

# SELFRIDGE FLYER

Volume 7, Issue 6

*"127<sup>th</sup> Wing – Your Hometown Air Force"*

November 2024





## 2024 IN REVIEW

# Happy holidays from the Selfridge BCC

As the holiday season approaches, the Selfridge Base Community Council would like to take this opportunity to wish our military members and their families a very merry holiday season!

This past year has been one of those years that will remain in our memories for a very long time.

From hosting the Open House and Air Show (OHAS) and the BCC Golf Outing to all the opportunities we had to work together with the personnel of Selfridge Air National Guard Base, 2024 was a very special year for us councilmembers.

The 2024 Selfridge Open House and Air Show in June featuring the United States Air Force Thunderbirds and many other fantastic acts was a tremendous success. More than two years of planning went into hosting the show and the results were worth all the effort.

By some estimates, more than 125,000 people visited the base over the three-day weekend.

Visitors were able to see vintage aircraft acts, including the beautiful F4U Corsair and the P51 Mustang, Michigan's all-female skydiving team the Misty Blues, our own A-10 and KC-135 teams, the USAF Thunderbirds, and much, much more.

The theme for the Air Show was "Innovation Focused, STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math) Driven."

There were two STEAM events leading up to the air show, and these events did a fantastic job of getting the word out to our communities about the OHAS.

We want to send a big "thank you" to the M1 Concourse and Chesterfield Township for hosting these events. Of course, STEAM was also very significant during the Air Show weekend as two hangers on base overflowed with artists, robots, engineers, students and visitors.

The 2024 OHAS would not have been possible without support from or-

ganizations such as Home Depot, Macray Harbor, HunchFree, Johnson Printing, the Macomb County Chamber of Commerce, NDIA, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, and every organization that sponsored a flight line chalet or helped with the show planning and execution.

Of course, all the personnel from the base who worked and volunteered their time for the Air Show should also be recognized and thanked.

They successfully organized and conducted an extremely complex event with great confidence and pride. And I know they enjoy showing off their wonderful base, personnel and aircraft.

The Air Show is the largest fundraiser for the Selfridge Base Community Council.

Our organization supports the base, and through this and other fundraising events, we are able to turn around and provide funding for the morale funds for all the service units on base.

I look forward to presenting these checks dur-

ing our December meeting — an annual highlight of our organization.

Our other major fundraiser is our annual BCC Golf Outing, which we held in September.

More than 140 golfers had a great time at the event, which was sponsored by Walsh Group and presented by Sawyer Services and held at the Selfridge Golf Course.

In addition, Thrivent provided a very special opportunity for participants to "Honor A Veteran" which recognized veterans on signs at the entrance to the course. The Selfridge Golf Course crew did their usual fantastic job of giving us good weather and an even better event on their golf course.

The Selfridge Base Community Council meets the third Tuesday of every month.

These monthly meetings provide an opportunity to meet with Selfridge military personnel, networking with like-minded business and community leaders, a delicious lunch, and the opportunity to hear from various guests on wide-ranging topics rele-

vant to the mission of the BCC — supporting Selfridge.

Guests in 2024 included speakers from Boeing, LIFT, the Selfridge Air Museum, the U.S. Space Force and distinguished individuals such as former 127th Wing Commander, retired Brig. Gen. Doug Slocum.

The official purpose of the Selfridge BCC is "to continue and improve the outstanding relationship between the civilian community and the military service community centered at Selfridge Air National Guard Base."

We are made up of approximately 250 local businesses and elected leaders with the sole mission to support our Selfridge Air National Guard Base and its personnel.

If you are interested in learning more about the Selfridge BCC and how you can join our organization, I encourage you to visit our website at selfridgecommunitycouncil.com. I hope to see you at a meeting soon!

*John Stolz, Selfridge BCC president-elect*



John Stolz

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### SELFRIDGE BASE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**President**  
Jonathan Vandenbossche

The Selfridge Base Community Council's mission is to continue improving outstanding relationships between both the civilian and military-service communities centered at Selfridge Air National Guard Base.

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Brig. Gen. Matthew Brancato

**Deputy Wing Commander**  
Col. David Spehar

**Wing Command Chief Master Sergeant**  
Chief Master Sgt. Bruce Hedrick

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Mrs. Penny Carroll

**Base Visual Information Manager**  
Mr. Andrew Schumann

**Chief of Community Engagement**  
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**Command Information NCOIC**  
Master Sgt. Chelsea E. FitzPatrick

**Public Affairs Staff**  
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Senior Master Sgt. Daniel Heaton  
Tech. Sgt. Andrew Schumann  
Senior Airmen Nathan Wingate  
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### PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

The Selfridge Flyer is a publication of the Selfridge Base Community Council and is not an official publication of the Department of Defense. Contents of the Selfridge Flyer are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the DoD, or MediaNews Group.

**On the cover:** U.S. Airmen from the 127th Wing return from an overseas deployment to Selfridge Air National Guard Base on Nov. 3, 2024. Friends and family members met the Airmen upon their return.

U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO  
BY SENIOR AIRMAN NATHAN WINGATE



## HERE TO HELP

# Getting your military ID card at Selfridge

**By Penelope Carroll**  
127th Wing Public Affairs

If you're visiting the ID card office at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, planning ahead will ensure a smooth experience.

## Before You Arrive

Appointments are required on Tuesdays and Fridays. Wednesdays and Thursdays are for walk-ins; however, the office closes between 12-1 p.m. The office is closed on Mondays. Priority service is always given to service members in uniform. Visitors should

bring all necessary documents, as copies cannot be made on-site.

## Appointments and Documentation

Each individual needing an ID must have a separate appointment, and two forms of ID are required for issuance. The first ID must be a primary form, like a driver's license or passport, while secondary forms include a Social Security card or birth certificate. Appointments can be made through a web search for RAPIDS APPOINTMENTS finding and us-

ing the .mil url link. Common Access Card renewal will be limited to 30 calendar days prior to the current CAC's expiration date. Exceptions will be made for military members who are deploying and whose cards will expire while they are on orders. If you are replacing a lost CAC, customers must have a police report or memorandum from leadership.

## Adding Dependents and Special Cases

When adding dependents, bring necessary certified documents

(birth certificate, Social Security card, marriage license, etc.). For dependents age 10 or older, a DD Form 1172-2, signed by the sponsor, is required.

## Disabled Veteran Eligibility

Veterans rated 100% disabled by the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) may receive a DoD ID card with proper documentation, including a Benefits Summary Letter from the DVA.

For more details, check official DoD guidelines or visit [www.cac.mil](http://www.cac.mil).



PHOTO COURTESY OF SELFTRIDGE AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE

Richard Cherry, right, a defense enrollment eligibility reporting system technician, hands a new identification card to a retiree at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, Oct. 22, 2024. Those planning a visit to the Selfridge ANGB DEERS office will have a more efficient experience by planning ahead.

Go hunting  
this weekend.



Michigan Air National Guard





## BY YOUR SIDE

# Military and family readiness provides, guides and empowers Airmen

By 2nd Lt. Elise Wahlstrom

127th Wing Public Affairs

Joining the Michigan Air National Guard is like joining a family.

From the wild uncle who makes family get-togethers entertaining, to the brother or sister who can be relied on for anything, Guard members never go through life alone.

The Military and Family Readiness Center at Selfridge Air National Guard Base is like a reliable brother or sister and connects service members with the resources they need at every phase of their lives.

“Having a Military and Family Readiness Center at Selfridge is important to our military members,” said John Harvey, MFRC coordinator at Selfridge ANGB. “However, a

major roadblock we have is that people don’t know they have access to all the support programs we have to offer.”

From a military member’s first enlistment through retirement, the MFRC’s wide-ranging assistance provides support as simple as giving stuffed animals to deployed members’ children, or more complex programs such as explaining health care benefits to the newly retired.

When first joining the 127th Wing, Airmen attend a First Duty Station course facilitated by the MFRC. The class educates Airmen on the basics of their financial benefits, such as how to read their military pay stub.

The class later breaks down options available for retirement savings, and why it can be a benefit to start saving as soon as possible.

sible.

“The course I teach goes over how credit works, budgets, investments, earnings statements and the options available for retirement savings,” said Gary Salach, financial adviser at Selfridge ANGB.

“This course helps Airmen understand their inflow and outflow, and encourage them to make responsible purchases,” Salach said.

Salach also helps service members in need of more personalized financial assistance. He can help troops navigate life events such as adoption or divorce, provide insight into large purchases, or direct them to grants and loans.

Deployment unlocks a new degree of support needs. Leaving home for long periods of time and being separated from family can create unique challenges.

lenges.

“The Comfort Crew for Military Kids,” a free MFRC resource available to military members, provides resources for children, such as animated movies and guided journals to help them open up about difficult subjects like parental separation.

During deployments, families are engaged by Key Support Liaisons, the MFRC volunteer program.

These volunteers check in with family members monthly to ensure they are handling the separation well and provide a sense of community and connection to the unit and base.

If a family member is struggling, the KSL may offer strategies to stay connected or put them in contact with free counselor resources.

“The Key Support Liaison plays a crucial role

in fostering a sense of belonging and support for our military families,” said Micaela Brancato, a KSL at Selfridge ANGB.

This personal level of support provides care and assistance to military families during the deployment.

As with all good things, military careers inevitably come to an end. When that time comes, the MFRC is ready to help through the Transition Assistance Program.

TAP guides retirees transitioning into civilian life, educating them on health care benefits, claiming VA disability, planning for further education, and even providing resources for starting a business.

Members can go through the program up to 24 months prior to their anticipated separation date.

Serving in the military has its ups and downs, but

the MFRC team at Selfridge ANGB ensures service members have access to the resources available to stay ready and resilient for whatever challenges come their way.

To learn more about Military and Family Readiness Center resources and events at Selfridge, contact their office, find them on the AF Connect app or visit [www.127wg.ang.af.mil/About-127th-Wing/Military-Family-Readiness](http://www.127wg.ang.af.mil/About-127th-Wing/Military-Family-Readiness).

The MFRC team at Selfridge is also looking for community volunteers to become Key Support Liaisons.

There is no minimum time commitment and anyone can volunteer. No military service or connection is required. If you are interested in supporting our troops, email the MFRC at [127FSS.MFR.Mil-Fam-Support@us.af.mil](mailto:127FSS.MFR.Mil-Fam-Support@us.af.mil).

Members of the 127th Wing and their families look through donated school supplies at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, Aug. 13, 2022. The Military and Family Readiness Center provides a wide range of services and support for all service members based at Selfridge.

U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD  
PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. DREW SCHUMANN



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## CALLED TO SERVE

# Religious affairs team provides confidential support

By Penelope Carroll  
127th Wing Public Affairs

In the demanding environment of military service, where physical, emotional, and moral challenges are constant, the 127th Wing religious affairs team plays a critical role in supporting the well-being of service members and their families.

Entrusted with a range of duties aimed at supporting moral and spiritual resilience of the wing, their responsibilities include performing religious rites, leading worship services, and offering confidential counseling. While they are not typically licensed as clinical counselors, their training allows them to assist with various life challenges, from deployment stress to family relationships. Their absolute commitment to confidentiality makes chaplains a trusted resource, offering a safe space where service members can seek support without fear of judgment.

"I love doing what I do because we are a chaplain to all, not just to our own religious institution or beliefs, but to the individual who need to be inspired to fulfill their mission whether it is through religious accommodation, spiritual fitness, or leadership advisement," said U.S. Air Force Major Courtland Pitt, a chaplain with the 127th Wing.

Air Force chaplains do not work alone. They are supported by religious affairs Airmen, enlisted personnel who are experts in principles of religious diversity, accommodation, major faith group requirements, privileged communication and program management. This team's collective responsibilities extend beyond typical religious services.

Master Sgt. Danielle Heilig, religious affairs superintendent, 127th Wing, says they offer many types of support to Airmen in need. The religious affairs team is trained to provide compassionate, nonjudgmental support while directing individuals to additional resources, if needed.

"I recently met with a group of first sergeants and asked them how they decompressed from the stressors of their job. I wanted them to understand that they had to take care of themselves so that they were resilient enough to care for their Air-



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY MUNNAF JOARDER

U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Danielle Heilig, religious affairs superintendent, 127th Wing, Michigan National Guard, manages religious programs and supports the Wing chaplains. Religious affairs Airmen build a culture of spiritual care, inspire readiness, spiritual fitness and leadership advisement as experts in principles of religious diversity.

men," she said.

Military life can bring intense demands and high expectations, leading to stress both on the job and at home. Religious affairs teams provide a confidential ear and coping strategies to manage these pressures, and recently, 127th Wing religious affairs team held a Strong Bonds weekend marriage retreat to help Airmen and their families.

"The positive feedback from the weekend reaffirms the importance of these gatherings," Heilig said. "I believe that continuing to offer such experiences can significantly contribute to the well-being of couples in our community."

Strong Bonds programs are retreats and classes led by 127th Wing religious affairs, where military members and their families attend with others in the unit. During the events, they participate in small group activities that reveal common bonds and nurture friendships. In 2025, they plan to host three separate events for married couples, families and individuals.

These family-centered events help

troops manage stress from a variety of sources, for example, the upcoming holidays.

"Sometimes, it can be as simple as immersing yourself in a favorite video game, enjoying outdoor activities, catching a movie, or binge-watching a beloved series," Pitt said of managing stress. "Ultimately, the most important connection is the one you have with yourself, and embracing this mindset can help us all cope better during this season and beyond."

By offering spiritual guidance, moral support, and a confidential resource for personal concerns, military chaplains and their teams are indispensable in the military community.

They uphold the values of integrity, compassion, and confidentiality, providing a steady presence for service members and their families. Through their dedication, the religious affairs team strengthens the overall resilience of the 127th Wing, helping service members to remain strong, focused, and supported throughout their service.



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS JAKE HESSEN

U.S. Air Force Maj. Courtland Pitt, a chaplain with the 127th Wing, Michigan National Guard, gives the invocation at a change of command ceremony at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, Oct. 5, 2024. The chaplain corps is entrusted with a wide range of support duties to build Airmen's moral and spiritual resilience.



## HELPING OUR OWN

# Family Relief Fund provides emergency financial assistance to military families

By Penelope Carroll  
127th Wing Public Affairs

The Team Selfridge Family Relief Fund is an emergency financial assistance program aimed at helping the men and women who work at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, regardless of military service branch.

The fund offers monetary support to military families who are experiencing financial hardships due to unforeseen circumstances and for whom there are limited resources to solve a crisis. It serves as a resource that takes care of military families while service members are deployed overseas.

The fund also assists with emergency and contingency situations for Selfridge military and civilian members and their families without regard to age, race, religion, color, national origin or gender.

Chief Master Sgt. Thomas Creek, senior enlisted advisor for the 191st Maintenance Squadron, is on the board of directors for the TSFRF.

"I wish more people on the base knew about what we do and how we can help when life takes an unexpected turn," he said. "While most applications are approved, considerable thought and discussion goes into reviewing all applications to ensure we are meeting the needs of the requesters."

The Team Selfridge Family Relief Fund was established in 2007 in response for the growing need to take care of military families while service

members are deployed and focusing on the mission. Founded by Col. Thomas Sierakowski, his brother, Wally, and members of the family readiness group at the time, the fund was initially intended to serve Air National Guard members at the base; however, the fund's usage quickly expanded to everyone at Selfridge.

Military members can access the fund through the Military and Family Readiness Center at the Airman Wellness Center or by asking their leadership team.

"We get requests of all types for assistance," said Senior Master Sgt. Doug Shippy, 127th Communications Squadron's senior enlisted leader and member of the board of directors for the fund.

The board members who serve on TSFRF are all volunteers and are all senior enlisted leaders from across Selfridge and represent all the branches of service to include Air Force, Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard and Border Patrol.

The board meets formally at least annually, but come together at fundraising events multiple times through the year.

Shippy explained: "I volunteer for this fund because I am passionate about this organization."

The TSFRF directly impacted me and was there for me and my family many years ago. I was a young Airman seeking assistance for my family. But first, like many of us, I had to get over my pride and ask."

This year, the Selfridge Family Relief Fund has



COURTESY PHOTO

Volunteers of the Team Selfridge Family Relief Fund program participate in a golf outing to raise donations. This year, the TSFRF has helped 10 military members with almost \$25,000 in relief.

helped 10 military members with almost \$25,000 in relief provided. Some of the circumstances included replacing a hot water heater in a family home for a deployed member and helping families pay electric bills, car repair bills and funeral expenses.

The Team Selfridge Family Relief Fund has also sponsored a medical service dog for a veteran and a seizure assist dog for a military member's child — both life-changing gifts for the families helped.

"The most rewarding moments since I've been

on the TSFRF are when we help people who are facing severe financial hardship due to their child's medical issues," Creek added. "To be able to ease a parent's burden so they can concentrate on their children's well-being has been most fulfilling to me."

All moneys coming into the fund are private donations, primarily from local business owners, but also from private individuals. The easiest way to donate is directly to the Team Selfridge Family Relief Fund, P.O. Box 450083, Selfridge ANGB, MI 48045-0083.



## FAMILY SUPPORT



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. DREW SCHUMANN

U.S. Air Force Maj. Kyle Bruckner, right, director of intelligence, 127th Operations Support Squadron, Michigan National Guard, hugs his family upon return to Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, Nov. 3, 2024. Airmen from the 127th Wing returned from a four-month overseas deployment to Southwest Asia.

## Child care programs available during drill weekends

**By Master Sgt. Chelsea E. FitzPatrick**  
127th Wing Public Affairs

### Drill Weekends

The 127th Force Support Squadron has partnered with three child care providers off-base to provide

space available child care during drill weekends.

Currently, space is limited to 18 slots, so eligibility is prioritized as follows:

- Single-parent military member
- Dual-military couples
- Nonmilitary spouse must work civilian job during drill period

To be considered for the available drill-weekend child care, members must first complete the child care request form, which includes the signature of either their supervisor or first sergeant. Once accepted, child care requests must be sent to Chief Master Sgt.

Dawn Porter no later than the Monday prior to drill weekend by emailing dawn.porter@us.af.mil.

Child care programs interested in participating also can contact Porter.

### Full Time

The Bryant Child Devel-

opment Center at Selfridge Air National Guard Base offers full-time care for children ages 6 weeks through pre-kindergarten. To learn about eligibility requirements for the Bryant CDC, interested members should go to [public.militarychild-care.csd.disa.mil/mcc-central/mcchome](http://public.militarychild-care.csd.disa.mil/mcc-central/mcchome).

opment Center at Selfridge

For those full-time members who live further away from Selfridge, there are child care fee assistance respite programs you can find by going to [childcareaware.org/fee-assistance-respite/military-families/air-force/fee-assistance](http://childcareaware.org/fee-assistance-respite/military-families/air-force/fee-assistance).



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