



#### **News release**

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## **Soaring high and making history Ellington Field: gearing up for a celebration**

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BAY AREA HOUSTON, Texas –The famed 147th Fight Wing / 111<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron of the Texas Air National Guard announced recently that they are gearing up to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of Ellington Field, now commanded as Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base.

The celebration is planned for November 3, 2007, and will consist of military personnel open house displaying vintage aircraft and items donated from current and former 147th FW unit members.

Later in the evening, the men and women of EF JRB will be honored at a dinner reception with invited attendees including former President George W. Bush and other high ranking officials and dignitaries.

The general public should plan to experience the 147<sup>th</sup> FW's 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary display and artifacts featuring the special ceremonial "Heritage F-16" fighter aircraft at the October 6-7, 2007, Wings of Houston Airshow.

Proceeds from this event will benefit the military Family Readiness nonprofit organization that serves to help military families in need when a loved one is deployed.

The legacy of Ellington Field began in 1917, spurred by World War I, it opened as one of the largest aviation training fields in the nation.

Ellington Field quickly became known for the first camp newspaper, the first American aerial gunnery and bombing range, the first canteen girls and the first aerial ambulance in American history.

What followed after World War I was the deterioration of Ellington Field and eventually in 1927, Ellington Field was ravaged by a fire. The only reminiscent artifact to remain standing beyond the prairie grass was a metal water tower.

In fact, the throes of World War II promoted Rep. Albert Thomas to fight for the revitalization of Ellington Field. Thomas pointed out that the area's petroleum refineries, upon which war effort depended, would need military protection in the region.

Often Ellington Field's presence has been felt during times of war including: World War I, World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam War and Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

Most recently in the wake of Sept. 11, the 147th FW escorted Air Force One; President Bush; and former 147th FW pilot and former President George W. Bush.

Ellington Field is still on the radar screen – Ellington Field has served two tours of duty in Iraq; their diligence was noted when they received their Wings perfect score of a 100 percent for their last tour to Iraq.

In addition, EL JRB has played a major role in humanitarian relief in the aftermath of Hurricane Rita and Hurricane Katrina. U.S. Coast Guard pilots and rescuers bravely flew citizen rescue missions lifting desperate citizens off roof tops in dangerous environments. TX Air NG and TX Army NG pilots and personnel flew and supported cargo flights back and forth to bring medical patients to Houston area hospitals.

“The men and women of Ellington Field have a rich history of defending and supporting not only the Bay Area Houston region but our country. “Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership is honored to be a part of a community that has one of only a few airfields built for World War I training purposes that is still viable and operational today,” said Jim Reinhartsen, BAHEP president.

Their wings span beyond times of war, or humanitarian efforts, but to the community of Bay Area Houston offering protection and supporting our economy.

Acquired by the City of Houston in 1984, Ellington Field now supports the United States military, NASA and general aviation tenants.

The base is staffed by 1,500 military and civilians. The unit’s overall impact to the local economy is 175 million, according to estimates by Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership.

For 90 years Ellington Field has been making history – home to the 111th Observation Guard, also known as “Houston’s Own” and home to the largest flying club in Texas and the annual “Wings Over Houston” airshow.

Despite daunting tasks, the men and women of the 147th FIG continue to come through with flying colors whether home or abroad.

**Bay Area Houston** is an economically and internationally diversified, high-tech region that is home to NASA Johnson Space Center and numerous industries including aerospace and specialty chemical.

**Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership** is a nonprofit organization that promotes the growth of the Bay Area Houston region through the retention, expansion and recruitment of target industries. Visit [www.bayareahouston.com](http://www.bayareahouston.com).

**Space Alliance Technology Outreach Program** is a NASA-funded program which provides technical assistance to small businesses for free. Visit [www.spacetechnologies.com](http://www.spacetechnologies.com)

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