

COMMENTARY

About the paper

AIRLIFT
Dispatch

Published by Diggle Publishing, Inc., a private firm in no way connected with the U.S. Air Force, under exclusive written contract with the 437th Airlift Wing. This commercial enterprise Air Force newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military service.

Contents of the *Airlift Dispatch* are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or the Department of the Air Force. The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the Department of Defense, the Department of the Air Force, or Diggle Publishing, Inc., of the products or services advertised.

Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation, or any other nonmerit factor of the purchaser, user or patron. All photos are Air Force photos unless identified otherwise.

Deadlines

The deadline for submitting stories for space-available publication is noon Friday, preceding the desired publication date. The *Airlift Dispatch* reserves the right to edit all copy submitted for publication.

Advertising

Classified advertisements may be referred to Diggle Publishing, Inc., P.O. Box 2014, Charleston, S.C., 29465, Phone: (843) 849-1778 or fax 849-0214. Classified advertisements are free, with the exception of personal business ads, for active duty military members and their spouses, retirees and Reservists.

Address/Numbers

Editorial content is prepared by the 437th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 1600, Rm. 223.

Phone: (843) 963-5608

Fax: (843) 963-5604.

Mail to: 437 AW PAI

102 East Hill Blvd.
Charleston AFB, SC 29404-5154
or send to:

dispatch@charleston.af.mil

Editorial Staff

437 AW Commander
Col. Vern M. "Rusty"
Findley II

Chief, Public Affairs
Lt. Col. Edmund Meme

Editor
Staff Sgt. Pamela Smith

Associate editor
Staff Sgt. Michael Duhe

Staff writer
Senior Airman Jason Smith

Photo Support
Base Visual Information Center

C-141 closing, NCO rank are big events for wing

By Col. Rusty Findley
437 AW commander

It's great to be back having been on the road for the past three weeks. I enjoyed my time away, but am much happier to be here. At the senior leader orientation course, the senior commanders discussed what's happening in our Air Force. We are definitely on an upward vector, but still have some issues that need to be resolved. One thing that became very apparent as I listened to our senior leaders was that they are all committed to adding more predictability and stability for our folks.

A special thanks to Col. Karl Young for doing such a great job while I was gone. I know he'll continue to do a great job for us over the next few weeks when I am gone again.

It was my honor to congratulate the Team Charleston Top Dollar team at staff meeting this week. As many of you read in the base newspaper, our 7-person team brought home three Air Mobility Command awards: Best Overall Team, Espirit de Corp and Best Finance Team. They will now compete at Air Force level for top honors, and schedule permitting, I hope to watch them win the competition.

The team consists of 2nd Lt. Andy Grab (team leader),

Master Sgt. Scott Hollabaugh (team NCOIC), Staff Sgt. Frank Alfaro, Staff Sgt. Julie Buie, Senior Airman Jackie Dent, Senior Airman Robert Florio, and Senior Airman Robert Simpson.

In addition to the primary team members, I also thank each alternate member from the contracting and comptroller squadrons who trained extensively with the team.

Award of NCO status is a big deal and one that the Air Force member should be proud to achieve. We held a ceremony this week, recognizing our newest inductees. I hope everyone shares my enthusiasm as we congratulate them on this significant accomplishment. I need your help in making sure that this occasion is memorable and a fitting tribute to our airmen. Please work with the First Six Association to ensure a good attendance at these ceremonies.

Likewise, I would like to thank the First Six Association and Tech. Sgt. Lisa Barkman, Staff Sgt. Cheryl Purter, Senior Airman Liz Davis and Senior Airman Candy Guinn for arranging the ceremony on Tuesday to congratulate about 20 airmen for achieving this distinction. These ceremonies play an important role in recruiting and retention. We need to recognize our people when they do great things, achieving NCO status is a milestone in one's enlisted career.

As mentioned last week, we hosted Ms. Darleen A. Druyun, principal deputy assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition and Management on Tuesday and Wednesday. In this group, we also had retired Gen. Duane Cassidy, a former commander of Military Airlift Command, Blaise Durante, deputy assistant secretary for Management, Policy, and Program Integration, Bill Farrell, from the Air Force 2002 office in the Pentagon, and Bill Boesch, an Air Force consultant.

They were all truly impressed with the C-17 and the

men and women of Team Charleston. Ms. Druyun is a big supporter of the C-17 and has been actively involved with the acquisition of the C-17 for a long time. This was her first opportunity to fly in one and she was impressed! A special thanks to the wing project officer, Capt. Steve Moore, 437th Support Group executive officer, and the protocol staff for another outstanding visit.

We said farewell to Rose Alexander on Tuesday. She will work in the community relations section of the Public Affairs Office. She has worked very hard for six wing commanders since she joined the command section in 1991. I speak for all those commanders when I say we appreciated her outstanding efforts in making our schedules work. She is clearly one of the wing's unsung heroes! We also said farewell to two executive officers this week: Major Creg Paulk and Capt. Seaborn Whatley. Paulk heads to Air Command and Staff College while Whatley heads to Air Mobility Command headquarters. We wish them all continued success.

We also said farewell to Special Agent Donald Colby last week who retired after more than 24 years in the Air Force. His career included more than 17 years in the Air Force Office of Special Investigations. The

retirement ceremony was officiated by Col. Dave Frazzell, vice commander of the AFOSI at Andrews AFB, Md. I know the ceremony meant a lot to him personally and that we'll miss him. He will remain in the local area and will run his own consulting business. Special Agent Simon Morgan will replace him later this month.

Team Charleston members do their jobs with pride, passion and professionalism. I recently saw that firsthand when members of the 437th Aircraft Generation

Squadron, led by Barbara Langston, spruced up the flightline side areas of the squadron operations buildings one and two recently. The innovative use of landscaping to spell out "Gator" and "Shark" clearly shows that they have that passion and pride that makes this a great wing. Now, when visitors, aircrews and maintainers enter those buildings, they will be reminded of that unit pride everyday. I applaud their outstanding initiative!

Today and Saturday may be your last opportunity to see the C-141s at Charleston as the 16th Airlift Squadron deactivates. There will be a golf tournament today and a retreat ceremony at 4:30 p.m. in honor of the C-141 and the 16th AS. There will be a fly-over immediately following the retreat ceremony with a social event, open to everyone, in the Charleston Club at 6 p.m.

On Saturday, there will be a deactivation ceremony held at 9 a.m. in the C-17 nosedock with static displays available immediately afterwards.

The C-141 will leave in July after 35 years and the accomplishments of those that flew and maintained this venerable airlifter deserve our highest praise. Let's say farewell in our trademark Team Charleston style.

It's great being back among the folks who comprise the premier airlift wing on the face of the planet.

Have a great week.



Staff Sgt. Andrew Rodler

Col. Rusty Findley (third from left) recognizes the Charleston Top Dollar Team for their first place finish in the competition. Top Dollar team members are (left to right) Senior Airman Rob Florio, 2nd Lt. Andy Grab, Staff Sgt. Julie Buie, Staff Sgt. Frank Alfaro, Senior Airman Jackie Dent and Senior Airman Bob Simpson