

COMMENTARY

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AIRLIFT
Dispatch

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Air Expo to show C-17s capabilities to the public

By Col. Rusty Findley
437 AW commander

The senior officer visits went so well last week that I have to say thanks again, as always, to our Protocol staff and to the many project officers for their great efforts. It was a challenge to handle that many visits at once, but we came through in an outstanding manner. I heard nothing but positive praise for our efforts.

Thanks to Protocol staff members Kathy Knichel, 1st Lt. Christopher Hobbs, Master Sgt. Terry Gabbert, Senior Airman Rachel Kosmalski and Michelle Arnold for all you do for this base. Many thanks to the outstanding project officers: Maj. Hank Fairtlough, 14th Airlift Squadron, Capt. Sarah Maynard, 437th Civil Engineer Squadron, 1st Lt. Delfrieda Hudson 437th Comptroller Squadron, 1st Lt. Grant Meadows, 437th Logistics Group, 2nd Lt. Noelle Hatchell 437th Services Squadron, Senior Master Sgt. Terrie Powell 437th Support Group and 2nd Lt. Jason Wyen, 437th Civil Engineer Squadron. With a Protocol staff and project officers like these, it is easy to understand why so many people want to visit the premier airlift wing on the face of the planet.

Congratulations to our Diamond Sharp recipients for September. Congratulations to Staff Sgt. James Damato, 437th Aerial Port Squadron; Staff Sgt. Maria Dillingham-Greene, 437th Medical Group; Staff Sgt. Terrence White, 437th Logistics Support Squadron and Senior Airman Craig Carpenter, 437th Aircraft Generation Squadron. Our Diamond Sharp winners are those who went above

and beyond the call of duty.

I had a great opportunity to participate in my first European Intra-theater Strategic Deployment mission that went to Ramstein AB, Germany, on Sunday and returned to Charleston on Tuesday night. It was a great, quick trip. My thanks to the crew that I flew with that includes Capt. Lenny Richoux, Capt. Landon Henderson, Senior Airman Rodney Nuckoles and Senior Airman Harry Pollock.

The Airlift/Tanker Association held their general membership meeting on Wednesday to prepare for the upcoming Annual Airlift/Tanker Association Convention in Anaheim, Calif., to be held Nov 2-5. We plan to send a number of people to the convention. The general membership meeting also discussed the road rally to be held Nov. 17, starting at noon, and ending with an awards ceremony at the Charleston Club at 5 p.m. The A/TA holiday service project was also discussed.

On Thursday, we were fortunate to host more than 40 members from Leadership Charleston, a group of "up and coming" civic leaders who spend one day per month for 10 months learning about federal, state and city government, and about the various major employers in the Low



Photo by Staff Sgt. Andrew Rodier
Staff Sgt. Nichelle Cunningham (left to right), 437th Airlift Wing paralegal and CFC keyworker, Col. Rusty Findley, 437 AW commander and Chief Master Sgt. Harvey Hampton, 437 AW command chief master sergeant, prepare for Findley to sign his annual CFC contribution form. The CFC campaign is now in full swing.

Country. The Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce sponsors the Leadership Charleston group annually and they visited us Thursday to learn more about the military. We support a base orientation tour for this group every year because it gives business leaders a better appreciation of what we do for our nation's defense.

Today, we will hold a retirement ceremony for Lt. Col. Craig Armstrong and his spouse, Doris. On Thursday, we held a farewell dinner for them.

Craig has served his country for 24 years and has been in a number of leadership positions within our wing.

He was the commander of the 437th Contracting Squadron, deputy commander of the 437th Support Group and most recently served as the director of Wing Staff. He has left his mark on a lot of programs and people at Charleston and we will miss him tremendously. It was a true honor for me to be a part of his retirement ceremony. Craig and Doris will head to Atlanta, Ga., as the southeast region logistics manager for General Electric Supply. We wish them the best of luck in their new career.

Maj. Petra Sharrett, Capt. Brian Newberry and the Air Expo 2000 committee are

doing a great job of getting ready for our airshow Oct. 14. The Air Expo 5K run on Saturday was a complete success as more than 300 runners participated in this annual event. See the article on page 15 for more details on the run.

As the Air Expo draws closer, the schedule of events and aircraft static displays are starting to take firm shape in what is considered one of the largest tourist attractions in the state. Our premier event will be the airfield seizure with our C-17s airdropping paratroopers and off-loading two Army tanks and a Bradley fighting vehicle as part of a demonstration of our ability to deliver the Army's Immediate Ready Company. Army attack helicopters will also participate in the airfield seizure and a variety of pyrotechnic explosions will impress the crowds.

The Air Expo is a massive undertaking for the base and we all need to pull together to make this air show a complete success. To celebrate a successful air show, everyone is invited to a party from 5-9 p.m. after the Air Expo in the C-17 Nosedock.

Have a great day, and it is always a pleasure to be at the premier airlift wing on the face of the planet!

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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

To ensure you receive a response to your concerns, please leave your name and the information needed to contact you.

