

# 1 CTCS wins AFA's Gill Robb Wilson Award

By Tech. Sgt. Daniel Murphy  
437 AW Public Affairs

The 1<sup>st</sup> Combat Camera Squadron was awarded the 1999 Air Force Association's Gill Robb Wilson Award Sept. 13 in a ceremony in Washington, D.C. The award is presented annually for outstanding achievement in the field of Arts and Letters.

"Lt. Col. Rory S. Kinney, commander, 1<sup>st</sup> Combat Camera Squadron, accepted the award on behalf of the squadron," said 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Jimmie Griffin, combat photography element chief. "Kinney attended the award ceremony with a cross section of personnel from our unit."

The squadron was recognized for the outstanding work of its still photographers and videographers who acquire, transmit, and exploit near real-time still and motion imagery to document operations and support commanders at all levels, according to the award.

"The award was mainly presented for our work in the

Kosovo conflict," said Griffin. "It was the real-time turnover of the information to those who needed it. We supplied 90 percent of the military imagery."

As the only active duty combat camera squadron in the Air Force, they are kept busy.

"We had 45 of the 139 personnel assigned, deployed during Kosovo," said Griffin. "They were there not only to shoot combat footage but to document history, support war crimes investigations, provide airfield intelligence and photos for public affairs."

The footage is used by civilian media as well as the military.

"The squadron's photos have appeared on the front page of the *New York Times*, and in *Newsweek* and *Time* magazines," said Griffin. "They have also been in *Airman Magazine* and newspapers across the country."

Past winners of this award have included Edward R. Murrow, *Airman Magazine*, CNN, Tom Clancy, and the Discovery Channel.

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a second C-141 from McChord AFB, Wash., and a C-17 from Charleston AFB.

A C-5 from Travis AFB, Calif., continued the airlift Oct. 5. The deployment of several hundred troops continues this week, followed by a deployment of the main body of Thai troops over the next few weeks.

"It was a short notice tasking with less than 24 hours notice for us to coordinate the details and get ready to go," said Maj. Michael Harsh, a C-17 pilot assigned to the 17<sup>th</sup> Airlift Squadron who flew two missions into Darwin. "The missions were rather long and we had to spend the night at Cairns because the airfield was extremely crowded at Darwin with other nation's military forces."

Darwin is an airport similar to Charleston's, with a joint civilian and military runways and ramp areas. Harsh and his crew flew U.S. Army civil affairs and intelligence teams to Darwin from Hawaii and Pope AFB, N.C.

The multinational force now numbers more than 6,000. It is expected to reach full strength of 7,500 soon with the arrival of soldiers from Thailand.

Thailand is sending 1,580 troops to participate in the International Forces East Timor, or INTERFET, peacekeeping operation. Thailand's military contingent will be the second largest behind Australia, and includes a Thai officer, Maj. Gen. Songkitti Chakkabatr, who is serving as deputy commander of INTERFET.

The deployment of the Thai military abroad for a military operation, the first since the Vietnam War, drew region-wide attention. Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai and other national leaders attended a ceremony at the air base, marking the event. Hundreds of family members and friends waved goodbye as the troops departed.

The Thai troops are being flown first to Australia, where they will spend a few days preparing for deployment into East Timor aboard C-130 aircraft. The operation features the unique talents of both strategic — long haul airlift — and theatre airlift, which relies on C-130 aircraft for the flight from Australia to East Timor. Only the

C-17 and C-130 are capable of landing at the Dili airfield in East Timor. As of Wednesday, no Charleston based C-17s have flown into East Timor.

Defense Secretary William Cohen was in Thailand last week to pledge U.S. military support to transport the Thai troops as part of the United Nations peacekeeping effort in East Timor.

"The sooner Thai troops can arrive in East Timor the better off we will be," Cohen said.

The savage rampages of anti-independence militias in the territory have caused havoc in East Timor since it voted for independence from Indonesia on Aug. 30. News wires have reported that the civil administration is no longer functioning and the judiciary and court systems have ceased to exist. In addition, essential services, such as water and electricity, are in real danger of collapse.

The territory is now effectively controlled by a U.N.-sanctioned peacekeeping force led by Australia, which entered East Timor on Sept. 30. (*Information for this article was taken from PACAF News Service*)

# Cessna avoids serious damage after gear collapses during landing

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A twin-engine civilian Cessna 402 aircraft was damaged when its landing gear collapsed Friday at approximately 9:45 a.m. after landing on Runway 33. There were no injuries to the pilot and the aircraft sustained damage to its underside and propellers.

The aircraft had a very normal approach with no warning as to a problem with the landing gear, according to John Hoogendam, pilot, Bank Air Airlines of Columbia, S.C.

"When I touched down, the plane started shaking," Hoogendam continued. "The gear warning light came on and the props hit the ground. I shut the plane down, waited for it to stop, looked for a fire and then escaped."

"Charleston AFB safety, fire and security forces personnel responded to the scene

and Fire Chief Mike Stallings took over as the on-scene commander," said Chris Anderson, 437 AW Wing SAFETY occupational safety and health specialist. "Everyone who was supposed to respond made it to the scene."

Chief Stallings echoed Anderson's words. "We had an excellent initial response force. Everyone worked to preserve the accident site."

The Charleston AFB Fire Department provides protection for the entire airfield.

"We handle all the fire protection whether it is civilian or military," Stallings said. "We have the most well-trained crash fire fighters in the nation."

The airplane was lifted up with a crane, mechanics locked the landing gear in place and it was towed to a hanger for further investigation, said Stallings.

The crash is still under investigation at this time.

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was for the Army and Air Force to jointly demonstrate their wartime capabilities."

On the first and second nights, all of the drops were done successfully despite challenging weather conditions that included rain showers, low cloud ceilings, and thunder storms. "We recorded satisfactory drops on all of the days and we had paid attention to Operational Risk Management each night to avoid problems," Mead said.

Schlegel, from the C-17 side, planned the exercise with Capt. Eric Carney, a C-141 tactician. "We both learned more about integrating other airframes and the Army to act as one team."

"This was one of the most successful Large Package Weeks in over a year, based on the large number of 'chutes' and the overall precision of the drops which allowed the soldiers to accomplish their follow on mission," said Maj. Ralph Standbrook, Charleston's only Army ground liaison officer. "The Army leadership was unbelievably happy with the maintenance status of the aircraft."

Richardson agreed that the Army was extremely pleased with the exercise. "I spoke with the Commanding General of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, Maj. Gen. Dan McNeil, as he was preparing to walk up a C-141 and join his paratroopers in a drop later that evening. He was as excited about jumping out of the aircraft as the young 20-year-old Army soldier next to him and he was very happy with the performance of the C-130, C-17 and C-141 crews who were there to support his Corps."



Charley Schlegel, 14 AS

**Capt. Christine Leader and other aircrew members brief primary Army Jumpmasters prior to the Large Package drop.**

Mead added the aircrew training was invaluable where C-17 and C-141 pilots received their qualification to lead a formation of airlifters while loadmaster and navigator recurrency training was also accomplished.

Senior Airmen Josh Hardy, a configuration specialist and crew chief, and Jay Scoda, Aerospace Ground Equipment driver were identified as superior maintenance performers for the deployment.

"Airman Scoda was our 'Johnny-on-the-spot' and was always there when we needed him. He worked his tail off on 12 hour shifts in a very unappreciated job, but it truly makes the difference when you have all the stuff there when you need it," said 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Chris Hobbs, assistant maintenance supervisor in the 437<sup>th</sup> Aircraft Generation Squadron and the deployed maintenance officer for LPW.

"This is the kind of trip we dream about in maintenance," said Hobbs. "The jets cooperated and didn't break, we were able to keep mostly everyone on 8-hour shifts and we had great cooperation from the en-route maintenance squadron at Pope and with the Army."



**A twin-engine Cessna sits on the Charleston AFB flightline after its landing gear collapsed shortly after the aircraft touched down. The pilot was uninjured.**