

FEATURE

Tops in Blue wows crowd

Tops in Blue wowed an audience of more than 2,000 people Tuesday at the North Charleston Performing Arts Center.

The 2000 edition of Tops in Blue theme is "If You Believe" and the show included a musical medley of songs that captivated the entire audience. Tops In Blue 2000 took center stage for an hour and a half, performing a variety of music styles ranging from big band to pop, country to rhythm and blues, and contemporary latin to nostalgic rock and roll. One of this year's highlights was music from favorite animated movies such as Alladin, Lion King, Beauty and the Beast and Toy Story.

The show closed with a rousing rendition of Lee Greenwood's "God Bless the USA."

Members of the audience were clearly impressed with this year's show.

Renaee Phillips attended the show with several co-workers. "I thought it was wonderful," she commented after the show. "This is my first time seeing Tops in Blue. It was fabulous."

Marie Malone said, "I thought it was great - the costumes were beautiful. The lead singers could be professional (performers)."

Kelly Mackey called it a "great show." She especially liked the Disney theme.

Airman 1st Class Kimberly Stokes of the 437th Security Forces Squadron was one of many military members who watched the show. "I enjoy seeing Tops in Blue every year and seeing the new talent," she said. "I wasn't disappointed."

Heather Raley said, "I liked

everything. When they played the Lee Greenwood song, I almost cried."

Col. Dennis Kaan, 437th Support Group commander, said it was a great show and a great crowd.

Following the show, Col. Karl Young, 437th Airlift Wing vice commander, congratulated cast members, which included a member of team Charleston, Senior Airman Marlon Pharr.

For more than 45 years, Tops In Blue has been energizing audiences around the world. This year's show was no exception.

According to Mr. Tom Edwards, the show's producer and Director of Air Force Entertainment, this show, throughout the power of music, is sure to promote the importance of believing in one's self through life. "Music is the universal language, which transcends all generations," says Edwards. "This message is understood throughout the world, regardless of language or culture."

This year's team of 35 active duty military members is indeed a reflection of the "Best of the Best." Continuing the tradition of worldwide ambassadors, this group of talented young Air Force members display the pride, patriotism, and dedication felt by Air Force personnel around the world.

They will present 132 performances in 20 countries during this year's Tops in Blue world tour.



photos by Senior Airman Jerome Suson

Female members of Tops in Blue perform a medley of Salsa songs for a packed house Tuesday at the North Charleston Performing Arts Center. The male members performed as well, doing their version of a barber shop quartet.



1st Lt. Eric Cameron plays a rendition of Louie Armstrong's "Hello Dolly."



Tops in Blue, led by 1st Lt. John Martin, ends the evening with a selection patriotic songs.