

Base orientation visits are going well

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

I appreciate everyone's efforts in helping to get me spun up on issues and concerns so quickly. I am really having a great deal of fun! I hope to see many more of your smiling faces as I make my rounds through the remainder of the squadrons and groups.

I've always had the philosophy that if you are not having fun at what you are doing, then you really need to look in a mirror and ask yourself why. From what I've seen so far, I don't think that's a big problem here at the premier airlift wing on the face of the planet. I've seen a lot to be proud of already in the short time I've been here. Last week, I visited with the 437th Support Group and I was truly impressed by the people that I met. This week I plan to visit the wing staff agencies.

I have really enjoyed the opportunity to meet the young men and women of Team Charleston who do such a fantastic job for our Air Force and country. My experience here and elsewhere in the Air Force is that our people are the best our nation has to offer.

Outstanding airmen

There are folks like Senior Airman Jeannine McGuire of the 437th Comptroller Squadron who was selected as the Air Force Financial Services Airman of the Year, and Senior Airman Freddie Lorick who works in customer service and is fondly referred to by his co-workers as "Fast Freddie" for reasons that I can't go into in this column. In the 437th Mission Support Squadron, I met Senior Airman Terra Bradley who works in the awards and decorations section of the Military Personnel Flight, who I had to coax out of her that she really loves Charleston Air Force Base.

And the 437th Services Squadron folks under the leadership of Maj. Brian "David Letterman Jr." Blankenship, who I won't forget for a long time, were truly impressive as they welcomed me with their now standard "hoots, whistles and high-five" salutes in the club.

Then there was a young man, Airman 1st Class James Slayton from the 437th Civil Engineer Squadron, who I met during my orientation and who has the distinction of being the first person to receive a wing coin under my command. In an email from Tech Sgt. Sherley Jones II, and his wife Corlette, to Lt. Col. Jon Roop, 437th CES commander, they relayed the following story about Slayton:

"I want to commend your squadron for the assistance provided to me on Saturday, March 11 by Airman 1st Class James K. Slayton. My wife and I were away from home and a hose split in two on our washer. This caused our house to flood in every room. Airman Slayton was dispatched to take care of the issue. When I arrived home I was informed of the situation and after the photo personnel took pictures we began the clean up process. Airman Slayton did above and beyond what I would have expected 437th CES personnel to do. He stayed and helped for about 3 hours in assisting with the cleanup. I think most airmen would have left after doing the initial part of their job. He assisted my wife and me with moving furniture, taking out rugs and various other things," he said.

"What makes this event even more personal, is the fact that my wife and I had just come back from North Carolina a few days earlier from burying our son. We were not in the best state of mind to handle such a situation. Thanks to his assistance along with another friend of mine we were able to dispense of the water after 3 hours. Airman Slayton sets an example that more airmen should exemplify."

This email highlights one of the many examples of the great things that our folks are doing above and beyond what is expected.

Settling in

It was a great week getting around to see many of the people that make up Team Charleston. I got my household goods and I am now slowly wading through them, but I am not going to hold up my orientation schedule to unpack. I will continue to charge forward and make it a point to meet as many of you as I can.

I am looking forward this week to getting up in the air and flying again. I hope to get two sorties this weekend and in April I look forward to going on a channel mission. In between those, I am planning to visit the 437th Logistics Group and 437th Operations Group next week and the 437th Medical Group the following week. More to follow in next week's column.

I enjoy meeting with as many of the wing's leaders and supervisors as early and often as I can. I had lunch with the first sergeants and chiefs this past week and also met with squadron and group commanders. These were two very good introductory meetings. I thanked them for all that they are doing as leaders and supervisors in this wing. Like I told the first sergeants and chiefs on Monday, sometimes there is a tendency to forget the commanders, supervisors and leaders when it comes to doling out the thanks. I like to make it a point to thank **all** of Team Charleston for what they do each day.

Earth/Arbor Day

If you drove by the base picnic grounds on Wednesday, then chances are you saw the more than 1,100 local school children gathered at our fourth annual Earth/Arbor Day from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. More than 30 exhibitors made presentations to fifth grade elementary school students from 14 Charleston County Schools.

Students got to hear and see presentations on everything from how to save the Manatee, a touch tank from the soon-to-open South Carolina Aquarium to a display from the Turtle and Tortoise society. The 437th Civil Engineer Squadron environmental flight arranged for awards to the winners of the poster, essay and mural contests.

A number of base agencies participated in this event to include our firefighters and security forces. It was a true Team Charleston effort with many volunteers from throughout the base. The environmental flight took on the difficult task of arranging this worthwhile event for our children. They have my sincere appreciation for another event well-done.

Have a safe and fun 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.



First give the appropriate base agency a chance to solve the problem, but if you don't get a satisfactory answer, call me at **963-5581** or send an e-mail to action@charleston.af.mil.

Easy to pick up keys

I locked myself out of base housing about two weeks ago. I called maintenance, who told me to go to the housing office for a spare key. To my surprise, I just walked in and said I locked my keys in the house and the lady at the desk asked for my house number and gave me the key. She told me to return it when I finished. I could have been anyone getting that key and that bothered me because she never asked for identification.

That same week, I saw something on TV about hotel/motel keys being taken and people returning to break in later because the locks weren't changed. That brought my situation to light. Maybe you ought to test housing again to see if they would make the same mistake twice. This could of ended differently if I was not a resident of my house, thankfully, but what if I weren't?

Please let others know they should stop the person right away and ask for a key when they are asking for something important like a key. Thank You.

Thank you for your concern. The housing office has a policy for issuing keys to individuals when they have been locked out of their quarters. In most cases, when a member is locked out, they do not have identification with them.

Consequently, housing office personnel use other means of identifying the individual picking up the key, such as asking for information that only someone close to the member would know. Unfortunately, in your case this was not done. You have made an excellent point and the proper procedure has been reinforced to the housing office staff.

Airlift DISPATCH

Published by Diggle Publishing, Inc., a private firm in no way connected with the U.S. Air Force, under exclusive written contract with the 437th Airlift Wing. This commercial enterprise Air Force newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military service.

Contents of the *Airlift Dispatch* are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or the Department of the Air Force. The appearance of adver-

tising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the Department of Defense, the Department of the Air Force, or Diggle Publishing, Inc., of the products or services advertised.

Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation, or any other nonmerit factor of the purchaser, user or patron.

Editorial content is prepared by the 437th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 1600, Rm. 223. The phone number is (843) 963-5608/fax (843) 963-5604. All photos are Air Force photos unless identified otherwise. The deadline for submitting news stories for space-available

publication is noon Friday, preceding the desired publication date. The *Airlift Dispatch* reserves the right to edit all copy submitted for publication. Submissions can be mailed to: 102 East Hill Blvd., Charleston AFB, SC 29404-5154 or send e-mail to dispatch@charleston.af.mil.

Classified advertisements may be referred to Diggle Publishing, Inc., P.O. Box 2014, Charleston, S.C., 29465, Phone: (843) 849-1778 or faxed to 849-0214.

Editorial Staff

Commander Col. Vern "Rusty" Findley II
Chief, Public Affairs.....Lt. Col. Edmund Memi
Editor.....Staff Sgt. Pamela Smith
Associate editor.....Staff Sgt. Michael Duhe
Photo Support.....Base Visual Information Center