

DISPATCH



A I R L I F T

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Vol. 41, No. 9

437th Airlift Wing, Charleston AFB, SC

Friday, March 8, 2002



Photo by Master Sgt. Keith Reed

An airman refuels a C-17 at the Incirlik Air Base, Turkey, flightline. C-17s can fly to Afghanistan and back without having to refuel. Charleston AFB personnel and aircraft are deployed worldwide in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Globemasters last link of Afghan airlift

By Master Sgt. Louis Arana-Barrada
Air Force Print News

On what was a rare quiet day at Incirlik AB, Turkey, a busy fighter base, not one C-17 Globemaster III cargo plane was scheduled to make a run into Afghanistan.

There were no aircrews or cargo loaders scurrying about trying to ready the huge C-17s for flights "down range." That, too, was rare. But it would not be long before the planes would be back on the job.

That is because the C-17s, on duty at Incirlik and at Rhein-Main and Ramstein air bases in Germany since

See C-17, page 3

Connecticut children show support for CAFB: Banner signed during fund-raising campaign given to Team Charleston

By Lt. Col. Ed Memi
437 AW Public Affairs

The children of Connecticut appreciate Team Charleston's efforts in the war on terrorism, and they showed that appreciation when they sent a signed 3- by 10-foot banner praising the base for its fight in the war on terrorism.

The banner was presented to the aircrew of the Spirit of Connecticut C-17 Globemaster III, maintenance members and wing leadership at a Pratt and Whitney conference at the North Charleston Convention Center Feb. 26.

Pratt and Whitney, manufacturers of the F-117 engine used on C-17s, hosted the Air Force, the Boeing Company and United Airlines at a Technical Interchange Meeting and Program Management Review conference. The four-day conference, which is held every six months, focuses primarily on the C-17 engine and various technical issues.

The banner, which will be displayed in the 437th Airlift Wing headquarters' lobby, was the result of the pharma-

ceutical giant Bayer Corporation. Bayer used the banner during a generous fundraiser for Connecticut families affected by the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. The United Way was used to distribute funds to the families.

The fundraiser was called "Connecticut Kids for Kids," and the idea was to encourage elementary school-age kids to help other kids during this time of great need. At a fundraiser, the vinyl banner was put on display for people to sign. Employees of Pratt and Whitney also signed the banner later.

The folks at Bayer were awed by the C-17 Spirit of Connecticut ceremony coverage Oct. 12 and decided it would be nice to present the banner to the base as a gift for their efforts in the war, explained retired Brig. Gen. Steve Roser, a Pratt and Whitney executive attending the conference and a former 437 AW commander. Eleven members from Charleston AFB, including Col. Karl Young, 437 AW vice commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Harvey Hampton, 437 AW command chief master sergeant, were part of the crew that flew the aircraft to the naming ceremony held at the Connecticut Air

National Guard Base at Bradley International Airport.

"After the kids saw the Spirit of Connecticut dedication on local TV with the Charleston crew and maintenance, they were so impressed with them that they wanted to dedicate this banner to the Spirit of Connecticut and the folks at Charleston AFB who are fighting the war for us," Roser said.

Roser said the banner was given to Pratt and Whitney and they were to make sure the base received it later. "This conference was a great opportunity since we had all the maintenance folks working on the engine and we took this opportunity to present it to Charleston."

Staff Sgt. Eric Walker, 315th Aircraft Generation Squadron and jet engine mechanic who flew to Connecticut for the dedication ceremony, was on hand to accept the banner.

"On the flight out there, I was happy just to go along, and it made a big impact on me on what the Pratt and Whitney people do to make these en-



Photo by Senior Airman Jason Smith

Staff Sgt. John Carter, 437th Aircraft Generation Squadron, gets an up-close look at an F-117 engine, used on the C-17, in the production stage at the Pratt and Whitney Plant in Connecticut. Carter, a member of the original Spirit of Connecticut crew, and three other 437 AGS members, received a tour of the plant Oct. 12, 2001.

See BANNER, page 12

IN THE NEWS

Airman spends honeymoon flying into Afghanistan

By Master Sgt.
Louis Arana-Barradas
Air Force Print News

Airman 1st Class Rick Mras is green, being a C-17 Globemaster III loadmaster for only two of the two-and-one-half years he has been in the Air Force. But he already knows he would not trade his job for any other in the world.

And he considers it an honor to be a part of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"It's good to know what I'm doing here lets other people back home go on with their lives," Mras said. "Obviously I'm not in this job for the money. I'm in it because it means something."

Still, he confesses he would rather be home at CAFB, kissing his new bride, Danielle. She is an airman, too — an airfield management troop he married a scant five months ago. He was on his honeymoon when base officials at Charleston called him back to duty.

No wonder, he said, "My wife hates me being here." He has been home two weeks since Sept. 11. But, still, he said, "I'm lucky. There are guys who have been gone from home a lot longer." So now, Mras is spending what should have been his honeymoon flying into Afghanistan with the crew of his C-17. But the experience he is getting makes the separation from his wife a little easier to take.

Luckily, Mras is near the end of his 45-day tour with Charleston's 14th Airlift

Squadron. So far, he has been on about 60 combat sorties, 45 into Afghanistan. He has accrued about 160 combat flying hours.

As a loadmaster in the Air Force, he is in charge of everything behind the flight deck of the \$250 million jet. That is a sobering thought, but a challenge which Mras said he relishes.

"Where else is a 20-year-old going to get (those) kind of responsibilities?" he asked. "What we're doing is important. That's why I love my job."

During this tour, Mras

landed in Pakistan, Uzbekistan and "all the 'stan' countries around there," he said. At the start of the operation, his crew landed their C-17 on dirt strips more than once to drop off special forces. It was a bit scary at first, he said.

"Many times we didn't know where we were going," Mras said. "And sometimes it was the first time a C-17 had landed on those dirt strips. We proved the C-17 can do the job. I love this jet."

All that action makes Mras a veteran. On his 46th mission to the base here, a busy

military base near the Afghan capital of Kabul, he got to relax a bit. Mras was going along as a teacher — passing on what he had learned throughout the past two months onto two "rookie" loadmasters making their first trip into the country.

Mras was glad to pass on what he knew. He told the loadmasters what his routine was for a flight "down range." He explained the details of flying with no lights once the airplane was over Afghanistan. He told them that once in Afghanistan, they had to stay on the pavement be-

cause of the landmine threat. Plus, he gave them details on how the ground crews take pallets of cargo off the airplane.

"And since the runways and the taxiways are so narrow, you have to hang out the troops' doors and guide the pilot to the parking area," he said. "You sure don't want to go off the pavement."

The huge cargo plane took off from Incirlik AB, Turkey, in the afternoon. It had no passengers, but did have 46,000 pounds of supplies, equipment and food packed in its cargo hold.

"We haul a lot of food for the troops," he said. "So we know they appreciate what we do."

But back home in Indianapolis, Ind., Mras said his mother worries about his safety. Unlike his dad — a retired Air Force C-141 Starlifter flight engineer who is proud of what his son is doing — she wants him to come home. But her son is not worried.

"Still, every time I talk to her, I reassure her that I'm as safe as I can be on this plane," Mras said.

Once he gets back to Incirlik, Mras plans to sleep — a lot. Then he will count the four short days until he returns home. Once back with his wife, he wants to continue his honeymoon. The couple plans to take a Caribbean cruise. This time, he hopes there is no interruption.

"I miss my wife," he said. "And I'm really ready for a vacation."



Photo by Master Sgt. Keith Reed

As a C-17 makes its final approach into Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan, Airman 1st Class Rick Mras (center), 14th Airlift Squadron, gives fellow loadmasters Senior Airman Bryan Marvel (left), 14 AS, and Staff Sgt. Donny Washam, 16th Airlift Squadron, some final tips on what to expect when they land. Mras and his wife, Danielle, plan to resume their honeymoon when he returns.

ECAMP team to visit, study, assess CAFB: Team made up of personnel from contractor, AMC, MacDill, Pope AFBs

By Staff Sgt. Melanie Streeter
437 AW Public Affairs

The Air Mobility Command Environmental Compliance Assessment and Management Program team is coming to Charleston AFB Sunday.

The team includes Col. Tina Chester, 43rd Logistics Group commander, Pope AFB, N.C., experts from AMC, a contractor and other base-level personnel from Pope AFB and MacDill AFB, Fla.

The ECAMP is a comprehensive assessment of the installation's environmental management program and consists of a detailed review of 13 compliance areas: air; hazardous materials; hazardous waste; natural and cultural resources; pesticides; petroleum, oil and lubricants; storage tanks; pollution prevention; solid waste; water qual-

ity; waste water; toxic substances; and other areas, such as the installation restoration program.

"It's a great opportunity for them (the team) to learn more about the ECAMP process and perhaps more importantly, glean valuable information through the process of cross feeding with their counterparts here at Charleston," said Nicole Shope, 437th Civil Engineer Squadron Environmental Management Flight.

One of those innovative programs is the replacement of wood chip ground cover at the Child Development Center and Youth Center with chipped recycled tires.

According to Tech. Sgt. Gerald Bloss, 437 CES Simplified Acquisition of Base Engineer Requirements program manager, the recycled tire ground cover is

projected to last 10 times longer than the wood chip, requires much less maintenance and just plain looks better.

"It also saves our natural resources by reusing tires and helps the base comply with affirmative procurement requirements," Shope said.

Shope, along with Dale Cook, 437th Logistics Group, and Ashley Allinder and Julie Schoen, both from the 437 CES, trained more than 1,200 base personnel in pollution prevention, storm water pollution prevention, hazardous waste and ECAMP procedures during the past year.

The training led to the base receiving no violations and no findings during a recent no-notice RCRA (Resource Conservation and Recovery Act) inspection, Shope said.

The ECAMP team will kick off the

assessment with an in-brief Monday, 8:30 a.m., in the Community Education Center ballroom. Shope said all base personnel are invited to attend the in-brief, and those responsible for managing environmental programs within their units are highly encouraged to attend.

"Each time we are visited by an inspection or assessment team, we hear the words, 'We're here to help,'" said Shope. "We often nod with ambivalence and perhaps a bit of fear in our eyes, but the ECAMP team really is here to help. They help us identify those compliance violations we may have overlooked and provide us with solutions so we can fix those instances on non-compliance before a state or federal regulator takes note and levies a fine or enforcement action on us."

AF education's Bootstrap Program gets 'the boot'

Program discontinued in favor of AFELA; service obligation, duty status change

By Senior Airman Jason Smith
437 AW Public Affairs

The Bootstrap Program that used to allow Air Force personnel to attend college in a full-time status while still considered active-duty members is no longer.

Bootstrap was discontinued Feb. 22 after an Air Force judge advocate general reviewed the program and determined it could not continue without compliance to the Air Force Educational Leave of Absence Policy.

According to a memorandum for major command directors, the Bootstrap Program has been replaced with an updated version of the Air Force Educational Leave of Absence Policy. All of those already attending school under Bootstrap, and those who have been approved by a unit commander for an upcoming Bootstrap Program, will be grandfathered under the old policy. However, new applicants will see considerable changes under AFELA.

The two biggest changes, according to the memorandum, involve the service commitment after school is completed and the benefits while attending school.

Bootstrap participants used to have a three-to-one active-duty service commitment. Basically, every month of school attended under Boot-

strap equaled three months of additional military service. AFELA participants only have a two-to-one service commitment after completion of school. Although the service obligation is slightly less under AFELA, the participant, in addition to the two-to-one service commitment policy, must complete any other period of obligated service.

The second major change under AFELA puts program participants in educational leave status instead of permissive TDY status. Bootstrap participants collected basic pay, basic allowance for housing, basic allowance for subsistence, and all special pay and allowances authorized. AFELA participants will now receive only basic pay.

All students will be required to fill out the Air Force Form 204, Educational Leave of Absence Request, and the AF Form 988, Leave Request/Authorization form.

According to Diana Roebuck, 437th Education Services Flight chief, seven Charleston AFB members were selected under Bootstrap in 2001 alone. Ten people total were selected in the previous two years.

"There are a minimal number of people who would have used Bootstrap," said Roebuck. "The Air Force is the only service that used Bootstrap, and conforming it to meet pub-

lic law was a necessary step."

Even those who were considering Bootstrap may still benefit under AFELA, according to Roebuck. Montgomery GI Bill benefits are currently at \$800 per month, and Roebuck said she expects to see them raised to \$900 per month starting in October. Since AFELA participants, who are eligible for GI Bill benefits, can use the full amount of the bill, the loss of BAH and BAS may be moot.

"The spirit and intent of these two programs is to provide an educational opportunity for those people who aren't able to pursue normal, off-duty education due to personal or mission circumstances," said Senior Master Sgt. Matt Harless, 437th Airlift Wing career assistance advisor. "I think AFELA will help ensure that only people who are sincerely trying to get an education and otherwise can't go to school will apply."

Harless went on to say a decline in the number of participants wouldn't necessarily signal a lack of success, and it may even help further retention because it requires the participant to re-enlist prior to accepting AFELA.

Anyone interested in earning a commission will still have ample opportunity, according to Harless.

He said AFELA will not affect any other commissioning programs al-

ready in place, and there are still programs for everyone's needs and desires. Roebuck echoed his sentiments.

"There are no limits to the options available right now," said Roebuck. "There are many ways other than Bootstrap to finish your degree and earn a commission. Please come in and talk to a professional counselor who will work with you to meet your educational goals."

No matter what educational goals a Team Charleston member may have, Harless recommends talking to him before making a hasty decision.

"Often people initially choose commissioning programs because they are unaware of the many other career opportunities that exist, such as retraining and special duty assignments," said Harless. "That's where I step in and help."

"I can talk to people, and their dependents, and get an idea of what their goals are," continued Harless. "Then I can point them in one of several directions based on their personal situation."

For more information about education opportunities, call the Community Education Center at 963-4575. For more information about career progression, call Harless at 963-8004.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Tiffany Page

Keep on rolling

Senior Airman Chris Gergen, 437th Transportation Squadron, changes a marker light on a humvee while deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

C-17

continued from page 1

the start of Operation Enduring Freedom, are flying most of the sorties into Afghanistan. Each day, the huge transports ferry troops, supplies and equipment needed to sustain U.N. forces there.

The Afghan airlift is a job tailor-made for the C-17, said Maj. Eugene De Paolo, a C-5 Galaxy pilot from Dover Air Force Base, Del., who is attached to Incirlik's 728th Air Mobility Squadron as a C-17 airlift stage manager.

He said the Afghan airlift again proves the C-17's dependability.

"The C-17's the right aircraft for this mission, no doubt about it," De Paolo said. "It's a tremendous platform to get the job done. And they're flying with great reliability."

That equates to more cargo and troops delivered on time to meet the operational needs of U.N. forces on the ground, he said.

The C-17s are not doing the job alone, of course.

They are sharing the airlift load with their big brothers, the C-5s. The bigger

planes bring cargo and troops from the United States to one of the staging bases. From there, the C-17s fly the troops and cargo the last leg into Afghanistan.

Getting to Afghanistan and back is not a routine flight by any means. Missions from Germany can last 26 hours. Plus, aircrews must fly into a part of the world with some of the most rugged mountains. It is an area full of threats to aircraft. And once there, aircraft must land at short and unfamiliar airfields. So it takes a focused crew, officials said.

On the ground, things are tense as ground crews quickly unload their precious cargoes.

Aircraft spend as little time on the ground as possible, said Capt. Jeff Nelson, a C-17 pilot from the 17th Airlift Squadron.

"When we land, we sit with our engines running and brakes on," Nelson said. "And we wait for the loadmaster to offload the cargo."

It is a stressful time that can seem like forever, he said.

But though they know

they are in a threat area and want to get out now, Nelson said there is no rushing.

"We don't want to cut any corners," he said. "So we let the loadmaster do his job."

Once cleared to go, the cargo planes make a hasty, tactical departure for friendly skies.

Planes that fly from Incirlik make the round trip without refueling. Those flying back to Germany usually stop in a neighboring country to refuel before heading home.

As if the C-17 is not busy enough, it is also acting as a tanker of sorts, De Paolo said. Some of the later versions of the aircraft have larger fuel tanks. That allows C-17s flying from Incirlik to offload aviation fuel in Afghanistan.

De Paolo said the missions into Afghanistan are not as frequent or robust as the C-17 missions flown during Kosovo, but the aircrews are just as enthusiastic to get the job done, and the airplane is holding up under the around-the-clock flying.

"The C-17's doing an outstanding job here," De Paolo said.

NEWS BRIEFS

Spotlight

Honorary chiefs: The Honorary Chief Induction Ceremony is scheduled for Thursday, 3 p.m., at the Charleston Club. The group will be inducting Brig. Gen. Rusty Findley, 437th Airlift Wing commander, and Tony Kolgaklis. Dress for all chiefs at this occasion will be the service dress uniform.

Promotion ceremony: There will be a promotion ceremony March 15, 11 a.m., for Lt. Col. Robert King, 437th Aerial Port Squadron commander. The ceremony will be held in Bldg. 178, the APS warehouse. A lunch reception will follow the ceremony. For more information, call 963-6410, 963-3070 or 963-3210.

Around the base

Ceremony: There will be a massing of the colors Sunday, 3 p.m., at Summerall Chapel, on the Citadel campus. According to a Citadel release, it will be a colorful, dignified, patriotic ceremony dedicated to the memory of those members of the military services who gave their lives to preserve the nation's liberties and to honor those who have served and are serving to ensure continued freedom.

ERAU: Embry Riddle Aeronautical University is holding its next class registration. The term runs March 18-May 17. For more information, call the Community Education Center at 963-4575.

AfSA: The Air Force Sergeants Association meets Tuesday at 4 p.m. in the Daedalion Room of the Charleston Club.

Study Skills: The Community Education Center has scheduled a Study Skills Seminar Wednesday, 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., in the center. The class is designed to help personnel in upgrade training and those taking college level classes or tests. For more information, call 963-4575.

First Six: A First Six meeting is scheduled for March 15, 2 p.m., at the Charleston Club. For more information, call Senior Airman Heather Reid at 963-5549.

City Colleges of Chicago: Term IV for City Colleges of Chicago begins March 17. Registration is currently in progress and will continue through Thursday. Class schedules for Term IV are available and can be e-mailed, faxed or picked up at the Community Education Center. A variety of classes are being offered. For more information, call 552-5959.

Healthcare council: The Joint

Healthcare Consumers Advisory Council is scheduled to meet Thursday, 2 p.m., at the base theater. Items on the agenda include discussion on the latest health care benefits issues resulting from the National Defense Authorization Act and updates from the Naval Hospital Charleston and the Charleston AFB clinic on local healthcare services. For more information, call Capt. Mia Dawson at 963-6505.

Recruiters: The Recruiter Selection Team will visit Charleston AFB March 15. Chief Master Sgt. Roberto Marroquin and Senior Master Sgt. Victor Geary will brief recruiter candidates and volunteers at 1 p.m. in the Family Support Center classroom. For more information, call Staff Sgt. Shonna Billings at 963-4536.

Webster University: The Charleston Campus of Webster University is now registering for its next term, which begin March 18. Classes meet once per week in the evening or on Saturday during each nine-week term. For more information, call 572-2675.

Commissioning: There will be a Commissioning Briefing March 20, 10-11:30 a.m., at the Community Education Center. The briefing will be conducted by Capt. Dennis Nuttall, Unit Admissions

Officer for AFROTC Detachment 772, Charleston Southern University. For more information or to reserve a seat, call 963-4575.

Chiefs' Group: The Charleston AFB Chiefs' Group will hold its monthly meeting March 21, 11 a.m., in the Charleston Club. Representatives from Heritage Trust will address the group, and lunch will be provided.

Education fair: The "Spring Fling Educational Fair" is scheduled for March 27, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., in the Community Education Center ballroom. Refreshments will be served, and a drawing for prizes will take place at noon. For more information, call 963-4575.

Dental Assisting: The 437th Dental Flight is now accepting applications for the next Red Cross Dental Assisting class to begin on April 15. This program includes an academic phase as well as hands-on dental assisting training, where students will be taught how to assist in general dentistry procedures. Some duties include preparing a dental treatment room; taking and recording vital signs; preparing dental materials for use; passing instruments and medications for restoring teeth; assisting in cleaning and sterilizing dental instruments; and some adminis-

trative tasks. The program lasts approximately six-seven months, with 40 class hours per week, including weekends and holidays off. Some benefits include a certificate of training, obtaining a marketable skill, certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and exposure to a wide variety of dental specialty procedures. Applications are located at the Deily Dental Clinic, on the second floor of the 437th Medical Group building, and are due by 4 p.m. March 27. For more information, call Staff Sgt. Linda Lee at 963-6839.

Volunteers: Charleston AFB will host its 6th Annual Earth Day celebration March 27. Volunteers are needed to make the event a success. For more information, or to volunteer, call Keith Thompson at 963-4020 or Al Urrutia at 963-4978.

Closure: The Commissary will be closed March 31 in observance of Easter.

Family Support Center

Pre-deployment Briefing: Monday, March 11, 18 and 25, 8-8:30 a.m., and Thursday, March 14, 21 and 28, 4-4:30 p.m.

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

Charleston Warrior of the Week

Senior Airman Angela Hawkins
437th Mission Support Squadron

Senior Airman Angela Hawkins is a member of the commander's support staff for the 437th Mission Support Squadron.

On a daily basis, Hawkins tracks EPRs, OPRs and decorations. She's also responsible for the administrative aspects of the Weight Management Program, to include conducting weigh-ins, and tracking progress.

Hawkins recently finished her associate's degree from Trident Technical College, and she's also working toward completing her Community College of the Air Force degree.

"I have to take two CLEP tests, and then I should be done," Hawkins said. "I'm working toward my bachelor's in nursing."

Nursing won't be new to Hawkins since she was a licensed practical nurse before she entered the Air Force in 1998. She said she hopes to eventually become a registered nurse as an Air Force officer.

In the immediate future, Hawkins said she's looking forward to sewing on staff sergeant stripes in the next couple months.

"Extra money is always a good thing," Hawkins said. "I'm going to enjoy the new challenges, but I'm really looking forward to the pay raise."

When she's not working, Hawkins spends time with her two daughters, Megan, 6, and Emma, 2. When time allows her, she also said she likes to shop, go to the beach, bowl and sing karaoke.

"I think I'm pretty good (karaoke)," said Hawkins. "I doubt the people who've heard me would agree, but I enjoy it anyway."



Photo by Senior Airman Jason Smith

COMMENTARY

Team Charleston sets the standard for airlift

By Brig. Gen. Rusty Findley
Wing Commander

I'm glad to be home again after more than three months deployed as the Director of Mobility Forces. It is great to be back and I thank everyone for his or her outstanding support of Operation Enduring Freedom. We need to remain focused and keep supporting our deployed forces overseas while doing our part here.

As I have stated before in this column, we're in a fight against terrorism for the long haul and need to prepare ourselves for operations over a sustained period. This is not a sprint, but a marathon and we do need to pace ourselves for the future. It will take continued sacrifice by our people and their families. I appreciate everyone's dedication to this very important effort during these defining times for our nation.

During my time in Southwest Asia, I had a chance to travel a little and it is very clear that our reputation among our many customers is superb. Our results speak for themselves and we've shown the world once again that the C-17 is a true "hybrid," combining the best features of tactical and strategic airlift. Our people have performed marvelously across the entire spectrum. Everybody who flies, fixes and supports this aircraft should be extremely proud of their accomplishments, but also realize that we're not done yet and prepare themselves accordingly.

In fact, while traveling throughout the area of operations, one senior Army commander stated that the Air Force decision to purchase the C-17 was the smartest thing we've done as a military service in the past 10 years. Additionally, I also had a chance to meet with our deployed people throughout the theater and their morale is very high, despite the hardship of separation from their loved ones.

At Monday's staff meeting, it was my honor to recognize some of our outstanding performers. The 437th Communications Squadron distinguished itself by winning the quarterly blood drive trophy. I also presented wing coins to Senior Master Sgt. **Steve Cathey**, 437th Aerial Port Squadron, who was a distinguished graduate of the Senior NCO Academy and to Staff Sgt. **Jennifer Ramirez**, 437th Medical Group, who was a distinguished graduate of the Airman Leadership School.

We hosted Deidre A. Lee, Director of Defense Procurement, for a visit on Tuesday and Wednesday. She was visiting the area for an awards banquet at Seabrook Island, but found time in her busy schedule to meet with our 437th Contracting Squadron members in an informal "town hall" question and answer session.

Col. Tina Chester, the 43rd Logistics Group commander, Pope AFB, N.C., and chief of the Environmental Compliance and Assessment Management Program team, will arrive Sunday with 28 assessors to take a comprehensive look at our programs. They will be here through March 15 to help improve our environmental program by identifying strengths and areas that need improvement. The ECAMP is a great tool to strengthen and make our environmental program even stronger and better. The visit will help us to prioritize funding for future environmental projects while giving us some great feedback on our program. Give them your full cooperation.

If you have concerns or questions about your health care, you should

attend the Joint Healthcare Consumers Advisory Council briefing Thursday at 2 p.m. in the base theater. There will be briefers on a variety of healthcare services and issues. Everyone is welcome to attend and representatives from the U.S. Navy Hospital and 437 MDG will be on-hand to answer your questions. Get the latest word on your benefits and be informed.

We welcome Col. Robert Butler, director of intelligence for U.S. Transportation Command and Lt. Col. Lacy Ingram, Jr., deputy director of intelligence for Air Mobility Command, for a "how goes it visit" Thursday and March 15. They will spend most of their time visiting with the intelligence flight in the 437th Operations Support Squadron. This is their first official visit to the base.

Please congratulate Col. Select **Bob King**, 437 APS commander, who pins on his new rank on March 15.

We will also welcome Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, into town next week for a Close Allies meeting. We won't have much interplay with him, but we do get to greet him and welcome him to Charleston.

Wondering how you could help our Air Force family? Perhaps, you might consider donating to the Air Force Assistance Fund. The annual fundraising drive began Feb. 25 and runs until March 29. The money you donate to the Air Force Aid Society through the AFAS drive does make it back to Charleston AFB. Last year alone, our people received nearly \$118,000 from the AFAS for personal emergencies and \$32,000 for educational grants. Your generosity helps our Air Force community.

I have great news regarding one of our senior leaders, Col. **Bob "Dice" Allardice**, 437th Operations Group commander. Col. Allardice was selected to become the wing commander at McChord AFB, Wash. This great news was announced as part of the command selection board that met recently. We don't have a date yet on when this will happen. We do know his replacement will be Col. Bill Bender.

In the same announcement, they named a replacement for me, Col. Brooks Bash, who is currently assigned to the Pentagon, Washington D.C.

I don't have a date for a change of command and no word yet on where I will be going. I will, however, savor every minute that I get to command this outstanding wing, the finest wing on the face of the planet. In the upcoming weeks, you'll see me out and about visiting many of the units on the base.



Photo by Master Sgt. Dan Murphy
Staff Sgt. Toby Thompson (flightsuit), 15th Airlift Squadron loadmaster, briefs Pratt and Whitney employees and others about C-17 operations at Camp Rhino, Afghanistan. Thompson is part of the Year of the Warrior briefing team that attended the Technical Interchange Meeting and Program Management Review held in Charleston, S.C.

About the paper

AIRLIFT
Dispatch

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Off duty--Around town



Sports:

Stingrays: Friday, 7:30 p.m., vs. Columbia, and Saturday, 7:30 p.m., vs. Florida. For more information, call 554-6060.

Lowgators: Next home game Monday, 7:30 p.m. For more information, call 460-1000.

Entertainment:

Live music: Angie Aparo performs at Theatre 99, 30 Cumberland St., tonight, 10:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10. For more information, call 853-6687 or visit www.etix.com.

Live music: Danielle Howle and the Tantrums perform for their CD release show Saturday, 10:30 p.m., at Theatre 99, 30 Cumberland St. Tickets are \$5. For more information, call 853-6687 or visit www.etix.com.

Variety show: Singer John McNally and comedian Shaun Connors perform Sunday, 7:30 p.m., at Sottile Theatre, 44 George St. Tickets are \$25. For more information, call 577-7400.

Theater: The Footlight Players present "Sweet Charity," a musical comedy, tonight, Saturday, and March 14-16 and 21-23, 8 p.m., at their theatre, 20 Queen St. A matinee performance is Sunday, 3 p.m. Tickets are \$25 for adults, and \$22 for seniors and students. For more information, call 722-4487.

Theater: The Crabpot Players performs the "Wizard of Oz," a timeless family classic, tonight, Saturday and March 15-16, 7 p.m., at the Darby

Building, 302 Pitt St., Mount Pleasant. Tickets are \$5, and children ages 5 and under are free. For more information, call 849-2061.

Comedy: The Have Nots! perform improv comedy tonight and Saturday, 8 p.m., at Theatre 99, 30 Cumberland St. Tickets are \$10. For more information, call 853-6687 or visit www.etix.com.

Events:

Cruz-in and show: Vehicles from the '20s to '70s will leave the Goose Creek Wal-Mart Parking lot Saturday, 2 p.m., and travel to Denny's on Ashley Phosphate Rd. for a judging and display from 3-6 p.m. Donations are requested. For more information, call Mike at 553-5837.

Second Saturday: Charleston Museum, 360 Meeting St., presents a day of family garden activities including decorative pots, flower necklaces, plant markers, a scavenger hunt and more Saturday, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Cost for the event is included with admission. For more information, call 722-2996, Ext. 264.

Exotic bird fair: The Charleston Bird Fair offers exotic birds, cages, toys, books, food and more are on display Saturday, and Sunday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., at Ladson Exchange Park. Tickets are \$3 for adults and free for children under 12. For more information, call 553-7706.

Dog agility tests: Top canines jump, climb, balance and run through courses Saturday and Sunday, 8:30 a.m., at Palmetto Islands County Park, Mount Pleasant. There is a \$1 gate fee. For more information, call 720-8021.

Listings are published on a space-available basis at the discretion of the editor of the Airlift Dispatch. Events listed are subject to change without notice. Those interested in attending an event should call ahead to confirm the date and time. To submit an event for Off duty, send a fax with all pertinent information and a call-back number to 963-5604.

FEATURE

CAFB celebrates 'Women Sustaining the American Spirit'

Story by Capt. Beth Szucs
437 AW Public Affairs

March 1 kicked off Women's History Month nationwide and at Charleston AFB. Organizations across the country are celebrating the month, highlighting the contributions of women in every aspect of society from business to civil rights to military service.

"I think it is very important because women, not just nationally, but even locally, have contributed a lot to everyday life," said Staff Sgt. Tiffany Richardson, 437th Medical Group Public Health apprentice and Women's History Month committee member. "It's not just the military, it's national Women's History Month. In the past we weren't acknowledged for all the good things we've done, and I think we need to celebrate and finally acknowledge the women and their contributions."

Charleston AFB will celebrate Women's History Month with two main events, a Walk-a-thon and a motivational breakfast.

The Walk-a-thon is scheduled for March 15 at 2 p.m. Participating

members will walk around McCombs Way Track together the first time and then continue around as many times as each person desires.

The motivational breakfast will be a buffet at the Charleston Club March 26 at 7:30 a.m. and feature a guest speaker. Members who would like to take part in either event can call 963-6024 or 963-6703 to RSVP.

The roots of Women's History Month can be traced back to the Education Task Force of the Sonoma County (California) Commission on the Status of Women, who started "Women's History Week" in 1978, according to the National Women's History Project Web site. They started the week to address their concerns over the lack of information about women's history in the K-12 curriculum and in the general public.

In 1981, the Commission secured a Congressional Resolution declaring a "National Women's History Week," according to the Web site. Their work continued to spread across the nation, and in 1987, the National

Womens Airforce Service Pilots relieved critical pilot shortage in 1940's

In September 1942, women flyers with commercial licenses were finally given the chance to serve their country and use their flying abilities. The Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron, made up of these women, was activated under the leadership of Nancy Harness Love. Their wartime mission was to fly aircraft from factories to training bases.

At almost the same time, the Women's Flying Training Detachment was created to recruit and train women pilots for ferrying duties. The famous aviator Jacqueline Cochran took command of this organization.

On Aug. 5, 1943, the two organizations merged into the Women Airforce Service Pilots, with Cochran serving as director of women pilots.

WASPs received the same flight training as male aviation cadets, except they received no aerial gunnery training and very little formation flying or acrobatics. At first, the WASPs only flew light aircraft from factories to training bases. Eventually they started flying fighters, four-engine bombers and transports. WASPs also flew noncombat missions such as towing aerial gunnery targets, flying as practice targets for searchlight crews and instructing pilots in instrument flying.

In December 1944, the WASP program was terminated after the critical shortage of male pilots ended. Although 25,000 women applied for WASP training, only 1,830 had been accepted, and 1,074 had graduated and been assigned to flight duty.

The women in this organization were afforded the privileges of officers but remained civil service employees. However, in November 1977, president Carter signed a bill granting WW II veterans' status for former WASPs.

Gen. Henry "Hap" Arnold once stated that it became common for commanding officers to prefer WASPs over male ferry pilots because the women pilots did not carry 'address books' (addresses and numbers of friends along the route) and often reached their destination quicker than the male pilots. (*Information for this article was taken from the Air Force Museum website at www.wpafb.af.mil/museum/history/wwii/waf.htm.)*

Women with spirit

■ First woman in the Air Force (1948), Staff Sgt. Esther McGowin Blake

■ First woman to break the sound barrier (1953), Jacqueline Cochran

■ First female chief master sergeant (1960), Chief Master Sgt. Leslie McGowan

■ First female promoted to general (1971), Brig. Gen. Jeanne Holm

■ First female chaplain (1973), 1st Lt. Lorraine K. Potter

■ First female test pilot (1974), Capt. Leslie H. Kenne

■ First female Air Force Academy cadet (1976), Joan Olsen

■ First 10 women graduate Air Force Undergraduate Pilot Training, Williams Air Force Base, Ariz. (1977)

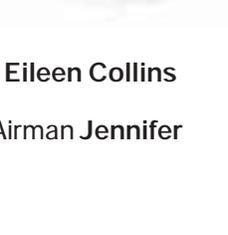
■ First secretary of the Air Force (1993), Sheila Widnall

■ First female to fly combat missions (1995), Capt. Martha McSally

■ First female space shuttle commander (1999), Col. Eileen Collins

■ First female sniper school graduate (2001), Senior Airman Jennifer Donaldson

Timeline courtesy of *Airman Magazine*



Women's History Project petitioned Congress to expand the celebration to the entire month of March.

"Each year, programs and activities in schools, workplaces and communities have become more extensive as information and program ideas have been developed and shared," stated the Web site.

As the nation celebrates the month with the theme, "Women sustaining the American spirit," the Department of Defense celebrates the contributions women have made in the armed services throughout history.

"From the days of the American Revolution to the conflict in the Persian Gulf and today, throughout the world, American women have, and are, honorably serving in defense of our nation," according to the Center for Women Veterans Web site.

Women were an integral part of the Army Air Force in the early 1940's according to the Wright Patterson AFB museum Web site.

"Women served with distinction in the AAF, replacing men who could then be reassigned to combat and other vital duties," the WPAFB Web site stated.

"The Women's Army Auxil-

iary Corps was created in May 1942," stated the Web site. "Top priority for assignments of WAACs was to serve at Aircraft Warning Stations. In the spring of 1943, WAACs became the Women's Army Corps."

While almost one-half of the women served in the Army Air Forces, the Web site stated many others worked clerical, administrative, topographical and even mechanic jobs.

Nursing was a traditional field for women to go into at that time, and as a result, almost 6,000 nurses were on duty at AAF station hospitals by 1944, according to the Web site.

Women did find their way into flying assignments, according to the WPAFB Web site, to help with a critical pilot shortage. The Women Airforce Service Pilots organization become official in 1943 and conducted missions from ferrying aircraft to eventually flying fighters, bombers and transports.

Before the WASP program was terminated in 1944, 1,074 female pilots reported for flight duty.

"From the Revolutionary War to the present, America's women veterans have been invisible heroines," stated the Women Veterans homepage. "They are true examples for future generations that securing our country's liberty and freedom are everyone's responsibility."

Team Charleston members adjust to deployment

By 2nd Lt. Jennifer Andrews
437 AW Public Affairs

Operation Enduring Freedom has many Charleston AFB personnel deployed to several locations, including Rhein Main AB, Germany.

"We know when something big happens, the C-17 and Charleston people will be there," said Capt. Jeff Nelson, 17th Airlift Squadron.

The high operations tempo of OEF has turned Rhein Main, which is scheduled to close in 2005, to an action-packed hub of the Air Force airlift mission.

Charleston personnel are proud to be serving overseas, however, they do miss the comforts of home.

"Sometimes people can take things for granted in the United States," said Maj. Rob Atkatz, a Charleston Reserve C-17 pilot. "When you deploy, you gain a better understanding of the world and appreciate what you have at home."

Gaining appreciation of the world comes in many forms.

"I used to take fast food for granted, but now it seems like a treat," said Nelson

In addition to food, some personnel had to adjust to Germany's rainy weather compared to Charleston's sunshine and warm weather.

"The weather was the biggest adjustment for me coming from Charleston,"

said Tech. Sgt. Vernell Richardson, 315th Aircraft Generation Squadron. "I also miss my 3-year-old son."

The biggest adjustment for many was being away from loved ones.

"My youngest child just learned how to crawl, and it's hard that I missed that," said Staff Sgt. Shirley Riley, 437th Maintenance Squadron.

Even though missing families is hard, most Charleston personnel find the work rewarding.

"I've been in the Air Force for 13 years, and this is the pinnacle of my career," said Staff Sgt. Taylor Adams, 315th AGS.

The majority of CAFB personnel agree with Adams and take their work very seriously.

"It's a matter of trust," Riley said. "The pilots depend on us to make sure the aircraft is running correctly."

Richardson sees it in a "do unto others" light.

"I work on the plane like I'm the one flying it," Richardson said. "If it's not good enough for me, it's not good enough for others."

However, the job wouldn't be completed if it weren't for personnel working together to accomplish the mission.

"It's a whole team concept," Riley said. "If someone needs help, you go out and help them. It's all about teamwork."

BANNER

continued from page 1

gines," said Walker. "I have a background in education and working with kids, and the presentation today meant a lot to me."

Tech. Sgt. Michael Hall, a jet-engine mechanic in the 437th Aircraft Generation Squadron and original crewmember, agreed that the presentation was special.

"I got to show the public, and Pratt and Whitney employees, around the aircraft when we flew up there," said Hall. "Most people had never seen a C-17 up close." He added the banner presentation made him feel proud because "somebody actually thinks about us."

Roser said the German-based Bayer Company was also extremely impressed with the Spirit of Connecticut ceremony.

"Big corporations, like Bayer and Pratt and Whitney, are very patriotic, and this is something we wanted to do," said Roser.

Pratt and Whitney employees are still talking about the C-17 Spirit of Connecticut ceremony because it was their first chance for many to see the engines on the aircraft, according to Roser.

"To see the finished product and people in BDUs and flight suits, when their whole life is spent building one segment of an engine, was special," said Roser.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. John Lasky

Staff Sgt. Shirley Riley, a fuel systems mechanic deployed from the 437th Maintenance Squadron, takes a shot during a game of 8-ball at the Rocket Club. The club offers a needed break from the "contingency dorms" at Rhein-Main AB, Germany, where as many as four servicemembers share a room.

Chapel events



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 Events

Stations of the Cross and soup supper: Every Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., through March 26

Choir practice: Every Tuesday, 7 p.m.

Soup and Bread Luncheon: Every Wednesday, noon, through March 27

Cantor Practice: Thursday and March 21, 6 p.m.

Holy Thursday and Adoration: March 28, 5:30 p.m.

Good Friday Service: March 29, 5:30 p.m.

Easter Vigil: March 30, 9 p.m.

Protestant Events

Truth Project practice: Monday, 7 p.m.

Protestant Parish Council: Tuesday, 11 a.m.

Lenten Luncheon: Wednesday, noon

Choir practice: Wednesday, 6 p.m.

Protestant Men of the Chapel Breakfast: March 16, 7:30 a.m., in the Annex

Maundy Thursday Service: March 28, 6:30 p.m.

Good Friday Service: March 29, noon

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 an 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.

Tonight, 7:30 p.m.

"A Beautiful Mind" – Russell Crowe

It is 1947 and mathematician John Forbes Nash Jr. made an astonishing discovery early in life and stood on the brink of international acclaim. But his white-hot ascent into the intellectual stratosphere drastically changed course when Nash's intuitive brilliance was undermined by schizophrenia. Facing challenges that have destroyed many others, Nash fought back, with the help of his devoted wife, Alicia. **(PG-13) 135 minutes**

Saturday and March 15, 7:30 p.m.

"Black Hawk Down" – Ewan McGregor

In 1993, the U.S. sent Special Forces into Somalia to destabilize the government and bring food and humanitarian aid to the starving population. Using Black Hawk helicopters to lower the soldiers onto the ground, an unexpected attack by Somali forces brings two of the helicopters down immediately. From there, the U.S. soldiers must struggle to regain their balance while enduring heavy gunfire. **(R) 144 minutes**

March 16, 7:30 p.m.

"The Count of Monte Cristo" – Guy Pearce

(PG-13) 131 minutes

Fitness & Sports

Free YOWS bowling

**By Senior Airman
Jason Smith**
437 AW Public Affairs

A free Year of the Warrior Spirit bowling tournament is scheduled for Tuesday, 1 p.m., at Starlifter Lanes.

The nine-pin, no-tap tournament is open to two teams from each group on base, including the 315th Airlift Wing.

Teams interested must be co-ed, and have at least one senior NCO and one field-grade (or higher) officer, according to Nancy Corbin, 437th Services Squadron deputy commander. After the bowling is over, teams will be awarded points. Unlike most other competitions, the team with the best scores will be awarded the fewest points.

"There will be a YOWS event every month between now and August," said Corbin. "After the tug-of-war at the base picnic, the

overall winning group (group with the fewest points) will be presented with a YOWS trophy."

A Spirit Award will also be awarded by the base chaplains, according to Corbin. She said the chaplains will be attending the monthly competitions to rate the spirit of the competitors and spectators who show up to support their respective teams.

Some of the other events planned between now and August include Combat Warrior Day, sponsored by the 437th Security Forces Squadron, an obstacle course contest, sponsored by the 315th Airlift Wing, a Warrior Run, sponsored by the Health and Wellness Center and a Project X event, sponsored by the Company Grade Officers Council.

For more information about YOWS events, go to <https://www.charleston.af.mil/chasweb/events/yows.htm>.

Best defense to meet offensive match Tuesday

**By Senior Airman
Jason Smith**
437 AW Public Affairs

The 2002 Charleston AFB Intramural Basketball season is shaping up to be a nail biter.

Although the season isn't over until the end of March, APS 1 and MXS 1 are already tied for the first-place spot. SFS is staying close, just one game behind the two leaders. CES could also easily take the top spot with a win and some losses by the three teams above them.

One of the early key games for CES and SFS could turn out to be Tuesday's game between the two. The game is scheduled for 8 p.m. on the Starlifter Court. Since SFS has the top defense in the league, and CES has the second best offense, the game has the potential to answer the question, "What will win; the most powerful force or the immovable

object?" Or at least it will answer the important sports question, "What's more important; a good offense or a good defense?"

"We've been underestimated," said Sandy Simmons, SFS coach. "As long as teams keep underestimating us, we'll keep surprising the competition."

Speaking on the competition, Simmons said the caliber of play is tougher

than her team expected going into the season. She also said SFS has great depth, and the better the team's opponents play, the higher SFS raises the level of its play.

The top eight teams at the end of the season will head to the playoffs, but the higher a team finishes in the standings, the better match-up it will have in the post season.

Place	Team	Wins	Losses	PF	PA	Games
1	APSI	9	1	645	436	10
	MXS1	9	1	596	470	10
3	SFS	8	2	466	398	10
4	CES	9	3	650	557	12
5	MED GP/ICTCS	8	3	673	580	11
6	OSS	6	6	564	579	12
	AGS	6	6	560	565	12
8	SUP	4	7	491	549	11
9	CS/SVS	4	8	522	628	12
10	NAVY HOSP.	3	8	618	638	11
11	MXS2	1	10	646	741	11
12	APS2 (dropped)	0	12	177	467	12