. My hope is that staffer comes here with an open mind."

In the meantime the BRAC/REDeC steering committee is continuing its efforts to get the 179th off the closure list. It now has another $50,000 to work with.

The State Controlling Board released the money, promised by Gov. Bob Taft, on Wednesday.

"It certainly will help," Greene said. "It will help pay for our trip to Buffalo. It could pay for other trips. It could pay for a trip to Washington, D.C."

Greene said such a trip to Washington could be for the purpose of arguing the Mansfield case before a BRAC commission member.

"If they won't come to us, we'll go to them," he said.

Efforts have intensified in the weeks since the 179th was placed on the Pentagon's closure list. A lobbying group is still active in Washington, D.C., and the local steering committee has hired a consultant in Columbus to help draft its presentation for a regional hearing in Buffalo on June 27.

Ohio, which had three bases on the list, will get a chance to argue its case at that hearing. The state has been allotted a total of two hours. Greene hopes Mansfield gets at least 30 minutes.

"We'll attend some hearings prior to that so we can check out the format and see what some of the other arguments have been and how they've been presented," Greene said.

"I wouldn't say that's our last effort to present our case, but the style and substance of our presentation will be important."

rkent@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7274

As you can see we are doing everything we can possibly do to convince the BRAC that we really want to keep all of Civilian-Military facilities and personell in place. Even to producing a TV program to inform all of our citizens about our Civilian-Military.

Former 179th generals will meet the public

Six generals, former members of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, will be together for the first time Thursday for a "Meet the Generals Day" at Mansfield Memorial Museum, 34 Park Avenue West.

They will greet the public from 4 to 6 p.m.

Scheduled to participate are Francis Hazzard, Ray Weber, Fred Larson, Myron Ashcraft, Rich Green and Vergel Lattimore.

The 179th, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, has been recommended for closing by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission. Public rallies to have the 179th removed from the closure list are planned for June 18 in Bellville and June 22 on the square in Mansfield.

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

1. Mission/Military Value

- Primary Aircraft Weapons System: (8) C-130H2+ Hercules (Distinguishing Operational and Technical highlights are detailed in attachment 1.); Valued at $240,000,000.

- Major Command: Air Mobility Command (AMC), Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.

- The proud home to one the most highly trained, combat-tested, veteran, C-130 forces in the United States Air Force. Since Vietnam, we have led the way in the C-130 community in both combat hours and sorties.

- Our air crews have been decorated with over 116 Air Medals and 16 Aerial Achievement Medals since Operations Joint Guard (1996-1998, Sarajevo), and Joint Forge (1998-1999, Sarajevo); these medals recognize meritorious service and/or valor in aerial flight.

- We make significant airlift contributions to the USAF mission and have an enviable safety record. Flying an accident-free average of over 3,400 hours from FY 2003 to FY 2005 (projected), we have accumulated a total of over 134,000 safe flying hours.

- We are a vital component of the Total Force (with the ANG providing nearly 50% of the USAF's tactical airlift capability, the fight can't be fought without us) and have supported combat and humanitarian operations and exercises around the world. Some examples:

  Volant Oak (Panama); 1979 - 1999.
  Volant Partner (Germany); 1987 - 1992
  Reforger (Alaska); 1983
  Desert Shield Desert Storm; 1990 - 1991.
  Operation Restore Hope (Somalia); 1992 – 1993.
  Operation Provide Promise (Bosnia); 1993 – 1994.
  Operation Joint Endeavor (Bosnia); 1996 – 1998.
  Operation Joint Guard (Bosnia); 1998 – 1999.
  Operation Joint Forge (Bosnia); 1999 – 2002.
  Operation Southern Watch (Mid-East); 1996 – 1999.
  Operation Uphold Democracy (Haiti); 1994.
  Operation Shining Hope (Kosovo); 1999.

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

- Since 9/11, the inception of the Global War on Terror, and Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom, the 179th has been engaged like never before. Some key statistics:

2001		
	Operations Supported	Coronet Oak, Deep Freeze, Noble Eagle
	Participating units	Airlift Squadron, Medical Squadron, Logistics Support, Airlift Squadron, Aerial Port Squadron
	Days served	13,842
2002		
	Operations Supported	Southern Watch, Deep Freeze, Noble Eagle, Israeli support, Enduring Freedom, Joint Forge, Northern Watch
	Participating units	Aircraft maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Civil engineering squadron, Services
	Days served	56,912
2003		
	Operations Supported	Deep Freeze, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, Israeli Support
	Participating units	Aircraft Operations, Aircraft Maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Civil engineering squadron, Services, Intelligence
	Days served	35,971
2004		
	Operations Supported	Deep Freeze, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom
	Participating units	Aircraft Operations, Aircraft Maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Intelligence
	Days served	64,052

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

Combat Aerial Operations Totals for OEF and OIF:

	HOURS	SORTIES	PAX	CARGO TONS
OIF AL JABER	1,219.3	878	9,735	1287.2
OIF TALIL, AL SALEM, AL UDIED	1,839.4	1,222	19,755	2,429
OEF AL SALEM, AL UDIED, CURRENT AOR	898.6	550	5490	1852.6
TOTALS	3957.3	2650	34980	5568.8

- Our Proposed $8.0 M Fire/Crash Rescue Station will accommodate **JOINT** Air National Guard/Army National Guard firefighting missions.

- In addition to the flying mission, we are home to a wide range of expeditionary combat and homeland security support units, capable of delivering many invaluable capabilities. Some examples:

  Civil Engineering
  - Engineering force to maintain facilities and infrastructure
  - Fire Department and Power Production team

  Logistics Readiness Squadron
  - Supply of materiel and fuels, maintenance of the vehicle fleet, traffic management services and planning and management of the mobilization process to ensure an accurate and rapid response in the event of contingency moves or national emergency.

  Aerial Port Squadron
  - Coordinate missions with Base Operations and the affected work centers of the squadron
  - Plan, schedule and process air cargo, passengers, and mail
  - Prepare load plans, manifests and air movement reports using automated or manual tools
  - Prepare/Inspect and Process Cargo for onward movement

  Security Forces Squadron
  - Point of entry control to the installation
  - Armed response to the installation

- Presidential Aircraft support at remote locations upon request
- Support to the Governor for natural or man-made disasters

Communications Flight
- Maintenance and support to computers and crypto equipment.
- Maintenance and support to telephone switch and outside telephone plant.
- Maintenance and support to land mobile radio (LMR), Ground to Air radio (VHF/UHF), state emergency radio (HF) and tactical mobility radio.
- Visual information support

Services Flight
- Food Service, Lodging, Wartime Mortuary Affairs, Search & Recovery Operations, Morale, Welfare & Recreation, Tactical Field Exchange

Mission Support Flight
- Personnel services to the Wing and surrounding retired military community, including recruiting, retention, enlistment, retirements, Separations, Force Deployment and sustainment, ID Cards and health care Enrollment, support.

Environmental Management Office
- Programs to reduce hazardous and solid waste generation
- Increase recycling and Green Purchasing efforts
- Maintain compliance with all applicable EPA, Air Force, and Air National Guard regulations

Expeditionary Medical Support (EMEDS)
- Mobile and highly capable clinical disaster response/assessment

- Because the ANG is also the State Governors' asset (The Guard is the only military force immediately available to a governor in times of emergency, including civil unrest and natural or manmade disasters), we are uniquely positioned to support a host of Homeland Security missions. Some examples:

Expeditionary Medical Support
- Forward deployed trauma resuscitation/surgical capability including critical care
- Multi-functional team composition decreases number of medics required to deploy
    - 179MDG is only MDG in FEMA Region 5 with Surgical capabilities
    - Region Five Consists of:
        - Ohio

- Michigan
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Wisconsin
- Minnesota

Security Forces

- Conduct anti-terror assessments and provide threat information to the Governor
- Coordinate local anti-terrorism intelligence sharing with local police agencies

Readiness

- Provide trained and equipped Nuclear Biologic Chemical (NBC) Readiness Personnel

Communication Flight

- Provide critical command and control with State Emergency Management Agency via the State HF radio net. Additionally the 179th CF has direct radio contact and support agreements with local fire and law enforcement agencies, which would enable us to coordinate a Homeland Defense emergency response with the rest of the State.

2. Land, Facilities, Infrastructure, Air Space

- Mansfield's 9000-foot, Instrument Flight Rule (IFR)-equipped runway is one of the longest in Ohio (only 6 of 168 are longer.)

- No commercial carriers compete for Mansfield-Lahm's airspace.

- We enjoy exceptional mission support facilities:
  - 33 Buildings: 292,863 Sq. Ft.
  - Total Acres: 230
  - Value: $92,928,000.
  - Main Cantonment Area: 67 Acres
  - Drop Zone: 157 Acres
  - **Airport Costs**: $49,904

  - Military Construction Investments:
    1997 - Medical Training/Dining Hall: $3.1M
    1998 - Jet Fuel Storage Complex: $4.1 M
    1998 - Headquarters Building: $4.7 M
    2001 - Security Forces Operations Building: $2.7 M

2003 - Air Operations/Communications Building: $6.6 M
2004 - Transportation Complex: $3.3 M
2005 – Upgraded/Hardened Main Gate Facility: $690 K

- Planned Improvements
  Fire Station: $8.0 M (FY '06)
  Civil Engineering Facility: $5.9 M (FY '09)

- Ample room for expansion (see attachment 2)

3. Economic Impact

Employees

Full-time	293
Duty Status Guardsmen	767
Total	**1060**

Impact on Local Economy

Annual Payroll	$ 25.5M
Operating Funds	$ 16.6M
Total	**$ 42.1M**

Operating Funds

Operations & Maintenance	$ 114,300
Ohio National Guard Tuition Assistance Program	$ 160,000
State Income Tax	$ 995,160
Profit for the State	**$ 720,860**

Benefit to Mansfield

Mansfield City Income Tax	$174,000
Income from Property Lease	$ 49,905
Profit for Mansfield	**$ 223,905**

4. Community Infrastructure Support

- Large, talented, and supportive recruiting community with a radius reaching as far as Columbus and Cleveland, resulting in unit strength of 104.7%, 5th in the entire ANG (91 units.)

- Robust relationships with the City of Mansfield, Richland and surrounding counties, especially civic and legislative leaders.

- Property lease from City of Mansfield only ≈ $50K / year

- Over 1500 sleeping rooms within easy driving distance of the base could accommodate much larger traditional force, or surge requirements (we use only 80 double-occupied rooms now, with a strength of 767 traditional Guardsmen)

5. **Environmental Impact:**
   - The 179th has a proud record of Environmental Stewardship, e.g.,
     - Installation Restoration Program (IRP):
       - 5 of 8 sites are officially closed.
       - All will be closed by mid-2006.
     - No underground storage tank issues
     - Current small arms firing range will require soil remediation when it is ordered closed. Estimated cost $ 0.5M.

6. **Awards and Accomplishments:**

Year	Inspection/Award	Reason or Results
2005	Environmental, Safety, Occupational, Health Compliance Assessment & Management Program (ESOHCAMP)	Outstanding and Best Ever Seen
2004	Health Services Inspection (HSI)	Excellent Rating
2003	Deneke Award	Outstanding ANG Civil Engineer
2002	CMSgt Edward Wilbert Award	Outstanding Fire Dept of the Year
2002	James D. Weaver Award	Outstanding Fulltime Medical Technician
2002	ANG Environmental Quality Award For Recycling	
2002	ANG Services Flt of the Year	Superior Performance
2002	Initial Readiness Inspection	Excellent
2002	Unit Compliance Inspection	Excellent
2002	Aircrew Stan/Eval Inspection	Excellent
2001	AF Outstanding Unit Award	Outstanding Performance
2001	ANG Metcalf Trophy	Outstanding Mission Accomplishment
2000	Tappan Award	Outstanding Ohio Flying Unit
2000	EORI @ Ramstein AB, GE	Top rating
2000	Health Services Inspection	Highest Air Force rating
2000	IG Exercise (IGX)	Top rating
1999	Tappan Award	Outstanding Ohio Flying Unit

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

Attachment 1

C-130 HERCULES

The C-130 Hercules primarily performs the tactical intra-theater portion of the airlift mission. The aircraft is capable of operating from rough; dirt strips and is the prime transport for para-dropping troops and equipment into hostile areas. Basic and specialized versions perform a diversity of roles, including airlift support, aero medical missions, and natural disaster relief missions.

The C-130 Hercules has unsurpassed versatility, performance, and mission effectiveness. The flexible design of the Hercules enables it to be configured for many different missions, allowing for one aircraft to perform the role of many. Much of the special mission equipment added to the Hercules is removable, allowing the aircraft to revert back to its cargo delivery role if desired. Additionally, the C-130 can be rapidly reconfigured for the various types of cargo

The C-130's design maximum gross weight is 155,000 pounds (175,000 pounds wartime) with a normal landing weight of 130,000 pounds. The airplane is capable of airlifting 6 pallets or 74 litters or 16 CDS bundles or 92 combat troops or 64 paratroopers. It can also carry 45,000 pounds of cargo or a combination of any of these up to the cargo compartment capacity or maximum allowable weight.

Conduct aero medical evacuation operations. Movement of casualties by air transportation under the supervision of qualified aero medical evacuation crew members to/between medical treatment facilities

Support psychological operations. Support of operations targeted against the minds of the enemy civilian population and combat forces. Speaker operations and leaflet airdrops can be used to influence and demoralize hostile forces prior to and during offensive operations

The mission of the C-130 is to provide rapid transportation of personnel or cargo for delivery by parachute to a designated drop zone, or by landing at austere locations within the theater of operations.

The C-130 provides long range, day or night capability. C-130 combat delivery assets can perform airdrops in visual conditions; AWADS C-130s are additionally capable of executing airdrops in IMC (Instrument Meteorological Conditions) independent of external navigation aids

The C-130 can deliver personnel, equipment or supplies either by landing or by various aerial delivery modes.

In the first, parachutes pull the load, weighing up to 42,000 pounds, from the aircraft. When the load is clear of the plane, cargo parachutes inflate and lower the load to the ground.

The second method, called the Container Delivery System, uses the force of gravity to pull from one to 16 bundles of supplies from the aircraft. When the bundles, weighing up to 2,200 pounds each, are out of the aircraft, parachutes inflate and lower them to the ground.

MANSFIELD AIRCRAFT UPGRADES

AWADS (Adverse Weather Aerial Delivery System) - The precise delivery of personnel, equipment, and supplies during adverse weather, using a self-contained aircraft instrumentation system without artificial ground assistance or the use of ground navigational aids.

SCNS (Self-Contained Navigation System) - SCNS provides the flight crew an integrated navigation system, with four independent navigation solutions, including GPS, flight guidance and advisory information to fly a variety of missions. SCNS also provides control of communication and navigation radios, flight planning and calculation, and control of troop/cargo airdrops, as well as processing of radar data on some models.

ESKE (Enhanced Station Keeping Equipment)

GPWS (Ground Proximity Warning System)

GPS (Global Positioning System) - Installs a space-based all-weather radio navigation system into all SCNS-equipped C-130s to allow autonomous navigation capabilities. Eliminates reliance upon ground-based stations to provide navigational inputs to aircraft systems

MLS (Microwave Landing System) - Allows precision approaches and landings. MLS will allow elimination of ILS, which suffers from frequency congestion.

NVG (Night Vision Goggles)

NVIS (Night Vision Imaging System)

SATCOM (Satellite Communication) - Installs a permanent SATCOM antenna, interface cabling, preamplifier, and control panel for portable SATCOM radios required by joint users of combat delivery aircraft

GCAS (Ground Collision Avoidance System)

TCAS (Traffic Collision Avoidance System)

Threat Avoidance.

Improved capability to detect/degrade/defeat threats.

Chaff Flare Dispensers, Radar Jammers

MWS (Missile Warning System)

RWS (Radar Warning System)

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

OTHER DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF MANSFIELD'S C-130 FLEET

- Flying Hours (average equivalent baseline) on our aircraft place them at less than half of their useful life span.

- **Enhanced Cargo Delivery** capability via the Canary Slide Ramp System (ideal for Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Defense Team rapid movement requirement)

- Our **record of excellence and innovation in aircraft maintenance** has involved us in important, mission-enhancing research and development (often for the entire C-130 fleet):

  - **(BCEM) Battery Control Electronic Module** test aircraft for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center

  - **Corrosion Sensor Test Aircraft** for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center (administered by Battelle Labs in Columbus) to aid in determining corrosion impact from world wide environmental conditions on entire ANG and Air Force C-130 fleet. This evaluation will also help to re-evaluate C-130 aircraft frequency for wash intervals and corrosion inspections

  - **SATCOM Form Fit And Function Evaluation** (C-130 aircraft) for Wright Patterson AFB to help refine the Satellite Secure Communications System for CENTAF operations

  - Potential **Deicing Fluid Evaluation Site** for the Air Force Research Laboratory

  - **Main Landing Gear Torque Tube Coupling Safety Test Aircraft** for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center and Air Mobility Command (AMC)

  - Evaluator for the **Airdrop Ballistic Winds / Gps Tracker Test** for Wright Patterson, AFB

RECEIVED
06302005

June 27, 2005

Brig. Gen. Sue Ellen Turner
% BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street
Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Subject: The removal of the C-130-H's from the 179th Air Wing, Lahm Field, Mansfield, Ohio

Subject: The lack of factual information about the 179th and other Air Guard, National Guard, and Reservist personell or their facilities.

Dear Sir,

I have done quite a lot of research on the subject of the 179th Air Wing, based at Lahm Field, Mansfield, Ohio. Also have spent time in composing this letter. Please, please, sir, do me the courtesy of reading what I have provided for your enlightenment. Enclosed is much infamation regarding the past and present of the 179th. It is a very active Air Guard Unit. Their planes and the personell have been deployed to many places in the world for both Military and Humanitarian missions, all successfully completed.

Inspections of the 179th have always been completed with the highest possible ratings. All the years the 179th Air Guard has been at Lahm Field it has always been carefully and pridefully maintained. The runway at Lahm Field is one of the longest in the US and can accomodate the largest planes now flying. It is also an emergency landing strip for a shuttle. Why give up the use of this runway for Military use, just to spend billions on another airstrip at some other Air Base?

Guard Units were <u>never</u> meant to be moved around. They were supposed to be locally based, and the members of these Guard Units were to train at their facilities twice a month, then to have 2 weeks of more concentrated training

at a regular, or "standing" military facility.
By closing these Guard and Reserve facilities you are defeating the very purpose for which they were created.
By going forward with your plans in Ohio you are destroying our faith and trust in the purpose and structure of our Guard system, and betraying the people who serve in them.
You will force the retirement of many Senior Officers and staff, with many years of experience and great depth of knowledge. Young people who have homes and families will not re-new their contracts. They will not up-root their families
Currently, there is a short-fall in signing up new recruits for some branches of service. If you forge ahead with closing of so many Militilitary bases, especially Guard and Reserve forces, you will have a MAJOR in recruiting over-all, short-fall.
The ENTIRE BRAC needs to review their short-sighted thinking while we still have a civilian-military. Since about 40 per cent of our fighting man power now in the war zones is civilian-military, BRAC needs to use more thought before taking any action. Taking into account at the last "closing" it was to save 19 billion dollars. It cost 22 billion to close the bases. I don't see any money saved.

The professional or career Military expects to move around frequently. They know this will happen upon signing contracts to serve. Both they, and their families expect this. Many resources at their disposal will help and render advice and much financial aid to make their transitions easy as possible.
Guard and Reserve Units are not prepared for such change. Neither are their personnell. Nothing is in place to move them from one location to the next. Especially not financially.
BRAC seems to have no regard or compassion for what ever hardships or problems might arise for Reserve or Guard, or anyone else, for that matter.
The 179th has an enviable safety record. They have not had a lost time accident in many years. Let alone a formal "Stand Down" to consider or re-evaluate a problem. It has always been, and still is a very well-run facilety.
Lahm Field is one of the newer Air Guard bases. It has been well-maintained and up-graded. It is a Military Installation to be proud of. Instead of taking away the C-130-H's, bring more of them here. If you must close an Air Wing, bring the F-16's here, there is plenty of room.
Also, the 706th Transportation Company from Marion, Ohio could be based at Lahm, plus the Guard Units from Mansfield and Ashland.

That makes more sense to most people around here.
Contrary to what BRAC states that we have no room to expand, we have a LOT more land to expand to if it becomes necessary.
BRAC also states it is difficult to activate smaller Units. Apparently, they are ignorant of computers, fax machines, all kinds of telephones, radio, and good-old-fashioned written orders.
I think Ohio may have lost more people in Iraq than any other state, not too mention many horribly wounded. Their lives, and their families lives will never be the same again. More Ohioans are still being deployed, some from the 179th.
How can BRAC think of closing away with such an active Air Wing?
Here in Ohio we have great caring, reverance, and respect for our Military people, living and dead. We take great pride in what our hero's, past and present have sacrificed for us and the rest of the nation.
BRAC's high handedness is an insult to all of our service people, living or dead, and their families and people who loved them, also.
BRAC withholds information from the very people most affected by their decisions. Even their address and telephone numbers are not available to us, the "common people". The "common masses" who pay their salaries one way or another.

Many of us, the citizens of Ohio believe the Air Force is commiting legal robbery, and getting BRAC to do it for them. Our Air Guard planes are newer, better equiped, and much better maintained than the Cargo planes the Air Force now has at their disposal.

So where to acquire planes, the quickest and with the least cost?

Not a problem. We will just remove them from the Air Guard Units. Get them under our control and our command.

That will make the Air Force look better to the US Congress when we ask them for money for some "pet project".

The 179th is an Air Wing. How can they be an Air Wing without planes?

Ruth Ann Welch R#12 705 Pinkney Road
Mansfield, Ohio 44903 1(419)468-1253

The above "Cartoon" is the way many of our citizens feel about closing the 179th Air Base. We in Ohio have no large military base as do many other states. We have no Eglin Air Field, No Camp Le June, No Fort Wood, No May Pat, No Fort Leonard Wood etc.

The people of Ohio have in the past sacrificed many of our fine National Guard, Reservists, Air Guard personell for generations, and we are still doing so. We feel betrayed by what BRAC wishes to do. It is a direct insult to all who have died and many who have been so terribly wounded. A "slap in the face" to all of those who have given so much and to everyone who loved them

Vietnam Memorial stirs emotions

By John Jarvis
Gannett News Service

UPPER SANDUSKY — A wool stocking cap pulled halfway down on his head, the man in the red-and-black flannel jacket ran his fingers slowly across the letters.

W-I-L-L-I-A-M E F-O-L-L-O-N.

A grimace wrinkled the 58-year-old's expression, and he lowered his hand from the white name on the black wall to rub the salt-and-pepper whiskers on his face.

"William E. Follon. ... He got killed on the day we were supposed to leave," said Tom Gottfried of Carey. Members of the Air Force's 37th Combat Engineers, they had already turned in their battle gear and were at an airfield in Binh Dinh province "waiting for a ride out of the country."

Before their flight arrived, an enemy rocket attack killed the sergeant from Iowa, one of Gottfried's "best buddies."

"It killed him pretty much outright," Gottfried said.

Follon's is one of about 58,000 names of men and women killed in the Vietnam War commemorated on the Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall & Museum just outside of Upper Sandusky. The display will be at Thiel's Wheels on Tarhe Trail at U.S. 23 and Ohio 53 through Sunday.

Gottfried spent 13 months in Vietnam, from the end of 1968 through Feb. 2, 1970.

"It was good to be home, but it was kind of a letdown," because of the ill will some had for the war and those who fought in it, he said.

Gottfried said he'd feel better about his experience in Southeast Asia "if we'd won the war. ... There are a lot of good people on this wall who probably wouldn't be on there if we'd kept on."

Working security for the event, former Marion-area resident Mark Sigler of Harpster helped students find names on the wall.

"It lets you know the costs of war," said Sigler, an Army sergeant in the transportation corps during the Vietnam War era. He served in Korea, unlike his friend, Medard A.J. Ruehle.

Ruehle was one of 11 Wyandot County residents who died in Southeast Asia.

"He got out of a helicopter to help some wounded and in the process got killed himself," Sigler said.

Visiting the Upper Sandusky wall event from Findlay was Frederick Adams, who helped set up a similar tribute in his city.

"There's a bunch of guys from Findlay I went to school with who are on the wall," Adams said. "It's hard to just come here and not feel something for all these people."

Gary Cox of Marion, who helped provide computer information to assist visitors in locating their loved ones' names on the wall last fall in Marion, helped with the Upper Sandusky event as well.

If you go

- **What:** The Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall & Museum
- **When:** Through Sunday
  Today: 1 p.m., Veterans tribute ceremony; 6 p.m., musical and flag tribute
  Sunday: 2 p.m., closing ceremony
- **Where:** Thiel's Wheels, Tarhe Trail at U.S. 23 and Ohio 53, Upper Sandusky.

"I pay tribute to the 58,000 names that are on that wall."

Gary Cox
veteran

"I pay tribute to the 58,000 names that are on the wall," said Cox, a former Marine who didn't see combat. "As a Vietnam-era veteran I wasn't able to participate, but I can give back to the guys that did."

The people of Ohio Honor their military dead, I believe more than any other state. We have hundreds if not thousands of Memorials to our beloved dead from our largest towns to our smallest villages. On Memorial Day our cemeteries are a mass of color because all of the Star and Stripes flying over every veterans grave. The BRAC is going to dis-honor some of these veterans. They were deployed from our Reserve and Guard Units. Now, you want to "change the Rules" in the middle of the war, and make a "hardship" for those who still are under contract to the military.

Local war hero honored in new museum display

News Journal
staff reports

MANSFIELD — A Memorial Day military display featuring the late Albert Allen of Mansfield, who is a member of Ohio's Military Hall of Fame, will open Saturday and run through the Memorial Day weekend at the Mansfield Museum at 35 Park Avenue West.

Allen, who died last year, was a lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserves and a survivor of the Bataan Death March and years spent in Japanese prisoner of war camps during World War II.

Museum Curator Scott Schaut said the items were donated by Allen's wife, Nancy. He said the display includes memorabilia from Allen's father, Albert L "Cap" Allen Sr., who was commander of Mansfield's Company M, 145th Infantry, 37th Division in France during World War I.

Also on display will be "broadside" advertisements for previous Memorial Day services held in this city during the 1880s when Civil War veterans were the only ex-soldiers available to be honored.

Schaut said displays concerning World War II and home-front industry in Mansfield, as well as a history of the 179th Airlift Wing, are still up.

He said one of the oddities of military history in Richland County is that while there are many displays concerning the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War and the two World Wars, there are almost no items connected with the Mexican-American War of 1845 or the Spanish-American War of 1898.

"Both of those wars have been totally overshadowed by the bigger wars," Schaut said. "Mansfield sent troops to fight Mexico in 1845 and many more to Cuba in 1898.

"Commander Edward Parker Wood of Mansfield was commander of the U.S.S. Petrel at the battle of Manila Bay."

The museum is open Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. and on Memorial Day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Lately our local Newspaper has been "featuring" a World War II milet ary person, with a long article about them.
Their service in the second World War, their lives after Military service, and other interesting stories the servicemen may tell.
We do revere our military people.
Although, a number of the BRAC have been military, I don't believe they hold our more humb Reserve and Guard people in the same high esteem as we do.

Ohio squad takes heavy hit in Iraq

COLUMBUS (AP) — Six Marines were killed and another 15 were wounded from one central Ohio squad in a major U.S. offensive near Iraq's border with Syria, a newspaper reported.

The squad was one of three belonging to the 1st Platoon of Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment, according to The Washington Post, which has a reporter embedded with Operation Matador.

The military has confirmed five Marine deaths so far and says about 100 insurgents have been killed in the operation — one of the largest U.S. offensives since Fallujah was reclaimed from militants.

Chief Warrant Officer Orrin Bowman, the site commander for the Columbus-based company, confirmed Thursday the company was participating in the operation and had taken casualties. He declined to say how many from the Marine reserve unit had been killed or release any names.

The military has identified two Ohio Marines with the 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment who have died in Iraq since Sunday. Lance Cpl. Wesley G. Davids, 20, of Dublin, was killed in an explosion in Karabilah on Wednesday and Cpl. Dustin A. Derga, 24, of Columbus, was killed by small arms fire in Ubaydi on Sunday, according to the Department of Defense.

Bowman said the unit is in the process of contacting and helping the affected families.

Lima is a rifle company that has four platoons, Bowman said. Each platoon has three squads that normally have 13 people but can be reinforced depending on a mission, he said.

Davids left for Iraq in January, last talked to his family four weeks ago and was scheduled to come home in October, his mother said.

"While his death is a tragic loss, he died doing something he felt passionately about," Jody Davids said. "He was the best that this country has to offer."

Her son loved working on cars and graduated in 2003 from Dublin Scioto High School, where he was on the crew team.

"He was just a very impressive, strong young man," said Russ Merritt, his high school coach. "Wes was kind of an inspiration to all of us. You just had no doubt that he would give 100 percent."

The operation was launched after U.S. intelligence showed large numbers of insurgents had moved into the northern Jazirah Desert following losses in Fallujah and Ramadi, further east. The area is believed to be a staging ground for foreign fighters crossing into Iraq from Syria along ancient smuggling routes.

The offensive started Saturday night and is aimed at rooting out followers of Iraq's most wanted militant leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

Two Ohio soldiers killed in grenade attack in Ramadi, Iraq

The Associated Press

Two Ohio soldiers were killed in Iraq when their military vehicle came under a grenade attack, the Department of Defense said Wednesday.

Army Sgt. Larry R. Kuhns Jr., 24, of Austintown, and Spc. Anthony D. Kinslow, 21, of Westerville, died Monday in Ramadi, the volatile town 70 miles west of Baghdad.

Both were assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division from Fort Carson, Colo. The brigade has lost 65 soldiers in Iraq.

It was the second time in as many weeks that more than one serviceman from Ohio was killed in the same attack in Iraq. Three Marines from an Akron-based unit died in an explosion last Thursday during fighting in Haqlaniyah, 90 miles north of Baghdad.

Kuhns worked at the Army recruiting office in Boardman for a time in late 2003, said Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Catrucco, who works at the office.

"He was an awesome guy. He was very professional," Catrucco said. "He was the type of soldier any sergeant would love to have."

Kuhns, whose wife lives in Fort Carson, recently had been promoted to sergeant, Catrucco said. He began his military career as a reservist with the 319th Engineer Company in Butler, Pa.

Kinslow's mother declined comment Wednesday.

Ohio has lost a lot of people, and nobody seems to care, certainly not BRAC, positively not the politicians. As far as I can tell the military isn't much interested in our losses. We may have more dead than any other state. Where do you think the next generation of Civilian - Military is comming from? Who is going to join a Guard or Reserve Unit if they know in advance that they may spend more time traveling than training twice a month? You already have a shortfall of new recruits in the Regular Military. You are conducting this war with 40% Civilian - Military. How do you purpose to recruit more people for any kind of military duty? Your short-sightness is going to make us a "target of opportunity" [illegible]

Lexington family has three sons in Iraq

By Ron Simon
News Journal

LEXINGTON — Like his father before him, James Andrews, 58, chose to be a soldier.

He served first in the Air Force and then the Army Reserves with the 1486th Transportation Company. He capped off a long military career by driving a truck during Operation Desert Storm and serving as his unit's first sergeant.

"I think if I hadn't retired there's no doubt I'd have already been over in Iraq and back by this time," Andrews said.

Instead, his three sons, Kyle, 24, Kraig, 22 and Kolby, 20, are in Iraq and Kyle is there for the second time.

Like their father before them, they chose to be soldiers. With a difference. All three are Marines. Kyle is a second lieutenant. Kraig is a lance corporal and Kolby is a private first class.

All three are, as their e-mail photos show, deep in harm's way.

"Have a wonderful Father's Day and thanks for all the things you do for me," Kyle wrote in a card last week. He is the only son, right now, who is able to stay in touch. "They come and go in operations," James explained.

"This is such a different war from the one I was in," James said. "Back then, it was letters and postcards. Today, it's tech messages, cell phone calls and e-mail. I was a driver and never was shot at. They are being shot at."

And three blue stars are in the window at the Andrews home on Steam Corners Road.

"I know they're doing a good job," James said of his sons. "They're really into what they do. Two of them have talked about making the Marine Corps a career. I'd like to think they are doing this because I was in the service."

Unspoken are any fears James and Renee Andrews may have about their sons being hurt in the midst of war. They know the dates down to the day when each of their boys will rotate home.

Lt. Kyle Andrews, with his brothers Pfc. Kolby Andrews and Lance Cpl. Kraig Andrews. *(Submitted photos)*

Lt. Kyle Andrews, 24, whose wife's name is Lauren, is doing his second tour in Iraq. When he comes home later this year, he will be a basic infantry instructor at Camp LeJeune. "He's guaranteed to be home for three years," his father said.

Lance Cpl. Kraig Andrews, 22, whose wife's name is Albra, would be home next but he might have to rotate to Afghanistan a few more years down the road, James said. "They plan that far ahead these days."

Pfc. Kolby Andrews, 20, unmarried, plans to leave the Corps perhaps temporarily to attend college. "If he ever wants to be an officer he has to have some college," his father said.

Kraig and Kolby are Lexington High School graduates and Kyle is a St. Peter's graduate. James thinks his youngest son was the one who first checked into the idea of a military career. "Then Kraig got interested and he joined," James said. One Marine became two Marines became three Marines.

There is a lot of military background in the Andrews clan. James' late father, James Sr., was a captain in the Army Air Force in World War II. Renee's father, Joseph S. Krebs, was a corpsman and ambulance driver with the Army in Europe during World War II.

ANDREWS SR.

KREBS

A native of Pennsylvania, James met Renee in California while he was in the Air Force. They were married for 20 years before divorcing. For now they are staying together.

James Jr.'s day job, the one he has held for 32 years, is postal carrier. He works out of the Ashland Post Office and his route covers the west side, mostly along Sandusky Street.

Nine years after he left service he joined the Army Reserves. With three boys to raise a little extra cash wouldn't hurt. But a war came along with it.

James was a squad leader as well as a driver during the Gulf War and finally rose to First Sergeant. When he reached 20 years he called it quits. "It was fun being a driver and moving equipment, but I really wasn't that happy with all the paperwork a first sergeant has," he said.

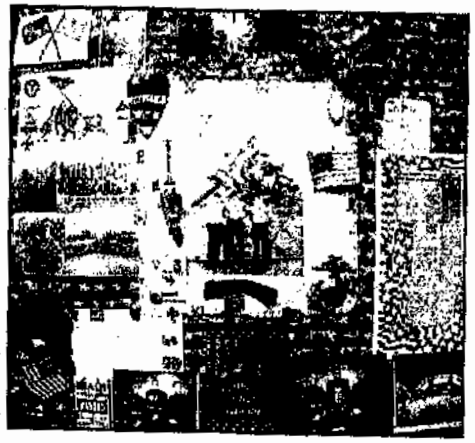
Now he and Renee stay in contact via all the new technology that links soldiers in the field with their families. And they wait. It's Father's Day.

And the boys are far away.

rsimon@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7230

Kolby Andrews, front row on the right, in Iraq.

Kyle and Kraig Andrews in Iraq.



A collage of the Andrews boys hangs in their home. *(Daniel Melograna/ News Journal)*

Another family of local Hero's you will note the father of these fine young men, was an Army Reservist. The quality of people BRAC wants to shuffle around.

Closings could hurt Guard, some fear

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — Some members of the panel deciding which U.S. military bases to close worry the Pentagon's plans to reshuffle National Guard and Reserve installations are too radical and could discourage recruitment.

The Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure plan, released Friday, proposes consolidating 387 Reserve and National Guard installations into about 125.

Those recommendations are part of a larger plan to close 33 major bases and restructure 29 others to streamline and modernize the military.

The Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing's base at Mansfield Lahm Airport is among

■ More on the effort to keep the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield, **see page 3A.**

those to be closed.

The Guard and Reserve changes could affect hundreds of thousands of people who serve in the part-time forces while holding down full-time jobs. The main concern is that consolidating installations will mean longer travel times for reservists and Guard members.

"You're going to have real enlistment problems," said former Rep. James Bilbray of Nevada, one of the nine members of the president-appointed base closing commission.

The base closure panel will review the Pentagon's recommendations and make any changes it deems necessary before submitting its list to the president by Sept 8. If Bush approves, it goes to Congress for an all-or-nothing vote.

The panel began its work Monday by questioning Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and senior Pentagon officials about how they formulated their recommendations.

Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the Guard and Reserve consolidations were done to enhance capability, cut costs and integrate the part-time forces more closely with active-duty units.

Members of the heavily stressed Guard and Reserves make up about 40 percent of the roughly 138,000 U.S. troops in Iraq.

Myers acknowledged that "there will be some inconvenience" for people serving in the Guard and Reserves if the Pentagon's recommendations are followed.

Recruitment numbers for the Guard and Army reserves are already lagging this year. Guard recruitment was 24 percent behind in the first four months of the current recruiting year, which runs from October 2004 through September 2005.

"Anybody who looks at retention issues would have to be concerned about this," said John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a defense Web site. "This was one of the first things that really popped out at me."

a lot of people are very concerned about possible greater short falls in recruitment for any branch or any part of the military.

Guard, Reserve death toll matches highest total

WASHINGTON (AP) — Thirty members of the Army National Guard, Army Reserve and Marine Corps Reserve died in the Iraq war in May, matching the highest toll for any month of the war, according to Pentagon figures.

The overall U.S. death toll last month was 80, the highest since 107 in January. There were 52 deaths in April and 36 in March, when it appeared the insurgency was waning.

Iraqis bore the brunt of the insurgent violence in May, but it also took a heavy toll on the approximately 140,000 U.S. troops there. The 80 deaths compares with a monthly average of 70 over the previous 12 months.

The Guard and Reserve, which make up nearly half the force in Iraq, have generally had fewer than 20 deaths per month during the war, and it's not clear why their losses spiked to 30 in May. That matched the 30 deaths among the Guard and Reserve in January, and it compared with 11 in April, 13 in March and 16 in February.

The May total reached 30 when the Pentagon announced on Friday that Sgt. Miguel A. Ramos, 39, of Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, died May 31 in Baghdad when a rocket struck near his position. He was assigned to the Army Reserve's 807th Signal Company, 35th Signal Battalion, based at Juana Diaz, Puerto Rico.

One of the month's 30 fatalities died in the United States. Staff Sgt. Tommy S. Little, 47, of Aliceville, Ala., died May 2 at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, of injuries sustained on April 19 near Iskandariyah, Iraq, when a roadside bomb detonated near his Humvee utility vehicle. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 114th Field Artillery Regiment of the Mississippi Army National Guard at Columbus, Miss.

May also was a costly month for the Army's 3rd Infantry Division, which had 10 reported fatalities. Since it arrived in Iraq in February to become the first Army division to return for a second combat tour, the 3rd Infantry has lost 34 of its soldiers, according to Pentagon figures. During its previous tour, which included the initial invasion in March 2003 and lasted about eight months, the division lost 44 soldiers.

Closing the base makes no sense

I am writing this letter to rge everyone to write their ate politicians and help stop ie closing of the 179th Airlift ing in Mansfield. The airbase rovides about 1,000 full- and art-time jobs and has an esti- ated $70 million annual effect n the area economy. The Base ealignment and Closure 3RAC) threatens not only Iansfield's Air National Guard ase but nearly a third of all Air ational Guard Units. It will rastically change the military s we know it. Our Mansfield nit has credentials that far ex- eed the criteria to stay open. (It ompares to the best units out ere). This is why the closing of makes no sense. The money aved does not offset the bene- its to the nation's defense.

The 179th Airlift Wing repre- ents the core of patriotism. hey are the heart and soul of merica. They are the small own people; they are our riends, neighbors, brothers, nd co-workers, most of which ave deep roots in our commu- ity. Many of these people may ist leave the military. They ave families here. They can't ommute in some cases, hun- reds of miles to go to drill. My amily will no doubt have to nove, possibly out of state. I vas born and raised in the beau- iful town of Bellville. My fami- y is here. My friends are here. Ay life is here. I would like my hildren to go to school here.

Don't get me wrong, there are lot of people also going hrough this. My point is that ur base is different because here is no compelling reason to lose it down. When you add up he numbers, it doesn't save the nilitary that much money. If it nade sense, I would support it. Ve need to write letters to Taft/Voinovich/Dewine and your listrict congressman. Thank ou for supporting our troops!

Jolie McCue
Bellville

Birthdays under fire

I would never have imagined that my three sons would be serving in the Marine Corps in Iraq at the same time. Half my heart is in Iraq.

On May 13, my son, 2nd Lt. Kyle J. Andrews turned 24 under fire in Iraq. He is with the 2nd AA BN, stationed at Camp Fallujah, Iraq. Recently he spent more than 10 days on a mission with no shower facilities available. Just a week later, he e-mailed us a copy of "The Desert Marine" which is a 2nd Marine Division publication that carried stories about Marines at Falhujah and also at Hadithah Dam, Iraq.

My middle son CPL Kraig L. Andrews serves with 3/8 Lima Co. and is also stationed at Falhujah. Kraig and Kyle have been able to share some time together at the chow hall and also working out.

On June 26, my youngest son, PFC Kolby J. Andrews, who is a member of 3/25 Scout-Sniper Platoon will celebrate his 20th birthday involved in Operation Iraqi Freedom at Hadithah Dam. As a mother of three sons who are serving in the United States Marine Corps, I could not be more proud of their commitment and accomplishments.

I feel fortunate we are able to correspond by phone, e-mail or text message on my cell phone almost weekly. Sometimes it is hard to say good-bye to them, but I always let them know that I am proud of them, miss them, love them, and that everyone is praying for their safe return.

Renee Andrews
Lexington

Fight for the 179th

First of all, I would like to start off by saying thank you and how proud I am of all the U.S. military and the 179th Ohio Air National Guard unit here in Mansfield, of which I have two sons who are members.

I have had many people throw in my face that the National Guardsmen are just weekend warriors. My answer to them is at least they are warriors and they believe in our country and what it stands for. Most people probably don't know that at the present time the U.S. has 60 percent National Guardsmen serving overseas due to the decline in recruitment of the regular branches of the military.

I am appalled with Mayor Lydia Reid and other community businessmen saying it would be a "win-win situation" for the city of Mansfield if the 179th were to close. It sounds like instead of fighting to keep the 179th and its annual $30 million payroll here in Richland County, they would rather have another white elephant on their hands (just look around the Mansfield area) and see all that they have brought in — not too much. At least once a month the hotels are being occupied with guardsmen on drill weekend.

I keep hearing it's a political decision, so who is getting rich off this? Rep. Michael Oxley, please step forward and fight to keep the 179th here in Mansfield; after all you are in a position to use your clout, and people do listen to you.

Candace Zeger
Lucas

Letters

Let's save the 179th

We hope you will all take the time to attend the rallies being planned to save our 179th Airlif wing of the Ohio Air National Guard. This unit is heavily involved in our community.

The fire department that is maintained at Mansfield Lahm is also counted on to provide mutual aid with the surrounding fire departments, at times when no C-130s are in the air. This service would be badly missed.

So wear your "We Love the 179th pins," put your "Save the 179th" magnets on your cars and go to these events Saturday in Bellville and Wednesday on the square in downtown Mansfield. Let's show our state leaders we as a community do care and want to prevent the closure of our base.

Our thanks to the REDEC/BRAC Steering committee here for all the work and time involved in fighting this closure.

Joyce and **Jerry Duff**
Mansfield

The above are just a few peoples' thoughts on closing the 179 Air Wing based at Lahm Field, Mansfield Ohio. Everyone is totally against this idea. If anything we would like to see more C-130-H's brought here. Possibly, a Jet Fighter Wing also. Something BRAC can't understand, or care about, is the pride we all share for these big planes, along with the military who fly and maintain them, as well as their support people. Indeed, we all have great affection for both the planes and the personell.

SAVE the 179th

.ook for special l79th poster in 'uesday's paper

It's time for area residents to ake up pens, e-mails, phones nd letters in defense of the 79th Airlift Wing of the Ohio ir National Guard.

The local military unit at lansfield Lahm Airport has een recommended for clo- ure by the Pentagon as part f the 2005 Base Realignment nd Closure process.

The BRAC commission is udying those recommenda- ons and will offer a list of facili- es to be closed or realigned to resident Bush this fall. But this ommunity is not about to go way quietly as our economy ses 1,000 full and part-time bs and a facility worth $70 illion annually to the local conomy.

We are not going to let go asily of a unit that's been a art of this community's fabric r more than 50 years.

On Tuesday, the News Jour- al will publish a full-page color oster aimed at sending a ear message to Washington at area residents want to ave the 179th."

We urge you to put that oster in your home and busi- ess windows as a sign of your pport. We also urge you to ing it to the community rally downtown Mansfield on ne 22 aimed at saving the it.

On the back of the poster ll be content helping to ex- ain why the decision to close e unit is flawed. On the back ll be names, addresses and one numbers of key elected icials and also the BRAC ommission. We urge you to ntact these officials and mmission and send them a py of the poster to make ur feelings known.

It's time to let Washington derstand how important the 9th is to Richland County, rth central Ohio, the nation d the world.

Look for this special poster Tuesday's print edition.

Here is who to contact:

If you would like to offer edback directly to the Base alignment and Closure ommission, an e-mail form available at p://www.brac.gov/feed- ck.aspx.

Letters can be mailed to 05 Defense Base Closure d Realignment Commission, 21 S. Clark St., Ste. 600, Ar- gton, Va., 22202.

Community must fight hard to retain 179th

The issue:
Local committee committed to waging battle over Airlift Wing

Our opinion:
Loss of the base, a valuable asset to north central Ohio, is not acceptable

It would be easy to give up the fight for the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

But Mike Greene and others won't let that happen.

Earlier this week Ohio Adjutant General Greg Wayt met with Greene and other members of the REDeC/BRAC steering committee and the All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs.

"The 179th is on a list recommended for closure," Wayt said during his visit. "But in the two previous rounds, about 30 percent of the bases on the recommended list were able to change the commission's mind."

That means Greene and others in the community must press forward, making the argument for the value of the unit to the city, the state and the nation.

Despite a strong effort spearheaded by Greene, co-chairman of the Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee, the 179th Airlift Wing was on the Pentagon's list announced this month, putting 1,000 local jobs in peril.

Now Greene is leading a rally called "Save Our 179th Day" at 5:30 p.m. June 22 on the downtown square. He hopes to attract 10,000 people as well as national media coverage.

And he wants everyone in the area to get involved, encouraging community residents to make signs for their cars, homes and businesses. He promises speakers, bands and cheerleaders for next month's event.

And for good reason.

The 179th is more than just a military unit to this community. It's more than just 1,000 full and part-time jobs. It's more than $70 million annually to the local economy.

It is an integral part of the fabric of this community.

The unit's military growth and success during the past 57 years has been mirrored by its networking and immersion with the north central Ohio communities it represents.

The fight to keep it is important. Rep. Michael Oxley has joined the fight, pledging to use his political clout to bring base closure commission officials to town in hopes of getting the 179th off the list.

We hope others in the community see the need for the base to remain open and join the ReDEC/BRAC Steering Committee in making noise. Losing the 179th Airlift Wing would be a huge blow to our city and our region.

We won't go down without a fight.

Send us your thoughts

E-mail
chunnell@
nncogannett.com

Mail
Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 25
Mansfield, OH 44901

Fax
(419) 521-7415

Again, our citizens have found a way to both honor our veterans and finance one of our Mansfield memorials to show proper respect to our heros.

Commemorative bricks available for veterans

MANSFIELD — The Korean War Veterans Association plans to install more commemorative bricks at the Korean War Memorial in Mansfield's Central Park in June.

About 300 bricks have been placed and dedicated by families and friends of veterans who served in all of America's wars or in peacetime.

Association member Bill Woodrow said each brick is inscribed with the words "Duty, Honor, Country." All are embedded in the walkway in front of the memorial.

There are two kinds of bricks; 4-by-8-inch bricks on which three lines of 13 characters each may be inscribed for $50, and 8-by-8-inch bricks on which five lines of 13 characters each may be inscribed for $100.

Applications for commemorative bricks or gift certificates can be obtained by calling Frank J. Russo at (419) 756-1468. The deadline is June 1.

The veterans plan to install the next set of bricks June 25.

Bellville crowd rallies to save 179th

By Mark Caudill
News Journal

BELLVILLE — Maj. Steve McLaughlin joined the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard when he was a senior in high school.

The 37-year-old Shelby man is focused on keeping it open.

"I'm not thinking about closure right now," McLaughlin said. "I'm thinking about what pressure we can put on the politicians to save this base."

The 179th is on the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission list of facilities recommended to be shut down to reduce overall military expenses. McLaughlin, an intelligence officer, and hundreds of other people turned out Saturday afternoon at the bandstand on Main Street for a rally to save the 179th. AmVets Post 43 hosted the event.

Jolie McCue organized Saturday's rally.

"My husband works out there full-time," she said. "I think, from my heart, they're closing it for the wrong reasons."

The rally included a popcorn stand manned by Boy Scouts, face-painting, a lemonade stand and music from the Clear Fork High School marching band. "We love the 179th" buttons were the fashion accessory of the day, and form letters to be signed and mailed to designated legislators were circulated throughout the throng.

U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley, R-Findlay, doesn't need convincing. He will speak at a June 27 BRAC hearing in Buffalo, N.Y.

"We have a tremendous story to tell," Oxley said. "I feel comfortable going to Buffalo and presenting our case. We have the facts."

Oxley seemed confident the 179th ultimately would be taken off the closure list.

"The message we are sending loud and clear from Bellville is, 'Keep your hands off our C-130s. They're doing their jobs, and the people are doing their jobs,' " he said.

Mansfield Mayor Lydia Reid addressed members of the 179th.

"You are an integral part of this community," she said. "We don't know what in the world we would do without you. That's why we are fighting so hard."

Reid encouraged everyone to attend Wednesday's rally in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

"This is just a prelude to our big rally in Mansfield," she said. "We will see you at 5:30 Wednesday in downtown, sunny Mansfield."

McCue will be there.

"I hope they keep having rallies," she said. "Right now, this is all the public can do."

mcaudill@oncogannett.com
(419) 521-7219

Dan O'Hara attended Saturday's "Save the 179th" rally with poster in hand. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

All of us really do care about the 179th Air Wing, as well as other Reserve and Guard Units.

Rallying 'round the 179th

Jackie Beilstein passes out balloons at Saturday's "Save the 179th" rally in Bellville. The rally was a prelude to the larger event planned to start at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday in the square in downtown Mansfield. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Big rally for 179th planned for next month

By Mark Caudill
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Mike Greene wants the community to unite behind the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

GREENE

"Let our voices be heard all the way to Washington," said Greene, co-chairman of the Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee that worked for more than a year to keep the base off the recommended

See RALLY, back page

About the 179th

- **What:** 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard
- **Based:** Mansfield Lahm Airport
- **Airmen:** Roughly 1,000 full- and part-time airmen. The 179th is the seventh-largest employer in north central Ohio.
- **Awards:** The 179th has received many awards, decorations and recognitions, including the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. Recently, the 179th received the Alan P. Tappan Memorial Trophy, which designates the outstanding Air National Guard unit in Ohio; and the Rusty Metcalf Award, which acknowledges the unit as one of the best in the entire Air Force.

Rally

From page 1A

closure list.

Despite the efforts, the 179th Airlift Wing was on the Pentagon's list announced this month, putting 1,000 local jobs in peril.

Greene is spearheading a rally called "Save Our 179th Day" at 5:30 p.m. June 22 on the downtown square. He hopes to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

"This isn't going to be just our group preaching to the choir. I really want to make this a huge, huge event," Greene said. "I want them to understand that this is serious business."

Greene encourages community residents to make signs for their cars, homes and businesses. He promises speakers, bands and cheerleaders for next month's event.

Greene said if the rally is as big as planned, he hopes BRAC members, who are scheduled to be in Cleveland on June 23, will visit Mansfield. This week, BRAC members will begin visiting bases slated for closure.

The 179th Airlift Wing, which has 230 full-time positions, was not on the list for a visit.

"If you had less than 300 full-timers, you would not get a visit," Greene said.

But local leaders aren't waiting for June 22 to do something. They will meet at 1 p.m. today at Gorman-Rupp's north plant with an All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs. Representatives from other affected communities, including Cleveland and Springfield, will be at the meeting.

"The idea was, 'What could we do to help each other?' " Greene said.

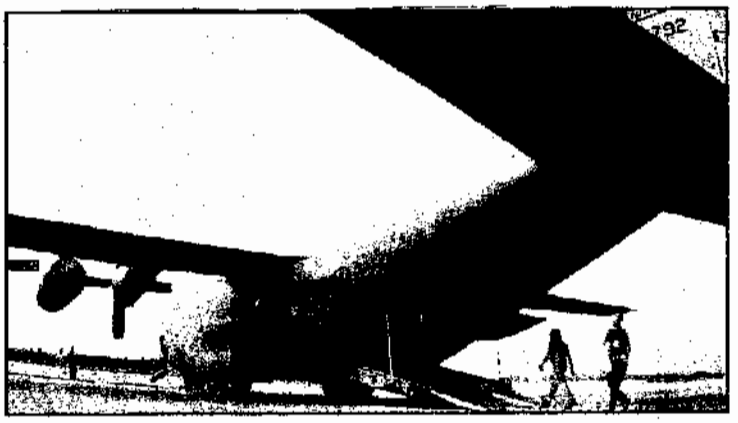
Greene fears the Air Force wants the 179th Airlift Wing's C-130s.

"If they're going to take our planes away, we would prefer that the Army not come in and maybe prevent civilian aviation possibilities," he said.

But that's only a fallback plan.

"Our main priority is getting us off the list," Greene said.

mcaudill@mcogannett.com
(419) 521-7219



Guests head inside a C-130 for a tour April 19, 2004, during the Mansfield-Richland County Chamber of Commerce after-hours event at the 179th Airlift Wing. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Rep. Oxley hopes to sway commission's decision about 179th

By Greg Wright
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — Rep. Michael Oxley said Monday he would urge base closure commission officials come to Mansfield so he and local officials can persuade them to keep the 179th Airlift Wing open.

The 179th Airlift Wing was one of 13 facilities in Ohio the Pentagon put on its recommended Base Realignment and Closure list May 13. But the commission's nine-member, independent panel must review the Pentagon picks and could remove some from the list.

"I never give up," Oxley said.

OXLEY

Gov. Bob Taft sent a letter to commission chairman Anthony Principi on May 17 asking commissioners to come to Mansfield, as well bases in Springfield a Cleveland.

The Pentagon propos moving eight C-13(cargo planes from t 179th to airfields in Alat ma and Arkansas. This r flects the Pentagon's mo

See OXLEY, back page

Oxley

From page 1A

to consolidate military bases and reserve units.

Oxley met Monday in Columbus with Army National Guard Maj. Gen. Gregory Wayt, Ohio's

strategy to keep the 179th open.

The commission will visit major bases on the proposed closure and realignment list. The commission also announced 16 regional hearings in California, Texas and other states to get community input on the Pentagon recommendations.

Ohio is not on the regional meeting list. Oxley said he and

a meeting in the Buckeye State.

Oxley said he also could use his clout to try to persuade commissioners to come to the 179th. He said he knows about half of the commissioners, including former Utah Republican Rep. James Hansen, former Nevada Democratic Rep. James Bilbray and former White House Chief

Budget item for 179th show of commitment

House bill includes funds for base scheduled to close

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — The U.S. House of Representatives passed a spending bill Thursday that includes $1.3 million for a fire station project at Mansfield Lahm Airport.

What that budget item means as far as the future of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at the airport remains unclear.

"Unless we manage to get off the (Base Realignment and Closure) list, it's kind of a moot point," said Mike Greene, who is leading local efforts to keep the 179th in Mansfield. "As of right now, the plan is to send that firefighting unit to Toledo."

The 179th Airlift Wing base is on the Pentagon's list of bases recommended for closing.

But U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley (R-Findlay), who asked for the fire station funding, said it shows that the fight to preserve the 179th is not over.

"By this, we are showing our commitment to keeping our base in Mansfield one of

See BRAC, back page

Details

The 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, is one of 13 facilities in Ohio the Pentagon put on its recommended Base Realignment and Closure list May 13.

About 1,000 full- and part-time airmen are assigned to the 179th, which is the seventh-largest employer in north central Ohio.

The Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee is leading the fight to remove the 179th from the recommended closure list before a decision is made this year.

A "Save Our 179th Day" rally is set for June 22 at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

News Journal staff report

Groups fight to keep 179th in Mansfield

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — It's not over yet.

No one is giving up on keeping the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at Lahm Airport.

That was the message from Ohio Adjutant Gen. Greg Wayt after a Tuesday meeting of the REDeC/BRAC steering committee and the All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs.

"The 179th is on a list recommended for closure," Wayt said. "But in the two previous rounds, about 30 percent of the bases on the recommended list were able to change the commission's mind."

Mansfield learned this month the 179th is on the list compiled as part of the Base Realignment and Closure process, which could mean the loss of 1,000 local jobs.

Mike Greene, who has led the local effort to keep the 179th open, said there is plenty area residents can do to help change the BRAC commission's mind.

"Write letters," he said. "It sounds trite. But that's one thing we can all do. Write to your senator. Write to your representative. Write to the president.

"Our goal is to get off the list. It's happened before. Springfield was on the last two lists and managed to get off."

Greene hopes a huge public show of suppo helps sway some minds.

"Show up at our ral June 22," he said. "We like to get between 10,0 and 15,000 people togeth on the square to sho Washington what we thi of the 179th."

Greene is spearheadi plans for the 5:30 p.m. ral which will coincide with "Save Our 179th Day." I is hoping to draw sor statewide and natior news coverage to he Mansfield plead its case.'

BRAC officials have s not made public all the formation used to make cisions about which m tary bases to close.

"We're still not sure actly what criteria th used," said De Williamson, the governo regional economic devel ment representative an member of the local BR committee. "We're waiti for that information to published so we know wl issues we need to addres

Tuesday's meeti brought together repres tatives of other commu ties in Ohio affected by most-recent BRAC nouncement.

"We're trying to see w we can do to help e other," Greene said. "Ri now, I think Cleveland the most well-organi group. We're hoping to ate some synergy with t group and help one an er."

rkent@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7274

BRAC

From page 1A

the most modern in the Guard system," Oxley said. "This would raise our investment in the 179th Airlift Wing unit to more than $20 million over the last eight years."

Greene said any effort in support of the 179th can only help efforts to save the Guard base.

"I still think the best thing we can do is to show community support for the base," Greene said. "That's why I think that rally is so important. We want as many people on the square June 22 as possible to show Washington what the 179th means to all of us."

Greene said Ret. Brig. Gen. Steve Koper, president of the National Guard Association of the United States, has committed to attend the rally.

"We've invited the governor and, hopefully, we'll have some other supporters here from Washington and Columbus," Greene said.

In the meantime, efforts are ongoing to entice members of the BRAC commission to visit Mansfield. Because the 179th has only about 250 full-time not mandatory.

Oxley released a letter he sent to Commission Chairman Anthony Principi in which he wrote, "I believe you will find the 179th represents a compelling case due to the active role it plays in homeland defense and the global war on terror."

In a letter to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Oxley urged the Pentagon to release "installation-specific data" used to make the closing list.

Greene has said the information is important so 179th supporters can better make a case to remain open.

Economic Development Corp.), which has diligently prepared for the BRAC process for more than a year, is now preparing its presentation to the commission in an effort to reverse (the closing)," Oxley wrote.

"Without access to this important data, REDeC cannot properly make its case that this guard unit, which has seen 35 deployments in support of our national defense in just the last four years, should remain open and operational."

rkent@nncogannett.com

Air Force just wants to have the C-130s

Six former Ohio Air National Guard generals visit area to share history

By Ron Simon
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Retired Brig. General Fred Larson calls the possible closure of his old unit, the 179th Airlift Wing, "a grab for the iron."

The "iron" being the unit's fairly well kept fleet of eight C-130H cargo planes.

"The Air Force has not been a very good steward of their C-130s," said the former 179th commander. "A lot of them have aged and a lot are grounded. So there are squadron holes. So this is a grab. It doesn't matter what a unit like the 179th has done or the skills and military value it has. All the Air Force wants is the iron."

Larson was one of six former Ohio Air National Guard generals, all with ties to the 179th, in Mansfield on Thursday. All but one were pilots with the 179th and two were commanders.

They were brought together by Master Sgt. Rod Togliatti, the 179th's historian, for a day of history at the base at Lahm Airport.

Togliatti said the men represent 190 years of combined service, 45,000 hours of flying time and a large piece of memory.

"How many times do you get six generals together to talk about history?" he asked.

Afterward, the generals stopped at the Mansfield Museum on Park Avenue West to meet the public.

Some, like retired Brig. Gen. Myron Ashcraft, go back to the days when the unit was a jet fighter squadron. Ashcraft, who now flies for United Airlines, made the switch from fighter cockpits to the lumbering C-130s. It was the right training for those commercial planes he flies today, he said.

Other generals included Major Gen. Francis Hazard, Brig. Gen. Ray Weber and Brig. Gen. Richard Green, who commanded the unit until his recent promotion and later retirement.

LARSON

ASHCRAFT

HAZARD

WEBER

GREEN

LATTIMORE

Brig. Gen. Vergel Lattimore was the 179th chaplain and the Air National Guard Assistant to the Air Force Chief of Chaplains, and is still active.

"I travel all over the country. I'm the chaplain's chaplain," he said.

Green, like Larson, doesn't care to see his old unit broken up.

"This is a tough blow," he said of the closure threat. "The Air Force simply wants our new planes. No matter what the unit has done, the planes are all they want."

Ashcraft agreed.

"They are stealing our airplanes. That's wrong, ethically and morally. It's a shame," he said.

Larson said a major study taken under his command in the early 1990s proved the unit could expand to double its size at Mansfield Lahm Airport. He said arguments that there is no room to expand are simply wrong.

"I think the 179th is not set for closure. We're going to fight this tooth and nail," he said.

rsimon@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7230

Some Guard bases may lose planes

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — What happens when you take away all the airplanes from an Air National Guard facility?

It's a question being asked at more than a dozen bases ever since the Pentagon announced that it wants the Air Force to consolidate its planes at fewer locations.

Under a military restructuring plan announced Friday, the Pentagon proposed shifting hundreds of planes and thousands of jobs away from Air National Guard bases.

For example:

- Reno-Tahoe International Airport Air Guard Station in Nevada would lose its eight C-130H planes.
- Bradley International Airport Air Guard Station in Connecticut would see all of its A-10s fly away.
- Nashville International Air Guard Station in Tennessee would lose its C-130H aircraft.

"How can you be an airlift wing without any airlift?" asked April Conway, a spokeswoman for the Nevada Air National Guard.

The recommendations now go to a president-appointed commission that will spend the summer holding hearings before sending its recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 8.

Compared with four previous Base Realignment and Closure rounds that began in 1988, National Guard and Reserve bases would be hit hard this time. The Pentagon proposes consolidating about 387 Reserve and National Guard installations into about 125, many to be located at or near active-duty bases.

Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the base closing commission Monday that the Air Force wants more planes in fewer units to more quickly fulfill missions.

"What they have right now are pockets of small numbers of aircraft that are at various locations," Myers said. "And it makes it unwieldy when you try to access them for missions, particularly the kind of missions we're in today in Iraq and Afghanistan and for that matter, around the world."

a lot of citizens are certain in their own minds that the Air Force wants our newer, better C-130. That this is a legal case of Air Piracy. The C-130-H's of the 179th have more up-dated equipment, as well as being much better maintained. Where in this article, General Richard Myers, says it more difficult to deploy planes in smaller groups. That is a mis-represental of the truth. In this day of radio, telephones and computers, not to mention signed letters of orders, fax etc. Any and all orders can be transmitted in a matter of seconds. The Air Force is being very heavy-handed in "robbing" the Air Guard units of their C-130-H's. Robbing is how the pegs that units feel, not too mention our citizens.

Pentagon: 179th too crowded

Lack of expansion room among reasons for recommended closing

By Greg Wright
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — About 1,000 full and part-time military jobs in Mansfield are in danger primarily because the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield has less room to grow than its rivals in Toledo, Arkansas and Alabama, according to Pentagon documents.

■ TV show explains BRAC process, page 6A.

One of several major criteria the Pentagon considered while determining which military bases to close or realign is whether the facility can accommodate growth. The base also must fit into the Pentagon's future defense strategy.

The Pentagon proposed disbanding the local Ohio Air National Guard last month and moving its eight C-130H transport planes to

See 179th, page 6A

179th

From page 1A

Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base in Alabama and the 314th Airlift Wing at Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas.

Other support services now at Mansfield would go to the Louisville International Airport Air Guard Station in Kentucky and the Toledo Express Airport Air Guard Station.

However, local officials said Monday the ratings are wrong, since city officials offered the Pentagon access to 168 additional acres when military officials indicated expansion might be considered a factor. The 179th Airlift Wing currently is located on 227 acres.

Rep. Michael Oxley, R-Findlay, and local officials have said they would fight to keep transport planes at the 179th at Mansfield Lahm Airport. Gov. Bob Taft announced Monday he will give the Richland Economic Development Corp. $50,000 to promote the 179th.

But it's unlikely the independent Base Realignment and Closure commission would overturn the Pentagon's decision because of the facility's size, a military expert said.

"It's too small to worry about," said John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a defense analysis firm.

While some bases on the closure list could lose thousands of jobs, Pike said, the 179th has just 234 full time military and civilian workers. Still, local officials argue, the base is the seventh largest employer in north central Ohio, including around 650 part-time jobs held by "traditional" National Guard members.

The Pentagon claimed in environmental documents released this weekend the 179th has no room for growth. Little Rock can develop another 1,783 acres; Maxwell an additional 264 acres and Toledo has 45 acres, the Pentagon said. Only Louisville had zero acreage available, the Pentagon said.

Another factor in the Defense Department's base closing considerations was military value. Mansfield ranked lower in military value and capacity than other airlift bases, according to the Pentagon.

The top ranked airlift base is Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. Mansfield ranked 119th out of 154 airlift bases behind Little Rock in 17th place; Maxwell, 21st; Louisville, 79th; and Toledo, 100th.

Local officials contend the 179th is still busy in the war on terrorism with its 35 deployments since Sept. 11, 2001. The facility is modern and there is room to house up to a dozen C-130H planes at the base, said retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Fred Larson, co-chair of the group fighting to save the 179th.

The Pentagon argues it has too many small Air National Guard units; its goal is to merge many with active-duty facilities, said Loren Thompson, a military expert at the Lexington Institute.

But the base closure panel, which is reviewing the Pentagon recommendations, could disagree and decide to keep national guard units such as the 179th open, Thompson said.

The nine-member commission must come up with a final closure list by Sept. 8.

The information that Lahm Field can't expand is absolutely in error. Lahm Field and 179th base there can be expanded greatly any time that becomes necessary. It already has one of the longest runways in the US and can accomodate the largest planes in the world. Lahm Field is an emergency landing strip, if necessary, for the space shuttle. Why spend Millions on increasing the length of a runway some place else, when Lahm Field has everything necessary.

Bad data led to decision, officials say

By Linda Martz
News Journal

MANSFIELD — The Pentagon used flawed data and left major questions unanswered in recommending the 179th Airlift Wing be closed, former base officials say.

Local officials plan to correct those issues in hope of keeping the Ohio Air National Guard unit and its 1,000 full- and part-time jobs in Mansfield, where it's been for more than 50 years.

Retired Brig. Gen. Myron Ashcraft, now a

See DATA, page 6A

Data

From page 1A

United Airlines pilot, said the thing that "jumped right out" when he looked at criteria released Monday is the Pentagon inaccurately said Mansfield Lahm Airport doesn't have enough land available to expand the wing's fleet from eight to 16 C-130H transport planes.

The military considers larger bases more efficient, the Lexington resident said.

Once the Pentagon documents said additional land was not available — an incorrect claim — other questions, such as what it would cost to expand, were left unanswered, he said.

"Once they say that we don't have the land, everything else is out the window," Ashcraft said. "They don't even evaluate how much it would cost to have a full squadron.

"That's the kind of stuff we have to fight it on — is the data," he said Monday night. "I don't see any other shortfall in the criteria that we would fail to meet."

Local officials said Monday they're frustrated by Pentagon documents showing the military meted out low scores to Lahm in areas such as room to expand, military value and capacity. The 179th, which has had 35 deployments since Sept. 11, 2001, generates about $70 million annually to the local economy.

Mayor Lydia Reid said local officials offered the Pentagon 168 additional acres — the city-owned Bradley and Kissell farms north of the airport — when military officials indicated expansion opportunities could be considered. The 179th Airlift Wing now takes up 227 acres.

"Certainly, if they need space to build on, they can build a hell of a lot on 168 acres," the mayor said Monday. "We have said 'whatever it takes, we'll do it.' We're willing to do whatever they want."

Reid said Lahm has a lot more going for it than acknowledged by the Pentagon rankings. "We've got the second longest runway in the state. Also, we've got an airport that is underutilized" — meaning military planes don't need to compete with a lot of other air traffic, she said.

"Some of the places that weren't on that list (to be closed) do not have the capability we do," Reid said.

Mike Greene, co-chairman of the Richland County Economic Development Corp./BRAC Steering Committee, which worked for more than a year to avoid a recommendation that the base be closed, said the Pentagon claims Mansfield doesn't have enough space for a large fleet.

But the master plan outlined in the early 1990s by former base commander Brig. Gen. Fred Larson anticipated constructing more ramps to store planes, Greene said.

"It's easily accomplished simply by putting down more pads," at much less cost than the $33 million the Department of Defense said it would save by closing down Mansfield's base, Greene said.

Ashcraft said the Air Force appears to want to shut down Guard and Reserve units so it can acquire their equipment. "They have a very old, tired, beat up fleet. The way to get airplanes without buying them is just to steal them from the Guard and Reserve," he said.

Larson said, "It doesn't matter to them that they gain no military value (to the country overall) from our airplanes," Larson said. "They're just moving planes from one location to another, at a cost of $33 million."

Local officials are still trying to arrange for a visit to Mansfield by a member of the BRAC commission before a decision is made — but may get only a visit from a staff member, Larson said.

Ohio has been allotted two hours at an upcoming regional base closure hearing in Buffalo — and Mansfield must share that time with Cleveland and Springfield, Larson said. "We're asking for half an hour, but we may get 15 minutes."

lmartz@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7229

With so much at stake for so many people, in so many parts of the United States, how could BRAC not have up-to-date information? How could they take their duty to the people of this country so lightly? If they failed to have the correct facts about the 179th and Lahm Field, how many errors are they making about other bases? They don't go to these military facilities, and God Forbid they should consult with anyone whose future is mightily affected by their decisions.

Editorial

Closing 179th would be a mistake

The issue:
Today's special section devoted to the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

Our Opinion:
The message is simple: Save the 179th.

You should notice a little something extra in the News Journal today.

It's a four-page section aimed at sending a loud and clear message to the Base Realignment and Closure commission and lawmakers in Washington.

North central Ohio believes the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard should remain open and in operation at Lahm Airport in Mansfield.

The first page is a color poster with a simple message. "Save the 179th" is in huge letters, visible from a distance.

We urge you to put this poster in the window of your home, business or other locale that will be seen by the public. We want you to save it and bring it to the community-wide rally June 22. We then want you to mail it to the BRAC commission or lawmakers, and urge them to stop the planned closure of this vital military unit.

The second page is a message from retired Brig. Gen. Richard Green, a former commander of the 179th, who lays out a clear argument why the Pentagon wants the 179th closed and why it should remain open.

Send us your thoughts

E-mail
chunnell@
nncogannett.com

Mail
Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 25
Mansfield, OH 44901

Fax
(419) 521-7415

The third and fourth pages are messages from local businesses and residents in support of the unit, which has been a part of north central Ohio for more than 50 years.

Make no mistake. Closing the 179th is a mistake. The Pentagon simply wants the unit's eight C-130H aircraft, which would bolster the aging Active Duty and Reserve fleet for the Air Force.

But it would not be good public relations to make public that need for the planes. Instead, the Pentagon cited in its recommendation that there is no room for expansion at the local unit, a claim not supported by the facts. The City of Mansfield has offered another 168 acres for potential base expansion.

We urge the BRAC commission to look deeply into the Pentagon's flawed logic and look instead at the real reason for its closure recommendation — eight aircraft that Congress purchased explicitly for use by the Ohio Air National Guard.

We urge local residents to join the fight by posting today's posters all over the community. Bring them to the public rally. And then mail them to the people who will help keep the 179th open.

It's not to late. This fight has really just begun. We urge you to join in today.

This editorial states that there is plenty of room for expansion for the 179th Air Wing and Lahm Field in general.

Editorial

Pentagon has slapped part-time soldiers

The issue:
Reserve and National Guard bases were hit hard in the latest round of BRAC Commission recommendations.

Our opinion:
This is a funny way to thank the soldiers who have put so much on the line in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Pentagon has a unique way of thanking the Reserve and National Guard forces for their great contributions during the war on terror.

The thanks is a cold slap in the face with Pentagon reality.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, want to shuffle, cut and otherwise consolidate 387 National Guard and Reserve installations into about 125.

This convoluted thinking is again proof that active duty military leaders a.) don't understand the Guard and Reserve lifestyle or appreciate the needs of part-time soldiers, sailors and airmen; and/or b.) don't care about the future of either segment of the nation's military.

Their plan would include closing the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard in Mansfield, one of the best flying units in the country today.

Myers said these Guard and Reserve moves are being made to enhance capability, cut costs and integrate the part-time forces more closely with active-duty units.

We would argue this plan would accomplish few of the goals outlined above, save for cutting costs.

Myers admitted "there will be some inconvenience" for people serving in the Guard and Reserve if the Pentagon's recommendations to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission are followed.

Some inconvenience? That's like saying Noah needed to build a bit of a boat when the rains came. The understatement is that severe.

How about the fact it will add hundreds or even thousands of miles, and the accompanying expenses for members to meet monthly military obligations? How about the fact it will force Guard or Reserve troops, some of whom may be nearly qualified for retirement, out of the service who simply cannot make long-range trips once a month?

The economic effect on the communities like Mansfield scheduled to lose these units is one thing. But the effect on the individual who has devoted much of his or her life in service to the country is even worse. Lahm Airport will survive and perhaps even flourish with the influx of private business should the 179th close its doors.

But the 1,000 full and part-time airmen who made up the unit, hundreds of which have served around the nation and the world since Sept. 11, 2001, will never be the same. The 179th, for example, has gone on 35 deployments in the last four years.

At a time when recruiting for the National Guard is down 24 percent from last year, it seems sheer folly to slap the face of the people who make the Guard and Reserve the success story the part-time military is today.

Without the Guard and Reserve, the Bush administration could not have fought its war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, about 40 percent of the 138,000 troops in Iraq are Guard and Reserve forces. The Pentagon's reward is to make their career in the military even tougher to maintain.

We urge the members of the BRAC Commission to take a hard look at what the Pentagon has in mind for the Guard and Reserve. We think when they do they will see the security of this nation will be severely weakened with Rumsfeld's plans for the nation's citizen soldiers.

This editorial will give you more information about the 179th, and the opinions of many are the same.

Bush defends base closings, says money being wasted

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP) — Speaking out for the first time in favor of controversial base closings, President Bush said Friday the nation is wasting billions of dollars on unnecessary military facilities and needs the money for the war on terrorism.

Bush, who faces opposition from many states to shutting down bases, tried to be reassuring. He said the bases would be chosen fairly and the government would do all it could

See BUSH, back page

Bush

From page 1A

to help affected communities recover.

But he made clear that the process — however painful — could not be avoided.

In a speech to graduates of the Naval Academy, he said the closings and realignments "will result in a military that is more efficient and better prepared so you can better protect the American people against the dangers of this new century."

"In this war, there is only one option and that is victory," he said, to cheers from midshipmen, relatives and faculty at the academy on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay.

When Bush last spoke at a Naval Academy commencement, it was four months before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and his focus was his administration's effort to reshape the military into a faster, lighter and more flexible — but not larger — fighting force.

Since the attacks, and amid a global anti-terror campaign and wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, a top-to-bottom military transformation is even more necessary, Bush said.

Keys to the success are new technology, repositioning of global forces, new weapons and realigned bases at home, he said.

Bush said he understands the fears in cities where bases have been marked for changes or closure. The first round of closings in a decade has members of Congress and local officials working hard to protect the 33 major bases slated for closure and the 29 others proposed for downsizing.

"I know firsthand how hard base closings can be on local communities," said the former Texas governor who saw facilities shut down in his state.

Members of the congressionally chartered Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) will visit bases and hold hearings on the Pentagon proposal. The plan aims to save $48.8 billion over 20 years by eliminating redundant and inefficient facilitates and promoting cooperation among the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps.

The panel will decide on changes to the Pentagon plan and give a list to Bush and Congress this fall for approval or rejection.

Commission chairman Anthony Principi on Friday joined a growing chorus of lawmakers demanding that the Defense Department quickly release the thousands of pages of data backing up each of its recommendations.

Briefly

More work for 179th

MANSFIELD — Twenty-nine members of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard will leave Monday in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, the U.S. military initiative in Afghanistan.

Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the 179th has flown more than 2,600 sorties, moved 35,000 passengers and transported 5,600 cargo tons of material in combat theaters, according to a unit news release.

The airlift wing, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, was recommended for closure this month by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission. An area campaign is under way to remove the 179th from the closure list before a final decision is made later this year.

No, Mr. Bush, we are not wasting money on our personell at our Military facilities or our personell. May be other places are, Ohio is not. We have had terrible losses. My grandson has served a tour of duty in Bosnia, and Iraq in one of the most dangerous missions in Iraq. Transportation of fuel. Now BRAC wants to do what ever with the 706th Transportation Company.

AmVets Post 43 joins fight for 179th

Rally planned for June 18 in Bellville

By David Benson
News Journal

BELLVILLE — A second major rally to keep the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard in Mansfield is in the works.

AmVets Post 43 in Bellville will host a Rally to Save the 179th Airlift Wing on June 18 at 3 p.m. at the bandstand on Main Street.

The 179th, based on Mansfield Lahm Airport, is on the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission list of facilities recommended to be shut down to reduce overall military expenses.

A separate Save the 179th Day rally is set for June 22 at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage for that event.

Joli McCue is organizing the Bellville rally.

"When Post 43 called me and asked me if I would do it, I said I would be glad to. Somebody's got to do something," said McCue, the wife of a 179th member.

"If we get a big turnout it will show how much community support the 179th has. Our legislators will see we're not going to take this closing lying down," she said.

The other purpose of the rally is to provide information to those who have questions about the BRAC process and what individuals can do to try to prevent the closure, McCue said.

"So far, the support for the base and for this rally has just poured in. It's been phenomenal," she said.

Speakers at the Bellville rally will include Mayor Carolynn Studenmund, REDeC/BRAC steering committee co-chairman Brig. Gen.(r) Fred Larson, Brig. Gen.(r) Myron Ashcraft, Brig. Gen.(r) Rich Green, Richland County Commissioner Ed Olson, county Veteran Services Commission President Larry Moore and state Rep. Bill Hartnett.

In addition, form letters supporting the 179th will be available at the rally, which will need to be signed and mailed to designated legislators.

The AmVets and American Legion Color Guards and the Clear Fork High School marching band will participate. For children, there will be face painting, lemonade and popcorn stands and balloons.

Food and music will be featured after the rally at the AmVets Ron Boyce Hall located north of the bandstand on Main Street. Music will be provided by AmVets' Steve Stephenson, Dave King, & Westwind and by the Jo Kidd Outfit, comprised of 179th members.

For additional information, call McCue at (419) 886-4283. To donate food or supplies, contact the AmVets at (419) 886-2658.

dbenson@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7272

Tech Sgt. Ken Schonauer of Mansfield works on the tail section of a C-130 at Lahm Airport earlier this month. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal)*

Family and friends placed flags Sunday to honor veterans, soldiers and emergency personnel at a Healing Field ceremony in Fredericktown. The field will stand through Wednesday. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal photos)*

A place to honor many sacrifices

By Jennifer Kowalewski
News Journal

FREDERICKTOWN — Charles Blanchette served his country in World War I, World War II and the Korean War.

His granddaughter, Denise Needles, honored his memory by flying a flag Sunday in the Healing Fields at Kokosing Construction Co. The Exchange Club of Mount Vernon and Knox County sponsored the event to honor veterans, current soldiers and emergency personnel.

"It's pretty neat," the Mount Vernon woman said after buying a flag. "I saw all the flags and thought he has to have a flag."

Healing Fields began in Sandy, Utah, in 2002, when Colonial Flag Co. owner Paul Swenson wanted to honor those who lost their lives in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Volunteer Jane Engle said Swenson flew 3,000 flags in Utah to show how many victims were killed.

While residents walked among the flags, many felt a sense of healing, and Healing Fields have sprung up across the country, Engle said.

Chairwoman Melody Brent has worked to bring the Healing Field to Fredericktown since November 2004. Residents purchased flags to fly in a 2-acre field in honor of their loved ones, Exchange Club President Diane Collier said. Residents from Richland, Morrow, Ashland, Knox and Licking counties participated.

Residents can visit the field for the next few days

See FLAGS, back page

Ann Eing leans on her son, Jeff, as they look at the flag they placed to honor Ann's husband, John, a World War II Navy veteran.

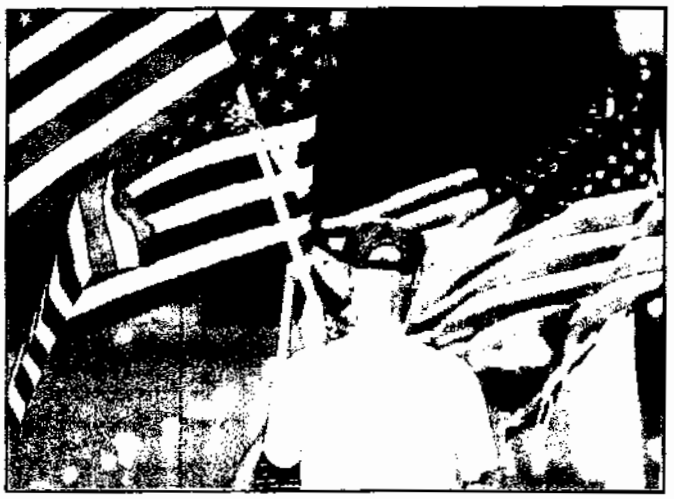
If you go

Residents can visit the Healing Field at Kokosing Construction Co. in Fredericktown through Wednesday evening. Kokosing Construction is on Ohio 13, near the Ohio 95 interchange. The flags honor and remember veterans, those serving in the military and emergency personnel. The program includes:

- **Today**, 3 p.m: Ohio Highway Patrol helicopter land; 4 p.m: The Petty Group (Knox County singers); 5 p.m: singers and speakers, including state Sen. Bill Harris, R-Mansfield.
- **Tuesday**, 4 p.m: Apple Valley Singers; 5 p.m: music and speakers including state Rep. Thom Collier, R-Mount Vernon.
- **Wednesday**, 4 p.m: Color Guard from Knox County Veterans; 4:30 p.m: speeches and closing remarks.

News Journal staff report

HEALING FIELD



A man walks among the memorial flags in the Healing Field at Fredericktown on Sunday. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal)*

Flags

From page 1A

to walk among the flags, Collier said.

"It's an experience you may never be a part of again," she said, as names were called over a loudspeaker to indicate whose turn it was to place a flag. "It's amazing to see all the red, white and blue. You can't imagine when the breeze blows, hearing 1,000 flags flapping in the breeze."

Collier, whose father-in-law stormed the beaches of Normandy, said she has participated in Healing Fields in Dallas and Findlay.

Volunteer Jim Tharp, a U.S. Navy veteran, said field coordinator Steve Murphy and the crew has worked since Friday to get the field ready. Poles were placed in the ground to support the flags, spaced 10 feet apart.

The crew installed lights so people could visit the field at night.

Denise Hess of Mount Vernon plans to visit again before it closes Wednesday. The Mount Vernon woman took her granddaughter, Shayla Ingram, 2, to the field.

"I just think it's going to be a unique experience," she said, waiting for her father's name to be called. "It's going to be emotional."

The Healing Field means more to her because her nephew, Travis Hess, is serving in Iraq with the Ohio National Guard 211th Maintenance Company of Newark.

"It's an experience you may never be part of again. It's amazing to see all the red, white and blue."

Diane Collier, Exchange Club president

U.S. Army Korean War veteran David A. Munk flew a flag in honor of his son, Rick L. Munk, a 23-year-old veteran of the Ohio Highway Patrol.

"It's great," David Munk said, watching the flags go up. "It's the best thing to happen to this little community. If it weren't for them, we wouldn't be here."

As residents drove into the field, a flag that had flown in Iraq hung between two fire engines to greet them. Bobby and Lisa Folden took their 9-month-old girl, Mackenzie, under the flags to honor veterans Bobby knows at the Station Break Senior Citizen Center in Mount Vernon.

Many of the clients at the center helped with the Healing Field by making ribbons with the names of those honored.

"You really respect what they did for the country," Bobby Folden said.

jkowalewsk@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7232

Concert to raise money for family of Galion soldier killed in Iraq

By Jennifer Kowalewski
News Journal

GALION — The Galion Community Band will remember a hero.

A combined band and choral concert to benefit the Lee Anne Ivy Fund is scheduled Sunday at 7 p.m. at Galion High School. Residents are asked to donate to assist the family of Marine Staff Sgt. Kendall Ivy II, 28, the Galion native killed in action in Iraq earlier this month.

"We hope that the community will support this effort," community band organizer Brian Treisch said. "The concert was suggested to us as a way to generate funds for the Ivy family.

"We have been able to move rapidly to put this concert together. Many of the band members were classmates, former teachers, and friends of Kendall."

The concert will feature patriotic music, combined band and choral works and pieces to honor Sgt. Ivy. Details are still being arranged.

"We are sure that 'Semper Fidelis,' 'The Stars & Stripes, Forever' and "Battle Hymn of the Republic' will be performed," Treisch said. "Rick Walker is working to complete the concert lineup and I am working to complete the band roster."

The Galion Community Band has performed since 1976, including annually at the Fourth of July concert before the fireworks display.

Any interested instrumental musician or choir member not already contacted is welcome to join the band for a rehearsal at 6 p.m. today.

"We have a solid band set at this time, but we welcome any musician," Treisch said.

According to a military report issued to his family, Ivy died May 11 in western Iraq from a severe leg wound suffered when the vehicle in which he was riding struck a roadside bomb.

Ivy, who went to Iraq in February, is the sixth member of the military from north central Ohio to die in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Ivy played football and baseball at Galion High School. He joined the Marine Corps after graduating in 1995. He is survived by his widow, Lee Anne, who lives in Camp LeJeune, N.C., and is four-months pregnant, two sons and a daughter.

The Lee Anne Ivy Fund has been established at First Federal Bank to assist the family.

jkowalewski@mncogannett.com
(419) 521-7232

If you go

What: Galion Community Band concert.
Where: Galion High School auditorium.
When: 7 p.m. Sunday.
Why: To benefit the family of Kendall Ivy, a soldier killed while serving his country in Iraq.
For information, call Brian Treisch at (419) 462-2209.

News Journal

Just one of our many lost service men in Iraq. Also, what is being done to aid and support his widow and family.

Lt. Col. William Schock and Col. Bill Roberts present a "My Boss Is a Patriot" certificate to Crestview Middle School Principal John McNeely at a school assembly Wednesday. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Patriotic Crestview principal honored

By Lou Whitmire
News Journal

OLIVESBURG — John McNeely, principal of Crestview Middle School, got quite a surprise Wednesday afternoon.

He received a "My Boss is a Patriot" certificate of appreciation from the Office of the Secretary of Defense at a school assembly.

McNeely is a strong supporter of the Ohio National Guard and Army Reserve. He was nominated for the honor by teacher Linda Roney, a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve.

Roney's military boss, 10th Battalion commander Lt. Col. William Schock, and Schock's boss, 6th Brigade commander Col. Bill Roberts, traveled from the 100th Division at Louisville, Ky., to present the award.

McNeely, surprised and emotional as he stood at the podium, said he was almost speechless.

"I'm honored to receive this award. ... You people in the military are

After the assembly, Roney said McNeely is supportive of everyone at the school who has relatives in the military.

"We're honoring him not for what he gives me, but for his patriotism," Roney said.

Fellow teacher Joyce Galloway thanked McNeely for supporting her when her son Daniel was deployed to Iraq with the Army Reserve's 1486th Transportation Co.

McNeely said he was being honored for something he ought to be doing anyway.

"When Mrs. Roney was deployed (after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks) I told Mrs. Roney your job will be here when you get back," he said.

Even when she is not deployed, Roney's job in the military requires travel and days off from her job as a seventh- and eighth-grade teacher.

She teaches a course in the Army Reserve called "combined arms exercise," and she is area coordinator for Kentucky. Her military job most recently took her out of the classroom April 29 to May 4 to participate in weapons training.

Schock said Roney couldn't do her job without employers like Crestview Schools.

"She is responsible for all instructors in Kentucky who teach the course," he said.

Roney trains people in eight states — Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Schock, 57, who leaves in June for Iraq to assist the Iraqi people with veterans affairs, said the award presentation was his first and called it a proud moment. He is a human resources director for the regional veteran's affairs office in Louisville.

Roberts, an attorney in Kentucky, lauded McNeely for his willingness to share Roney with her other job.

"We as Army Reserve soldiers depend on two groups of people — our families and employers. We're here to recognize someone who is a patriot to us," Roberts said.

McNeely said his uncle John was drafted into World War II and landed in the Normandy invasion. McNeely's father, Bryon McNeely, served in World War II and received a Purple Heart, a Bronze Star and other honors — and survived being shot twice in the back of the head.

The principal said the award ranked with the birth of his daughter. "It's a moment I will remember," he said.

Roney said she first met her principal on the telephone.

"He made it clear he was very patriotic and me being in the Reserve would not be a detriment," she recalled.

"I have a wonderful lady who is my sub. I just have the best of all worlds."

Sarah Jenkins, 12, a sixth-grader, applauded her principal.

"He runs the school well," she said.

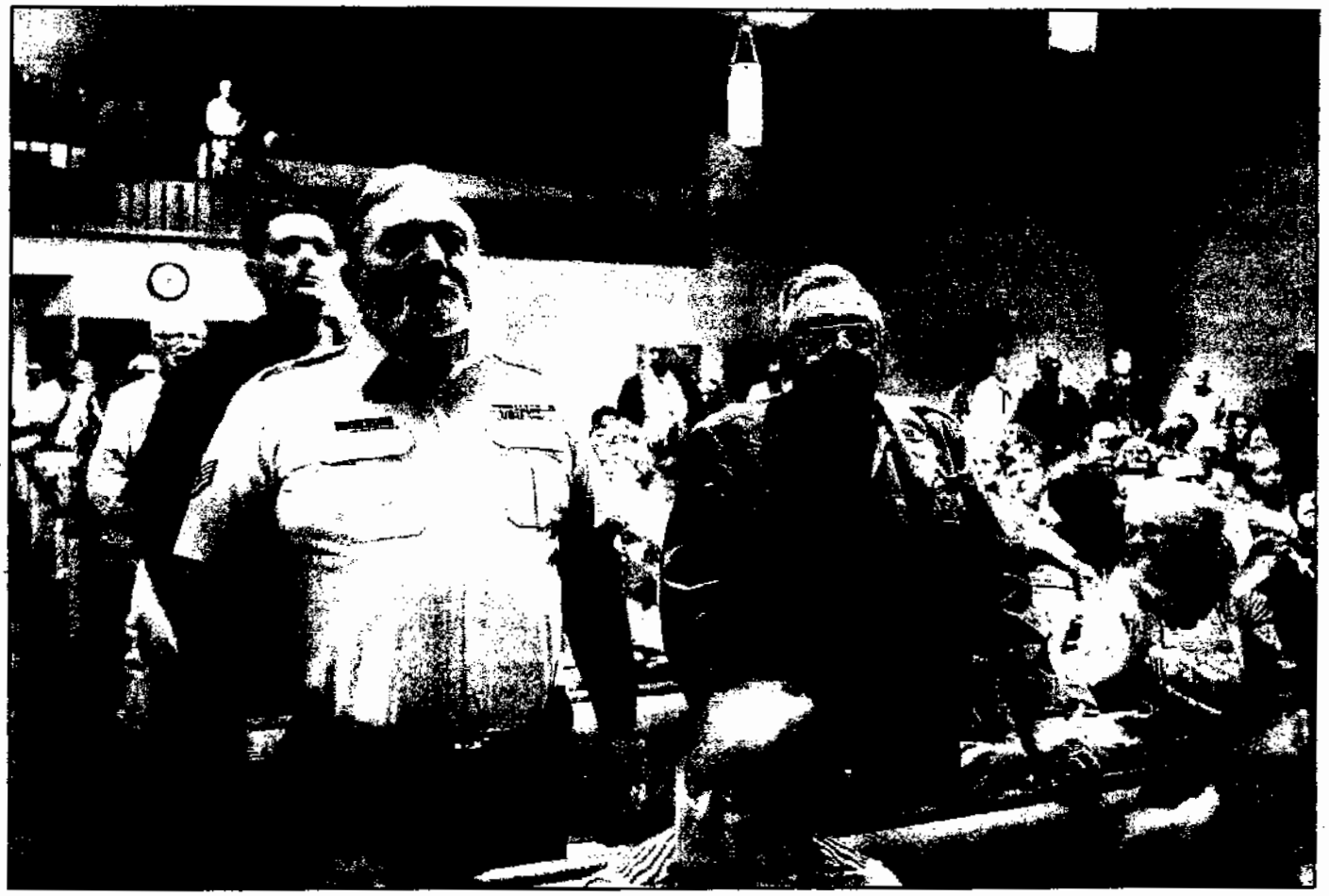
Classmate Connor Plemens, 12, said McNeely is nice.

"He is very deserving of this," he added.

lwhitmire@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7223

Another Civilian - Military person, who is a wonderful asset to our Community. The 179th also has a choir that sings at special local events.

Remembering the soldiers



Above, Gary Johnson, a member of the Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing for 10 years, stands beside his father, Glenn Johnson, a World War II Army veteran, during the "America, we must not forget" service Sunday at the Berean Baptist Church on Middle Bellville Road. Glenn Johnson has another son, Randy, in the service in Uzbekistan. Glenn's wife, Phyllis, is sitting to his right.

Right, Marine Tim Crumbliss sings "O' God, Our Help in Ages Past" during the service Sunday. Backing up Crumbliss is the church choir, led by the Rev. Bryan Moak.

(Walt Butler/ News Journal photos)

The people who are in our Civilian-Military units, are not just Military personell. They are part of our lives in every way. Our fathers and mothers, Sons and daughters, our friends, whom we love. Now BRAC wants to dis-respect them.

BRAC staff member to visit 179th

But BRAC/REDeC steering committee not sure if they are even allowed to attend

Program on WMFD-TV lays out story of 179th, BRAC commission

News Journal staff report

MANSFIELD — Mike Greene and Ret. Brig. Gen. Fred Larson, the former commander of the 179th, who together are leading efforts to save the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, have taped a program that will air on WMFD-TV at 7:30 p.m. each evening through Sunday.

"It pretty much lays out the entire story of the 179th and the BRAC commission and why it is so vital that the air base remains here in Mansfield," Greene said. "I hope everyone in Mansfield will watch it and come down and support us at our rally on June 22."

A "Save Our 179th Day" rally is set that day at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract a crowd of 10,000 and national media coverage. Greene hopes a huge public show of support helps sway some minds.

Ret. Brig. Gen. Steve Koper, president of the National Guard Association of the United States, has committed to attend the rally. Greene said he expects U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley and Ohio Adjutant Gen. Greg Wayt to be on hand. He's confident that Gov. Bob Taft will also be in Mansfield that day.

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Local officials haven't been successful in arranging a visit to Mansfield by a member of the Base Realignment and Closure commission but they haven't given up efforts to argue their case.

A BRAC commission staff member — not an actual commissioner — will be in Mansfield on Tuesday to visit the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at Mansfield Lahm Airport, which last month was placed on a list of military bases to be closed by the Pentagon.

Call it a second-tier visit.

"He will meet with staff at the air base," said Mike Greene, of the Richland Economic Development Corporation, which is spearheading efforts to keep the 179th in Mansfield.

GREENE

"I don't even know if our committee will be allowed to attend. If we are, we won't be able to ask questions or present our case.

"The briefing will be 100 percent presented and produced by the 179th. It will not be open to the public. My hope is that staffer comes here with an open mind."

In the meantime the BRAC/REDeC steering committee is continuing its efforts to get the 179th off the closure list. It now has another $50,000 to work with.

The State Controlling Board released the money, promised by Gov. Bob Taft, on Wednesday.

"It certainly will help," Greene said. "It will help pay for our trip to Buffalo. It could pay for other trips. It could pay for a trip to Washington, D.C."

Greene said such a trip to Washington could be for the purpose of arguing the Mansfield case before a BRAC commission member.

"If they won't come to us, we'll go to them," he said.

Efforts have intensified in the weeks since the 179th was placed on the Pentagon's closure list. A lobbying group is still active in Washington, D.C., and the local steering committee has hired a consultant in Columbus to help draft its presentation for a regional hearing in Buffalo on June 27.

Ohio, which had three bases on the list, will get a chance to argue its case at that hearing. The state has been allotted a total of two hours. Greene hopes Mansfield gets at least 30 minutes.

"We'll attend some hearings prior to that so we can check out the format and see what some of the other arguments have been and how they've been presented," Greene said.

"I wouldn't say that's our last effort to present our case, but the style and substance of our presentation will be important."

rkent@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7274

As you can see we are doing everything we can possibly do to convince the BRAC that we really want to keep all of Civilian-Military facilities and personell in place. Even to producing a TV program to inform all of our citizens about our Civilian-Military.

Former 179th generals will meet the public

Six generals, former members of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, will be together for the first time Thursday for a "Meet the Generals Day" at Mansfield Memorial Museum, 34 Park Avenue West.

They will greet the public from 4 to 6 p.m.

Scheduled to participate are Francis Hazard, Ray Weber, Fred Larson, Myron Ashcraft, Rich Green and Vergel Latimore.

The 179th, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, has been recommended for closing by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission. Public rallies to have the 179th removed from the closure list are planned for June 18 in Bellville and June 22 on the square in Mansfield.

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

1. Mission/Military Value

- Primary Aircraft Weapons System: (8) C-130H2+ Hercules (Distinguishing Operational and Technical highlights are detailed in attachment 1.); Valued at $240,000,000.

- Major Command: Air Mobility Command (AMC), Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.

- The proud home to one the most highly trained, combat-tested, veteran, C-130 forces in the United States Air Force. Since Vietnam, we have led the way in the C-130 community in both combat hours and sorties.

- Our air crews have been decorated with over 116 Air Medals and 16 Aerial Achievement Medals since Operations Joint Guard (1996-1998, Sarajevo), and Joint Forge (1998-1999, Sarajevo); these medals recognize meritorious service and/or valor in aerial flight.

- We make significant airlift contributions to the USAF mission and have an enviable safety record. Flying an accident-free average of over 3,400 hours from FY 2003 to FY 2005 (projected), we have accumulated a total of over 134,000 safe flying hours.

- We are a vital component of the Total Force (with the ANG providing nearly 50% of the USAF's tactical airlift capability, the fight can't be fought without us) and have supported combat and humanitarian operations and exercises around the world. Some examples:

  Volant Oak (Panama); 1979 - 1999.
  Volant Partner (Germany); 1987 - 1992
  Reforger (Alaska); 1983
  Desert Shield Desert Storm; 1990 - 1991.
  Operation Restore Hope (Somalia); 1992 - 1993.
  Operation Provide Promise (Bosnia); 1993 – 1994.
  Operation Joint Endeavor (Bosnia); 1996 – 1998.
  Operation Joint Guard (Bosnia); 1998 – 1999.
  Operation Joint Forge (Bosnia); 1999 – 2002.
  Operation Southern Watch (Mid-East); 1996 – 1999.
  Operation Uphold Democracy (Haiti); 1994.
  Operation Shining Hope (Kosovo); 1999.

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

- Since 9/11, the inception of the Global War on Terror, and Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom, the 179th has been engaged like never before. Some key statistics:

2001		
	Operations Supported	Coronet Oak, Deep Freeze, Noble Eagle
	Participating units	Airlift Squadron, Medical Squadron, Logistics Support, Airlift Squadron, Aerial Port Squadron
	Days served	13,842
2002		
	Operations Supported	Southern Watch, Deep Freeze, Noble Eagle, Israeli support, Enduring Freedom, Joint Forge, Northern Watch
	Participating units	Aircraft maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Civil engineering squadron, Services
	Days served	56,912
2003		
	Operations Supported	Deep Freeze, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, Israeli Support
	Participating units	Aircraft Operations, Aircraft Maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Civil engineering squadron, Services, Intelligence
	Days served	35,971
2004		
	Operations Supported	Deep Freeze, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom
	Participating units	Aircraft Operations, Aircraft Maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Intelligence
	Days served	64,052

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

Combat Aerial Operations Totals for OEF and OIF:

	HOURS	SORTIES	PAX	CARGO TONS
OIF AL JABER	1,219.3	878	9,735	1287.2
OIF TALLIL, AL SALEM, AL UDIED	1,839.4	1,222	19,755	2,429
OEF AL SALEM, AL UDIED, CURRENT AOR	898.6	550	5490	1852.6
TOTALS	3957.3	2650	34980	5568.8

- Our Proposed $8.0 M Fire/Crash Rescue Station will accommodate **JOINT** Air National Guard/Army National Guard firefighting missions.

- In addition to the flying mission, we are home to a wide range of expeditionary combat and homeland security support units, capable of delivering many invaluable capabilities. Some examples:

Civil Engineering
- Engineering force to maintain facilities and infrastructure
- Fire Department and Power Production team

Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Supply of materiel and fuels, maintenance of the vehicle fleet, traffic management services and planning and management of the mobilization process to ensure an accurate and rapid response in the event of contingency moves or national emergency.

Aerial Port Squadron
- Coordinate missions with Base Operations and the affected work centers of the squadron
- Plan, schedule and process air cargo, passengers, and mail
- Prepare load plans, manifests and air movement reports using automated or manual tools
- Prepare/Inspect and Process Cargo for onward movement

Security Forces Squadron
- Point of entry control to the installation
- Armed response to the installation

- Presidential Aircraft support at remote locations upon request
- Support to the Governor for natural or man-made disasters

Communications Flight
- Maintenance and support to computers and crypto equipment.
- Maintenance and support to telephone switch and outside telephone plant.
- Maintenance and support to land mobile radio (LMR), Ground to Air radio (VHF/UHF), state emergency radio (HF) and tactical mobility radio.
- Visual information support

Services Flight
- Food Service, Lodging, Wartime Mortuary Affairs, Search & Recovery Operations, Morale, Welfare & Recreation, Tactical Field Exchange

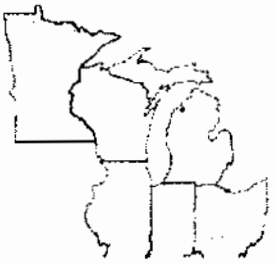
Mission Support Flight
- Personnel services to the Wing and surrounding retired military community, including recruiting, retention, enlistment, retirements, Separations, Force Deployment and sustainment, ID Cards and health care Enrollment, support.

Environmental Management Office
- Programs to reduce hazardous and solid waste generation
- Increase recycling and Green Purchasing efforts
- Maintain compliance with all applicable EPA, Air Force, and Air National Guard regulations

Expeditionary Medical Support (EMEDS)
- Mobile and highly capable clinical disaster response/assessment

- Because the ANG is also the State Governors' asset (The Guard is the only military force immediately available to a governor in times of emergency, including civil unrest and natural or manmade disasters), we are uniquely positioned to support a host of Homeland Security missions. Some examples:

Expeditionary Medical Support
- Forward deployed trauma resuscitation/surgical capability including critical care
- Multi-functional team composition decreases number of medics required to deploy
    - 179MDG is only MDG in FEMA Region 5 with Surgical capabilities
    - Region Five Consists of:
        - Ohio



- Michigan
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Wisconsin
- Minnesota

Security Forces

- Conduct anti-terror assessments and provide threat information to the Governor
- Coordinate local anti-terrorism intelligence sharing with local police agencies

Readiness

- Provide trained and equipped Nuclear Biologic Chemical (NBC) Readiness Personnel

Communication Flight

- Provide critical command and control with State Emergency Management Agency via the State HF radio net. Additionally the 179th CF has direct radio contact and support agreements with local fire and law enforcement agencies, which would enable us to coordinate a Homeland Defense emergency response with the rest of the State.

2. Land, Facilities, Infrastructure, Air Space

- Mansfield's 9000-foot, Instrument Flight Rule (IFR)-equipped runway is one of the longest in Ohio (only 6 of 168 are longer.)

- No commercial carriers compete for Mansfield-Lahm's airspace.

- We enjoy exceptional mission support facilities:
  - 33 Buildings: 292,863 Sq. Ft.
  - Total Acres: 230
  - Value: $92,928,000.
  - Main Cantonment Area: 67 Acres
  - Drop Zone: 157 Acres
  - **Airport Costs**: $49,904

  - Military Construction Investments:
    1997 - Medical Training/Dining Hall: $3.1M
    1998 - Jet Fuel Storage Complex: $4.1 M
    1998 - Headquarters Building: $4.7 M
    2001 - Security Forces Operations Building: $2.7 M

2003 - Air Operations/Communications Building: $6.6 M
2004 - Transportation Complex: $3.3 M
2005 – Upgraded/Hardened Main Gate Facility: $690 K

- Planned Improvements
  Fire Station: $8.0 M (FY '06)
  Civil Engineering Facility: $5.9 M (FY '09)

- Ample room for expansion (see attachment 2)

3. **Economic Impact**

Employees

Full-time	293
Duty Status Guardsmen	767
Total	**1060**

Impact on Local Economy

Annual Payroll	$ 25.5M
Operating Funds	$ 16.6M
Total	**$ 42.1M**

Operating Funds

Operations & Maintenance	$ 114,300
Ohio National Guard Tuition Assistance Program	$ 160,000
State Income Tax	$ 995,160
Profit for the State	**$ 720,860**

Benefit to Mansfield

Mansfield City Income Tax	$174,000
Income from Property Lease	$ 49,905
Profit for Mansfield	**$ 223,905**

4. **Community Infrastructure Support**
   - Large, talented, and supportive recruiting community with a radius reaching as far as Columbus and Cleveland, resulting in unit strength of 104.7%, 5th in the entire ANG (91 units.)

- Robust relationships with the City of Mansfield, Richland and surrounding counties, especially civic and legislative leaders.

- Property lease from City of Mansfield only ≈ $50K / year

- Over 1500 sleeping rooms within easy driving distance of the base could accommodate much larger traditional force, or surge requirements (we use only 80 double-occupied rooms now, with a strength of 767 traditional Guardsmen)

5. Environmental Impact:

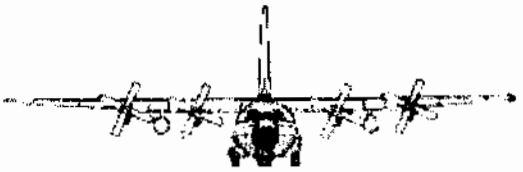
- The 179th has a proud record of Environmental Stewardship, e.g.,
  - Installation Restoration Program (IRP):
    - 5 of 8 sites are officially closed.
    - All will be closed by mid-2006.
  - No underground storage tank issues
  - Current small arms firing range will require soil remediation when it is ordered closed. Estimated cost $ 0.5M.

6. Awards and Accomplishments:

Year	Inspection/Award	Reason or Results
2005	Environmental, Safety, Occupational, Health Compliance Assessment & Management Program (ESOHCAMP)	Outstanding and Best Ever Seen
2004	Health Services Inspection (HSI)	Excellent Rating
2003	Deneke Award	Outstanding ANG Civil Engineer
2002	CMSgt Edward Wilbert Award	Outstanding Fire Dept of the Year
2002	James D. Weaver Award	Outstanding Fulltime Medical Technician
2002	ANG Environmental Quality Award For Recycling	
2002	ANG Services Flt of the Year	Superior Performance
2002	Initial Readiness Inspection	Excellent
2002	Unit Compliance Inspection	Excellent
2002	Aircrew Stan/Eval Inspection	Excellent
2001	AF Outstanding Unit Award	Outstanding Performance
2001	ANG Metcalf Trophy	Outstanding Mission Accomplishment
2000	Tappan Award	Outstanding Ohio Flying Unit
2000	EORI @ Ramstein AB, GE	Top rating
2000	Health Services Inspection	Highest Air Force rating
2000	IG Exercise (IGX)	Top rating
1999	Tappan Award	Outstanding Ohio Flying Unit

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

Attachment 1



C-130 HERCULES

The C-130 Hercules primarily performs the tactical intra-theater portion of the airlift mission. The aircraft is capable of operating from rough; dirt strips and is the prime transport for para-dropping troops and equipment into hostile areas. Basic and specialized versions perform a diversity of roles, including airlift support, aero medical missions, and natural disaster relief missions.

The C-130 Hercules has unsurpassed versatility, performance, and mission effectiveness. The flexible design of the Hercules enables it to be configured for many different missions, allowing for one aircraft to perform the role of many. Much of the special mission equipment added to the Hercules is removable, allowing the aircraft to revert back to its cargo delivery role if desired. Additionally, the C-130 can be rapidly reconfigured for the various types of cargo

The C-130's design maximum gross weight is 155,000 pounds (175,000 pounds wartime) with a normal landing weight of 130,000 pounds. The airplane is capable of airlifting 6 pallets or 74 litters or 16 CDS bundles or 92 combat troops or 64 paratroopers. It can also carry 45,000 pounds of cargo or a combination of any of these up to the cargo compartment capacity or maximum allowable weight.

Conduct aero medical evacuation operations. Movement of casualties by air transportation under the supervision of qualified aero medical evacuation crew members to/between medical treatment facilities

Support psychological operations. Support of operations targeted against the minds of the enemy civilian population and combat forces. Speaker operations and leaflet airdrops can be used to influence and demoralize hostile forces prior to and during offensive operations

The mission of the C-130 is to provide rapid transportation of personnel or cargo for delivery by parachute to a designated drop zone, or by landing at austere locations within the theater of operations.

The C-130 provides long range, day or night capability. C-130 combat delivery assets can perform airdrops in visual conditions; AWADS C-130s are additionally capable of executing airdrops in IMC (Instrument Meteorological Conditions) independent of external navigation aids

The C-130 can deliver personnel, equipment or supplies either by landing or by various aerial delivery modes.

In the first, parachutes pull the load, weighing up to 42,000 pounds, from the aircraft. When the load is clear of the plane, cargo parachutes inflate and lower the load to the ground.

The second method, called the Container Delivery System, uses the force of gravity to pull from one to 16 bundles of supplies from the aircraft. When the bundles, weighing up to 2,200 pounds each, are out of the aircraft, parachutes inflate and lower them to the ground.

MANSFIELD AIRCRAFT UPGRADES

AWADS (Adverse Weather Aerial Delivery System) - The precise delivery of personnel, equipment, and supplies during adverse weather, using a self-contained aircraft instrumentation system without artificial ground assistance or the use of ground navigational aids.

SCNS (Self-Contained Navigation System) - SCNS provides the flight crew an integrated navigation system, with four independent navigation solutions, including GPS, flight guidance and advisory information to fly a variety of missions. SCNS also provides control of communication and navigation radios, flight planning and calculation, and control of troop/cargo airdrops, as well as processing of radar data on some models.

ESKE (Enhanced Station Keeping Equipment)

GPWS (Ground Proximity Warning System)

GPS (Global Positioning System) - Installs a space-based all-weather radio navigation system into all SCNS-equipped C-130s to allow autonomous navigation capabilities. Eliminates reliance upon ground-based stations to provide navigational inputs to aircraft systems

MLS (Microwave Landing System) - Allows precision approaches and landings. MLS will allow elimination of ILS, which suffers from frequency congestion.

NVG (Night Vision Goggles)

NVIS (Night Vision Imaging System)

SATCOM (Satellite Communication) - Installs a permanent SATCOM antenna, interface cabling, preamplifier, and control panel for portable SATCOM radios required by joint users of combat delivery aircraft

GCAS (Ground Collision Avoidance System)

TCAS (Traffic Collision Avoidance System)

Threat Avoidance.

Improved capability to detect/degrade/defeat threats.

Chaff Flare Dispensers, Radar Jammers

MWS (Missile Warning System)

RWS (Radar Warning System)

RECEIVED
06302005

June 27, 2005

Mr. Anthony Principi
% BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street
Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Subject: The removal of the C-130-H's from the 179th Air Wing; Lahm Field; Mansfield, Ohio

Subject: The lack of factual information about the 179th and other Air Guard, National Guard, and Reservist personnel or their facilities.

Dear Sir,
I have done quite a lot of research on the subject of the 179th Air Wing, based at Lohm Field; Monofield, Ohio. Also have spent time in composing this letter. Please, please, sir; do me the courtesy of reading what I have provided for your enlightenment.
Enclosed is much ~~in~~formation regarding the past and present of the 179th. It is a very active Air Guard Unit. Their planes and the personell have been deployed to many places in the world for both Military and Humanitarian missions, all successfully completed.
Inspections of the 179th have always been completed with the highest possible ratings. All the years the 179th Air Guard has been at Lohm Field it has always been carefully and pridefully maintained. The runway at Lohm Field is one of the longest in the US and can accomodate the largest planes now flying. It is also an emergency landing strip for a shuttle. Why give up the use of this runway for Military use, just to spend billions on another airstrip at some other Air Base?
Guard Units were <u>never</u> meant to be moved around. They were supposed to be locally based, and the members of these Guard Units were to train at their facilities twice a month, then to have 2 weeks of more concentrated training

at a regular, or "standing" military facility.
By closing these Guard and Reserve facilities you are defeating the very purpose for which they were created.
By going forward with your plans in Ohio you are destroying our faith and trust in the purpose and structure of our Guard system, and betraying the people who serve in them.
You will force the retirement of many Senior Officers and staff, with many years of experience and great depth of knowledge. Young people who have homes and families will not re-new their Contracts. They will not up-root their families
Currently, there is a short fall in signing up new recruits for some branches of service. If you forge ahead with closing of so many Milititary bases, especially Guard and Reserve forces, you will have a MAJOR in recruiting over-all, short-fall.
The ENTIRE BRAC needs to review their short-sighted thinking while we still have a civilian-military. Since about 40 per cent of our fighting man power now in the war zones is civilian-military, BRAC needs to use more thought before taking any action. Taking into account at the last "closing" it was to save 19 billion dollars. It cost 22 billion to close the bases. I don't see any money saved.

The professional or career Military expects to move around frequently. They know this will happen upon signing contracts to serve. Both they, and their families expect this. Many resources at their disposal will help and render advice and much financial aid to make their transitions easy as possible.
Guard and Reserve Units are not prepared for such change. Neither are their personnell. Nothing is in place to move them from one location to the next. Especially not financially.
BRAC seems to have no regard or compassion for what ever hardships or problems might arise for Reserve or Guard, or any one else, for that matter.
The 179th has an enviable safety record. They have not had a lost time accident in many years. Let alone a formal "Stand Down" to consider or re-evaluate a problem. It has always been, and still is a very well-run facilety.
Lahm Field is one of the newer Air Guard bases. It has been well-maintained and up-graded. It is a Military Installation to be proud of. Instead of taking away the C-130-H's, bring more of them here. If you must close an Air Wing, bring the F-16's here, there is plenty of room.
Also, the 706th Transportation Company from Marion, Ohio could be based at Lahm, plus the Guard Units from Mansfield and Ashland.

That makes more sense to most people around here.
Contrary to what BRAC states that we have no room to expand, we have a LOT more land to expand to if it becomes necessary.
BRAC also states it is difficult to activate smaller Units. Apparently, they are ignorant of computers, fax machines, all kinds of telephones, radio, and good-old-fashioned written orders.
I think Ohio may have lost more people in Iraq than any other state, not too mention many horribly wounded. Their lives, and their families lives will never be the same again. More Ohioans are still being deployed, some from the 179th.
How can BRAC think of doing away with such an active Air Wing?
Here in Ohio we have great caring, reverance, and respect for our Military people, living and dead. We take great pride in what our hero's, past and present have sacrificed for us and the rest of the nation. BRAC's high handedness is an insult to all of our service people, living or dead, and their families and people who loved them, also.
BRAC withholds information from the very people most affected by their decisions. Even their address and telephone numbers are not available to us, the "common people". The "common masses" who pay their salaries one way or another.

Many of us, the citizens of Ohio believe the Air Force is commiting legal robbery, and getting BRAC to do it for them. Our Air Guard planes are newer, better equiped, and much better maintained than the Cargo planes the Air Force now has at their disposal.

So where to acquire planes, the quickest and with the least cost?

Not a problem. We will just remove them from the Air Guard Units. Put them under our control and our command.

That will make the Air Force look better to the US Congress when we ask them for money for some "pet project".

The 179th is an Air Wing. How can they be an Air Wing without planes?

Ruth Ann Wehk R#12 705 Pinkney Road
Mansfield, Ohio 44903 1(419) 468-1253

The above "Cartoon" is the way many of our citizens feel about closing the 179th Air Base. We in Ohio have no large military base as do many other states. We have no Eglin Air Field, No Camp Le June, No Fort Wood, No May Port, No Fort Leonard Wood etc.

The people of Ohio have in the past sacrificed many of our fine National Guard, Reservists, Air Guard personell for generations, and we are still doing so. We feel betrayed by what BRAC wishes to do. It is a direct insult to all who have died and many who have been so terribly wounded. A "slap in the face" to all of those who have given so much and to everyone who loved them

Vietnam Memorial stirs emotions

By John Jarvis
Gannett News Service

UPPER SANDUSKY — A wool stocking cap pulled halfway down on his head, the man in the red-and-black flannel jacket ran his fingers slowly across the letters.

W-I-L-L-I-A-M E F-O-L-L-O-N.

A grimace wrinkled the 58-year-old's expression, and he lowered his hand from the white name on the black wall to rub the salt-and-pepper whiskers on his face.

"William E. Follon. ... He got killed on the day we were supposed to leave," said Tom Gottfried of Carey. Members of the Air Force's 37th Combat Engineers, they had already turned in their battle gear and were at an airfield in Binh Dinh province "waiting for a ride out of the country."

Before their flight arrived, an enemy rocket attack killed the sergeant from Iowa, one of Gottfried's "best buddies."

"It killed him pretty much outright," Gottfried said.

Follon's is one of about 58,000 names of men and women killed in the Vietnam War commemorated on the Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall & Museum just outside of Upper Sandusky. The display will be at Thiel's Wheels on Tarhe Trail at U.S. 23 and Ohio 53 through Sunday.

Gottfried spent 13 months in Vietnam, from the end of 1968 through Feb. 2, 1970.

"It was good to be home, but it was kind of a letdown," because of the ill will some had for the war and those who fought in it, he said.

Gottfried said he'd feel better about his experience in Southeast Asia "if we'd won the war. ... There are a lot of good people on this wall who probably wouldn't be on there if we'd kept on."

Working security for the event, former Marion-area resident Mark Sigler of Harpster helped students find names on the wall.

"It lets you know the costs of war," said Sigler, an Army sergeant in the transportation corps during the Vietnam War era. He served in Korea, unlike his friend, Medard A.J. Ruehle.

Ruehle was one of 11 Wyandot County residents who died in Southeast Asia.

"He got out of a helicopter to help some wounded and in the process got killed himself," Sigler said.

Visiting the Upper Sandusky wall event from Findlay was Frederick Adams, who helped set up a similar tribute in his city.

"There's a bunch of guys from Findlay I went to school with who are on the wall," Adams said. "It's hard to just come here and not feel something for all these people."

Gary Cox of Marion, who helped provide computer information to assist visitors in locating their loved ones' names on the wall last fall in Marion, helped with the Upper Sandusky event as well.

If you go

- **What:** The Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall & Museum
- **When:** Through Sunday
  Today: 1 p.m., Veterans tribute ceremony; 6 p.m., musical and flag tribute
  Sunday: 2 p.m., closing ceremony
- **Where:** Thiel's Wheels, Tarhe Trail at U.S. 23 and Ohio 53, Upper Sandusky.

"I pay tribute to the 58,000 names that are on that wall."

Gary Cox
veteran

"I pay tribute to the 58,000 names that are on the wall," said Cox, a former Marine who didn't see combat. "As a Vietnam-era veteran I wasn't able to participate, but I can give back to the guys that did."

The people of Ohio Honor their military dead, I believe more than any other state. We have hundreds if not thousands of Memorials to our beloved dead from our largest towns to our smallest villages. On Memorial Day our cemeteries are a mass of color because all of the Stars and Stripes flying over every veterans grave. The BRAC is going to dis-honor some of these veterans. They were deployed from our Reserve and Guard Units. Now, you want to "change the Rules" in the middle of the war, and make a "hardship" for those who still are under contract to the military.

Local war hero honored in new museum display

News Journal
staff reports

MANSFIELD — A Memorial Day military display featuring the late Albert Allen of Mansfield, who is a member of Ohio's Military Hall of Fame, will open Saturday and run through the Memorial Day weekend at the Mansfield Museum at 35 Park Avenue West.

Allen, who died last year, was a lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserves and a survivor of the Bataan Death March and years spent in Japanese prisoner of war camps during World War II.

Museum Curator Scott Schaut said the items were donated by Allen's wife, Nancy. He said the display includes memorabilia from Allen's father, Albert L. "Cap" Allen Sr., who was commander of Mansfield's Company M, 145th Infantry, 37th Division in France during World War I.

Also on display will be "broadside" advertisements for previous Memorial Day services held in this city during the 1880s when Civil War veterans were the only ex-soldiers available to be honored.

Schaut said displays concerning World War II and home-front industry in Mansfield, as well as a history of the 179th Airlift Wing, are still up.

He said one of the oddities of military history in Richland County is that while there are many displays concerning the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War and the two World Wars, there are almost no items connected with the Mexican-American War of 1845 or the Spanish-American War of 1898.

"Both of those wars have been totally overshadowed by the bigger wars," Schaut said. "Mansfield sent troops to fight Mexico in 1845 and many more to Cuba in 1898.

"Commander Edward Parker Wood of Mansfield was commander of the U.S.S. Petrel at the battle of Manila Bay."

The museum is open Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. and on Memorial Day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Lately our local Newspaper has been "featuring" a World War II military person, with a long article about them.
Their service in the second World War, their lives after Military service, and other interesting stories the servicemen may tell.
We do revere our military people.
Although, a number of the BRAC have been military, I don't believe they hold our more humble Reserve and Guard people in the same high esteem as we do.

Ohio squad takes heavy hit in Iraq

COLUMBUS (AP) — Six Marines were killed and another 15 were wounded from one central Ohio squad in a major U.S. offensive near Iraq's border with Syria, a newspaper reported.

The squad was one of three belonging to the 1st Platoon of Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment, according to The Washington Post, which has a reporter embedded with Operation Matador.

The military has confirmed five Marine deaths so far and says about 100 insurgents have been killed in the operation — one of the largest U.S. offensives since Fallujah was reclaimed from militants.

Chief Warrant Officer Orrin Bowman, the site commander for the Columbus-based company, confirmed Thursday the company was participating in the operation and had taken casualties. He declined to say how many from the Marine reserve unit had been killed or release any names.

The military has identified two Ohio Marines with the 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment who have died in Iraq since Sunday. Lance Cpl. Wesley G. Davids, 20, of Dublin, was killed in an explosion in Karabilah on Wednesday and Cpl. Dustin A. Derga, 24, of Columbus, was killed by small arms fire in Ubaydi on Sunday, according to the Department of Defense.

Bowman said the unit is in the process of contacting and helping the affected families.

Lima is a rifle company that has four platoons, Bowman said. Each platoon has three squads that normally have 13 people but can be reinforced depending on a mission, he said.

Davids left for Iraq in January, last talked to his family four weeks ago and was scheduled to come home in October, his mother said.

"While his death is a tragic loss, he died doing something he felt passionately about," Jody Davids said. "He was the best that this country has to offer."

Her son loved working on cars and graduated in 2003 from Dublin Scioto High School, where he was on the crew team.

"He was just a very impressive, strong young man," said Russ Merritt, his high school coach. "Wes was kind of an inspiration to all of us. You just had no doubt that he would give 100 percent."

The operation was launched after U.S. intelligence showed large numbers of insurgents had moved into the northern Jazirah Desert following losses in Fallujah and Ramadi, further east. The area is believed to be a staging ground for foreign fighters crossing into Iraq from Syria along ancient smuggling routes.

The offensive started Saturday night and is aimed at rooting out followers of Iraq's most wanted militant leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

Two Ohio soldiers killed in grenade attack in Ramadi, Iraq

The Associated Press

Two Ohio soldiers were killed in Iraq when their military vehicle came under a grenade attack, the Department of Defense said Wednesday.

Army Sgt. Larry R. Kuhns Jr., 24, of Austintown, and Spc. Anthony D. Kinslow, 21, of Westerville, died Monday in Ramadi, the volatile town 70 miles west of Baghdad.

Both were assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division from Fort Carson, Colo. The brigade has lost 65 soldiers in Iraq.

It was the second time in as many weeks that more than one serviceman from Ohio was killed in the same attack in Iraq. Three Marines from an Akron-based unit died in an explosion last Thursday during fighting in Haqlaniyah, 90 miles north of Baghdad.

Kuhns worked at the Army recruiting office in Boardman for a time in late 2003, said Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Catrucco, who works at the office.

"He was an awesome guy. He was very professional," Catrucco said. "He was the type of soldier any sergeant would love to have."

Kuhns, whose wife lives in Fort Carson, recently had been promoted to sergeant, Catrucco said. He began his military career as a reservist with the 319th Engineer Company in Butler, Pa.

Kinslow's mother declined comment Wednesday.

Ohio has lost a lot of people, and nobody seems to care, certainly not BRAC, positively not the politicians. As far as I can tell the military isn't much interested in our losses. We may have more dead than any other state. Where do you think the next generation of Civilian - Military is comming from? Who is going to join a Guard or Reserve Unit if they know in advance that they may spend more time traveling than training twice a month? You already have a shortfall of new recruits in the Regular Military. You are conducting this war with 40% Civilian - Military. How do you purpose to recruit more people for any kind of military duty? Your short-sightness is going to make us a "target of opportunity" [illegible]

Lexington family has three sons in Iraq

By Ron Simon
News Journal

LEXINGTON — Like his father before him, James Andrews, 58, chose to be a soldier.

He served first in the Air Force and then the Army Reserves with the 1486th Transportation Company. He capped off a long military career by driving a truck during Operation Desert Storm and serving as his unit's first sergeant.

"I think if I hadn't retired there's no doubt I'd have already been over in Iraq and back by this time," Andrews said.

Instead, his three sons, Kyle, 24, Kraig, 22 and Kolby, 20, are in Iraq and Kyle is there for the second time.

Like their father before them, they chose to be soldiers. With a difference. All three are Marines. Kyle is a second lieutenant. Kraig is a lance corporal and Kolby is a private first class.

All three are, as their e-mail photos show, deep in harm's way.

"Have a wonderful Father's Day and thanks for all the things you do for me," Kyle wrote in a card last week. He is the only son, right now, who is able to stay in touch. "They come and go in operations," James explained.

"This is such a different war from the one I was in," James said. "Back then, it was letters and postcards. Today, it's tech messages, cell phone calls and e-mail. I was a driver and never was shot at. They are being shot at."

And three blue stars are in the window at the Andrews home on Steam Corners Road.

"I know they're doing a good job," James said of his sons. "They're really into what they do. Two of them have talked about making the Marine Corps a career. I'd like to think they are doing this because I was in the service."

Unspoken are any fears James and Renee Andrews may have about their sons being hurt in the midst of war. They know the dates down to the day when each of their boys will rotate home.

Lt. Kyle Andrews, with his brothers Pfc. Kolby Andrews and Lance Cpl. Kraig Andrews. *(Submitted photos)*

Lt. Kyle Andrews, 24, whose wife's name is Lauren, is doing his second tour in Iraq. When he comes home later this year, he will be a basic infantry instructor at Camp LeJeune. "He's guaranteed to be home for three years," his father said.

Lance Cpl. Kraig Andrews, 22, whose wife's name is Albra, would be home next but he might have to rotate to Afghanistan a few more years down the road, James said. "They plan that far ahead these days."

Pfc. Kolby Andrews, 20, unmarried, plans to leave the Corps perhaps temporarily to attend college. "If he ever wants to be an officer he has to have some college," his father said.

Kraig and Kolby are Lexington High School graduates and Kyle is a St. Peter's graduate. James thinks his youngest son was the one who first checked into the idea of a military career. "Then Kraig got interested and he joined," James said. One Marine became two Marines became three Marines.

There is a lot of military background in the Andrews clan. James' late father, James Sr., was a captain in the Army Air Force in World War II.

ANDREWS SR.

Renee's father, Joseph S. Krebs, was a corpsman and ambulance driver with the Army in Europe during World War II.

KREBS

A native of Pennsylvania, James met Renee in California while he was in the Air Force. They were married for 20 years before divorcing. For now they are staying together.

James Jr.'s day job, the one he has held for 32 years, is postal carrier. He works out of the Ashland Post Office and his route covers the west side, mostly along Sandusky Street.

Nine years after he left service he joined the Army Reserves. With three boys to raise a little extra cash wouldn't hurt. But a war came along with it.

James was a squad leader as well as a driver during the Gulf War and finally rose to First Sergeant. When he reached 20 years he called it quits. "It was fun being a driver and moving equipment, but I really wasn't that happy with all the paperwork a first sergeant has," he said.

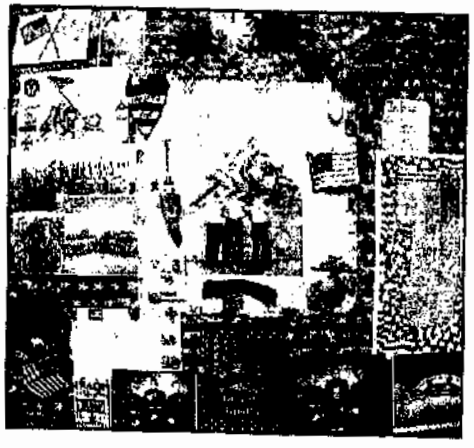
Now he and Renee stay in contact via all the new technology that links soldiers in the field with their families. And they wait. It's Father's Day.

And the boys are far away.

rsimon@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7230

Kolby Andrews, front row on the right, in Iraq.

Kyle and Kraig Andrews in Iraq.



A collage of the Andrews boys hangs in their home. *(Daniel Melograne/ News Journal)*

Another family of local Hero's you will note the father of these fine young men, was an Army Reservist. The quality of people BRAC wants to shuffle around.

Closings could hurt Guard, some fear

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — Some members of the panel deciding which U.S. military bases to close worry the Pentagon's plans to reshuffle National Guard and Reserve installations are too radical and could discourage recruitment.

The Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure plan, released Friday, proposes consolidating 387 Reserve and National Guard installations into about 125.

Those recommendations are part of a larger plan to close 33 major bases and restructure 29 others to streamline and modernize the military.

The Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing's base at Mansfield Lahm Airport is among

More on the effort to keep the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield, **see page 3A.**

those to be closed.

The Guard and Reserve changes could affect hundreds of thousands of people who serve in the part-time forces while holding down full-time jobs. The main concern is that consolidating installations will mean longer travel times for reservists and Guard members.

"You're going to have real enlistment problems," said former Rep. James Bilbray of Nevada, one of the nine members of the president-appointed base closing commission.

The base closure panel will review the Pentagon's recommendations and make any changes it deems necessary before submitting its list to the president by Sept 8. If Bush approves, it goes to Congress for an all-or-nothing vote.

The panel began its work Monday by questioning Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and senior Pentagon officials about how they formulated their recommendations.

Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the Guard and Reserve consolidations were done to enhance capability, cut costs and integrate the part-time forces more closely with active-duty units.

Members of the heavily stressed Guard and Reserves make up about 40 percent of the roughly 138,000 U.S. troops in Iraq.

Myers acknowledged that "there will be some inconvenience" for people serving in the Guard and Reserves if the Pentagon's recommendations are followed.

Recruitment numbers for the Guard and Army reserves are already lagging this year. Guard recruitment was 24 percent behind in the first four months of the current recruiting year, which runs from October 2004 through September 2005.

"Anybody who looks at retention issues would have to be concerned about this," said John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a defense Web site. "This was one of the first things that really popped out at me."

a lot of people are very concerned about possible greater short falls in recruitment for any branch or any part of the military.

Guard, Reserve death toll matches highest total

WASHINGTON (AP) — Thirty members of the Army National Guard, Army Reserve and Marine Corps Reserve died in the Iraq war in May, matching the highest toll for any month of the war, according to Pentagon figures.

The overall U.S. death toll last month was 80, the highest since 107 in January. There were 52 deaths in April and 36 in March, when it appeared the insurgency was waning.

Iraqis bore the brunt of the insurgent violence in May, but it also took a heavy toll on the approximately 140,000 U.S. troops there. The 80 deaths compares with a monthly average of 70 over the previous 12 months.

The Guard and Reserve, which make up nearly half the force in Iraq, have generally had fewer than 20 deaths per month during the war, and it's not clear why their losses spiked to 30 in May. That matched the 30 deaths among the Guard and Reserve in January, and it compared with 11 in April, 13 in March and 16 in February.

The May total reached 30 when the Pentagon announced on Friday that Sgt. Miguel A. Ramos, 39, of Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, died May 31 in Baghdad when a rocket struck near his position. He was assigned to the Army Reserve's 807th Signal Company, 35th Signal Battalion, based at Juana Diaz, Puerto Rico.

One of the month's 30 fatalities died in the United States. Staff Sgt. Tommy S. Little, 47, of Aliceville, Ala., died May 2 at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, of injuries sustained on April 19 near Iskandariyah, Iraq, when a roadside bomb detonated near his Humvee utility vehicle. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 114th Field Artillery Regiment of the Mississippi Army National Guard at Columbus, Miss.

May also was a costly month for the Army's 3rd Infantry Division, which had 10 reported fatalities. Since it arrived in Iraq in February to become the first Army division to return for a second combat tour, the 3rd Infantry has lost 34 of its soldiers, according to Pentagon figures. During its previous tour, which included the initial invasion in March 2003 and lasted about eight months, the division lost 44 soldiers.

Closing the base makes no sense

I am writing this letter to rge everyone to write their ate politicians and help stop ie closing of the 179th Airlift Ving in Mansfield. The airbase rovides about 1,000 full- and art-time jobs and has an estiiated $70 million annual effect n the area economy. The Base ealignment and Closure 3RAC) threatens not only Iansfield's Air National Guard ase but nearly a third of all Air 'ational Guard Units. It will rastically change the military s we know it. Our Mansfield 'nit has credentials that far exeed the criteria to stay open. (It ompares to the best units out iere). This is why the closing of makes no sense. The money aved does not offset the beneits to the nation's defense.

The 179th Airlift Wing repreents the core of patriotism. 'hey are the heart and soul of merica. They are the small own people; they are our riends, neighbors, brothers, nd co-workers, most of which ave deep roots in our commuity. Many of these people may ust leave the military. They ave families here. They can't ommute in some cases, hunreds of miles to go to drill. My amily will no doubt have to iove, possibly out of state. I vas born and raised in the beauiful town of Bellville. My famiy is here. My friends are here. Ay life is here. I would like my hildren to go to school here.

Don't get me wrong, there are lot of people also going hrough this. My point is that ur base is different because here is no compelling reason to lose it down. When you add up he numbers, it doesn't save the nilitary that much money. If it nade sense, I would support it. Ve need to write letters to Taft/Voinovich/Dewine and your listrict congressman. Thank 'ou for supporting our troops!

Jolie McCue
Bellville

Birthdays under fire

I would never have imagined that my three sons would be serving in the Marine Corps in Iraq at the same time. Half my heart is in Iraq.

On May 13, my son, 2nd Lt. Kyle J. Andrews turned 24 under fire in Iraq. He is with the 2nd AA BN, stationed at Camp Fallujah, Iraq. Recently he spent more than 10 days on a mission with no shower facilities available. Just a week later, he e-mailed us a copy of "The Desert Marine" which is a 2nd Marine Division publication that carried stories about Marines at Fallujah and also at Hadithah Dam, Iraq.

My middle son CPL Kraig L. Andrews serves with 3/8 Lima Co. and is also stationed at Fallujah. Kraig and Kyle have been able to share some time together at the chow hall and also working out.

On June 26, my youngest son, PFC Kolby J. Andrews, who is a member of 3/25 Scout-Sniper Platoon will celebrate his 20th birthday involved in Operation Iraqi Freedom at Hadithah Dam. As a mother of three sons who are serving in the United States Marine Corps, I could not be more proud of their commitment and accomplishments.

I feel fortunate we are able to correspond by phone, e-mail or text message on my cell phone almost weekly. Sometimes it is hard to say good-bye to them, but I always let them know that I am proud of them, miss them, love them, and that everyone is praying for their safe return.

Renee Andrews
Lexington

Fight for the 179th

First of all, I would like to start off by saying thank you and how proud I am of all the U.S. military and the 179th Ohio Air National Guard unit here in Mansfield, of which I have two sons who are members.

I have had many people throw in my face that the National Guardsmen are just weekend warriors. My answer to them is at least they are warriors and they believe in our country and what it stands for. Most people probably don't know that at the present time the U.S. has 60 percent National Guardsmen serving overseas due to the decline in recruitment of the regular branches of the military.

I am appalled with Mayor Lydia Reid and other community businessmen saying it would be a "win-win situation" for the city of Mansfield if the 179th were to close. It sounds like instead of fighting to keep the 179th and its annual $30 million payroll here in Richland County, they would rather have another white elephant on their hands (just look around the Mansfield area) and see all that they have brought in — not too much. At least once a month the hotels are being occupied with guardsmen on drill weekend.

I keep hearing it's a political decision, so who is getting rich off this? Rep. Michael Oxley, please step forward and fight to keep the 179th here in Mansfield; after all you are in a position to use your clout, and people do listen to you.

Candace Zeger
Lucas

Letters

Let's save the 179th

We hope you will all take the time to attend the rallies being planned to save our 179th Airlif wing of the Ohio Air National Guard. This unit is heavily involved in our community.

The fire department that is maintained at Mansfield Lahm is also counted on to provide mutual aid with the surrounding fire departments, at times when no C-130s are in the air. This service would be badly missed.

So wear your "We Love the 179th pins," put your "Save the 179th" magnets on your cars and go to these events Saturday in Bellville and Wednesday on the square in downtown Mansfield. Let's show our state leaders we as a community do care and want to prevent the closure of our base.

Our thanks to the REDEC/BRAC Steering committee here for all the work and time involved in fighting this closure.

Joyce and Jerry Duff
Mansfield

The above are just a few peoples' thoughts on closing the 179 Air Wing based at Lahm Field, Mansfield, Ohio. Everyone is totally against this idea. If anything we would like to see more C-130-H's brought here. Possibly, a Jet Fighter Wing also. Something BRAC can't understand, or care about, is the pride we all share for these big planes, along with the military who fly and maintain them, as well as their support people. Indeed, we all have great affection for both the planes and the personell.

SAVE the 179th

.ook for special 179th poster in 'uesday's paper

It's time for area residents to ıke up pens, e-mails, phones nd letters in defense of the 79th Airlift Wing of the Ohio ir National Guard.

The local military unit at lansfield Lahm Airport has een recommended for closure by the Pentagon as part f the 2005 Base Realignment nd Closure process.

The BRAC commission is udying those recommendaons and will offer a list of facilies to be closed or realigned to resident Bush this fall. But this ommunity is not about to go way quietly as our economy ses 1,000 full and part-time bs and a facility worth $70 illion annually to the local conomy.

We are not going to let go asily of a unit that's been a art of this community's fabric r more than 50 years.

On Tuesday, the News Jourıl will publish a full-page color oster aimed at sending a ear message to Washington at area residents want to ave the 179th."

We urge you to put that oster in your home and busiess windows as a sign of your pport. We also urge you to ing it to the community rally downtown Mansfield on ne 22 aimed at saving the it.

On the back of the poster ll be content helping to exain why the decision to close e unit is flawed. On the back ll be names, addresses and one numbers of key elected icials and also the BRAC ommission. We urge you to ntact these officials and mmission and send them a py of the poster to make ur feelings known.

It's time to let Washington derstand how important the 9th is to Richland County, rth central Ohio, the nation d the world.

Look for this special poster Tuesday's print edition.

Here is who to contact:

If you would like to offer edback directly to the Base alignment and Closure ommission, an e-mail form available at p://www.brac.gov/feedck.aspx.

Letters can be mailed to 05 Defense Base Closure d Realignment Commission, 21 S. Clark St., Ste. 600, Argton, Va., 22202.

Community must fight hard to retain 179th

The issue:
Local committee committed to waging battle over Airlift Wing

Our opinion:
Loss of the base, a valuable asset to north central Ohio, is not acceptable

It would be easy to give up the fight for the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

But Mike Greene and others won't let that happen.

Earlier this week Ohio Adjutant General Greg Wayt met with Greene and other members of the REDeC/BRAC steering committee and the All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs.

"The 179th is on a list recommended for closure," Wayt said during his visit. "But in the two previous rounds, about 30 percent of the bases on the recommended list were able to change the commission's mind."

That means Greene and others in the community must press forward, making the argument for the value of the unit to the city, the state and the nation.

Despite a strong effort spearheaded by Greene, co-chairman of the Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee, the 179th Airlift Wing was on the Pentagon's list announced this month, putting 1,000 local jobs in peril.

Now Greene is leading a rally called "Save Our 179th Day" at 5:30 p.m. June 22 on the downtown square. He hopes to attract 10,000 people as well as national media coverage.

And he wants everyone in the area to get involved, encouraging community residents to make signs for their cars, homes and businesses. He promises speakers, bands and cheerleaders for next month's event.

And for good reason.

The 179th is more than just a military unit to this community. It's more than just 1,000 full and part-time jobs. It's more than $70 million annually to the local economy.

It is an integral part of the fabric of this community.

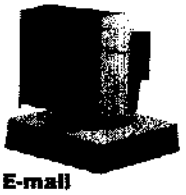
The unit's military growth and success during the past 57 years has been mirrored by its networking and immersion with the north central Ohio communities it represents.

The fight to keep it is important. Rep. Michael Oxley has joined the fight, pledging to use his political clout to bring base closure commission officials to town in hopes of getting the 179th off the list.

We hope others in the community see the need for the base to remain open and join the ReDEC/BRAC Steering Committee in making noise. Losing the 179th Airlift Wing would be a huge blow to our city and our region.

We won't go down without a fight.

Send us your thoughts



E-mail
chunnell@
nncogannett.com

Mail
Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 25
Mansfield, OH 44901

Fax
(419) 621-7415

again, our citizens have found a way to both honor our veterans and finance one of our Mansfield memorials to show proper respect to our heros.

Commemorative bricks available for veterans

MANSFIELD — The Korean War Veterans Association plans to install more commemorative bricks at the Korean War Memorial in Mansfield's Central Park in June.

About 300 bricks have been placed and dedicated by families and friends of veterans who served in all of America's wars or in peacetime.

Association member Bill Woodrow said each brick is inscribed with the words "Duty, Honor, Country." All are embedded in the walkway in front of the memorial.

There are two kinds of bricks; 4-by-8-inch bricks on which three lines of 13 characters each may be inscribed for $50, and 8-by-8-inch bricks on which five lines of 13 characters each may be inscribed for $100.

Applications for commemorative bricks or gift certificates can be obtained by calling Frank J. Russo at (419) 756-1468. The deadline is June 1.

The veterans plan to install the next set of bricks June 25.

Bellville crowd rallies to save 179th

By Mark Caudill
News Journal

BELLVILLE — Maj. Steve McLaughlin joined the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard when he was a senior in high school.

The 37-year-old Shelby man is focused on keeping it open.

"I'm not thinking about closure right now," McLaughlin said. "I'm thinking about what pressure we can put on the politicians to save this base."

The 179th is on the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission list of facilities recommended to be shut down to reduce overall military expenses. McLaughlin, an intelligence officer, and hundreds of other people turned out Saturday afternoon at the bandstand on Main Street for a rally to save the 179th. AmVets Post 43 hosted the event.

Jolie McCue organized Saturday's rally.

"My husband works out there full-time," she said. "I think, from my heart, they're closing it for the wrong reasons."

The rally included a popcorn stand manned by Boy Scouts, face-painting, a lemonade stand and music from the Clear Fork High School marching band. "We love the 179th" buttons were the fashion accessory of the day, and form letters to be signed and mailed to designated legislators were circulated throughout the throng.

U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley, R-Findlay, doesn't need convincing. He will speak at a June 27 BRAC hearing in Buffalo, N.Y.

"We have a tremendous story to tell," Oxley said. "I feel comfortable going to Buffalo and presenting our case. We have the facts."

Oxley seemed confident the 179th ultimately would be taken off the closure list.

"The message we are sending loud and clear from Bellville is, 'Keep your hands off our C-130s. They're doing their jobs, and the people are doing their jobs,' " he said.

Mansfield Mayor Lydia Reid addressed members of the 179th.

"You are an integral part of this community," she said. "We don't know what in the world we would do without you. That's why we are fighting so hard."

Reid encouraged everyone to attend Wednesday's rally in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

"This is just a prelude to our big rally in Mansfield," she said. "We will see you at 5:30 Wednesday in downtown, sunny Mansfield."

McCue will be there.

"I hope they keep having rallies," she said. "Right now, this is all the public can do."

mcaudill@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7219

Dan O'Hara attended Saturday's "Save the 179th" rally with poster in hand. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

All of us really do care about the 179th Air Wing, as well as other 'Reserve and Guard' Units.

Rallying 'round the 179th

Jackie Beilstein passes out balloons at Saturday's "Save the 179th" rally in Bellville. The rally was a prelude to the larger event planned to start at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday in the square in downtown Mansfield. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Big rally for 179th planned for next month

By Mark Caudill
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Mike Greene wants the community to unite behind the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

GREENE

"Let our voices be heard all the way to Washington," said Greene, co-chairman of the Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee that worked for more than a year to keep the base off the recommended

See RALLY, back page

About the 179th

- **What:** 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard
- **Based:** Mansfield Lahm Airport
- **Airmen:** Roughly 1,000 full- and part-time airmen. The 179th is the seventh-largest employer in north central Ohio.
- **Awards:** The 179th has received many awards, decorations and recognitions, including the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. Recently, the 179th received the Alan P. Tappan Memorial Trophy, which designates the outstanding Air National Guard unit in Ohio; and the Rusty Metcalf Award, which acknowledges the unit as one of the best in the entire Air Force.

Rally

From page 1A

closure list.

Despite the efforts, the 179th Airlift Wing was on the Pentagon's list announced this month, putting 1,000 local jobs in peril.

Greene is spearheading a rally called "Save Our 179th Day" at 5:30 p.m. June 22 on the downtown square. He hopes to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

"This isn't going to be just our group preaching to the choir. I really want to make this a huge, huge event," Greene said. "I want them to understand that this is serious business."

Greene encourages community residents to make signs for their cars, homes and businesses. He promises speakers, bands and cheerleaders for next month's event.

Greene said if the rally is as big as planned, he hopes BRAC members, who are scheduled to be in Cleveland on June 23, will visit Mansfield. This week, BRAC members will begin visiting bases slated for closure.

The 179th Airlift Wing, which has 230 full-time positions, was not on the list for a visit.

"If you had less than 300 full-timers, you would not get a visit," Greene said.

But local leaders aren't waiting for June 22 to do something. They will meet at 1 p.m. today at Gorman-Rupp's north plant with an All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs. Representatives from other affected communities, including Cleveland and Springfield, will be at the meeting.

"The idea was, 'What could we do to help each other?' " Greene said.

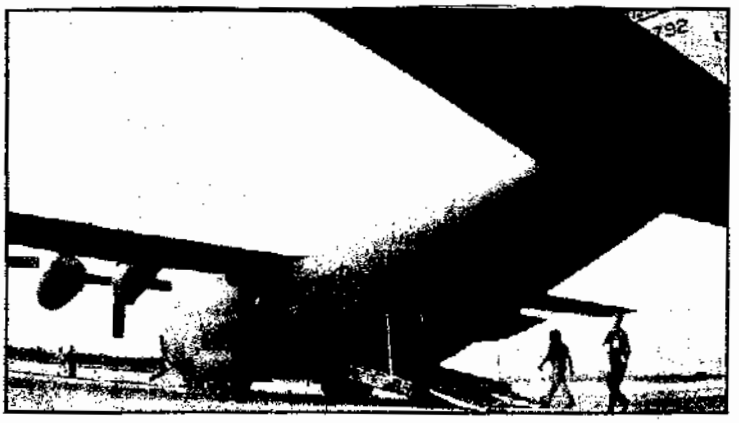
Greene fears the Air Force wants the 179th Airlift Wing's C-130s.

"If they're going to take our planes away, we would prefer that the Army not come in and maybe prevent civilian aviation possibilities," he said.

But that's only a fallback plan.

"Our main priority is getting us off the list," Greene said.

mcaudill@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7219



Guests head inside a C-130 for a tour April 19, 2004, during the Mansfield-Richland County Chamber of Commerce after-hours event at the 179th Airlift Wing. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Rep. Oxley hopes t sway commission's decision about 179t

By Greg Wright
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — Rep. Michael Oxley said Monday he would urge base closure commission officials come to Mansfield so he and local officials can persuade them to keep the 179th Airlift Wing open.

The 179th Airlift Wing was one of 13 facilities in Ohio the Pentagon put on its recommended Base Realignment and Closure list May 13. But the commission's nine-member, independent panel must review the Pentagon picks and could remove some from the list.

"I never give up," Oxley said.

OXLEY

Gov. Bob Taft sent a letter to commission chairman Anthony Principi on May 17 asking commissioners to come to Mansfield, as well bases in Springfield a Cleveland.

The Pentagon propos moving eight C-13(cargo planes from t 179th to airfields in Alat ma and Arkansas. This r flects the Pentagon's mo

See OXLEY, back page

Oxley

From page 1A

to consolidate military bases and reserve units.

Oxley met Monday in Columbus with Army National Guard Maj. Gen. Gregory Wayt, Ohio's

strategy to keep the 179th open.

The commission will visit major bases on the proposed closure and realignment list. The commission also announced 16 regional hearings in California, Texas and other states to get community input on the Pentagon recommendations.

Ohio is not on the regional meeting list. Oxley said he and

a meeting in the Buckeye State.

Oxley said he also could use his clout to try to persuade commissioners to come to the 179th. He said he knows about half of the commissioners, including former Utah Republican Rep. James Hansen, former Nevada Democratic Rep. James Bilbray and former White House Chief

Budget item for 179th show of commitment

House bill includes funds for base scheduled to close

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — The U.S. House of Representatives passed a spending bill Thursday that includes $1.3 million for a fire station project at Mansfield Lahm Airport.

What that budget item means as far as the future of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at the airport remains unclear.

"Unless we manage to get off the (Base Realignment and Closure) list, it's kind of a moot point," said Mike Greene, who is leading local efforts to keep the 179th in Mansfield. "As of right now, the plan is to send that firefighting unit to Toledo."

The 179th Airlift Wing base is on the Pentagon's list of bases recommended for closing.

But U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley (R-Findlay), who asked for the fire station funding, said it shows that the fight to preserve the 179th is not over.

"By this, we are showing our commitment to keeping our base in Mansfield one of

See BRAC, back page

Details

The 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, is one of 13 facilities in Ohio the Pentagon put on its recommended Base Realignment and Closure list May 13.

About 1,000 full- and part-time airmen are assigned to the 179th, which is the seventh-largest employer in north central Ohio.

The Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee is leading the fight to remove the 179th from the recommended closure list before a decision is made this year.

A "Save Our 179th Day" rally is set for June 22 at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

News Journal staff report

Groups fight to keep 179th in Mansfield

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — It's not over yet.

No one is giving up on keeping the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at Lahm Airport.

That was the message from Ohio Adjutant Gen. Greg Wayt after a Tuesday meeting of the REDeC/BRAC steering committee and the All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs.

"The 179th is on a list recommended for closure," Wayt said. "But in the two previous rounds, about 30 percent of the bases on the recommended list were able to change the commission's mind."

Mansfield learned this month the 179th is on the list compiled as part of the Base Realignment and Closure process, which could mean the loss of 1,000 local jobs.

Mike Greene, who has led the local effort to keep the 179th open, said there is plenty area residents can do to help change the BRAC commission's mind.

"Write letters," he said. "It sounds trite. But that's one thing we can all do. Write to your senator. Write to your representative. Write to the president.

"Our goal is to get off the list. It's happened before. Springfield was on the last two lists and managed to get off."

Greene hopes a huge public show of suppo helps sway some minds.

"Show up at our ral June 22," he said. "We like to get between 10,0 and 15,000 people togeth on the square to sho Washington what we thi of the 179th."

Greene is spearheadi plans for the 5:30 p.m. ral which will coincide with "Save Our 179th Day." I is hoping to draw sor statewide and natior news coverage to he Mansfield plead its case.'

BRAC officials have s not made public all the formation used to make cisions about which m tary bases to close.

"We're still not sure actly what criteria th used," said Da Williamson, the governo regional economic devel ment representative an member of the local BR committee. "We're waiti for that information to published so we know wl issues we need to addres

Tuesday's meeti brought together repres tatives of other commu ties in Ohio affected by most-recent BRAC nouncement.

"We're trying to see w we can do to help e other," Greene said. "Ri now, I think Cleveland the most well-organi group. We're hoping to ate some synergy with t group and help one an er."

rkent@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7274

BRAC

From page 1A

the most modern in the Guard system," Oxley said. "This would raise our investment in the 179th Airlift Wing unit to more than $20 million over the last eight years."

Greene said any effort in support of the 179th can only help efforts to save the Guard base.

"I still think the best thing we can do is to show community support for the base," Greene said. "That's why I think that rally is so important. We want as many people on the square June 22 as possible to show Washington what the 179th means to all of us."

Greene said Ret. Brig. Gen. Steve Koper, president of the National Guard Association of the United States, has committed to attend the rally.

"We've invited the governor and, hopefully, we'll have some other supporters here from Washington and Columbus," Greene said.

In the meantime, efforts are ongoing to entice members of the BRAC commission to visit Mansfield. Because the 179th has only about 250 full-time not mandatory.

Oxley released a letter he sent to Commission Chairman Anthony Principi in which he wrote, "I believe you will find the 179th represents a compelling case due to the active role it plays in homeland defense and the global war on terror."

In a letter to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Oxley urged the Pentagon to release "installation-specific data" used to make the closing list.

Greene has said the information is important so 179th supporters can better make a case to remain open.

Economic Development Corp.), which has diligently prepared for the BRAC process for more than a year, is now preparing its presentation to the commission in an effort to reverse (the closing)," Oxley wrote.

"Without access to this important data, REDeC cannot properly make its case that this guard unit, which has seen 35 deployments in support of our national defense in just the last four years, should remain open and operational."

rkent@nncogannett.com

Air Force just wants to have the C-130s

Six former Ohio Air National Guard generals visit area to share history

y Ron Simon
ews Journal

MANSFIELD — Retired rig. General Fred Larson lls the possible closure of s old unit, the 179th Air- t Wing, "a grab for the on."

The "iron" being the unit's irly well kept fleet of eight 130H cargo planes.

"The Air Force has not en a very good steward their C-130s," said the rmer 179th commander. lot of them have aged d a lot are grounded. So ere are squadron holes. this is a grab. It doesn't atter what a unit like the 9th has done or the skills d military value it has. l the Air Force wants is e iron."

Larson was one of six rmer Ohio Air National ard generals, all with s to the 179th, in Mans- ld on Thursday. All but e were pilots with the 9th and two were com- anders.

They were brought to- ther by Master Sgt. Rod gliatti, the 179th's histori- , for a day of history at e base at Lahm Airport.

Tbgliatti said the men present 190 years of mbined service, 45,000 urs of flying time and a ge piece of memory.

"How many times do you t six generals together to k about history?" he asked.

Afterward, the generals opped at the Mansfield useum on Park Avenue est to meet the public.

Some, like retired Brig. en. Myron Ashcraft, go ck to the days when the it was a jet fighter uadron. Ashcraft, who w flies for United Air- es, made the switch from ghter cockpits to the lum- ring C-130s. It was the ght training for those mmercial planes he flies day, he said.

Other generals included ajor Gen. Francis Hazard, rig. Gen. Ray Weber and rig. Gen. Richard Green, o commanded the unit til his recent promotion

LARSON

ASHCRAFT

HAZARD

WEBER

GREEN

LATTIMORE

and later retirement.

Brig. Gen. Vergel Lattimore was the 179th chaplain and the Air National Guard Assistant to the Air Force Chief of Chaplains, and is still active.

"I travel all over the country. I'm the chaplain's chaplain," he said.

Green, like Larson, doesn't care to see his old unit broken up.

"This is a tough blow," he said of the closure threat. "The Air Force simply wants our new planes. No matter what the unit has done, the planes are all they want."

Ashcraft agreed.

"They are stealing our airplanes. That's wrong, ethically and morally. It's a shame," he said.

Larson said a major study taken under his command in the early 1990s proved the unit could expand to double its size at Mansfield Lahm Airport. He said arguments that there is no room to expand are simply wrong.

"I think the 179th is not set for closure. We're going to fight this tooth and nail," he said.

rsimon@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7230

Some Guard bases may lose planes

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — What happens when you take away all the airplanes from an Air National Guard facility?

It's a question being asked at more than a dozen bases ever since the Pentagon announced that it wants the Air Force to consolidate its planes at fewer locations.

Under a military restructuring plan announced Friday, the Pentagon proposed shifting hundreds of planes and thousands of jobs away from Air National Guard bases.

For example:

- Reno-Tahoe International Airport Air Guard Station in Nevada would lose its eight C-130H planes.
- Bradley International Airport Air Guard Station in Connecticut would see all of its A-10s fly away.
- Nashville International Air Guard Station in Tennessee would lose its C-130H aircraft.

"How can you be an airlift wing without any airlift?" asked April Conway, a spokeswoman for the Nevada Air National Guard.

The recommendations now go to a president-appointed commission that will spend the summer holding hearings before sending its recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 8.

Compared with four previous Base Realignment and Closure rounds that began in 1988, National Guard and Reserve bases would be hit hard this time. The Pentagon proposes consolidating about 387 Reserve and National Guard installations into about 125, many to be located at or near active-duty bases.

Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the base closing commission Monday that the Air Force wants more planes in fewer units to more quickly fulfill missions.

"What they have right now are pockets of small numbers of aircraft that are at various locations," Myers said. "And it makes it unwieldy when you try to access them for missions, particularly the kind of missions we're in today in Iraq and Afghanistan and for that matter, around the world."

a lot of citizens are certain in their own minds that the Air Force wants our newer, better C-130+ That this is a legal case of Air Piracy. The C-130-H's of the 179th have more up-dated equipment, as well as being much better maintained. Where in this article, General Richard Myers, says it more difficult to deploy planes in smaller groups. That is a mis-representation of the truth. In this day of radio, telephones and computers, not to mention signed letters of orders, fax etc. Any and all orders can be transmitted in a matter of seconds. The Air Force is being very heavy-handed in "robbing" the Air Guard units of their C-130-H's. "Robbing" is how the people that actually feel, not to mention our citizens,

Pentagon: 179th too crowded

Lack of expansion room among reasons for recommended closing

By Greg Wright
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — About 1,000 full and part-time military jobs in Mansfield are in danger primarily because the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield has less room to grow than its rivals in Toledo, Arkansas and Alabama, according to Pentagon documents.

■ TV show explains BRAC process, page 6A.

One of several major criteria the Pentagon considered while determining which military bases to close or realign is whether the facility can accommodate growth. The base also must fit into the Pentagon's future defense strategy.

The Pentagon proposed disbanding the local Ohio Air National Guard last month and moving its eight C-130H transport planes to

See 179th, page 6A

179th

From page 1A

Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base in Alabama and the 314th Airlift Wing at Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas.

Other support services now at Mansfield would go to the Louisville International Airport Air Guard Station in Kentucky and the Toledo Express Airport Air Guard Station.

However, local officials said Monday the ratings are wrong, since city officials offered the Pentagon access to 168 additional acres when military officials indicated expansion might be considered a factor. The 179th Airlift Wing currently is located on 227 acres.

Rep. Michael Oxley, R-Findlay, and local officials have said they would fight to keep transport planes at the 179th at Mansfield Lahm Airport. Gov. Bob Taft announced Monday he will give the Richland Economic Development Corp. $50,000 to promote the 179th.

But it's unlikely the independent Base Realignment and Closure commission would overturn the Pentagon's decision because of the facility's size, a military expert said.

"It's too small to worry about," said John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a defense analysis firm.

While some bases on the closure list could lose thousands of jobs, Pike said, the 179th has just 234 full time military and civilian workers. Still, local officials argue, the base is the seventh largest employer in north central Ohio, including around 650 part-time jobs held by "traditional" National Guard members.

The Pentagon claimed in environmental documents released this weekend the 179th has no room for growth. Little Rock can develop another 1,783 acres; Maxwell an additional 264 acres and Toledo has 45 acres, the Pentagon said. Only Louisville had zero acreage available, the Pentagon said.

Another factor in the Defense Department's base closing considerations was military value. Mansfield ranked lower in military value and capacity than other airlift bases, according to the Pentagon.

The top ranked airlift base is Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. Mansfield ranked 119th out of 154 airlift bases behind Little Rock in 17th place; Maxwell, 21st; Louisville, 79th; and Toledo, 100th.

Local officials contend the 179th is still busy in the war on terrorism with its 35 deployments since Sept. 11, 2001. The facility is modern and there is room to house up to a dozen C-130H planes at the base, said retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Fred Larson, co-chair of the group fighting to save the 179th.

The Pentagon argues it has too many small Air National Guard units; its goal is to merge many with active-duty facilities, said Loren Thompson, a military expert at the Lexington Institute.

But the base closure panel, which is reviewing the Pentagon recommendations, could disagree and decide to keep national guard units such as the 179th open, Thompson said.

The nine-member commission must come up with a final closure list by Sept. 8.

The information that Lahm Field can't expand is absolutely in error. Lahm Field and 179th base there can be expanded greatly any time that becomes necessary. It already has one of the longest runways in the US and can accomodate the largest planes in the world. Lahm Field is an emergency landing strip, if necessary, for the space shuttle. Why spend Millions on increasing the length of a runway some place else, when Lahm Field has everything necessary,

Bad data led to decision, officials say

By Linda Martz
News Journal

MANSFIELD — The Pentagon used flawed data and left major questions unanswered in recommending the 179th Airlift Wing be closed, former base officials say.

Local officials plan to correct those issues in hope of keeping the Ohio Air National Guard unit and its 1,000 full- and part-time jobs in Mansfield, where it's been for more than 50 years.

Retired Brig. Gen. Myron Ashcraft, now a

See DATA, page 6A

Data

From page 1A

United Airlines pilot, said the thing that "jumped right out" when he looked at criteria released Monday is the Pentagon inaccurately said Mansfield Lahm Airport doesn't have enough land available to expand the wing's fleet from eight to 16 C-130H transport planes.

The military considers larger bases more efficient, the Lexington resident said.

Once the Pentagon documents said additional land was not available — an incorrect claim — other questions, such as what it would cost to expand, were left unanswered, he said.

"Once they say that we don't have the land, everything else is out the window," Ashcraft said. "They don't even evaluate how much it would cost to have a full squadron.

"That's the kind of stuff we have to fight it on — is the data," he said Monday night. "I don't see any other shortfall in the criteria that we would fail to meet."

Local officials said Monday they're frustrated by Pentagon documents showing the military meted out low scores to Lahm in areas such as room to expand, military value and capacity. The 179th, which has had 35 deployments since Sept. 11, 2001, generates about $70 million annually to the local economy.

Mayor Lydia Reid said local officials offered the Pentagon 168 additional acres — the city-owned Bradley and Kissell farms north of the airport — when military officials indicated expansion opportunities could be considered. The 179th Airlift Wing now takes up 227 acres.

"Certainly, if they need space to build on, they can build a hell of a lot on 168 acres," the mayor said Monday. "We have said 'whatever it takes, we'll do it.' We're willing to do whatever they want."

Reid said Lahm has a lot more going for it than acknowledged by the Pentagon rankings. "We've got the second longest runway in the state. Also, we've got an airport that is underutilized" — meaning military planes don't need to compete with a lot of other air traffic, she said.

"Some of the places that weren't on that list (to be closed) do not have the capability we do," Reid said.

Mike Greene, co-chairman of the Richland County Economic Development Corp./BRAC Steering Committee, which worked for more than a year to avoid a recommendation that the base be closed, said the Pentagon claims Mansfield doesn't have enough space for a large fleet.

But the master plan outlined in the early 1990s by former base commander Brig. Gen. Fred Larson anticipated constructing more ramps to store planes, Greene said.

"It's easily accomplished simply by putting down more pads," at much less cost than the $33 million the Department of Defense said it would save by closing down Mansfield's base, Greene said.

Ashcraft said the Air Force appears to want to shut down Guard and Reserve units so it can acquire their equipment. "They have a very old, tired, beat up fleet. The way to get airplanes without buying them is just to steal them from the Guard and Reserve," he said.

Larson said, "It doesn't matter to them that they gain no military value (to the country overall) from our airplanes," Larson said. "They're just moving planes from one location to another, at a cost of $33 million."

Local officials are still trying to arrange for a visit to Mansfield by a member of the BRAC commission before a decision is made — but may get only a visit from a staff member, Larson said.

Ohio has been allotted two hours at an upcoming regional base closure hearing in Buffalo — and Mansfield must share that time with Cleveland and Springfield, Larson said. "We're asking for half an hour, but we may get 15 minutes."

lmartz@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7229

With so much at stake for so many people, in so many parts of the United States, how could BRAC not have up-to-date information? How could they take their duty to the people of this country so lightly? If they failed to have the correct facts about the 179th and Lahm Field, how many errors are they making about other bases? They don't go to these military facilities, and God Forbid they should consult with anyone whose future is mightly affected by their decisions.

Editorial

Closing 179th would be a mistake

The Issue:
Today's special section devoted to the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

Our Opinion:
The message is simple: Save the 179th.

You should notice a little something extra in the News Journal today.

It's a four-page section aimed at sending a loud and clear message to the Base Realignment and Closure commission and lawmakers in Washington.

North central Ohio believes the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard should remain open and in operation at Lahm Airport in Mansfield.

The first page is a color poster with a simple message. "Save the 179th" is in huge letters, visible from a distance.

We urge you to put this poster in the window of your home, business or other locale that will be seen by the public. We want you to save it and bring it to the community-wide rally June 22. We then want you to mail it to the BRAC commission or lawmakers, and urge them to stop the planned closure of this vital military unit.

The second page is a message from retired Brig. Gen. Richard Green, a former commander of the 179th, who lays out a clear argument why the Pentagon wants the 179th closed and why it should remain open.

Send us your thoughts

E-mail
chunnell@
nncogannett.com

Mail
Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 25
Mansfield, OH 44901

Fax
(419) 521-7415

The third and fourth pages are messages from local businesses and residents in support of the unit, which has been a part of north central Ohio for more than 50 years.

Make no mistake. Closing the 179th is a mistake. The Pentagon simply wants the unit's eight C-130H aircraft, which would bolster the aging Active Duty and Reserve fleet for the Air Force.

But it would not be good public relations to make public that need for the planes. Instead, the Pentagon cited in its recommendation that there is no room for expansion at the local unit, a claim not supported by the facts. The City of Mansfield has offered another 168 acres for potential base expansion.

We urge the BRAC commission to look deeply into the Pentagon's flawed logic and look instead at the real reason for its closure recommendation — eight aircraft that Congress purchased explicitly for use by the Ohio Air National Guard.

We urge local residents to join the fight by posting today's posters all over the community. Bring them to the public rally. And then mail them to the people who will help keep the 179th open.

It's not to late. This fight has really just begun. We urge you to join in today.

This editorial states that there is plenty of room for expansion for the 179th Air Wing and Lahm Field in general.

Editorial

Pentagon has slapped part-time soldiers

The Issue:
Reserve and National Guard bases were hit hard in the latest round of BRAC Commission recommendations.

Our opinion:
This is a funny way to thank the soldiers who have put so much on the line in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Pentagon has a unique way of thanking the Reserve and National Guard forces for their great contributions during the war on terror.

The thanks is a cold slap in the face with Pentagon reality.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, want to shuffle, cut and otherwise consolidate 387 National Guard and Reserve installations into about 125.

This convoluted thinking is again proof that active duty military leaders a.) don't understand the Guard and Reserve lifestyle or appreciate the needs of part-time soldiers, sailors and airmen; and/or b.) don't care about the future of either segment of the nation's military.

Their plan would include closing the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard in Mansfield, one of the best flying units in the country today.

Myers said these Guard and Reserve moves are being made to enhance capability, cut costs and integrate the part-time forces more closely with active-duty units.

We would argue this plan would accomplish few of the goals outlined above, save for cutting costs.

Myers admitted "there will be some inconvenience" for people serving in the Guard and Reserve if the Pentagon's recommendations to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission are followed.

Some inconvenience? That's like saying Noah needed to build a bit of a boat when the rains came. The understatement is that severe.

How about the fact it will add hundreds or even thousands of miles, and the accompanying expenses for members to meet monthly military obligations? How about the fact it will force Guard or Reserve troops, some of whom may be nearly qualified for retirement, out of the service who simply cannot make long-range trips once a month?

The economic effect on the communities like Mansfield scheduled to lose these units is one thing. But the effect on the individual who has devoted much of his or her life in service to the country is even worse. Lahm Airport will survive and perhaps even flourish with the influx of private business should the 179th close its doors.

But the 1,000 full and part-time airmen who made up the unit, hundreds of which have served around the nation and the world since Sept. 11, 2001, will never be the same. The 179th, for example, has gone on 35 deployments in the last four years.

At a time when recruiting for the National Guard is down 24 percent from last year, it seems sheer folly to slap the face of the people who make the Guard and Reserve the success story the part-time military is today.

Without the Guard and Reserve, the Bush administration could not have fought its war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, about 40 percent of the 138,000 troops in Iraq are Guard and Reserve forces. The Pentagon's reward is to make their career in the military even tougher to maintain.

We urge the members of the BRAC Commission to take a hard look at what the Pentagon has in mind for the Guard and Reserve. We think when they do they will see the security of this nation will be severely weakened with Rumsfeld's plans for the nation's citizen soldiers.

This editorial will give you more information about the 179th, and the opinions of many are the same.

Bush defends base closings, says money being wasted

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP) — Speaking out for the first time in favor of controversial base closings, President Bush said Friday the nation is wasting billions of dollars on unnecessary military facilities and needs the money for the war on terrorism.

Bush, who faces opposition from many states to shutting down bases, tried to be reassuring. He said the bases would be chosen fairly and the government would do all it could

See BUSH, back page

Bush

From page 1A

to help affected communities recover.

But he made clear that the process — however painful — could not be avoided.

In a speech to graduates of the Naval Academy, he said the closings and realignments "will result in a military that is more efficient and better prepared so you can better protect the American people against the dangers of this new century."

"In this war, there is only one option and that is victory," he said, to cheers from midshipmen, relatives and faculty at the academy on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay.

When Bush last spoke at a Naval Academy commencement, it was four months before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and his focus was his administration's effort to reshape the military into a faster, fighter and more flexible — but not larger — fighting force.

Since the attacks, and amid a global anti-terror campaign and wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, a top-to-bottom military transformation is even more necessary, Bush said.

Keys to the success are new technology, repositioning of global forces, new weapons and realigned bases at home, he said.

Bush said he understands the fears in cities where bases have been marked for changes or closure. The first round of closings in a decade has members of Congress and local officials working hard to protect the 33 major bases slated for closure and the 29 others proposed for downsizing.

"I know firsthand how hard base closings can be on local communities," said the former Texas governor who saw facilities shut down in his state.

Members of the congressionally chartered Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) will visit bases and hold hearings on the Pentagon proposal. The plan aims to save $48.8 billion over 20 years by eliminating redundant and inefficient facilitates and promoting cooperation among the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps.

The panel will decide on changes to the Pentagon plan and give a list to Bush and Congress this fall for approval or rejection.

Commission chairman Anthony Principi on Friday joined a growing chorus of lawmakers demanding that the Defense Department quickly release the thousands of pages of data backing up each of its recommendations.

Briefly

More work for 179th

MANSFIELD — Twenty-nine members of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard will leave Monday in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, the U.S. military initiative in Afghanistan.

Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the 179th has flown more than 2,600 sorties, moved 35,000 passengers and transported 5,600 cargo tons of material in combat theaters, according to a unit news release.

The airlift wing, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, was recommended for closure this month by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission. An area campaign is under way to remove the 179th from the closure list before a final decision is made later this year.

No, Mr. Bush, we are not wasting money on our personell at our Military facilities or our personell. Maybe other places are, Ohio is not. We have had terrible losses. My grandson has served a tour of duty in Bosnia, and Iraq in one of the most dangerous missions in Iraq. Transportation of fuel. Now BRAC wants to do what ever with the 706th Transportation Company.

AmVets Post 43 joins fight for 179th

Rally planned for June 18 in Bellville

By David Benson
News Journal

BELLVILLE — A second major rally to keep the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard in Mansfield is in the works.

AmVets Post 43 in Bellville will host a Rally to Save the 179th Airlift Wing on June 18 at 3 p.m. at the bandstand on Main Street.

The 179th, based on Mansfield Lahm Airport, is on the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission list of facilities recommended to be shut down to reduce overall military expenses.

A separate Save the 179th Day rally is set for June 22 at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage for that event.

Joli McCue is organizing the Bellville rally.

"When Post 43 called me and asked me if I would do it, I said I would be glad to. Somebody's got to do something," said McCue, the wife of a 179th member.

"If we get a big turnout it will show how much community support the 179th has. Our legislators will see we're not going to take this closing lying down," she said.

The other purpose of the rally is to provide information to those who have questions about the BRAC process and what individuals can do to try to prevent the closure, McCue said.

"So far, the support for the base and for this rally has just poured in. It's been phenomenal," she said.

Speakers at the Bellville rally will include Mayor Carolynn Studenmund, REDeC/BRAC steering committee co-chairman Brig. Gen.(r) Fred Larson, Brig. Gen.(r) Myron Ashcraft, Brig. Gen.(r) Rich Green, Richland County Commissioner Ed Olson, county Veteran Services Commission President Larry Moore and state Rep. Bill Hartnett.

In addition, form letters supporting the 179th will be available at the rally, which will need to be signed and mailed to designated legislators.

The AmVets and American Legion Color Guards and the Clear Fork High School marching band will participate. For children, there will be face painting, lemonade and popcorn stands and balloons.

Food and music will be featured after the rally at the AmVets Ron Boyce Hall located north of the bandstand on Main Street. Music will be provided by AmVets' Steve Stephenson, Dave King, & Westwind and by the Jo Kidd Outfit, comprised of 179th members.

For additional information, call McCue at (419) 886-4283. To donate food or supplies, contact the AmVets at (419) 886-2658.

dbenson@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7272

Tech Sgt. Ken Schonauer of Mansfield works on the tail section of a C-130 at Lahm Airport earlier this month. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal)*

Family and friends placed flags Sunday to honor veterans, soldiers and emergency personnel at a Healing Field ceremony in Fredericktown. The field will stand through Wednesday. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal photos)*

A place to honor many sacrifices

By Jennifer Kowalewski
News Journal

FREDERICKTOWN — Charles Blanchette served his country in World War I, World War II and the Korean War.

His granddaughter, Denise Needles, honored his memory by flying a flag Sunday in the Healing Fields at Kokosing Construction Co. The Exchange Club of Mount Vernon and Knox County sponsored the event to honor veterans, current soldiers and emergency personnel.

"It's pretty neat," the Mount Vernon woman said after buying a flag. "I saw all the flags and thought he has to have a flag."

Healing Fields began in Sandy, Utah, in 2002, when Colonial Flag Co. owner Paul Swenson wanted to honor those who lost their lives in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Volunteer Jane Engle said Swenson flew 3,000 flags in Utah to show how many victims were killed.

While residents walked among the flags, many felt a sense of healing, and Healing Fields have sprung up across the country, Engle said.

Chairwoman Melody Brent has worked to bring the Healing Field to Fredericktown since November 2004. Residents purchased flags to fly in a 2-acre field in honor of their loved ones, Exchange Club President Diane Collier said. Residents from Richland, Morrow, Ashland, Knox and Licking counties participated.

Residents can visit the field for the next few days

See FLAGS, back page

Ann Eing leans on her son, Jeff, as they look at the flag they placed to honor Ann's husband, John, a World War II Navy veteran.

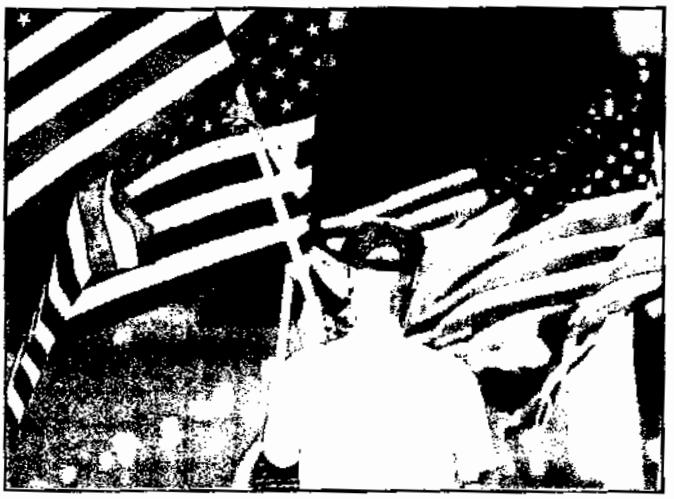
If you go

Residents can visit the Healing Field at Kokosing Construction Co. in Fredericktown through Wednesday evening. Kokosing Construction is on Ohio 13, near the Ohio 95 interchange. The flags honor and remember veterans, those serving in the military and emergency personnel. The program includes:

- **Today**, 3 p.m: Ohio Highway Patrol helicopter land; 4 p.m: The Petty Group (Knox County singers); 5 p.m: singers and speakers, including state Sen. Bill Harris, R-Mansfield.
- **Tuesday**, 4 p.m: Apple Valley Singers; 5 p.m: music and speakers including state Rep. Thom Collier, R-Mount Vernon.
- **Wednesday**, 4 p.m: Color Guard from Knox County Veterans; 4:30 p.m: speeches and closing remarks.

News Journal staff report

HEALING FIELD



A man walks among the memorial flags in the Healing Field at Fredericktown on Sunday. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal)*

Flags

From page 1A

to walk among the flags, Collier said.

"It's an experience you may never be a part of again," she said, as names were called over a loudspeaker to indicate whose turn it was to place a flag. "It's amazing to see all the red, white and blue. You can't imagine when the breeze blows, hearing 1,000 flags flapping in the breeze."

Collier, whose father-in-law stormed the beaches of Normandy, said she has participated in Healing Fields in Dallas and Findlay.

Volunteer Jim Tharp, a U.S. Navy veteran, said field coordinator Steve Murphy and the crew has worked since Friday to get the field ready. Poles were placed in the ground to support the flags, spaced 10 feet apart.

The crew installed lights so people could visit the field at night.

Denise Hess of Mount Vernon plans to visit again before it closes Wednesday. The Mount Vernon woman took her granddaughter, Shayla Ingram, 2, to the field.

"I just think it's going to be a unique experience," she said, waiting for her father's name to be called. "It's going to be emotional."

The Healing Field means more to her because her nephew, Travis Hess, is serving in Iraq with the Ohio National Guard 211th Maintenance Company of Newark.

"It's an experience you may never be part of again. It's amazing to see all the red, white and blue."

Diane Collier, Exchange Club president

U.S. Army Korean War veteran David A. Munk flew a flag in honor of his son, Rick L. Munk, a 23-year-old veteran of the Ohio Highway Patrol.

"It's great," David Munk said, watching the flags go up. "It's the best thing to happen to this little community. If it weren't for them, we wouldn't be here."

As residents drove into the field, a flag that had flown in Iraq hung between two fire engines to greet them. Bobby and Lisa Folden took their 9-month-old girl, Mackenzie, under the flags to honor veterans Bobby knows at the Station Break Senior Citizen Center in Mount Vernon.

Many of the clients at the center helped with the Healing Field by making ribbons with the names of those honored.

"You really respect what they did for the country," Bobby Folden said.

jkowalewsk@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7232

Concert to raise money for family of Galion soldier killed in Iraq

By Jennifer Kowalewski
News Journal

GALION — The Galion Community Band will remember a hero.

A combined band and choral concert to benefit the Lee Anne Ivy Fund is scheduled Sunday at 7 p.m. at Galion High School. Residents are asked to donate to assist the family of Marine Staff Sgt. Kendall Ivy II, 28, the Galion native killed in action in Iraq earlier this month.

"We hope that the community will support this effort," community band organizer Brian Treisch said. "The concert was suggested to us as a way to generate funds for the Ivy family.

"We have been able to move rapidly to put this concert together. Many of the band members were classmates, former teachers, and friends of Kendall."

The concert will feature patriotic music, combined band and choral works and pieces to honor Sgt. Ivy. Details are still being arranged.

"We are sure that 'Semper Fidelis,' 'The Stars & Stripes, Forever' and "Battle Hymn of the Republic' will be performed," Treisch said. "Rick Walker is working to complete the concert lineup and I am working to complete the band roster."

The Galion Community Band has performed since 1976, including annually at the Fourth of July concert before the fireworks display.

Any interested instrumental musician or choir member not already contacted is welcome to join the band for a rehearsal at 6 p.m. today.

"We have a solid band set at this time, but we welcome any musician," Treisch said.

According to a military report issued to his family, Ivy died May 11 in western Iraq from a severe leg wound suffered when the vehicle in which he was riding struck a roadside bomb.

Ivy, who went to Iraq in February, is the sixth member of the military from north central Ohio to die in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Ivy played football and baseball at Galion High School. He joined the Marine Corps after graduating in 1995. He is survived by his widow, Lee Anne, who lives in Camp LeJeune, N.C., and is four-months pregnant, two sons and a daughter.

The Lee Anne Ivy Fund has been established at First Federal Bank to assist the family.

jkowalewsk@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7232

If you go

What: Galion Community Band concert.
Where: Galion High School auditorium.
When: 7 p.m. Sunday.
Why: To benefit the family of Kendall Ivy, a soldier killed while serving his country in Iraq.
For information, call Brian Treisch at (419) 462-2209.

News Journal

Just one of our many lost service men in Iraq. Also, what is being done to aid and support his widow and family.

Lt. Col. William Schock and Col. Bill Roberts present a "My Boss Is a Patriot" certificate to Crestview Middle School Principal John McNeely at a school assembly Wednesday. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Patriotic Crestview principal honored

By Lou Whitmire
News Journal

OLIVESBURG — John McNeely, principal of Crestview Middle School, got quite a surprise Wednesday afternoon.

He received a "My Boss is a Patriot" certificate of appreciation from the Office of the Secretary of Defense at a school assembly.

McNeely is a strong supporter of the Ohio National Guard and Army Reserve. He was nominated for the honor by teacher Linda Roney, a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve.

Roney's military boss, 10th Battalion commander Lt. Col. William Schock, and Schock's boss, 6th Brigade commander Col. Bill Roberts, traveled from the 100th Division at Louisville, Ky., to present the award.

McNeely, surprised and emotional as he stood at the podium, said he was almost speechless.

"I'm honored to receive this award. ... You people in the military are

After the assembly, Roney said McNeely is supportive of everyone at the school who has relatives in the military.

"We're honoring him not for what he gives me, but for his patriotism," Roney said.

Fellow teacher Joyce Galloway thanked McNeely for supporting her when her son Daniel was deployed to Iraq with the Army Reserve's 1486th Transportation Co.

McNeely said he was being honored for something he ought to be doing anyway.

"When Mrs. Roney was deployed (after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks) I told Mrs. Roney your job will be here when you get back," he said.

Even when she is not deployed, Roney's job in the military requires travel and days off from her job as a seventh- and eighth-grade teacher.

She teaches a course in the Army Reserve called "combined arms exercise," and she is area coordinator for Kentucky. Her military job most recently took her out of the classroom April 29 to May 4 to participate in weapons training.

Schock said Roney couldn't do her job without employers like Crestview Schools.

"She is responsible for all instructors in Kentucky who teach the course," he said.

Roney trains people in eight states — Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Schock, 57, who leaves in June for Iraq to assist the Iraqi people with veterans affairs, said the award presentation was his first and called it a proud moment. He is a human resources director for the regional veteran's affairs office in Louisville.

Roberts, an attorney in Kentucky, lauded McNeely for his willingness to share Roney with her other job.

"We as Army Reserve soldiers depend on two groups of people — our families and employers. We're here to recognize someone who is a patriot to us," Roberts said.

McNeely said his uncle John was drafted into World War II and landed in the Normandy invasion. McNeely's father, Bryon McNeely, served in World War II and received a Purple Heart, a Bronze Star and other honors — and survived being shot twice in the back of the head.

The principal said the award ranked with the birth of his daughter. "It's a moment I will remember," he said.

Roney said she first met her principal on the telephone.

"He made it clear he was very patriotic and me being in the Reserve would not be a detriment," she recalled.

"I have a wonderful lady who is my sub. I just have the best of all worlds."

Sarah Jenkins, 12, a sixth-grader, applauded her principal.

"He runs the school well," she said.

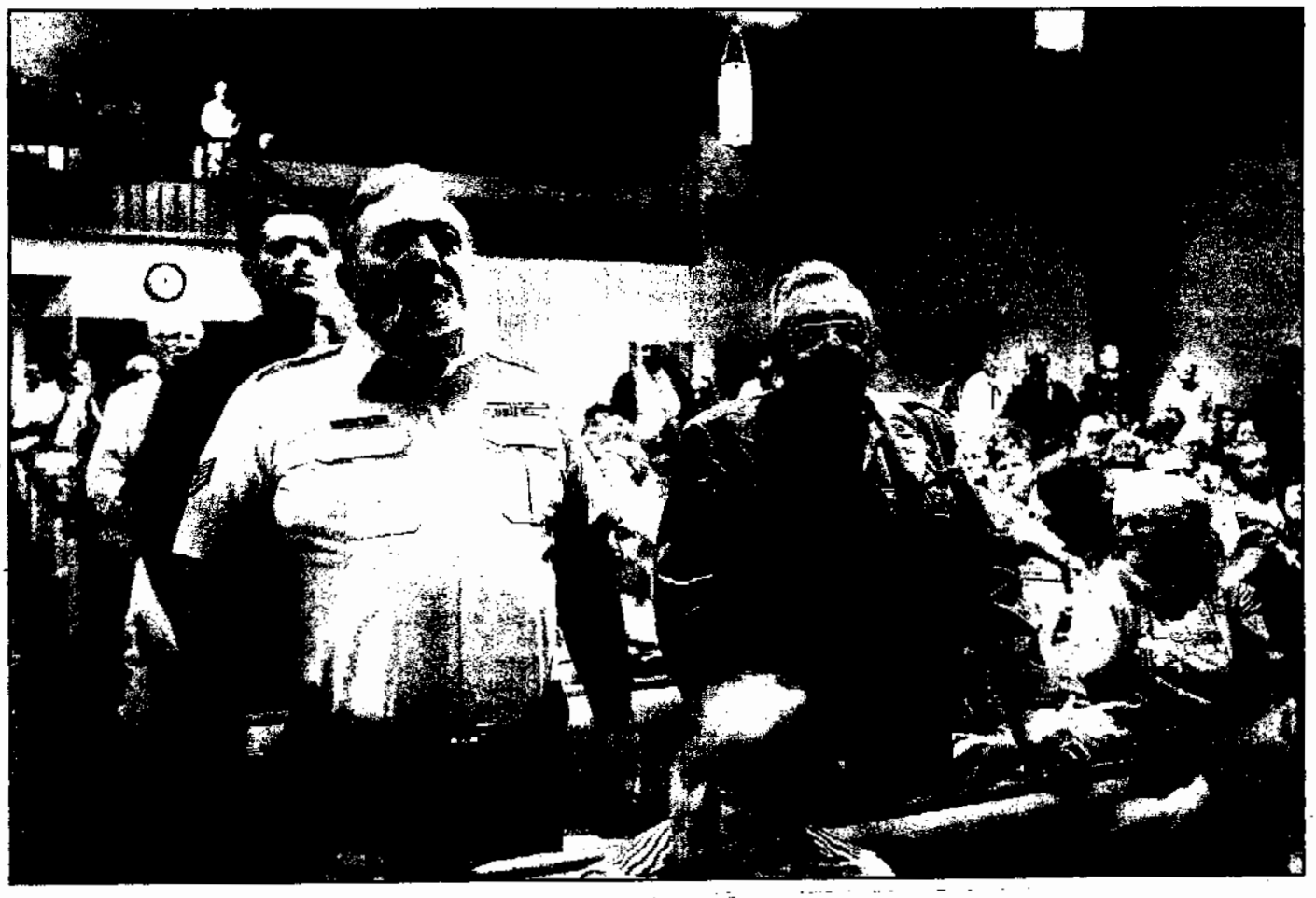
Classmate Connor Plemens, 12, said McNeely is nice.

"He is very deserving of this," he added.

lwhitmire@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7223

Another Civilian Military person, who is a wonderful asset to our Community. The 179th also has a Choir that sings at special local events.

Remembering the soldiers



Above, Gary Johnson, a member of the Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing for 10 years, stands beside his father, Glenn Johnson, a World War II Army veteran, during the "America, we must not forget" service Sunday at the Berean Baptist Church on Middle Bellville Road. Glenn Johnson has another son, Randy, in the service in Uzbekistan. Glenn's wife, Phyllis, is sitting to his right.

Right, Marine Tim Crumbliss sings "O' God, Our Help in Ages Past" during the service Sunday. Backing up Crumbliss is the church choir, led by the Rev. Bryan Moak.

(Walt Butler/ News Journal photos)

The people who are in our Civilian-Military units, are not just Military personell, They are part of our lives in every way. Our fathers and mothers, Sons and daughters, our friends, whom we love. Now BRAC wants to dis-respect them.

BRAC staff member to visit 179th

But BRAC/REDeC steering committee not sure if they are even allowed to attend

Program on WMFD-TV lays out story of 179th, BRAC commission

News Journal staff report

MANSFIELD — Mike Greene and Ret. Brig. Gen. Fred Larson, the former commander of the 179th, who together are leading efforts to save the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, have taped a program that will air on WMFD-TV at 7:30 p.m. each evening through Sunday.

"It pretty much lays out the entire story of the 179th and the BRAC commission and why it is so vital that the air base remains here in Mansfield," Greene said. "I hope everyone in Mansfield will watch it and come down and support us at our rally on June 22."

A "Save Our 179th Day" rally is set that day at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract a crowd of 10,000 and national media coverage. Greene hopes a huge public show of support helps sway some minds.

Ret. Brig. Gen. Steve Koper, president of the National Guard Association of the United States, has committed to attend the rally. Greene said he expects U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley and Ohio Adjutant Gen. Greg Wayt to be on hand. He's confident that Gov. Bob Taft will also be in Mansfield that day.

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Local officials haven't been successful in arranging a visit to Mansfield by a member of the Base Realignment and Closure commission but they haven't given up efforts to argue their case.

A BRAC commission staff member — not an actual commissioner — will be in Mansfield on Tuesday to visit the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at Mansfield Lahm Airport, which last month was placed on a list of military bases to be closed by the Pentagon.

Call it a second-tier visit.

"He will meet with staff at the air base," said Mike Greene, of the Richland Economic Development Corporation, which is spearheading efforts to keep the 179th in Mansfield.

GREENE

"I don't even know if our committee will be allowed to attend. If we are, we won't be able to ask questions or present our case.

"The briefing will be 100 percent presented and produced by the 179th. It will not be open to the public. My hope is that staffer comes here with an open mind."

In the meantime the BRAC/REDeC steering committee is continuing its efforts to get the 179th off the closure list. It now has another $50,000 to work with.

The State Controlling Board released the money, promised by Gov. Bob Taft, on Wednesday.

"It certainly will help," Greene said. "It will help pay for our trip to Buffalo. It could pay for other trips. It could pay for a trip to Washington, D.C."

Greene said such a trip to Washington could be for the purpose of arguing the Mansfield case before a BRAC commission member.

"If they won't come to us, we'll go to them," he said.

Efforts have intensified in the weeks since the 179th was placed on the Pentagon's closure list. A lobbying group is still active in Washington, D.C., and the local steering committee has hired a consultant in Columbus to help draft its presentation for a regional hearing in Buffalo on June 27.

Ohio, which had three bases on the list, will get a chance to argue its case at that hearing. The state has been allotted a total of two hours. Greene hopes Mansfield gets at least 30 minutes.

"We'll attend some hearings prior to that so we can check out the format and see what some of the other arguments have been and how they've been presented," Greene said.

"I wouldn't say that's our last effort to present our case, but the style and substance of our presentation will be important."

rkent@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7274

Former 179th generals will meet the public

Six generals, former members of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, will be together for the first time Thursday for a "Meet the Generals Day" at Mansfield Memorial Museum, 34 Park Avenue West.

They will greet the public from 4 to 6 p.m.

Scheduled to participate are Francis Hazard, Ray Weber, Fred Larson, Myron Ashcraft, Rich Green and Vergel Lattimore.

The 179th, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, has been recommended for closing by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission. Public rallies to have the 179th removed from the closure list are planned for June 18 in Bellville and June 22 on the square in Mansfield.

As you can see we are doing everything we can possibly do to convince the BRAC that we really want to keep all of Civilian-Military facilities and personell in place. Even to producing a TV program to inform all of our citizens about our Civilian-Military.

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

1. Mission/Military Value

- Primary Aircraft Weapons System: (8) C-130H2+ Hercules (Distinguishing Operational and Technical highlights are detailed in attachment 1.); Valued at $240,000,000.

- Major Command: Air Mobility Command (AMC), Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.

- The proud home to one the most highly trained, combat-tested, veteran, C-130 forces in the United States Air Force. Since Vietnam, we have led the way in the C-130 community in both combat hours and sorties.

- Our air crews have been decorated with over 116 Air Medals and 16 Aerial Achievement Medals since Operations Joint Guard (1996-1998, Sarajevo), and Joint Forge (1998-1999, Sarajevo); these medals recognize meritorious service and/or valor in aerial flight.

- We make significant airlift contributions to the USAF mission and have an enviable safety record. Flying an accident-free average of over 3,400 hours from FY 2003 to FY 2005 (projected), we have accumulated a total of over 134,000 safe flying hours.

- We are a vital component of the Total Force (with the ANG providing nearly 50% of the USAF's tactical airlift capability, the fight can't be fought without us) and have supported combat and humanitarian operations and exercises around the world. Some examples:

  Volant Oak (Panama); 1979 - 1999.
  Volant Partner (Germany); 1987 - 1992
  Reforger (Alaska); 1983
  Desert Shield Desert Storm; 1990 - 1991.
  Operation Restore Hope (Somalia); 1992 – 1993.
  Operation Provide Promise (Bosnia); 1993 – 1994.
  Operation Joint Endeavor (Bosnia); 1996 – 1998.
  Operation Joint Guard (Bosnia); 1998 – 1999.
  Operation Joint Forge (Bosnia); 1999 – 2002.
  Operation Southern Watch (Mid-East); 1996 – 1999.
  Operation Uphold Democracy (Haiti); 1994.
  Operation Shining Hope (Kosovo); 1999.

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

- Since 9/11, the inception of the Global War on Terror, and Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom, the 179th has been engaged like never before. Some key statistics:

2001		
	Operations Supported	Coronet Oak, Deep Freeze, Noble Eagle
	Participating units	Airlift Squadron, Medical Squadron, Logistics Support, Airlift Squadron, Aerial Port Squadron
	Days served	13,842
2002		
	Operations Supported	Southern Watch, Deep Freeze, Noble Eagle, Israeli support, Enduring Freedom, Joint Forge, Northern Watch
	Participating units	Aircraft maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Civil engineering squadron, Services
	Days served	56,912
2003		
	Operations Supported	Deep Freeze, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, Israeli Support
	Participating units	Aircraft Operations, Aircraft Maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Civil engineering squadron, Services, Intelligence
	Days served	35,971
2004		
	Operations Supported	Deep Freeze, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom
	Participating units	Aircraft Operations, Aircraft Maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Intelligence
	Days served	64,052

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

Combat Aerial Operations Totals for OEF and OIF:

	HOURS	SORTIES	PAX	CARGO TONS
OIF AL JABER	1,219.3	878	9,735	1287.2
OIF TALLIL, AL SALEM, AL UDIED	1,839.4	1,222	19,755	2,429
OEF AL SALEM, AL UDIED, CURRENT AOR	898.6	550	5490	1852.6
TOTALS	3957.3	2650	34980	5568.8

- Our Proposed $8.0 M Fire/Crash Rescue Station will accommodate **JOINT** Air National Guard/Army National Guard firefighting missions.

- In addition to the flying mission, we are home to a wide range of expeditionary combat and homeland security support units, capable of delivering many invaluable capabilities. Some examples:

  Civil Engineering
  - Engineering force to maintain facilities and infrastructure
  - Fire Department and Power Production team

  Logistics Readiness Squadron
  - Supply of materiel and fuels, maintenance of the vehicle fleet, traffic management services and planning and management of the mobilization process to ensure an accurate and rapid response in the event of contingency moves or national emergency.

  Aerial Port Squadron
  - Coordinate missions with Base Operations and the affected work centers of the squadron
  - Plan, schedule and process air cargo, passengers, and mail
  - Prepare load plans, manifests and air movement reports using automated or manual tools
  - Prepare/Inspect and Process Cargo for onward movement

  Security Forces Squadron
  - Point of entry control to the installation
  - Armed response to the installation

- Presidential Aircraft support at remote locations upon request
- Support to the Governor for natural or man-made disasters

Communications Flight
- Maintenance and support to computers and crypto equipment.
- Maintenance and support to telephone switch and outside telephone plant.
- Maintenance and support to land mobile radio (LMR), Ground to Air radio (VHF/UHF), state emergency radio (HF) and tactical mobility radio.
- Visual information support

Services Flight
- Food Service, Lodging, Wartime Mortuary Affairs, Search & Recovery Operations, Morale, Welfare & Recreation, Tactical Field Exchange

Mission Support Flight
- Personnel services to the Wing and surrounding retired military community, including recruiting, retention, enlistment, retirements, Separations, Force Deployment and sustainment, ID Cards and health care Enrollment, support.

Environmental Management Office
- Programs to reduce hazardous and solid waste generation
- Increase recycling and Green Purchasing efforts
- Maintain compliance with all applicable EPA, Air Force, and Air National Guard regulations

Expeditionary Medical Support (EMEDS)
- Mobile and highly capable clinical disaster response/assessment

- Because the ANG is also the State Governors' asset (The Guard is the only military force immediately available to a governor in times of emergency, including civil unrest and natural or manmade disasters), we are uniquely positioned to support a host of Homeland Security missions. Some examples:

Expeditionary Medical Support
- Forward deployed trauma resuscitation/surgical capability including critical care
- Multi-functional team composition decreases number of medics required to deploy
    - 179MDG is only MDG in FEMA Region 5 with Surgical capabilities
    - Region Five Consists of:
        - Ohio

- Michigan
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Wisconsin
- Minnesota

Security Forces

- Conduct anti-terror assessments and provide threat information to the Governor
- Coordinate local anti-terrorism intelligence sharing with local police agencies

Readiness

- Provide trained and equipped Nuclear Biologic Chemical (NBC) Readiness Personnel

Communication Flight

- Provide critical command and control with State Emergency Management Agency via the State HF radio net. Additionally the 179th CF has direct radio contact and support agreements with local fire and law enforcement agencies, which would enable us to coordinate a Homeland Defense emergency response with the rest of the State.

2. Land, Facilities, Infrastructure, Air Space

- Mansfield's 9000-foot, Instrument Flight Rule (IFR)-equipped runway is one of the longest in Ohio (only 6 of 168 are longer.)

- No commercial carriers compete for Mansfield-Lahm's airspace.

- We enjoy exceptional mission support facilities:
  - 33 Buildings: 292,863 Sq. Ft.
  - Total Acres: 230
  - Value: $92,928,000.
  - Main Cantonment Area: 67 Acres
  - Drop Zone: 157 Acres
  - **Airport Costs**: $49,904

  - Military Construction Investments:
    1997 - Medical Training/Dining Hall: $3.1M
    1998 - Jet Fuel Storage Complex: $4.1 M
    1998 - Headquarters Building: $4.7 M
    2001 - Security Forces Operations Building: $2.7 M

2003 - Air Operations/Communications Building: $6.6 M
2004 - Transportation Complex: $3.3 M
2005 – Upgraded/Hardened Main Gate Facility: $690 K

- Planned Improvements
  Fire Station: $8.0 M (FY '06)
  Civil Engineering Facility: $5.9 M (FY '09)

- Ample room for expansion (see attachment 2)

3. **Economic Impact**

Employees

Full-time	293
Duty Status Guardsmen	767
Total	**1060**

Impact on Local Economy

Annual Payroll	$ 25.5M
Operating Funds	$ 16.6M
Total	**$ 42.1M**

Operating Funds

Operations & Maintenance	$ 114,300
Ohio National Guard Tuition Assistance Program	$ 160,000
State Income Tax	$ 995,160
Profit for the State	**$ 720,860**

Benefit to Mansfield

Mansfield City Income Tax	$174,000
Income from Property Lease	$ 49,905
Profit for Mansfield	**$ 223,905**

4. **Community Infrastructure Support**
   - Large, talented, and supportive recruiting community with a radius reaching as far as Columbus and Cleveland, resulting in unit strength of 104.7%, 5th in the entire ANG (91 units.)

- Robust relationships with the City of Mansfield, Richland and surrounding counties, especially civic and legislative leaders.

- Property lease from City of Mansfield only ≈ $50K / year

- Over 1500 sleeping rooms within easy driving distance of the base could accommodate much larger traditional force, or surge requirements (we use only 80 double-occupied rooms now, with a strength of 767 traditional Guardsmen)

5. **Environmental Impact:**
   - The 179th has a proud record of Environmental Stewardship, e.g.,
     - Installation Restoration Program (IRP):
       - 5 of 8 sites are officially closed.
       - All will be closed by mid-2006.
     - No underground storage tank issues
     - Current small arms firing range will require soil remediation when it is ordered closed. Estimated cost $ 0.5M.

6. **Awards and Accomplishments:**

Year	Inspection/Award	Reason or Results
2005	Environmental, Safety, Occupational, Health Compliance Assessment & Management Program (ESOHCAMP)	Outstanding and Best Ever Seen
2004	Health Services Inspection (HSI)	Excellent Rating
2003	Deneke Award	Outstanding ANG Civil Engineer
2002	CMSgt Edward Wilbert Award	Outstanding Fire Dept of the Year
2002	James D. Weaver Award	Outstanding Fulltime Medical Technician
2002	ANG Environmental Quality Award For Recycling	
2002	ANG Services Flt of the Year	Superior Performance
2002	Initial Readiness Inspection	Excellent
2002	Unit Compliance Inspection	Excellent
2002	Aircrew Stan/Eval Inspection	Excellent
2001	AF Outstanding Unit Award	Outstanding Performance
2001	ANG Metcalf Trophy	Outstanding Mission Accomplishment
2000	Tappan Award	Outstanding Ohio Flying Unit
2000	EORI @ Ramstein AB, GE	Top rating
2000	Health Services Inspection	Highest Air Force rating
2000	IG Exercise (IGX)	Top rating
1999	Tappan Award	Outstanding Ohio Flying Unit

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

Attachment 1

C-130 HERCULES

The C-130 Hercules primarily performs the tactical intra-theater portion of the airlift mission. The aircraft is capable of operating from rough; dirt strips and is the prime transport for para-dropping troops and equipment into hostile areas. Basic and specialized versions perform a diversity of roles, including airlift support, aero medical missions, and natural disaster relief missions.

The C-130 Hercules has unsurpassed versatility, performance, and mission effectiveness. The flexible design of the Hercules enables it to be configured for many different missions, allowing for one aircraft to perform the role of many. Much of the special mission equipment added to the Hercules is removable, allowing the aircraft to revert back to its cargo delivery role if desired. Additionally, the C-130 can be rapidly reconfigured for the various types of cargo

The C-130's design maximum gross weight is 155,000 pounds (175,000 pounds wartime) with a normal landing weight of 130,000 pounds. The airplane is capable of airlifting 6 pallets or 74 litters or 16 CDS bundles or 92 combat troops or 64 paratroopers. It can also carry 45,000 pounds of cargo or a combination of any of these up to the cargo compartment capacity or maximum allowable weight.

Conduct aero medical evacuation operations. Movement of casualties by air transportation under the supervision of qualified aero medical evacuation crew members to/between medical treatment facilities

Support psychological operations. Support of operations targeted against the minds of the enemy civilian population and combat forces. Speaker operations and leaflet airdrops can be used to influence and demoralize hostile forces prior to and during offensive operations

The mission of the C-130 is to provide rapid transportation of personnel or cargo for delivery by parachute to a designated drop zone, or by landing at austere locations within the theater of operations.

The C-130 provides long range, day or night capability. C-130 combat delivery assets can perform airdrops in visual conditions; AWADS C-130s are additionally capable of executing airdrops in IMC (Instrument Meteorological Conditions) independent of external navigation aids

The C-130 can deliver personnel, equipment or supplies either by landing or by various aerial delivery modes.

In the first, parachutes pull the load, weighing up to 42,000 pounds, from the aircraft. When the load is clear of the plane, cargo parachutes inflate and lower the load to the ground.

The second method, called the Container Delivery System, uses the force of gravity to pull from one to 16 bundles of supplies from the aircraft. When the bundles, weighing up to 2,200 pounds each, are out of the aircraft, parachutes inflate and lower them to the ground.

MANSFIELD AIRCRAFT UPGRADES

AWADS (Adverse Weather Aerial Delivery System) - The precise delivery of personnel, equipment, and supplies during adverse weather, using a self-contained aircraft instrumentation system without artificial ground assistance or the use of ground navigational aids.

SCNS (Self-Contained Navigation System) - SCNS provides the flight crew an integrated navigation system, with four independent navigation solutions, including GPS, flight guidance and advisory information to fly a variety of missions. SCNS also provides control of communication and navigation radios, flight planning and calculation, and control of troop/cargo airdrops, as well as processing of radar data on some models.

ESKE (Enhanced Station Keeping Equipment)

GPWS (Ground Proximity Warning System)

GPS (Global Positioning System) - Installs a space-based all-weather radio navigation system into all SCNS-equipped C-130s to allow autonomous navigation capabilities. Eliminates reliance upon ground-based stations to provide navigational inputs to aircraft systems

MLS (Microwave Landing System) - Allows precision approaches and landings. MLS will allow elimination of ILS, which suffers from frequency congestion.

NVG (Night Vision Goggles)

NVIS (Night Vision Imaging System)

SATCOM (Satellite Communication) - Installs a permanent SATCOM antenna, interface cabling, preamplifier, and control panel for portable SATCOM radios required by joint users of combat delivery aircraft

GCAS (Ground Collision Avoidance System)

TCAS (Traffic Collision Avoidance System)

Threat Avoidance.

Improved capability to detect/degrade/defeat threats.

Chaff Flare Dispensers, Radar Jammers

MWS (Missile Warning System)

RWS (Radar Warning System)

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

OTHER DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF MANSFIELD'S C-130 FLEET

- Flying Hours (average equivalent baseline) on our aircraft place them at less than half of their useful life span.

- **Enhanced Cargo Delivery** capability via the Canary Slide Ramp System (ideal for Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Defense Team rapid movement requirement)

- Our **record of excellence and innovation in aircraft maintenance** has involved us in important, mission-enhancing research and development (often for the entire C-130 fleet):

  - **(BCEM) Battery Control Electronic Module** test aircraft for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center

  - **Corrosion Sensor Test Aircraft** for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center (administered by Battelle Labs in Columbus) to aid in determining corrosion impact from world wide environmental conditions on entire ANG and Air Force C-130 fleet. This evaluation will also help to re-evaluate C-130 aircraft frequency for wash intervals and corrosion inspections

  - **SATCOM Form Fit And Function Evaluation** (C-130 aircraft) for Wright Patterson AFB to help refine the Satellite Secure Communications System for CENTAF operations

  - Potential **Deicing Fluid Evaluation Site** for the Air Force Research Laboratory

  - **Main Landing Gear Torque Tube Coupling Safety Test Aircraft** for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center and Air Mobility Command (AMC)

  - Evaluator for the **Airdrop Ballistic Winds / Gps Tracker Test** for Wright Patterson, AFB

RECEIVED

06302005

June 27, 2005

General James T. Hill
% BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street
Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Subject: The removal of the C-130-H's from the 179th Air Wing; Lahm Field; Mansfield, Ohio

Subject: The lack of factual information about the 179th and other Air Guard, Material Guard, and Reservist personell or their facilities.

Dear Sir,

I have done quite a lot of research on the subject of the 179th Air Wing, based at Lahm Field, Mansfield, Ohio. Also have spent time in composing this letter. Please, please, sir, do me the courtesy of reading what I have provided for your enlightenment.

Enclosed is much ~~in~~ information regarding the past and present of the 179th. It is a very active Air Guard Unit. Their planes and the personell have been deployed to many places in the world for both Military and Humanitarian missions, all successfully completed.

Inspections of the 179th have always been completed with the highest possible ratings. All the years the 179th Air Guard has been at Lahm Field it has always been carefully and pridefully maintained. The runway at Lahm Field is one of the longest in the US and can accomodate the largest planes now flying. It is also an emergency landing strip for a shuttle. Why give up the use of this runway for Military use, just to spend billions on another airstrip at some other Air Base?

Guard Units were <u>never</u> meant to be moved around. They were supposed to be locally based, and the members of these Guard Units were to train at their facilities twice a month, then to have 2 weeks of more concentrated training

at a regular, or "standing" military facility.
By closing these Guard and Reserve facilities you are defeating the very purpose for which they were created.
By going forward with your plans in Ohio you are destroying our faith and trust in the purpose and structure of our Guard system, and betraying the people who serve in them.
You will force the retirement of many Senior Officers and staff, with many years of experience and great depths of knowledges. Young people who have homes and families will not re-new their contracts. They will not up-root their families
Currently, there is a short fall in signing up new recruits for some branches of service. If you forge ahead with closing of so many Militilary bases, especially Guard and Reserve forces, you will have a MAJOR in recruiting over-all, short-fall.
The ENTIRE BRAC needs to review their short-sighted thinking while we still have a civilian-military. Since about 40 per cent of our fighting man power now in the war zones is civilian-military, BRAC needs to use more thought before taking any action. Taking into account at the last "closing" it was to save 19 billion dollars. It cost 22 billion to close the bases. I don't see any money saved

The professional or career Military expects to move around frequently. They know this will happen upon signing contracts to serve. Both they, and their families expect this. Many resources at their disposal will help and render advice and much financial aid to make their transitions easy as possible.
Guard and Reserve Units are not prepared for such change. Neither are their personnell. Nothing is in place to move them from one location to the next. Especially not financially.
BRAC seems to have no regard or compassion for what ever hardships or problems might arise for Reserve or Guard, or anyone else, for that matter.
The 179th has an enviable safety record. They have not had a lost time accident in many years. Let alone a formal "Stand Down" to consider or re-evaluate a problem. It has always been, and still is a very well-run facilety.
Lahm Field is one of the newer Air Guard bases. It has been well-maintained and up-graded. It is a Military Installation to be proud of. Instead of taking away the C-130-H's, bring more of them here. If you must close an Air Wing, bring the F-16's here, there is plenty of room.
Also, the 706th Transportation Company from Marion, Ohio could be based at Lahm, plus the Guard Units from Mansfield and Ashland.

That makes more sense to most people around here.
Contrary to what BRAC states that we have no room to expand, we have a LOT more land to expand to if it becomes necessary.
BRAC also states it is difficult to activate smaller Units. Apparently, they are ignorant of computers, fax machines, all kinds of telephones, radio, and good-old-fashioned written orders.
I think Ohio may have lost more people in Iraq than any other state, not too mention many doubly wounded. Their lives, and their families lives will never be the same again. More Ohioans are still being deployed, some from the 179th.
How can BRAC think of closing away with such an active Air Wing?
Here in Ohio we have great caring, reverance, and respect for our Military people, living and dead. We take great pride in what our hero's, past and present have sacrificed for us and the rest of the nation.
BRAC's high handedness is an insult to all of our service people, living or dead, and their families and people who loved them, also.
BRAC withholds information from the very people most affected by their decisions. Even their address and telephone numbers are not available to us, the "Common people". The "common masses" who pay their salaries one way or another.

Many of us, the citizens of Ohio believe the Air Force is commiting legal robbery, and getting BRAC to do it for them. Our Air Guard planes are newer, better equiped, and much better maintained than the Cargo planes the Air Force now has at their disposal.

So when to acquire planes, the quickest and with the least cost?

Not a problem. We will just remove them from the Air Guard Units. Get them under our control and our command.

That will make the Air Force look better to the US Congress when we ask them for money for some "pet project".

The 179th is an Air Wing. How can they be an Air Wing without planes?

Ruth Ann Welch R#12 705 Pinkney Road
Mansfield, Ohio 44903 1(419) 468-1253

The above "Cartoon" is the way many of our citizens feel about closing the 179th Air Base. We in Ohio have no large military base as do many other states. We have no Eglin Air Field, No Camp Le June, No Fort Wood, No May Port, No Fort Leonard Wood etc.

The people of Ohio have in the past sacrificed many of our fine National Guard, Reservists, Air Guard personell for generations, and we are still doing so. We feel betrayed by what BRAC wishes to do. It is a direct insult to all who have died and many who have been so terribly wounded. A "slap in the face" to all of those who have given so much and to everyone who loved them

Vietnam Memorial stirs emotions

By John Jarvis
Gannett News Service

UPPER SANDUSKY — A wool stocking cap pulled halfway down on his head, the man in the red-and-black flannel jacket ran his fingers slowly across the letters.

W-I-L-L-I-A-M E F-O-L-L-O-N.

A grimace wrinkled the 58-year-old's expression, and he lowered his hand from the white name on the black wall to rub the salt-and-pepper whiskers on his face.

"William E. Follon. ... He got killed on the day we were supposed to leave," said Tom Gottfried of Carey. Members of the Air Force's 37th Combat Engineers, they had already turned in their battle gear and were at an airfield in Binh Dinh province "waiting for a ride out of the country."

Before their flight arrived, an enemy rocket attack killed the sergeant from Iowa, one of Gottfried's "best buddies."

"It killed him pretty much outright," Gottfried said.

Follon's is one of about 58,000 names of men and women killed in the Vietnam War commemorated on the Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall & Museum just outside of Upper Sandusky. The display will be at Thiel's Wheels on Tarhe Trail at U.S. 23 and Ohio 53 through Sunday.

Gottfried spent 13 months in Vietnam, from the end of 1968 through Feb. 2, 1970.

"It was good to be home, but it was kind of a letdown," because of the ill will some had for the war and those who fought in it, he said.

Gottfried said he'd feel better about his experience in Southeast Asia "if we'd won the war. ... There are a lot of good people on this wall who probably wouldn't be on there if we'd kept on."

Working security for the event, former Marion-area resident Mark Sigler of Harpster helped students find names on the wall.

"It lets you know the costs of war," said Sigler, an Army sergeant in the transportation corps during the Vietnam War era. He served in Korea, unlike his friend, Medard A.J. Ruehle.

Ruehle was one of 11 Wyandot County residents who died in Southeast Asia.

"He got out of a helicopter to help some wounded and in the process got killed himself," Sigler said.

Visiting the Upper Sandusky wall event from Findlay was Frederick Adams, who helped set up a similar tribute in his city.

"There's a bunch of guys from Findlay I went to school with who are on the wall," Adams said. "It's hard to just come here and not feel something for all these people."

Gary Cox of Marion, who helped provide computer information to assist visitors in locating their loved ones' names on the wall last fall in Marion, helped with the Upper Sandusky event as well.

If you go

- **What:** The Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall & Museum
- **When:** Through Sunday
  Today: 1 p.m., Veterans tribute ceremony; 6 p.m., musical and flag tribute
  Sunday: 2 p.m., closing ceremony
- **Where:** Thiel's Wheels, Tarhe Trail at U.S. 23 and Ohio 53, Upper Sandusky.

"I pay tribute to the 58,000 names that are on that wall."

Gary Cox
veteran

"I pay tribute to the 58,000 names that are on the wall," said Cox, a former Marine who didn't see combat. "As a Vietnam-era veteran I wasn't able to participate, but I can give back to the guys that did."

The people of Ohio Honor their military dead, I believe more than any other state. We have hundreds if not thousands of Memorials to our beloved dead from our largest towns to our smallest villages. On Memorial Day our cemeteries are a mass of color because all of the Stars and Stripes flying over every veterans grave. The BRAC is going to dis-Honor some of these veterans. They were deployed from our Reserve and Guard Units. Now, you want to "change the Rules" in the middle of the war, and make a "hardship" for those who still are under contract to the military.

Local war hero honored in new museum display

News Journal
staff reports

MANSFIELD — A Memorial Day military display featuring the late Albert Allen of Mansfield, who is a member of Ohio's Military Hall of Fame, will open Saturday and run through the Memorial Day weekend at the Mansfield Museum at 35 Park Avenue West.

Allen, who died last year, was a lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserves and a survivor of the Bataan Death March and years spent in Japanese prisoner of war camps during World War II.

Museum Curator Scott Schaut said the items were donated by Allen's wife, Nancy. He said the display includes memorabilia from Allen's father, Albert L "Cap" Allen Sr., who was commander of Mansfield's Company M, 145th Infantry, 37th Division in France during World War I.

Also on display will be "broadside" advertisements for previous Memorial Day services held in this city during the 1880s when Civil War veterans were the only ex-soldiers available to be honored.

Schaut said displays concerning World War II and home-front industry in Mansfield, as well as a history of the 179th Airlift Wing, are still up.

He said one of the oddities of military history in Richland County is that while there are many displays concerning the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War and the two World Wars, there are almost no items connected with the Mexican-American War of 1845 or the Spanish-American War of 1898.

"Both of those wars have been totally overshadowed by the bigger wars," Schaut said. "Mansfield sent troops to fight Mexico in 1845 and many more to Cuba in 1898.

"Commander Edward Parker Wood of Mansfield was commander of the U.S.S. Petrel at the battle of Manila Bay."

The museum is open Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. and on Memorial Day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Lately our local Newspaper has been "featuring" a World War II milet ary person, with a long article about them.
Their service in the second World War, their lives after Military service, and other interesting stories the servicemen may tell.
We do revere our military people.
Although, a number of the BRAC have been military, I don't believe they hold our more humble Reserve and Guard people in the same high esteem as we do.

Ohio squad takes heavy hit in Iraq

COLUMBUS (AP) — Six Marines were killed and another 15 were wounded from one central Ohio squad in a major U.S. offensive near Iraq's border with Syria, a newspaper reported.

The squad was one of three belonging to the 1st Platoon of Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment, according to The Washington Post, which has a reporter embedded with Operation Matador.

The military has confirmed five Marine deaths so far and says about 100 insurgents have been killed in the operation — one of the largest U.S. offensives since Fallujah was reclaimed from militants.

Chief Warrant Officer Orrin Bowman, the site commander for the Columbus-based company, confirmed Thursday the company was participating in the operation and had taken casualties. He declined to say how many from the Marine reserve unit had been killed or release any names.

The military has identified two Ohio Marines with the 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment who have died in Iraq since Sunday. Lance Cpl. Wesley G. Davids, 20, of Dublin, was killed in an explosion in Karabilah on Wednesday and Cpl. Dustin A. Derga, 24, of Columbus, was killed by small arms fire in Ubaydi on Sunday, according to the Department of Defense.

Bowman said the unit is in the process of contacting and helping the affected families.

Lima is a rifle company that has four platoons, Bowman said. Each platoon has three squads that normally have 13 people but can be reinforced depending on a mission, he said.

Davids left for Iraq in January, last talked to his family four weeks ago and was scheduled to come home in October, his mother said.

"While his death is a tragic loss, he died doing something he felt passionately about," Jody Davids said. "He was the best that this country has to offer."

Her son loved working on cars and graduated in 2003 from Dublin Scioto High School, where he was on the crew team.

"He was just a very impressive, strong young man," said Russ Merritt, his high school coach. "Wes was kind of an inspiration to all of us. You just had no doubt that he would give 100 percent."

The operation was launched after U.S. intelligence showed large numbers of insurgents had moved into the northern Jazirah Desert following losses in Fallujah and Ramadi, further east. The area is believed to be a staging ground for foreign fighters crossing into Iraq from Syria along ancient smuggling routes.

The offensive started Saturday night and is aimed at rooting out followers of Iraq's most wanted militant leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

Two Ohio soldiers killed in grenade attack in Ramadi, Iraq

The Associated Press

Two Ohio soldiers were killed in Iraq when their military vehicle came under a grenade attack, the Department of Defense said Wednesday.

Army Sgt. Larry R. Kuhns Jr., 24, of Austintown, and Spc. Anthony D. Kinslow, 21, of Westerville, died Monday in Ramadi, the volatile town 70 miles west of Baghdad.

Both were assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division from Fort Carson, Colo. The brigade has lost 65 soldiers in Iraq.

It was the second time in as many weeks that more than one serviceman from Ohio was killed in the same attack in Iraq. Three Marines from an Akron-based unit died in an explosion last Thursday during fighting in Haqlaniyah, 90 miles north of Baghdad.

Kuhns worked at the Army recruiting office in Boardman for a time in late 2003, said Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Catrucco, who works at the office.

"He was an awesome guy. He was very professional," Catrucco said. "He was the type of soldier any sergeant would love to have."

Kuhns, whose wife lives in Fort Carson, recently had been promoted to sergeant, Catrucco said. He began his military career as a reservist with the 319th Engineer Company in Butler, Pa.

Kinslow's mother declined comment Wednesday.

Ohio has lost a lot of people, and nobody seems to care, certainly not BRAC, positively not the politicians. As far as I can tell the military isn't much interested in our losses. We may have more dead than any other state. Where do you think the next generation of Civilian - Military is comming from? Who is going to join a Guard or Reserve Unit if they know in advance that they may spend more time traveling than training twice a month? You already have a shortfall of new recruits in the Regular Military. You are conducting this war with 40% Civilian - Military. How do you purpose to recruit more people for any kind of military duty? Your short-sightness is going to make us a "target of opportunity" [illegible]

Lexington family has three sons in Iraq

By Ron Simon
News Journal

LEXINGTON — Like his father before him, James Andrews, 58, chose to be a soldier.

He served first in the Air Force and then the Army Reserves with the 1486th Transportation Company. He capped off a long military career by driving a truck during Operation Desert Storm and serving as his unit's first sergeant.

"I think if I hadn't retired there's no doubt I'd have already been over in Iraq and back by this time," Andrews said.

Instead, his three sons, Kyle, 24, Kraig, 22 and Kolby, 20, are in Iraq and Kyle is there for the second time.

Like their father before them, they chose to be soldiers. With a difference. All three are Marines. Kyle is a second lieutenant. Kraig is a lance corporal and Kolby is a private first class.

All three are, as their e-mail photos show, deep in harm's way.

"Have a wonderful Father's Day and thanks for all the things you do for me," Kyle wrote in a card last week. He is the only son, right now, who is able to stay in touch. "They come and go in operations," James explained.

"This is such a different war from the one I was in," James said. "Back then, it was letters and postcards. Today, it's tech messages, cell phone calls and e-mail. I was a driver and never was shot at. They are being shot at."

And three blue stars are in the window at the Andrews home on Steam Corners Road.

"I know they're doing a good job," James said of his sons. "They're really into what they do. Two of them have talked about making the Marine Corps a career. I'd like to think they are doing this because I was in the service."

Unspoken are any fears James and Renee Andrews may have about their sons being hurt in the midst of war. They know the dates down to the day when each of their boys will rotate home.

Lt. Kyle Andrews, with his brothers Pfc. Kolby Andrews and Lance Cpl. Kraig Andrews. *(Submitted photos)*

Lt. Kyle Andrews, 24, whose wife's name is Lauren, is doing his second tour in Iraq. When he comes home later this year, he will be a basic infantry instructor at Camp LeJeune. "He's guaranteed to be home for three years," his father said.

Lance Cpl. Kraig Andrews, 22, whose wife's name is Albra, would be home next but he might have to rotate to Afghanistan a few more years down the road, James said. "They plan that far ahead these days."

Pfc. Kolby Andrews, 20, unmarried, plans to leave the Corps perhaps temporarily to attend college. "If he ever wants to be an officer he has to have some college," his father said.

Kraig and Kolby are Lexington High School graduates and Kyle is a St. Peter's graduate. James thinks his youngest son was the one who first checked into the idea of a military career. "Then Kraig got interested and he joined," James said. One Marine became two Marines became three Marines.

There is a lot of military background in the Andrews clan. James' late father, James Sr., was a captain in the Army Air Force in World War II. Renee's father, Joseph S. Krebs, was a corpsman and ambulance driver with the Army in Europe during World War II.

ANDREWS SR.

A native of Pennsylvania, James met Renee in California while he was in the Air Force. They were married for 20 years before divorcing. For now they are staying together.

KREBS

James Jr.'s day job, the one he has held for 32 years, is postal carrier. He works out of the Ashland Post Office and his route covers the west side, mostly along Sandusky Street.

Nine years after he left service he joined the Army Reserves. With three boys to raise a little extra cash wouldn't hurt. But a war came along with it.

James was a squad leader as well as a driver during the Gulf War and finally rose to First Sergeant. When he reached 20 years he called it quits. "It was fun being a driver and moving equipment, but I really wasn't that happy with all the paperwork a first sergeant has," he said.

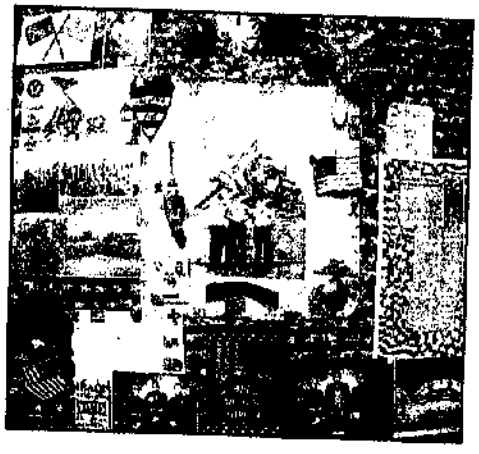
Now he and Renee stay in contact via all the new technology that links soldiers in the field with their families. And they wait. It's Father's Day.

And the boys are far away.

rsimon@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7230

Kolby Andrews, front row on the right, in Iraq.

Kyle and Kraig Andrews in Iraq.



A collage of the Andrews boys hangs in their home. *(Daniel Melograna/ News Journal)*

Another family of local Heroes you will note the father of these fine young men, was an Army Reservist. The quality of people BRAC wants to shuffle around.

Closings could hurt Guard, some fear

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — Some members of the panel deciding which U.S. military bases to close worry the Pentagon's plans to reshuffle National Guard and Reserve installations are too radical and could discourage recruitment.

The Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure plan, released Friday, proposes consolidating 387 Reserve and National Guard installations into about 125.

Those recommendations are part of a larger plan to close 33 major bases and restructure 29 others to streamline and modernize the military.

The Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing's base at Mansfield Lahm Airport is among those to be closed.

■ More on the effort to keep the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield, see page 3A.

The Guard and Reserve changes could affect hundreds of thousands of people who serve in the part-time forces while holding down full-time jobs. The main concern is that consolidating installations will mean longer travel times for reservists and Guard members.

"You're going to have real enlistment problems," said former Rep. James Bilbray of Nevada, one of the nine members of the president-appointed base closing commission.

The base closure panel will review the Pentagon's recommendations and make any changes it deems necessary before submitting its list to the president by Sept 8. If Bush approves, it goes to Congress for an all-or-nothing vote.

The panel began its work Monday by questioning Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and senior Pentagon officials about how they formulated their recommendations.

Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the Guard and Reserve consolidations were done to enhance capability, cut costs and integrate the part-time forces more closely with active-duty units.

Members of the heavily stressed Guard and Reserves make up about 40 percent of the roughly 138,000 U.S. troops in Iraq.

Myers acknowledged that "there will be some inconvenience" for people serving in the Guard and Reserves if the Pentagon's recommendations are followed.

Recruitment numbers for the Guard and Army reserves are already lagging this year. Guard recruitment was 24 percent behind in the first four months of the current recruiting year, which runs from October 2004 through September 2005.

"Anybody who looks at retention issues would have to be concerned about this," said John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a defense Web site. "This was one of the first things that really popped out at me."

a lot of people are very concerned about possible greater short falls in recruitment for any branch or any part of the military.

Guard, Reserve death toll matches highest total

WASHINGTON (AP) — Thirty members of the Army National Guard, Army Reserve and Marine Corps Reserve died in the Iraq war in May, matching the highest toll for any month of the war, according to Pentagon figures.

The overall U.S. death toll last month was 80, the highest since 107 in January. There were 52 deaths in April and 36 in March, when it appeared the insurgency was waning.

Iraqis bore the brunt of the insurgent violence in May, but it also took a heavy toll on the approximately 140,000 U.S. troops there. The 80 deaths compares with a monthly average of 70 over the previous 12 months.

The Guard and Reserve, which make up nearly half the force in Iraq, have generally had fewer than 20 deaths per month during the war, and it's not clear why their losses spiked to 30 in May. That matched the 30 deaths among the Guard and Reserve in January, and it compared with 11 in April, 13 in March and 16 in February.

The May total reached 30 when the Pentagon announced on Friday that Sgt. Miguel A. Ramos, 39, of Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, died May 31 in Baghdad when a rocket struck near his position. He was assigned to the Army Reserve's 807th Signal Company, 35th Signal Battalion, based at Juana Diaz, Puerto Rico.

One of the month's 30 fatalities died in the United States. Staff Sgt. Tommy S. Little, 47, of Aliceville, Ala., died May 2 at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, of injuries sustained on April 19 near Iskandariyah, Iraq, when a roadside bomb detonated near his Humvee utility vehicle. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 114th Field Artillery Regiment of the Mississippi Army National Guard at Columbus, Miss.

May also was a costly month for the Army's 3rd Infantry Division, which had 10 reported fatalities. Since it arrived in Iraq in February to become the first Army division to return for a second combat tour, the 3rd Infantry has lost 34 of its soldiers, according to Pentagon figures. During its previous tour, which included the initial invasion in March 2003 and lasted about eight months, the division lost 44 soldiers.

Closing the base makes no sense

I am writing this letter to rge everyone to write their ate politicians and help stop ie closing of the 179th Airlift Ving in Mansfield. The airbase rovides about 1,000 full- and art-time jobs and has an estiated $70 million annual effect n the area economy. The Base ealignment and Closure BRAC) threatens not only Iansfield's Air National Guard ase but nearly a third of all Air ational Guard Units. It will rastically change the military s we know it. Our Mansfield Unit has credentials that far exeed the criteria to stay open. (It ompares to the best units out here). This is why the closing of makes no sense. The money aved does not offset the beneits to the nation's defense.

The 179th Airlift Wing repreents the core of patriotism. They are the heart and soul of merica. They are the small own people; they are our riends, neighbors, brothers, nd co-workers, most of which ave deep roots in our commuity. Many of these people may ust leave the military. They ave families here. They can't ommute in some cases, hunreds of miles to go to drill. My amily will no doubt have to nove, possibly out of state. I vas born and raised in the beauiful town of Bellville. My famiy is here. My friends are here. My life is here. I would like my hildren to go to school here.

Don't get me wrong, there are lot of people also going hrough this. My point is that ur base is different because here is no compelling reason to lose it down. When you add up he numbers, it doesn't save the nilitary that much money. If it nade sense, I would support it. We need to write letters to Taft/Voinovich/Dewine and your listrict congressman. Thank you for supporting our troops!

Jolie McCue
Bellville

Birthdays under fire

I would never have imagined that my three sons would be serving in the Marine Corps in Iraq at the same time. Half my heart is in Iraq.

On May 13, my son, 2nd Lt. Kyle J. Andrews turned 24 under fire in Iraq. He is with the 2nd AA BN, stationed at Camp Fallujah, Iraq. Recently he spent more than 10 days on a mission with no shower facilities available. Just a week later, he e-mailed us a copy of "The Desert Marine" which is a 2nd Marine Division publication that carried stories about Marines at Fallujah and also at Hadithah Dam, Iraq.

My middle son CPL Kraig L. Andrews serves with 3/8 Lima Co. and is also stationed at Fallujah. Kraig and Kyle have been able to share some time together at the chow hall and also working out.

On June 26, my youngest son, PFC Kolby J. Andrews, who is a member of 3/25 Scout-Sniper Platoon will celebrate his 20th birthday involved in Operation Iraqi Freedom at Hadithah Dam. As a mother of three sons who are serving in the United States Marine Corps, I could not be more proud of their commitment and accomplishments.

I feel fortunate we are able to correspond by phone, e-mail or text message on my cell phone almost weekly. Sometimes it is hard to say good-bye to them, but I always let them know that I am proud of them, miss them, love them, and that everyone is praying for their safe return.

Renee Andrews
Lexington

Fight for the 179th

First of all, I would like to start off by saying thank you and how proud I am of all the U.S. military and the 179th Ohio Air National Guard unit here in Mansfield, of which I have two sons who are members.

I have had many people throw in my face that the National Guardsmen are just weekend warriors. My answer to them is at least they are warriors and they believe in our country and what it stands for. Most people probably don't know that at the present time the U.S. has 60 percent National Guardsmen serving overseas due to the decline in recruitment of the regular branches of the military.

I am appalled with Mayor Lydia Reid and other community businessmen saying it would be a "win-win situation" for the city of Mansfield if the 179th were to close. It sounds like instead of fighting to keep the 179th and its annual $30 million payroll here in Richland County, they would rather have another white elephant on their hands (just look around the Mansfield area) and see all that they have brought in — not too much. At least once a month the hotels are being occupied with guardsmen on drill weekend.

I keep hearing it's a political decision, so who is getting rich off this? Rep. Michael Oxley, please step forward and fight to keep the 179th here in Mansfield, after all you are in a position to use your clout, and people do listen to you.

Candace Zeger
Lucas

Letters

Let's save the 179th

We hope you will all take the time to attend the rallies being planned to save our 179th Airlif wing of the Ohio Air National Guard. This unit is heavily involved in our community.

The fire department that is maintained at Mansfield Lahm is also counted on to provide mutual aid with the surrounding fire departments, at times when no C-130s are in the air. This service would be badly missed.

So wear your "We Love the 179th pins," put your "Save the 179th" magnets on your cars and go to these events Saturday in Bellville and Wednesday on the square in downtown Mansfield. Let's show our state leaders we as a community do care and want to prevent the closure of our base.

Our thanks to the REDEC/BRAC Steering committee here for all the work and time involved in fighting this closure.

Joyce and Jerry Duff
Mansfield

The above are just a few peoples' thoughts on closing the 179 Air Wing based at Lahm Field, Mansfield, Ohio. Everyone is totally against this idea. If anything we would like to see more C-130-H's brought here. Possibly, a Jet Fighter Wing also. Something BRAC can't understand, or care about, is the pride we all share for these big planes, along with the military who fly and maintain them, as well as their support people. Indeed, we all have great affection for both the planes and the personell.

SAVE the 179th

.ook for special L79th poster in 'uesday's paper

It's time for area residents to ıke up pens, e-mails, phones nd letters in defense of the 79th Airlift Wing of the Ohio ir National Guard.

The local military unit at lansfield Lahm Airport has een recommended for closure by the Pentagon as part f the 2005 Base Realignment nd Closure process.

The BRAC commission is udying those recommendaons and will offer a list of facilies to be closed or realigned to resident Bush this fall. But this ommunity is not about to go way quietly as our economy ses 1,000 full and part-time bs and a facility worth $70 illion annually to the local conomy.

We are not going to let go asily of a unit that's been a art of this community's fabric r more than 50 years.

On Tuesday, the News Jourıl will publish a full-page color oster aimed at sending a ear message to Washington at area residents want to ave the 179th."

We urge you to put that oster in your home and busiess windows as a sign of your pport. We also urge you to ing it to the community rally downtown Mansfield on ne 22 aimed at saving the it.

On the back of the poster ll be content helping to exain why the decision to close e unit is flawed. On the back ll be names, addresses and one numbers of key elected icials and also the BRAC ommission. We urge you to ntact these officials and mmission and send them a py of the poster to make ur feelings known.

It's time to let Washington derstand how important the 9th is to Richland County, rth central Ohio, the nation d the world.

Look for this special poster Tuesday's print edition.

Here is who to contact:

If you would like to offer edback directly to the Base alignment and Closure ommission, an e-mail form available at p://www.brac.gov/feedck.aspx.

Letters can be mailed to 05 Defense Base Closure d Realignment Commission, 21 S. Clark St., Ste. 600, Arıgton, Va., 22202.

Community must fight hard to retain 179th

The issue:
Local committee committed to waging battle over Airlift Wing

Our opinion:
Loss of the base, a valuable asset to north central Ohio, is not acceptable

It would be easy to give up the fight for the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

But Mike Greene and others won't let that happen.

Earlier this week Ohio Adjutant General Greg Wayt met with Greene and other members of the REDeC/BRAC steering committee and the All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs.

"The 179th is on a list recommended for closure," Wayt said during his visit. "But in the two previous rounds, about 30 percent of the bases on the recommended list were able to change the commission's mind."

That means Greene and others in the community must press forward, making the argument for the value of the unit to the city, the state and the nation.

Despite a strong effort spearheaded by Greene, co-chairman of the Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee, the 179th Airlift Wing was on the Pentagon's list announced this month, putting 1,000 local jobs in peril.

Now Greene is leading a rally called "Save Our 179th Day" at 5:30 p.m. June 22 on the downtown square. He hopes to attract 10,000 people as well as national media coverage.

And he wants everyone in the area to get involved, encouraging community residents to make signs for their cars, homes and businesses. He promises speakers, bands and cheerleaders for next month's event.

And for good reason.

The 179th is more than just a military unit to this community. It's more than just 1,000 full and part-time jobs. It's more than $70 million annually to the local economy.

It is an integral part of the fabric of this community.

The unit's military growth and success during the past 57 years has been mirrored by its networking and immersion with the north central Ohio communities it represents.

The fight to keep it is important. Rep. Michael Oxley has joined the fight, pledging to use his political clout to bring base closure commission officials to town in hopes of getting the 179th off the list.

We hope others in the community see the need for the base to remain open and join the ReDEC/BRAC Steering Committee in making noise. Losing the 179th Airlift Wing would be a huge blow to our city and our region.

We won't go down without a fight.

Send us your thoughts

E-mail
chunnell@
nncogannett.com

Mail
Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 25
Mansfield, OH 44901

Fax
(419) 521-7415

Again, our citizens have found a way to both honor our veterans and finance one of our Mansfield memorials to show proper respect to our heros.

Commemorative bricks available for veterans

MANSFIELD — The Korean War Veterans Association plans to install more commemorative bricks at the Korean War Memorial in Mansfield's Central Park in June.

About 300 bricks have been placed and dedicated by families and friends of veterans who served in all of America's wars or in peacetime.

Association member Bill Woodrow said each brick is inscribed with the words "Duty, Honor, Country." All are embedded in the walkway in front of the memorial.

There are two kinds of bricks; 4-by-8-inch bricks on which three lines of 13 characters each may be inscribed for $50, and 8-by-8-inch bricks on which five lines of 13 characters each may be inscribed for $100.

Applications for commemorative bricks or gift certificates can be obtained by calling Frank J. Russo at (419) 756-1468. The deadline is June 1.

The veterans plan to install the next set of bricks June 25.

Bellville crowd rallies to save 179th

By Mark Caudill
News Journal

BELLVILLE — Maj. Steve McLaughlin joined the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard when he was a senior in high school.

The 37-year-old Shelby man is focused on keeping it open.

"I'm not thinking about closure right now," McLaughlin said. "I'm thinking about what pressure we can put on the politicians to save this base."

The 179th is on the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission list of facilities recommended to be shut down to reduce overall military expenses. McLaughlin, an intelligence officer, and hundreds of other people turned out Saturday afternoon at the bandstand on Main Street for a rally to save the 179th. AmVets Post 43 hosted the event.

Jolie McCue organized Saturday's rally.

"My husband works out there full-time," she said. "I think, from my heart, they're closing it for the wrong reasons."

The rally included a popcorn stand manned by Boy Scouts, face-painting, a lemonade stand and music from the Clear Fork High School marching band. "We love the 179th" buttons were the fashion accessory of the day, and form letters to be signed and mailed to designated legislators were circulated throughout the throng.

U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley, R-Findlay, doesn't need convincing. He will speak at a June 27 BRAC hearing in Buffalo, N.Y.

"We have a tremendous story to tell," Oxley said. "I feel comfortable going to Buffalo and presenting our case. We have the facts."

Oxley seemed confident the 179th ultimately would be taken off the closure list.

"The message we are sending loud and clear from Bellville is, 'Keep your hands off our C-130s. They're doing their jobs, and the people are doing their jobs,' " he said.

Mansfield Mayor Lydia Reid addressed members of the 179th.

"You are an integral part of this community," she said. "We don't know what in the world we would do without you. That's why we are fighting so hard."

Reid encouraged everyone to attend Wednesday's rally in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

"This is just a prelude to our big rally in Mansfield," she said. "We will see you at 5:30 Wednesday in downtown, sunny Mansfield."

McCue will be there.

"I hope they keep having rallies," she said. "Right now, this is all the public can do."

mcaudill@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7219

Dan O'Hara attended Saturday's "Save the 179th" rally with poster in hand. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

All of us really do care about the 179th Air Wing, as well as other Reserve and Guard Unit.

Rallying 'round the 179th

Jackie Beilstein passes out balloons at Saturday's "Save the 179th" rally in Bellville. The rally was a prelude to the larger event planned to start at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday in the square in downtown Mansfield. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Big rally for 179th planned for next month

By Mark Caudill
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Mike Greene wants the community to unite behind the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

GREENE

"Let our voices be heard all the way to Washington," said Greene, co-chairman of the Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee that worked for more than a year to keep the base off the recommended

See RALLY, back page

About the 179th

- **What:** 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard
- **Based:** Mansfield Lahm Airport
- **Airmen:** Roughly 1,000 full- and part-time airmen. The 179th is the seventh-largest employer in north central Ohio.
- **Awards:** The 179th has received many awards, decorations and recognitions, including the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. Recently, the 179th received the Alan P. Tappan Memorial Trophy, which designates the outstanding Air National Guard unit in Ohio; and the Rusty Metcalf Award, which acknowledges the unit as one of the best in the entire Air Force.

Rally

From page 1A

closure list.

Despite the efforts, the 179th Airlift Wing was on the Pentagon's list announced this month, putting 1,000 local jobs in peril.

Greene is spearheading a rally called "Save Our 179th Day" at 5:30 p.m. June 22 on the downtown square. He hopes to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

"This isn't going to be just our group preaching to the choir. I really want to make this a huge, huge event," Greene said. "I want them to understand that this is serious business."

Greene encourages community residents to make signs for their cars, homes and businesses. He promises speakers, bands and cheerleaders for next month's event.

Greene said if the rally is as big as planned, he hopes BRAC members, who are scheduled to be in Cleveland on June 23, will visit Mansfield. This week, BRAC members will begin visiting bases slated for closure.

The 179th Airlift Wing, which has 230 full-time positions, was not on the list for a visit.

"If you had less than 300 full-timers, you would not get a visit," Greene said.

But local leaders aren't waiting for June 22 to do something. They will meet at 1 p.m. today at Gorman-Rupp's north plant with an All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs. Representatives from other affected communities, including Cleveland and Springfield, will be at the meeting.

"The idea was, 'What could we do to help each other?' " Greene said.

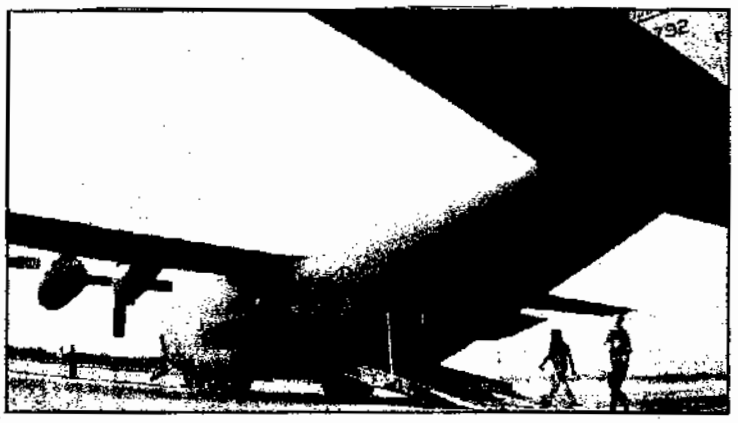
Greene fears the Air Force wants the 179th Airlift Wing's C-130s.

"If they're going to take our planes away, we would prefer that the Army not come in and maybe prevent civilian aviation possibilities," he said.

But that's only a fallback plan.

"Our main priority is getting us off the list," Greene said.

mcaudill@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7219



Guests head inside a C-130 for a tour April 19, 2004, during the Mansfield-Richland County Chamber of Commerce after-hours event at the 179th Airlift Wing. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Rep. Oxley hopes t sway commission's decision about 179t

By Greg Wright
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — Rep. Michael Oxley said Monday he would urge base closure commission officials come to Mansfield so he and local officials can persuade them to keep the 179th Airlift Wing open.

The 179th Airlift Wing was one of 13 facilities in Ohio the Pentagon put on its recommended Base Realignment and Closure list May 13. But the commission's nine-member, independent panel must review the Pentagon picks and could remove some from the list.

"I never give up," Oxley said.

OXLEY

Gov. Bob Taft sent a letter to commission chairman Anthony Principi on May 17 asking commissioners to come to Mansfield, as well bases in Springfield a Cleveland.

The Pentagon propos moving eight C-13(cargo planes from t 179th to airfields in Alat ma and Arkansas. This r flects the Pentagon's mo

See OXLEY, back page

Oxley

From page 1A

to consolidate military bases and reserve units.

Oxley met Monday in Columbus with Army National Guard Maj. Gen. Gregory Wayt, Ohio's

a meeting in the Buckeye State.

Oxley said he also could use his clout to try to persuade commissioners to come to the 179th. He said he knows about half of the commissioners, including former Utah Republican Rep. James Hansen, former Nevada Democratic Rep. James Bilbray and former White House Chief

strategy to keep the 179th open.

The commission will visit major bases on the proposed closure and realignment list. The commission also announced 16 regional hearings in California, Texas and other states to get community input on the Pentagon recommendations.

Ohio is not on the regional meeting list. Oxley said he and

Budget item for 179th show of commitment

House bill includes funds for base scheduled to close

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — The U.S. House of Representatives passed a spending bill Thursday that includes $1.3 million for a fire station project at Mansfield Lahm Airport.

What that budget item means as far as the future of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at the airport remains unclear.

"Unless we manage to get off the (Base Realignment and Closure) list, it's kind of a moot point," said Mike Greene, who is leading local efforts to keep the 179th in Mansfield. "As of right now, the plan is to send that firefighting unit to Toledo."

The 179th Airlift Wing base is on the Pentagon's list of bases recommended for closing.

But U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley (R-Findlay), who asked for the fire station funding, said it shows that the fight to preserve the 179th is not over.

"By this, we are showing our commitment to keeping our base in Mansfield one of

See BRAC, back page

Details

The 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, is one of 13 facilities in Ohio the Pentagon put on its recommended Base Realignment and Closure list May 13.

About 1,000 full- and part-time airmen are assigned to the 179th, which is the seventh-largest employer in north central Ohio.

The Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee is leading the fight to remove the 179th from the recommended closure list before a decision is made this year.

A "Save Our 179th Day" rally is set for June 22 at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

News Journal staff report

Groups fight to keep 179th in Mansfield

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — It's not over yet.

No one is giving up on keeping the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at Lahm Airport.

That was the message from Ohio Adjutant Gen. Greg Wayt after a Tuesday meeting of the REDeC/BRAC steering committee and the All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs.

"The 179th is on a list recommended for closure," Wayt said. "But in the two previous rounds, about 30 percent of the bases on the recommended list were able to change the commission's mind."

Mansfield learned this month the 179th is on the list compiled as part of the Base Realignment and Closure process, which could mean the loss of 1,000 local jobs.

Mike Greene, who has led the local effort to keep the 179th open, said there is plenty area residents can do to help change the BRAC commission's mind.

"Write letters," he said. "It sounds trite. But that's one thing we can all do. Write to your senator. Write to your representative. Write to the president.

"Our goal is to get off the list. It's happened before. Springfield was on the last two lists and managed to get off."

Greene hopes a huge public show of suppo helps sway some minds.

"Show up at our ral June 22," he said. "We like to get between 10,0 and 15,000 people togeth on the square to sho Washington what we thi of the 179th."

Greene is spearheadi plans for the 5:30 p.m. ral which will coincide with "Save Our 179th Day." I is hoping to draw sor statewide and natio news coverage to he Mansfield plead its case.'

BRAC officials have s not made public all the formation used to make cisions about which m tary bases to close.

"We're still not sure actly what criteria th used," said Da Williamson, the governo regional economic devel ment representative an member of the local BR committee. "We're waiti for that information to published so we know wi issues we need to addres

Tuesday's meeti brought together repres tatives of other commu ties in Ohio affected by most-recent BRAC nouncement.

"We're trying to see w we can do to help e other," Greene said. "Ri now, I think Cleveland the most well-organi group. We're hoping to ate some synergy with t group and help one an er."

rkent@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7274

BRAC

From page 1A

the most modern in the Guard system," Oxley said. "This would raise our investment in the 179th Airlift Wing unit to more than $20 million over the last eight years."

Greene said any effort in support of the 179th can only help efforts to save the Guard base.

"I still think the best thing we can do is to show community support for the base," Greene said. "That's why I think that rally is so important. We want as many people on the square June 22 as possible to show Washington what the 179th means to all of us."

Greene said Ret. Brig. Gen. Steve Koper, president of the National Guard Association of the United States, has committed to attend the rally.

"We've invited the governor and, hopefully, we'll have some other supporters here from Washington and Columbus," Greene said.

In the meantime, efforts are ongoing to entice members of the BRAC commission to visit Mansfield. Because the 179th has only about 250 full-time not mandatory.

Oxley released a letter he sent to Commission Chairman Anthony Principi in which he wrote, "I believe you will find the 179th represents a compelling case due to the active role it plays in homeland defense and the global war on terror."

In a letter to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Oxley urged the Pentagon to release "installation-specific data" used to make the closing list.

Greene has said the information is important so 179th supporters can better make a case to remain open.

Economic Development Corp.), which has diligently prepared for the BRAC process for more than a year, is now preparing its presentation to the commission in an effort to reverse (the closing)," Oxley wrote.

"Without access to this important data, REDeC cannot properly make its case that this guard unit, which has seen 35 deployments in support of our national defense in just the last four years, should remain open and operational."

rkent@nncogannett.com

Air Force just wants to have the C-130s

Six former Ohio Air National Guard generals visit area to share history

By Ron Simon
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Retired Brig. General Fred Larson calls the possible closure of his old unit, the 179th Airlift Wing, "a grab for the iron."

The "iron" being the unit's fairly well kept fleet of eight C-130H cargo planes.

"The Air Force has not been a very good steward of their C-130s," said the former 179th commander. "A lot of them have aged and a lot are grounded. So there are squadron holes. So this is a grab. It doesn't matter what a unit like the 179th has done or the skills and military value it has. All the Air Force wants is the iron."

Larson was one of six former Ohio Air National Guard generals, all with ties to the 179th, in Mansfield on Thursday. All but one were pilots with the 179th and two were commanders.

They were brought together by Master Sgt. Rod Togliatti, the 179th's historian, for a day of history at the base at Lahm Airport.

Togliatti said the men represent 190 years of combined service, 45,000 hours of flying time and a large piece of memory.

"How many times do you get six generals together to talk about history?" he asked.

Afterward, the generals stopped at the Mansfield Museum on Park Avenue West to meet the public.

Some, like retired Brig. Gen. Myron Ashcraft, go back to the days when the unit was a jet fighter squadron. Ashcraft, who now flies for United Airlines, made the switch from fighter cockpits to the lumbering C-130s. It was the right training for those commercial planes he flies today, he said.

Other generals included Major Gen. Francis Hazard, Brig. Gen. Ray Weber and Brig. Gen. Richard Green, who commanded the unit until his recent promotion

LARSON

ASHCRAFT

HAZARD

WEBER

GREEN

LATTIMORE

and later retirement.

Brig. Gen. Vergel Lattimore was the 179th chaplain and the Air National Guard Assistant to the Air Force Chief of Chaplains, and is still active.

"I travel all over the country. I'm the chaplain's chaplain," he said.

Green, like Larson, doesn't care to see his old unit broken up.

"This is a tough blow," he said of the closure threat. "The Air Force simply wants our new planes. No matter what the unit has done, the planes are all they want."

Ashcraft agreed.

"They are stealing our airplanes. That's wrong, ethically and morally. It's a shame," he said.

Larson said a major study taken under his command in the early 1990s proved the unit could expand to double its size at Mansfield Lahm Airport. He said arguments that there is no room to expand are simply wrong.

"I think the 179th is not set for closure. We're going to fight this tooth and nail," he said.

rsimon@nocogannett.com
(419) 521-7230

Some Guard bases may lose planes

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — What happens when you take away all the airplanes from an Air National Guard facility?

It's a question being asked at more than a dozen bases ever since the Pentagon announced that it wants the Air Force to consolidate its planes at fewer locations.

Under a military restructuring plan announced Friday, the Pentagon proposed shifting hundreds of planes and thousands of jobs away from Air National Guard bases.

For example:

- Reno-Tahoe International Airport Air Guard Station in Nevada would lose its eight C-130H planes.
- Bradley International Airport Air Guard Station in Connecticut would see all of its A-10s fly away.
- Nashville International Air Guard Station in Tennessee would lose its C-130H aircraft.

"How can you be an airlift wing without any airlift?" asked April Conway, a spokeswoman for the Nevada Air National Guard.

The recommendations now go to a president-appointed commission that will spend the summer holding hearings before sending its recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 8.

Compared with four previous Base Realignment and Closure rounds that began in 1988, National Guard and Reserve bases would be hit hard this time. The Pentagon proposes consolidating about 387 Reserve and National Guard installations into about 125, many to be located at or near active-duty bases.

Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the base closing commission Monday that the Air Force wants more planes in fewer units to more quickly fulfill missions.

"What they have right now are pockets of small numbers of aircraft that are at various locations," Myers said. "And it makes it unwieldy when you try to access them for missions, particularly the kind of missions we're in today in Iraq and Afghanistan and for that matter, around the world."

a lot of citizens are certain in their own minds that the Air Force wants our newer, better C-130. That this is a legal case of Air Piracy. The C-130-H's of the 179th have more up-dated equipment, as well as being much better maintained. Where in this article, General Richard Myers, says it more difficult to deploy planes in smaller groups. That is a mis-represental of the truth.

In this day of radio, telephones and computers, not to mention signed letters of orders, fax etc. Any and all orders can be transmitted in a matter of seconds.

The Air Force is being very heavy-handed in "robbing" the Air Guard units of their C-130-H's. "Robbing" is how the peops of that units feel, not too mention our citizens.

Pentagon: 179th too crowded

Lack of expansion room among reasons for recommended closing

By Greg Wright
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — About 1,000 full and part-time military jobs in Mansfield are in danger primarily because the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield has less room to grow than its rivals in Toledo, Arkansas and Alabama, according to Pentagon documents.

■ TV show explains BRAC process, page 6A.

One of several major criteria the Pentagon considered while determining which military bases to close or realign is whether the facility can accommodate growth. The base also must fit into the Pentagon's future defense strategy.

The Pentagon proposed disbanding the local Ohio Air National Guard last month and moving its eight C-130H transport planes to

See 179th, page 6A

179th

From page 1A

Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base in Alabama and the 314th Airlift Wing at Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas.

Other support services now at Mansfield would go to the Louisville International Airport Air Guard Station in Kentucky and the Toledo Express Airport Air Guard Station.

However, local officials said Monday the ratings are wrong, since city officials offered the Pentagon access to 168 additional acres when military officials indicated expansion might be considered a factor. The 179th Airlift Wing currently is located on 227 acres.

Rep. Michael Oxley, R-Findlay, and local officials have said they would fight to keep transport planes at the 179th at Mansfield Lahm Airport. Gov. Bob Taft announced Monday he will give the Richland Economic Development Corp. $50,000 to promote the 179th.

But it's unlikely the independent Base Realignment and Closure commission would overturn the Pentagon's decision because of the facility's size, a military expert said.

"It's too small to worry about," said John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a defense analysis firm.

While some bases on the closure list could lose thousands of jobs, Pike said, the 179th has just 234 full time military and civilian workers. Still, local officials argue, the base is the seventh largest employer in north central Ohio, including around 650 part-time jobs held by "traditional" National Guard members.

The Pentagon claimed in environmental documents released this weekend the 179th has no room for growth. Little Rock can develop another 1,783 acres; Maxwell an additional 264 acres and Toledo has 45 acres, the Pentagon said. Only Louisville had zero acreage available, the Pentagon said.

Another factor in the Defense Department's base closing considerations was military value. Mansfield ranked lower in military value and capacity than other airlift bases, according to the Pentagon.

The top ranked airlift base is Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. Mansfield ranked 119th out of 154 airlift bases behind Little Rock in 17th place; Maxwell, 21st; Louisville, 79th; and Toledo, 100th.

Local officials contend the 179th is still busy in the war on terrorism with its 35 deployments since Sept. 11, 2001. The facility is modern and there is room to house up to a dozen C-130H planes at the base, said retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Fred Larson, co-chair of the group fighting to save the 179th.

The Pentagon argues it has too many small Air National Guard units; its goal is to merge many with active-duty facilities, said Loren Thompson, a military expert at the Lexington Institute.

But the base closure panel, which is reviewing the Pentagon recommendations, could disagree and decide to keep national guard units such as the 179th open, Thompson said.

The nine-member commission must come up with a final closure list by Sept. 8.

The information that Lahm Field can't expand is absolutely in error. Lahm Field and 179th base there can be expanded greatly any time that becomes necessary. It already has one of the longest runways in the US and can accomodate the largest planes in the world. Lahm Field is an emergency landing strip, if necessary, for the space shuttle. Why spend Millions on increasing the length of a runway some place else, when Lahm Field has everything necessary.

Bad data led to decision, officials say

By Linda Martz
News Journal

MANSFIELD — The Pentagon used flawed data and left major questions unanswered in recommending the 179th Airlift Wing be closed, former base officials say.

Local officials plan to correct those issues in hope of keeping the Ohio Air National Guard unit and its 1,000 full- and part-time jobs in Mansfield, where it's been for more than 50 years.

Retired Brig. Gen. Myron Ashcraft, now a

See DATA, page 6A

Data

From page 1A

United Airlines pilot, said the thing that "jumped right out" when he looked at criteria released Monday is the Pentagon inaccurately said Mansfield Lahm Airport doesn't have enough land available to expand the wing's fleet from eight to 16 C-130H transport planes.

The military considers larger bases more efficient, the Lexington resident said.

Once the Pentagon documents said additional land was not available — an incorrect claim — other questions, such as what it would cost to expand, were left unanswered, he said.

"Once they say that we don't have the land, everything else is out the window," Ashcraft said. "They don't even evaluate how much it would cost to have a full squadron.

"That's the kind of stuff we have to fight it on — is the data," he said Monday night. "I don't see any other shortfall in the criteria that we would fail to meet."

Local officials said Monday they're frustrated by Pentagon documents showing the military meted out low scores to Lahm in areas such as room to expand, military value and capacity. The 179th, which has had 35 deployments since Sept. 11, 2001, generates about $70 million annually to the local economy.

Mayor Lydia Reid said local officials offered the Pentagon 168 additional acres — the city-owned Bradley and Kissell farms north of the airport — when military officials indicated expansion opportunities could be considered. The 179th Airlift Wing now takes up 227 acres.

"Certainly, if they need space to build on, they can build a hell of a lot on 168 acres," the mayor said Monday. "We have said 'whatever it takes, we'll do it.' We're willing to do whatever they want."

Reid said Lahm has a lot more going for it than acknowledged by the Pentagon rankings. "We've got the second longest runway in the state. Also, we've got an airport that is underutilized" — meaning military planes don't need to compete with a lot of other air traffic, she said.

"Some of the places that weren't on that list (to be closed) do not have the capability we do," Reid said.

Mike Greene, co-chairman of the Richland County Economic Development Corp./BRAC Steering Committee, which worked for more than a year to avoid a recommendation that the base be closed, said the Pentagon claims Mansfield doesn't have enough space for a large fleet.

But the master plan outlined in the early 1990s by former base commander Brig. Gen. Fred Larson anticipated constructing more ramps to store planes, Greene said.

"It's easily accomplished simply by putting down more pads," at much less cost than the $33 million the Department of Defense said it would save by closing down Mansfield's base, Greene said.

Ashcraft said the Air Force appears to want to shut down Guard and Reserve units so it can acquire their equipment. "They have a very old, tired, beat up fleet. The way to get airplanes without buying them is just to steal them from the Guard and Reserve," he said.

Larson said, "It doesn't matter to them that they gain no military value (to the country overall) from our airplanes," Larson said. "They're just moving planes from one location to another, at a cost of $33 million."

Local officials are still trying to arrange for a visit to Mansfield by a member of the BRAC commission before a decision is made — but may get only a visit from a staff member, Larson said.

Ohio has been allotted two hours at an upcoming regional base closure hearing in Buffalo — and Mansfield must share that time with Cleveland and Springfield, Larson said. "We're asking for half an hour, but we may get 15 minutes."

lmartz@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7229

With so much at stake for so many people, in so many parts of the United States, how could BRAC not have up-to-date information? How could they take their duty to the people of this country so lightly? If they failed to have the correct facts about the 179th and Lahm Field, how many errors are they making about other bases? They don't go to these military facilities, and God Forbid they should consult with anyone whose future is mightily affected by their decisions.

Editorial

Closing 179th would be a mistake

The Issue:
Today's special section devoted to the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

Our Opinion:
The message is simple: Save the 179th.

You should notice a little something extra in the News Journal today.

It's a four-page section aimed at sending a loud and clear message to the Base Realignment and Closure commission and lawmakers in Washington.

North central Ohio believes the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard should remain open and in operation at Lahm Airport in Mansfield.

The first page is a color poster with a simple message. "Save the 179th" is in huge letters, visible from a distance.

We urge you to put this poster in the window of your home, business or other locale that will be seen by the public. We want you to save it and bring it to the community-wide rally June 22. We then want you to mail it to the BRAC commission or lawmakers, and urge them to stop the planned closure of this vital military unit.

The second page is a message from retired Brig. Gen. Richard Green, a former commander of the 179th, who lays out a clear argument why the Pentagon wants the 179th closed and why it should remain open.

Send us your thoughts

E-mail
chunnell@
nncogannett.com

Mail
Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 25
Mansfield, OH 44901

Fax
(419) 521-7415

The third and fourth pages are messages from local businesses and residents in support of the unit, which has been a part of north central Ohio for more than 50 years.

Make no mistake. Closing the 179th is a mistake. The Pentagon simply wants the unit's eight C-130H aircraft, which would bolster the aging Active Duty and Reserve fleet for the Air Force.

But it would not be good public relations to make public that need for the planes. Instead, the Pentagon cited in its recommendation that there is no room for expansion at the local unit, a claim not supported by the facts. The City of Mansfield has offered another 168 acres for potential base expansion.

We urge the BRAC commission to look deeply into the Pentagon's flawed logic and look instead at the real reason for its closure recommendation — eight aircraft that Congress purchased explicitly for use by the Ohio Air National Guard.

We urge local residents to join the fight by posting today's posters all over the community. Bring them to the public rally. And then mail them to the people who will help keep the 179th open.

It's not to late. This fight has really just begun. We urge you to join in today.

This editorial states that there is plenty of room for expansion for the 179th Air Wing and Lahm Field in general.

Editorial

Pentagon has slapped part-time soldiers

The issue:
Reserve and National Guard bases were hit hard in the latest round of BRAC Commission recommendations.

Our opinion:
This is a funny way to thank the soldiers who have put so much on the line in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Pentagon has a unique way of thanking the Reserve and National Guard forces for their great contributions during the war on terror.

The thanks is a cold slap in the face with Pentagon reality.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, want to shuffle, cut and otherwise consolidate 387 National Guard and Reserve installations into about 125.

This convoluted thinking is again proof that active duty military leaders a.) don't understand the Guard and Reserve lifestyle or appreciate the needs of part-time soldiers, sailors and airmen; and/or b.) don't care about the future of either segment of the nation's military.

Their plan would include closing the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard in Mansfield, one of the best flying units in the country today.

Myers said these Guard and Reserve moves are being made to enhance capability, cut costs and integrate the part-time forces more closely with active-duty units.

We would argue this plan would accomplish few of the goals outlined above, save for cutting costs.

Myers admitted "there will be some inconvenience" for people serving in the Guard and Reserve if the Pentagon's recommendations to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission are followed.

Some inconvenience? That's like saying Noah needed to build a bit of a boat when the rains came. The understatement is that severe.

How about the fact it will add hundreds or even thousands of miles, and the accompanying expenses for members to meet monthly military obligations? How about the fact it will force Guard or Reserve troops, some of whom may be nearly qualified for retirement, out of the service who simply cannot make long-range trips once a month?

The economic effect on the communities like Mansfield scheduled to lose these units is one thing. But the effect on the individual who has devoted much of his or her life in service to the country is even worse. Lahm Airport will survive and perhaps even flourish with the influx of private business should the 179th close its doors.

But the 1,000 full and part-time airmen who made up the unit, hundreds of which have served around the nation and the world since Sept. 11, 2001, will never be the same. The 179th, for example, has gone on 35 deployments in the last four years.

At a time when recruiting for the National Guard is down 24 percent from last year, it seems sheer folly to slap the face of the people who make the Guard and Reserve the success story the part-time military is today.

Without the Guard and Reserve, the Bush administration could not have fought its war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, about 40 percent of the 138,000 troops in Iraq are Guard and Reserve forces. The Pentagon's reward is to make their career in the military even tougher to maintain.

We urge the members of the BRAC Commission to take a hard look at what the Pentagon has in mind for the Guard and Reserve. We think when they do they will see the security of this nation will be severely weakened with Rumsfeld's plans for the nation's citizen soldiers.

This editorial will give you more information about the 179th, and the opinions of many are the same.

Bush defends base closings, says money being wasted

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP) — Speaking out for the first time in favor of controversial base closings, President Bush said Friday the nation is wasting billions of dollars on unnecessary military facilities and needs the money for the war on terrorism.

Bush, who faces opposition from many states to shutting down bases, tried to be reassuring. He said the bases would be chosen fairly and the government would do all it could

See BUSH, back page

Bush

From page 1A

to help affected communities recover.

But he made clear that the process — however painful — could not be avoided.

In a speech to graduates of the Naval Academy, he said the closings and realignments "will result in a military that is more efficient and better prepared so you can better protect the American people against the dangers of this new century."

"In this war, there is only one option and that is victory," he said, to cheers from midshipmen, relatives and faculty at the academy on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay.

When Bush last spoke at a Naval Academy commencement, it was four months before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and his focus was his administration's effort to reshape the military into a faster, lighter and more flexible — but not larger — fighting force.

Since the attacks, and amid a global anti-terror campaign and wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, a top-to-bottom military transformation is even more necessary, Bush said.

Keys to the success are new technology, repositioning of global forces, new weapons and realigned bases at home, he said.

Bush said he understands the fears in cities where bases have been marked for changes or closure. The first round of closings in a decade has members of Congress and local officials working hard to protect the 33 major bases slated for closure and the 29 others proposed for downsizing.

"I know firsthand how hard base closings can be on local communities," said the former Texas governor who saw facilities shut down in his state.

Members of the congressionally chartered Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) will visit bases and hold hearings on the Pentagon proposal. The plan aims to save $48.8 billion over 20 years by eliminating redundant and inefficient facilitates and promoting cooperation among the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps.

The panel will decide on changes to the Pentagon plan and give a list to Bush and Congress this fall for approval or rejection.

Commission chairman Anthony Principi on Friday joined a growing chorus of lawmakers demanding that the Defense Department quickly release the thousands of pages of data backing up each of its recommendations.

Briefly

More work for 179th

MANSFIELD — Twenty-nine members of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard will leave Monday in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, the U.S. military initiative in Afghanistan.

Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the 179th has flown more than 2,600 sorties, moved 35,000 passengers and transported 5,800 cargo tons of material in combat theaters, according to a unit news release.

The airlift wing, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, was recommended for closure this month by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission. An area campaign is under way to remove the 179th from the closure list before a final decision is made later this year.

No, Mr. Bush, we are not wasting money on our personell at our Military facilities or our personell. Maybe other places are, Ohio is not. We have had terrible losses. My grandson has served a tour of duty in Bosnia, and Iraq in one of the most dangerous missions in Iraq. Transportation of fuel. Now BRAC wants to do whatever with the 706th Transportation Company.

AmVets Post 43 joins fight for 179th

Rally planned for June 18 in Bellville

By David Benson
News Journal

BELLVILLE — A second major rally to keep the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard in Mansfield is in the works.

AmVets Post 43 in Bellville will host a Rally to Save the 179th Airlift Wing on June 18 at 3 p.m. at the bandstand on Main Street.

The 179th, based on Mansfield Lahm Airport, is on the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission list of facilities recommended to be shut down to reduce overall military expenses.

A separate Save Our 179th Day rally is set for June 22 at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage for that event.

Joli McCue is organizing the Bellville rally.

"When Post 43 called me and asked me if I would do it, I said I would be glad to. Somebody's got to do something," said McCue, the wife of a 179th member.

"If we get a big turnout it will show how much community support the 179th has. Our legislators will see we're not going to take this closing lying down," she said.

The other purpose of the rally is to provide information to those who have questions about the BRAC process and what individuals can do to try to prevent the closure, McCue said.

"So far, the support for the base and for this rally has just poured in. It's been phenomenal," she said.

Speakers at the Bellville rally will include Mayor Carolynn Studenmund, REDeC/BRAC steering committee co-chairman Brig. Gen.(r) Fred Larson, Brig. Gen.(r) Myron Ashcraft, Brig. Gen.(r) Rich Green, Richland County Commissioner Ed Olson, county Veteran Services Commission President Larry Moore and state Rep. Bill Hartnett.

In addition, form letters supporting the 179th will be available at the rally, which will need to be signed and mailed to designated legislators.

The AmVets and American Legion Color Guards and the Clear Fork High School marching band will participate. For children, there will be face painting, lemonade and popcorn stands and balloons.

Food and music will be featured after the rally at the AmVets Ron Boyce Hall located north of the bandstand on Main Street. Music will be provided by AmVets' Steve Stephenson, Dave King, & Westwind and by the Jo Kidd Outfit, comprised of 179th members.

For additional information, call McCue at (419) 886-4283. To donate food or supplies, contact the AmVets at (419) 886-2658.

dbenson@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7272

Tech Sgt. Ken Schonauer of Mansfield works on the tail section of a C-130 at Lahm Airport earlier this month. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal)*

Family and friends placed flags Sunday to honor veterans, soldiers and emergency personnel at a Healing Field ceremony in Fredericktown. The field will stand through Wednesday. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal photos)*

A place to honor many sacrifices

By Jennifer Kowalewski
News Journal

FREDERICKTOWN — Charles Blanchette served his country in World War I, World War II and the Korean War.

His granddaughter, Denise Needles, honored his memory by flying a flag Sunday in the Healing Fields at Kokosing Construction Co. The Exchange Club of Mount Vernon and Knox County sponsored the event to honor veterans, current soldiers and emergency personnel.

"It's pretty neat," the Mount Vernon woman said after buying a flag. "I saw all the flags and thought he has to have a flag."

Healing Fields began in Sandy, Utah, in 2002, when Colonial Flag Co. owner Paul Swenson wanted to honor those who lost their lives in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Volunteer Jane Engle said Swenson flew 3,000 flags in Utah to show how many victims were killed.

While residents walked among the flags, many felt a sense of healing, and Healing Fields have sprung up across the country, Engle said.

Chairwoman Melody Brent has worked to bring the Healing Field to Fredericktown since November 2004. Residents purchased flags to fly in a 2-acre field in honor of their loved ones, Exchange Club President Diane Collier said. Residents from Richland, Morrow, Ashland, Knox and Licking counties participated.

Residents can visit the field for the next few days

See FLAGS, back page

Ann Eing leans on her son, Jeff, as they look at the flag they placed to honor Ann's husband, John, a World War II Navy veteran.

If you go

Residents can visit the Healing Field at Kokosing Construction Co. in Fredericktown through Wednesday evening. Kokosing Construction is on Ohio 13, near the Ohio 95 interchange. The flags honor and remember veterans, those serving in the military and emergency personnel. The program includes:

- **Today**, 3 p.m: Ohio Highway Patrol helicopter land; 4 p.m: The Petty Group (Knox County singers); 5 p.m: singers and speakers, including state Sen. Bill Harris, R-Mansfield.
- **Tuesday**, 4 p.m: Apple Valley Singers; 5 p.m: music and speakers including state Rep. Thom Collier, R-Mount Vernon.
- **Wednesday**, 4 p.m: Color Guard from Knox County Veterans; 4:30 p.m: speeches and closing remarks.

News Journal staff report

HEALING FIELD

A man walks among the memorial flags in the Healing Field at Fredericktown on Sunday. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal)*

Flags

From page 1A

to walk among the flags, Collier said.

"It's an experience you may never be a part of again," she said, as names were called over a loudspeaker to indicate whose turn it was to place a flag. "It's amazing to see all the red, white and blue. You can't imagine when the breeze blows, hearing 1,000 flags flapping in the breeze."

Collier, whose father-in-law stormed the beaches of Normandy, said she has participated in Healing Fields in Dallas and Findlay.

Volunteer Jim Tharp, a U.S. Navy veteran, said field coordinator Steve Murphy and the crew has worked since Friday to get the field ready. Poles were placed in the ground to support the flags, spaced 10 feet apart.

The crew installed lights so people could visit the field at night.

Denise Hess of Mount Vernon plans to visit again before it closes Wednesday. The Mount Vernon woman took her granddaughter, Shayla Ingram, 2, to the field.

"I just think it's going to be a unique experience," she said, waiting for her father's name to be called. "It's going to be emotional."

The Healing Field means more to her because her nephew, Travis Hess, is serving in Iraq with the Ohio National Guard 211th Maintenance Company of Newark.

"It's an experience you may never be part of again. It's amazing to see all the red, white and blue."

Diane Collier
Exchange Club president

U.S. Army Korean War veteran David A. Munk flew a flag in honor of his son, Rick L. Munk, a 23-year-old veteran of the Ohio Highway Patrol.

"It's great," David Munk said, watching the flags go up. "It's the best thing to happen to this little community. If it weren't for them, we wouldn't be here."

As residents drove into the field, a flag that had flown in Iraq hung between two fire engines to greet them. Bobby and Lisa Folden took their 9-month-old girl, Mackenzie, under the flags to honor veterans Bobby knows at the Station Break Senior Citizen Center in Mount Vernon.

Many of the clients at the center helped with the Healing Field by making ribbons with the names of those honored.

"You really respect what they did for the country," Bobby Folden said.

jkowalewsk@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7232

Concert to raise money for family of Galion soldier killed in Iraq

By Jennifer Kowalewski
News Journal

GALION — The Galion Community Band will remember a hero.

A combined band and choral concert to benefit the Lee Anne Ivy Fund is scheduled Sunday at 7 p.m. at Galion High School. Residents are asked to donate to assist the family of Marine Staff Sgt. Kendall Ivy II, 28, the Galion native killed in action in Iraq earlier this month.

"We hope that the community will support this effort," community band organizer Brian Treisch said. "The concert was suggested to us as a way to generate funds for the Ivy family.

"We have been able to move rapidly to put this concert together. Many of the band members were classmates, former teachers, and friends of Kendall."

The concert will feature patriotic music, combined band and choral works and pieces to honor Sgt. Ivy. Details are still being arranged.

"We are sure that 'Semper Fidelis,' 'The Stars & Stripes, Forever' and "Battle Hymn of the Republic' will be performed," Treisch said. "Rick Walker is working to complete the concert lineup and I am working to complete the band roster."

The Galion Community Band has performed since 1976, including annually at the Fourth of July concert before the fireworks display.

Any interested instrumental musician or choir member not already contacted is welcome to join the band for a rehearsal at 6 p.m. today.

"We have a solid band set at this time, but we welcome any musician," Treisch said.

According to a military report issued to his family, Ivy died May 11 in western Iraq from a severe leg wound suffered when the vehicle in which he was riding struck a roadside bomb.

Ivy, who went to Iraq in February, is the sixth member of the military from north central Ohio to die in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Ivy played football and baseball at Galion High School. He joined the Marine Corps after graduating in 1995. He is survived by his widow, Lee Anne, who lives in Camp LeJeune, N.C., and is four-months pregnant, two sons and a daughter.

The Lee Anne Ivy Fund has been established at First Federal Bank to assist the family.

jkowalewski@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7232

If you go

What: Galion Community Band concert.
Where: Galion High School auditorium.
When: 7 p.m. Sunday.
Why: To benefit the family of Kendall Ivy, a soldier killed while serving his country in Iraq.
For information, call Brian Treisch at (419) 462-2209.

News Journal

Just one of our many lost service men in Iraq. Also, what is being done to aid and support his widow and family.

Lt. Col. William Schock and Col. Bill Roberts present a "My Boss Is a Patriot" certificate to Crestview Middle School Principal John McNeely at a school assembly Wednesday. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Patriotic Crestview principal honored

By Lou Whitmire
News Journal

OLIVESBURG — John McNeely, principal of Crestview Middle School, got quite a surprise Wednesday afternoon.

He received a "My Boss is a Patriot" certificate of appreciation from the Office of the Secretary of Defense at a school assembly.

McNeely is a strong supporter of the Ohio National Guard and Army Reserve. He was nominated for the honor by teacher Linda Roney, a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve.

Roney's military boss, 10th Battalion commander Lt. Col. William Schock, and Schock's boss, 6th Brigade commander Col. Bill Roberts, traveled from the 100th Division at Louisville, Ky., to present the award.

McNeely, surprised and emotional as he stood at the podium, said he was almost speechless.

"I'm honored to receive this award. ... You people in the military are

After the assembly, Roney said McNeely is supportive of everyone at the school who has relatives in the military.

"We're honoring him not for what he gives me, but for his patriotism," Roney said.

Fellow teacher Joyce Galloway thanked McNeely for supporting her when her son Daniel was deployed to Iraq with the Army Reserve's 1486th Transportation Co.

McNeely said he was being honored for something he ought to be doing anyway.

"When Mrs. Roney was deployed (after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks) I told Mrs. Roney your job will be here when you get back," he said.

Even when she is not deployed, Roney's job in the military requires travel and days off from her job as a seventh- and eighth-grade teacher.

She teaches a course in the Army Reserve called "combined arms exercise," and she is area coordinator for Kentucky. Her military job most recently took her out of the classroom April 29 to May 4 to participate in weapons training.

Schock said Roney couldn't do her job without employers like Crestview Schools.

"She is responsible for all instructors in Kentucky who teach the course," he said.

Roney trains people in eight states — Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Schock, 57, who leaves in June for Iraq to assist the Iraqi people with veterans affairs, said the award presentation was his first and called it a proud moment. He is a human resources director for the regional veteran's affairs office in Louisville.

Roberts, an attorney in Kentucky, lauded McNeely for his willingness to share Roney with her other job.

"We as Army Reserve soldiers depend on two groups of people — our families and employers. We're here to recognize someone who is a patriot to us," Roberts said.

McNeely said his uncle John was drafted into World War II and landed in the Normandy invasion. McNeely's father, Bryon McNeely, served in World War II and received a Purple Heart, a Bronze Star and other honors — and survived being shot twice in the back of the head.

The principal said the award ranked with the birth of his daughter. "It's a moment I will remember," he said.

Roney said she first met her principal on the telephone.

"He made it clear he was very patriotic and me being in the Reserve would not be a detriment," she recalled.

"I have a wonderful lady who is my sub. I just have the best of all worlds."

Sarah Jenkins, 12, a sixth-grader, applauded her principal.

"He runs the school well," she said.

Classmate Connor Plemens, 12, said McNeely is nice.

"He is very deserving of this," he added.

lwhitmire@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7223

Another Civilian-Military person, who is a wonderful asset to our community. The 179th also has a choir that sings at special local events.

Remembering the soldiers

Above, Gary Johnson, a member of the Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing for 10 years, stands beside his father, Glenn Johnson, a World War II Army veteran, during the "America, we must not forget" service Sunday at the Berean Baptist Church on Middle Bellville Road. Glenn Johnson has another son, Randy, in the service in Uzbekistan. Glenn's wife, Phyllis, is sitting to his right.

Right, Marine Tim Crumbliss sings "O' God, Our Help in Ages Past" during the service Sunday. Backing up Crumbliss is the church choir, led by the Rev. Bryan Moak.

(Walt Butler/ News Journal photos)

The people who are in our Civilian-Military units, are not just Military personell, They are part of our lives in every way. Our fathers and mothers, Sons and daughters, our friends, whom we love. Now BRAC wants to dis-respect them.

BRAC staff member to visit 179th

But BRAC/REDeC steering committee not sure if they are even allowed to attend

Program on WMFD-TV lays out story of 179th, BRAC commission

News Journal staff report

MANSFIELD — Mike Greene and Ret. Brig. Gen. Fred Larson, the former commander of the 179th, who together are leading efforts to save the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, have taped a program that will air on WMFD-TV at 7:30 p.m. each evening through Sunday.

"It pretty much lays out the entire story of the 179th and the BRAC commission and why it is so vital that the air base remains here in Mansfield," Greene said. "I hope everyone in Mansfield will watch it and come down and support us at our rally on June 22."

A "Save Our 179th Day" rally is set that day at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract a crowd of 10,000 and national media coverage. Greene hopes a huge public show of support helps sway some minds.

Ret. Brig. Gen. Steve Koper, president of the National Guard Association of the United States, has committed to attend the rally. Greene said he expects U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley and Ohio Adjutant Gen. Greg Wayt to be on hand. He's confident that Gov. Bob Taft will also be in Mansfield that day.

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Local officials haven't been successful in arranging a visit to Mansfield by a member of the Base Realignment and Closure commission but they haven't given up efforts to argue their case.

A BRAC commission staff member — not an actual commissioner — will be in Mansfield on Tuesday to visit the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at Mansfield Lahm Airport, which last month was placed on a list of military bases to be closed by the Pentagon.

Call it a second-tier visit.

"He will meet with staff at the air base," said Mike Greene, of the Richland Economic Development Corporation, which is spearheading efforts to keep the 179th in Mansfield.

GREENE

"I don't even know if our committee will be allowed to attend. If we are, we won't be able to ask questions or present our case.

"The briefing will be 100 percent presented and produced by the 179th. It will not be open to the public. My hope is that staffer comes here with an open mind."

In the meantime the BRAC/REDeC steering committee is continuing its efforts to get the 179th off the closure list. It now has another $50,000 to work with.

The State Controlling Board released the money, promised by Gov. Bob Taft, on Wednesday.

"It certainly will help," Greene said. "It will help pay for our trip to Buffalo. It could pay for other trips. It could pay for a trip to Washington, D.C."

Greene said such a trip to Washington could be for the purpose of arguing the Mansfield case before a BRAC commission member.

"If they won't come to us, we'll go to them," he said.

Efforts have intensified in the weeks since the 179th was placed on the Pentagon's closure list. A lobbying group is still active in Washington, D.C., and the local steering committee has hired a consultant in Columbus to help draft its presentation for a regional hearing in Buffalo on June 27.

Ohio, which had three bases on the list, will get a chance to argue its case at that hearing. The state has been allotted a total of two hours. Greene hopes Mansfield gets at least 30 minutes.

"We'll attend some hearings prior to that so we can check out the format and see what some of the other arguments have been and how they've been presented," Greene said.

"I wouldn't say that's our last effort to present our case, but the style and substance of our presentation will be important."

rkent@rncogannett.com
(419) 521-7274

Former 179th generals will meet the public

Six generals, former members of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, will be together for the first time Thursday for a "Meet the Generals Day" at Mansfield Memorial Museum, 34 Park Avenue West.

They will greet the public from 4 to 6 p.m.

Scheduled to participate are Francis Hazzard, Ray Weber, Fred Larson, Myron Ashcraft, Rich Green and Verpel Lattimore.

The 179th, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, has been recommended for closing by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission. Public rallies to have the 179th removed from the closure list are planned for June 18 in Bellville and June 22 on the square in Mansfield.

As you can see we are doing everything we can possibly do to convince the BRAC that we really want to keep all of Civilian-Military facilities and personell in place. Even to producing a TV program to inform all of our citizens about our Civilian-Military.

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

1. Mission/Military Value

- Primary Aircraft Weapons System: (8) C-130H2+ Hercules (Distinguishing Operational and Technical highlights are detailed in attachment 1.); Valued at $240,000,000.

- Major Command: Air Mobility Command (AMC), Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.

- The proud home to one the most highly trained, combat-tested, veteran, C-130 forces in the United States Air Force. Since Vietnam, we have led the way in the C-130 community in both combat hours and sorties.

- Our air crews have been decorated with over 116 Air Medals and 16 Aerial Achievement Medals since Operations Joint Guard (1996-1998, Sarajevo), and Joint Forge (1998-1999, Sarajevo); these medals recognize meritorious service and/or valor in aerial flight.

- We make significant airlift contributions to the USAF mission and have an enviable safety record. Flying an accident-free average of over 3,400 hours from FY 2003 to FY 2005 (projected), we have accumulated a total of over 134,000 safe flying hours.

- We are a vital component of the Total Force (with the ANG providing nearly 50% of the USAF's tactical airlift capability, the fight can't be fought without us) and have supported combat and humanitarian operations and exercises around the world. Some examples:

  Volant Oak (Panama); 1979 - 1999.
  Volant Partner (Germany); 1987 - 1992
  Reforger (Alaska); 1983
  Desert Shield Desert Storm; 1990 - 1991.
  Operation Restore Hope (Somalia); 1992 – 1993.
  Operation Provide Promise (Bosnia); 1993 – 1994.
  Operation Joint Endeavor (Bosnia); 1996 – 1998.
  Operation Joint Guard (Bosnia); 1998 – 1999.
  Operation Joint Forge (Bosnia); 1999 – 2002.
  Operation Southern Watch (Mid-East); 1996 – 1999.
  Operation Uphold Democracy (Haiti); 1994.
  Operation Shining Hope (Kosovo); 1999.

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

- Since 9/11, the inception of the Global War on Terror, and Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom, the 179th has been engaged like never before. Some key statistics:

2001		
	Operations Supported	Coronet Oak, Deep Freeze, Noble Eagle
	Participating units	Airlift Squadron, Medical Squadron, Logistics Support, Airlift Squadron, Aerial Port Squadron
	Days served	13,842
2002		
	Operations Supported	Southern Watch, Deep Freeze, Noble Eagle, Israeli support, Enduring Freedom, Joint Forge, Northern Watch
	Participating units	Aircraft maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Civil engineering squadron, Services
	Days served	56,912
2003		
	Operations Supported	Deep Freeze, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, Israeli Support
	Participating units	Aircraft Operations, Aircraft Maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Civil engineering squadron, Services, Intelligence
	Days served	35,971
2004		
	Operations Supported	Deep Freeze, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom
	Participating units	Aircraft Operations, Aircraft Maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Intelligence
	Days served	64,052

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

Combat Aerial Operations Totals for OEF and OIF:

	HOURS	SORTIES	PAX	CARGO TONS
OIF AL JABER	1,219.3	878	9,735	1287.2
OIF TALIL, AL SALEM, AL UDIED	1,839.4	1,222	19,755	2,429
OEF AL SALEM, AL UDIED, CURRENT AOR	898.6	550	5490	1852.6
TOTALS	3957.3	2650	34980	5568.8

- Our Proposed $8.0 M Fire/Crash Rescue Station will accommodate **JOINT** Air National Guard/Army National Guard firefighting missions.

- In addition to the flying mission, we are home to a wide range of expeditionary combat and homeland security support units, capable of delivering many invaluable capabilities. Some examples:

  Civil Engineering
  - Engineering force to maintain facilities and infrastructure
  - Fire Department and Power Production team

  Logistics Readiness Squadron
  - Supply of materiel and fuels, maintenance of the vehicle fleet, traffic management services and planning and management of the mobilization process to ensure an accurate and rapid response in the event of contingency moves or national emergency.

  Aerial Port Squadron
  - Coordinate missions with Base Operations and the affected work centers of the squadron
  - Plan, schedule and process air cargo, passengers, and mail
  - Prepare load plans, manifests and air movement reports using automated or manual tools
  - Prepare/Inspect and Process Cargo for onward movement

  Security Forces Squadron
  - Point of entry control to the installation
  - Armed response to the installation

- Presidential Aircraft support at remote locations upon request
- Support to the Governor for natural or man-made disasters

Communications Flight
- Maintenance and support to computers and crypto equipment.
- Maintenance and support to telephone switch and outside telephone plant.
- Maintenance and support to land mobile radio (LMR), Ground to Air radio (VHF/UHF), state emergency radio (HF) and tactical mobility radio.
- Visual information support

Services Flight
- Food Service, Lodging, Wartime Mortuary Affairs, Search & Recovery Operations, Morale, Welfare & Recreation, Tactical Field Exchange

Mission Support Flight
- Personnel services to the Wing and surrounding retired military community, including recruiting, retention, enlistment, retirements, Separations, Force Deployment and sustainment, ID Cards and health care Enrollment, support.

Environmental Management Office
- Programs to reduce hazardous and solid waste generation
- Increase recycling and Green Purchasing efforts
- Maintain compliance with all applicable EPA, Air Force, and Air National Guard regulations

Expeditionary Medical Support (EMEDS)
- Mobile and highly capable clinical disaster response/assessment

- Because the ANG is also the State Governors' asset (The Guard is the only military force immediately available to a governor in times of emergency, including civil unrest and natural or manmade disasters), we are uniquely positioned to support a host of Homeland Security missions. Some examples:

Expeditionary Medical Support
- Forward deployed trauma resuscitation/surgical capability including critical care
- Multi-functional team composition decreases number of medics required to deploy
    - 179MDG is only MDG in FEMA Region 5 with Surgical capabilities
    - Region Five Consists of:
        - Ohio

- Michigan
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Wisconsin
- Minnesota

Security Forces

- Conduct anti-terror assessments and provide threat information to the Governor
- Coordinate local anti-terrorism intelligence sharing with local police agencies

Readiness

- Provide trained and equipped Nuclear Biologic Chemical (NBC) Readiness Personnel

Communication Flight

- Provide critical command and control with State Emergency Management Agency via the State HF radio net. Additionally the 179th CF has direct radio contact and support agreements with local fire and law enforcement agencies, which would enable us to coordinate a Homeland Defense emergency response with the rest of the State.

2. Land, Facilities, Infrastructure, Air Space

- Mansfield's 9000-foot, Instrument Flight Rule (IFR)-equipped runway is one of the longest in Ohio (only 6 of 168 are longer.)

- No commercial carriers compete for Mansfield-Lahm's airspace.

- We enjoy exceptional mission support facilities:
  - 33 Buildings: 292,863 Sq. Ft.
  - Total Acres: 230
  - Value: $92,928,000.
  - Main Cantonment Area: 67 Acres
  - Drop Zone: 157 Acres
  - **Airport Costs**: $49,904

  - Military Construction Investments:
    1997 - Medical Training/Dining Hall: $3.1M
    1998 - Jet Fuel Storage Complex: $4.1 M
    1998 - Headquarters Building: $4.7 M
    2001 - Security Forces Operations Building: $2.7 M

2003 - Air Operations/Communications Building: $6.6 M
2004 - Transportation Complex: $3.3 M
2005 – Upgraded/Hardened Main Gate Facility: $690 K

- Planned Improvements
  Fire Station: $8.0 M (FY '06)
  Civil Engineering Facility: $5.9 M (FY '09)

- Ample room for expansion (see attachment 2)

3. Economic Impact

Employees

Full-time	293
Duty Status Guardsmen	767
Total	**1060**

Impact on Local Economy

Annual Payroll	$ 25.5M
Operating Funds	$ 16.6M
Total	**$ 42.1M**

Operating Funds

Operations & Maintenance	$ 114,300
Ohio National Guard Tuition Assistance Program	$ 160,000
State Income Tax	$ 995,160
Profit for the State	**$ 720,860**

Benefit to Mansfield

Mansfield City Income Tax	$174,000
Income from Property Lease	$ 49,905
Profit for Mansfield	**$ 223,905**

4. Community Infrastructure Support

- Large, talented, and supportive recruiting community with a radius reaching as far as Columbus and Cleveland, resulting in unit strength of 104.7%, 5th in the entire ANG (91 units.)

- Robust relationships with the City of Mansfield, Richland and surrounding counties, especially civic and legislative leaders.

- Property lease from City of Mansfield only ≈ $50K / year

- Over 1500 sleeping rooms within easy driving distance of the base could accommodate much larger traditional force, or surge requirements (we use only 80 double-occupied rooms now, with a strength of 767 traditional Guardsmen)

5. **Environmental Impact:**
   - The 179th has a proud record of Environmental Stewardship, e.g.,
     - Installation Restoration Program (IRP):
       - 5 of 8 sites are officially closed.
       - All will be closed by mid-2006.
     - No underground storage tank issues
     - Current small arms firing range will require soil remediation when it is ordered closed. Estimated cost $ 0.5M.

6. **Awards and Accomplishments:**

Year	Inspection/Award	Reason or Results
2005	Environmental, Safety, Occupational, Health Compliance Assessment & Management Program (ESOHCAMP)	Outstanding and Best Ever Seen
2004	Health Services Inspection (HSI)	Excellent Rating
2003	Deneke Award	Outstanding ANG Civil Engineer
2002	CMSgt Edward Wilbert Award	Outstanding Fire Dept of the Year
2002	James D. Weaver Award	Outstanding Fulltime Medical Technician
2002	ANG Environmental Quality Award For Recycling	
2002	ANG Services Flt of the Year	Superior Performance
2002	Initial Readiness Inspection	Excellent
2002	Unit Compliance Inspection	Excellent
2002	Aircrew Stan/Eval Inspection	Excellent
2001	AF Outstanding Unit Award	Outstanding Performance
2001	ANG Metcalf Trophy	Outstanding Mission Accomplishment
2000	Tappan Award	Outstanding Ohio Flying Unit
2000	EORI @ Ramstein AB, GE	Top rating
2000	Health Services Inspection	Highest Air Force rating
2000	IG Exercise (IGX)	Top rating
1999	Tappan Award	Outstanding Ohio Flying Unit

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

Attachment 1

C-130 HERCULES

The C-130 Hercules primarily performs the tactical intra-theater portion of the airlift mission. The aircraft is capable of operating from rough; dirt strips and is the prime transport for para-dropping troops and equipment into hostile areas. Basic and specialized versions perform a diversity of roles, including airlift support, aero medical missions, and natural disaster relief missions.

The C-130 Hercules has unsurpassed versatility, performance, and mission effectiveness. The flexible design of the Hercules enables it to be configured for many different missions, allowing for one aircraft to perform the role of many. Much of the special mission equipment added to the Hercules is removable, allowing the aircraft to revert back to its cargo delivery role if desired. Additionally, the C-130 can be rapidly reconfigured for the various types of cargo

The C-130's design maximum gross weight is 155,000 pounds (175,000 pounds wartime) with a normal landing weight of 130,000 pounds. The airplane is capable of airlifting 6 pallets or 74 litters or 16 CDS bundles or 92 combat troops or 64 paratroopers. It can also carry 45,000 pounds of cargo or a combination of any of these up to the cargo compartment capacity or maximum allowable weight.

Conduct aero medical evacuation operations. Movement of casualties by air transportation under the supervision of qualified aero medical evacuation crew members to/between medical treatment facilities

Support psychological operations. Support of operations targeted against the minds of the enemy civilian population and combat forces. Speaker operations and leaflet airdrops can be used to influence and demoralize hostile forces prior to and during offensive operations

The mission of the C-130 is to provide rapid transportation of personnel or cargo for delivery by parachute to a designated drop zone, or by landing at austere locations within the theater of operations.

The C-130 provides long range, day or night capability. C-130 combat delivery assets can perform airdrops in visual conditions; AWADS C-130s are additionally capable of executing airdrops in IMC (Instrument Meteorological Conditions) independent of external navigation aids

The C-130 can deliver personnel, equipment or supplies either by landing or by various aerial delivery modes.

In the first, parachutes pull the load, weighing up to 42,000 pounds, from the aircraft. When the load is clear of the plane, cargo parachutes inflate and lower the load to the ground.

The second method, called the Container Delivery System, uses the force of gravity to pull from one to 16 bundles of supplies from the aircraft. When the bundles, weighing up to 2,200 pounds each, are out of the aircraft, parachutes inflate and lower them to the ground.

MANSFIELD AIRCRAFT UPGRADES

AWADS (Adverse Weather Aerial Delivery System) - The precise delivery of personnel, equipment, and supplies during adverse weather, using a self-contained aircraft instrumentation system without artificial ground assistance or the use of ground navigational aids.

SCNS (Self-Contained Navigation System) - SCNS provides the flight crew an integrated navigation system, with four independent navigation solutions, including GPS, flight guidance and advisory information to fly a variety of missions. SCNS also provides control of communication and navigation radios, flight planning and calculation, and control of troop/cargo airdrops, as well as processing of radar data on some models.

ESKE (Enhanced Station Keeping Equipment)

GPWS (Ground Proximity Warning System)

GPS (Global Positioning System) - Installs a space-based all-weather radio navigation system into all SCNS-equipped C-130s to allow autonomous navigation capabilities. Eliminates reliance upon ground-based stations to provide navigational inputs to aircraft systems

MLS (Microwave Landing System) - Allows precision approaches and landings. MLS will allow elimination of ILS, which suffers from frequency congestion.

NVG (Night Vision Goggles)

NVIS (Night Vision Imaging System)

SATCOM (Satellite Communication) - Installs a permanent SATCOM antenna, interface cabling, preamplifier, and control panel for portable SATCOM radios required by joint users of combat delivery aircraft

GCAS (Ground Collision Avoidance System)

TCAS (Traffic Collision Avoidance System)

Threat Avoidance.

Improved capability to detect/degrade/defeat threats.

Chaff Flare Dispensers, Radar Jammers

MWS (Missile Warning System)

RWS (Radar Warning System)

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

OTHER DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF MANSFIELD'S C-130 FLEET

- Flying Hours (average equivalent baseline) on our aircraft place them at less than half of their useful life span.

- **Enhanced Cargo Delivery** capability via the Canary Slide Ramp System (ideal for Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Defense Team rapid movement requirement)

- Our **record of excellence and innovation in aircraft maintenance** has involved us in important, mission-enhancing research and development (often for the entire C-130 fleet):

  - **(BCEM) Battery Control Electronic Module** test aircraft for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center

  - **Corrosion Sensor Test Aircraft** for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center (administered by Battelle Labs in Columbus) to aid in determining corrosion impact from world wide environmental conditions on entire ANG and Air Force C-130 fleet. This evaluation will also help to re-evaluate C-130 aircraft frequency for wash intervals and corrosion inspections

  - **SATCOM Form Fit And Function Evaluation** (C-130 aircraft) for Wright Patterson AFB to help refine the Satellite Secure Communications System for CENTAF operations

  - Potential **Deicing Fluid Evaluation Site** for the Air Force Research Laboratory

  - **Main Landing Gear Torque Tube Coupling Safety Test Aircraft** for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center and Air Mobility Command (AMC)

  - Evaluator for the **Airdrop Ballistic Winds / Gps Tracker Test** for Wright Patterson, AFB

RECEIVED
06302005

June 27, 2005

Mr. James V. Hansen
c/o BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street
Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Subject: The removal of the C-130-H's from the 179th Air Wing; Lahm Field; Mansfield, Ohio

Subject: The lack of factual information about the 179th and other Air Guard, National Guard, and Reservist personnel or their facilities.

Dear Sir,

I have done quite a lot of research on the subject of the 179th Air Wing, based at Lahm Field, Mansfield, Ohio. Also have spent time in composing this letter. Please, please, sir, do me the courtesy of reading what I have provided for your enlightenment. Enclosed is much information regarding the past and present of the 179th. It is a very active Air Guard Unit. Their planes and the personell have been deployed to many places in the world for both Military and Humanitarian missions, all successfully completed.

Inspections of the 179th have always been completed with the highest possible ratings. All the years the 179th Air Guard has been at Lahm Field it has always been carefully and prudefully maintained. The runway at Lahm Field is one of the longest in the US and can accomodate the largest planes now flying. It is also an emergency landing strip for a shuttle. Why give up the use of this runway for Military use, just to spend billions on another airstrip at some other Air Base?

Guard Units were never meant to be moved around. They were supposed to be locally based, and the members of these Guard Units were to train at their facilities twice a month, then to have 2 weeks of more concentrated training

at a regular, or "standing" military facility.
By closing these Guard and Reserve facilities you are defeating the very purpose for which they were created.
By going forward with your plans in Ohio you are destroying our faith and trust in the purpose and structure of our Guard system, and betraying the people who serve in them.
You will force the retirement of many Senior Officers and staff, with many years of experience and great depth of knowledge. Young people who have homes and families will not re-new their contracts. They will not up-root their families
Currently, there is a short fall in signing up new recruits for some branches of service. If you forge ahead with closing of so many Militilary bases, especially Guard and Reserve forces, you will have a MAJOR in recruiting over-all, short-fall.
The ENTIRE BRAC needs to review their short-sighted thinking while we still have a civilian-military. Since about 40 per cent of our fighting man power now in the war zones is civilian-military, BRAC needs to use more thought before taking any action. Taking into account at the last "closing" it was to save 19 billion dollars. It cost 22 billion to close the bases. I don't see any money saved

The professional or career Military expects to move around frequently. They know this will happen upon signing contracts to serve. Both they, and their families expect this. Many resources at their disposal will help and render advice and much financial aid to make their transitions easy as possible.
Guard and Reserve Units are not prepared for such change. Neither are their personnell. Nothing is in place to move them from one location to the next. Especially not financially.
BRAC seems to have no regard or compassion for what ever hardships or problems might arise for Reserve or Guard, or any one else, for that matter.
The 179th has an enviable safety record. They have not had a lost time accident in many years. Let alone a formal "Stand Down" to consider or re-evaluate a problem. It has always been, and still is a very well-run facilety.
Lahm Field is one of the newer Air Guard bases. It has been well-maintained and up-graded. It is a Military Installation to be proud of. Instead of taking away the C-130-H's, bring more of them here. If you must close an Air Wing, bring the F-16's here, there is plenty of room.
Also, the 706th Transportation Company from Marion, Ohio could be based at Lahm, plus the Guard Units from Mansfield and Ashland.

That makes more sense to most people around here.
Contrary to what BRAC states that we have no room to expand, we have a LOT more land to expand to if it becomes necessary.
BRAC also states it is difficult to activate smaller Units. Apparently, they are ignorant of computers, fax machines, all kinds of telephones, radio, and good-old-fashioned written orders.
I think Ohio may have lost more people in Iraq than any other state, not too mention many horribly wounded. Their lives, and their families lives will never be the same again. More Ohioans are still being deployed, some from the 179th.
How can BRAC think of doing away with such an active Air Wing?
Here in Ohio we have great caring, reverance, and respect for our Military people, living and dead. We take great pride in what our hero's, past and present have sacrificed for us and the rest of the nation. BRAC's high handedness is an insult to all of our service people, living or dead, and their families and people who loved them, also.
BRAC withholds information from the very people most affected by their decisions. Even their address and telephone numbers are not available to us, the "common people". The "common masses" who pay their salaries one way or another.

Many of us, the citizens of Ohio believe the Air Force is commiting legal robbery, and getting BRAC to do it for them. Our Air Guard planes are newer, better equiped, and much better maintained than the Cargo planes the Air Force now has at their disposal.

So where to acquire planes, the quickest and with the least cost?

Not a problem. We will just remove them from the Air Guard Units. Put them under our control and our command.

That will make the Air Force look better to the US Congress when we ask them for money for some "pet project".

The 179th is an Air Wing. How can they be an Air Wing without planes?

Ruth Ann Wehl R#12 705 Pinkney Road
Mansfield, Ohio 44903 1(419) 468-1253

The above "Cartoon" is the way many of our citizens feel about Closing the 179th Air Base. We in Ohio have no large military base as do many other states. We have no Eglin Air Field, No Camp Le June, No Fort Wood, No May Port, No Fort Leonard Wood etc.

The people of Ohio have in the past sacrificed many of our fine National Guard, Reservists, Air Guard personell for generations, and we are still doing so. We feel betrayed by what BRAC wishes to do. It is a direct insult to all who have died and many who have been so terribly wounded. A "slap in the face" to all of those who have given so much and to everyone who loved them

Vietnam Memorial stirs emotions

By John Jarvis
Gannett News Service

UPPER SANDUSKY — A wool stocking cap pulled halfway down on his head, the man in the red-and-black flannel jacket ran his fingers slowly across the letters.

W-I-L-L-I-A-M E F-O-L-L-O-N.

A grimace wrinkled the 58-year-old's expression, and he lowered his hand from the white name on the black wall to rub the salt-and-pepper whiskers on his face.

"William E. Follon. ... He got killed on the day we were supposed to leave," said Tom Gottfried of Carey. Members of the Air Force's 37th Combat Engineers, they had already turned in their battle gear and were at an airfield in Binh Dinh province "waiting for a ride out of the country."

Before their flight arrived, an enemy rocket attack killed the sergeant from Iowa, one of Gottfried's "best buddies."

"It killed him pretty much outright," Gottfried said.

Follon's is one of about 58,000 names of men and women killed in the Vietnam War commemorated on the Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall & Museum just outside of Upper Sandusky. The display will be at Thiel's Wheels on Tarhe Trail at U.S. 23 and Ohio 53 through Sunday.

Gottfried spent 13 months in Vietnam, from the end of 1968 through Feb. 2, 1970.

"It was good to be home, but it was kind of a letdown," because of the ill will some had for the war and those who fought in it, he said.

Gottfried said he'd feel better about his experience in Southeast Asia "if we'd won the war. ... There are a lot of good people on this wall who probably wouldn't be on there if we'd kept on."

Working security for the event, former Marion-area resident Mark Sigler of Harpster helped students find names on the wall.

"It lets you know the costs of war," said Sigler, an Army sergeant in the transportation corps during the Vietnam War era. He served in Korea, unlike his friend, Medard A.J. Ruehle.

Ruehle was one of 11 Wyandot County residents who died in Southeast Asia.

"He got out of a helicopter to help some wounded and in the process got killed himself," Sigler said.

Visiting the Upper Sandusky wall event from Findlay was Frederick Adams, who helped set up a similar tribute in his city.

"There's a bunch of guys from Findlay I went to school with who are on the wall," Adams said. "It's hard to just come here and not feel something for all these people."

Gary Cox of Marion, who helped provide computer information to assist visitors in locating their loved ones' names on the wall last fall in Marion, helped with the Upper Sandusky event as well.

If you go

- **What:** The Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall & Museum
- **When:** Through Sunday
  Today: 1 p.m., Veterans tribute ceremony; 6 p.m., musical and flag tribute
  Sunday: 2 p.m., closing ceremony
- **Where:** Thiel's Wheels, Tarhe Trail at U.S. 23 and Ohio 53, Upper Sandusky.

"I pay tribute to the 58,000 names that are on that wall."
Gary Cox
veteran

"I pay tribute to the 58,000 names that are on the wall," said Cox, a former Marine who didn't see combat. "As a Vietnam-era veteran I wasn't able to participate, but I can give back to the guys that did."

The people of Ohio Honor their military dead, I believe more than any other state. We have hundreds if not thousands of Memorials to our beloved dead from our largest towns to our smallest villages. On Memorial Day our cemeteries are a mass of color because all of the Stars and Stripes flying over every veterans grave. The BRAC is going to dis-honor some of these veterans. They were deployed from our Reserve and Guard Units. Now, you want to "change the Rules" in the middle of the war, and make a "hardship" for those who still are under contract to the military.

Local war hero honored in new museum display

News Journal
staff reports

MANSFIELD — A Memorial Day military display featuring the late Albert Allen of Mansfield, who is a member of Ohio's Military Hall of Fame, will open Saturday and run through the Memorial Day weekend at the Mansfield Museum at 35 Park Avenue West.

Allen, who died last year, was a lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserves and a survivor of the Bataan Death March and year's spent in Japanese prisoner of war camps during World War II.

Museum Curator Scott Schaut said the items were donated by Allen's wife, Nancy. He said the display includes memorabilia from Allen's father, Albert L "Cap" Allen Sr., who was commander of Mansfield's Company M, 145th Infantry, 37th Division in France during World War I.

Also on display will be "broadside" advertisements for previous Memorial Day services held in this city during the 1880s when Civil War veterans were the only ex-soldiers available to be honored.

Schaut said displays concerning World War II and home-front industry in Mansfield, as well as a history of the 179th Airlift Wing, are still up.

He said one of the oddities of military history in Richland County is that while there are many displays concerning the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War and the two World Wars, there are almost no items connected with the Mexican-American War of 1845 or the Spanish-American War of 1898.

"Both of those wars have been totally overshadowed by the bigger wars," Schaut said. "Mansfield sent troops to fight Mexico in 1845 and many more to Cuba in 1898.

"Commander Edward Parker Wood of Mansfield was commander of the U.S.S. Petrel at the battle of Manila Bay."

The museum is open Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. and on Memorial Day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Lately our local Newspaper has been "featuring" a World War II military person, with a long article about them.
Their service in the second World War, their lives after Military service, and other interesting stories the servicemen may tell.
We do revere our military people.
Although, a number of the BRAC have been military, I don't believe they hold our more humb Reserve and Guard people in the same high esteem as we do.

Ohio squad takes heavy hit in Iraq

COLUMBUS (AP) — Six Marines were killed and another 15 were wounded from one central Ohio squad in a major U.S. offensive near Iraq's border with Syria, a newspaper reported.

The squad was one of three belonging to the 1st Platoon of Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment, according to The Washington Post, which has a reporter embedded with Operation Matador.

The military has confirmed five Marine deaths so far and says about 100 insurgents have been killed in the operation — one of the largest U.S. offensives since Fallujah was reclaimed from militants.

Chief Warrant Officer Orrin Bowman, the site commander for the Columbus-based company, confirmed Thursday the company was participating in the operation and had taken casualties. He declined to say how many from the Marine reserve unit had been killed or release any names.

The military has identified two Ohio Marines with the 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment who have died in Iraq since Sunday. Lance Cpl. Wesley G. Davids, 20, of Dublin, was killed in an explosion in Karabilah on Wednesday and Cpl. Dustin A. Derga, 24, of Columbus, was killed by small arms fire in Ubaydi on Sunday, according to the Department of Defense.

Bowman said the unit is in the process of contacting and helping the affected families.

Lima is a rifle company that has four platoons, Bowman said. Each platoon has three squads that normally have 13 people but can be reinforced depending on a mission, he said.

Davids left for Iraq in January, last talked to his family four weeks ago and was scheduled to come home in October, his mother said.

"While his death is a tragic loss, he died doing something he felt passionately about," Jody Davids said. "He was the best that this country has to offer."

Her son loved working on cars and graduated in 2003 from Dublin Scioto High School, where he was on the crew team.

"He was just a very impressive, strong young man," said Russ Merritt, his high school coach. "Wes was kind of an inspiration to all of us. You just had no doubt that he would give 100 percent."

The operation was launched after U.S. intelligence showed large numbers of insurgents had moved into the northern Jazirah Desert following losses in Fallujah and Ramadi, further east. The area is believed to be a staging ground for foreign fighters crossing into Iraq from Syria along ancient smuggling routes.

The offensive started Saturday night and is aimed at rooting out followers of Iraq's most wanted militant leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

Two Ohio soldiers killed in grenade attack in Ramadi, Iraq

The Associated Press

Two Ohio soldiers were killed in Iraq when their military vehicle came under a grenade attack, the Department of Defense said Wednesday.

Army Sgt. Larry R. Kuhns Jr., 24, of Austintown, and Spc. Anthony D. Kinslow, 21, of Westerville, died Monday in Ramadi, the volatile town 70 miles west of Baghdad.

Both were assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division from Fort Carson, Colo. The brigade has lost 65 soldiers in Iraq.

It was the second time in as many weeks that more than one serviceman from Ohio was killed in the same attack in Iraq. Three Marines from an Akron-based unit died in an explosion last Thursday during fighting in Haqlaniyah, 90 miles north of Baghdad.

Kuhns worked at the Army recruiting office in Boardman for a time in late 2003, said Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Catrucco, who works at the office.

"He was an awesome guy. He was very professional," Catrucco said. "He was the type of soldier any sergeant would love to have."

Kuhns, whose wife lives in Fort Carson, recently had been promoted to sergeant, Catrucco said. He began his military career as a reservist with the 319th Engineer Company in Butler, Pa.

Kinslow's mother declined comment Wednesday.

Ohio has lost a lot of people, and nobody seems to care, certainly not BRAC, positively not the politicians. As far as I can tell the military isn't much interested in our losses. We may have more dead than any other state.
When do you think the next generation of Civilian - Military is comming from? Who is going to join a Guard or Reserve Unit if they know in advance that they may spend more time traveling than training twice a month? You already have a short fall of new recruits in the Regular Military. You are conducting this war with 40% Civilian - Military.
How do you propose to recruit more people for any kind of military duty? Your short-sightness is going to make us a "Force of Convenient" [illegible]

Lexington family has three sons in Iraq

By Ron Simon
News Journal

LEXINGTON — Like his father before him, James Andrews, 58, chose to be a soldier.

He served first in the Air Force and then the Army Reserves with the 1486th Transportation Company. He capped off a long military career by driving a truck during Operation Desert Storm and serving as his unit's first sergeant.

"I think if I hadn't retired there's no doubt I'd have already been over in Iraq and back by this time," Andrews said.

Instead, his three sons, Kyle, 24, Kraig, 22 and Kolby, 20, are in Iraq and Kyle is there for the second time.

Like their father before them, they chose to be soldiers. With a difference. All three are Marines. Kyle is a second lieutenant. Kraig is a lance corporal and Kolby is a private first class.

All three are, as their e-mail photos show, deep in harm's way.

"Have a wonderful Father's Day and thanks for all the things you do for me," Kyle wrote in a card last week. He is the only son, right now, who is able to stay in touch. "They come and go in operations," James explained.

"This is such a different war from the one I was in," James said. "Back then, it was letters and postcards. Today, it's tech messages, cell phone calls and e-mail. I was a driver and never was shot at. They are being shot at."

And three blue stars are in the window at the Andrews home on Steam Corners Road.

"I know they're doing a good job," James said of his sons. "They're really into what they do. Two of them have talked about making the Marine Corps a career. I'd like to think they are doing this because I was in the service."

Unspoken are any fears James and Renee Andrews may have about their sons being hurt in the midst of war. They know the dates down to the day when each of their boys will rotate home.

Lt. Kyle Andrews, with his brothers Pfc. Kolby Andrews and Lance Cpl. Kraig Andrews. *(Submitted photos)*

Lt. Kyle Andrews, 24, whose wife's name is Lauren, is doing his second tour in Iraq. When he comes home later this year, he will be a basic infantry instructor at Camp LeJeune. "He's guaranteed to be home for three years," his father said.

Lance Cpl. Kraig Andrews, 22, whose wife's name is Albra, would be home next but he might have to rotate to Afghanistan a few more years down the road, James said. "They plan that far ahead these days."

Pfc. Kolby Andrews, 20, unmarried, plans to leave the Corps perhaps temporarily to attend college. "If he ever wants to be an officer he has to have some college," his father said.

Kraig and Kolby are Lexington High School graduates and Kyle is a St. Peter's graduate. James thinks his youngest son was the one who first checked into the idea of a military career. "Then Kraig got interested and he joined," James said. One Marine became two Marines became three Marines.

There is a lot of military background in the Andrews clan. James' late father, James Sr., was a captain in the Army Air Force in World War II. Renee's father, Joseph S. Krebs, was a corpsman and ambulance driver with the Army in Europe during World War II.

ANDREWS SR.

KREBS

A native of Pennsylvania, James met Renee in California while he was in the Air Force. They were married for 20 years before divorcing. For now they are staying together.

James Jr.'s day job, the one he has held for 32 years, is postal carrier. He works out of the Ashland Post Office and his route covers the west side, mostly along Sandusky Street.

Nine years after he left service he joined the Army Reserves. With three boys to raise a little extra cash wouldn't hurt. But a war came along with it.

James was a squad leader as well as a driver during the Gulf War and finally rose to First Sergeant. When he reached 20 years he called it quits. "It was fun being a driver and moving equipment, but I really wasn't that happy with all the paperwork a first sergeant has," he said.

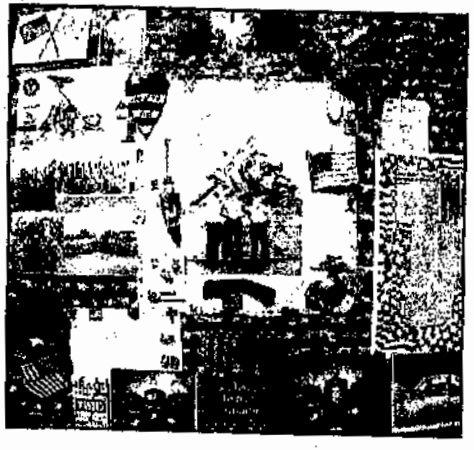
Now he and Renee stay in contact via all the new technology that links soldiers in the field with their families. And they wait. It's Father's Day.

And the boys are far away.

rsimon@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7230

Kolby Andrews, front row on the right, in Iraq.

Kyle and Kraig Andrews in Iraq.



A collage of the Andrews boys hangs in their home. *(Daniel Melograna/ News Journal)*

Another family of local Hero's you will note the father of these fine young men, was an Army Reservist. The quality of people BRAC wants to shuffle around.

Closings could hurt Guard, some fear

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — Some members of the panel deciding which U.S. military bases to close worry the Pentagon's plans to reshuffle National Guard and Reserve installations are too radical and could discourage recruitment.

The Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure plan, released Friday, proposes consolidating 387 Reserve and National Guard installations into about 125.

Those recommendations are part of a larger plan to close 33 major bases and restructure 29 others to streamline and modernize the military.

The Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing's base at Mansfield Lahm Airport is among

■ More on the effort to keep the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield, see page 3A.

those to be closed.

The Guard and Reserve changes could affect hundreds of thousands of people who serve in the part-time forces while holding down full-time jobs. The main concern is that consolidating installations will mean longer travel times for reservists and Guard members.

"You're going to have real enlistment problems," said former Rep. James Bilbray of Nevada, one of the nine members of the president-appointed base closing commission.

The base closure panel will review the Pentagon's recommendations and make any changes it deems necessary before submitting its list to the president by Sept 8. If Bush approves, it goes to Congress for an all-or-nothing vote.

The panel began its work Monday by questioning Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and senior Pentagon officials about how they formulated their recommendations.

Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the Guard and Reserve consolidations were done to enhance capability, cut costs and integrate the part-time forces more closely with active-duty units.

Members of the heavily stressed Guard and Reserves make up about 40 percent of the roughly 138,000 U.S. troops in Iraq.

Myers acknowledged that "there will be some inconvenience" for people serving in the Guard and Reserves if the Pentagon's recommendations are followed.

Recruitment numbers for the Guard and Army reserves are already lagging this year. Guard recruitment was 24 percent behind in the first four months of the current recruiting year, which runs from October 2004 through September 2005.

"Anybody who looks at retention issues would have to be concerned about this," said John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a defense Web site. "This was one of the first things that really popped out at me."

a lot of people are very concerned about possible greater short falls in recruitment for any branch or any part of the military.

Guard, Reserve death toll matches highest total

WASHINGTON (AP) — Thirty members of the Army National Guard, Army Reserve and Marine Corps Reserve died in the Iraq war in May, matching the highest toll for any month of the war, according to Pentagon figures.

The overall U.S. death toll last month was 80, the highest since 107 in January. There were 52 deaths in April and 36 in March, when it appeared the insurgency was waning.

Iraqis bore the brunt of the insurgent violence in May, but it also took a heavy toll on the approximately 140,000 U.S. troops there. The 80 deaths compares with a monthly average of 70 over the previous 12 months.

The Guard and Reserve, which make up nearly half the force in Iraq, have generally had fewer than 20 deaths per month during the war, and it's not clear why their losses spiked to 30 in May. That matched the 30 deaths among the Guard and Reserve in January, and it compared with 11 in April, 13 in March and 16 in February.

The May total reached 30 when the Pentagon announced on Friday that Sgt. Miguel A. Ramos, 39, of Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, died May 31 in Baghdad when a rocket struck near his position. He was assigned to the Army Reserve's 807th Signal Company, 35th Signal Battalion, based at Juana Diaz, Puerto Rico.

One of the month's 30 fatalities died in the United States. Staff Sgt. Tommy S. Little, 47, of Aliceville, Ala., died May 2 at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, of injuries sustained on April 19 near Iskandariyah, Iraq, when a roadside bomb detonated near his Humvee utility vehicle. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 114th Field Artillery Regiment of the Mississippi Army National Guard at Columbus, Miss.

May also was a costly month for the Army's 3rd Infantry Division, which had 10 reported fatalities. Since it arrived in Iraq in February to become the first Army division to return for a second combat tour, the 3rd Infantry has lost 34 of its soldiers, according to Pentagon figures. During its previous tour, which included the initial invasion in March 2003 and lasted about eight months, the division lost 44 soldiers.

Closing the base makes no sense

I am writing this letter to rge everyone to write their ate politicians and help stop ie closing of the 179th Airlift ing in Mansfield. The airbase rovides about 1,000 full- and art-time jobs and has an esti- ated $70 million annual effect a the area economy. The Base ealignment and Closure 3RAC) threatens not only Iansfield's Air National Guard ase but nearly a third of all Air ational Guard Units. It will rastically change the military s we know it. Our Mansfield nit has credentials that far ex- sed the criteria to stay open. (It ompares to the best units out iere). This is why the closing of makes no sense. The money aved does not offset the bene- its to the nation's defense.

The 179th Airlift Wing repre- ents the core of patriotism. hey are the heart and soul of merica. They are the small own people; they are our riends, neighbors, brothers, nd co-workers, most of which ave deep roots in our commu- ity. Many of these people may ist leave the military. They ave families here. They can't ommute in some cases, hun- reds of miles to go to drill. My amily will no doubt have to iove, possibly out of state. I vas born and raised in the beau- iful town of Bellville. My fami- y is here. My friends are here. Ay life is here. I would like my hildren to go to school here.

Don't get me wrong, there are lot of people also going hrough this. My point is that ur base is different because here is no compelling reason to lose it down. When you add up he numbers, it doesn't save the nilitary that much money. If it nade sense, I would support it. Ve need to write letters to Taft/Voinovich/Dewine and your listrict congressman. Thank ou for supporting our troops!

Jolie McCue
Bellville

Birthdays under fire

I would never have imagined that my three sons would be serving in the Marine Corps in Iraq at the same time. Half my heart is in Iraq.

On May 13, my son, 2nd Lt. Kyle J. Andrews turned 24 under fire in Iraq. He is with the 2nd AA BN, stationed at Camp Fallujah, Iraq. Recently he spent more than 10 days on a mission with no shower facilities available. Just a week later, he e-mailed us a copy of "The Desert Marine" which is a 2nd Marine Division publication that carried stories about Marines at Fallujah and also at Hadithah Dam, Iraq.

My middle son CPL Kraig L. Andrews serves with 3/8 Lima Co. and is also stationed at Fallujah. Kraig and Kyle have been able to share some time together at the chow hall and also working out.

On June 26, my youngest son, PFC Kolby J. Andrews, who is a member of 3/25 Scout-Sniper Platoon will celebrate his 20th birthday involved in Operation Iraqi Freedom at Hadithah Dam. As a mother of three sons who are serving in the United States Marine Corps, I could not be more proud of their commitment and accomplishments.

I feel fortunate we are able to correspond by phone, e-mail or text message on my cell phone almost weekly. Sometimes it is hard to say good-bye to them, but I always let them know that I am proud of them, miss them, love them, and that everyone is praying for their safe return.

Renee Andrews
Lexington

Fight for the 179th

First of all, I would like to start off by saying thank you and how proud I am of all the U.S. military and the 179th Ohio Air National Guard unit here in Mansfield, of which I have two sons who are members.

I have had many people throw in my face that the National Guardsmen are just weekend warriors. My answer to them is at least they are warriors and they believe in our country and what it stands for. Most people probably don't know that at the present time the U.S. has 60 percent National Guardsmen serving overseas due to the decline in recruitment of the regular branches of the military.

I am appalled with Mayor Lydia Reid and other community businessmen saying it would be a "win-win situation" for the city of Mansfield if the 179th were to close. It sounds like instead of fighting to keep the 179th and its annual $30 million payroll here in Richland County, they would rather have another white elephant on their hands (just look around the Mansfield area) and see all that they have brought in — not too much. At least once a month the hotels are being occupied with guardsmen on drill weekend.

I keep hearing it's a political decision, so who is getting rich off this? Rep. Michael Oxley, please step forward and fight to keep the 179th here in Mansfield, after all you are in a position to use your clout, and people do listen to you.

Candace Zeger
Lucas

Letters

Let's save the 179th

We hope you will all take the time to attend the rallies being planned to save our 179th Airlif wing of the Ohio Air National Guard. This unit is heavily involved in our community.

The fire department that is maintained at Mansfield Lahm is also counted on to provide mutual aid with the surrounding fire departments, at times when no C-130s are in the air. This service would be badly missed.

So wear your "We Love the 179th pins," put your "Save the 179th" magnets on your cars and go to these events Saturday in Bellville and Wednesday on the square in downtown Mansfield. Let's show our state leaders we as a community do care and want to prevent the closure of our base.

Our thanks to the REDEC/BRAC Steering committee here for all the work and time involved in fighting this closure.

Joyce and Jerry Duff
Mansfield

The above are just a few peoples' thoughts on closing the 179 Air Wing based at Lahm Field, Mansfield, Ohio. Everyone is totally against this idea. If anything we would like to see more C-130-H's brought here. Possibly, a Jet Fighter Wing also. Something BRAC can't understand, or care about, is the pride we all share for these big planes, along with the military who fly and maintain them, as well as their support people. Indeed, we all have great affection for both the planes and the personell.

SAVE the 179th

.ook for special 179th poster in Tuesday's paper

It's time for area residents to ike up pens, e-mails, phones nd letters in defense of the 79th Airlift Wing of the Ohio ir National Guard.

The local military unit at lansfield Lahm Airport has een recommended for closure by the Pentagon as part f the 2005 Base Realignment nd Closure process.

The BRAC commission is udying those recommendaons and will offer a list of facilies to be closed or realigned to resident Bush this fall. But this ommunity is not about to go way quietly as our economy ses 1,000 full and part-time bs and a facility worth $70 illion annually to the local conomy.

We are not going to let go asily of a unit that's been a art of this community's fabric r more than 50 years.

On Tuesday, the News Jourl will publish a full-page color oster aimed at sending a ear message to Washington at area residents want to ave the 179th."

We urge you to put that oster in your home and busiess windows as a sign of your pport. We also urge you to ing it to the community rally downtown Mansfield on ne 22 aimed at saving the it.

On the back of the poster ll be content helping to exain why the decision to close e unit is flawed. On the back ll be names, addresses and one numbers of key elected icials and also the BRAC ommission. We urge you to ntact these officials and mmission and send them a py of the poster to make ur feelings known.

It's time to let Washington derstand how important the 9th is to Richland County, rth central Ohio, the nation d the world.

Look for this special poster Tuesday's print edition.

Here is who to contact:

If you would like to offer edback directly to the Base alignment and Closure ommission, an e-mail form available at p://www.brac.gov/feedck.aspx.

Letters can be mailed to 05 Defense Base Closure d Realignment Commission, 21 S. Clark St., Ste. 600, Argton, Va., 22202.

Community must fight hard to retain 179th

The issue:
Local committee committed to waging battle over Airlift Wing

Our opinion:
Loss of the base, a valuable asset to north central Ohio, is not acceptable

It would be easy to give up the fight for the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

But Mike Greene and others won't let that happen.

Earlier this week Ohio Adjutant General Greg Wayt met with Greene and other members of the REDeC/BRAC steering committee and the All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs.

"The 179th is on a list recommended for closure," Wayt said during his visit. "But in the two previous rounds, about 30 percent of the bases on the recommended list were able to change the commission's mind."

That means Greene and others in the community must press forward, making the argument for the value of the unit to the city, the state and the nation.

Despite a strong effort spearheaded by Greene, co-chairman of the Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee, the 179th Airlift Wing was on the Pentagon's list announced this month, putting 1,000 local jobs in peril.

Now Greene is leading a rally called "Save Our 179th Day" at 5:30 p.m. June 22 on the downtown square. He hopes to attract 10,000 people as well as national media coverage.

And he wants everyone in the area to get involved, encouraging community residents to make signs for their cars, homes and businesses. He promises speakers, bands and cheerleaders for next month's event.

And for good reason.

The 179th is more than just a military unit to this community. It's more than just 1,000 full and part-time jobs. It's more than $70 million annually to the local economy.

It is an integral part of the fabric of this community.

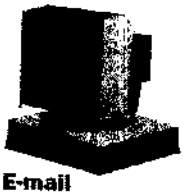
The unit's military growth and success during the past 57 years has been mirrored by its networking and immersion with the north central Ohio communities it represents.

The fight to keep it is important. Rep. Michael Oxley has joined the fight, pledging to use his political clout to bring base closure commission officials to town in hopes of getting the 179th off the list.

We hope others in the community see the need for the base to remain open and join the ReDEC/BRAC Steering Committee in making noise. Losing the 179th Airlift Wing would be a huge blow to our city and our region.

We won't go down without a fight.

Send us your thoughts



E-mail
chunnell@
nncogannett.com

Mail
Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 25
Mansfield, OH 44901

Fax
(419) 521-7415

Again, our citizens have found a way to both honor our veterans and finance one of our Mansfield memorials to show proper respect to our heros.

Commemorative bricks available for veterans

MANSFIELD — The Korean War Veterans Association plans to install more commemorative bricks at the Korean War Memorial in Mansfield's Central Park in June.

About 300 bricks have been placed and dedicated by families and friends of veterans who served in all of America's wars or in peacetime.

Association member Bill Woodrow said each brick is inscribed with the words "Duty, Honor, Country." All are embedded in the walkway in front of the memorial.

There are two kinds of bricks; 4-by-8-inch bricks on which three lines of 13 characters each may be inscribed for $50, and 8-by-8-inch bricks on which five lines of 13 characters each may be inscribed for $100.

Applications for commemorative bricks or gift certificates can be obtained by calling Frank J. Russo at (419) 756-1468. The deadline is June 1.

The veterans plan to install the next set of bricks June 25.

Bellville crowd rallies to save 179th

By Mark Caudill
News Journal

BELLVILLE — Maj. Steve McLaughlin joined the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard when he was a senior in high school.

The 37-year-old Shelby man is focused on keeping it open.

"I'm not thinking about closure right now," McLaughlin said. "I'm thinking about what pressure we can put on the politicians to save this base."

The 179th is on the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission list of facilities recommended to be shut down to reduce overall military expenses. McLaughlin, an intelligence officer, and hundreds of other people turned out Saturday afternoon at the bandstand on Main Street for a rally to save the 179th. AmVets Post 43 hosted the event.

Jolie McCue organized Saturday's rally.

"My husband works out there full-time," she said. "I think, from my heart, they're closing it for the wrong reasons."

The rally included a popcorn stand manned by Boy Scouts, face-painting, a lemonade stand and music from the Clear Fork High School marching band. "We love the 179th" buttons were the fashion accessory of the day, and form letters to be signed and mailed to designated legislators were circulated throughout the throng.

U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley, R-Findlay, doesn't need convincing. He will speak at a June 27 BRAC hearing in Buffalo, N.Y.

"We have a tremendous story to tell," Oxley said. "I feel comfortable going to Buffalo and presenting our case. We have the facts."

Oxley seemed confident the 179th ultimately would be taken off the closure list.

"The message we are sending loud and clear from Bellville is, 'Keep your hands off our C-130s. They're doing their jobs, and the people are doing their jobs,'" he said.

Mansfield Mayor Lydia Reid addressed members of the 179th.

"You are an integral part of this community," she said. "We don't know what in the world we would do without you. That's why we are fighting so hard."

Reid encouraged everyone to attend Wednesday's rally in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

"This is just a prelude to our big rally in Mansfield," she said. "We will see you at 5:30 Wednesday in downtown, sunny Mansfield."

McCue will be there.

"I hope they keep having rallies," she said. "Right now, this is all the public can do."

mcaudill@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7219

Dan O'Hara attended Saturday's "Save the 179th" rally with poster in hand. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

All of us really do care about the 179th Air Wing, as well as other Reserve and Guard Units.

Rallying 'round the 179th

Jackie Beilstein passes out balloons at Saturday's "Save the 179th" rally in Bellville. The rally was a prelude to the larger event planned to start at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday in the square in downtown Mansfield. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Big rally for 179th planned for next month

By Mark Caudill
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Mike Greene wants the community to unite behind the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

GREENE

"Let our voices be heard all the way to Washington," said Greene, co-chairman of the Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee that worked for more than a year to keep the base off the recommended

See RALLY, back page

About the 179th

- **What:** 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard
- **Based:** Mansfield Lahm Airport
- **Airmen:** Roughly 1,000 full- and part-time airmen. The 179th is the seventh-largest employer in north central Ohio.
- **Awards:** The 179th has received many awards, decorations and recognitions, including the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. Recently, the 179th received the Alan P. Tappan Memorial Trophy, which designates the outstanding Air National Guard unit in Ohio; and the Rusty Metcalf Award, which acknowledges the unit as one of the best in the entire Air Force.

Rally

From page 1A

closure list.

Despite the efforts, the 179th Airlift Wing was on the Pentagon's list announced this month, putting 1,000 local jobs in peril.

Greene is spearheading a rally called "Save Our 179th Day" at 5:30 p.m. June 22 on the downtown square. He hopes to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

"This isn't going to be just our group preaching to the choir. I really want to make this a huge, huge event," Greene said. "I want them to understand that this is serious business."

Greene encourages community residents to make signs for their cars, homes and businesses. He promises speakers, bands and cheerleaders for next month's event.

Greene said if the rally is as big as planned, he hopes BRAC members, who are scheduled to be in Cleveland on June 23, will visit Mansfield. This week, BRAC members will begin visiting bases slated for closure.

The 179th Airlift Wing, which has 230 full-time positions, was not on the list for a visit.

"If you had less than 300 full-timers, you would not get a visit," Greene said.

But local leaders aren't waiting for June 22 to do something. They will meet at 1 p.m. today at Gorman-Rupp's north plant with an All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs. Representatives from other affected communities, including Cleveland and Springfield, will be at the meeting.

"The idea was, 'What could we do to help each other?' " Greene said.

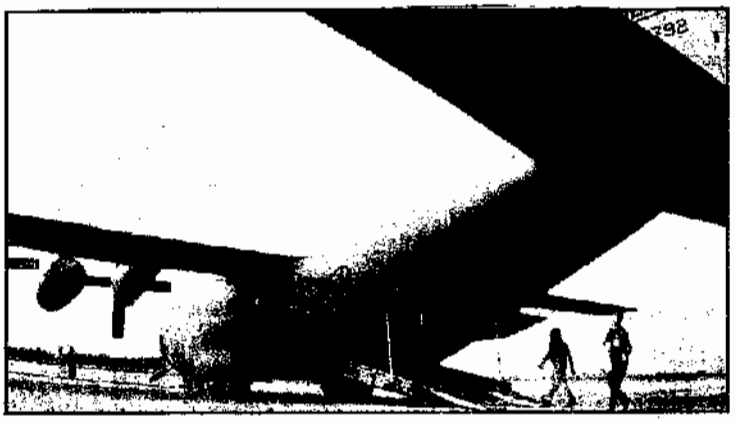
Greene fears the Air Force wants the 179th Airlift Wing's C-130s.

"If they're going to take our planes away, we would prefer that the Army not come in and maybe prevent civilian aviation possibilities," he said.

But that's only a fallback plan.

"Our main priority is getting us off the list," Greene said.

mcaudill@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7219



Guests head inside a C-130 for a tour April 19, 2004, during the Mansfield-Richland County Chamber of Commerce after-hours event at the 179th Airlift Wing. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Rep. Oxley hopes t sway commission's decision about 179t

By Greg Wright
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — Rep. Michael Oxley said Monday he would urge base closure commission officials come to Mansfield so he and local officials can persuade them to keep the 179th Airlift Wing open.

The 179th Airlift Wing was one of 13 facilities in Ohio the Pentagon put on its recommended Base Realignment and Closure list May 13. But the commission's nine-member, independent panel must review the Pentagon picks and could remove some from the list.

"I never give up," Oxley said.

OXLEY

Gov. Bob Taft sent a letter to commission chairman Anthony Principi on May 17 asking commissioners to come to Mansfield, as well bases in Springfield a Cleveland.

The Pentagon propos moving eight C-13(cargo planes from t 179th to airfields in Alat ma and Arkansas. This r flects the Pentagon's mo

See OXLEY, back page

Oxley

From page 1A

to consolidate military bases and reserve units.

Oxley met Monday in Columbus with Army National Guard Maj. Gen. Gregory Wayt, Ohio's

strategy to keep the 179th open.

The commission will visit major bases on the proposed closure and realignment list. The commission also announced 16 regional hearings in California, Texas and other states to get community input on the Pentagon recommendations.

Ohio is not on the regional meeting list. Oxley said he and

a meeting in the Buckeye State.

Oxley said he also could use his clout to try to persuade commissioners to come to the 179th. He said he knows about half of the commissioners, including former Utah Republican Rep. James Hansen, former Nevada Democratic Rep. James Bilbray and former White House Chief

Budget item for 179th show of commitment

House bill includes funds for base scheduled to close

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — The U.S. House of Representatives passed a spending bill Thursday that includes $1.3 million for a fire station project at Mansfield Lahm Airport.

What that budget item means as far as the future of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at the airport remains unclear.

"Unless we manage to get off the (Base Realignment and Closure) list, it's kind of a moot point," said Mike Greene, who is leading local efforts to keep the 179th in Mansfield. "As of right now, the plan is to send that firefighting unit to Toledo."

The 179th Airlift Wing base is on the Pentagon's list of bases recommended for closing.

But U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley (R-Findlay), who asked for the fire station funding, said it shows that the fight to preserve the 179th is not over.

"By this, we are showing our commitment to keeping our base in Mansfield one of

See BRAC, back page

Details

The 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, is one of 13 facilities in Ohio the Pentagon put on its recommended Base Realignment and Closure list May 13.

About 1,000 full- and part-time airmen are assigned to the 179th, which is the seventh-largest employer in north central Ohio.

The Richland Economic Development Corporation/Base Realignment and Closure Steering Committee is leading the fight to remove the 179th from the recommended closure list before a decision is made this year.

A "Save Our 179th Day" rally is set for June 22 at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage.

News Journal staff report

Groups fight to keep 179th in Mansfield

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — It's not over yet.

No one is giving up on keeping the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at Lahm Airport.

That was the message from Ohio Adjutant Gen. Greg Wayt after a Tuesday meeting of the REDeC/BRAC steering committee and the All-Ohio Task Force to Save Defense Jobs.

"The 179th is on a list recommended for closure," Wayt said. "But in the two previous rounds, about 30 percent of the bases on the recommended list were able to change the commission's mind."

Mansfield learned this month the 179th is on the list compiled as part of the Base Realignment and Closure process, which could mean the loss of 1,000 local jobs.

Mike Greene, who has led the local effort to keep the 179th open, said there is plenty area residents can do to help change the BRAC commission's mind.

"Write letters," he said. "It sounds trite. But that's one thing we can all do. Write to your senator. Write to your representative. Write to the president.

"Our goal is to get off the list. It's happened before. Springfield was on the last two lists and managed to get off."

Greene hopes a huge public show of suppo helps sway some minds.

"Show up at our ral June 22," he said. "We like to get between 10,0 and 15,000 people togeth on the square to sho Washington what we thi of the 179th."

Greene is spearheadi plans for the 5:30 p.m. ral which will coincide with "Save Our 179th Day." I is hoping to draw sor statewide and natio news coverage to he Mansfield plead its case.'

BRAC officials have s not made public all the formation used to make cisions about which m tary bases to close.

"We're still not sure actly what criteria th used," said Da Williamson, the governo regional economic devel ment representative an member of the local BR committee. "We're waiti for that information to published so we know wi issues we need to addres

Tuesday's meet brought together repres tatives of other commu ties in Ohio affected by most-recent BRAC nouncement.

"We're trying to see w we can do to help e other," Greene said. "Ri now, I think Cleveland the most well-organi group. We're hoping to ate some synergy with t group and help one an er."

rkent@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7274

BRAC

From page 1A

the most modern in the Guard system," Oxley said. "This would raise our investment in the 179th Airlift Wing unit to more than $20 million over the last eight years."

Greene said any effort in support of the 179th can only help efforts to save the Guard base.

"I still think the best thing we can do is to show community support for the base," Greene said. "That's why I think that rally is so important. We want as many people on the square June 22 as possible to show Washington what the 179th means to all of us."

Greene said Ret. Brig. Gen. Steve Koper, president of the National Guard Association of the United States, has committed to attend the rally.

"We've invited the governor and, hopefully, we'll have some other supporters here from Washington and Columbus," Greene said.

In the meantime, efforts are ongoing to entice members of the BRAC commission to visit Mansfield. Because the 179th has only about 250 full-time not mandatory.

Oxley released a letter he sent to Commission Chairman Anthony Principi in which he wrote, "I believe you will find the 179th represents a compelling case due to the active role it plays in homeland defense and the global war on terror."

In a letter to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Oxley urged the Pentagon to release "installation-specific data" used to make the closing list.

Greene has said the information is important so 179th supporters can better make a case to remain open.

Economic Development Corp.), which has diligently prepared for the BRAC process for more than a year, is now preparing its presentation to the commission in an effort to reverse (the closing)," Oxley wrote.

"Without access to this important data, REDeC cannot properly make its case that this guard unit, which has seen 35 deployments in support of our national defense in just the last four years, should remain open and operational."

rkent@nncogannett.com

Air Force just wants to have the C-130s

Six former Ohio Air National Guard generals visit area to share history

By Ron Simon
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Retired Brig. General Fred Larson calls the possible closure of his old unit, the 179th Airlift Wing, "a grab for the iron."

The "iron" being the unit's fairly well kept fleet of eight C-130H cargo planes.

"The Air Force has not been a very good steward of their C-130s," said the former 179th commander. "A lot of them have aged and a lot are grounded. So there are squadron holes. So this is a grab. It doesn't matter what a unit like the 179th has done or the skills and military value it has. All the Air Force wants is the iron."

Larson was one of six former Ohio Air National Guard generals, all with ties to the 179th, in Mansfield on Thursday. All but one were pilots with the 179th and two were commanders.

They were brought together by Master Sgt. Rod Togliatti, the 179th's historian, for a day of history at the base at Lahm Airport.

Togliatti said the men represent 190 years of combined service, 45,000 hours of flying time and a large piece of memory.

"How many times do you get six generals together to talk about history?" he asked.

Afterward, the generals stopped at the Mansfield Museum on Park Avenue West to meet the public.

Some, like retired Brig. Gen. Myron Ashcraft, go back to the days when the unit was a jet fighter squadron. Ashcraft, who now flies for United Airlines, made the switch from fighter cockpits to the lumbering C-130s. It was the right training for those commercial planes he flies today, he said.

Other generals included Major Gen. Francis Hazard, Brig. Gen. Ray Weber and Brig. Gen. Richard Green, who commanded the unit until his recent promotion and later retirement.

LARSON

ASHCRAFT

HAZARD

WEBER

GREEN

LATTIMORE

Brig. Gen. Vergel Lattimore was the 179th chaplain and the Air National Guard Assistant to the Air Force Chief of Chaplains, and is still active.

"I travel all over the country. I'm the chaplain's chaplain," he said.

Green, like Larson, doesn't care to see his old unit broken up.

"This is a tough blow," he said of the closure threat. "The Air Force simply wants our new planes. No matter what the unit has done, the planes are all they want."

Ashcraft agreed.

"They are stealing our airplanes. That's wrong, ethically and morally. It's a shame," he said.

Larson said a major study taken under his command in the early 1990s proved the unit could expand to double its size at Mansfield Lahm Airport. He said arguments that there is no room to expand are simply wrong.

"I think the 179th is not set for closure. We're going to fight this tooth and nail," he said.

rsimon@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7230

Some Guard bases may lose planes

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — What happens when you take away all the airplanes from an Air National Guard facility?

It's a question being asked at more than a dozen bases ever since the Pentagon announced that it wants the Air Force to consolidate its planes at fewer locations.

Under a military restructuring plan announced Friday, the Pentagon proposed shifting hundreds of planes and thousands of jobs away from Air National Guard bases.

For example:

- Reno-Tahoe International Airport Air Guard Station in Nevada would lose its eight C-130H planes.
- Bradley International Airport Air Guard Station in Connecticut would see all of its A-10s fly away.
- Nashville International Air Guard Station in Tennessee would lose its C-130H aircraft.

"How can you be an airlift wing without any airlift?" asked April Conway, a spokeswoman for the Nevada Air National Guard.

The recommendations now go to a president-appointed commission that will spend the summer holding hearings before sending its recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 8.

Compared with four previous Base Realignment and Closure rounds that began in 1988, National Guard and Reserve bases would be hit hard this time. The Pentagon proposes consolidating about 387 Reserve and National Guard installations into about 125, many to be located at or near active-duty bases.

Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the base closing commission Monday that the Air Force wants more planes in fewer units to more quickly fulfill missions.

"What they have right now are pockets of small numbers of aircraft that are at various locations," Myers said. "And it makes it unwieldy when you try to access them for missions, particularly the kind of missions we're in today in Iraq and Afghanistan and for that matter, around the world."

a lot of citizens are certain in their own minds that the Air Force wants our newer, better C-130. That this is a legal case of Air Piracy. The C-130-H's of the 179th have more up-dated equipment, as well as being much better maintained. Where in this article, General Richard Myers, says it more difficult to deploy planes in smaller groups. That is a mis-representation of the truth. In this day of radio, telephones and computers, not to mention signed letters of orders, fax etc. Any and all orders can be transmitted in a matter of seconds. The Air Force is being very heavy-handed in "robbing" the Air Guard units of their C-130-H's. Robbing is how the peoples of these units feel, not to mention our citizens.

Pentagon: 179th too crowded

Lack of expansion room among reasons for recommended closing

By Greg Wright
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — About 1,000 full and part-time military jobs in Mansfield are in danger primarily because the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield has less room to grow than its rivals in Toledo, Arkansas and Alabama, according to Pentagon documents.

■ TV show explains BRAC process, page 6A.

One of several major criteria the Pentagon considered while determining which military bases to close or realign is whether the facility can accommodate growth. The base also must fit into the Pentagon's future defense strategy.

The Pentagon proposed disbanding the local Ohio Air National Guard last month and moving its eight C-130H transport planes to

See 179th, page 6A

179th

From page 1A

Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base in Alabama and the 314th Airlift Wing at Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas.

Other support services now at Mansfield would go to the Louisville International Airport Air Guard Station in Kentucky and the Toledo Express Airport Air Guard Station.

However, local officials said Monday the ratings are wrong, since city officials offered the Pentagon access to 168 additional acres when military officials indicated expansion might be considered a factor. The 179th Airlift Wing currently is located on 227 acres.

Rep. Michael Oxley, R-Findlay, and local officials have said they would fight to keep transport planes at the 179th at Mansfield Lahm Airport. Gov. Bob Taft announced Monday he will give the Richland Economic Development Corp. $50,000 to promote the 179th.

But it's unlikely the independent Base Realignment and Closure commission would overturn the Pentagon's decision because of the facility's size, a military expert said.

"It's too small to worry about," said John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a defense analysis firm.

While some bases on the closure list could lose thousands of jobs, Pike said, the 179th has just 234 full time military and civilian workers. Still, local officials argue, the base is the seventh largest employer in north central Ohio, including around 650 part-time jobs held by "traditional" National Guard members.

The Pentagon claimed in environmental documents released this weekend the 179th has no room for growth. Little Rock can develop another 1,783 acres; Maxwell an additional 264 acres and Toledo has 45 acres, the Pentagon said. Only Louisville had zero acreage available, the Pentagon said.

Another factor in the Defense Department's base closing considerations was military value. Mansfield ranked lower in military value and capacity than other airlift bases, according to the Pentagon.

The top ranked airlift base is Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. Mansfield ranked 119th out of 154 airlift bases behind Little Rock in 17th place; Maxwell, 21st; Louisville, 79th; and Toledo, 100th.

Local officials contend the 179th is still busy in the war on terrorism with its 35 deployments since Sept. 11, 2001. The facility is modern and there is room to house up to a dozen C-130H planes at the base, said retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Fred Larson, co-chair of the group fighting to save the 179th.

The Pentagon argues it has too many small Air National Guard units; its goal is to merge many with active-duty facilities, said Loren Thompson, a military expert at the Lexington Institute.

But the base closure panel, which is reviewing the Pentagon recommendations, could disagree and decide to keep national guard units such as the 179th open, Thompson said.

The nine-member commission must come up with a final closure list by Sept. 8.

The information that Lahm Field can't expand is absolutely in error. Lahm Field and 179th base there can be expanded greatly any time that becomes necessary. It already has one of the longest runways in the US and can accomodate the largest planes in the world. Lahm Field is an emergency landing strip, if necessary, for the space shuttle. Why spend Millions on increasing the length of a runway some place else, when Lahm Field has everything necessary.

Bad data led to decision, officials say

By Linda Martz
News Journal

MANSFIELD — The Pentagon used flawed data and left major questions unanswered in recommending the 179th Airlift Wing be closed, former base officials say.

Local officials plan to correct those issues in hope of keeping the Ohio Air National Guard unit and its 1,000 full- and part-time jobs in Mansfield, where it's been for more than 50 years.

Retired Brig. Gen. Myron Ashcraft, now a

See DATA, page 6A

Data

From page 1A

United Airlines pilot, said the thing that "jumped right out" when he looked at criteria released Monday is the Pentagon inaccurately said Mansfield Lahm Airport doesn't have enough land available to expand the wing's fleet from eight to 16 C-130H transport planes.

The military considers larger bases more efficient, the Lexington resident said.

Once the Pentagon documents said additional land was not available — an incorrect claim — other questions, such as what it would cost to expand, were left unanswered, he said.

"Once they say that we don't have the land, everything else is out the window," Ashcraft said. "They don't even evaluate how much it would cost to have a full squadron.

"That's the kind of stuff we have to fight it on — is the data," he said Monday night. "I don't see any other shortfall in the criteria that we would fail to meet."

Local officials said Monday they're frustrated by Pentagon documents showing the military meted out low scores to Lahm in areas such as room to expand, military value and capacity. The 179th, which has had 35 deployments since Sept. 11, 2001, generates about $70 million annually to the local economy.

Mayor Lydia Reid said local officials offered the Pentagon 168 additional acres — the city-owned Bradley and Kissell farms north of the airport — when military officials indicated expansion opportunities could be considered. The 179th Airlift Wing now takes up 227 acres.

"Certainly, if they need space to build on, they can build a hell of a lot on 168 acres," the mayor said Monday. "We have said 'whatever it takes, we'll do it.' We're willing to do whatever they want."

Reid said Lahm has a lot more going for it than acknowledged by the Pentagon rankings. "We've got the second longest runway in the state. Also, we've got an airport that is underutilized" — meaning military planes don't need to compete with a lot of other air traffic, she said.

"Some of the places that weren't on that list (to be closed) do not have the capability we do," Reid said.

Mike Greene, co-chairman of the Richland County Economic Development Corp./BRAC Steering Committee, which worked for more than a year to avoid a recommendation that the base be closed, said the Pentagon claims Mansfield doesn't have enough space for a large fleet.

But the master plan outlined in the early 1990s by former base commander Brig. Gen. Fred Larson anticipated constructing more ramps to store planes, Greene said.

"It's easily accomplished simply by putting down more pads," at much less cost than the $33 million the Department of Defense said it would save by closing down Mansfield's base, Greene said.

Ashcraft said the Air Force appears to want to shut down Guard and Reserve units so it can acquire their equipment. "They have a very old, tired, beat up fleet. The way to get airplanes without buying them is just to steal them from the Guard and Reserve," he said.

Larson said, "It doesn't matter to them that they gain no military value (to the country overall) from our airplanes," Larson said. "They're just moving planes from one location to another, at a cost of $33 million."

Local officials are still trying to arrange for a visit to Mansfield by a member of the BRAC commission before a decision is made — but may get only a visit from a staff member, Larson said.

Ohio has been allotted two hours at an upcoming regional base closure hearing in Buffalo — and Mansfield must share that time with Cleveland and Springfield, Larson said. "We're asking for half an hour, but we may get 15 minutes."

lmartz@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7229

With so much at stake for so many people, in so many parts of the United States, how could BRAC not have up-to-date information? How could they take their duty to the people of this country so lightly? If they failed to have the correct facts about the 179th and Lahm Field, how many errors are they making about other bases? They don't go to these military facilities, and God Forbid they should consult with anyone whose future is mightily affected by their decisions.

Editorial

Closing 179th would be a mistake

The Issue:
Today's special section devoted to the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard.

Our Opinion:
The message is simple: Save the 179th.

You should notice a little something extra in the News Journal today.

It's a four-page section aimed at sending a loud and clear message to the Base Realignment and Closure commission and lawmakers in Washington.

North central Ohio believes the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard should remain open and in operation at Lahm Airport in Mansfield.

The first page is a color poster with a simple message. "Save the 179th" is in huge letters, visible from a distance.

We urge you to put this poster in the window of your home, business or other locale that will be seen by the public. We want you to save it and bring it to the community-wide rally June 22. We then want you to mail it to the BRAC commission or lawmakers, and urge them to stop the planned closure of this vital military unit.

The second page is a message from retired Brig. Gen. Richard Green, a former commander of the 179th, who lays out a clear argument why the Pentagon wants the 179th closed and why it should remain open.

Send us your thoughts

E-mail
chunnell@
nncogannett.com

Mail:
Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 25
Mansfield, OH 44901

Fax
(419) 521-7415

The third and fourth pages are messages from local businesses and residents in support of the unit, which has been a part of north central Ohio for more than 50 years.

Make no mistake. Closing the 179th is a mistake. The Pentagon simply wants the unit's eight C-130H aircraft, which would bolster the aging Active Duty and Reserve fleet for the Air Force.

But it would not be good public relations to make public that need for the planes. Instead, the Pentagon cited in its recommendation that there is no room for expansion at the local unit, a claim not supported by the facts. The City of Mansfield has offered another 168 acres for potential base expansion.

We urge the BRAC commission to look deeply into the Pentagon's flawed logic and look instead at the real reason for its closure recommendation — eight aircraft that Congress purchased explicitly for use by the Ohio Air National Guard.

We urge local residents to join the fight by posting today's posters all over the community. Bring them to the public rally. And then mail them to the people who will help keep the 179th open.

It's not to late. This fight has really just begun. We urge you to join in today.

This editorial states that there is plenty of room for expansion for the 179th Air Wing and Lahm Field in general.

Editorial

Pentagon has slapped part-time soldiers

The Issue:
Reserve and National Guard bases were hit hard in the latest round of BRAC Commission recommendations.

Our opinion:
This is a funny way to thank the soldiers who have put so much on the line in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Pentagon has a unique way of thanking the Reserve and National Guard forces for their great contributions during the war on terror.

The thanks is a cold slap in the face with Pentagon reality.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, want to shuffle, cut and otherwise consolidate 387 National Guard and Reserve installations into about 125.

This convoluted thinking is again proof that active duty military leaders a.) don't understand the Guard and Reserve lifestyle or appreciate the needs of part-time soldiers, sailors and airmen; and/or b.) don't care about the future of either segment of the nation's military.

Their plan would include closing the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard in Mansfield, one of the best flying units in the country today.

Myers said these Guard and Reserve moves are being made to enhance capability, cut costs and integrate the part-time forces more closely with active-duty units.

We would argue this plan would accomplish few of the goals outlined above, save for cutting costs.

Myers admitted "there will be some inconvenience" for people serving in the Guard and Reserve if the Pentagon's recommendations to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission are followed.

Some inconvenience? That's like saying Noah needed to build a bit of a boat when the rains came. The understatement is that severe.

How about the fact it will add hundreds or even thousands of miles, and the accompanying expenses for members to meet monthly military obligations? How about the fact it will force Guard or Reserve troops, some of whom may be nearly qualified for retirement, out of the service who simply cannot make long-range trips once a month?

The economic effect on the communities like Mansfield scheduled to lose these units is one thing. But the effect on the individual who has devoted much of his or her life in service to the country is even worse. Lahm Airport will survive and perhaps even flourish with the influx of private business should the 179th close its doors.

But the 1,000 full and part-time airmen who made up the unit, hundreds of which have served around the nation and the world since Sept. 11, 2001, will never be the same. The 179th, for example, has gone on 35 deployments in the last four years.

At a time when recruiting for the National Guard is down 24 percent from last year, it seems sheer folly to slap the face of the people who make the Guard and Reserve the success story the part-time military is today.

Without the Guard and Reserve, the Bush administration could not have fought its war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, about 40 percent of the 138,000 troops in Iraq are Guard and Reserve forces. The Pentagon's reward is to make their career in the military even tougher to maintain.

We urge the members of the BRAC Commission to take a hard look at what the Pentagon has in mind for the Guard and Reserve. We think when they do they will see the security of this nation will be severely weakened with Rumsfeld's plans for the nation's citizen soldiers.

This editorial will give you more information about the 179th, and the opinions of many are the same.

Bush defends base closings, says money being wasted

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP) — Speaking out for the first time in favor of controversial base closings, President Bush said Friday the nation is wasting billions of dollars on unnecessary military facilities and needs the money for the war on terrorism.

Bush, who faces opposition from many states to shutting down bases, tried to be reassuring. He said the bases would be chosen fairly and the government would do all it could

See BUSH, back page

Bush

From page 1A

to help affected communities recover.

But he made clear that the process — however painful — could not be avoided.

In a speech to graduates of the Naval Academy, he said the closings and realignments "will result in a military that is more efficient and better prepared so you can better protect the American people against the dangers of this new century."

"In this war, there is only one option and that is victory," he said, to cheers from midshipmen, relatives and faculty at the academy on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay.

When Bush last spoke at a Naval Academy commencement, it was four months before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and his focus was his administration's effort to reshape the military into a faster, lighter and more flexible — but not larger — fighting force.

Since the attacks, and amid a global anti-terror campaign and wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, a top-to-bottom military transformation is even more necessary, Bush said.

Keys to the success are new technology, repositioning of global forces, new weapons and realigned bases at home, he said.

Bush said he understands the fears in cities where bases have been marked for changes or closure. The first round of closings in a decade has members of Congress and local officials working hard to protect the 33 major bases slated for closure and the 29 others proposed for downsizing.

"I know firsthand how hard base closings can be on local communities," said the former Texas governor who saw facilities shut down in his state.

Members of the congressionally chartered Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) will visit bases and hold hearings on the Pentagon proposal. The plan aims to save $48.8 billion over 20 years by eliminating redundant and inefficient facilitates and promoting cooperation among the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps.

The panel will decide on changes to the Pentagon plan and give a list to Bush and Congress this fall for approval or rejection.

Commission chairman Anthony Principi on Friday joined a growing chorus of lawmakers demanding that the Defense Department quickly release the thousands of pages of data backing up each of its recommendations.

Briefly

More work for 179th

MANSFIELD — Twenty-nine members of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard will leave Monday in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, the U.S. military initiative in Afghanistan.

Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the 179th has flown more than 2,600 sorties, moved 35,000 passengers and transported 5,600 cargo tons of material in combat theaters, according to a unit news release.

The airlift wing, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, was recommended for closure this month by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission. An area campaign is under way to remove the 179th from the closure list before a final decision is made later this year.

No, Mr. Bush, we are not wasting money on our personell at our Military facilities or our personell. Maybe other places are, Ohio is not. We have had terrible losses. My grandson has served a tour of duty in Bosnia, and Iraq in one of the most dangerous missions in Iraq. Transportation of fuel. Now BRAC wants to do whatever with the 706th Transportation Company

AmVets Post 43 joins fight for 179th

Rally planned for June 18 in Bellville

By David Benson
News Journal

BELLVILLE — A second major rally to keep the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard in Mansfield is in the works.

AmVets Post 43 in Bellville will host a Rally to Save the 179th Airlift Wing on June 18 at 3 p.m. at the bandstand on Main Street.

The 179th, based on Mansfield Lahm Airport, is on the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission list of facilities recommended to be shut down to reduce overall military expenses.

A separate Save Our 179th Day rally is set for June 22 at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract 10,000 people and national media coverage for that event.

Joli McCue is organizing the Bellville rally.

"When Post 43 called me and asked me if I would do it, I said I would be glad to. Somebody's got to do something," said McCue, the wife of a 179th member.

"If we get a big turnout it will show how much community support the 179th has. Our legislators will see we're not going to take this closing lying down," she said.

The other purpose of the rally is to provide information to those who have questions about the BRAC process and what individuals can do to try to prevent the closure, McCue said.

"So far, the support for the base and for this rally has just poured in. It's been phenomenal," she said.

Speakers at the Bellville rally will include Mayor Carolynn Studenmund, REDeC/BRAC steering committee co-chairman Brig. Gen.(r) Fred Larson, Brig. Gen.(r) Myron Ashcraft, Brig. Gen.(r) Rich Green, Richland County Commissioner Ed Olson, county Veteran Services Commission President Larry Moore and state Rep. Bill Hartnett.

In addition, form letters supporting the 179th will be available at the rally, which will need to be signed and mailed to designated legislators.

The AmVets and American Legion Color Guards and the Clear Fork High School marching band will participate. For children, there will be face painting, lemonade and popcorn stands and balloons.

Food and music will be featured after the rally at the AmVets Ron Boyce Hall located north of the bandstand on Main Street. Music will be provided by AmVets' Steve Stephenson, Dave King, & Westwind and by the Jo Kidd Outfit, comprised of 179th members.

For additional information, call McCue at (419) 886-4283. To donate food or supplies, contact the AmVets at (419) 886-2658.

dbenson@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7272

Tech Sgt. Ken Schonauer of Mansfield works on the tail section of a C-130 at Lahm Airport earlier this month. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal)*

Family and friends placed flags Sunday to honor veterans, soldiers and emergency personnel at a Healing Field ceremony in Fredericktown. The field will stand through Wednesday. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal photos)*

A place to honor many sacrifices

By Jennifer Kowalewski
News Journal

FREDERICKTOWN — Charles Blanchette served his country in World War I, World War II and the Korean War.

His granddaughter, Denise Needles, honored his memory by flying a flag Sunday in the Healing Fields at Kokosing Construction Co. The Exchange Club of Mount Vernon and Knox County sponsored the event to honor veterans, current soldiers and emergency personnel.

"It's pretty neat," the Mount Vernon woman said after buying a flag. "I saw all the flags and thought he has to have a flag."

Healing Fields began in Sandy, Utah, in 2002, when Colonial Flag Co. owner Paul Swenson wanted to honor those who lost their lives in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Volunteer Jane Engle said Swenson flew 3,000 flags in Utah to show how many victims were killed.

While residents walked among the flags, many felt a sense of healing, and Healing Fields have sprung up across the country, Engle said.

Chairwoman Melody Brent has worked to bring the Healing Field to Fredericktown since November 2004. Residents purchased flags to fly in a 2-acre field in honor of their loved ones, Exchange Club President Diane Collier said. Residents from Richland, Morrow, Ashland, Knox and Licking counties participated.

Residents can visit the field for the next few days

See FLAGS, back page

Ann Eing leans on her son, Jeff, as they look at the flag they placed to honor Ann's husband, John, a World War II Navy veteran.

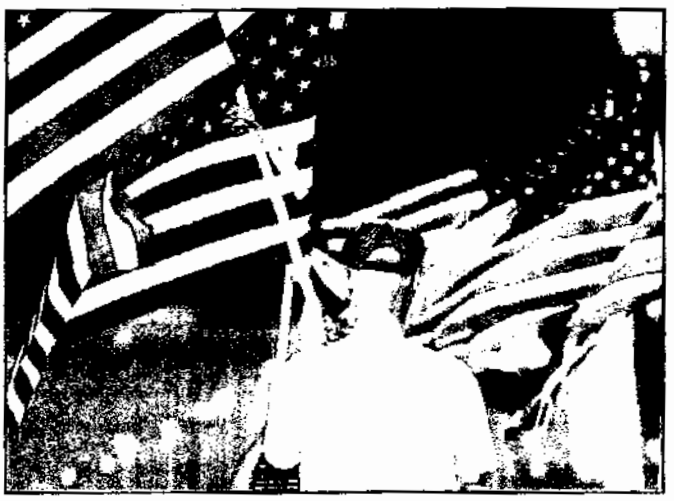
If you go

Residents can visit the Healing Field at Kokosing Construction Co. in Fredericktown through Wednesday evening. Kokosing Construction is on Ohio 13, near the Ohio 95 interchange. The flags honor and remember veterans, those serving in the military and emergency personnel. The program includes:

- **Today**, 3 p.m: Ohio Highway Patrol helicopter land; 4 p.m: The Petty Group (Knox County singers); 5 p.m: singers and speakers, including state Sen. Bill Harris, R-Mansfield.
- **Tuesday**, 4 p.m: Apple Valley Singers; 5 p.m: music and speakers including state Rep. Thom Collier, R-Mount Vernon.
- **Wednesday**, 4 p.m: Color Guard from Knox County Veterans; 4:30 p.m: speeches and closing remarks.

News Journal staff report

HEALING FIELD



A man walks among the memorial flags in the Healing Field at Fredericktown on Sunday. *(Jason J. Molyet/News Journal)*

Flags

From page 1A

to walk among the flags, Collier said.

"It's an experience you may never be a part of again," she said, as names were called over a loudspeaker to indicate whose turn it was to place a flag. "It's amazing to see all the red, white and blue. You can't imagine when the breeze blows, hearing 1,000 flags flapping in the breeze."

Collier, whose father-in-law stormed the beaches of Normandy, said she has participated in Healing Fields in Dallas and Findlay.

Volunteer Jim Tharp, a U.S. Navy veteran, said field coordinator Steve Murphy and the crew has worked since Friday to get the field ready. Poles were placed in the ground to support the flags, spaced 10 feet apart.

The crew installed lights so people could visit the field at night.

Denise Hess of Mount Vernon plans to visit again before it closes Wednesday. The Mount Vernon woman took her granddaughter, Shayla Ingram, 2, to the field.

"I just think it's going to be a unique experience," she said, waiting for her father's name to be called. "It's going to be emotional."

The Healing Field means more to her because her nephew, Travis Hess, is serving in Iraq with the Ohio National Guard 211th Maintenance Company of Newark.

"It's an experience you may never be part of again. It's amazing to see all the red, white and blue."

Diane Collier,
Exchange Club president

U.S. Army Korean War veteran David A. Munk flew a flag in honor of his son, Rick L. Munk, a 23-year-old veteran of the Ohio Highway Patrol.

"It's great," David Munk said, watching the flags go up. "It's the best thing to happen to this little community. If it weren't for them, we wouldn't be here."

As residents drove into the field, a flag that had flown in Iraq hung between two fire engines to greet them. Bobby and Lisa Folden took their 9-month-old girl, Mackenzie, under the flags to honor veterans Bobby knows at the Station Break Senior Citizen Center in Mount Vernon.

Many of the clients at the center helped with the Healing Field by making ribbons with the names of those honored.

"You really respect what they did for the country," Bobby Folden said.

jkowalewsk@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7232

Concert to raise money for family of Galion soldier killed in Iraq

By Jennifer Kowalewski
News Journal

GALION — The Galion Community Band will remember a hero.

A combined band and choral concert to benefit the Lee Anne Ivy Fund is scheduled Sunday at 7 p.m. at Galion High School. Residents are asked to donate to assist the family of Marine Staff Sgt. Kendall Ivy II, 28, the Galion native killed in action in Iraq earlier this month.

"We hope that the community will support this effort," community band organizer Brian Treisch said. "The concert was suggested to us as a way to generate funds for the Ivy family.

"We have been able to move rapidly to put this concert together. Many of the band members were classmates, former teachers, and friends of Kendall."

The concert will feature patriotic music, combined band and choral works and pieces to honor Sgt. Ivy. Details are still being arranged.

"We are sure that 'Semper Fidelis,' 'The Stars & Stripes, Forever' and "Battle Hymn of the Republic' will be performed," Treisch said. "Rick Walker is working to complete the concert lineup and I am working to complete the band roster."

The Galion Community Band has performed since 1976, including annually at the Fourth of July concert before the fireworks display.

Any interested instrumental musician or choir member not already contacted is welcome to join the band for a rehearsal at 6 p.m. today.

"We have a solid band set at this time, but we welcome any musician," Treisch said.

According to a military report issued to his family, Ivy died May 11 in western Iraq from a severe leg wound suffered when the vehicle in which he was riding struck a roadside bomb.

Ivy, who went to Iraq in February, is the sixth member of the military from north central Ohio to die in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Ivy played football and baseball at Galion High School. He joined the Marine Corps after graduating in 1995. He is survived by his widow, Lee Anne, who lives in Camp LeJeune, N.C., and is four-months pregnant, two sons and a daughter.

The Lee Anne Ivy Fund has been established at First Federal Bank to assist the family.

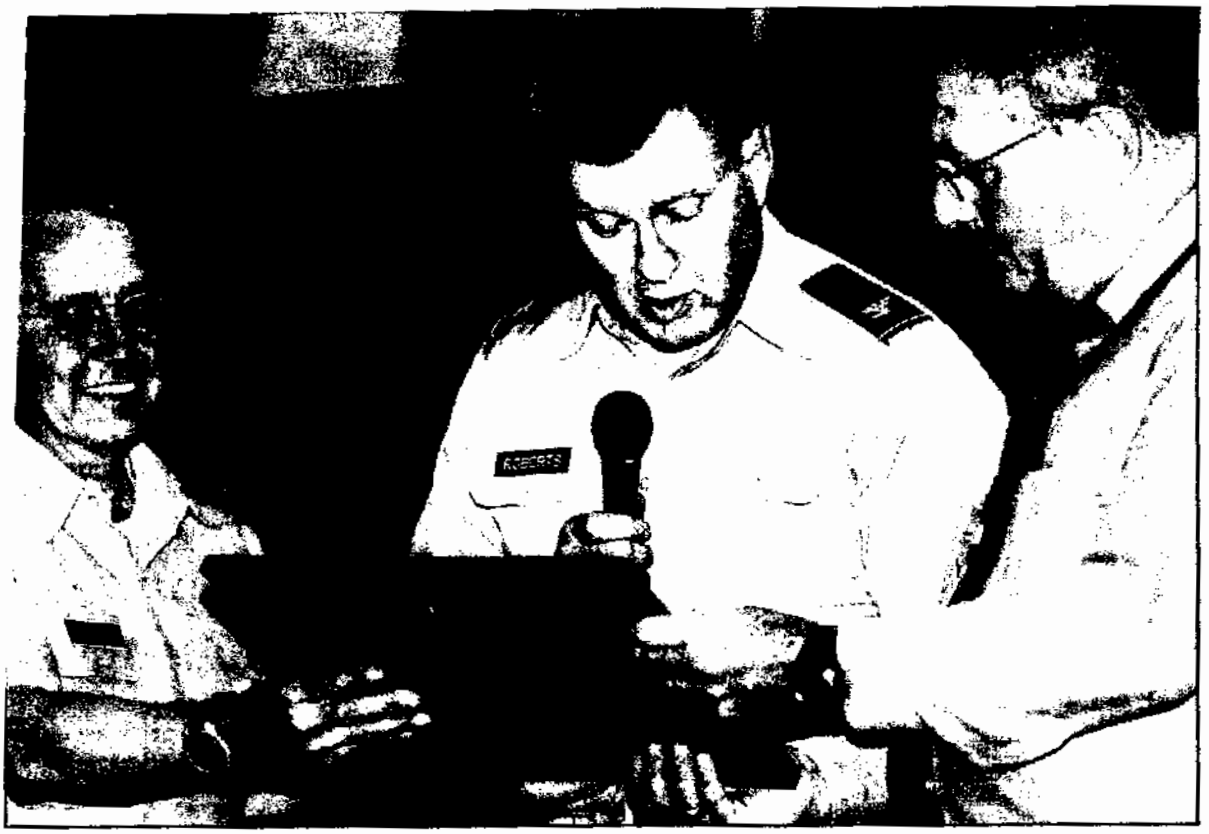
jkowalewski@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7232

If you go

What: Galion Community Band concert.
Where: Galion High School auditorium.
When: 7 p.m. Sunday.
Why: To benefit the family of Kendall Ivy, a soldier killed while serving his country in Iraq.
For information, call Brian Treisch at (419) 462-2209.

News Journal

Just one of our many lost service men in Iraq. Also, what is being done to aid and support his widow and family.



Lt. Col. William Schock and Col. Bill Roberts present a "My Boss Is a Patriot" certificate to Crestview Middle School Principal John McNeely at a school assembly Wednesday. *(Daniel Melograna/News Journal)*

Patriotic Crestview principal honored

By Lou Whitmire
News Journal

OLIVESBURG — John McNeely, principal of Crestview Middle School, got quite a surprise Wednesday afternoon.

He received a "My Boss is a Patriot" certificate of appreciation from the Office of the Secretary of Defense at a school assembly.

McNeely is a strong supporter of the Ohio National Guard and Army Reserve. He was nominated for the honor by teacher Linda Roney, a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve.

Roney's military boss, 10th Battalion commander Lt. Col. William Schock, and Schock's boss, 6th Brigade commander Col. Bill Roberts, traveled from the 100th Division at Louisville, Ky., to present the award.

McNeely, surprised and emotional as he stood at the podium, said he was almost speechless.

"I'm honored to receive this award. ... You people in the military are

After the assembly, Roney said McNeely is supportive of everyone at the school who has relatives in the military.

"We're honoring him not for what he gives me, but for his patriotism," Roney said.

Fellow teacher Joyce Galloway thanked McNeely for supporting her when her son Daniel was deployed to Iraq with the Army Reserve's 1486th Transportation Co.

McNeely said he was being honored for something he ought to be doing anyway.

"When Mrs. Roney was deployed (after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks) I told Mrs. Roney your job will be here when you get back," he said.

Even when she is not deployed, Roney's job in the military requires travel and days off from her job as a seventh- and eighth-grade teacher.

She teaches a course in the Army Reserve called "combined arms exercise," and she is area coordinator for Kentucky. Her military job most recently took her out of the classroom April 29 to May 4 to participate in weapons training.

Schock said Roney couldn't do her job without employers like Crestview Schools.

"She is responsible for all instructors in Kentucky who teach the course," he said.

Roney trains people in eight states — Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Schock, 57, who leaves in June for Iraq to assist the Iraqi people with veterans affairs, said the award presentation was his first and called it a proud moment. He is a human resources director for the regional veteran's affairs office in Louisville.

Roberts, an attorney in Kentucky, lauded McNeely for his willingness to share Roney with her other job.

"We as Army Reserve soldiers depend on two groups of people — our families and employers. We're here to recognize someone who is a patriot to us," Roberts said.

McNeely said his uncle John was drafted into World War II and landed in the Normandy invasion. McNeely's father, Bryon McNeely, served in World War II and received a Purple Heart, a Bronze Star and other honors — and survived being shot twice in the back of the head.

The principal said the award ranked with the birth of his daughter. "It's a moment I will remember," he said.

Roney said she first met her principal on the telephone.

"He made it clear he was very patriotic and me being in the Reserve would not be a detriment," she recalled.

"I have a wonderful lady who is my sub. I just have the best of all worlds."

Sarah Jenkins, 12, a sixth-grader, applauded her principal.

"He runs the school well," she said.

Classmate Connor Plemens, 12, said McNeely is nice.

"He is very deserving of this," he added.

lwhitmire@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7223

Another Civilian-Military person, who is a wonderful asset to our Community. The 179th also has a choir that sings at special local events.

Remembering the soldiers

Above, Gary Johnson, a member of the Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing for 10 years, stands beside his father, Glenn Johnson, a World War II Army veteran, during the "America, we must not forget" service Sunday at the Berean Baptist Church on Middle Bellville Road. Glenn Johnson has another son, Randy, in the service in Uzbekistan. Glenn's wife, Phyllis, is sitting to his right.

Right, Marine Tim Crumbliss sings "O' God, Our Help in Ages Past" during the service Sunday. Backing up Crumbliss is the church choir, led by the Rev. Bryan Moak.

(Walt Butler/ News Journal photos)

The people who are in our Civilian-Military units, are not just Military personell. They are part of our lives in every way. Our fathers and mothers, Sons and daughters, our friends, whom we love. Now BRAC wants to dis-respect them.

BRAC staff member to visit 179th

But BRAC/REDeC steering committee not sure if they are even allowed to attend

Program on WMFD-TV lays out story of 179th, BRAC commission

News Journal staff report

MANSFIELD — Mike Greene and Ret. Brig. Gen. Fred Larson, the former commander of the 179th, who together are leading efforts to save the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, have taped a program that will air on WMFD-TV at 7:30 p.m. each evening through Sunday.

"It pretty much lays out the entire story of the 179th and the BRAC commission and why it is so vital that the air base remains here in Mansfield," Greene said. "I hope everyone in Mansfield will watch it and come down and support us at our rally on June 22."

A "Save Our 179th Day" rally is set that day at 5:30 p.m. on the square in downtown Mansfield. Organizers hope to attract a crowd of 10,000 and national media coverage. Greene hopes a huge public show of support helps sway some minds.

Ret. Brig. Gen. Steve Koper, president of the National Guard Association of the United States, has committed to attend the rally. Greene said he expects U.S. Rep. Mike Oxley and Ohio Adjutant Gen. Greg Wayt to be on hand. He's confident that Gov. Bob Taft will also be in Mansfield that day.

By Russ Kent
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Local officials haven't been successful in arranging a visit to Mansfield by a member of the Base Realigument and Closure commission but they haven't given up efforts to argue their case.

A BRAC commission staff member — not an actual commissioner — will be in Mansfield on Tuesday to visit the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard at Mansfield Lahm Airport, which last month was placed on a list of military bases to be closed by the Pentagon.

Call it a second-tier visit.

"He will meet with staff at the air base," said Mike Greene, of the Richland Economic Development Corporation, which is spearheading efforts to keep the 179th in Mansfield.

GREENE

"I don't even know if our committee will be allowed to attend. If we are, we won't be able to ask questions or present our case.

"The briefing will be 100 percent presented and produced by the 179th. It will not be open to the public. My hope is that staffer comes here with an open mind."

In the meantime the BRAC/REDeC steering committee is continuing its efforts to get the 179th off the closure list. It now has another $50,000 to work with.

The State Controlling Board released the money, promised by Gov. Bob Taft, on Wednesday.

"It certainly will help," Greene said. "It will help pay for our trip to Buffalo. It could pay for other trips. It could pay for a trip to Washington, D.C."

Greene said such a trip to Washington could be for the purpose of arguing the Mansfield case before a BRAC commission member.

"If they won't come to us, we'll go to them," he said.

Efforts have intensified in the weeks since the 179th was placed on the Pentagon's closure list. A lobbying group is still active in Washington, D.C., and the local steering committee has hired a consultant in Columbus to help draft its presentation for a regional hearing in Buffalo on June 27.

Ohio, which had three bases on the list, will get a chance to argue its case at that hearing. The state has been allotted a total of two hours. Greene hopes Mansfield gets at least 30 minutes.

"We'll attend some hearings prior to that so we can check out the format and see what some of the other arguments have been and how they've been presented," Greene said.

"I wouldn't say that's our last effort to present our case, but the style and substance of our presentation will be important."

rkent@nncogannett.com
(419) 521-7274

Former 179th generals will meet the public

Six generals, former members of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, will be together for the first time Thursday for a "Meet the Generals Day" at Mansfield Memorial Museum, 34 Park Avenue West.

They will greet the public from 4 to 6 p.m.

Scheduled to participate are Francis Hazard, Ray Weber, Fred Larson, Myron Ashcraft, Rich Green and Vergel Lattimore.

The 179th, based at Mansfield Lahm Airport, has been recommended for closing by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission. Public rallies to have the 179th removed from the closure list are planned for June 18 in Bellville and June 22 on the square in Mansfield.

As you can see we are doing everything we can possibly do to convince the BRAC that we really want to keep all of Civilian-Military facilities and personell in place. Even to producing a TV program to inform all of our citizens about our Civilian-Military.

RECEIVED

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

1. Mission/Military Value

- Primary Aircraft Weapons System: (8) C-130H2+ Hercules (Distinguishing Operational and Technical highlights are detailed in attachment 1.); Valued at $240,000,000.

- Major Command: Air Mobility Command (AMC), Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.

- The proud home to one the most highly trained, combat-tested, veteran, C-130 forces in the United States Air Force. Since Vietnam, we have led the way in the C-130 community in both combat hours and sorties.

- Our air crews have been decorated with over 116 Air Medals and 16 Aerial Achievement Medals since Operations Joint Guard (1996-1998, Sarajevo), and Joint Forge (1998-1999, Sarajevo); these medals recognize meritorious service and/or valor in aerial flight.

- We make significant airlift contributions to the USAF mission and have an enviable safety record. Flying an accident-free average of over 3,400 hours from FY 2003 to FY 2005 (projected), we have accumulated a total of over 134,000 safe flying hours.

- We are a vital component of the Total Force (with the ANG providing nearly 50% of the USAF's tactical airlift capability, the fight can't be fought without us) and have supported combat and humanitarian operations and exercises around the world. Some examples:

  Volant Oak (Panama); 1979 - 1999.
  Volant Partner (Germany); 1987 - 1992
  Reforger (Alaska); 1983
  Desert Shield Desert Storm; 1990 - 1991.
  Operation Restore Hope (Somalia); 1992 – 1993.
  Operation Provide Promise (Bosnia); 1993 – 1994.
  Operation Joint Endeavor (Bosnia); 1996 – 1998.
  Operation Joint Guard (Bosnia); 1998 – 1999.
  Operation Joint Forge (Bosnia); 1999 – 2002.
  Operation Southern Watch (Mid-East); 1996 – 1999.
  Operation Uphold Democracy (Haiti); 1994.
  Operation Shining Hope (Kosovo); 1999.

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

- Since 9/11, the inception of the Global War on Terror, and Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom, the 179th has been engaged like never before. Some key statistics:

2001		
	Operations Supported	Coronet Oak, Deep Freeze, Noble Eagle
	Participating units	Airlift Squadron, Medical Squadron, Logistics Support, Airlift Squadron, Aerial Port Squadron
	Days served	13,842
2002		
	Operations Supported	Southern Watch, Deep Freeze, Noble Eagle, Israeli support, Enduring Freedom, Joint Forge, Northern Watch
	Participating units	Aircraft maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Civil engineering squadron, Services
	Days served	56,912
2003		
	Operations Supported	Deep Freeze, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, Israeli Support
	Participating units	Aircraft Operations, Aircraft Maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Civil engineering squadron, Services, Intelligence
	Days served	35,971
2004		
	Operations Supported	Deep Freeze, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom
	Participating units	Aircraft Operations, Aircraft Maintenance, Aerial Port, Logistics Support, Intelligence
	Days served	64,052

179th Airlift Wing
BRIEFING SUMMARY

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

Combat Aerial Operations Totals for OEF and OIF:

	HOURS	SORTIES	PAX	CARGO TONS
OIF AL JABER	1,219.3	878	9,735	1287.2
OIF TALLIL, AL SALEM, AL UDIED	1,839.4	1,222	19,755	2,429
OEF AL SALEM, AL UDIED, CURRENT AOR	898.6	550	5490	1852.6
TOTALS	3957.3	2650	34980	5568.8

- Our Proposed $8.0 M Fire/Crash Rescue Station will accommodate **JOINT** Air National Guard/Army National Guard firefighting missions.

- In addition to the flying mission, we are home to a wide range of expeditionary combat and homeland security support units, capable of delivering many invaluable capabilities. Some examples:

Civil Engineering
- Engineering force to maintain facilities and infrastructure
- Fire Department and Power Production team

Logistics Readiness Squadron
- Supply of materiel and fuels, maintenance of the vehicle fleet, traffic management services and planning and management of the mobilization process to ensure an accurate and rapid response in the event of contingency moves or national emergency.

Aerial Port Squadron
- Coordinate missions with Base Operations and the affected work centers of the squadron
- Plan, schedule and process air cargo, passengers, and mail
- Prepare load plans, manifests and air movement reports using automated or manual tools
- Prepare/Inspect and Process Cargo for onward movement

Security Forces Squadron
- Point of entry control to the installation
- Armed response to the installation

- Presidential Aircraft support at remote locations upon request
- Support to the Governor for natural or man-made disasters

Communications Flight
- Maintenance and support to computers and crypto equipment.
- Maintenance and support to telephone switch and outside telephone plant.
- Maintenance and support to land mobile radio (LMR), Ground to Air radio (VHF/UHF), state emergency radio (HF) and tactical mobility radio.
- Visual information support

Services Flight
- Food Service, Lodging, Wartime Mortuary Affairs, Search & Recovery Operations, Morale, Welfare & Recreation, Tactical Field Exchange

Mission Support Flight
- Personnel services to the Wing and surrounding retired military community, including recruiting, retention, enlistment, retirements, Separations, Force Deployment and sustainment, ID Cards and health care Enrollment, support.

Environmental Management Office
- Programs to reduce hazardous and solid waste generation
- Increase recycling and Green Purchasing efforts
- Maintain compliance with all applicable EPA, Air Force, and Air National Guard regulations

Expeditionary Medical Support (EMEDS)
- Mobile and highly capable clinical disaster response/assessment

- Because the ANG is also the State Governors' asset (The Guard is the only military force immediately available to a governor in times of emergency, including civil unrest and natural or manmade disasters), we are uniquely positioned to support a host of Homeland Security missions. Some examples:

Expeditionary Medical Support
- Forward deployed trauma resuscitation/surgical capability including critical care
- Multi-functional team composition decreases number of medics required to deploy
    - 179MDG is only MDG in FEMA Region 5 with Surgical capabilities
    - Region Five Consists of:
        - Ohio

- Michigan
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Wisconsin
- Minnesota

Security Forces

- Conduct anti-terror assessments and provide threat information to the Governor
- Coordinate local anti-terrorism intelligence sharing with local police agencies

Readiness

- Provide trained and equipped Nuclear Biologic Chemical (NBC) Readiness Personnel

Communication Flight

- Provide critical command and control with State Emergency Management Agency via the State HF radio net. Additionally the 179th CF has direct radio contact and support agreements with local fire and law enforcement agencies, which would enable us to coordinate a Homeland Defense emergency response with the rest of the State.

2. Land, Facilities, Infrastructure, Air Space

- Mansfield's 9000-foot, Instrument Flight Rule (IFR)-equipped runway is one of the longest in Ohio (only 6 of 168 are longer.)

- No commercial carriers compete for Mansfield-Lahm's airspace.

- We enjoy exceptional mission support facilities:
  - 33 Buildings: 292,863 Sq. Ft.
  - Total Acres: 230
  - Value: $92,928,000.
  - Main Cantonment Area: 67 Acres
  - Drop Zone: 157 Acres
  - **Airport Costs**: $49,904

  - Military Construction Investments:
    1997 - Medical Training/Dining Hall: $3.1M
    1998 - Jet Fuel Storage Complex: $4.1 M
    1998 - Headquarters Building: $4.7 M
    2001 - Security Forces Operations Building: $2.7 M

2003 - Air Operations/Communications Building: $6.6 M
2004 - Transportation Complex: $3.3 M
2005 – Upgraded/Hardened Main Gate Facility: $690 K

- Planned Improvements
  Fire Station: $8.0 M (FY '06)
  Civil Engineering Facility: $5.9 M (FY '09)

- Ample room for expansion (see attachment 2)

3. **Economic Impact**

Employees

Full-time	293
Duty Status Guardsmen	767
Total	**1060**

Impact on Local Economy

Annual Payroll	$ 25.5M
Operating Funds	$ 16.6M
Total	**$ 42.1M**

Operating Funds

Operations & Maintenance	$ 114,300
Ohio National Guard Tuition Assistance Program	$ 160,000
State Income Tax	$ 995,160
Profit for the State	**$ 720,860**

Benefit to Mansfield

Mansfield City Income Tax	$174,000
Income from Property Lease	$ 49,905
Profit for Mansfield	**$ 223,905**

4. **Community Infrastructure Support**
   - Large, talented, and supportive recruiting community with a radius reaching as far as Columbus and Cleveland, resulting in unit strength of 104.7%, 5th in the entire ANG (91 units.)

- Robust relationships with the City of Mansfield, Richland and surrounding counties, especially civic and legislative leaders.

- Property lease from City of Mansfield only ≈ $50K / year

- Over 1500 sleeping rooms within easy driving distance of the base could accommodate much larger traditional force, or surge requirements (we use only 80 double-occupied rooms now, with a strength of 767 traditional Guardsmen)

5. **Environmental Impact:**
   - The 179th has a proud record of Environmental Stewardship, e.g.,
     - Installation Restoration Program (IRP):
       - 5 of 8 sites are officially closed.
       - All will be closed by mid-2006.
     - No underground storage tank issues
     - Current small arms firing range will require soil remediation when it is ordered closed. Estimated cost $ 0.5M.

6. **Awards and Accomplishments:**

Year	Inspection/Award	Reason or Results
2005	Environmental, Safety, Occupational, Health Compliance Assessment & Management Program (ESOHCAMP)	Outstanding and Best Ever Seen
2004	Health Services Inspection (HSI)	Excellent Rating
2003	Deneke Award	Outstanding ANG Civil Engineer
2002	CMSgt Edward Wilbert Award	Outstanding Fire Dept of the Year
2002	James D. Weaver Award	Outstanding Fulltime Medical Technician
2002	ANG Environmental Quality Award For Recycling	
2002	ANG Services Flt of the Year	Superior Performance
2002	Initial Readiness Inspection	Excellent
2002	Unit Compliance Inspection	Excellent
2002	Aircrew Stan/Eval Inspection	Excellent
2001	AF Outstanding Unit Award	Outstanding Performance
2001	ANG Metcalf Trophy	Outstanding Mission Accomplishment
2000	Tappan Award	Outstanding Ohio Flying Unit
2000	EORI @ Ramstein AB, GE	Top rating
2000	Health Services Inspection	Highest Air Force rating
2000	IG Exercise (IGX)	Top rating
1999	Tappan Award	Outstanding Ohio Flying Unit

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

Attachment 1

C-130 HERCULES

The C-130 Hercules primarily performs the tactical intra-theater portion of the airlift mission. The aircraft is capable of operating from rough; dirt strips and is the prime transport for para-dropping troops and equipment into hostile areas. Basic and specialized versions perform a diversity of roles, including airlift support, aero medical missions, and natural disaster relief missions.

The C-130 Hercules has unsurpassed versatility, performance, and mission effectiveness. The flexible design of the Hercules enables it to be configured for many different missions, allowing for one aircraft to perform the role of many. Much of the special mission equipment added to the Hercules is removable, allowing the aircraft to revert back to its cargo delivery role if desired. Additionally, the C-130 can be rapidly reconfigured for the various types of cargo

The C-130's design maximum gross weight is 155,000 pounds (175,000 pounds wartime) with a normal landing weight of 130,000 pounds. The airplane is capable of airlifting 6 pallets or 74 litters or 16 CDS bundles or 92 combat troops or 64 paratroopers. It can also carry 45,000 pounds of cargo or a combination of any of these up to the cargo compartment capacity or maximum allowable weight.

Conduct aero medical evacuation operations. Movement of casualties by air transportation under the supervision of qualified aero medical evacuation crew members to/between medical treatment facilities

Support psychological operations. Support of operations targeted against the minds of the enemy civilian population and combat forces. Speaker operations and leaflet airdrops can be used to influence and demoralize hostile forces prior to and during offensive operations

The mission of the C-130 is to provide rapid transportation of personnel or cargo for delivery by parachute to a designated drop zone, or by landing at austere locations within the theater of operations.

The C-130 provides long range, day or night capability. C-130 combat delivery assets can perform airdrops in visual conditions; AWADS C-130s are additionally capable of executing airdrops in IMC (Instrument Meteorological Conditions) independent of external navigation aids

The C-130 can deliver personnel, equipment or supplies either by landing or by various aerial delivery modes.

In the first, parachutes pull the load, weighing up to 42,000 pounds, from the aircraft. When the load is clear of the plane, cargo parachutes inflate and lower the load to the ground.

The second method, called the Container Delivery System, uses the force of gravity to pull from one to 16 bundles of supplies from the aircraft. When the bundles, weighing up to 2,200 pounds each, are out of the aircraft, parachutes inflate and lower them to the ground.

MANSFIELD AIRCRAFT UPGRADES

AWADS (Adverse Weather Aerial Delivery System) - The precise delivery of personnel, equipment, and supplies during adverse weather, using a self-contained aircraft instrumentation system without artificial ground assistance or the use of ground navigational aids.

SCNS (Self-Contained Navigation System) - SCNS provides the flight crew an integrated navigation system, with four independent navigation solutions, including GPS, flight guidance and advisory information to fly a variety of missions. SCNS also provides control of communication and navigation radios, flight planning and calculation, and control of troop/cargo airdrops, as well as processing of radar data on some models.

ESKE (Enhanced Station Keeping Equipment)

GPWS (Ground Proximity Warning System)

GPS (Global Positioning System) - Installs a space-based all-weather radio navigation system into all SCNS-equipped C-130s to allow autonomous navigation capabilities. Eliminates reliance upon ground-based stations to provide navigational inputs to aircraft systems

MLS (Microwave Landing System) - Allows precision approaches and landings. MLS will allow elimination of ILS, which suffers from frequency congestion.

NVG (Night Vision Goggles)

NVIS (Night Vision Imaging System)

SATCOM (Satellite Communication) - Installs a permanent SATCOM antenna, interface cabling, preamplifier, and control panel for portable SATCOM radios required by joint users of combat delivery aircraft

GCAS (Ground Collision Avoidance System)

TCAS (Traffic Collision Avoidance System)

Threat Avoidance.

Improved capability to detect/degrade/defeat threats.

Chaff Flare Dispensers, Radar Jammers

MWS (Missile Warning System)

RWS (Radar Warning System)

CONTACT: 2LT Select Nicole Ashcroft 419.520.6377
Col Mark Stephens 520.6179 or Col Bill Waldron 520.6153

OTHER DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF MANSFIELD'S C-130 FLEET

- Flying Hours (average equivalent baseline) on our aircraft place them at less than half of their useful life span.

- **Enhanced Cargo Delivery** capability via the Canary Slide Ramp System (ideal for Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Defense Team rapid movement requirement)

- Our **record of excellence and innovation in aircraft maintenance** has involved us in important, mission-enhancing research and development (often for the entire C-130 fleet):

  - **(BCEM) Battery Control Electronic Module** test aircraft for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center

  - **Corrosion Sensor Test Aircraft** for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center (administered by Battelle Labs in Columbus) to aid in determining corrosion impact from world wide environmental conditions on entire ANG and Air Force C-130 fleet. This evaluation will also help to re-evaluate C-130 aircraft frequency for wash intervals and corrosion inspections

  - **SATCOM Form Fit And Function Evaluation** (C-130 aircraft) for Wright Patterson AFB to help refine the Satellite Secure Communications System for CENTAF operations

  - Potential **Deicing Fluid Evaluation Site** for the Air Force Research Laboratory

  - **Main Landing Gear Torque Tube Coupling Safety Test Aircraft** for Warner Robins Air Logistics Center and Air Mobility Command (AMC)

  - Evaluator for the **Airdrop Ballistic Winds / Gps Tracker Test** for Wright Patterson, AFB