

FEATURE

By Airman 1st Class
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The anniversary of 9/11 has now become a Day of Caring for Charleston AFB.

The day brings together more than 200 Team Charleston volunteers and members of the local community to remember the past and help build the future. They gave their time to paint, landscape, repair homes and mentor children.

"Sept. 11 left a scar on Americans," said Senior Master Sgt. Michael David, 437th Communications Squadron. "As we remember the fallen heroes who gave their all to help those in need that day, on this day, in their honor, we reach out and continue their acts of selfless giving."

"It's a great way for us (CAFB) to

help, even in a small way, to make things better," he continued. "This way, people realize we're not just flying planes overhead, but we are neighbors stepping forward to lend a hand where needed."

Although operations didn't stop on base, many were able to make time to give to improving the quality of someone else's life.

"I feel like there is so much volunteer work to be done in so many places that it's overwhelming," said Lt. Col. Russ Catanach, 315th Operations Group. "But at least we all made a stride today."

This is the second year base personnel have been involved in the Day of Caring.

"Through the Day of Caring, CAFB airmen demonstrated their commitment to being solid community citizens," said Barry Waldman,

Trident United Way communications and marketing president. "Valor and professionalism are hallmarks of the Air Force in foreign lands, but their generosity and community spirit mean just as much to us here at home. The people of the Lowcountry are indebted to them."

Many have volunteered and donated far beyond the scope of that one day, said Mr. Waldman.

"It reminds you to be thankful for some of the things you take for granted in your everyday life," said 2nd Lt. Brian Pressler, 1st Combat Camera Squadron. "I like to think I had a positive effect on someone else's life, and I helped make an improvement, no matter how small."

With the Day of Caring, volunteers hoped the acts of generosity and compassion will continue throughout the year.



As "Taps" played in the background, members of Team Charleston and their families paid respect to the victims of 9/11 as the flag was lowered to half mast Sept. 11. "I knew the pilot of the first plane that crashed into the towers," said Karen Bevis, 437th Operations Group. "I actually worked with him while he was here. This was just my way of paying respect to him and his family."

A day to Give Back



Saying a silent prayer, Tech. Sgt. Dave Walters, 373rd Training Squadron, attends a ceremony honoring the anniversary of 9/11 at the base flag pole Sept. 11. The anniversary of 9/11 marks a Day of Caring for members of Charleston AFB.

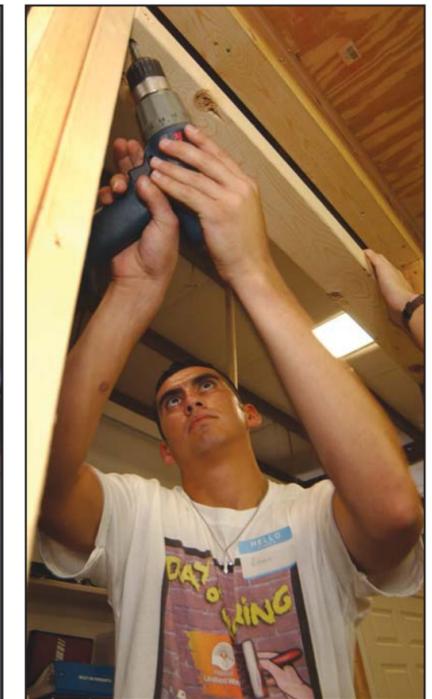
Photos by Staff Sgt. Corey Clements



Senior Master Sgt. Connie Danbury, 701st Airlift Squadron, paints the railing to stairs leading to a local home for girls. "My volunteerism allowed me to show support for all those who unselfishly contributed to the needs of our own on 9/11," she said.



Tech. Sgt. Dan Daiber, 701st Airlift Squadron, puts a fresh coat of paint on a fence at the Tri-County Home for Girls.



With a background in construction, Airman 1st Class Robert Mejia, 437th Communications Squadron, helps install a door to a new room at the Dorchester Disabilities and Special Needs Center. "After volunteering, I felt great to help and be a part of a day like that," he said. "It was a lot of fun to get back to 'hands-on' type of work."