

Charleston civilian to represent AMC for Wright Brothers Trophy

By Staff Sgt. Michael Duhe
437 AW Public Affairs

Jack Ruff, a training monitor for the 437th Maintenance Flight, has been selected as Air Mobility Command's nominee for the Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy.

The award, established by the National Aeronautic Association, is given annually to civilian government employee (federal, state or local) for significant public service of enduring value to aviation in the United States.

In a written message, AMC commander Gen. Charles T. Robertson, Jr., states, "Mr. Ruff's hard work, ingenuity and inspiring accomplishments epitomize the traits and character embodied in the Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy. I wish him the very best in further competition at the NAA."

"I'm very surprised because I didn't know this was coming," said Ruff, who is also a master sergeant in the 315th Airlift Wing (Reserve). "But I didn't do this alone. It was a team effort. We all do this together. I'm thankful for everyone who helped along the way."

Ruff is responsible for scheduling, administering, implementing and evaluating training for 178 assigned active duty military, Reserve and civilian technicians. He ensured train-

ing was completed and properly documented on schedule, ensuring availability of a fully qualified work force to perform the mission.

Ruff received an "excellent" rating during a staff assistance inspection conducted by 21st Air Force. He was publicly praised for efficient methods and innovative ideas, according to his nomination package.

Ruff also developed a plan to keep technicians dual-qualified on several mission-critical C-17 and C-141 aircraft maintenance tasks, including engine run, towing and jacking. He realized the potential benefits of having multi-airframe qualifications. His plan increased the availability of qualified maintenance technicians by 50 percent.

Ruff established a rotational training program to ensure maintenance flight personnel stay proficient on all heavy-maintenance and backshop tasks. The plan rotated personnel between Aero Repair, Wheel and Tire, and Inspections sections. His efforts resulted in an increased knowledge base, increased production efficiency and eliminated the "not my job" syndrome, according to his nomination package.

Heading the call of the squadron commander to fix a training problem, Ruff coordinated a down day for training wheel and tire shop members. The training covered technical data,

Air Force instructions and safety standards. Ruff's efforts resulted in a 95 percent pass rate on all Wheel and Tire shop quality assurance assessments.

The availability of a fully qualified work force enabled the maintenance flight to accomplish more than 120 C-17 aircraft home-station check inspections per year, averaging 2.9 days per inspection, which exceeds AMC standards. The flight also accomplished 12 C-141 aircraft isochronal inspections, averaging 14 days per inspection, also surpassing AMC standards.

The quality training coordinated by Ruff helped the Wheel and Tire section inspect, repair and build up more than 1,500 C-17 and C-141 tires last year in support of home-station and overseas requirements.

Finally, Ruff facilitated aircraft crash recovery training ensuring a qualified response team for all contingencies. Ultimately, a top-notch training program enabled the maintenance flight to provide quality aircraft to their customers, the C-17 and C-141 aircrews.

Ruff is also dedicated to the morale and welfare of his co-workers in the maintenance flight, his nomination package states. He routinely volunteers to conduct hail and farewell ceremonies in the flight. He also requisitions and prepares awards, plaques and gifts. He is a member of

the 437th Maintenance Squadron Fundraising Committee and helped raise more than \$10,000 last year to support the morale and welfare of squadron members.

Ruff is involved in his community. He is an active member of the civic club, where he is block captain for the crime watch committee. As a member of the American Legion, Ruff makes weekly trips to the Veterans Administration Hospital to visit sick and disabled veterans. He also works with his church's youth group as a mentor.

"I think he's a great choice," said Senior Master Sgt. Matthew McMahan, chief of the 437th Maintenance Flight. "It's well deserved. He's a people person who goes the extra mile to do things and enhance morale. He's dedicated and takes the initiative. I never have to ask him to do anything because he's always two steps ahead of me."

The Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy is presented annually by agreement on or about Dec. 17, the anniversary of the first successful flight of an airplane. It's given by the president of the National Aeronautic Association at the Aero Club of Washington's Annual Wright Brothers Memorial Banquet. Past recipients include Charles Lindbergh, Lt. Gen. James H. Doolittle, and Edwin Colodny.

Base residents encouraged to take precautions

Rabid raccoon found in base housing

A rabid raccoon was recently discovered near Charleston AFB family housing after a military member's dogs killed it. The raccoon's head was submitted to the South Carolina Department of Health, Environmental Center for analysis, which confirmed that the raccoon had rabies.

"Rabies is a viral disease spread between mammals," said Capt. Tracy Middleton, deputy commander of the 437th Public Health Flight. "The rabies virus lives in the saliva and brain tissue of infected animals and the disease is 100 percent fatal. Rabies is spread mainly through bites from infected animals. This means pets, livestock, wildlife and people are all at risk."

As a general rule, rabies in humans results from the bite of a rabid cat, dog, skunk, raccoon, fox, wolf or bat. Cats are the domestic animal most often affected by rabies in the United States. As of July 15, 78 cases of confirmed animal rabies have been reported in South Carolina.

"A change in expected behavior is the most consistent sign of rabies," said Middleton. "There are two forms of rabies: the 'dumb' form and the 'furious' form. In the dumb form, an animal may become shy, hide or be unusually approachable as well as appear to be in a stupor. Most people are familiar with the furious form of rabies when an animal appears excitable, irritable, and aggressive. The animal may seem confused and calm, and then suddenly attack when approached."

Animals with rabies can lose all caution for natural enemies, as was the case with this raccoon.

To protect yourself and your family from rabies, don't feed, handle or approach any wildlife or stray dogs and cats — you never know if they have been properly vaccinated. Teach your children not to approach unfamiliar animals. Do not feed stray pets and keep trash containers covered. Keep pets leashed or confined to your property at all times and make sure they are kept current on their rabies vaccinations.

If an animal bites or scratches you, treating the wound quickly will help prevent rabies as well as secondary bacterial infection. Thoroughly wash the wound with soap and water immediately, and then seek additional medical treatment as soon as possible. A health care provider will assess the rabies risk and decide whether further rabies prevention measures are necessary.

"If a wild animal or a stray dog or cat bites your pet, contact your veterinarian immediately for wound treatment and rabies vaccinations," said Army Capt. Larry Shelton, Charleston AFB veterinarian.

S.C. State law requires that a licensed veterinarian vaccinate every pet cat and dog against rabies. An owner of an unvaccinated cat or dog more than four months old may be guilty of a misdemeanor and fined up to \$100 or imprisoned up to 30 days for each offense. On Charleston AFB, all animals are required to be registered with the base Veterinary Clinic and be current on all vaccinations.

Anyone who sees stray pets or strange acting

Basic symptoms of rabies



- Daytime activity in animals normally active at night
- Staggering, weakness and paralysis
- A change in the sound of the animal's voice
- An inability to eat or drink
- Convulsions with frothing at the mouth

wild animals on Charleston AFB should call the 437th Security Forces Squadron at 963-3600. For off base reporting, contact your local animal control office.

Questions or concerns regarding rabies can be directed to the base veterinary clinic at 963-4264 or to the Public Health office at 963-6962. (submitted by 437th Public Health Flight)