



News Release

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

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CHARLESTON CLUB NAMED BEST IN AIR FORCE

CHARLESTON AIR FORCE BASE, S.C. – The Charleston Club is the Air Force

Services collocated club winner for 2001.

This comes on the heels of winning the Air Mobility Command collocated award for the last four years.

“When most people think of services, they think of the club,” said Lt. Col Bruce Alexander, 437th Services Squadron commander. “Through the support we receive from the active duty, Reserve, retirees and veterans, we get 110 percent participation in the facility. This also goes for the effort of all our people.”

The last time Charleston won the AF award was 1998, said Pat Simpson, club manager. “A big part of it is financial performance. We have been the top club in making a profit in AMC for the last four years.”

Simpson acknowledges that the award is not an individual award but won by the many staff members at the club.

“The biggest key is the staff,” said Simpson. “We have 10 employees that have been with us for more than 10 years and four for more than 30. That helps us with the continuity. I’m most happy for the people who work here. Without them it wouldn’t happen.”

Alexander echoed Simpson's observations.

"The food preparation and quality of every meal have a lot of veteran experience that is unmatched," said Alexander. "All our new people have this experience to draw from."

Along with winning the award, Charleston has also led the way in the command in membership.

"We have led in new memberships in AMC since 1996," said Simpson. "This helps AMC which has also led the Air Force in membership growth."

This outstanding support starts at the top and filters down.

"We get outstanding support from the wing leadership, including wing commander Col. Rusty Findley and Command Chief Master Sgt. Harvey Hampton. We also receive this support from the many group and squadron commanders out there," said Simpson.

The club is made up of approximately 4,200 members with an annual income of \$2.5 million.

The earnings of the club, over and above operating costs, stay here at CAFB.

"The profits go back into the programs and the memberships," said Simpson. "We use it to maintain everything. We don't receive money from any outside source.

"So far this year, we have put \$150,000 back into the membership through things like the club card drawing, free food for members and prizes. This works out to be about \$17,000 a month."

The club tries to break the old adage that the entire club is nothing more than the bar.

"We have family members night because it is the right thing to do," said Simpson. "We don't have to make money on everything we do, we are here for the community."

An Air Force survey, titled Corporate Prism, was taken about how members felt about their club.

“Charleston was rated as the best by members,” said Simpson. “It’s nice to know the members like you. I would rather hear the members are satisfied than win another award. We have the best value according to the survey. You have to satisfy your customers.”

Alexander attributes the clubs winning ways to more than the facility’s appearance.

“It would be nothing but a building without the great members and staff,” said Alexander.

Another way the club satisfies the membership is by having food available.

“We have a seven-days-a-week food operation due to our membership,” said Simpson.

“Someone can find food everyday during the week. We don’t close on Monday’s like many clubs do.”

The club has recently received some more help from within the membership.

“We have had a club advisory committee for almost a year now,” said Simpson. “They have provided some very good input that we have implemented. The number one thing for a club is for members to get involved.”

Charleston Club members don’t join and stay with the club just out of a sense of duty, but because it’s fun.

“I think it’s important to belong to the club,” said Senior Master Sgt. Bruce Blodgett, 437th Supply Squadron first sergeant. “I won \$1,100 the first time they had a drawing. It’s great they give back to the membership.”

A delegation from CAFB will be attending the Air Force Services Awards Banquet at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, in August to accept the award.

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