

# THE TEXAN

147TH RECONNAISSANCE WING



TEXAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD



*Making History*

LEADING THE WAY WITH INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

# THE TEXAN

## 147TH RECONNAISSANCE WING

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The icons to the left are interactive and will take you directly to the social media site of your choice.

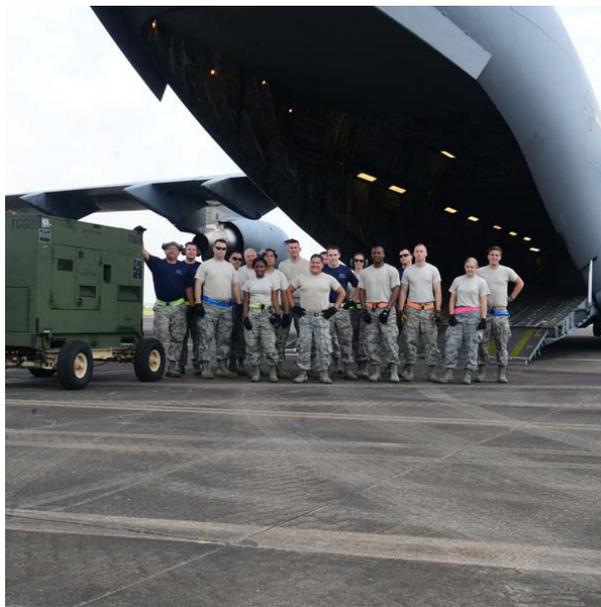


During a simple yet moving ceremony Chaplain T.C. Judd officiated the marriage between Tech. Sgt. Derrick Cox and Senior Airman Gonna St. Pierre at Ellington Field. The men and women of the 147th Reconnaissance Wing wish them a long and happy life together.

**COVER:**

An MQ-1B Predator from the 147th Reconnaissance Wing, Texas Air National Guard, based at Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base in Houston, parked at Lielvarde Air Base, Latvia, Aug. 31, 2015. Wing members mobilized to the Baltic nation where they deployed MQ-1B an entire MQ-1B Predator package, launching and recovering the first large-scale remotely piloted aircraft in Latvia. National Guard photo by 1Lt. Alicia Lacy.

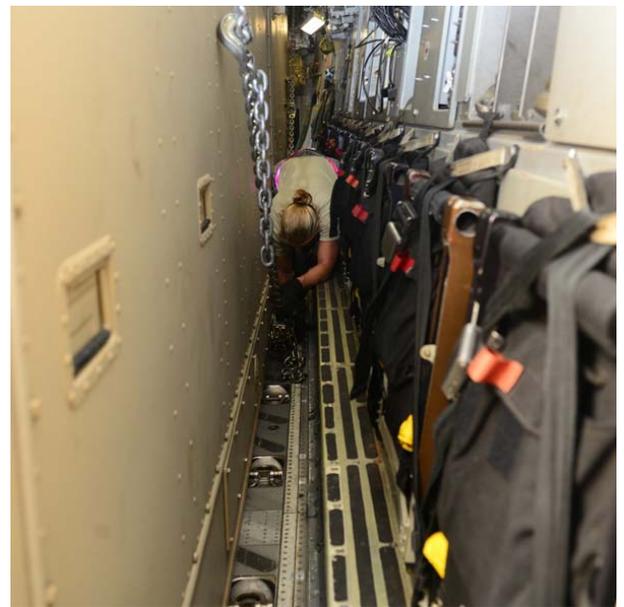
# PREPPING FOR DEPLOYMENT



Members of the 147th Reconnaissance Wing load equipment on to C-17 Globemasters at Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base in preparation for their deployment overseas. The unit deployed in support of the European Reassurance Initiative, a program that is designed to bolster cooperation between the United States and its European allies.

National Guard photos by Master Sgt. Sean Cowher





# US AIR NATIONAL GUARD MAKES HISTORY IN LATVIA

## *Texas and Michigan guardsmen demonstrate RPA capabilities with MQ-1*

By 1st Lt. Alicia Lacy  
147th Reconnaissance Wing Public Affairs



**LIELVARDE AIR BASE, Latvia** -- Airmen from the 147th Reconnaissance Wing made history launching, operating and recovering the first MQ-1 Predator in European airspace in the reconnaissance aircraft's first non-combat deployment Sept. 1, 2015, at Lielvarde Air Base, Latvia.

"Today at 7:47 a.m. central time, we made history with the successful launch, flight and recovery of our MQ-1 Predator in Latvia," said Col. Stanley Jones, 147th Reconnaissance Wing commander, Texas Air National Guard, in a statement Sept. 1 "This deployment is a total wing effort with the critical contributions coming from every group in the wing. We could not have gotten to the point without every Texan contributing to the effort."

The guardsmen successfully executed this feat through a partnership with the Michigan National Guard and the Republic of Latvia.

The coordination of all the components of the mission took four years to accomplish, from conception to execution, which began with Latvia's State Partnership Program partner, the Michigan National Guard, and included the Latvian Civil Aviation Authority, the Latvian National Armed Forces, Air Navigation Service Provider, and the Riga Area Control Center.

The Michigan guardsmen laid the foundation for the operation to take off. Inputs and contributions from Latvia, the Texas ANG and U.S. Air Forces in Europe helped finalize and eventually realize the mission.

Latvian President Raimonds Vejonis stressed the significance of the U.S. presence in Latvia and the ability for Latvian troops to train side-by-side with their NATO partners.

"It's important to train for interoperability between NATO partners," Vejonis said. "It's a good example of smart defense that we can use equipment that we don't currently have."

The non-combat deployment allowed for country-wide corridors to tie into special use airspace to de-

conflict civilian and military flights, as well as nationwide utilization of surveillance capabilities to support a broad range of government needs for Latvia, to include search and rescue, firefighting and border control according to Col. James Andrew Roberts, Combat Readiness Training Center commander, Michigan National Guard, and a major player in launching the operation.

In addition, the operation tested the wing's ability to travel to a forward location and establish operations to assure its commitment to regional security and safety to its Latvian and NATO allies and European partners. The airmen trained using a satellite data link and trained Latvian military on long-range flights to help them understand the opportunities and challenges with remotely piloted aircraft operations.

The partner training included processing and sharing intelligence gathered by RPAs and close air support operations with Latvian forward air controllers.

In addition to strengthening security in the region and the U.S. partnership with Latvia, the temporary deployment accomplished several objectives for those involved. For Latvia, the first use of the large-scale RPA in country. For the 147th Reconnaissance Wing, it was the first time the airmen deployed an entire package.

Traditionally, when the MQ-1 Predator is deployed, maintainers and pilots are mobilized and equipment is moved from different locations, but for this mobilization, equipment and personnel deployed as an entire package.

"We palletized our own equipment, packed it up, and got our own people and equipment deployed as a package," said Maj. Derek Weaver, 147th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron commander, 147th Maintenance Group, 147th Reconnaissance Wing, Texas ANG. "We got it right. We came here and set up in a couple of days and it was so smooth."

Weaver credits the efficient execution of the deployment to help from the Latvians, the Army stationed at Lielvarde and the professionalism of the 147th wing members.

The forward deployment was executed in support of the European Reassurance Initiative – an effort by President Barack Obama and Congress to bolster the security and capacity of NATO allies.

The ERI demonstrates the steadfast commitment of the U.S. to the security of NATO allies and partners in Europe through a persistent, rotational presence of U.S. forces and by increasing the responsiveness of U.S. forces to contingencies in Central Europe.





# CHIEF'S CORNER

## PT Program, a different perspective

BY CHIEF MASTER SGT. RICHARD REYNOLDS

Back in 2010, the Air Force revamped its physical fitness program into what we have today. Although the fitness requirements have changed only slightly since 2006, the testing process and accountability have changed dramatically, thus reducing ... I will call it "gray areas" of scoring. Airmen at every age fail the fitness assessment; no big deal, you get six months to retest, right? Well, that's where it gets complicated. As many of you know, the effects of a failed FA are far reaching: promotions delayed, or bypassed altogether; reenlistments being denied; technical schools having to be rescheduled; demotions, and in extreme cases, airmen being discharged. If you factor in medical issues requiring waivers, this just compounds the problem. Yes, this has been a culture change, but it should no longer be any different than keeping within grooming standards.

So why is the Air Force so strict on physical fitness? From Uncle Sam's point of view, a more fit force translates to better overall health. This means reducing the tab for your health bills; improved mental clarity, allowing for better decision making; lower stress levels, leading to more productivity. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, the ability to pull one's own weight in a combat environment. Some may argue how does a fitness test translate to combat endurance? The answer is simple, how can an airman bear the responsibility of moving an incapacitated



airman a reasonable distance during the stresses of combat, if he/she cannot do a minimum required amount of push-ups, sit-ups, or make a run within a prescribed time? I am aware that anyone can spin the fitness standards not translating to combat stamina, so just use common sense when making the comparison.

You may be asking yourself, "How is this perspective different? I already know all this." I am offering a leadership perspective on fitness. As maturing adults and heads of households, we are bestowed with the responsibility to lead our families. Now, I want you to think back to your childhood, and how attentive you were to what your parents said, did, believed, or behaved, good or bad. Eventually, you grew to act like your parents or utter many of the words and phrases your parents used. Ever had someone tell you, "You act/sound like your mom/dad"? Maybe you thought that about yourself as well. That is how the fitness program comes into play. By maintaining certain physical standards for the Air Force, you are mentoring your family to lead a healthy lifestyle. This translates to your small words of wisdom and actions that your young ones will mentally store, and eventually manifest in their own time, or maybe not. The key is that you are providing the example.

*PT continued on page 11*

HERITAGE TODAY



# COMMITMENT

When we finished basic training, we felt like we'd made it through something. We did it, we're done, we made it. You know why they call it basic training? Because that was the easy stuff. We thought we were going to change the world. We thought we'd all live to be heroes. But we learned two things after basic. The world wasn't going to come to us. And just because you put on a uniform doesn't mean you deserve to be a hero. You have to be committed. This wasn't the end of our training; it was the beginning of our new lives. We were Airmen now. You hear about the guys who flew the first missions, the men and women who set records, who broke records, who gutted up and did what they had to do. Let me tell you, everybody wants to be one of them. There's a big difference between wanting and doing. You may never be one of them. But you *will* be an Airman. You *will* serve your country and do your duty every single second of every single day until you separate, die or retire and when your moment comes—and there *will* come a moment—you'll be ready and you *will* change the world. We did. You *will* be ready. That's what commitment is about in the Air Force. Keep your eyes open and keep your wings sharp. Always. If in that moment you're undecided, you'll fail. You are allowed to make mistakes, but you are not allowed to do halfway. Stay focused. Commitment. Every Airman who has ever worn the uniform...who has fought and lived, or fought and died, is lifting you up. You're one of us. And you will go higher than we ever could. If there ever comes a time when you question your commitment, we want you to remember something. You're not doing this for us. We did this for you. Aim high, Airman.

<http://www.airman.af.mil>



# Hispanic Heritage Month

## *Powering Growth and Influence*

By Tech. Sgt. Adrienne Russell-George  
147th Equal Opportunity Office

Each year, Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15. The 30-day celebration acknowledges the great impact the Latino community has had on shaping the United States into the country it is today. The observation started in 1968 under President Lyndon Johnson as Hispanic Heritage week and was expanded by President Reagan in 1988 when it was enacted into law. September 15 was chosen as the start date because Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua all celebrate their independence on that date. Additionally, the independence anniversaries of Mexico and Chile, as well as Columbus Day all fall within this 30 day period. This

year's theme, "Powering Growth and Influence" is befitting of the effect so many Hispanic persons have had on our country.

Hispanics have had a profound, positive influence on our country through their strong commitment to family, faith, and service. They have enhanced and shaped our nations make-up with traditions that reflect the multi-ethnic and multicultural customs of the Hispanic community. Some customary celebrations in the Hispanic culture include: Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead), La Semana Santa (Holy Week) and Cinco de Mayo.

Science, art, politics, culture, and economy are a few of the major influences Latinos have had on the ever evolving culture of

the United States. Some notable Hispanic Americans who have had great positive influence on the world, are: Luis Walter Alvarez, Ellen Ochoa, Antonia Novello, Alberto Gonzalez, and Lionel Sosa are among a long list of noteworthy Latinos. We encourage you to inquire about some of the other Hispanic Americans who have paved the way and have greatly contributed to society.

As we approach Hispanic Heritage month, take some time to reflect on how great an influence Hispanic Americans have had on our country and the world and if possible, go out and partake in some of the customary celebrations taking place in and around the city.



Luis Walter Alvarez was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1968. He helped design a ground-controlled radar system for aircraft landings and developed a meteorite theory of dinosaur extinction.



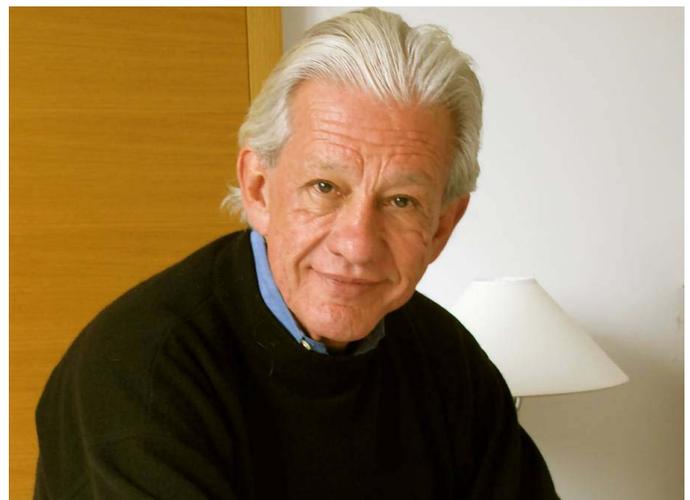
Dr. Antonia Novello, born in Fajardo, Puerto Rico, served as Surgeon General from 1990-1993. She focused on the dangers of smoking, teenage drinking, expanding AIDS education and improving healthcare.



Ellen Ochoa, who was the first female Hispanic astronaut. A mission specialist and flight engineer, Dr. Ochoa earned several awards from NASA, to include the Outstanding Leadership Medal and Exceptional Service Medal.



Alberto R. Gonzales was the 80th United States Attorney General, appointed in February 2005 by President George W. Bush, becoming the highest-ranking Hispanic-American in Executive Branch government to date. Gonzales also served as Secretary of State of Texas and then as a Texas Supreme Court Justice.



Lionel Sosa, the son of Mexican immigrants, grew up in San Antonio, Texas, served in the US Marine Corps and in 2005 was named one of the 25 most influential Hispanics in America by Time Magazine. He has led ad campaigns for several national companies and was advisor to Presidents Reagan and George W. Bush's campaigns.

*Airman & Family*  
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 Ideas | Comments | Suggestions

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AMERICAN AIRMEN | SPIRITUAL WINGMEN



147th Reconnaissance Wing  
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# Safety Shorts



**Prevent Blindness America has declared September as Home Eye Safety Awareness Month in an effort to remind everyone of the hazards in their own homes that could damage the precious gift of sight.**

Almost 40 percent of home eye injuries occur in the yard or garden. Debris from lawn mowers or power trimmers unexpectedly can enter the eye at a high rate of speed. Prevent Blindness America offers these tips on how to protect your eyes while doing work in the yard:

- When mowing, wear safety glasses with side protection or goggles. Check your yard and remove debris before mowing.
- When using a weed eater, wear safety glasses or goggles under a face shield.
- Wear goggles when working with power saws or trimmers.
- Turn off power tools when near an unprotected bystander, especially when young children approach. Bystanders and helpers need eye protection when around tools that are in use.
- Wear goggles to protect your eyes from fertilizers, pesticides and other yard chemicals, including lime dust.
- Read and follow all product instructions. Obey warnings on yard chemicals and equipment.

*PT continued from page 7*

Fitness translating to leadership at home was not my idea. I was rather neutral on the fitness requirements of the Air Force. The paradigm shift happened when I read an article in the Air Force Times about an organization called Mission: Readiness – Military Leaders for Kids (<http://www.missionreadiness.org/2010/too-fat-to-fight/>). The organization’s motivation is good, but for me, it went deeper. It provided me with the understanding that having a strict fitness program should be fully supported not only for the Airman’s health, but for the health of their families. For the troops who are single– well, you still have to pass the PT test.



# THERE IS STRENGTH IN NUMBERS.

JOIN FORCES WITH  
**NGAT** SO WE CAN  
CONTINUE TO FIGHT  
FOR YOUR FUTURE



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jennifer Atkinson, 36th Inf. Div.

## WHY JOIN NGAT?

As an American, you are encouraged to participate in the political institutions you protect. However, as a Soldier or Airman, you are also required to separate your political beliefs from the uniform you wear. Military personnel may not actively participate in partisan political activities<sup>1</sup>, making it difficult to rally together and speak with one voice on important issues facing the Texas Military Forces. The National Guard Association of Texas (NGAT) appears before various state and national legislative committees to speak on behalf of the Soldiers and Airmen of the Texas Military Forces. This is why your membership is so important. The greater our membership numbers, the more influence NGAT can bring to the political decision-makers and continue the fight on top issues affecting you and your family. Join NGAT today and make a real difference in the fight for your benefits and your future as a member of the Texas Military Forces.

### THESE ARE SOME OF THE ISSUES THAT NGAT IS CURRENTLY FIGHTING FOR YOU:

**EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS:** NGAT is fighting to protect your Hazelwood Act educational benefits through increased and expanded eligibility requirements.

**FORCE STRUCTURE:** The current threat to National Guard force structure remain serious. NGAT continues to support countering the Army's proposed cuts to Guard force structure and transfer of Guard combat aviation assets to the active force.

**RETIREMENT:** NGAT is backing the issues of establishing veteran status for the reserve component and lowering the 60 year old age restriction for the reserve component to collect retirement benefits.

**E1 - E6 can join The National Guard Association of Texas (NGAT) for free.**

**Scan the QR code below or visit [www.ngat.org](http://www.ngat.org) to sign up.**

**Free membership is good through 31 March 2016.**

**After 31 March 2016, membership can be renewed at current annual member or life member rates.**

<sup>1</sup>DoD Directive 1344.10, "Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces on Active Duty," February 19, 2008



## JOIN NGAT TODAY!

National Guard Association of Texas

[www.ngat.org](http://www.ngat.org) (512) 454-7300

