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The A-10s Officially Arrive At Selfridge!



photo by SrA Jeremy Brownfield, 127th Public Affairs

A 127th Wing A-10 “stands ready” on the flight line at Selfridge Air National Guard Base. The wing will officially stand up the new mission May 2. The A-10 Thunderbolt replaces the F-16 Falcon, an aircraft which has played a crucial role in homeland defense from Selfridge for almost two decades. The A-10 is a long-standing, well accomplished aircraft which will continue to provide air superiority and combat support under the 127th Wing.



Commander's Column



by Brig. Gen. Michael L. Peplinski
Commander, 127th Wing

Do you ever wonder what the Air Force will look like in 10 years, 20 years...? I'm sure most of us are so busy on a daily basis that knowing what tomorrow will bring is hard to imagine.

There is going to be a lot of change on the horizon. Will it impact Selfridge and the 127th? We don't know yet. Potentially it will, in the long term. What I can tell you is that the Air Force is going to start adapting to some budget realities within the DoD.

As some may have read in the media, here are some impacts on important Air Force programs that Secretary Gates announced recently. The C-17 line will close. F-22 production will end after a total of 187. The CSAR-X (Combat Search and Rescue) helicopter was cancelled. The next bomber was delayed / cancelled. The KC-X, while still the USAF number one priority, is delayed. KC-X is what would replace our aging tanker fleet here at Selfridge. DoD called for F-35 production rates to be increased but not as fast as legacy fighter platforms are retired. Legacy platforms are familiar jets like F-15s, F-16s, and A-10s. Of those platforms, fortunately we have in our wing inventory the A-10 that has more longevity than the others.

Last week there was even a New York Times op-ed piece that advocated the dissolution of the Air Force and redistribution of those roles and missions back to the Army, Navy, and Marine

Corps. Sometimes it seems there is little public recognition of what the Air Force has contributed to this nation's defense in the past several decades of combat in southwest Asia: years of no-fly zones, protecting the homeland, ensuring none of our Soldiers and Marines were attacked from the air during Operations Desert Storm, Iraqi Freedom or Enduring Freedom, not to mention precision close air support and reconnaissance. The Air Force's insurance of air dominance is being taken for granted.

Airlift, precision airdrop, and since 9-11, tankers passing the inflight fuel equivalent of the same number of gallons of water that goes over Niagara Falls in 30+ seconds are benchmarks of which the AF should be proud. Assisting the Army with convoy operations through Joint Expeditionary Tasking, formerly known as "In Lieu Of" tasking also drove the entire concept of Battlefield Airmen.

My bottom line to all of this is that we may have to "sound our own horn" more now than ever. I always talk about our wing to the public as THEIR "hometown Air Force." As Guardsmen, we can be the Air Force connection with communities, especially our own, in ways well beyond that of our active duty peers. When the Guard and Reserves are in the combat zone, America knows

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...From the Chief's Desk



by Chief Master Sgt. Rod Humphrey
127th Maintenance Group

The year has been a short and fast since my last article, and everyone across the Air National Guard knows Selfridge is once again at the top when it comes to the inspection process and policy compliance. It seems that we have had very little down time before our new challenge started to become reality.

Our mission is focused on combat capability and we are lucky to have received A-10s from within Michigan as well as other locations. Different aircraft breed a different environment: from mechanics and pilots to all support personnel, the way we fly and fight is changing daily. Different is not wrong, it is just different and we have an excellent opportunity to learn or teach something new every day.

The main reason I raise this topic today is people. Employee involvement is creating an environment in which people have an impact on decisions and actions that affect their jobs. Employee involvement is not the goal nor is it a tool, as practiced in many organizations. Rather, employee involvement is a management and leadership philosophy about how people are enabled to contribute.

My understanding comes from working with many organizations for more than 31 years to involve people as much as possible in all aspects of decisions and planning. This involvement

increases ownership and commitment, retains our best employees and fosters an environment in which people choose to be motivated and contributing.

The Quality Assurance office is working to enable everyone true buy-in for the inspection and operating process. Most supervisors have been tasked for inputs to operating instructions and this seems to be just additional duty, but in reality it is our collection of ideas on the correct way to operate safely and effectively. Not only can we look to other units when developing instructions but also talking, reviewing and expecting ideas from our youngest Airmen across the wing.

We have a large cross section of talent to draw from; some people are new to Selfridge with experience in certain areas or aircraft, others are in transition to a new mission with additional commitments and experience from different aircraft, everyone has to work together to succeed as we move down the road to a different way of completing our missions.

Soon I believe we will see an era of joint MAJCOM inspections and wing self-inspections conducted across both airframes including support sections. We as a wing should look for opportunities to share information and knowledge on policies and programs that are common to our missions and work together on a regular basis to ensure wing success.



The Official
Newspaper
of the 127th Wing

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Capt. Penny Carroll

Public Affairs Officer

2nd. Lt. Anthony Lesterson

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MSgt. Clarence Pence

MSgt. Terry Atwell

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SrA Jeremy Brownfield

SrA Anna Marie Wyatt

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John S. Swanson

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For story or photograph submissions, ideas or comments for the paper, e-mail the

Prevailing Wind staff at:

prevailingwind@miself.ang.af.mil

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New mission, new plane, new friends – Michigan Air Guard A-10 unit learning from Maryland

by SSgt. S. Patrick McCollum

National Guard Bureau

The year was 1987 and it was a good time to be a fighter pilot.

The movie "Top Gun" had been released the year before and a newly pinned Air Force officer was beginning his career as a pilot in the top-of-the-line F-16 "Fighting Falcon" fighter.

"When I got into the service in '87, that was the go-to airplane," said Lt. Col. Douglas "Bubbles" Champagne, commander of the 107th Fighter Squadron of the Michigan Air National Guard. The 107th is part of the 127th Wing at Selfridge Air National Guard Base near Detroit.

"They did just about everything," said Champagne. "And they still do."

While the F-16 can handle multiple missions, the 107th FS is also showing its ability to change with the times.

In 2005, the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) mandated that the unit turn in its Falcons and take possession of the A-10 II Thunderbolts from the 110th Fighter Wing at Battle Creek, Mich.

This close-air-support aircraft aids troops in the field through its ability to "loiter" near battle areas and operate under a 1,000-foot ceiling, not to mention what its 30 mm Gatling gun can do to tanks, armored vehicles and other ground targets.

During this BRAC transition, Champagne and other unit members have become part of a small, close-knit community in the Air National Guard.

After pilot training at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., Champagne trained on the Thunderbolt with the 175th Fighter Squadron here at Martin State Airport.

He said that with Air Guard units in just five states flying the aircraft - Idaho, Maryland, Arkansas, Pennsylvania and Michigan - it is almost impossible not to think of everyone as a team.

"You see the same guys all the time. You deploy with the same guys," said Champagne. "You all have a very common mindset."

That mindset is also apparent with some

of the 127th Wing mechanics who also visited Martin State for the type of training they like best.

"It's all on-the-job training," said Senior Airman James Judd, a phase technician, who worked on F-16s for seven years and rebuilt his first car at age 15. "We've been to a couple different bases and learned from them - kind of shadow them - [to] see what they do."

Having worked on cars, tractors, snowmobiles and aircraft for most of their lives, these technicians were grateful for a training program that didn't require them to start from scratch.

"Honestly, that's the best way to learn," said Senior Airman Justin Smith, a Michigan phase technician, who worked aircraft recovery concerns during a tour in Balad, Iraq. "Here's what you need to do. Here's the book on how to do it - do it."

Although it was an ancillary benefit to fixing aircraft, the training also gave them the opportunity to get to know their counterparts in other states.

On "Salsa Friday" in Maryland, the crew worked in a relaxed atmosphere with salsa music from a local radio station blasting in the background while they worked.

Knowing your fellow Guardmembers is useful, especially when you may have to borrow a few for deployment in an Air Expeditionary Force (AEF) cycle.

"Now when we go do an AEF, we're going to be grouped with [these] three other units," said Master Sgt. Adam Strine, a phase shift leader with the 175th Maintenance Squadron. "It's nice to know the guys that are coming with you are guys that have worked with you ... that you've trained."

While some are new to the workings of the Thunderbolt, also known as the Warthog, not everyone in the unit is completely new to the aircraft.

Capt. Jeremy "Frogger" Stoner, a former member of the 110th FW, deployed to Afghanistan as an A-10 pilot and saw its benefits firsthand.

"It was designed to do what the guys in

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127th Maintenance Group Changes Command

by SrA. Anna-Marie Wyant

127th Public Affairs

Lt. Col. Gregory S. Holzhei is the new commander of the 127th Maintenance Group, Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Mich., formally accepting the position at the change of command ceremony April 4, 2009.

Holzhei initially took command of the group after his predecessor, Col. John H. Theisen, who was unable to attend the ceremony, retired in February, leaving Michigan for civilian employment overseas.

Theisen received his commission in the U.S. Army from the Reserve Officer's Training Corps. He regularly participated in NATO operations while assigned to the British Sector in the Federal Republic of Germany. Upon leaving active duty, he became a contract negotiator in the defense industry and joined the Air National Guard. After participating in Operation Desert Storm, Theisen accepted a full time position in the Michigan Air National Guard. He served as the Deputy Commander for Support at Kirkuk Regional Air Base, Iraq during Operations Iraqi Freedom and Vigilant resolve.

Lt. Col. Holzhei voiced gratitude for the help and support Col. Theisen offered.

"I appreciated how he showed me the processes and gave me insight to why things are the way they are," Holzhei said.

Prior to his current assignment, Col. Holzhei was the Deputy Commander for Maintenance in the 127th Air Refueling Group. He earned his commission in 1987 through the Reserve Officer Training Corps at Michigan State University. His first assignment after pilot training was at Williams AFB, Ariz., as a T-37 instructor pilot. His next duty station was Little Rock AFB, Ark., where he served as an operational C-130E and C-130H3 instructor, evaluator, and formal training unit evaluator pilot. He joined the

Michigan Air National Guard in 1999 as a C-130 instructor



photo by SrA Jeremy Brownfield, 127th Public Affairs

Brig. Gen. Michael Peplinski hands the 127th Maintenance Group Flag to Lt. Col. Gregory S. Holzhei during an April 4, 2009, assumption of command ceremony at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Mich. Peplinski is the commander of the 127th. Holzhei had most recently been serving as the deputy commander for maintenance in the 127th Air Refueling Group, which is also at Selfridge.

pilot in the 171st Airlift Squadron at Selfridge.

Holzhei, who is now in charge of 432 authorized personnel, said the group has upheld a high standard of excellence, and he is grateful to be a part of it. During a speech at the assumption of command ceremony he compared the commander's position in a group to the rudder on a ship, leading it firmly yet gently.

"This group is headed in the right direction," Holzhei said. "I intend to be this ship's rudder."

Members of the group presented a bouquet of roses to Holzhei's wife, Vonda, as a gesture of welcome.

New Mission cont.

"Afghanistan need right now," said Stoner. "They need a plane that can get down below the weather and into the mountain valleys, [that] can stay for a while to support them with longer fuel capabilities than some of the other fighters, and slow enough and quiet enough that they can loiter and not give themselves away."

While there, Stoner's unit helped rebuild the A-10 program at Bagram Air Base.

"A-10s hadn't been there for a while," Stoner said. "We got an empty building, where we had to build our own operations desk. We had to build our own life support area for all of our gear."

After a lot of hard work by Citizen-Airmen, some of whom had experience in carpentry and electricity, the flight operations shop was ready to go.

Stoner flew close-air missions in support of many operations, some for which he was thanked personally.

"Special-ops teams or smaller groups that needed our assistance actually went out of their way to drive from wherever they were on their day off and sit down with us and say, 'You guys really helped us out,' or 'You guys saved our lives,'" Stoner said.

"Everything that a Guardsman sacrifices is more than compensated for when that one guy says 'thanks for being there for me today,'" Champagne added.

127th Wing Gets New Chemical Suits

by TSgt. Dan Heaton
127th Public Affairs

Say goodbye to messy charcoal. The Michigan Air National Guard is making the move to a new type of chemical warfare suit that not only provides better protection for Airmen, but also eliminates the mess of residual charcoal covering uniforms, bodies and everything else the old suits came in contact with. Say hello to JLIST.

The Joint Service Lightweight Integrated Suit Technology, or JLIST, chemical warfare suits are lighter and don't leave behind any charcoal mess, said Staff Sgt. Jerry Link, supply management journeyman with the 127th Mobility Support Group.

"That's the first thing we notice, no mess," Link said during the April Unit Training Assembly (UTA) as a steady stream of Airmen from around the 127th Wing came in to pick up the new suit. The wing received the first of the new suits in late 2008 and has been making the transition since, with priority given to those who are planning to deploy overseas.

The JSLIST is the product of a four-Service effort to field a common chemical protective clothing ensemble including a lightweight protective garment, multi-purpose overboots and gloves. According to the U.S. Army Study Guide, each component of the JLIST is based on state-of-the-art materiel technologies that have undergone extensive user evaluation and field and laboratory testing.

According to Staff Sgt. Tevis Williams, who works with Sgt. Link at the MSG Processing Center, Airmen receive new JLIST overcoats and overpants to replace their previously issued equipment.

"We're still using the same boots and gloves," Williams said. "And you no longer need to use the hood, because there is a hood on the JLIST overcoat."

According to the Army Study Guide, JSLIST Program objectives included reduced heat stress, compatibility with all interfacing equipment, longer wear, and washability. The JSLIST replaces the Battle Dress Overgarment (BDO).

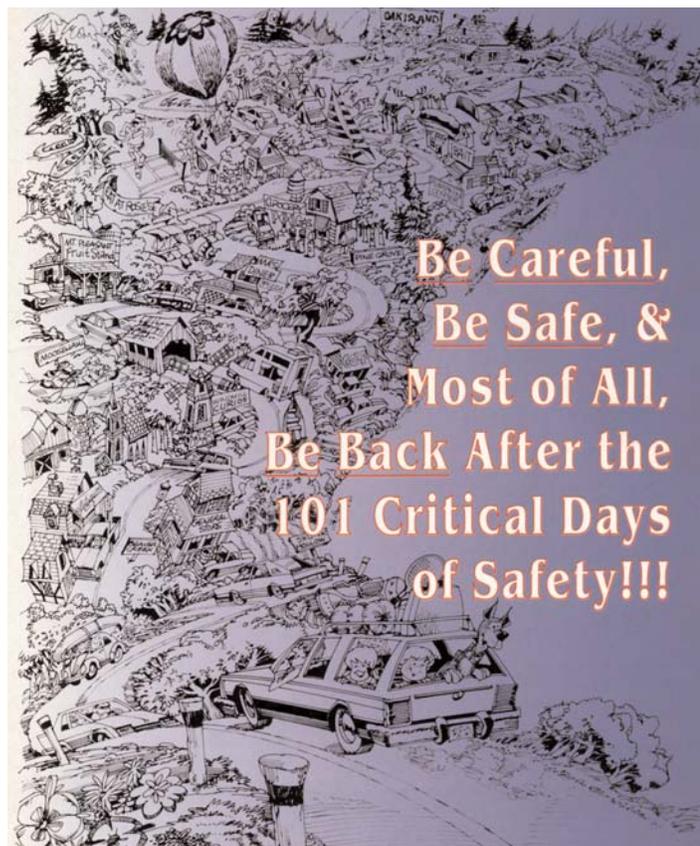
Link said about a quarter of the wing has already made the move to the new suit.

The MSG Processing Center is located in Hangar 9 and is open during regular duty hours. No appointment is necessary to pick up the new suit.



photo by Master Sgt. Clarence Pence, 127th Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Tevis Williams unloads new JLIST chemical warfare suits for distribution at the 127th Mission Support Group Mobility Processing Center.



Commander's Column cont.

we are at war.

I urge you all to know some facts and figures about Air Force accomplishments, especially those of our own units. Within the boundaries of classified information rules and operations security, tell your family, co-workers, friends and neighbors what and how we contribute to the fight as Airmen and Guardsmen. If you don't know those rules or are unsure, talk to our Public Affairs office. They are trained professionals here to help us tell our story. There is far more authenticity to the story and we reap more impact when it comes from you personally rather than an "official press release."

Our Air Force is changing, and we must be prepared to accept those changes, adapt to new missions and be prepared for the force of the future. Like a race horse, we've got to keep the next mile in sight, even as we face new missions brought on by recent conversions, the next round of inspections and the latest requests for deployment support. Selfridge and the 127th Wing have been housed in this community for decades but have seen numerous missions come and go, infrastructure and tenant activity changes; we've got to be looking to the horizon in order to transform with the rest of the Air Force.

Swine Flu Giving You The Blues?

By Lt. Col. Mark Manor
127th Public Health Officer

What's up with pigs getting the flu, and wasn't that some weird Oriental thing many years ago? Influenza (commonly called flu) has been around for several thousand years. In fact, birds, swine, and other animals have been getting the flu for thousands of years. Approximately half of the U.S. pig population has had swine influenza.

Recent studies have shown that 15% to 25% of swine farmers probably have been infected with swine flu viruses, as well as about 10% of veterinarians. Cases of swine flu have most commonly occurred in people with direct exposure to pigs, but some cases of human-to-human transmission is possible.

Seasonal outbreaks of the flu are caused by viruses that are already among people. Influenza is a contagious disease of the lungs that is usually spread (among humans) by infected persons coughing and sneezing. People with weakened immune systems (very young children or the elderly) have higher risks of getting the flu. Each particular type of flu virus is different and when there is a major change in its makeup a bad flu seasons occur.

When an extreme change to the seasonal strains of flu occur, annually developed immunizations fall behind the curve which can lead to a pandemic because no one had any immunity to the new strain. This can make the new flu strain more severe and could change daily life for a time, including limitations on travel and public gatherings, such as the recent restrictions in Mexico. New flu shots can be developed to work against the new strains

of flu, but it takes about four to six months to develop.

What can you do to protect yourself? First, ensure you get your annual flu shot. Proper hand washing with warm soapy water and cough etiquette is particularly important in reducing the spread. People should cover their coughs and sneezes and if sick, they should stay away from others as much as possible. Also, practice good health habits, including eating a balanced diet and getting sufficient rest. Individuals should discuss health concerns with their health care provider, health department or other trusted sources. Finally, prepare as you would for any emergency, keeping a stock of essential supplies at home, such as appropriate food, water, medicines, and a thermometer.

Still worried? Public health officials will share information and prevention and control actions taken place in the community, state and nation. The World Health Organization, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and countries throughout the world are building on existing disease outbreak plans, including those developed for SARS, and a coordinated international effort is underway to develop vaccines and improve the detection and tracking of influenza viruses.

Should there be reason for major concern, health officials will advise the public about what they should do. They would describe the signs and symptoms of the specific disease, and provide steps such as practicing good health habits, proper hygiene, and other methods the public could take to protect themselves against infections. For more information, log on to www.cdc.gov.

Ceremony to say goodbye to the F-16s

On May 2, the 127th Wing will hold a ceremony marking the official stand up of the new flying mission, while saying goodbye to the F-16, a jet that flew out of Selfridge Air National Guard Base for almost 20 years.

The A-10s ability to fly at low altitude and slower speeds and its ability to employ a wide variety of conventional munitions including its 30 mm GAU-8/A seven-barrel Gatling gun, make it an often requested aircraft by ground troops wanting close air support. The aircraft has proven invaluable to the United States and its allies and has participated in Operations Desert Storm, Southern Watch, Provide Comfort, Desert Fox, Noble Anvil, Deny Flight, Deliberate Guard, Allied Force, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

The 107th Fighter Squadron, the fighter-jet-flying "Red Devils" squadron of the 127th Wing, flew F-16s since 1990. They were called upon to patrol the Iraqi no fly-zones from bases in Kuwait, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia. On September 11, 2001, while the 107th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron was landing in Saudi Arabia in support of Operation Southern Watch, the skeleton crew remaining in Michigan responded immediately to the terrorist attacks taking place in the skies of America that morning.

Through tremendous teamwork, within hours the Michigan Air National Guard had F-16s patrolling local skies, armed and prepared to defend the nation against any threat. The squadron

flew 24 hours a day for 23 straight days in November 2001, and later that year was recognized by the Air Force Association as the top flying unit and the Air National Guard's Distinguished Flying Unit. The 127th Wing continuously provided Air Sovereignty Alert non-stop around the clock from Sept 11, 2001 until it transferred the mission to the Ohio Air National Guard F-16s on Oct 1, 2008.

In the Iraq war, the 107th Fighter Squadron became the first U.S. F-16 unit stationed inside Iraq in 2004. The squadron played an instrumental role assisting the Marine ground forces in the Fallujah battles of 2004, and later that year the F-16s were sent to Kirkuk in northern Iraq.

In January 2007, 107th Fighter Squadron "Red Devils" and the 127th Maintenance Group deployed to Balad Air Base, Iraq, as part of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing. (The 332nd AEW has ancestral lineage to the former 332nd Fighter Group's Tuskegee Airmen of World War II who received gunnery training at Selfridge Air National Guard Base.) While deployed the Red Devils successfully flew combat missions including close air support to coalition ground forces in the decisive battle of An Najaf on January 28 that contributed to more than 400 enemy insurgents killed and 100 captured.

The ceremony will be held in Hangar 3 at 3 p.m. on Saturday, May 2. The event is open to all base personnel.

Promotions

Senior Airman

Alexander J. Bastow, 191 MXS
Kenneth W. Kirchoff, 107 FS

Staff Sergeant

Mariam Abdallah, 107 FS
Eric J Burgess, 127 MXS
David L. Deno, 127 CES
Teresa S. Edwards, 127 LRS
Jonathan P. Holtz, 127 MXS
Daniel L. Polk, 127 MXS
Heath D. Postma, 191 AMX
Jason L. Turner, 127 AMX

Technical Sergeant

Richard T. Bastien, 191MXS
Kenneth W. Forche, 127 CES
Matthew T. Huff, 171 ARS
Matthew McCroskery, 127 SFS
George F. Rhea, 127 SFS

Master Sergeant

Hope E. Morphey, 127 ARG
Mark J Nicholls, 127 ARG
Jeffrey A. Wesley, 127 WG

Retirements

TSgt. Shawn P. Clancy, 127 MXS
SSgt. Robert W. Burnham, 127 CS

Newcomers

Shane Cannon, 127 STUFLT
David Jones, 127 STUFLT
Arren Sniderman, 127 STUFLT
AIC Peter A Taylor, 127 AMXS
SrA Stephanie L. Kimball, 127MXS
SSgt. James Baker, 127 AMX
SSgt. Joseph Hopkins, 191 AMXS
SSgt. Michael D, Matthews, 127 MXS
TSgt. Adam English, 127 AMXS
TSgt. Michael N. Finn, 127 AMXS
TSgt. Adam Pittenber, 127 AMXS
TSgt. Brian A. Matthews, 127 MXS
TSgt. Travis J. Morgan, 127 AMX
TSgt. James E. Richards Jr., 127 AMX
TSgt. Vern A. Scheck, 127 MXS
TSgt. Matthew Staup, 127 AMX
MSgt. Stephen Delano, 127 AMX
MSgt. Joseph P. Newcoms, 127 MXS
MSgt. Donald Sillence, 127 MXS
MSgt. Michael S. Staffeld, 127 AMXS
Lt. Col. Paul Beck, 171 ARS

Briefly...

BAH Recertification!

The Pay Entitlements Office needs to have every Military member in the 127 Wing recertify Basic Allowance for Quarters (BAQ).

February drill schedule: the following units' personnel need to recertify their BAQ during Feb UTA: Wing HQs, Medical Group, 107th Fighter Squadron, 127th Operations Group, 127th Operations Support Flight. AF Form 594 must be completed and is available on the e-Publishing.af.mil website.

Joint Federal Travel Regulation (JFTR), Chapter 10, U10100 Par D, reads - "Effective 20 April 1999, after initial certification, a Reserve Component member must recertify dependency status at least every third year from the previous certification or upon a dependency status change." 2009 is the 3rd year mark for the 127th Wing. JFTR, Chapter 10, U10100 Par C, reads - "If a member fails to provide the certification in a timely manner, the housing allowance on behalf of the dependents is stopped at the end of the month in which the certification is due." However, our office will allow 30 extra days to have this requirement com-

pleted.

Each member is required to complete the AF Form 594 (Application and Authorization to Start, Stop or Change Basic Allowance for Quarters (BAQ) or Dependency Redetermination). Failure to do this will result in the termination of your BAH on behalf of dependents. Supporting documentation (i.e. marriage certificate, divorce decree or birth certificate) may be required. The FM office will contact each member who will need to provide supporting documentation after the AF 594 is submitted to our office.

If your BAH entitlement is stopped it will then be started effective the date of receipt of AF Form 594 and will not be retroactive. Exceptions to this policy will be for deployments or formal schools. These will be approved on a case by case basis.

Selfridge Air Show

The Selfridge Air Show will be held on August 22 and 23 with the USAF Thunderbirds headlining the show. For more information, log on to www.selfridgeairshow.org and follow along on Facebook and Myspace!

Base Visual Information/Multimedia Moved to Bldg 303

The base visual information/multimedia office has moved to co-locate with its public affairs partners. The Public Affairs/ Multi media team is now fully functional. The new location is the second floor of building 303, west wing, room 256. Phone numbers to both public affairs and multimedia will remain the same.

127th Wing Website

For the most current information regarding the 127th Wing and Selfridge Air National Guard Base, log on to www.127wg.ang.af.mil. Posted there is news, photos, videos, career and employment opportunities, resource information and more. The Family Support Center has a link off the front page that lists their upcoming programs, to include discounts and free stuff.

WARRIOR DREAMS?

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