

Team Shaw says thank you

By Mrs. Tarsha Storey
Correspondent

From manicured grounds to properly maintained buildings, Team Shaw and members of the community showed their gratitude for the many contracted employees whose work helps keep Shaw looking its best.

The Javits-Wagner-O'Day Appreciation Day picnic was held Oct. 8, at Memorial Park. JWOD hosts the annual picnic to recognize base employees who are blind or have severe disabilities.

The guest speaker at the picnic was Mr. Dennis Fields, Chief Operating Officer for NISH, formerly known as the National Institute for the Severely Handicapped. The company offers employment opportunities for people with severe disabilities.

At the picnic, Mr. Fields focused on the impact JWOD has not only on Shaw, but also on the surrounding community. "JWOD represents government at its best," he said. "It's a benefit for taxpayers and employment for disabled people."

During the appreciation picnic, many agencies recognized their employees with awards. The Genesis Center, the custodial and postal service provider on base, honored Ms. Diane Givens, Ms. Roberta

Goodman, Mr. Michael Webb, Ms. Shirley Bracy and Ms. Naomi Harvin.

The ground maintenance company honored Mr. Clark Green, Mr. Phil Humphries, Ms. Cheryl Wells, Mr. Gene Baldwin, Mr. Kenny Green and Mr. Milton Choice.

They also presented a special memorial award in memory of Mr. Ollie Dinkins, a ground maintenance employee at Shaw who passed away in September.

Goodwill Industries, employer of base switchboard and commissary shelf-stocking workers, recognized Ms. Loretta Williams, Mr. Patrick Isaac, Ms. Ami Washington, Ms. Khadijah Musa, Ms. Sophia Jenkins and Ms. Lachael June. A special presentation to Staff Sgt. Donovan Thompson, 20th Communications Squadron, and to Ms. Tracy Pierce, commissary officer was also made.

JWOD has provided employment opportunities at Shaw and according to Mr. Fields, they are the largest employer of disabled people in the nation. JWOD provides employment opportunities for them that would normally not exist.

Employees of JWOD welcomed the gratitude expressed at the picnic.

"The JWOD picnic made me feel appreciated," said Ms. Tashama Dennis, a janitorial worker employed by the Genesis Center.

Shaw's feelings toward JWOD were summed up by Col. Mike Beale, 20th Fighter Wing vice commander. "I want to give all the JWOD workers a big salute for all the hard work they do," he said.



Photo by Mrs. Tarsha Storey

Col. Mike Beale, 20th Fighter Wing vice commander, presents Mr. Gene Baldwin with the Shaw Ground Maintenance Team Employee of the Year award.

Pumpkin patch fun at CDC



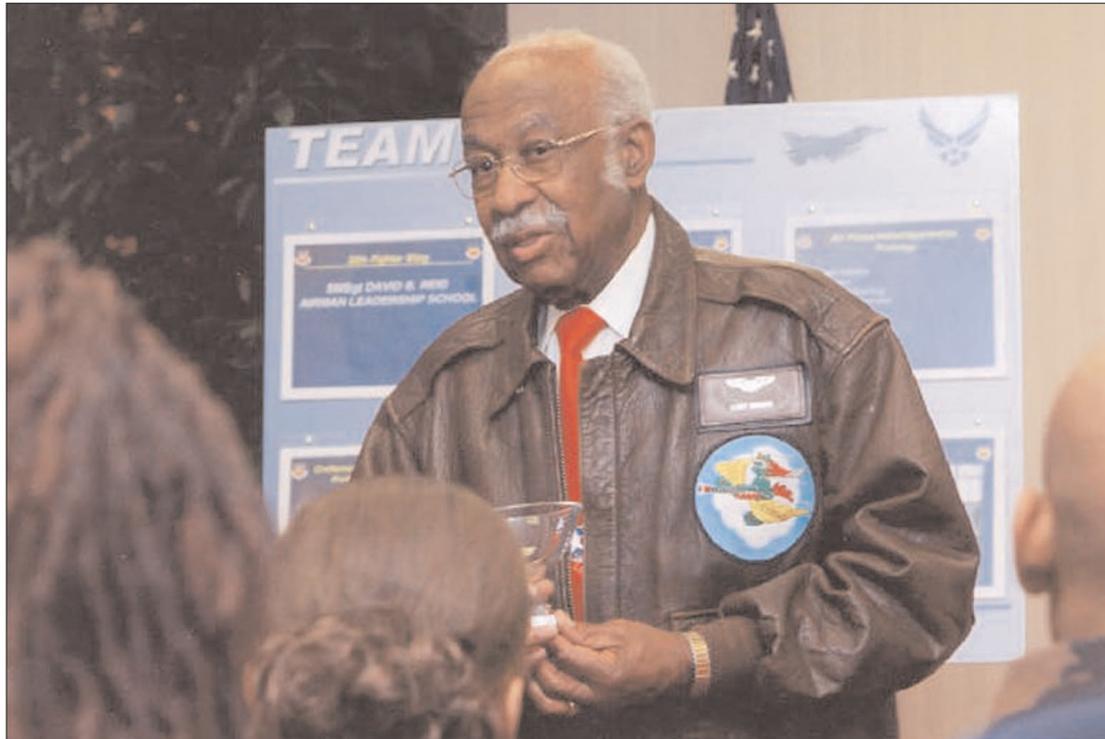
Photos by Airman 1st Class Joel M. Mease

The Child Development Center held its annual fall festival Wednesday. Events included dressing up as an animal, getting pumpkins and listening to music. Above, children gather around Ms. Mary Proctor, CDC caregiver. Left, Emma, daughter of Tech. Sgt. Bridget, 20th Medical Operations Squadron, and Staff Sgt. Brian Moore, 337th Recruiting Squadron, grabs a pumpkin.



Left, Christian, daughter of Staff Sgt. Ethan and Senior Airman Leanne Glenn, both 20th Component Maintenance Squadron, claps for joy. Above, children gather around a bunny's cage as another activity during the annual fall festival at the CDC.

They fought two wars: Tuskegee Airman talks about service, equality



Courtesy photo

Mr. Bowman speaks about the role of the Tuskegee Airmen at the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Senior Master Sgt. David B. Reid Airman Leadership School's Tuskegee Airmen Library.

By Senior Airman Susan Penning
Staff writer

The Air Force recently celebrated 57 years of excellence in air power. Many changes have transformed the force to make it what it is today. Some of these were due to advances in technology, but others occurred because a few brave Airmen stood up and fought not only for their country, but also for the equality of all people. Mr. Leroy Bowman was one of them.

Mr. Bowman had a dream to fly for the service at a young age. But, at the time, the Army Air Corps was reluctant to train black pilots.

"There was a rumor going around if you volunteered for the Army, you would be selected more quickly for the corps, so that's what I did," said the Sumter native.

In 1941, he joined the Army. At the time, World War II was brewing and the U.S. government decided to expand the role of African-Americans in the military. So, in 1942, Mr. Bowman got his chance to be airborne.

Orders were cut for him to attend the Tuskegee Institute. He was one of the students chosen for the Army Air Corps "military experiment" to train black pilots and support staff.

"The entire program was designed to prove black men were not able to fly. After trying it, they discovered the opposite was true," he said.

The African-American service members who trained at the Tuskegee Institute were

given the name Tuskegee Airmen, and became known as trailblazers for desegregation and equality in the military.

"We had to set the example. If we had failed, it may have been at least another 50 years to get where we are today," Mr. Bowman said.

During World War II, Mr. Bowman flew the P-40, P-47 and P-51. He said his main duty was to do dive-bombing. Later, he escorted bombers.

He was assigned to the 332nd Fighter Group, the largest in the corps.

"In the 332nd, we flew more than 200 missions and never lost a bomber to an air attack," he said.

Although the mission of the Tuskegee Airmen was a success, casualties of war were inevitable.

"We lost a lot of guys accomplishing the mission and proving we could do it. The men who lost their lives would be proud to see where we've come," he added.

Mr. Bowman said although it was hard dealing with the segregation and inequality, he can look back on his time in the service and smile.

"When I walked across that stage at Tuskegee, the past nine months of pilot training flashed before me," he said. "I was so proud of myself, I cried."

Mr. Bowman, who left the service as a first lieutenant, is now a member of the Columbia chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen. There are 46 chapters in America, where former Tuskegee Airmen meet monthly to plan events to raise awareness about equality.

Tuskegee Airmen change history



Photo courtesy of the Air Force Museum

Cadets march on campus at the Tuskegee Institute.

In the late 1930s the U. S. government created civilian pilot training programs around the nation to provide a surplus of pilots in case of a national emergency. African-Americans were included in these programs, although they were trained at segregated facilities.

In World War II, political pressure challenged the government to expand the role of African-Americans in the military. On July 19, 1941, the Army Air Corps accepted that challenge.

The Tuskegee Institute, which was a small black college in Alabama founded by Booker T. Washington in 1881, was selected to host a "military experiment" to train African-American pilots and support staff. They later became known as the Tuskegee Airmen.

Primary flight training was conducted by the Division of Aeronautics at the institute. Once a cadet finished primary training at Tuskegee's Moton Field, he was sent to nearby Tuskegee Army Air Field for completion of flight training and transition to combat-type aircraft. The first classes of trained Tuskegee Airmen were fighter pilots with the 99th Fighter Squadron, slated for combat duty in North Africa. Additional pilots were assigned to the 332nd Fighter Group, which flew along with the 99th Squadron from bases in Italy.

In September of 1943, a twin-engine training program was begun at Tuskegee to provide bomber pilots. However, World War II ended before these men were able to get into combat.

By the end of the war, 992 men graduated from pilot training at Tuskegee, 450 of whom were sent overseas for combat assignment. During the same period, approximately 150 lost their lives while in training or on combat flights.

Additional men were trained at Tuskegee for air-crew and ground crew duties including flight engineers, gunners, mechanics, armorers, etc. Others were sent to Texas and New Mexico for training as navigators and bombardiers.

(Information courtesy of the Air Force Museum and the National Historic Site of Alabama.)

Weather team proves vital to wing mission

By Senior Airman Susan Penning
Staff writer

When it comes to putting weapons on target, many people don't realize the different factors affecting success or failure. One of the most important is the weather.

The Air Force provides three levels of weather support: strategic, operational and tactical. The 20th Operations Support Squadron Weather Flight supports Shaw at the tactical level.

The flight, which is also referred to as a combat weather team, joins with the 28th Operational Weather Squadron to provide resource protection to the base with watches, warnings and weather advisories.

"We help ensure the safety of Shaw's equipment and people," said Capt. Neil Edens, 20th OSS Weather Flight commander.

The CWT also gives tactical support to flying personnel.

"We take the airfield forecast and

tailor it to a customized brief for each sortie. Every pilot who takes off has a clear idea of how specific weather conditions will affect his or her flight," the captain said.

In order to better serve the 20th Fighter Wing's mission, the CWT recently completed an integration process where forecasters were embedded into each of the fighter squadrons.

According to CWT personnel, this was a big change from the way it was done in the past.

"Instead of being an outside agency asked to support a mission, our forecasters have become part of the team inside the squadron working for mission success," said Maj. Bill Bryant, 20th OSS assistant director of operations.

"Not only is a much higher level of customer support provided, but the weather professionals learn to understand the mission of the unit they are attached to," he said.

The restructuring has allowed

forecasters to provide in-house support and be at the forefront of the wing's mission.

"The integration of a forecaster into each of the various squadrons has reaped a benefit we hadn't even planned," said Capt. Edens. "Unit morale is high because they see a bigger part of the Air Force picture. They see the fruits of their labor first-hand, and they understand the value they provide to mission success."

Other members besides the embedded forecasters also see the benefits of the CWT's integration.

"I enjoy giving wing-level support, and the integration has proven successful," said Master Sgt. Larry Jones, 20th OSS Weather flight superintendent.

Flying personnel value the support they receive from the 20th OSS Weather flight.

As a pilot with his bachelor's degree in meteorology, Capt. Chris Bacon, 77th Fighter Squadron chief



Photo by Mrs. Tarsha Storey

Staff Sgt. Doug Jones, 20th OSS Weather Flight forecaster, briefs 1st Lt. Mike Blauser, 77th Fighter Squadron pilot, on weather conditions Wednesday.

of weapons and tactics, said he appreciates the new quality and quantity of data now available to him through his on-site meteorologist.

Weather flight leadership agrees.

When it comes to providing, projecting and sustaining combat-ready forces, the CWT has proven vital in helping the wing prepare to meet any challenge, anywhere, anytime, said Capt. Edens.