

AIRLIFT Dispatch

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437th Airlift Wing, Charleston AFB, SC

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Photo by Senior Airman Jason Smith

CAFB goes Hollywood

Rebecca Scarpati, Armed Forces Radio and Television Service producer, discusses script changes with (right) Steve Tardy, AFRTS project officer. Looking on was (left to right) Steven Monroe, AFRTS director, Staff Sgt. Gary Palmiter, 17th Airlift Squadron loadmaster, and Brad Staats, an actor portraying a loadmaster. Peeking through from behind is Master Sgt. Kenneth Glover and Tech. Sgt. Dirk Murray, both of the 437th Aerial Port Squadron. AFRTS was aboard a Charleston AFB C-17 filming a commercial about Space-Available travel which will be seen by service members around the world.

CGOs break for lunch with 21 AF Commander

By Capt. Tracy Velino
437 AW Public Affairs

The 21st Air Force commander's visit here Dec. 1-4 gave more than sixty Charleston AFB company grade officers a reason to get together for lunch and professional development Monday.

Maj. Gen. George "Nick" Williams, invited by the Company Grade Officers' Council, spoke briefly on mentorship and fielded questions ranging from officer assignment cycles to C-141 retirement and C-17 operations tempo.

"I do not have a prediction on Florida yet though," joked Williams after saying he'd take questions on any subject.

Williams told CGO's they are training their replacements each day. "You need to think about that person who's behind you, and train that person you see who's younger than you and coming up to be your replacement.

"Whether you're a career person who's going to stay for 30 or 35 years, or whether you're a person who stays 20 or ten, you are an Air Force per-

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AFGE national president admires partnership

By Lt. Col. Ed Memi
437 AW Public Affairs

Base civilians and military leaders got a chance to learn more about how unions can benefit the Charleston workforce as well as better contribute to accomplishing the wing's mission.

The national president of the American Federation of Government Employees, Bobby Harnage, which represents more than 600,000 federal civilians, prefers to partner with management. The union works hard to save money and it's concerned about saving taxpayer funds. In fact, Harnage said federal civilians are the largest single group of taxpayers in the country.

Harnage visited Charleston AFB Nov. 28-29 and his message was to take care of CAFB's civilian workforce

by getting better pay, improved health insurance benefits and maintaining job security for federal workers. The goals AFGE has for civilians are often the same as management — taking care of their people.

"My principal reasons for visiting Charleston was to visit my old friend, AFGE Local 1869 president Richard Egal, who will be retiring soon and to also recognize the good partnership that we have at Charleston," Harnage said. Charleston has 680 civilians who are represented by AFGE, Local 1869, the official bargaining unit for those employees.

AFGE Local 1869 and the base were recently awarded an honorable mention for the 2000 John N. Sturdivant National Partnership Award, which recognizes strong management/labor partnership relationships. CAFB has improved its rela-

tionship with the union by improving education, communication and solving problems at the lowest level with a new strategic plan.

Harnage says the AFGE has a full plate with many challenges ahead for civilian employees. AFGE membership needs to grow, he added, so their expanded lobbying efforts on behalf of government civilians can have more weight with members of Congress and the executive branch of government to provide better pay, job security and improved health benefits.

"We've been getting better at realizing most problems are political problems that need political solutions," Harnage said. "We've been getting more involved in the political arena. Our people are beginning to understand that our legislative process is our recourse in a lot of cases.

We've been getting politically involved at Capitol Hill and in the election process."

Harnage has visited the base before and said he wished he could stay longer. "I've been here before as a national representative and negotiated a couple of contracts. I came back as the AFGE national vice president and then I was down here on a tour when they brought in the first C-17s as the AFGE national treasurer. Charleston Air Force Base has a lot of good memories for me."

Harnage is no stranger to the South, having worked at Robins AFB, Ga.

The national agenda for AFGE is very extensive and there are a number of areas that they support. "Our priorities will be pay, which has been

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