

Notes 'n Stuff

selfridge (army) community service 1 feb '04

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SELFRIDGE COMMUNITY SERVICE EVENTS

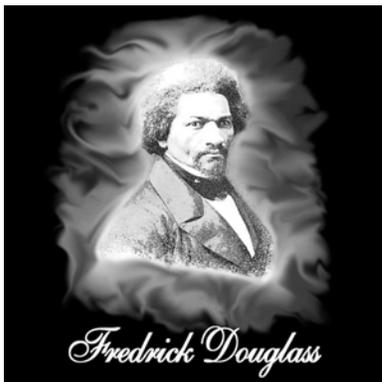
Feb 2004					
DAY	EVENT	LOCATION	TIMES	INFO	NUMBERS
5	Newcomers briefing	B 780/106	0830	Kevin	307-5949
5,12,19	Smoking Cessation (6 sessions)	B 780/104	0800	Anna	307-5211
12	Ask the Doc. . .Prostate health	B 780/104	1100	Anna	307-5211
	VA Outreach Counselor (Tuesdays)	B 780		Anna	307-5211
26	Selfridge Family Forum Training	Vandenberg	1000	Dave	307-5903
28	Army Family Team Building Level I	Vandenberg	0800	Dave	307-5903
	Employment Counselor (every Weds)	B 780/16		Kevin	307-5949
Mar 2004					
DAY	EVENT	LOCATION	TIMES	INFO	NUMBERS
4	Newcomer's Briefing	780	0830	Kevin	307-4258
25	15th Selfridge Family Forum	Vandenberg	0730	Dave	307-5903
	VA Outreach Counselor (Tuesdays)	B 780		Anna	307-5211
	Employment Counselor (every Weds)	B 780/16		Kevin	307-5949



*African-American
History Month*

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DEPLOYMENT INFO SENT OUT

To better prepare reserves, and guardsmen and their families for deployment, Selfridge Community Service (SCS) mailed CD's with information, forms and videos. "The CD is not the end all or be all of deployment information, but it gives the unit and families a fast means to locate what will be necessary" said Camille Todor, the SCS director. The CD contains handouts, slideshows, and videos on deployment and reunion. If your unit is interested in the CD, there are copies remaining. Send us a message at SCS@tacom.army.mil to request your copy.

ARMY FAMILY TEAM BUILDING (AFTB) CLASS

Saturday 28 Feb 04 there will be the first Level I AFTB class offered at Selfridge in quite a while. AFTB introduces new family members, to the Army culture they have become a part of. Level I covers ranks and insignias, support programs, etiquette, and other useful information to avoid the embarrassment of learning the hard way. Child care is provided. To sign up call Dave at (586) 307-5903

COLLEGE GRANT UP FOR GRABS

(Editor's note, The Emergency Financial Assistance (EFA) office at Selfridge Community Service handles request for Air Force Aid loans. Contact the EFA at 586 307-4514)

The Air Force Aid Society (AFAS) plans to award at least 4,000 grants to dependents of Air Force members for their college education through the General Henry H. Arnold Education Grant Program.

Applications for these \$1,500 need-based grants are still available from the Society's website, www.afas.org, but the submission deadline is rapidly approaching. Completed forms must be received by AFAS no later than March 12, 2004.

The grant program is open to dependent children of active duty, active guard/reserve, retired and deceased Air Force members. Spouses of active duty members and surviving spouses of deceased personnel are also eligible. All applicants must be enrolled as full-time undergraduates at an accredited college or university during the 2004-2005 academic year, and are required to maintain a minimum 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA).

Selection is heavily based on cost of attendance, family income, and is dependent on the number of eligible applicants competing. Final need assessment will be determined by an independent agency.

All interested students are encouraged to review full eligibility requirements, procedures and application instructions on the Society's website or call 1(800) 429-9475 for an application brochure.

The Air Force Aid Society, a non-profit organization, is the official charity of the U.S. Air Force and has been providing emergency and education assistance to Air Force families for more than 60 years. From Air Force Retiree News Service

GIVING BACK



He is on the sidelines, yelling instructions and encouragement to his wrestlers of L'Anse Creuse High School North (LCN). "Coach Acosta has improved my wrestling and the LCN wrestling program" says Senior Nate Michayluk Co-captain of the LCN wrestling team. "Because he wrestled in Florida, he brings new moves we have not seen in Michigan"

Coach Brandon Acosta, says he "wants to provide his high school wrestlers a positive role model and a mentor". He credits wrestling with providing him the discipline and motivation to succeed. Born in the inner city of New York City, sports was a positive influence in his developmental years. Later when his family moved to Florida, Brandon wrestled in jr high school and high school.

By coaching high school wrestlers, Brandon wants to give back to the sport that helped him so much. He was a great student, earning two Florida state high school wrestling championships and being named the state tournament MVP, both years and an undefeated senior season.

"Wrestling teaches so much and has so much to offer" Brandon states. His definition of success is when an individual succeeds. "A win/lost record only tells part of the story". The wrestler gradually learns to piece moves together in a winning combination. It's this learning that teaches perseverance, hard work and self esteem.

His motto? "Never give up", it was posted in his high school wrestling room, and has guided him through life.

What is the highlight of his wrestling career? Not his personal high school and college wrestling successes, but giving back to the sport and the "happiness he gets when a young wrestler learns how to use a move; and that hard work and practice does pay off.

Brandon is not a teacher, in his day job he is known as Captain Acosta, U.S. Air Force. Capt. Acosta pilots C-130's for the 171 Airlift Squadron at Selfridge Air National Guard Base. He flies support for various military units throughout the world. Sometimes he is not able to attend practice, but catches up when returns. Capt. Brandon Acosta, making a difference in his community.

MORE SCHOLARSHIPS

Didn't find any "college cash" in your stocking? Don't worry. There's still time to apply for Scholarships for Military Children money. Applications for the \$1,500 scholarships are due at the nearest commissary by close of business Feb. 18. At least one scholarship will be awarded at every commissary location with qualified applicants.

The application can be downloaded through a link on the front page of <http://www.commissaries.com> or downloaded directly from <http://www.militaryscholar.org> and filled out by hand or on the computer. Copies of the application are also available at commissaries worldwide.

Students should put on their thinking caps and give it their best shot when it comes to writing the scholarship essay. "In past years the essay has been a key factor in deciding among

the many outstanding applicants," said program liaison Edna Hoogewind, Defense Commissary Agency. This year's topic is "What aspect of military life has had the greatest influence on you?" Applications must be in the store by close of business on Feb. 18, and students who are not hand-delivering applications are advised to use a delivery method that supplies a return receipt. After March 29, applicants may visit <http://www.militaryscholar.org> and click on the "Verification of Receipt" section. Scholarship managers will respond to "Verification of Receipt" e-mails until June 15.

Applicants should check all materials carefully for simple things, like making sure the application is signed or that it's the 2004 application, not one from previous years.

The scholarship program is open to unmarried children under the age of 21 (23 if enrolled in school) of active duty personnel, Reserve, Guard and retired military. Eligibility will be determined using the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) database. Applicants should ensure that they, as well as their sponsor, are currently enrolled in the DEERS database and have a current ID card.

The applicant must be planning to attend, or already attending, an accredited college or university full-time in the fall term of 2004, or enrolled in a program of studies designed to transfer directly into a four-year program. Additional instructions can be found on the application or at <http://www.militaryscholar.org>. . . .

The Scholarships for Military Children program has awarded nearly 1,500 scholarships and nearly \$2 million since the first awards in 2001. Scholarships are funded through the voluntary donations of the various manufacturers, brokers and suppliers that sell products in commissaries. From Air Force Retiree News Service

YES, ANOTHER SCHOLARSHIP

The Selfridge Spouse Club (SSC) is a club that enthusiastically supports the Selfridge community. Members work diligently throughout the year organizing various fund-raisers. Our proceeds provide scholarships to military family members to continue their education as well as donations to schools and local service organizations attended by children from the Selfridge military community.

requests for Community Benefit funds should be restricted to only those organizations that directly affect the children of the Selfridge military community. Letters inviting organizations to request funds will go out in the middle of December to local schools, scouting organizations and community agencies. Scholarship applications will be available on December 15th.

Sample applications will be in the counselor's offices of our local high school for reference purposes. Applications can be obtained on-line via the Selfridge web site: http://www.selfridge.army.mil/selfridge_spouse.htm. All applications for Scholarships and Community Benefits must be postmarked no later than March 1, 2004 .

AF ANNOUNCES PROM SWEEPSTAKES

The Air Force has announced the fourth annual "Win the Perfect Prom Sweepstakes," which runs through Feb. 29 for high school students. The grand prize will be an all-expenses-paid prom and a live prom concert by recording artists Wakefield. The grand-prize winner will be drawn at random March 1, and will receive a \$1,500 cash allowance for personal expenses such as a tuxedo rental or a new dress, glamour makeover, corsage or boutonniere, or other expenses.

The prizewinner also will ride to the prom in a Hummer limousine. The winner's high school will receive \$20,000 to cover prom expenses such as banquet facility rental, catering, decorating, photography, mementos and a disc jockey. Ten first-place winners will each receive a \$500 allowance for personal prom expenses, while 25 second-place winners will each get \$150. Weekly prizes of Wakefield's compact discs also will be given away. Visit www.airforce.com or www.perfectproms.com. From Armed Forces News Issue: Friday: December 19, 2003

USS MICHIGAN AWARDED THE BATTLE 'E'



By Lt. Barbara Mertz, Naval Submarine Base Bangor Public Affairs

SILVERDALE, Wash. (NNS) -- Capt. Robert Schuetz, Commander, Submarine Squadron 17 presented USS Michigan (SSBN 727) with the 2003 Battle Efficiency (Battle "E") Award Jan. 22. Cmdr. Thomas Calabrese, commanding officer of Michigan, accepted the award on behalf of the boat's Sailors. . . .

"Each crew member of an award winner can be justifiably proud of his contribution to improve the Pacific Submarine Force readiness," said Rear Adm. Paul Sullivan, Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet in a congratulatory message. "I am extremely proud of your outstanding performance. Well done and congratulations."

The Ohio-class submarine USS MICHIGAN (SSBN 727) enters the intermediate maintenance facility at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard for an engineered refueling overhaul and conversion into a guided missile submarine (SSGN), Feb. 2, 2004. DoD photo, U.S. Navy. (Released)

ITERESTING WEBSITES

Balloonmolecules.com

<http://www.balloonmolecules.com/>

Designed by a trio of scientists working in Germany (Marcus Rehbein, Asif Karim, and Rolf Eckhardt), this fun and educational website is designed to facilitate the use of balloons in scientific education. More specifically, the site offers detailed instruction on how to create a variety of molecule models out of balloons, such as the octahedron, the diamond, the graphite lattice, and the Buckminster Fullerene. The site begins with a brief introduction to the art of balloon manipulation, then continues on to offer detailed visual and written explanations of how to create the knots that allow for the creation of some of the more complex balloon models. The site also contains a nice FAQ section, which answers some basic questions about the technique of creating balloon molecules. Finally, there is an online forum where visitors may submit queries and read the suggestions and comments of other visitors From The Scout Report, Copyright Internet Scout Project 1994-2003. <http://scout.wisc.edu/>

BookBrowse.com

<http://www.bookbrowse.com/>

Given that thousands of books are published each and ever year, it may be overwhelming for the discerning reader to separate the wheat from the chaff. Stepping into the fray (since 1997) is BookBrowse.com, started in 1997 by Davina Morgan-Witts and her husband Paul. As the site notes, "Bookbrowse carefully selects from the most interesting current books and provides you with multiple reviews and a substantial excerpt of each." Visitors to the site can browse titles by genre, read a list of the 2003 Favorite Books, examine reading guides for a host of titles, and view a list of recent books featured on the site. Another fun feature is the interview section, where users can peruse interview sessions with Isabel Allende, Harold Bloom, Geraldine Brooks, J.A. Jance, and 226 others. Finally, visitors can also sign up to receive the free e-newsletter, which is sent out weekly throughout most of the year.

>From The Scout Report, Copyright Internet Scout Project 1994-2003. <http://scout.wisc.edu/>

ARMAY AUGMENTEES LEAVE MINOT

By Rebecca Anne Fritz 5th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

MINOT AIR FORCE BASE, N.D. (ACCNS) - For the past 11 months, members of Minot's 5th Security Forces Squadron have had a new type of augmentee helping them protect the base.

But today, the 29 members of the North Dakota Army National Guard's 141st Engineering Combat Battalion are headed home. Army Spc. Scott Schumacher said his time at Minot was both difficult and rewarding. "It was challenging being away from my family, but it was worth it knowing I was serving both my country and home state," he said.

First Lt. Richard Milke, Detachment 1, Company A, 141st Engineering Combat Battalion, agreed with Schumacher's sentiment. Newly married, Lieutenant Milke is looking forward to going home to his wife and starting back up with his civilian lifestyle.

"In my opinion, we're all looking forward to going home," Lieutenant Milke said. "This time taught us all good lessons and a lot about ourselves." Asked to learn not only a different career

field but also a different military branch's standards, members of the battalion helped the 5th SFS meet deployment requirements for Operation Iraqi Freedom by replacing installation entry controllers at the gates.

Lieutenant Milke said even though the guardsmen faced some challenges because of different regulations, he believes that the majority would choose to serve side-by-side with Minot airmen again.

Ten augmentees have volunteered to stay on another year to lend a hand to the 5th SFS. "I think this whole experience gave us a better perspective of what other services do. It gave us all experience in a joint operation," Lieutenant Milke said. "I hope that as more and more requests for help from other services [came down], they will consider the National Guard. And if called up again myself, and given the choice, I would pick to return to the Air Force base."

IRS HELPS MILITARY GET NEW TAX BREAKS

IR-2003-132, Nov. 24, 2003

WASHINGTON -- The Internal Revenue Service is helping taxpayers use a new law providing income exclusions for death benefit payments and certain home sales. Both provisions are retroactive, so some qualifying taxpayers must file amended returns to claim these tax breaks. The IRS asks them to put the words "Military Family Tax Relief Act" in red at the top of such returns to speed processing.

The new law doubled the benefit paid to survivors of deceased Armed Forces members to \$12,000, made the entire amount tax-free and made the changes effective for deaths occurring after Sept. 10, 2001. Previously, only \$3,000 was tax-free. Recipients who already paid tax on benefits received for deaths after the effective date may file an amended return on Form 1040X, reducing their adjusted gross income by the \$3,000 they had reported as taxable. Those who receive such "gratuity" benefits in 2003 and future years will not have to report them on their tax returns.

Taxpayers may exclude gain on a home sale, provided they have owned and used the home as a principal residence for two of the five years before the sale. A reduced maximum exclusion may apply to those who satisfy part of the two-year rule. Military personnel often retain ownership of a home while away on duty but eventually sell it without returning to live in it, perhaps failing the use test completely.

The new law allows persons on qualified extended duty in the U.S. Armed Services or the Foreign Service to suspend this five-year test period for up to 10 years of such duty time. A taxpayer is on qualified extended duty when at a duty station that is at least 50 miles from the residence sold, or when residing under orders in government housing, for more than 90 days or for an indefinite period.

This change applies to home sales after May 6, 1997. A taxpayer may use this provision for only one property at a time and may exclude gain on only one home sale in any two-year period. Although an amended return must usually be filed within three years of the original return's due date, the law gives qualifying taxpayers who sold a home before 2001 until Nov. 10, 2004, to file an amended return claiming the exclusion.

A taxpayer may use Form 4506, "Request for Copy or Transcript of Return," to get an earlier year's tax return. This form and Form 1040X are available on the IRS Web site at www.irs.gov, or by calling 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676).

BLUE ANGELS NEED ENLISTED APPLICATIONS

From Blue Angels Public Affairs

EL CENTRO, Calif. (NNS) -- The Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron (Blue Angels) announced there is a shortage of qualified applications for the 2005 season. The application deadline is April 1, 2004, and selection results will be available no later than June 1, 2004.

According to Chief Aviation Electrician's Mate (AW) Louis Arrazola, Blue Angels command career counselor and applications chief, various aviation ratings are needed to fill billets for the 2005 season.

"We put the word out two months early last November to give West Coast Sailors an opportunity to interview while we're doing our winter training in El Centro, Calif.," he said. "That was done to save them the money for the cost of travel to Pensacola, Fla."

All Navy personnel with projected rotation dates in July 2004 through February 2005 are being considered, but others may apply, pending Blue Angels and detailee approval. Personnel selected will normally detach from their present command in October 2004 and report in mid-November 2004.

Arrazola also said serving with the Blue Angels is a good opportunity for Sailors to demonstrate their talent and skills to millions of spectators throughout North America.

"This is a great opportunity to showcase the professionalism the Navy and Marine Corps have to offer," he said. "It is also a great chance to travel throughout the United States and Canada."

Arrazola said there are open billets for aviation machinist's mate (AD) E-5 through E-7 levels, aviation electrician's mate (AE) E-4 through E-6 levels, aviation structural mechanic (AM) E-4 through E-6, aviation structural mechanic (equipment) (AME) E-5 level, aviation electronics technician (AT) E-4 through E-6 levels, aviation maintenance administrationman (AZ) E-5 through E-7 levels, storekeeper (SK) E-5 through E-6 levels, and yeoman (YN) E-5 level. YN billets are Type 1 shore duty, and only YNs completing a sea duty tour may apply. A normal tour of duty is three years and is considered Type 2 sea duty for rotational purposes. Outstanding E-4 performers will be considered.

Application details are outlined in NAVADMIN 298/03. Additional information and applications are available at www.blueangels.navy.mil or by contacting Arrazola from January to March 2004 at DSN 658-2551/2505 or commercial (760) 339-2551/2505. After March 2004, contact him at DSN 922-2583 ext. 152 or commercial (850) 452-2583 ext. 152 or by e-mail at louis.arrazola@navy.mil.

FREE FILE IMPROVEMENTS DETAILED

WASHINGTON - The Internal Revenue Service, Treasury Department and the Office of Management and Budget unveiled a series of improvements today designed to make the Free File program easier to use for more taxpayers. Now starting its second year, the Free File program lets millions of taxpayers prepare and file their federal taxes on-line for free.

Free File, which is available at IRS.gov, gives taxpayers free access to the benefits of online tax preparation and e-filing. Filing taxes electronically is easy, fast and secure. And, people

receive their refunds in half the time of a paper return. Free File applies only to the federal tax return.

Free File was created last year in partnership with an alliance of tax software companies to offer free online preparation and e-filing services to at least 60 percent of the nation's 130 million taxpayers. Free File, which was used by 2.8 million taxpayers last year, was principally designed to advance and increase e-filing receipts and to assist taxpayers, particularly in underserved and disadvantaged communities.

Among the improvements is an agreement that each company in the Free File Alliance will fully and clearly disclose its customer service options and all the forms and schedules they support. Taxpayers are under no obligation to purchase any fee-based services IV such as an Individual Retirement Account or Refund Anticipation Loan - in order to use the Free File services.

"Make no mistake -- no one likes paying taxes -- it's too confusing and too time consuming. But Free File makes this onerous task a good bit easier and less burdensome. Free File is an easy, fast and secure way for citizens to file taxes, and also allows Americans to get refunds in half the time. The efficiency of Free File saves both taxpayers and the IRS money," stated Treasury Secretary John W. Snow. . . .

Taxpayers are encouraged to review all 16 company offerings by visiting "Free File" at IRS.gov. While each company sets its own qualifying criteria for their free service, the majority of the offerings are designed to serve lower-income individuals (such as Form 1040 EZ Filers) or families who claim the Earned Income Tax Credit. Other offers are based on the individual's age, military service or state residency. . . .

Many of the improvements made to Free File for 2004 are a direct result of feedback received from taxpayers during last year's program. Other program enhancements were made by the companies themselves. Some improvements include:

- Disclose Customer Service Options. Each provider will readily display their customer service options and associated fees, if any. This disclosure will be available on each of the company's Free File websites.
- Disclose Tax Forms and Schedules. Each company will disclose the tax forms and schedules associated with their free offering so taxpayers will know immediately if an offering is right for them.
- Promotional Codes. Companies will not utilize any promotion codes or rebates as the methodology for providing free services. Each tax software program is designed to automatically notify the taxpayer if he or she is (or is not) eligible for a particular offering based on the information the taxpayer inputs (such as adjusted gross income).
- Clearer Up-front Instructions. Many of the companies will have clearer instructions available to clearly define up front what services and features are offered.
- Improvements Made to Reduce Concerns About Advertising. We have worked with the providers to address the perception that taxpayers received unsolicited advertising. Taxpayers are under no obligation to purchase any product or service to use Free File, and taxpayer information and data remains protected by one of the government's toughest standards.
- Guaranteed Calculations. All companies will guarantee the accuracy of the calculations made by their software. Any IRS penalties and interests incurred as a result of a miscalculation will be paid by the company.
- Free Printing of Completed Tax Return. Taxpayers who qualify and use one of the free services will be allowed to print their completed tax return for free on their personal computer.

The combined changes are designed to increase the program's level of performance and improve the taxpayer's overall tax preparation and e-filing experience. Each company is responsible for its own tax software program. Taxpayers who have issues with the software should contact the company to resolve the problem. If taxpayers encounter systemic problems that are not resolved, they can e-mail the IRS at: helpdesk@speedymail.com.

The IRS expects Free File will increase the public's interest in electronic filing. Surveys indicate a high public satisfaction rate with IRS e-file. IRS e-file users have a higher satisfaction rate than those who still use paper returns, according to the American Customer Satisfaction Index, which measures private-sector and public-sector services. Last year, approximately 53 million taxpayers used IRS e-file.

FAMILY FORUM 2004 SCHEDULED

Thursday 25 March 2004 in Vandenberg Conference Center from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. will be the 15th annual forum held at Selfridge. The forum is designed for delegates from the community to gather into four workgroups and discuss issues affecting the Selfridge / Military community and to identify solutions. Working with subject matter experts, the forum allows the delegates to participate in improving their community. Any issue that cannot be solved at the U.S. Garrison-Michigan level is forwarded to a higher HQ for study. Several issues from Selfridge made it to the Department of the Army level and one notable idea adopted is the Military Thrift Savings Plan. First identified at SFF 1995. For information contact Dave at (586) 307-5903

WORTH REPEATING

Love is a game that two can play and both win. ~Eva Gabor



CAPTION CONTEST



Didn't get a single caption this time, I'll put this one away for another edition.

Below is this edition's photo



Editor Dave Colangelo

U.S. Army Garrison-Michigan

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