

# **183 CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON**

## **MISSION**

## **LINEAGE**

183 Civil Engineering Flight, Nov 1969

Redesignated 183 Civil Engineering Squadron, 30 Jun 1985

Redesignated 183 Civil Engineer Squadron

## **STATIONS**

Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport, Springfield, IL

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

183 Mission Support Group

## **COMMANDERS**

Maj Eugene R Salch

Capt Gordon J. Buchanan

Capt Harold A. Olse

Lt Col William E. Mel, 13 Apr 1985

## **HONORS**

**Service Streamers**

**Campaign Streamers**

**Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

**Decorations**

## **EMBLEM**

## **MOTTO**

## **OPERATIONS**

A new experience and tasking was presented to us in May 1986 when thirty personnel from our

183rd Civil Engineering Squadron deployed to Palmerola Air Force Base in Honduras. Their mission was to improve the quality of life for the permanent party assigned to Palmerola. Many projects were completed such as rewiring the base hospital, increasing shower facilities, construction of a helicopter landing pad and additions to several base offices. In January 1987 eight Civil Engineering troops returned to Palmerola and constructed a shelter for equipment and maintenance personnel for protection from the weather. In retrospect the Honduran exercises provided outstanding training opportunities for the people involved and at the same time a great deal of satisfaction was realized from the humanitarian services that resulted.

The firefighters of the Illinois Air National Guard's 183rd Fighter Wing who were supposed to be out of a job when the wing gave up its F-16s last fall but received a one-year reprieve to stay through September are now on another one-year extension, reports the State Journal-Register. The news came from Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) who reportedly got the word from Lt. Gen. Harry Wyatt, ANG director. Since losing its F-16s the wing picked up the job of repairing F-16 engines, but the state is still actively seeking a new flying mission. Per the SJR, Durbin said the extension is "welcome news, as these highly skilled firefighters are critical to Springfield's ability to handle an emergency."

Sixteen firefighters with the Illinois Air National Guard's 183rd Fighter Wing in Springfield will be out of a job next September as part of the BRAC 2005 decision that stripped the unit of its F-16 flying mission. While the wing's F-16s left Springfield in 2008 after a 19-year run, the firefighters remained under an agreement between the wing and the Springfield Airport Authority. However, that agreement, under which the wing provided crash and rescue support to the airport, is set to expire in September 2011, reports the Springfield State Journal-Register. The firefighters will be on a recall list for two years, giving them priority if the 183rd is assigned a new flying mission and new spots open up, according to the newspaper. If that happens, the agreement would once again start up. The wing currently repairs F-16 engines. 2010

2010 The 183rd Civil Engineer Squadron began arriving at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan in June and by the end of July the entire team of about 25 engineers had arrived. Together with about 40 other guardsmen from throughout the country they make up the 455th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron responsible for Senior Air Authority (SAA) at Bagram. Essentially SAA means they are tasked with maintaining all the assets and facilities located on the airfield in direct support of the coalition forces flying mission. The team literally hit the ground running. Many of engineers assigned to the Heavy Equipment Shop spent their first full day in theater up to their knees in concrete and they haven't stopped since. SMSgt Mark Kessler and his team of electricians and power production specialists have kept busy maintaining the aircraft arresting barriers, airfield lighting and numerous generators located around the base – to date they have had 15 successful barrier engagements. The entire team, to include electricians, structures, heavy equipment, HVAC and supply have played a vital role in bedding down a new, high demand ISR mission. The mission at Bagram Airfield continues to grow faster than the existing infrastructure can support. The entire Civil Engineer Squadron works tirelessly maintaining the existing facilities and constructing new ones to ensure the mission can continue. Whether it is pouring concrete, putting up new tents or running new electrical lines, there is never a shortage of work. The busy

pace has certainly made the deployment a memorable one. The squadron will begin redeploying shortly after Christmas and the entire team should be home by the end of January.

Springfield Firefighters Respond to Crash: Four firefighters with the Illinois Air National Guard's 183rd Fighter Wing in Springfield last week responded to a civilian airplane crash at the Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport, the wing's home location. "They responded under the minimum time required by the Federal Aviation Administration and did a terrific job extinguishing the fire, securing the aircraft, and providing aid to those on board," said Lt. Col. Chuck Coderko, the wing's fire marshal. The aircraft came to rest off the runway in the grass during the Jan. 6 incident. Two of the six persons on board were injured. When the 183rd FW relinquished its F-16 flying mission in 2008, it retained nearly 20 full-time firefighter positions. These Air Guardsmen serve as first responders at the airport and support local fire departments. That said, last we heard, the wing is scheduled to lose the firefighters in September. 2011

8/8/2011 - Saint Michaels, Ariz -- When the wind blows, the red dust leaves the high desert plains and stings the eyes. In this, coupled with 90-plus degree heat, the Airmen of the 183rd Civil Engineering Squadron, 183rd Fighter Wing Springfield, IL, worked nine to 12 hours each day in the desert plains. But despite hard work and fiery temperatures that would wilt most, at the 183rd's work site you hear playful bantering and laughter amid the banging hammers and saw buzz. "When I was in Afghanistan, we were helping people - and that was good," said Senior Airman Leonard Avery of Williamsville. "To be helping people here in the United States - it just means so much more." Approximately 35 members of the squadron helped construct a 3,200 square foot adult programs building for the St. Michaels Association for Special Education in the heart of Navajo Nation from June 18 to 30. The 183rd was the sixth of eight annual training rotations to work on the building this year. It is scheduled to open in August. The facility is part of a five-year Department of Defense-sponsored, Air National Guard-conducted Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) project now in the second year. IRT projects train troops in their military skills while helping communities. With the Navajo project, the non-profit association pays for supplies and materials. The Department of Defense, through the Air Guard, provides the labor, tools, equipment, management, building plans and oversight - worth \$10.1 million. This more than halves the cost to the association and allows the project to be completed far earlier than the association could have done alone, said Gillis Chapela, the association's executive director. "The troops get a big thank-you from all of us," Chapela said. The adult programs building will be used to teach life skills to close to 30 developmentally challenged adults. It is the second facility built for the association; the first was a nursing facility. A total of seven buildings will be constructed and many others will be renovated. The association, established in 1968 by a Catholic nun, serves as both a school and home for about 80 children and young adults with severe disabilities from across the Native American reservation. National Guard Bureau leads the project with the Arizona Air National Guard, New Mexico Air National Guard and Colorado Air National Guard providing much of the logistics, contracting support, administration and planning. Units from Illinois, Maryland, Georgia, North Carolina, Utah, Wyoming, Florida, Guam, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Indiana, New Jersey, Arkansas, Tennessee and Montana have provided construction crews and additional planning.

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USAF UNIT HISTORIES

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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.

Unit yearbook. *183 Tactical Fighter Group, 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Illinois Air National Guard @1973.*

Unit yearbook. *183 Tactical Fighter Group, 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Special Commemorative Issue, Springfield Air Guard, Illinois Air National Guard, 1948-1983.*

Unit yearbook. *183 Tactical Fighter Group, 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, 1948-1988.*