

COMMENTARY

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AIRLIFT
Dispatch

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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.

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Address/Numbers

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

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Air Expo 2000 proves to be a huge success

By Col. Karl Young
437 AW vice commander

Col. Rusty Findley, 437th Airlift Wing commander, is at McChord AFB, Wash., this week to attend a review of the status, production and employment of the C-17 weapons system. This semi-annual review, hosted by the C-17 System Program Office, includes the two C-17 wing commanders and a representative from Altus AFB, Okla., and will allow for future improvements and cross-feeding of ideas.

Air Expo 2000 was a complete success as expected. It was a true Team Charleston effort and I'm sure the public now has a much greater appreciation of our mission. Findley and I were especially impressed with the tremendous effort put forth by everyone on the base. Maj. Petra Sharrett, Capt. Brian Newberry and the entire Air Expo 2000 Committee pulled together to make this one of the best open houses I've seen in many years.

What was really impressive was how quickly we were able to clean up the area after the show by doing a large-scale FOD walk. It was especially impressive to see aircraft take off, literally an hour after the show ended. That is a testament to everyone pulling together, after an extremely busy day, to help pitch in.

Thanks to everyone for their hard work. We estimated an even larger crowd than last year, despite the absence of a headliner act like the Air Force Thunderbirds or the Navy Blue Angels. The C-17 and U.S. Army airfield seizure demonstration was a big crowd pleaser, and it took a lot of work to make that happen so flawlessly despite major commitments elsewhere. Kudos to the maintenance community for launching seven C-17s while continuing to support our worldwide commitments. I hope to see many of you at the post expo thank-you party on Nov. 8, 3:30 p.m. at the Charleston Club.

Pending a formal announcement in December or

January, we have a good possibility of doing our next air expo in May with the Navy Blue Angels. Our project officer for this show will be Maj. Jim Shoemaker from the 14th Airlift Squadron. Please give him the same level of support that you gave Sharrett.

At Monday's staff meeting, we presented the blood drive trophy to the 437th Civil Engineer Squadron for the most donations. As many of you know, there is a nationwide blood shortage and Charleston AFB continues to lead the way by giving the "gift of life." Candace Oliver from the Red Cross presented the trophy to Lt. Col. Jon Roop, 437 CES commander, and Airman 1st Class Charisma Steadman, 437 CES Blood Drive monitor, for their efforts.

The wing commander also presented wing coins to the 437th Aircraft Generation Squadron Dorm (Bldg. 460) managers, Tech. Sgt. Bill Wright and Senior Airman Jarrod Klump, for their outstanding support of Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps tours. Since the dormitory ribbon-cutting ceremony Nov. 1, 1999, Wright and Klump have conducted 54 tours, averaging approximately 60 people per tour for a total of more than 3,000 visitors. Roughly 2,500 of those visitors were JROTC cadets. They have done a tremendous job in recruiting our future airmen and have made pride, professionalism and passion a reality in their work.

Findley also presented certificates of appreciation to Tech. Sergeants Michael Painter and Gary Saylor of the 437 AGS for their support during the Large Aircraft Interior Decontamination-Foreign Comparative Test Military Utility Assessment at the Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Center, Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz. The test was conducted on a C-141 to validate the "Turbofogger" chemical agent decontamination applicator. This was our first time proving that a viable option exists for aircraft interior decontamination.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Andrew Rodier

Col. Rusty Findley, 437th Airlift Wing commander, addresses the Air Expo 2000 crowd.

The base appearance inspection went very well this week, and I appreciate everyone pitching in to make the base look even better. Regardless of whether we win the additional funding or not, I know we put forth our best effort. Visitors often compliment us on our base's appearance, and every day it looks great. We can all take great pride in how our base looks day-to-day. Keep up the good work!

We hope to see many of our junior enlisted members at today's Oktoberfest from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. between dormitory buildings 473 and 466, next to Arthur Drive. The Oktoberfest is considered an alternate duty location for all E-6s and below. We have about 2,000 eligible members to attend, and I hope to see many of them out there. There will be plenty of free food and beverages, a live band, and more than 100 prizes will be given away. Team Charleston will pay tribute to our junior enlisted members. All others are invited also, but it will cost you \$5. If interested, please contact Master Sgt. Matt Harless, base career advisor at 963-5497.

We are making great progress in our Combined

Federal Campaign and are already more than \$23,000 ahead of where we were last year in the campaign. About half of our workforce has been contacted, and we are on track to meet or exceed our goal. A special thanks to our unit project officers and key workers for their outstanding efforts in talking up the program. CFC is a great way to provide a helping hand to others and a chance for us to give back to our community and many worthwhile charities. The campaign ends in about two weeks, and we need to keep up the good work. I'm optimistic that we'll meet our goal before the campaign officially closes out Nov. 10.

In light of recent terrorist activities around the world, it is imperative that members of Team Charleston remember that force protection is everyone's business. Awareness is your key to deterring, detecting and defeating the terrorist threat, and it has the added benefit of fighting crime. Tech. Sgt. Tim Moore, 437th Security Forces Squadron, is the wing's Anti-Terrorism NCO. He stands ready to assist unit anti-terrorism managers and commanders in reviewing their programs. You can reach him at 963-6146.