

DISPATCH



AIRLIFT

Inside

- ▶ HYT / 2
- ▶ Commentary / 8
- ▶ Hunley Park / 11
- ▶ Bowling / 15

Vol. 40, No. 10

437th Airlift Wing, Charleston AFB, SC

Friday, March 16, 2001



Photo by Senior Airman Jason Smith

Underground network

Senior Airman Robert Richey (black t-shirt) and Airman Gregory Glinka (brown t-shirt), both from the 437th Civil Engineer Squadron, work to remove old communication lines. Staff Sgt. Paul Thompson, also 437 CES (not in photo), supervises from the ground. The inactive lines have been replaced with underground ones.

Levitow Jr., visits Charleston AFB

By Staff Sgt. Pamela Smith
437 AW Public Affairs

John Levitow Jr., visited Charleston AFB Tuesday to see the C-17 Globemaster III named for his late father, Medal of Honor recipient Sgt. John Levitow, and to share his legacy.

Levitow, who received the award in 1969 for his actions during the Vietnam War, died of cancer Nov. 8.

"I'm here to tell you what my father would," the younger Levitow said to a group of Charleston troops on board the aircraft. "I want to thank you for what you do and to let you know that I'm proud of you."

Levitow, a flight nurse based out of Charlotte, N.C., made the trip to Charleston with his fiancée, Lucy Banks, to continue the work his father had started on behalf of the military.

"On trips with my dad," he said, "I learned what my dad meant to the Air Force and what the Air Force meant to

him."

The younger Levitow said his dad wanted to make the Air Force a career but winning the medal made it difficult to stay in.

"He was no longer one of the guys and that made it hard for him to do his job," Levitow said.

At the dedication ceremony Jan. 23, 1998, Levitow Sr., said he was "just lucky. Luck is all it is. I'm sure there are many people who have served, have done things that have been simply amazing and never been recognized."

Levitow Jr., said, "We all have the opportunity for 10 minutes of fame, but it's what you do with your entire life that matters."

Before his death, Levitow Sr., spent more than 20 years working for the Veterans Administration in his home state of Connecticut at both the state and federal level and Levitow Jr., said a lot of people don't realize the good things

See Levitow, page 3

Charleston AFB supply airman to join Tops in Blue for 2001 tour

By Senior Airman Donald Church
437 AW Public Affairs

An airman from the 437th Supply Squadron has been selected to represent Team Charleston in the 2001 Air Force Tops in Blue tour.

Airman 1st Class Dawanna Price became the latest member of Team Charleston to join the 45-year-old institution. She will leave before the end of March for Lackland AFB, Texas, where she will spend 45 days learning to perform and operate as a technical staff member.

"Last year I tried out for Tops in Blue," said Price. "I didn't do as well as I hoped I would. I have been practicing since then, singing at unit functions and even local sporting events. Last month all the work paid off."

According to the Air Force Ser-

vices agency, Tops in Blue is an all active duty US Air Force special unit made up of talented amateur performers selected for their entertainment abilities. Each year, thousands compete in base talent contests and the most talented move on to higher levels of competition. The result is an elite group composed of 36 of the most talented vocalists, musicians and dancers anywhere.

"If you asked me if I thought I would be doing this in the Air Force, I would probably have laughed," said Price. "After all, I had never even heard of Tops in Blue until last year."

Maj. Al Reilly created the Air Force Worldwide Talent Contest in 1953 to recognize talented airmen in various categories including comedy, drama, vocals, gospel, instrumental groups and country and western, according to Air Force Services. His idea was to

discover the highest caliber of entertainment and provide it for Air Force families throughout the world, thus the phrase "family entertaining family" was first adopted in the new Air Force talent program.

"I am really excited to be able to do this," said Price. "It has been a challenge for me and I hope to use this opportunity as a start to a professional career later. It certainly has me excited about being in the Air Force and having the ability to pursue my dream."

The Tops in Blue team is composed of active duty Air Force personnel on a permissive temporary duty assignment. Team members are selected through the Air Force Talent Contest structure.

After the initial training at Lackland AFB, the group performs for approximately nine months at locations

around the world.

Air Force members interested in joining Tops in Blue can obtain an application form from the Tops in Blue website at www.p.afsv.af.mil/TIB.



Courtesy photo

Airman 1st Class Dawanna Price, 437th Supply Squadron, recently earned a spot on the 2001 Air Force Tops in Blue tour. Price will leave for training by the end of March.

IN THE NEWS

Honorary Commanders Program kicks off at CAFB

**Story and photo by
Lt. Col. Ed Memi
437 AW Public Affairs**

Base leaders recognized a local community leader as "the godfather of Charleston AFB" during a ceremony March 9, launching the base Honorary Commanders Program in the Charleston Club.

Col. Rusty Findley, 437th Airlift Wing commander, presented a portrait drawing to Sam Lyons during a brief ceremony in the Charleston Club. The award was presented to Lyons because of his long-standing support of the base and will be displayed in the Charleston Club. Findley has affectionately called Lyons the "godfather of Charleston AFB" because of that strong support.

The presentation established Lyons as the first "Ambassador of Charleston AFB," a program to recognize community leaders for their strong support of the base. The presentation was part of a ceremony to kick-off the Honorary Commanders Program, which matches local area business leaders with wing groups, squadrons and tenant units.

In assuming the title of

honorary commander, these civic leaders will be invited to a number of base events and attend unit functions as if they were a member of the squadron or group. Forty-seven business leaders are participating in the program this year. Most squadrons have two honorary commanders. Each honorary commander joined their respective squadron by receiving their unit's guidon during a brief ceremony.

Lyons is a 12-year veteran of the U.S. Navy and has called Charleston his home since leaving the Navy in 1957. He is currently the director of business development for Palmetto Ford and is the honorary commander for the 437 AW commander.

During the ceremony, a short video was played that depicted the sacrifices made by the armed forces during the Korean War and Findley cited Lyons' service during World War II and the Korean War.

"Today, we have started a new tradition at Charleston Air Force Base," said Findley. "We're paying tribute to someone who is a part of that legacy (WW II and Korean War veteran), but that legacy didn't stop at the end of the

Korean War. He is a veteran of many wars and triumphs at Charleston AFB. Through the years, he has been the staunchest supporter of Charleston AFB and the greatest friend in the community that a commander could ever want.

"When I was at Grand Forks (AFB, N.D.), we called it our ambassadors program and those were the community leaders that put much time and energy to support the young men and women that were going to follow in that legacy," continued Findley. "Today, we are marking the first ambassador to Charleston AFB in the community. It is appropriate and right that 'the godfather of Charleston AFB,' Sam Lyons, my friend, be that person."

Findley hopes that many more community leaders will follow in Lyons' footsteps. Lyons accepted the honor and then spoke briefly.

"It is a wonderful surprise," Lyons said. "But as many of you know, I've never been without words. There has never been a time where I felt I could do anything by myself. All of you have helped me through the years and I am eternally grateful. Good luck to all of you."

"Hopefully, this new award will set an example for other people to follow," continued Lyons. "Maybe we can get more civilians involved in the base."

Retired Navy Admiral Jim Flatley, chairman of the Patriots Point foundation, also spoke highly of Lyons.

"I came here about 10 years ago to take over Patriot's Point, when it was in ruins," said Flatley. "Sam was one of the first guys to say 'hi' to me and took me under his mantle. He's been mentoring me ever since. He's an open, generous human being and I wanted to be here today be-

cause no one deserves this recognition more than Sam."

Lyons has received the Air Mobility Command Distinguished Citizen Award and has been extensively involved in community activities. He has received a large number of awards and recognition for his involvement.

The mission of the Honorary Commanders Program is to create a partnership with the community and to generate increased support for the base workforce, both military and civilian. The program was reactivated February 2000 and this is the second year for the program.



Col. Rusty Findley, 437th Airlift Wing commander, presents a pencil drawing to Sam Lyons, 437 AW honorary commander, during the Honorary Commanders ceremony.

High year of tenure for E-6 to become 22 years

Team Charleston members are applauding a recently announced decision to change technical sergeant high year of tenure from 20 to 22 years.

Enlisted tenures are governed by the Total Objective Plan for Career Airmen Personnel and were last revised in 1991. At that time, technical sergeant length of service was reduced from 23 to 20 years; the same as staff sergeants. The impending force draw-down was a major factor in deciding to keep both E-5 and E-6 HYT maximums at 20 years. By doing this, involuntary separation programs were, for the most part, avoided.

said Senior Master Sgt. Larry Welch, superintendent of force structure plans at the air staff.

With force drawdowns done, and having returned to an era with more stable end-strength, a review of enlisted HYT rates was accomplished in 2000. The review indicated while overall HYT rates were on target, some fine-tuning was in order for technical sergeants, Welch said.

"There were several compelling arguments for increasing technical sergeant HYT to 22 years," he said. "First, it's an opportunity to reward technical sergeants for career advancement and let them stay in the service longer. Second, it establishes a natural HYT bridge between staff sergeant HYT of 20 years and master sergeant HYT of 24 years service."



"Finally, input from the field indicates our enlisted members support the change," Welch said.

Most Team Charleston members are supporting the change in policy.

"It's a good thing that was a long time coming," said Tech. Sgt. Todd Bellamy, 437th Aerial Port Squadron. "I know a lot of people will still want to retire at twenty years, but for the few that want to continue to serve, this will allow them to stay longer and pass along their experience to the younger troops."

Although this change is effective July 1, all technical sergeants, re-

gardless of Air Force specialty code, are now eligible to apply for the fiscal 2001 Temporary HYT Extension Program. This will allow technical sergeants with HYT dates before July 1 to apply for a HYT extension to the 22 years of service point, according to Welch.

"I think this is good move for the Air Force," said Tech. Sgt. Adrian Brown, 437th Security Forces Squadron. "This allows the Air Force to keep a lot of good experience around longer and to continue to provide guidance to help them. It's a win-win situation for everyone."

Those who have an approved retirement on file have the option to request withdrawal of retirement or retiring on the approved retirement date. For more information on change to the Technical Sergeant HYT, contact the Military Personnel Flight at 963-4562, 963-4563 or 963-6211. Implementation guidance is forthcoming from the Air Force Personnel Center. (AFP. Senior Airman Donald Church, 437 AW Public Affairs, also contributed to this story.)



Joint Healthcare Consumers Advisory Council meeting

The 437th Medical Group invites everyone to attend a Joint Healthcare Consumer Advisory Council meeting Thursday, 2 p.m., at the base theater.

There will be discussions on the latest healthcare benefit issues resulting from the National Defense Authorization Act.

There will be updates from the Naval Hospital Charleston and the Charleston AFB Clinic on local healthcare services.

For more information, call 743-7607 or 963-6710.

New commissioning program offers new options for CAFB enlisted

By Senior Airman
Jason Smith

437 AW Public Affairs

The Charleston AFB education office has added another commissioning opportunity for eligible applicants.

The Professional Officer Course-Early Release Program opened March 1 and will be available until Aug. 1.

POC-ERP is a one-year program designed to help fill vacant Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps slots. Currently, there are 450 slots available, according to a POC-ERP fact sheet.

The program is open to Air Force active-duty enlisted personnel who can complete an undergraduate degree and AFROTC classes within one year of entry, or wish to take part in graduate study. More specific criteria for the program are:

- Be a U.S. citizen
- Able to finish bachelor's degree within one year
- Have a bachelor's degree and want to pursue graduate study
- Accepted to a college or university affiliated with AFROTC
- Commissioned and enter active duty prior to the age of 35
- Have one year continuous active duty service and one year time on station (both waiverable)

- At least a 2.0 GPA at the college level

- Medically qualified for a commission

- Achieve qualifying scores on the Air Force Officer Qualification Test

- Pass the AFROTC Physical Fitness Test

- Recommended by unit and wing commanders

- Meet all other requirements for enlistment

Diana Roebuck, base education office director, said the program is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for those who've wanted to be commissioned.

"This is an incredible window of opportunity," said Roebuck. "I encourage everyone who thinks they may be eligible to come in and have their records reviewed."

Along with giving members the time to complete their degree, POC-ERP also supplies the financial means. Those accepted who have a GPA of 2.5 or higher will receive a Type 2 scholarship that provides up to \$15,000 for tuition and \$510 for textbooks.

Those who have a GPA between 2.0 and 2.49 are eligible for the Professional Officer Course Incentive that provides up to \$3,000 for tuition and \$450 for textbooks.

Recipients of either type of scho-

lastic financial assistance will receive a \$200 monthly stipend beginning Oct. 1. The stipend is expected to rise to \$400 per month for one-year POC-ERP cadets, according to the fact sheet.

The service commitment after successful completion of the program is four years. Successful individuals will enter the Air Force as second lieutenants in a non-rated line or non-rated operations specialty. Pilot and navigator positions are not offered as part of the program.

Roebuck reminds CAFB while POC-ERP is the newest program to offer a commissioning opportunity to enlisted members, there are lots of other programs already in place for those who want a commission and may not meet all the eligibility requirements for this program.

"We have AECF (Airman Education and Commissioning Program), LEAD (Leaders Encouraging Airmen Development Program), SOAR (AFROTC Scholarships for Outstanding Airmen to ROTC) and ASCP (Airman Scholarship and Commissioning Program) also available," Roebuck said. "Anyone interested in any program should attend our monthly commissioning briefing."

The next briefing is scheduled for Wednesday, 10 a.m., at the education office.

This year, of the 13 CAFB applicants for commissioning programs, seven have been accepted. Roebuck said that number is expected to increase because some of the applicants are still waiting on the decision of the board for the programs for which they applied.

Staff Sgt. Matthew Hudson, 437th Maintenance Squadron, has recently been accepted for the SOAR program.

"I found out in the very end of December that I was accepted," said Hudson. "I've wanted a degree for a long time and Ms. Hamilton Woods (education office counselor) helped me with my package."

"I wouldn't say it was difficult," continued Hudson. "It was definitely tedious, but well worth it. It takes some time to get everything in order, but if you stick with it, you can do it."

Hudson said he will attend Charleston Southern University starting in the fall.

The 437 MXS had at least one applicant for every commissioning program this year. According to Roebuck they're setting the example for other squadrons to follow.

"Don't say, 'I'm not the one,'" said Roebuck. "Do it. Don't regret not taking the chance."

For more information, call the base education office at 963-4575 or visit www.afloats.af.mil.

Levitow

continued from page 1

his father did after that fateful day in Vietnam.

"My father helped to bring \$10 million annually into the state on behalf of its veterans," Levitow said.

Levitow said initially he wasn't interested in following in his father's footsteps of addressing troops and talking about military issues, but a conversation with retired Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Sam Parish at his father's funeral changed his mind.

"Chief Parish told me 'whether you like it or not, you're a piece of Air Force history,'" Levitow said. "So I

want today and tomorrow's Air Force to know who my father was because he's gone and can't speak for himself anymore."

He said his father was honored that an aircraft was named after him, but was humbled by the thought because his dad didn't want the notoriety.

"He just wanted to do his job, be a loadmaster and protect his country," Levitow said.

Levitow and Banks spent the rest of Tuesday visiting with airmen at the First Term Airman Center and Airman Leadership School students before heading home to Charlotte Wednesday.

Below is the actual text of Sgt. John L. Levitow's Medal of Honor citation:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Sgt. Levitow (then A1C.), U.S. Air Force, distinguished himself by exceptional heroism while assigned as a loadmaster aboard an AC-47 aircraft flying a night mission in support of Long Binh Army Post. Sgt. Levitow's aircraft was struck by a hostile mortar round. The resulting explosion ripped a hole 2 feet in diameter through the wing and fragments made over 3,500 holes in the fuselage. All occupants of the cargo compartment were wounded and helplessly slammed against the floor and fuselage. The explosion tore an activated flare from the grasp of a crewmember who had been launching flares to provide illumination for Army ground troops engaged in combat. Sgt. Levitow, though stunned by the concussion of the blast and suffering from over 40 fragment wounds in the back and legs, staggered to his feet and turned to assist the man nearest to him who had been knocked down and was bleeding heavily. As he was moving his wounded comrade forward and away from the opened cargo compartment door, he saw the smoking flare ahead of him in the aisle. Realizing the danger involved and completely disregarding his own wounds, Sgt. Levitow started toward the burning flare. The aircraft was partially out of control and the flare was rolling wildly from side to side. Sgt. Levitow struggled forward despite the loss of blood from his many wounds and the partial loss of feeling in his right leg. Unable to grasp the rolling flare with his hands, he threw himself bodily upon the burning flare. Hugging the deadly device to his body, he dragged himself back to the rear of the aircraft and hurled the flare through the open cargo door. At that instant, the flare separated and ignited in the air, but clear of the aircraft. Sgt. Levitow, by his selfless and heroic actions, saved the aircraft and its entire crew from certain death and destruction. Sgt. Levitow's gallantry, his profound concern for his fellowmen, at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the U.S. Air Force and reflect great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of his country.



Photo by Ed Kelly

Master Sgt. Edie Getz (center), 437th Mission Support Squadron Airman Leadership School Instructor, talks with John Levitow Jr., and his fiancée, Lucy Banks, about ALS during his visit to Charleston AFB Monday and Tuesday.

AAFES extends hours

Magnolia Place dining facility will close its doors for good after dinner Sunday. The new dining facility will open March 26. During that time, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service has extended its facilities hours to better serve meal cardholders. AAFES facilities will be open Sunday-March 25 as follows:

Burger King; Monday-Friday, 6 a.m.-8 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday, 6:30 a.m.-6 p.m.

Anthony's Pizza; Monday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., and Sunday 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

Robin Hood and Frank's Franks; Monday-Saturday, 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m., and Sunday 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

AAFES facilities accepts the Military Star Card, American Express, Visa, MasterCard and Discover.

NEWS BRIEFS

Spotlight

Retirement ceremony: The 1st Combat Camera Squadron is hosting a retirement ceremony for Master Sgt. Willard Pretlow Jr., today, 10 a.m., at the Charleston Club. For more information, call Staff Sgt. James Tabourne at 963-3366 or Tech. Sgt. David Underwood at 963-3331.

Retirement ceremony: The 437th Medical Group is hosting a retirement ceremony for Master Sgt. Lanette Johnson March 23, 9:30 a.m., at the Charleston Club. For more information, call Master Sgt. Frank Lisenbee at 963-6846.

Retirement ceremony: The 437th Civil Engineer Squadron is hosting a retirement ceremony for Master Sgt. David Linquist March 30, 10 a.m., at the Charleston Club. For more information, call Tech. Sgt. Paul Legg at 963-5053.

Around the base

Senior NCOs: Request for senior NCO volunteers to be a part of military liaison teams in Estonia and the Ukraine are being taken. Those selected will work with senior officers who have had little contact with the U.S. military in the past. Nominees must possess a high level of interpersonal skills and exceptional military maturity. Tour lengths are 179 days, and are comprised of members from all branches of the military. For more information, go to www.eucom.mil/programs/jctp/jctpmlts.htm, or call Tech. Sgt. Lisa Barkman at 963-6336.

Spanish linguist: Volunteers are needed to be Spanish linguists for support of Operation Dominant Chronical, Counterdrug Division. Volunteers must submit a letter including name, grade, social security number, Air Force Specialty Code, unit, security clearance, duty phone, language proficiency level and commander's endorsement to the personnel readiness function at the military personnel flight. For more information, call Senior Airman Tammy Haas, Randolph AFB, Texas, at DSN 665-2505, or Tech. Sgt. Lisa Barkman at 963-6336.

Trident: Trident Technical College is holding early enrollment for the summer semester now through April 17. Payment of tuition will be due before May 22. The term dates are May 23-Aug. 8. For more information, call 963-4581.

Spring semester: Class registration for Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's spring term runs through Monday. Classes are March 19-May 19. Classes are open to everyone and are held at the base education office. For more information, call

Charleston Profile

Tech. Sgt. Timothy Blair
315th Security Forces Squadron

Tech. Sgt. Timothy Blair is the supply sergeant for the 315th Security Forces Squadron. He is responsible for inventory and maintenance of the squadron's supplies.

In the civilian sector, Blair is a K-9 police officer for the city of North Charleston. Blair and his K-9 counterparts are responsible for control and narcotics.

"I wanted to be a cop because my father was one," said Blair. He added he always wanted to be involved in law enforcement and loves every minute of it.

"I just enjoy my job."

Blair, who started his military career as part of the Army Military Police, said the military has been nothing but good to him.

"I enjoy the traveling," said Blair, who has visited places such as California and Italy.

Outside of work, Blair enjoys activities such as wood-working, lifting weights and playing with his three dogs, one of which is a police dog.



Photo by Senior Airman Mary Hinson

767-8912.

Labor negotiation: Negotiations between Charleston AFB and Local 1869 American Federation of Government Employees on a labor agreement to replace the 1995 memorandum covering appropriated fund employees will begin today and last until April 13. Face-to-face negotiations commence the week of April 16. Anyone wanting to bring issues to the attention of either side should contact the union office at 963-5765 or 963-4463.

Finance: The finance office will not open until 9 a.m. Tuesday.

OSA: The Officers' Spouses' Association is holding a meeting Tuesday, 6 p.m., at the Charleston Club. The world-renown artist, Margaret Hall Hoybach, will create one of her paintings while telling humorous stories and anecdotes. A grilled chicken fresca salad, rolls and a chocolate fruit cup will be served. The cost is \$11 for club members and \$14 for non-members. RSVP by calling 871-9829 from 9 a.m.-9 p.m.

Air Force Association: Nomination packages for South Carolina Air Force Association Awards are due to the commander for review by Wednesday. The wing can submit one nomination for each available category. For more information, call Capt. Steven Moore at 963-2970.

Dining in meeting: The next meeting for the Enlisted Combat Dining In will be Wednesday, 3 p.m., in the wing conference room. The plan-

ning committee is still in need of volunteers. For more information, call Senior Master Sgt. James Moody at 963-6009 or Senior Master Sgt. Jerry Lautenslager at 963-2610.

Skills seminar: There will be a study skills seminar at the base education office Thursday, 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Call 963-4575 to reserve a slot.

Recycling: Curbside recycling pick up for military housing will be March 29, April 12 and 26.

SGLI: Military members who have the current maximum Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance coverage will see an increase in their SGLI to \$250,000 starting April 1. The monthly rate for the increased coverage is \$20. Those who currently have \$200,000 coverage and don't want the increased SGLI, need to fill out a SGLV Form 8286.

Easter baskets: The 437th Communications Squadron Booster Club is selling Easter baskets now through March 27. The \$5 baskets will be delivered April 12. To order call Paula Baker at 963-3505 or 2nd Lt. Celeste Rodriguez at 963-5071.

Base school forum: A school forum is scheduled for April 2, 7-8:30 p.m. at the Charleston Club. Lambs Elementary, Hunley Park Elementary, Morningside Middle, North Charleston High and Stall High Schools will be represented. Dr. Owen Bush, District 4 superintendent, and Bill Lewis, District 4 construction manager, will be in atten-

dance to brief about construction projects for District 4. Parents will have a chance to ask questions and interact with school representatives. For more information, call Senior Master Sgt. Terrie Powell at 963-2202.

Camp Happy Days: More than 170 men and women volunteers are needed to work for one week at Camp Happy Days for children with cancer July 1-7. Volunteers must be at least 21 years old. For information, visit www.camphappydays.com, or write to Camp Happy Days 2001, 1622 Ashley Hall Rd., Charleston, S.C., 29407.

Family Support Center

Air: The Family Support Center now has a membership with Air Inc., for the convenience of those personnel deciding between separation and an Air Force career. For more information, call 963-5187.

Sip-n-Chat Chucky Cheese Trip: Saturday, 6:30 p.m.

Investing Fundamentals: Monday, 8:30-11:30 a.m.

Resume II: Tuesday, 9-10:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.-noon.

Troops-to-Teachers: Tuesday, 10-11 a.m.

Sponsorship Training: Tuesday, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Pre-Deployment Briefings: March 26, 8 a.m., and Thursday and March 29, 4 p.m.

Home Buying: March 26, 10 a.m.-noon.

All workshops are held at the FSC unless otherwise noted. For more information or to register, call the Family Support Center at 963-4406.

COMMENTARY

About the paper

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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Honorary commanders program kicks off

By Col. Rusty Findley
437 AW commander

It was a good week last week as we kicked off our Honorary Commanders Program March 9. I had the opportunity to thank one of Charleston's "unsung" heroes, Sam Lyons. Sam has always been there to lend a helping hand to Charleston. He is the first recipient of our new Ambassadors of Charleston AFB recognition. See the article on page 2 for more details.

Last week, I mentioned a number of our visits. We received great feedback from Army Lt. Gen. Mike McDuffie, the J-4 from the U.S. Joint Staff at the Pentagon, and Brig. Gen. Lawrence Lashkevich, his counterpart from the Canadian Joint Staff. I appreciate the hard work by our project officer 1st Lt. Wade Cornelius, 437th Maintenance Squadron, and our protocol staff. Gen. McDuffie wrote back that he was very happy with the outstanding support from Charleston. A special thanks to the following who gave a great tour of the C-17: Maj. Rick Oddo, 437th Operations Support Squadron; 1st Lt. Kevin Minor, 17th Airlift Squadron; Staff Sgt. Brent Richburg, 17 AS; 1st Lt. Rob Blake, 437th Aircraft Generation Squadron; Staff Sgt. Rodger Folkerts, 437 AGS; and Airman 1st Class Joe Tucker, 437 AGS.

Maj. Gen. Walter E. Buchanan III, director of Operations and Training, Deputy Chief of Staff for Air and Space Operations, visited us Tuesday and Wednesday. Gen. Buchanan received a number of briefings about the wing and our Special Operations Low Level II mission. He had the opportunity to fly in one of our C-17s and tour our aerial port, life support facility and other support areas. He was very impressed with what he saw and complimented us for our outstanding efforts. A special thanks to our protocol staff and project officer Capt. Chad Rauls, 14th Airlift Squadron, for the visit.

Other visits that went well this week included Maj. Gen. Tom Fiscus, the deputy Judge Advocate General of the Air Force, and his mobilization assistant, Brig. Gen. Ed Tatum. They spent most of their time with the Staff Judge Advocate office, but did find time to meet with the Area Defense Council, 437th Security Forces Squadron, the Air Force Office of Special Investigations and also toured the Navy consolidated brig. They spoke very highly of our superb SJA staff.

We were especially pleased to host John Levitow Jr., the son of the late Medal of Honor recipient John L. Levitow, for a visit to the base Monday and Tuesday. He had an opportunity to tour the C-17 named in honor of his father and met with various leadership school graduates who have received the "Levitow award" for their outstanding performance. It was a special moment for him and I appreciate all the hard work by Command Chief Master Sgt. Harvey Hampton to pay tribute to the memory of this outstanding hero. See the article on page 1 for more information.

Upcoming visits include Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Gary Murray, commander of the Air Force Medical Operations Agency and Assistant Surgeon General for Dental Services who arrives today.

The 437th Medical Group conducted a TRICARE Pharmacy Benefit briefing for military retirees over age 65 Thursday in the base theater. This new benefit requires no enrollment fee or premium. This is a significant improvement for our retirees since prescription costs can be quite high. This is another example of our improving health care benefits. The new pharmacy benefit goes into effect April 1 as a result of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2001.

The 437 MDG is also hosting a Joint Healthcare Consumers Advisory Council Meeting on Thursday, 2 p.m., in

the base theater. Agenda items include a discussion of the latest healthcare benefit issues resulting from the National Defense Authorization Act and updates from the Naval hospital and the base clinic on local healthcare services. If you have questions about TRICARE, or just want more information about your health benefits, then plan to attend. Use this opportunity to learn more about your health benefits and give the 437 MDG your feedback in a face-to-face forum.

I recently learned the 437th Communication Squadron was selected as the Air Force recipient of the 2000 Small Unit Maintenance Effectiveness Award in the communications-electronics category. The communications squadron has dominated this category at the AMC level for the past three years and is now the best in the Air Force. The award represents a huge team effort between the 437 CS Mission Systems Flight and the Network Management section of the Information Systems Flight. Boasting an outstanding 98.5 percent cumulative system uptime and superior customer service, they rose to each challenge and excelled in every endeavor.

Continuing with the high honors, the 437th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office was recognized as having the best media relations program in the Air Force for 2000. They marketed 126 good ideas about the wing last year that resulted in 434 newscasts or articles. Master Sgt. Dan Murphy was also selected as the 2000 AMC Outstanding Public Affairs NCO.

In addition, Public Affairs also won second place in the annual AMC base newspaper contest. I appreciate all the hard work by the editor, Senior Airman Jason Smith. I like our base newspaper and so do our readers, according to a recent survey!

Team Charleston has a good story to tell to our community and I appreciate all the hard work by PA to let others know where the premier airlift wing on the face of the planet resides. They manage many of the programs that reach out to the community through the news media, various events and our own base newspaper. We are making good progress in making this a true Air Force town!

Congratulations to Staff Sgt. Jackie Dent, 437th Contracting Squadron, for being the 21st Air Force nominee for the Outstanding Airman of the Year honors. She competes at AMC next, and I will be there to cheer her on. She was also recently selected as the 21st Air Force nominee for the 2000 United Services Organization Spirit of Hope Award.

I presented a wing coin on Monday to Senior Master Sgt. Fred Richardson, 437 SFS, for receiving the AMC Order of the Bayonet, "Defender Class," for his significant contributions to our air base ground defense mission. It is always special when you are recognized by your peers!

We bid farewell today to Lt. Col. Ed Martin and his wife, Mary, upon his retirement after more than 23 years. Ed's been leading our Office of Very Cool Stuff in the 437th Logistics Group and has done an outstanding job. His career has included duty here as a C-141 Special Operations Low Level II navigator and the commander of the 437th Logistics Support Squadron. Both are leaving a great legacy behind them and we will miss them. Everyone is invited to attend his retirement ceremony in the education center today, 3 p.m. They will move to Atlanta, Ga., and we wish them continued success.

I hope to see many of you at the St. Patrick's Day Sunday brunch in the club from 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. This is another great initiative by your 437th Services Squadron and I know their pride, professionalism and passion will be on display. For the monthly brunch to be successful, we need your participation. See you there, and have a great weekend!



Photo by Ed Kelly

Col. Rusty Findley, 437th Airlift Wing commander, presented various Air Force and Air Mobility Command awards to the Public Affairs office at a Monday staff meeting.

FEATURE

Hunley Park fourth graders try to tackle new playground project

Story and photos by
Senior Airman Jason Smith
437 AW Public Affairs

Students at Hunley Park elementary school have no place to play, and they're asking for help from Charleston AFB.

Teacher Marsha Betcher's fourth-grade class has taken on the task of building a playground for the school as their class service project. Class 4-3, in conjunction with Youth Services Charleston, has initiated the Playground Restoration Campaign.

The school has been without the needed playground equipment since August, according to Betcher.

"There was a playground safety expose on one of the local news reports," Betcher said. "Our equipment was targeted and most of it was taken away. The kids all wrote letters to the station letting them know they were thankful for pointing out safety issues, but they really needed some help getting donations for new equipment. They never heard anything back."

Realizing they were on their own, the 23 students in Class 4-3 took a vote, and selected to start the PRC.

"We usually have about 100 students out here at a time," said Betcher. "The three pieces of equipment that's left here just aren't enough. We'll take anything we can get, but we've figured the ideal playground is going to cost about \$50,000."

An ideal playground for the school would include an obstacle course for the students, Betcher said. The school's physical educa-

tion teacher, Ann Harwood, would like to increase the school's participation in the Presidential Physical Fitness Award Program.

"Right now, we usually have about 12 students each year who meet the requirements for the Presidential Award," said Betcher. "With an obstacle course, we're convinced we could improve that. It's important to get the students away from the TV and the Playstation and have them doing something to stay in shape."

Tech. Sgt. Janet Clayton, 437th Medical Group Health and Wellness Center, agreed physical fitness was important at a young age.

"It's definitely important for kids to stay in shape," said Clayton. "The habits they form now will usually carry over into adulthood."

Safety is also an issue when designing and building a playground, according to Dr. Suzy Amburn, the school's principal.

"Everything needs to be made from recycled plastic or covered in rubber," said Amburn. "All wooden equipment we've seen in the past can't be used anymore because of splinters. The S-hooks that are used on swings have to be completely covered so students' clothes don't get caught. There are a lot more safety guidelines now than when I was growing up."

Amburn said the school has an excellent safety record and they will continue to remain safety conscious.

"We always push safety," she said. "Our sixth graders decided to make playground safety rules for a class project. They really did come up with some great rules, and they went to all the other classes to make sure the younger students understood them."

Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream in Charleston heard about the unsafe playground removal and the class's determination to get new, safer equipment. They decided to pitch in and help the class.

"Ben and Jerry's is sending me and another parent to Chicago," Betcher said. "We're going to attend a playground construction fund raising-course." Along with making

the school a better place for the students to play, Betcher pointed out a new playground would benefit all Charleston AFB children.

"About 40 percent of our students are military children," said Betcher. "A new playground would be a great reward for them, and would also be open to all the base children anytime they want to use it. If our fund raising goes well enough, we'd even like to clean up the whole area and maybe put a fence up. Right now with the construction going on behind the playground, debris, like glass and nails, makes its way into the play area. The added protection and security of a fence would be a big improvement."

The next big event for the PRC will be Safety and Fitness Day March 29, 8:30 a.m., at the school. Base agencies including the fire department, security forces and the HAWC will be participating in the event. Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream will be serving new flavors, members of the Carolina Stingrays will be signing autographs, the WAVE (96.1) will be broadcasting live and cars from Summerville

Speedway will be on display. Everyone is invited to attend.

"We hope the Safety and Fitness Day will be a huge success," said Betcher. "We're mainly looking for financial support, but we're excited about any help the base can offer us. We heard about the great support they gave Lambs Elementary with their playground needs and we're hoping we can get that kind of assistance."

For more information about assisting with Class 4-3's project or attending Safety and Fitness Day, call Betcher at 767-5914.



David Unnone stands on one of the remaining pieces of playground equipment.



(Left to right) Sonny Reyes and Andrew Ferguson play in the sand while David Phillips tries to take his sweater off.



(Left to right) Seth Kleinfeldt, Kendall Jones, Nikki Newsome, Devon Keim, Briana Doctor and Amanda Jones play on the swing set.



MAGNOLIA PLACE DINING FACILITY

On the Menu



Today

Lunch: Chicken noodle soup, salmon cakes, barbecue beef cubes, chicken, egg noodles, rice, collard greens, lima beans, cauliflower, brown gravy

Dinner: Veal steak, fish, potatoes, rice, okra, cream corn, vegetables

Saturday

Lunch: Cream of broccoli soup, chicken ala king, salisbury steak, knockwurst, mashed potatoes, steamed rice, kraut, cauliflower combo, succotash, brown gravy

Dinner: Roast beef, fried chicken, rice, potatoes, corn-on-the-cob, stewed tomatoes, green beans

Sunday

Lunch: Tomato vegetable soup, chicken enchiladas, meat loaf, yankee pot roast, potatoes, mexican rice, greens, carrots, gravy, zucchini

Dinner: Spaghetti with meat sauce, fish portions, cottage-fried potatoes, steamed rice, spinach, mixed vegetable, sweet potatoes, garlic toast



Photo by Senior Airman Donald Church

Magnolia Place will close after the Sunday meal. The new dining facility will open to Charleston AFB enlisted personnel March 26.

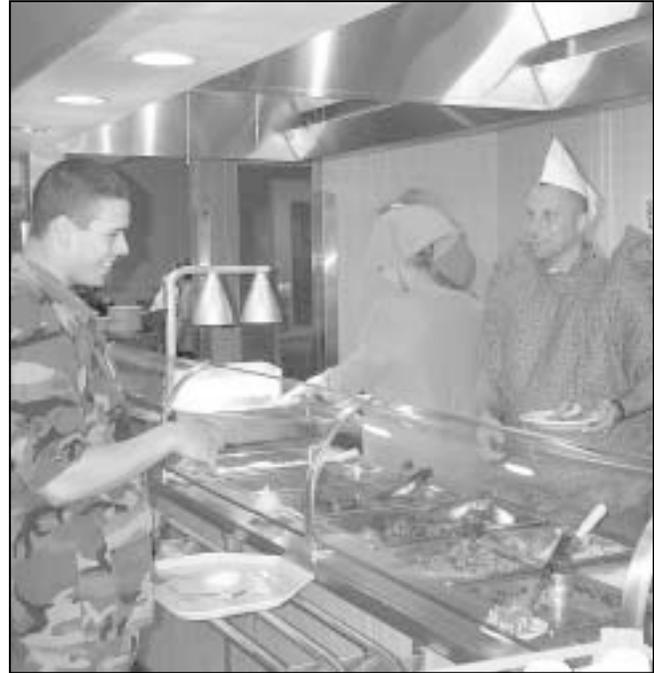


Photo by Master Sgt. Dan Murphy

Food for thought

Airman Chris Acevedo, 437th Medical Group is served by Staff. Sgt. Anthony Milunas, 437 MDG Health and Wellness Center, during the March 8 lunch at Magnolia Place. Milunas dressed as broccoli to promote National Nutrition Month. Other members of the HAWC dressed as fruits and vegetables also. The theme for March is "Building a Healthy Lifestyle." See page 15 for more information.

Chapel schedule



107 Arthur Drive

Office hours: 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday.

Phone: 963-2536. After duty hours, call the command post at 963-2531 for emergencies only.

Catholic Services

Saturday -- 4 p.m. Reconciliation, 5 p.m. Mass.

Sunday -- 9:30 a.m. Mass, 9:30 a.m. Children's Church.

Weekdays -- 11:30 a.m. Mass, Sacrament of Baptism pre-baptismal classes are held the first Sunday of each month at 11 a.m. in the Chapel Annex. For Sacrament of Marriage, call the Catholic chaplain six months prior to the wedding.

Protestant Services

Sunday -- 9:30 a.m. Sunday School in Bldg. 245, 11 a.m. Traditional Worship Service, 11 a.m. Children's Church.

Thursday -- 7 p.m. Praise and Worship contemporary service.

Buddhist: Columbia Shambhala Meditation Center, Suite 109, Columbia, S.C. 29405.

Orthodox: Holy Trinity, Greek Orthodox Church, 30 Race St., Charleston, S.C. Phone: 577-2063.

Jewish: Call Jewish Lay Leader: Airman 1st Class David Winner at 963-2102.

Islamic: Al-Jami Ar-Rasheed, 1998 Hugo Ave., Charleston Heights, S.C. Phone: 554-1773.

Movie schedule

Admission prices:

Adults/Children -- 99 cents

Any child under 17 years of age requires a parent or adult guardian (21 years old) to purchase admission ticket for the minor child to view R-rated movies. The ticket office opens 30 minutes prior to start of movie, unless otherwise noted.



Movie schedules are provided by AAFES. Patrons should call 963-3333 to verify movie titles, running times and start times, which are subject to change.

Today, 7:30 p.m.

"Save the Last Dance" – Julia Stiles

Sara comes from a small-town environment and dreams of devoting her life to ballet. Derek comes from inner-city Chicago and dances to a different beat; the rhythmic pulse of hip-hop. Together, they must overcome not only their differences, but also the opposition of their friends and families if their romance is going to survive.

(PG-13) 113 minutes

Saturday, 7:30 p.m.

"Castaway" – Tom Hanks

A FedEx systems engineer, whose personal and professional life are ruled by the clock, must transform himself physically and emotionally to survive a crash landing on a deserted island.

(PG-13) 144 minutes

March 23, 7:30 p.m.

"Antitrust" – Ryan Phillippe

When a young computer whiz is wooed by a huge Silicon Valley company, he soon discovers that his boss has rather nefarious ways around antitrust complaints.

(PG-13) 108 minutes

March 24, 7:30 p.m.

"Finding Forrester" – Sean Connery

Fitness & Sports

Sports line

APS bowler rolls second perfect game

Youth baseball: Today is the last day for youth baseball sign ups at the Youth Center. Volunteers are still needed to coach t-ball and coach-pitch baseball. The center is open 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Teams are being formed for ages 5-17. For more information, call 963-5684 or 963-3132.

Golf tournament: The 3rd Annual Support Group Golf Tournament will be held March 23 at Wrenwoods Golf Course. Check in begins at 7:30 a.m., and the tournament starts at 8:30 a.m. The format for the tournament is captain's choice. The \$20 entry fee includes range balls, a sleeve of play balls, lunch and beverages. Green and cart fees also apply. Many prizes will be awarded including golf passes, dinners and golf equipment. For more information call H.P. Bordeaux at 963-5495 or Erik Sonnenberg at 963-3505.

Golf tournament: The American Society of Military Comptrollers is sponsoring a golf tournament March 30 at the River Course on the Ashley on Dorchester Road. Registration starts at 11 a.m. The format for the tournament is captain's choice. Prizes will be awarded for the winners of the tournament, as well as closest to the flag and longest drive for both men and women. Lunch will be served after the tournament. The \$45 tournament fee includes green fees and cart rental. For more information, call Staff Sgt. Edward Lawson at 963-6421.

Golf tournament: The 437th Medical Group is sponsoring a golf tournament March 30 at Wrenwoods Golf Course. Registration is 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. The tournament starts at 1 p.m. The tournament format will be captain's choice. Prizes will be awarded for the longest drive, closest to the pin and top three teams. There will be a picnic afterwards with hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, soda and beer. The cost to enter is \$15 plus green and cart fees. The entry fee is due by March 23. For more information, or to sign up, call Joey Meadows at 963-6752.



Story and photo by Senior Airman Jason Smith
437 AW Public Affairs

Gregg Steffers, a member of the 437th Aerial Port Squadron, bowled his second perfect game at the Charleston AFB Bowling Alley March 8. Steffers, a right to left roller, posted his 300 in his third game and helped earn his team, APS1, all eight points for

the evening. APS1 was rolling-off against APS2, their sister team.

The 179-average thrower said he didn't do anything special to prepare for the game, and he just let, "the pins fall where they may."

Rosie Coulter, secretary for both leagues, said Steffers drew a crowd in the fifth or sixth frame.

"Everyone was watching and cheering him on," said Coulter. "He found his groove in the third game and was unstoppable."

Steffers is already known by the base bowling com-

munity for a perfect game he rolled in 1998.

APS1 is now on top in the National Intramural League. The normal day for the National League to roll is Tuesday, but due to TDYs, they rolled on a Thursday.

The base also has an American League rolling right now. Both leagues run simultaneously from September through April. The top five teams from the National and American Leagues will meet to bowl for the base championship in May.

National League standings			American League standings		
Team	Won	Lost	Team	Won	Lost
1. APS1	121	63	1. AGS1	129	55
2. CES1	108	76	2. 14AS	121	63
3. MSS	100	84	3. TRANS	117	67
4. 15 AS	100	84	4. SFS2	107	77
5. SFS1	94	90	5. MXS4	96	88
6. MXS3	90	94	6. APS4	93	91
7. COMM	89	95	7. MXS1	89	95
8. MXS2	88	96	8. SVS	88	96
9. OSS2	88	96	9. APS3	76	108
10. APS2	70	114	10. OSS1	68	116
			11. CES2	63	121
			12. CTCS1	57	127

National Nutrition Month; HAWC says 'build a healthy lifestyle'

By Anna Murphy
HAWC Dietetic intern

Nutrition has always played an important role in your life. The function of every cell in your body depends on the nutrients you take in from your diet. Several times a day you make choices that, over time, will influence your health for better or for worse. So what are the best decisions you can make for your body?

Start by using the Food Guide Pyramid as framework for making food choices every day. Combine nutritious foods and physical activity and you have the best recipe for a long, healthy life.

This year's theme for National Nutrition Month, "Building a Healthy Lifestyle," was designed to help you make good choices for your food and exercise habits. Use the ABC's of good choices to maximize your body's health.

Aim for fitness: Find your healthy weight and stay there. Staying at your body's ideal weight will help prevent all kinds of diseases like cancer, heart disease, diabetes, arthritis, stroke and hypertension. If you eat more calories than you burn in exercise, you will gain weight. If you eat fewer calories than you burn, you will lose weight. Physical activity will boost your energy and metabolism, help control your appetite and improve your overall health. Include moderate exercise in your weekly routine. You should do 30 minutes of aerobic activity at least five days a week. Aerobic exercise like running, walking, cycling and swimming are best for cardiovascular fitness. Weight lifting and other strength exercises are great for building and maintaining bone structure. Mix

aerobic and strength exercises for best results.

Build a healthy base: The Food Guide Pyramid is designed to help you meet all your everyday needs for vitamins, minerals and energy. Arrange your meals around the base of the pyramid. Let a variety of whole grains, fruits and vegetables make up the bulk of your diet. These foods are generally low in fat and high in vital nutrients. Add lean meats and low-fat dairy products to complete your meals while saving sweets and fats for special occasions. A healthy base will control weight gain and provide you with all the nutrients your body needs.

Choose sensibly: The nutrition facts label is a valuable resource in making sensible food choices. Plan ahead when making a trip to the grocery store or restaurant. Before buying a food, check the label for the amounts of total fat, saturated fat, sugars and sodium, or look for hints of high fat content. Be aware of the portion size. Many items that look like a single portion are actually two or more servings. When eating out, share an entrée, or take home leftovers. Choose low-fat dairy products, cooked dried beans and peas, fish, lean meats and poultry. Watch out for beverages and foods high in sugar, and whatever foods you choose, make your portion sizes reasonable.

The Health and Wellness Center is offering a Healthy Eating and Fitness While TDY class March 29, noon-1 p.m. Attendees should bring a bagged lunch. For more information, or to sign up, call 963-4007.

For more information about National Nutrition Month, visit www.eatright.org. To learn more about the USDA's Dietary Guidelines, visit <http://warp.nal.usda.gov/fnic>.