

2005 Defense Base Closure  Commission, June 26, 2005

Perhaps this flashy stationery will catch someone's attention enough to read it. I can't say it like Bing. General Richard Green or Ret. Big. General. Fred Hansen so I am sending this clipping and article from the Mansfield News Journal.

Please, reconsider the closure of 179th Air Light Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard at Mansfield Lake in Airport. My husband and I both worked at the 179th in 1950's. I spent my Kelly, Ohio, and know the way this entire area was affected when it was closed in the late 1950's. The economy has never been the same. Must not again all this happen and lose some of the brightest and best who trained or leave to find work?

Respectfully,  
Cecile E. Bevier

## Bad BRAC information?

Ret. Brig. General Fred Larson, former commander of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio National Guard, said the Department of Defense based its decision to close the 179th as part of its Base Realignment and Closure process, on faulty information.

Larson claims the following:

### Pentagon claim

- No expansion room.
- Can't acquire more land.
- No hydraulic fuel hydrant.
- Not enough fuel storage.
  
- Personnel can be moved from one unit to another.

### Larson rebuttal

"We do."  
"We can."  
"Not permitted for C-130 units."  
"We're not allowed to have more than we need, but we can add it."  
"True for active duty, but Guard units are not the same. ... Many will not transfer. ... new personnel will have to be trained. The cost to train was never considered."

**SAVE**  
**the**  
**179th**

**News Journal**

**M** → **MILLIRON**  
**INDUSTRIES**

Hang this poster in your window, then take it to the community rally June 22.

Dear Members of the BRAC Commission:

JUL 21 2005

As a tax paying citizen, I am writing this letter in response to your decision to close the 179<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard based in Mansfield Lahm Airport in Mansfield, Ohio.

Your report states that this base has limited military value and is too confined for further development. If this is indeed the case why has the Department of Defense spent 15 to 20 million tax payers dollars on new buildings and infrastructures over the last decade? I served for six (6) years on this base from 1966 to 1972 and there is very little that I would recognize with most reconstruction in the last 8 years. As I am writing this, there is construction taking place at the 179<sup>th</sup>.

If the Department of Defense did not intend to keep Mansfield in operation why was this money spent? This should make every taxpayer wonder about the use of their hard earned dollars.

Correct me if I'm wrong but I believe Mansfield Lahm Airport has the second longest runway in the state of Ohio and can handle aircraft like the C5Galzxy and Antoniv 124. Both of which have landed and departed on several occasions from this airport. This makes me question the limited military value statement.

With that said, I would also like to point out that this facility has very little commercial or civilian traffic compared to other bases with shorter runways. Mansfield is frequently visited by ICC 135's that come here to practice approaches and touch and goes because of our ability to handle them with little conflict of air space.

The citizens of Mansfield do not complain about noise issues created by training flights. Can that be said about other bases?

It was also stated that Mansfield did not have land available for expansion, again, correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe 169 acres has been made available for expansion and would be welcomed by the City of Mansfield. Compare that to the reported land available at Toledo (45 acres) and Louisville Kentucky (0 acres), therefore, that argument does not hold water.

This region of the country has suffered economically more so than most other areas across the United States. The closure of this base would only cause more hardships than we already have or should have to endure.

They say politics were not involved in the decision making process for base closures, but it appears to this taxpayer as if those bases targeted come from areas with smaller populations. Maybe that means less upset constituents to hear from and lower loss of votes at election time. Our aircrafts were founded by Congress, for the Air National Guard and it looks to me as if the Department of Defense want to take them to replace the active duty aging fleet with false statement as to why they are doing so.

Again, why did we waste 15 to 20 million taxpayers dollars on modernizing a base with no intention of keeping it open?

The record of the 179<sup>th</sup> speaks for itself. Numerous awards, a very high rating among airlift wings and dedicated and admirable service by its members in hostile and peacetime deployments around the world.

In closing, I would ask that your commission review the correct facts and rethink your decision in regards to the future of the 179<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing.

Sincerely,

*Jeff Bechtel*

JEFF BECHTEL  
1001 BRIARWOOD RD  
MANSFIELD, OH 10  
44907

06072005  
RECEIVED

6 June 2005

Kenneth Kmetz  
2404 Millsboro Road  
Ontario, OH 44906

BRAC Commission  
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600  
Arlington, VA 22202

BRAC Commission.

As a citizen-airman of the 179th Airlift Wing and Mansfield, Ohio resident for 39 years, I write this letter to encourage you to fight on behalf of the 179<sup>th</sup> members and the community/communities that will be adversely impacted. It is my honest assessment that it is in the best interest of the United States national defense to keep the 179th Airlift Wing open. Please do everything in your power to get the 179th Airlift Wing off of the BRAC list.

I am writing this letter as a concerned citizen and do not represent the 179th Airlift Wing though I am a member. I enlisted in December of 1986 and have long since contributed a great deal of time and energy to the unit and therefore the country it serves.

I encourage you to become familiar with the 179th Airlift Wing's record, its deployments, accomplishments, community involvement, and its direct support with the Global War on Terror (GWOT). I will only focus on my direct involvement with the above mentioned.

I am a current state of Ohio employee and work in support of the wing as a lieutenant firefighter at the base – I have been employed by the state in this capacity since November of 1989. Our department was named best in the Air National Guard recently and it supports a charity organization that has contributed over \$11K to the local community. The department is also a guard department made up of 24 traditional guardsmen who are to be "realigned" to Toledo, Ohio. They recently returned from a five-month tour in Iraq where they were continually under-fire and served their country with great distinction. They joined the Mansfield unit to be in Mansfield and be a part of something bigger (our national defense).

As a traditional guardsman, I have grown with the unit starting as an airman basic and now I command the Security Forces Squadron (this unit deployed seven different squads in support of GWOT). The opportunities afforded me in my career are not unlike many others who join the Air National Guard. It creates opportunities for our community members to get a college education, work experience, leadership opportunity, and much more that they take back to the community for which they reside. Though each of us is serving the nation and the community for which we live in, the community is also benefiting directly from the experiences of these citizen-airmen who go back to their "civilian" lives when they are not serving or training with the Air National Guard.

The Services Flight, an organization or unit at the wing, made up of over 40 people was recently named the best in the Air National Guard as well. Being named the best in anything is an accomplishment, but being named the best in the Air National Guard is quite a big deal considering we are among the best fighting force on the planet. That unit, which I was a part of, served with great distinction as well in support of the GWOT. It deployed five teams to five different locations all over the Middle East and the former Soviet Union. Their contribution was one of uncertainty, but they met it with great dedication to the unit and the community they represent. On their last deployment, they were awarded the Outstanding Unit Award with Valor.

Recently, the Base Honor Guard was named the Best in the Wright Patterson Area of Responsibility (includes 14 guard and reserve bases). Our inspections by higher headquarters have also been a great success for the unit. Please seek out inspection reports...it is proof positive of our worth in terms of what the unit is capable if the number of deployments and support for the GWOT is not enough. It is not just eight airplanes at the 179th Airlift Wing, it is an entire community made up of almost a 1000 people.

Our manning level has traditionally been over 105%, which is an outstanding standard and reflection of the unit's worth. In a time of war and with an entire volunteer force (active and reserve), and where recruiting and retention are paramount to mission success, it seems logical to go to where the volunteers reside rather than applying an active duty type of approach (take the people to where the mission is). Many guardsmen joined the guard to serve their country, but many (most) will not leave the community to continue to serve – for most, they leave their community only for a call-up or mission related training opportunity.

I ask again that you do everything in your power to keep the 179th Airlift Wing open and therefore help get them off the BRAC list. It is what is best for this community, this state, and the nation as a whole. Please don't let the history and tradition of this fine unit become nothing more than a memory. The 179th Airlift Wing is a part of this community and the community is a part of the 179th Airlift Wing.

Respectfully submitted for your consideration,



Kenneth Kmetz  
Mansfield, Ohio Resident

**GLENN H. GREGG  
10415 SW TERWILLIGER PLACE  
PORTLAND, OREGON 97219**

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05

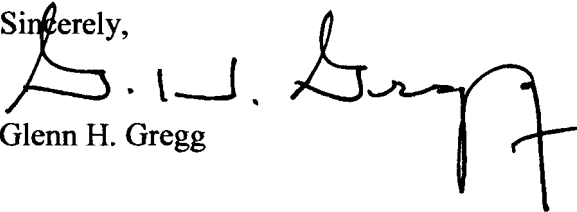
June 4, 2005

2005 Defense Base Closure and  
Realignment Commission  
2521 S. Clark St.  
Ste. 600  
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Commission Members:

Enclosed please find my statement regarding the proposed ill-conceived closure of the Oregon Air National Guard, 142<sup>nd</sup> Fighter Wing, located in Portland, Oregon.

Sincerely,

  
Glenn H. Gregg

Encl.

06072005

June 3, 2005

BRAC Commission  
2521 South Clark St.: Suite 600  
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Mr. Principi and Commission Members:


I am a member of the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield Ohio, and I am urging you to reconsider the closure of our base.

Sixty-five percent of the reductions in the BRAC list consist of Guard and Reserve components. If the list stands as is, this will have a huge effect on recruitment and retention in the guard. Many of our people are in this unit because they want to be in this unit and not some other unit. Many of the fulltime people are tied to this area because of their family, and will not move to another locations. The 179th Airlift Wing has been very successful in recruiting. We are presently at 102% manning, which is quite an accomplishment since many units can't meet manning requirements. If our base was to close that will leave the Cleveland area and northern Ohio area without any Air Guard representation, and that is a large recruitment area. I have noticed that several Generals feel that the Guardsmen will just accept this and travel further. This is not the case a great many people will just get out, and many of these people have tremendous experience that cannot be replaced when they leave. If people are our most valuable asset then we should keep them.

The 179th Airlift Wing is unsurpassed in doing our mission and providing community support. This base has just completed an ESHOCAMP inspection and received a grade of outstanding. In our past ORI Inspections we have always received an outstanding. We are presently supporting the War on Terror, aid the Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Defense Team, and also can support the Expeditionary Medical Support Mission. This unit provides much support to the community such as Adopt-a-School, where Guard members volunteer as tutors, act as mentors and positive role models and participate in other activities with students. Our Honor Guard has participated in over 70 funerals every year..

Our unit is made up of highly dedicated and professional people that perform their jobs with unsurpassed skill and motivation. This valuable asset would be lost forever if the 179th Airlift Wing were to be closed. It is not the Airplanes that make a unit it is the people.

Sincerely,



Jerry Pracker



559 Bennington Dr.

Mansfield, Ohio 44904

June 26, 2005



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06292005

To the Department of Base Closures;

I am writing to ask you to reconsider your decision to close the 179th Ohio Air National Guard in Mansfield, Ohio.

We of Mansfield are proud of the 179th. We are predominantly a conservative, patriotic community and the 179th has played a large role in this sentiment.

The 179th has been a positive exposure to the military for the young people in our community. Many have enlisted there (as did my son) as well as other branches of the military.

It makes economic sense to retain the 179th. Our base is 100% manned with highly proficient personnel. We have a small PX, no golf courses, hospitals and expensive trimmings that other ~~bases~~ bases have.

I was a teenager during the Viet Nam War and I continue to be amazed at the difference in attitudes our country has toward this conflict in Iraq. The high, high percentage of Guard involvement is the difference!

Please, I urge you, not only for economic reasons, but for reasons involving community, patriotism and future enlistments to retain the 179th in Mansfield, Ohio. Sincerely,  
Cindy M. M. M.

06152005



BRAC Commission  
2521 South Clark St., Suite 600  
Arlington, Virginia 22202

June 7, 2005

I am writing in regards to the 179th Airlift Wing based in Mansfield, Ohio. What would make you consider shutting down the longest airstrip in Ohio? And think that it is a good idea? In the first place, we sit strategically placed half way from Cleveland or Columbus, should either city be struck by terrorist attack, immediate help can be rerouted to our airstrip. If the guard unit goes, Mansfield will not have sufficient funds to keep this airstrip working. Secondly, we sit very close to our northern border. Though Canada has never been an unfriendly neighbor, it is not a large military power who could thwart attacks against us like our own defense department.

A third point is that many young people in this area seek employment or part time status with the National Guard through this base. Our readiness to defend ourselves is founded on many small locally involved units being trained to deploy where and when needed. We saw this after the attacks of 9/11 that our troops were on high alert and sent to aid where needed. Also, many of our guards members have been deployed to Iraq. We are very proud of our unit.


Lastly, as many areas of the nation recover from economic slump, the Mansfield area has been hard hit by many plant closings and sluggish economy. Our President, who visited the area, needed Ohio's help to gain reelection. We need help now to keep our unit in Mansfield. We call on your consideration to help keep Mansfielders involved in the security of this nation. Please reconsider the closing of Mansfield's 179th Airlift Wing

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marsha McNutt".

Marsha McNutt  
5775 Bunkerhill Rd.  
Butler, Ohio 44822

BRAC Commission  
2521 South Clark Street  
Suite 600  
Arlington, VA 22202

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06272005

June 22, 2005

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing in support of our fine men and women of the 179<sup>th</sup> Airwing here in Mansfield, Ohio. I had the honor of meeting them during my son's recruiting visit. They are of the highest caliber and conduct themselves in a professional matter.

I know they have served on many missions to Iraq. Their presence here in Mansfield and their service to our nation is greatly appreciated by our citizens here in Central Ohio.

I am requesting your consideration in keeping this great facility open. The impact on our local economy at this time will be devastating. Mansfield does not have a solid economic base.

I thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



David M. Grahaam  
Benjamin M. Graham  
3300 Welty Road  
Lucas, Ohio 44843



**RECEIVED**

06162005 June 13, 2005

Dear Sirs,

I am writing this letter in regard of the 179<sup>th</sup> Mansfield Base. My son joined the Air Guard when he was a senior in high school (2001) and he even talked two other class mates into joining too. He really was excited about it. He loves his job in the air port area. He has been to Germany and Spain. If you close this base up, you will close up dreams of young people that want to make something of them selves. Please think twice about closing this base

Thank you  
Proud Mother  
Lori Dentinger

Lori Dentinger  
210 John St.  
New Washington, Ohio  
44854

Dear Sir,

My name is Charles Christopher and I am a long term member of the Ohio Air National Guard at the 179<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing in Mansfield, Ohio. I am currently a full time technician in the Logistics Squadron; Petroleum, Oils and Lubricants branch. As you are aware, we are currently on the B.R.A.C. closure list. I, along with all of my co-workers, are shocked that our base was even considered for closure. As a unit, we are a benchmark unit for C-130 aircraft for the entire flying military. Twice we were chosen for the Outstanding Unit Award since my first enlistment here back in April of 1982. It seems to be a slap in the face for all that we have accomplished and are continually doing on a day to day basis. I know that recruiting at this time is difficult, to say the least, and retaining our people will be extremely hard to do. Many young airmen have voiced their concerns and are very worried about their future in being a vital part of the Guard and their nation security. Keeping this great family of ours together in our local community here in Mansfield, I feel is of utmost importance. I understand that the closure here is all about the aircraft that the regular Air Force needs. Our planes are the best because of the love each and every person puts into their job everyday. Our men and women work on these aircraft like they are their own. Please, on behalf of all of us here at the 179<sup>th</sup>, **fight** to keep us open and thousands of people including family members, will thank you!

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05312005

Sincerely,

Tsgt. Charles Christopher

*Tsgt. Charles Christopher*

May 2005

BRAC Commission  
2521 South Clark Street  
Suite 600  
Arlington, VA 22202

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To Whom it may Concern:

05272005

I'm writing to you today to ask for your support in keeping the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield open. I would like to share some of my thoughts with you.

I could run down a long list of things that we provide to the local community, not withstanding the economic impact on it. I could go over the wonderful history of the unit. I could write about meeting every challenge head on and surpassing expectations. I could lament about the many exercises and inspections that we have had to endure and yet we always scored excellent or outstanding on them. Or, the fact that my husband and I have both proudly been deployed overseas in order to serve our great nation, and fight for people who would have not otherwise had a choice at freedom, because our country issued the order to go. I could point out the fact that my husband has continuously volunteered to go overseas to serve our country because of his dedication and loyalty to his country. I could address the fact that when deployed to Germany in support of Operation Joint Forge, we, the 179th, had an efficiency rating of 90%, while the Active duty unit (permanently assigned) could barely muster half that rating. I would run out of paper listing the real world deployments, operations and missions we have been involved in just in the last ten years. I could discuss how we have a reputation as one of the best C-130 units in the Guard-- or the world for that matter. I could write page after page on the dedicated people, no, patriots, in the unit who, with their families, have sacrificed time and time again for the unit and their country. I could jot down a list of those who have multiple family members in the unit, or the ones who are second or third generation unit members themselves. But none of that seems to matter. The criterion used to make the recommendations for closure or realignment can't capture the most important data points, PEOPLE.

How do you assign a numerical value to a person's service or dedication so that it can be plugged into the Cost of Base Realignment Actions (COBRA) Model? You can't!

The 'people' aspect is just part of the equation, yet it is all of it as well. The reason the Guard and Reserve are so powerful and vital to this nation's security is the fact that they are citizen soldiers; stake holders in our nation's defense. The Romans knew this and the citizen soldier tradition revolutionized western warfare. My greatest fear is not that Mansfield will lose the 179<sup>th</sup>, but what will happen here (if the base closes) will happen everywhere else as well.

These are some of the items that the *local community, state, and nation will lose with our closing*:

1. The 179th provides over \$70 million in revenue to the local area.
2. Local Supplemental Fire Protection: The 179th provides specialized equipment and trained personnel to deal with fires involving aircraft and jet fuel. This capability supplements the city's ability to protect the airport and the adjacent community (instant response within a 5 mile radius of the base). The unit has the only foam capability in the area and has been dispatched as far away as Sycamore, Ohio (45 miles away) to extinguish the Kirby tire fire. The FAA requirement to have the fire fighting capability would require the city to build facilities, procure new equipment, hire fire fighters and then extensively train them.
3. Color guards and parades: The 179th has a very active color/honor guard, which provides color guards, honor guards and military equipment for military funerals and patriotic events in the community. Members of the 179th participate in more than 70 funerals and events each year.
4. The 179th performs flyovers with its C-130H Hercules for military and patriotic observances.
5. Open houses and base tours: By opening its doors to the community or by taking its equipment and message out into the community, the 179th has developed stronger bonds in our communities. The 179th hosts more than 60 schools and 3,000 visitors each year.
6. The 179th Airlift Wing Chorus: Formed in 2001, the chorus consists of military and family members who provide patriotic music. The chorus has participated in events such as the Freedom Festival, the Korean War anniversary and other patriotic events.
7. The unit started celebrating Earth Day in 1998 and each year more than 200 unit members support over 30 environmental projects in Mansfield, Shelby, Galion and surrounding areas.
8. Special Olympics: For more than 30 years, the unit has supported the Special Olympics by providing medical support to participants.
9. Adopt-a-School: The National Guard was the first government organization to embrace the Adopt-a-School concept, initiating its program in 1989. The 179th has adopted two elementary schools in Shelby -- Russell Elementary and Dowds Elementary. Guard members volunteer as tutors, act as mentors and positive role models and participate in other activities with students.
10. Community Projects: The 179th supports many community projects. Civil engineering provided carpenters, plumbers and general construction workers to reconstruct the Harmony House in Mansfield. The unit supports the United Way Day of Caring and plays a substantial leadership and financial role in supporting the Combined Federal Campaign, a non-profit charity which supports numerous local groups.
11. Unique Capabilities: Losing the 179th Airlift Wing would also limit the state in its civil and homeland defense capabilities. As I'm sure you are aware the Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Defense Team (WMD-CST) is located at Rickenbacker Air National Guard Base. Their mission to deploy within a four hour period to anywhere in their 250 mile area of operation would be eliminated with the loss of the 179th Airlift Wing. From the WMD-CST's conception they were to be air transportable and to be located with an airlift unit. Due to the large volume of equipment and the equipment's large size Mansfield is the only Guard

## School report cards released

The Ohio Department of Education released its annual state report cards for the state's public school districts. This chart provides a snapshot of how area districts fared this year and in the past two years.

District	Rating	No. met	AYP	PI	02-03	01-02
<b>Ashland County</b>						
Ashland City	Effective	14	No	93.1	87.6	86.9
Hillsdale	Effective	13	Met	93.8	90.4	86
Loudonville-Perrysville	Effective	12	Met	90.6	81.1	84
Mapleton	Effective	14	Met	91	91.7	87.1
<b>Crawford County</b>						
Buckeye Central	Con. Imp.	11	Met	85.7	85.8	76.1
Bucyrus	Effective	11	Met	90	76.2	80.6
Colonel Crawford	Con. Imp.	12	Met	86.8	83.9	82.5
Crestline	Con. Imp.	8	Met	80.3	83.1	74.8
Galion	Con. Imp.	7	No	86.8	80.9	75.7
Wynford	Con. Imp.	8	Met	86.3	82.5	87.6
<b>Huron County</b>						
Willard	Con. Imp.	9	No	85.7	77.3	78.2
<b>Knox County</b>						
Fredericktown	Con. Imp.	11	Met	89.7	83.8	86.3
Mount Vernon	Effective	11	No	90.9	85.1	81.5
<b>Morrow County</b>						
Cardington-Lincoln	Con. Imp.	9	Met	82.8	75.5	73.8
Highland	Con. Imp.	11	No	88.3	86.7	85.6
Mount Gilead	Con. Imp.	8	No	83.3	82.6	77.9
Northmor	Con. Imp.	7	Met	89	82	81.6
<b>Richland County</b>						
Clear Fork	Con. Imp.	9	Met	86.3	84.7	86
Crestview	Effective	14	Met	92.8	88.2	85.9
Lexington	Excellent	17	Met	98.3	94	92.9
Lucas	Effective	13	Met	92.5	87.9	90.3
Madison	Con. Imp.	8	No	81.7	81.2	76.7
Mansfield City	Academic emergency	4	No	69.3	66.4	63.9
Mansfield Community	Con. Imp.	1*	Met	60.7	0	0
Ontario	Excellent	17	Met	95.9	92.8	89.7
Plymouth-Shiloh	Effective	14	Met	96.9	86.8	90.9
Shelby	Effective	14	Met	95.7	85.1	85.2

Source: Ohio Department of Education Web site

Gere Goble/News Journal