

# SELFRIDGE FLYER

Volume 5, Issue 1

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

January/February 2022



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## SPECIAL EVENTS



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. CARLIN LESLIE

The 13-member F-22 Raptor Demonstration Team will headline the Selfridge 2022 Open House and Air Show, demonstrating the performance and capabilities of the world's premier 5th-generation fighter aircraft.

# Date set for 2022 Selfridge Open House and Air Show

**By Phillip Ulmer**  
*127th Wing Public Affairs*

The U.S. Air Force demonstration team that will highlight the Selfridge 2022 Open House and Air Show was recently announced at the International Council of Air Shows Convention in Las Vegas. The Selfridge Air Show, scheduled for July 9-10, 2022, will feature the Air Combat Command F-22 Demonstration Team. The F-22 team performs precision

aerial maneuvers to demonstrate the unique capabilities of the U.S. Air Force fifth-generation fighter aircraft.

The free event will also include the 127th Wing's KC-135 Stratotanker, the A-10 Thunderbolt II, warbirds, and air and ground static displays dating as far back as World War I.

"This air show is our way of opening our doors to the general public so that they can get a glimpse behind the gates as to

what we do here at Selfridge," said Brig. Gen. Rolf Mammen, 127th Wing and Selfridge Air National Guard Base Commander. "This is an opportunity for our Southeast Michigan communities to interact with the Airmen who execute the 127th Wing's missions, supporting our local communities and combatant commanders with global vigilance, reach, and power."

The base last hosted an airshow in 2017 featuring the U.S. Air Force Thunderbird to crowds

in excess of 300,000. The 2020 air show, which was originally scheduled for June 6-7, 2020, was cancelled due to COVID-19.

The full schedule of aerial performers and ground displays is still being developed and will be posted at [www.127wg.af.mil](http://www.127wg.af.mil). For updates and to learn more about the Selfridge 2022 Open House and Air Show, like and follow the 127th Wing on Facebook or download the 127th Wing mobile app via your smart phone.

## SELFRIDGE FLYER

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### SELFRIDGE BASE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

#### Presidents

Drema Isaac (Current)  
Fred Sherrerd (Future)

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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#### Vice Wing Commander

Col. David Spehar

#### Wing Command Chief Master Sergeant

Chief Master Sgt. Richard Gordon

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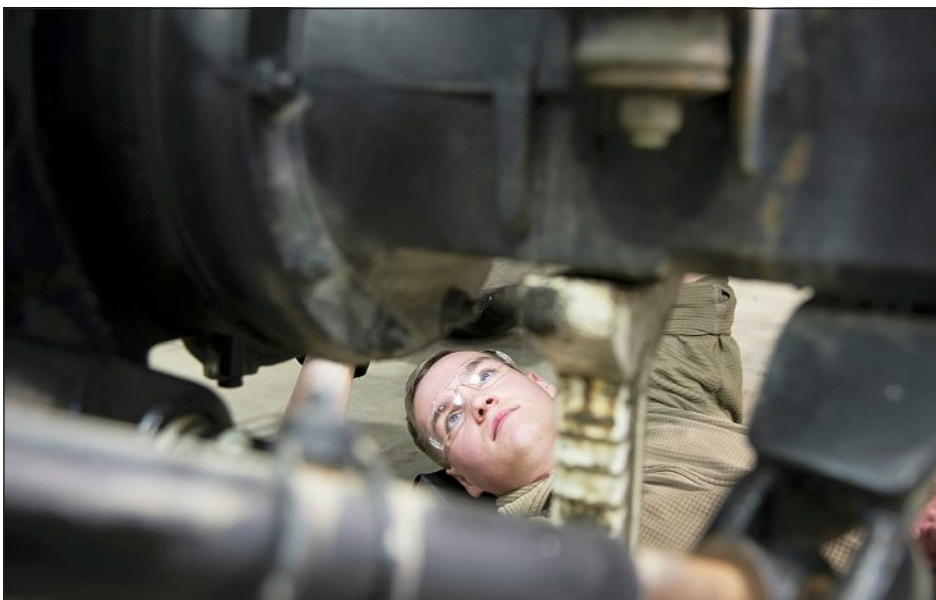
**On the cover:** The 127th Wing recently announced and recognized the 2021 Outstanding Airmen of the Year during a ceremony at Selfridge Air National Guard Base. Pictured left to right are: Brig. Gen. Rolf Mammen, 127th Wing Commander, Airman of the year; Airman First Class Klaudeta Meraja from the 127th Comptroller Flight; Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, Tech. Sgt. Louis Boggs from the 127th Comptroller Flight; Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, Master Sgt. Kenneth Efting from the 127th Maintenance Squadron; 127th Wing Recruiter of the Year, Tech. Sgt. Brandon Hamm, and Chief Master Sgt. Rick Gordon, 127th Wing Command Chief. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. David Kujawa. Photo illustration by Munnaf Joarder.)

## SEEN AROUND SELFRIDGE



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY TERRY L. ATWELL

Staff Sgt. Ephraim Blevins, a crew chief with the 127th Maintenance Squadron, conducts post-flight maintenance on the engine of an A-10 Thunderbolt II at Selfridge Air National Guard Base on Nov. 31, 2021.



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. SAMARA TAYLOR

Airman 1st Class Mason Lees, a heavy mobile equipment mechanic with the 127th Vehicle Maintenance Flight, conducts routine maintenance at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Oct. 26, 2021. Mechanics regularly conduct vehicle maintenance in order to ensure vehicles are ready to support the mission.



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. SAMARA TAYLOR

Airman 1st Class Austin Palmer, 191st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief conducts a preflight maintenance check on a KC-135 Stratotanker at Selfridge Air National Guard Base; Nov. 2, 2021. Crew Chiefs ensure that the aircraft in their care are ready to fly at a moment's notice so that pilots can safely and effectively complete their mission.



Senior Airman Eric Smith, 127th Civil Engineering Squadron, Waters and fuels system maintenance apprentice, connects the cold water line for plumbing installation in offices being constructed for the 127th CE Squadron on Jan. 9, 2022 at Selfridge Air National Guard Base. The 127th Civil Engineering Squadron has job openings available, the job of Water and Fuel Systems Maintenance specialists to manage the plumbing, wastewater collection systems, liquid fuel storage and natural gas distribution systems on the base. If you would like more information on joining the Michigan Air National Guard, call 586-239-5511. Career information is also available at [www.127wg.ang.af.mil/careers](http://www.127wg.ang.af.mil/careers). Information on the Air National Guard is available at [www.goang.com](http://www.goang.com) and on the Air Force as a whole at [www.airforce.com](http://www.airforce.com).

U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. SAMARA TAYLOR

## SEEN AROUND SELFRIDGE



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY TERRY L. ATWELL

**Above:** Senior Airman Branden Devos and Staff Sgt. Michael Heck of the 127th maintenance avionics shop here at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, connect test set power for a maintenance check on an A-10 Thunderbolt II on Nov. 4, 2021. Fighter Aircraft Integrated Avionics specialists work on the equipment that ensures pilots receive the information they need to operate their aircraft.

**Right:** An Airman from the 127th Logistics Readiness Squadron looks to his spotter for guidance as he operates a K-loader during an operations check at Selfridge Air National Guard Base on Dec. 8, 2021. The K-loader allows Aerial Port Team members to load various equipment onto the aircraft ahead of a group deployment.



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

Airman 1st Class James Pratt, 127th Maintenance Squadron, uses a TIG welding system to join two pieces of metal at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Oct. 2, 2021. Pratt is an aircraft technology specialist with the Michigan Air National Guard.



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY TERRY L. ATWELL

## HISTORY

# When Selfridge went to Hollywood

By Joseph N. Mazzara  
Selfridge Military Air Museum

Did you know that at one time, flyers and airplanes from Selfridge Field helped to make the silent movie “Wings” become the first ever “Best Picture” at the Academy Awards?

The year was 1926 and director William A. Wellman was hired by Paramount Pictures to help finish the movie, which was already four-months into production. Wellman had been sought because he was the only director in Hollywood who had flown combat missions during the Great World War. While stationed in France, the American Wellman joined the Lafayette Flying Corps and is credited with three victories and five probables for shooting down enemy aircraft in his Nieuport 24 fighter plane. Because of his combat experience, he promised to make the most accurate war movie possible.

The flying scenes were shot at Kelly Field in San Antonio, Texas. Over 300 pilots were used in the filming, including many from the United States Army Air Corps. Hollywood, being in the business of illusion, painted some Thomas — Morse MB-3 fighter planes to look like the SPAD aircraft (you can see a replica SPAD at the Selfridge Military Air Museum) flown by Americans and painted Curtiss P-1 Hawks to look like German aircraft. Wellman soon realized that he needed more airplanes and better-skilled pilots to perform the aerial stunts. The army called on flyers from the First Pursuit Group at Selfridge Field to do the job. Although there were flyers and airplanes from other Army airfields, the Selfridge flyers were considered the best pilots and also served as technical advisors to the film.

One Selfridge Field pilot, 2nd Lieutenant Clarence “Bill” Irvine served as director Wellman’s personal technical advisor. One of his responsibilities was to engineer the camera systems so that the close-ups would look realistic and the cameras would work correctly. He also advised on the dogfight scenes. Although Lt. Irvine’s work was mostly performed on the ground, he took to the skies to fill-in after a stunt pilot was injured and no longer able to fly. Because of Lt. Irvine’s technical advice and Wellman’s dedication to accuracy, the film won an Oscar for Engineering Effects and became the standard for all future aviation movies.

Another Selfridge Field pilot who flew for the film was Cadet Charles M. Wisely. Wisely was an experienced flyer with 1,275 hours of flying time, but he was recruited to the mission primarily for his mechanical skills, which were legendary. Although only a Cadet in the regular army, Wisely was a 1st Lieutenant in the reserves. He had also participated in the Wilkins — Detroit — Arctic expedition the previous summer, for which Selfridge Field earned many accolades.

For the filming, Lt. Wisely flew one of the Curtiss P-1 Hawks made to look like a German fighter aircraft. For one shot, he was flying at a high rate of speed at very low altitude when something went wrong. His airplane crashed to the ground and Lt. Wisely was killed instantly. After the accident, director Wellman feared that the pro-

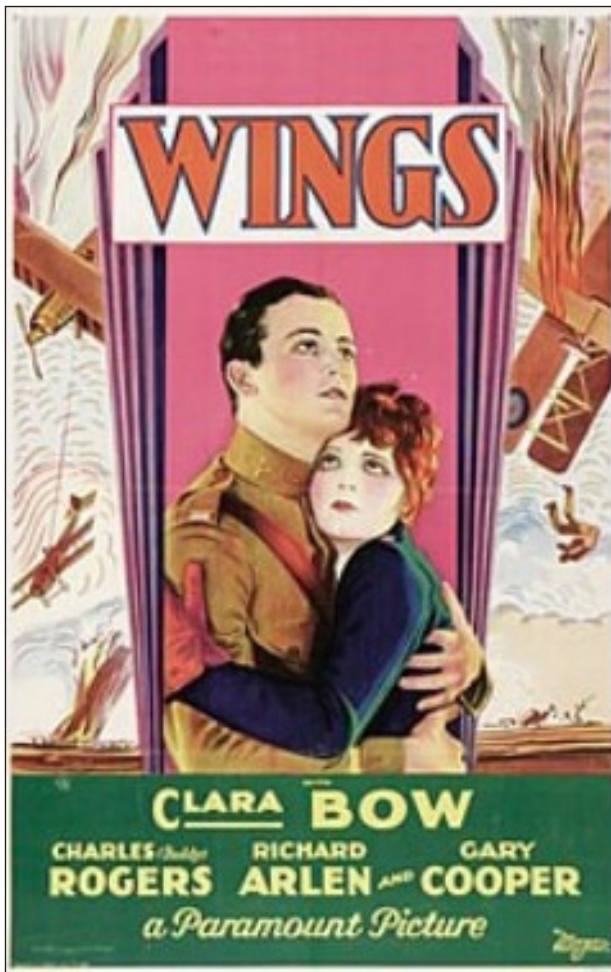


PHOTO COURTESY OF SELFRIDGE MILITARY AIR MUSEUM

Wings won the first ever Oscar for Best Picture, which was then called “Best Picture, Production.” To date, it is the only silent film to have done so.

duction would be shut down and the army flyers withdrawn. Instead, the U.S. Army determined that Lt. Wisely was at fault for the crash and the movie continued filming with other army pilots.

“Wings” premiered in New York City on August 12, 1927 where it ran for 63 weeks before moving on to wider distribution around the country. The movie was a huge success as Americans were still fascinated with flight ever since Charles Lindbergh’s cross-Atlantic flight earlier that year.

On May 16, 1929 the very first Academy Award ceremony was held to honor the achievements of 1927 and 1928. “Wings” won the first ever Oscar for Best Picture, which was then called “Best Picture, Production.” To date, it is the only silent film to have done so. It won a second award for Best Engineering Effects due in part to the technical advising of Selfridge Field’s Lt. Bill Irvine.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SELFRIDGE MILITARY AIR MUSEUM

This Thomas-Morse MB-3 was flown by Billy Mitchell at Selfridge Field.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SELFRIDGE MILITARY AIR MUSEUM

Director William A. Wellman was hired in 1926 by Paramount Pictures to help finish the film “Wings,” which was already four-months into production.

Those wondering what Selfridge Field’s earliest pilots and airplanes looked like in action can rent the movie and enjoy a great film while witnessing a part of Selfridge history being made.

## AIRMAN PROFILE

# Airman says military experience taught him how to 'push past mental barriers'

By Tech. Sgt. Samara Taylor  
127th Wing Public Affairs

Joining the military can be a daunting choice for some high schoolers, but it was not, for now, Airman 1st Class Xerrion Porter. He had a clear view of what he wanted and saw that joining the Air National Guard was a way to get him there.

"Xerrion had sought me out," said Tech. Sgt. Brandon Hamm with the 127th Mission Support Group Production Recruiter. "Most recruits are reluctant because of the unknown," said Hamm. "That was not the case for Porter. He knew exactly what he wanted."

He currently serves as a materials management apprentice with the 127th Logistics Readiness Squadron. Porter works with members of Selfridge to ensure they have essential materials for deployment.

Porter said he was glad he took the leap of faith. Being in the military has taught him to be a better person.

"The military has taught me to push past my mental barriers," said Porter. As a result, the military boot camp experience has helped him discover his abilities. Porter completed

a military-technical school program in April 2021. Through the program, he earned college credits that can be applied towards his degree.

A traditional Guardsman generally serves one weekend per month and two weeks per year.

Porter is currently attending school at Eastern Michigan, majoring in criminal justice. His goal is to become a police officer.

Porter qualifies for college benefits; he is currently using his Montgomery GI Bill, which is \$30,000 that can be used over his six-year enlistment term. As a Michigan Air National Guard (ANG) member, financial assistance for college is available through the Montgomery/Post 9-11 G. I. Bill. In addition to up to \$14,000 in Tuition Assistance each year.

He would encourage his peers to join and feel he made the right choice by joining the Michigan Air National Guard.

If you want more information on joining the Michigan Air National Guard, call 586-239-5511. Career information is also available at [www.127wg.ang.af.mil/careers](http://www.127wg.ang.af.mil/careers). Information on the Air National Guard is available at [www.goang.com](http://www.goang.com). For information on the Air Force, visit [www.airforce.com](http://www.airforce.com).



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. SAMARA TAYLOR

Airman 1st Class Xerrion Porter, a 127th Logistic Readiness Squadron, materials management journeyman inspects equipment from Tech. Sgt. John Kerschenheiter, 191st Maintenance Squadron, at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Nov. 6, 2021. Kerschenheiter is out-processing from the Michigan Air National Guard and returning his mission-oriented protective posture gear to Porter, who recently completed materials management tech school, December 2020. Kerschenheiter is retiring after 28 years of service. Kerschenheiter considers Selfridge to be a workplace of choice and advises Porter, "I hope you get to see the world as I have," said Kerschenheiter. "Being in the guard has been a blessing in my life."

## RECRUITING

# Michigan Air National Guard is hiring

By Tech. Sgt. Samara Taylor  
127th Wing Public Affairs

Now would be a good time if you ever thought about joining the military. The Michigan Air National Guard (ANG) has positions available, some of which include a sign-on bonus. A \$20,000 sign-on bonus for a fully qualified applicant and a \$15,000 bonus for a member electing to retrain into a bonus Air Force Specialty Code. The 127th Maintenance Squadron has an Aircraft Hydraulic Systems apprentice position, one among several AFSC, with a sign-on bonus for the fiscal year of 2022.

The ANG will provide training in your career field of choice.

Through valuable training, the hydraulic system specialist will become knowledgeable of mechanical systems on the aircraft. In addition, the trainee would repair, remove, replace, and maintain hydraulic systems, which are critical to the plane leaving the ground to conduct in-flight missions.

Airman 1st Class Austin Bollinger, with the 127th Maintenance Squadron, hydraulics systems apprentice, is a traditional guardsman who serves once a month with his unit. The pay he earns by serving two days each

month is four active duty days. Bollinger said he is fulfilled in his work as an apprentice. When he sees an A-10 Thunderbolt II take-off, Bollinger said he takes pride in his career, knowing that his efforts are a part of the mission to fly, fight and win.

"To be successful in this position, one should have a mechanical aptitude and a willingness to learn," said Bollinger.

Airmen will have the opportunity for advancement within their unit. Airmen have more responsibility, authority, and additional pay with a promotion.

Tech. Sgt. Drew Reynolds, of the 127th Maintenance Squad-

ron, hydraulic systems journeyman, has been in the military for 15 years and enjoys the benefits the military offers to him and his family. Reynolds has camaraderie within his unit. "Our shop is close-knit; we look out for each other," said Reynolds.

For your part-time service, you can earn a military retirement. To be eligible for retirement, one must complete 20 years of satisfactory military service. All prior service counts towards retirement.

Master Sgt. Jerry McCarthy, 127th Maintenance Squadron, hydraulic systems supervisor, has been with the unit for more

than 30 years. "I have enjoyed the mission of what we do as a unit," McCarthy said. "We have worked well together as a team."

If you would like more information on joining the Michigan Air National Guard, call recruiting at 586-239-5511. If you are a Michigan Air National Guard member and would like to retrain, contact the 127th Wing retention office at 1-586-239-4031; career information is also available at [www.127wg.ang.af.mil/careers](http://www.127wg.ang.af.mil/careers). Information on the Air National Guard is available at [www.goang.com](http://www.goang.com) and on the Air Force as a whole at [www.airforce.com](http://www.airforce.com).

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