

COMMENTARY

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AIRLIFT
Dispatch

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15th Airlift Squadron hosts World War II aviators

By **Col. Karl Young**
437AW vice commander

Col. Findley is at Scott AFB, Ill., this week to attend Phoenix Rally, a meeting of all the commanders in Air Mobility Command. I'm sure he'll have plenty of information from the conference to share with us next week.

Col. Findley and I got a chance to help tear down the walls of one of the racket ball courts as we begin expansion plans for our new Cardio Theater in the base sports and fitness center. Col. Findley wanted this project to get underway as our final Year of the Family undertaking for the base. The cardio-theater should be the single best overall project that will serve the most people. The theater will feature stationary bikes and treadmills set amongst televisions, radios and CD players that patrons can use while exercising. See the article on page 1.

Former 16th Airlift Squadron aircrew and support staff and deployed members of the 437th Air Expeditionary Group were recently awarded the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for their accomplishments in 1999. Members assigned to those units during that period are authorized to wear the ribbon. Check with Military Personnel Flight customer service to determine eligibility to wear the ribbon.

A lot of base people attended the base appearance team out-briefing Oct. 20. We enjoyed all the spirit they displayed. The best thing about the inspection was the pride displayed as people went around cleaning up their yards and their respective buildings. The base always looks good, but you deserve special thanks too for the final push to make the best look better than usual. The base displays a lot of pride, professionalism and passion everyday. We should know today how well we did. We're proud of everyone on the base and the effort they made. Let's continue to work together to keep Charleston the finest place on the

face of the planet.

It was my honor, along with 437th deputy support group commander Lt. Col. Connie Davis to represent the base as part of the kick-off ceremonies Wednesday for the 44th annual Coastal Carolina Fair at Exchange Park in Ladson. The fair runs from Oct. 26 to Nov. 4th and features daily carnival rides and entertainment, everything from the Marshall Tucker Band to the cartoon character Scooby-Doo. Discount tickets are available at the base Outdoor Recreation Center.

Col. Findley and I will be heading to a football game at the University of South Carolina, in Columbia, on Saturday to represent the base as part of their special salute to the armed forces for military appreciation day. USC will be playing Tennessee. If you plan to attend the game, we'll be easy to spot in our uniforms as we "show the flag," so please stop by and say hello if you spot us.

About 22 members of the 15th Troop Carrier Squadron along with their families toured the base Sunday through Wednesday. The 15th Airlift Squadron made the arrangements for these distinguished World War II glider and C-47 pilots and their families to tour a C-17 static, fly in the Boeing simulators, visit the dormitories and eat in

the dining facility. There was also an excellent banquet held in the Charleston Club Tuesday to honor this distinguished group of aviators for their sacrifices. Not many squadrons can trace their heritage back to World War II, and it was a very special event for the 15th AS to play a part in this reunion. A special thanks to the 15th AS project officers: Capt Mitch Richardson, 1st Lt. Jeff Sparrow and 1st Lt. Paul Skipworth for their outstanding efforts in honoring, as veteran news reporter Tom Brokaw called in his book, "America's Greatest Generation." See the article in next week's *Airlift Dispatch* for more details.

The Junior Enlisted Oktoberfest was a complete success Oct. 20. Let's do it again! We had a great turnout, and from all the feedback that I've heard, it was a great way to say thanks to our junior enlisted workforce. A special thanks to Master Sgt. Matt Harless and members of the Oktoberfest Committee, especially Master Sgt. Diane Chancey, Senior Master Sgt. Carl Hunsinger from the Top-3 Association, 2nd Lt. Zabrina Robinson from the Company Grade Officer Council and all the first sergeants for doing all the cooking. I'm sure I left out a number of people who worked behind the

scenes to make this a success. You also have my thanks.

Air Force Basketball Team tryouts start this week in preparation for the Armed Forces Basketball Championships. The tryouts will run from Oct. 26 to Nov. 12. The Armed Forces tournament runs from Nov. 14-17. There will be a social, a three-point shootout and a slam-dunk contest for Armed Forces players on Nov. 14. In preparing for the tournament, the Starlifter basketball courts were recently refinished. The first tournament game starts Nov. 15 at 10 a.m. in the fitness center. All games are open to base members to watch. For a complete schedule of games, please visit the 437th Services Squadron web site at www.437Services.com.

Let's all rally behind our team of 437th Contracting and Comptroller Squadron members who are scheduled to compete in the Air Force Top Dollar competition Dec. 6-13 at Gulfport, Miss. The annual competition tests our base members ability to do their jobs in a deployed situation under some very physically challenging conditions.

As many of you may remember, our Charleston team received top honors at the AMC competition June 24-29 in Alpena, Mich., and therefore won the right to represent AMC in the Air Force competition. Representing Charleston will be 2nd Lt. Andy Grab, Master Sgt. Scott Hollabaugh, Staff Sgt. Julie Buie, Staff Sgt. Frank Alfaro, Senior Airman Jacqueline Dent, Senior Airman Jeannine McGuire, and Senior Airman Robert Florio. We wish them the best of luck as they prepare for the competition!

Finally, congratulations to Team Charleston as the 21st Air Force nominee for the 2000 Daedalian Trophy for Aircraft Maintenance. We wish our maintainers good luck in the AMC and Air Force competitions. More to follow.

It's been a great week, and you're all doing a fantastic Air Force job. Thanks for all you do every day.



Photo by Senior Airman Jason Smith

Col. Rusty Findley, 437th Airlift Wing commander, helps prepare some sausages during Oktoberfest.