

COMMENTARY

About the paper

AIRLIFT
Dispatch

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Dental Clinic renamed; Family Day planned

By Col. Rusty Findley
437 AW commander

We were fortunate to have a visit by Dr. James Sears, executive director of the TRICARE Management Activity, Washington, DC, who visited with us July 18-20. I was very impressed with what he had to say about TRICARE and how the program has improved much to the benefit of our people. Although TRICARE difficulties still exist, they are working very hard to improve the system. One of the good news stories is that they have improved the procedures for processing \$72 million worth of claims a month, and 99.6 percent receive payment within 60 days.

He said, "When comparing TRICARE to other major health plans, with regard to quality of care, range of benefit, and cost, TRICARE wins!" Military treatment facilities throughout DoD are optimizing their ability to deliver direct care, which will further enhance the TRICARE program. It's great to see TRICARE making such significant improvements.

Last Friday was the dedication of the dental clinic in memory of Capt. (Dr.) Larry T. Deily, Jr., a base dentist, who fought a two and half year battle with cancer until he finally succumbed. He last performed his regularly assigned duties on Nov. 6, 1998 and passed away peacefully at home in Mt. Pleasant, S.C. on May 9, 1999.

He epitomized the officer-warrior spirit and always displayed a positive attitude and courage in his work. When we think of a warrior, we often think of the person who stormed the hill and took down the machine gun nests, but there are quiet heroes like Cpt. Deily, who set an example and show great courage when staring down the barrel of a deadly disease. Naming the dental clinic after Deily was a fitting honor to someone who showed great determination in fighting a deadly disease while performing at the top of his field.

Congratulations to Tech. Sgt. Theresa Ware, 437th Command Post, who was selected as Air Mobility Command's senior controller of the year. She oversaw the movement of 10,202 missions, 25,806 passengers, and 36,728 tons of cargo. She has worked at the command post for the past 12 years and has done an outstanding job (see article on page 3).

Each year, the Airlift/Tanker Association recognizes 12

individuals who have demonstrated superior leadership, made outstanding contributions to the airlift/tanker mission, and provided invaluable service to their civilian communities. The Airlift/Tanker Association Young Leadership Award recipients are recognized annually at the A/TA's national convention in Anaheim, Calif.; and this year, Capt. Charles S. Nesemeier, 437th Aircraft Generation Squadron, was selected as one of 12 top individuals in the Air Force. Congratulations!

I expect a really good outbrief today from the AMC Staff Assistance Visit of our 437th Security Forces Squadron. The 9-person team, led by Maj. Lynden Skinner, was visiting the base at the request of Maj. Robert Eatman, who wanted some additional feedback. Since Charleston has a very good reputation in the command, they will learn how we do things and perhaps benchmark some of our processes, but also share some of the things they learned from other bases with us so we all can improve.

The family day picnic kicks off on Aug. 4, from 11 to 5 p.m. at the base pool and surrounding areas on Davis Drive. Lots of games and activities are planned for children and adults. Adult games include a Velcro wall, bungee run and much more. The event is open to everyone and is a great chance to earn ATWIND game pieces. It's also a great opportunity for the Air Force family to get together and have fun! Call 963-3809 for more information.

The colonels will play the chiefs in a softball game on Aug. 4 at 2:30 p.m. The chiefs are older and their vision is more blurred than the top three enlisted members whom we played recently. I can't remember the score from the top three game, but I'm certain that the colonels will be victorious once again. Please come out and watch the game.

On the mission side, we continue to support airdrop missions at home and abroad. As an example, we participated in Purple Dragon, a huge exercise, and now three Charleston-based C-17s participated in an airdrop of 179 troops, including seven Ukrainian military members, as part of Peace Shield 2000, held July 15-18 in the Ukraine.

Be proud of what we do in this wing. And thanks for what you do—every day. See you at the picnic!

Action Line

The Commander's Action line is your direct link to me. It's your opportunity to make Charleston Air Force Base a better place to live, work and play.

First give the appropriate base agency a chance to solve the problem, but if you don't get a satisfactory answer, call me at 963-5581 or send an e-mail to action@charleston.af.mil.



Great Music

I just wanted to thank and commend the Services Squadron and the Charleston Club for hosting the band, Big Black Building, on July 7.

Although I like rhythm and blues and jazz, and can somewhat deal with karaoke, it was great to see

some variety at the club. The club usually empties out at 6:35 p.m.

When the band was wrapping up at 9 p.m., people were begging them to keep playing.

Once again I say "thank you" to services and the club, and I hope to see the band, Big Black Building at the Charleston Club again.

Letter to the editor: Thanks for making Retreat important

I was on my way to the gym for my 4:30 p.m. aerobics class, and as usual I was running behind. As I approached the stop sign just before you make a right to the gym, the music that signifies the end of the official duty day, and also pays respect to the flag, known as Retreat, began to play. I cursed at myself for running late and impatiently sat there in my vehicle with the music off, doing what I was supposed to do until the music stopped, and then I could get on with my day.

I sat in my car restless and irritated that I had to wait a few more minutes before I could get on with my workout. I was looking around at all the stopped cars and what I saw across the street to my left would change my view on Retreat. There stood an older gentleman facing the flag and holding his right arm over his chest.

This man not only stopped his car, he got out of it and

gave the flag the respect it deserves. I stared at him until the music ended, at the same time realizing how selfish I was.

I was so irritated at wasting a few "precious" moments that I had failed to realize that if it weren't for the flag I may not have had the freedom to drive my own car to the gym for a workout. We, as Americans, too often take for granted the privileges we have grown accustomed to.

I want to thank that man, probably a soldier who knows what it's like to have his freedom threatened, for making me realize that the flag deserves a few minutes of my valuable time.

The next time I hear Retreat, I'm going to take the opportunity to respect the flag the way it has earned its right to be respected.

Aundrea Blaylock