

Did you know?

In the U.S., gifts are exchanged on Christmas Day in a sort of compromise of Dutch, German and British gift-giving customs.



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AMC facts

This year, there have been 17 completed suicides in the AF, compared to 34 at this same time last year. That's a 50% drop.



From our homes to yours -



Team Charleston wishes everyone the happiest of holiday seasons . . .

Staff Sgt. Andrew Rodier

AF, industry team up for quick retrofit of C-17 landing gear

by 1st Lt. Dave Huxsoll
Aeronautical System Center Public Affairs

The Air Force, Boeing, and two Ohio companies have teamed up to dramatically reduce the time needed to retrofit landing gear on some C-17 Globemaster IIIs.

The C-17 System Program Office here, along with the Boeing Company and subcontractors Eagle Tool and Machine Company, Springfield, Ohio, and BF Goodrich Aerospace, Cleveland, came together and accomplished in just two months what was originally scheduled to take 16 months.

The first 39 of the 56 C-17s in the inventory were delivered to the Air Force with an undetected design flaw that led to premature failures of the trunnion collar, a component of the main landing gear which guides gear rotation up and down. The trunnion collar attaches the main landing gear post to the fuselage.

Durability testing failure in February 1997 showed the original trunnion collar design would not last for the full 30-year service life of the C-17. Since this test regime was leading the actual fleet usage rate, starting with aircraft number 40, all new aircraft have re-designed forward main landing gear trunnion collars. A retrofit program was established for the

see C-17, page 3

USO honors Charleston hero

By Staff Sgt. Pamela Smith
437 AW Public Affairs

Tech. Sgt. James Morrison II, a special operations flight engineer assigned to the 16th Airlift Squadron, was given the United Service Organization Airman of the Year Award Dec. 10 for his efforts in saving the lives of 92 military members during a training mission in June 1998.

Morrison was performing scanner duties on a modified C-141B during a joint special operations exercise when a signal flare was accidentally launched. The flare ended up beneath one of the special operations vehicles loaded with fuel and ammunition.

Without thinking, Morrison moved the 83 Army special operations members and other C-141 crewmembers away from the vehicle as the front end burst into flames. Morrison grabbed a fire extinguisher, crawled to the vehicle and swept the flare from underneath the vehicle.

"I feel I was just doing my job," said Morrison, who also received the Pitsenbarger Award for his actions, "and that's why I feel very fortunate to be receiving these prestigious awards."

Morrison credits his quick reaction during the in-flight emergency to his Air Force training. "It's all about training. We as Air Force members fight like we train and train like we fight," he said.

Morrison was nominated for the award by Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Jim Finch and it was presented at the 1999 USO Holiday Gala aboard the Intrepid Sea-Air-Space

Museum in New York City by Defense Secretary William Cohen.

"I had no idea Cohen was going to present the award," said Morrison. "I'm still numbed by the whole experience."

The awards banquet also gave Morrison the opportunity to fulfill a lifelong dream when he met Sen. John Glenn.

"He was a boyhood hero of mine," Morrison said. "Meeting him was better than receiving the award."



Staff Sgt. Pamela Smith

Tech. Sgt. Jim Morrison was presented with two awards, the Pitsenbarger Award (left) and the USO Airman of the Year Award, for his actions during a training mission in June 1998.