

SELFRIDGE FLYER

Volume 8, Issue 4

"127th Wing — Your Hometown Air Force"

July 2025



LETHALITY

Combat readiness prepares us for new threats

By Lt. Col. Corey Enderby
127th Wing Inspector General

Inspections and exercises keep us ready to face peer competitors at any time.

That's the whole reason we train to operate in contested, degraded and operationally-limited environments. We must be ready to prioritize mobilization efforts, sustain the base, or generate our assets and people while the base is under attack. On Sept. 10-13, we will have the opportunity to practice responding to a home station attack when Air Combat Command evaluates us during a combat readiness inspection.

A combat readiness exercise, or inspection, is an operationally-relevant exercise, tested against pacing challenges. CRE and CRI is intended to inform commanders of their unit's ability to execute mission in a realistic scenario, against a high-end threat. The difference between the two is that a CRI is a when our higher Air Force command inspects our ability to present properly test wing members in a way so we are prepared to support combatant commanders in real war-time environments. The CRI provides Air Force senior leaders an independent perspective of our ability to successfully accomplish our missions as assigned.

During our September CRI, nicknamed "Operation Bronco," the purpose will be to demonstrate and evaluate our capabilities to generate the A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft and expeditionary air base missions in an environment that is contested, has degraded abilities, and under chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear threat conditions.

What makes this even more special is we will also practice energy resilience



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

Airmen from the 127th Maintenance Group's Munitions Flight conduct a simulated explosive operation while wearing Mission Oriented Protective Posture gear at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, June 8, 2025. During the exercise, Airmen were inspected on the proper wear and labelling of their gear before loading chaff and flare into magazines as part of readiness training.

readiness, basically fighting a war when we have no power. How well can you communicate without computers, cell phones, air conditioning, in a CBRN environment? Are you able to operate as an agile Airman with decentralized decision-making and adherence to your commander's intent?

If you think this scenario is crazy or not realistic, think again. The first maneuver a peer competitor might do is to limit our aircraft generation capability.

It's not a matter of if cyber-attacks against soft targets and critical infrastructure will occur, but when. Unmanned aircraft systems linked with artificial intelligence will be deployed not just for surveillance, but for potential attacks. UAS jamming may not be effective over the next few years based on AI influence. CBRN does not need to come from ballistic missiles. We must think asymmetrically. Current world events and conflicts pro-

vide realistic scenarios and opportunities for the future of modern warfare.

We must not be complacent. We can't wait for a real-world crisis like this to prepare. We are no longer protected by distance and oceans. Our peer competitors are currently better than us in several critical areas.

Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff, Sgt. Major Troy Black, stated it best when he said: "The

best way to prevent war is to be so overwhelmingly prepared for it that no adversary dares to challenge us. Deterrence is built on credibility, and credibility is built on capability. We must be ready at all times, not just in times of crisis. We must train, equip and prepare to win, ensuring that if war comes, we finish it on our terms. We do not seek conflict, but if it comes, our enemies must know that we will dominate them completely."

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SELFRIDGE BASE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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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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PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

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On the cover: An F-15EX Eagle II from the Defense Contracting Management Agency Boeing St. Louis, flies over Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, June 11, 2025.

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

OUR LEGACY

Retiree appreciation event to be held Sept. 20

By Selfridge Retiree Affairs Office
127th Wing

The Retiree Affairs Office will host a military retiree appreciation day at Selfridge Air National Guard Base on Sept. 20. The annual event, organized for military retirees, those in the process of transitioning out of service and their spouses, provides information and resources for people moving on to their next life chapter.

During the event, attendees will have the opportunity to hear guest speakers from Medicare, Elder Law, Great Lakes National Cemetery, Veterans Administration, Macomb County Sheriff's office, Army Community Service, among others.

Attendees will also have the chance to

obtain updated identification cards, receive flu vaccines and speak with dental and vision insurance company representatives. This free event will also include a continental breakfast.

The RAO is staffed by volunteers from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays. Located in the dining facility, building 164, the RAO is a walk-in military resource center for military retirees and their spouses. Volunteers served active duty, reserves, National Guard or are spouses of those who served.

If you're interested in registering for the retiree appreciation event, finding resources or volunteering with the RAO, go to detroit.armymwr.com/programs/retiree-affairs-office, email SelfRAO@yahoo.com or call 586-239-5580.



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY SR. MASTER SGT. DAN HEATON

Retired military members and their spouses attend a retiree appreciation event at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, Sep. 23, 2017. The annual event is held to provide information and resources to veterans transitioning to the next chapter of their lives.

Go hunting this weekend.



Michigan Air National Guard



HOT JOBS

The builders behind the 'boom'

By Airman 1st Class Jacob Hessen

127th Wing Public Affairs

Behind layers of fencing on Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Airmen from the 127th Maintenance Group munitions shop work with some of the most advanced weapons known to man. Munition systems specialists are responsible for building, inspecting and preparing bombs and bullets for the A-10 Thunderbolt II that keep the mission moving. The munitions shop performs a wide range of tasks, such as storage, building bombs and missiles, and trailer maintenance.

This career field has an important mission and the demand is large. With the new F-15 Eagle II EX mission coming to Selfridge, the future is bright. Master Sgt. Scott Roberts, a munitions systems supervisor, says there are lots of opportunities.

"Everything we do here for the A-10s is universal for any aircraft. The biggest change is we're going to get new facilities, new missiles," Roberts said. "We look for people that work well with the team because we're not allowed to do anything by ourselves. There's 11 different jobs inside munitions. You can start at the bottom and move your way up."

For Staff Sgt. Teddi Zimmerman, munition systems specialist, there's a lot to love about this career field.

"One of my favorite things is how 50/50 it is," Zimmerman said. "Between sitting at my desk doing desk work and then going outside and working hands-on is huge."

While the balance of hands-on work with the bombs and office work is appealing, the camaraderie stands out for her.

"I love my job and I love the people I work with," Zimmerman said. "It's just a really good field to work in."

Zimmerman didn't always start out interested in the mil-



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

U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Teddi Zimmerman, a munitions systems specialist with the 127th Maintenance Squadron, Michigan Air National Guard, places a 30mm round used in the GAU-8/A Avenger gun of an A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft, into a case at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, June 8, 2025. Zimmerman and her team manage all aspects of nonnuclear munitions processes to store, assemble, account for and transport weapons systems, supporting missions around the world.

itary — or even the Air Force. Her journey began as a freshman at Eastern Michigan University. During her first semester in a creative writing course, she saw a female classmate in a military uniform every week and that inspired her.

"I joined to pay for schooling and I ended up stopping schooling because I like the military so much," Zimmerman said.

That decision led her to the Army National Guard, where she enlisted as a communications specialist. She spent seven years

in the Army before making her way to the Air National Guard. When she came to Selfridge, she wasn't sure what would be next for her.

She came out to tour with the full-time staff. They made her feel at home and comfortable right away and she enlisted that same day.

One of the benefits of transitioning from the Army to the Air Force was that she didn't need to attend Air Force basic military training. She just went to her eight-week munitions systems

specialist training at Sheppard Air Force Base in Texas, then came right back home. She also maintained the same pay grade she had earned in the Army.

For Zimmerman, the benefits didn't stop there. In addition to receiving an enlistment bonus, she also secured a temporary full-time position, giving her full-time pay and benefits in this high-demand role.

Zimmerman has found a home here at Selfridge. She says the biggest difference she has noticed between the Army and Air

Force is mindset and purpose.

"Everyone takes it very seriously and that is so warming to my heart because it feels like, from the Army to here, I'm doing something with a purpose," she said. "People show up and they know that what they do is important, so they're excited for it."

To learn more about the munitions systems specialist career field, enlistment bonuses, or other opportunities in the Michigan Air National Guard, go to www.127wg.ang.af.mil and click on "Join Us."

CHANGE OF COMMAND

Russell takes command of Air Station Detroit

By Lt. Connor Riley

Coast Guard Air Station Detroit

Coast Guard Air Station Detroit conducted its first aerial change-of-command ceremony, June 3, 2025, when Cmdr. Kyle T. Russell took command from Cmdr. Christian T. Polyak in the skies above Selfridge Air National Guard Base. Rear Adm. Jonathan Hickey, Coast Guard District Great Lakes commander, presided over the transfer of command.

Polyak formally transferred command to Russell through a symbolic aerial formation, rendering lead aircraft position while attendees watched and listened to radio communications. Following his relief, Polyak was promoted to the rank of captain, in anticipation of his next assignment as commanding officer of the USCG Aviation Logistics Center in Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

Russell formerly served as the executive officer at CGAS Traverse City. His other duty assignments include:

- Deputy Office Chief of CG-4 Business Operations and the Office of Aeronautical Engineering
- Assistant Aeronautical Engineering Officer at CGAS Detroit
- Support Division aeronautical engineering officer and fleet instructor pilot at the Aviation Training Center in Mobile, Alabama
- Search and rescue pilot at CGAS North Bend, Oregon
- Avionics electrical technician at CGAS Traverse City
- Seaman at Station St. Ignace

Russell has accumulated more than 3,000 flight hours in the MH-65 Dolphin aircraft and held designations as an instructor pilot, aircraft commander, and flight mechanic instructor.

Russell is a 2000 graduate from USCG Boot Camp and a 2005 graduate of the officer candidate school. His education includes a bachelor of science in professional aeronautics from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University and a master of business administration from Marylhurst University.

Established in 1966 and consisting of 120 personnel operating five MH-65E advanced search and rescue helicopters, CGAS Detroit provides year-round search and rescue coverage to the Great Lakes region from Selfridge ANGB and during the summer season, from facilities in Muskegon and Waukegan, Illinois. In addition to the regular area of operations,



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. DREW SCHUMANN

Two U.S. Coast Guard MH-65 Dolphin helicopters carrying Cmdr. Christian Polyak (left) and Cmdr. Kyle Russell (right) take part in an aerial change of command ceremony for Coast Guard Air Station Detroit, June 3, 2025, at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan. The ceremony marked the formal transition of command responsibilities as Russell assumed leadership CGAS Detroit, with a maritime mission of search and rescue, law enforcement, and homeland security operations throughout the Great Lakes region.

aircraft and personnel from CGAS Detroit have participated in several contingency responses to regional crises such as hurricanes Helen and Milton, as well as augmenting other CGAS throughout the United States.

During Polyak's tenure, the Air Station responded to over 250 search and rescue cases and saved and/or assisted

more than 100 human lives.

CGAS Detroit also provides support to the community and nation through its other missions such as Maritime Observation Patrols, Maritime Law Enforcement, Ports Waterways and Coastal Security, and Rotary-Wing Air Intercept support. During these missions, personnel are tasked with protecting not only

local communities, but also protecting the President and other national strategic assets.

CGAS Detroit and its personnel stand "Always Ready" around the clock and every day of the year, and we greatly appreciate the support of our local community, as well as the communities from which our units' personnel come from.

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY SENIOR MASTER SGT. DAN HEATON

U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Nea Barkell, 127th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Michigan National Guard, stands in front of an A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, June 7, 2025. Barkell, an aerospace propulsion technician, is responsible for servicing and maintaining the two TF34-GE-100 turbofan engines on the attack jet.

Engine troops, heart of A-10

By Senior Master Sgt. Daniel Heaton
127th Wing Public Affairs

Aerospace propulsion technicians in the 127th Maintenance Group's propulsion shop are preparing to make a big change.

The Airmen in the shop currently service and maintain the TF34-GE100 turbofan engines that power the A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft that are assigned to Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan.

On April 29, 2025, President Donald Trump announced that the 127th Wing will transition to the F-15EX Eagle II after its A-10 mission is divested. With the

change will come a need for new training and new skills since the F-15EX is equipped with two F110-GE-129 engines.

"It will be a different philosophy of learning that engine and what makes it unique, but we'll be ready for it," said Tech. Sgt. Todd Van Meekeren, an aerospace propulsion technician.

Until the first F-15EXs arrive at Selfridge, currently estimated to arrive sometime in 2028, the 127th Maintenance Group Airmen will keep the A-10s mission-ready.

"We're always improving our skills, making sure the aircraft are ready to go," said Senior Airman Zach Kervin, an aero-

space propulsion technician.

Kervin has been with the unit for about three years.

He said the opportunity to learn new skills — and some occasional travel — are his favorite parts about serving with the A-10 engine shop.

On a recent drill weekend for the Michigan Air National Guard's 127th Wing, a small team of Airmen from the shop performed a 100-hour servicing on an A-10 engine — a routine preventative maintenance task designed to keep the engine performing in peak condition.

Among those working on the task was

Senior Airman Nea Barkell, a member of the team for about four years.

She said the hands-on job working on the aircraft makes her aviation career go "full circle." In her civilian job, she works as an aircraft dispatcher at Willow Run Airport in Ypsilanti. She also holds a private pilot's license.

"Working on the engines (at Selfridge) gives me a touch of everything," she said.

The engines on the F-15EX are an afterburner turbofan that can each generate about 29,000 pounds of thrust. The A-10 engines can each generate about 9,000 pounds of thrust.

Seen around Selfridge



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY 1ST LT. ELISE WAHLSTROM

Above: U.S. Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Robert E. Roby, air transportation superintendent, 127th Logistics Readiness Squadron, Michigan Air National Guard, moves cargo at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, June 11, 2025. Air transportation specialists like Roby coordinate and execute cargo loading operations to ensure equipment and supplies reached their destination on time and mission-ready.

Right: Airmen from the 105th Airlift Wing, New York Air National Guard, guide a forklift to the ramp of a C-17 Globemaster aircraft at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, June 11, 2025. The 105th Airlift Wing provided strategic airlift of cargo and Soldiers in support of a large-scale mobilization exercise between the Michigan Army National Guard and Latvia.



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY 1ST LT. ELISE WAHLSTROM



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY 1ST LT. ELISE WAHLSTROM

Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 125th Infantry Regiment, Michigan Army National Guard, load equipment into a light medium tactical vehicle at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, June 11, 2025. The Soldiers returned home after participating in a large-scale mobilization exercise in Latvia demonstrating global mobility and combat preparedness.

“NO TRESPASS” NOTICE

The Selfridge Air National Guard Base Firearms Range is located at Building 881, Ammo Road, Selfridge ANGB, MI 48045.

Trespassing is not only illegal, but dangerous due to gunfire.

If you have a valid need for entry to the range, please contact Mr. Alan Pionk at (586) 239-4282.

Macomb County Schools Students and Staff With Gratitude for our U.S. Servicemen and Women who Sacrifice for our Freedoms



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Clintondale Community Schools, Eastpointe Community Schools, Fitzgerald Public Schools, Fraser Public Schools,
Lake Shore Public Schools, Lakeview Public Schools, L'Anse Creuse Public Schools, Mount Clemens Community Schools,
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