

Thanks for the great welcome, Team Charleston

By Col. Vern "Rusty" Findley II
437th AW commander

I am extremely pleased to have the opportunity to command the 437th Airlift Wing. I have commanded two wings, each with their unique differences and I consider myself truly fortunate to have the opportunity to command a third wing. Being a wing commander is the best job in the world, especially when you are working for the greatest Air Force in the world. Never in my wildest dreams would I have thought that I would have this kind of opportunity.

I'm truly humble and proud to command such a great wing and pledge to continue the standard setting partnership with our Reserve Associate wing, the 315th Airlift Wing. My wife Sandy and I are excited to be here and we pledge to give you 110 percent.

In the upcoming weeks, I'll be out and about visiting many of the groups and squadrons to learn more about what you do and your concerns.

We appreciate the great Team Charleston welcome and extend our special thanks to everyone who helped with the change-of-command ceremony. A special thanks to Kathy Knichel, Tech. Sgt. Shawn Rouse and Tech. Sgt. Terry Gabbert from the protocol staff. Maj. Brian Robinson, 15th Airlift Squadron, and Capt. Christopher Wyckoff, 437th Military Equal Opportunity Office, were the perfect project officers, especially when a deluge forced the formation indoors at the last minute. Thanks for all your hard work -- it was truly a spe-

cial occasion for my family and me. During my remarks, I highlighted the importance of doing the mission safely, maintaining professionalism and pride in our Air Force and just plain taking care of our people. In the future, I'll share more of my thoughts in this space too, so more to follow.

In the upcoming weeks, I'll be out and about visiting many of the groups and squadrons to learn more about what you do and your concerns. I like to have plenty of feedback and look forward to meeting with as many of you as possible.

We enjoy a good relationship with the local community and I want to build upon that relationship through such programs as the honorary commander's program. We cannot do what we do unless we have strong public support. We need to be actively engaged in our communities who are

critical to our success.

Team Charleston has many things to be proud of. You have literally rewritten history during Allied Force and as Maj. Gen. John D. Hopper Jr., 21st Air Force commander, said during the change of command ceremony, you have done what no other airlift unit could do. You have proved your mettle in the toughest of times and no doubt will continue to do that. Today, we continue to excel as we surge to more than 190 percent of our aircrew commitment this week to support the president in his travels to India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Switzerland. It is a busy time for the wing, especially for our maintainers and operators!

Keep up the good work! Sandy and I look forward to meeting many of you in the very near future. Have a great weekend.

Action Line

The Commander's Action Line is your direct link to me. It's your opportunity to make Charleston Air Force Base a better place to live, work and play.

Callers are encouraged to leave their name and phone number so we can provide a personal reply. Remember the easiest way to resolve problems is to call the agency responsible directly and use your chain of command. If you don't get a satisfactory answer, call me at 963-5581 or send an e-mail to action@charleston.af.mil.

Here are some commonly used phone numbers:
Security Forces963-3600
Base Exchange.....552-5000
Commissary.....963-5695
Housing Office.....963-3859



Commissary usage

I was told that if you get your orders stamped, you are allowed to use the commissary facilities while on temporary duty. I went to billeting at Altus AFB while TDY and had my orders stamped and was told by the billeting office that I could use the commissary. When I got to the commissary, I had all my food up there and they told me that I am not allowed to do it. There are a couple other civil

service people here that have done this and they had no problem. What is the policy on this?

Thank you for calling and getting this clarified. There is indeed a stamp which our lodging folks use to allow access to the various Services facilities, the base theater, and the base exchange. This is all per DoD regulations. The Commissary is, however, under separate DoD guidance, and no such waiver is possible.

We apologize for the misunderstanding regarding your recent shopping trip to the commissary. Commissary shopping is restricted to authorized shoppers with valid identification. This identification is a military ID, such as dependent military, active duty, retired or Reserve. DoD Reg. 1330, 17-11, Chapter 2, defines who is eligible. We apologize for the misunderstanding.

If you have further questions on commissary policy, please call Eddie Williams, Commissary Officer, at 963-5709 or 963-5695.

Another dog dilemma

I hate to disturb you with one more complaint about dogs on base but I am forced. Twice in the past week, the latest today, owners have allowed their dogs droppings to remain in my yard.

I'm not talking about way down by the street on the other side of the sidewalk. I'm talking repeated droppings less than 10 feet from our front door. If we owned a dog and had to pick up after it this would just be more to pick up, but I don't own a dog.

We have a 15-month-old daughter who loves to

play outside. We pick up the trash that blows into the yard so she won't try eating it. We spray the weeds and thorns so she has grass to play in. We powder the ant hills so she is less likely to get stung. Something we don't look for is dog droppings. Her diapers go into a cheap plastic bag and then into the garbage. If we owned a dog, its droppings would be in the same cheap plastic bag and then, once again, into the garbage.

Is there some way to enforce the animal laws on base?

To the owners walking your dogs on our street, please think of your little baby playing in pet droppings when you don't own a pet. It's a pretty aggravating thought, isn't it? Treat others as you want to be treated.

Unfortunately, this seems to be an ongoing problem throughout the housing area. Pet owners are responsible for safety of their pets and the people around them. Therefore, the owners must control their pets, ensuring the cleanliness of the pet's area and for picking up behind them when walking the pet. All members are briefed at the time they move into family housing of their responsibilities as pet owners to avoid the pet becoming a neighborhood nuisance by barking and invading the privacy of others. First, I suggest you contact the pet owner and attempt to resolve the problem. If that does not work, then contact the Housing Office (963-3868) with the name of the owner and steps will be taken to correct the problem. Thank you for your concern.

Airlift DISPATCH

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