

Shaw BHC celebrates freedom, diversity

By Ms. Adriene M. Dicks
Correspondent

The quest for freedom is something people around the world have experienced. Celebrations of freedom are held here and abroad throughout the year. In this country, the most well-known celebration is July 4th, U.S. Independence Day. However, there is another day some consider African American Independence Day. It is called Juneteenth.

After the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, the document that freed slaves in Jan. 1, 1863, some slaves still did not know they were free. It wasn't until June 19, 1865, two and a half years later, the last slaves in Galveston, Texas, learned they were free.

This event is celebrated today with picnics, speeches, and family and community gatherings lasting from one day to the entire month of June.

Here, Juneteenth is the holiday when the Shaw Black Heritage Committee emphasizes education, achievement and diversity.

According to Staff Sgt. Charlie Helms, Shaw BHC president, Juneteenth is among the many cultural celebrations often overlooked because people don't know about it.

"This is a celebration of freedom. Many minorities around the world have been oppressed in some form or fashion. This is our chance to celebrate equal opportunity in a diverse world," said Sgt. Helms.

In the past, the committee has held the Juneteenth celebration on base for the Shaw community. This year, the celebration moves off base bringing the Shaw and Sumter communities together. More events have been added to the observance.

One of the events for this year is the BHC's Third Annual Golf Tournament, to be held June 18 at the Carolina Lakes Golf Course with a 1 p.m. shotgun start. The fee is \$20 for members and \$25 for non-members, which includes green fees and cart. Participants must sign up and pay by Wednesday. To register or get more information, call Sgt. Helms at **895-5310** or Ms. Mattie Dowdy at **895-1441**.

All proceeds from the golf tournament will go toward the BHC Scholarship Fund. According to Sgt. Helms, from last year's tournament the committee was able to award two \$600 scholarships to students chosen from Crestwood, Lakewood and Sumter High Schools. He said the students were chosen from these schools because most students from the Shaw community attend them.

Also on June 18, the committee has teamed with Great J Productions, a local production company directed by Ms. Shonda English, for the Juneteenth Formal Affair. This event is scheduled to be held at the M.H. Newton Family Center at 415 Manning Ave. in Sumter from 7 to 10 p.m. Tickets for this event are \$15. The guest speaker is Ms. Patricia Bee, author of "Mama's Pearls." There will also be spoken word presentations and live entertainment from musi-

cal groups Great Jubilation and Kenny Burroughs and Company. For more information, call **934-1057**.

June 19, events start with the Juneteenth Celebration, sponsored by the Shaw BHC, Solomon's Kitchen, a local soul food restaurant, and Great J Productions. It will be held at Solomon's Kitchen, located at 369 Manning Ave. in Sumter from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. This event will feature live African drumming, a fashion show with African attire, singers and other musicians. Admission is free and vendors from Sumter, Florence, Columbia and other areas will be on site. The fundraiser for this event is t-shirt sales, which are on sale now. To purchase t-shirts, call Mr. Abe Abron at **895-3034**.

Ms. English said this is a family-oriented event intended to increase awareness.

"This is American history, and it's an event that isn't learned about in schools," said Ms. English. "We want to make celebrating Juneteenth a tradition and help all people appreciate the freedoms they have."

The last event for the day and the weekend, sponsored by the Shaw BHC, is the Juneteenth After Party. It is scheduled for 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. at American Legion Post 202 at 746 Bailey St. in Sumter. The cover charge is to be paid at the door. For more information, call **773-4811**.

"We wanted to turn it into a weekend of celebrations," said Sgt. Helms. "We are also educating. This is one of the events in history that lets people know everyone deserves to be treated equally."

Shaw member, Scouts save lives

Recreational trip turns to rescue for local Troop 305

By Airman 1st Class Susan Penning
Staff writer

On May 22, members of Boy Scout Troop 305 embarked on a whitewater canoe and kayak trip along the Chattooga River, in northern South Carolina. Little did they know their recreational adventure was about to turn into a lifesaving rescue.

At the end of their five and a half-hour river ride, the troop was in the process of docking and packing up their watercraft when they heard a cry for help across the river. Approximately 50 yards away were three adults and a child who appeared to be in distress. After hearing their cries for help, Master Sgt. Todd Biggs, Scout leader and 20th Component Maintenance Squadron test measurement and diagnostic equipment superintendent, ordered the boats back in the water to provide assistance.

"I knew the canoes could get there more quickly than us trying to swim across," he said. After Sgt. Biggs assisted in launching the boats, he swam over to help.

The Scouts reached the victims and were able to get them all safely to shore. Once on shore, Sgt. Biggs noticed a woman attempting CPR on her husband. "I could see his chest wasn't rising and falling when she blew air into his mouth. The victim's head wasn't in a good position to open the airway, so I



Courtesy photo

Members of Boy Scout Troop 305 enjoy a leisurely boating trip along the Chattooga River May 22. Little do they know they will soon be performing a life-saving rescue.

intervened," said Sgt. Biggs. He performed CPR for a few minutes, and the victim began breathing on his own. The man was placed on his side so he could recover properly. After that, the Scouts carried him a quarter mile uphill on a kayak to their vehicles. He was then taken via ambulance to a local hospital, where he was treated and released the same day.

The victims indicated they were walking along the river, decided to wade across what they thought was a shallow portion, then slipped into water over their heads. One person couldn't swim, so another tried to help, but panicked, inhaled water and began to drown. The child, who was wearing a personal flotation device, and the non-swimmer were able to secure themselves to a rock and wait for help, but the woman was desperately trying to keep her hus-

band's head above water until help arrived.

"[Sgt.] Biggs played a huge part in the rescue," said Mr. Greg Simonson, a Scout leader from Troop 305 who helped the victims to shore. "I am so proud of how all the leaders and troop members responded that day."

"We knew we had to get help to the victims as soon as possible," said Sgt. Biggs. "No one panicked. The Scouts used the tools they were trained to use, such as lifesaving techniques, first aid and how to carry someone in distress."

"The CPR training I received in the Air Force was also vital in the situation," he added.

Sgt. Biggs said troop leaders are working to get the Scouts national recognition for their performance that day.

Shaw welcomes LeMay evaluation team



Left, 20th Services Squadron members greet Mr. Eric Weston, a LeMay team evaluator, at Carolina Pines Inn June 4. The 20th SVS is contending for the Air Force's Gen. Curtis LeMay Award, which recognizes the best overall services unit at a large base. The winner will be announced in early August.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Josef Cole

Above, Mr. Bruce Miller (right), Carolina Lakes Golf Course manager, gives Col. Lisa Skopal, LeMay evaluator, a tour of the course June 4.

Right, Buzzy, the 20th SVS mascot, and LeMay team evaluators get together for a group picture.

Far right, 20th SVS members greet the LeMay evaluation team as they arrive at Carolina Pines Inn.



Photo by Airman 1st Class Amber McCarthy



Photo by Staff Sgt. Nathaniel Bevier

Team Shaw dads happy at home for Father's Day

By Ms. Adriene M. Dicks
Correspondent

For military families, being apart from time to time is a way of life, with deployments and TDYs. Being together on holidays is never guaranteed, because there is always a chance military members will be called upon to serve in locations away from their families and in support of their countries. This year, some Team Shaw fathers who have spent time on deployments and TDYs are excited to be able to celebrate Father's Day June 20 with family.

Master Sgt. Larry Jones, 20th Operations Support Squadron, is looking forward to spending Father's Day with his three daughters, Christina, Bethany and Annie, for the first time since 2001. The single father has been on a remote tour to Korea for a year and was also deployed September – December 2003. Sgt. Jones said in addition to missing birthdays and other holidays throughout the year, he missed being able to watch them grow up.

"When you're away from your children for so long and so often, it hurts. Birthdays are special but my daughters change every day and I didn't

get to see that," said Sgt. Jones. "We have a happy home and we love being together. I want to be there for whatever changes they may go through."

In addition to whatever his daughters plan to do for him, Sgt. Jones plans on making this Father's Day special for them as well. He said they love the water so he plans to take them to the beach for the holiday weekend. He also plans to make Father's Day special for them because he will be TDY again soon to attend the senior NCO academy.

For the father of a young child or a first-time father, being away can mean missing more than just holidays and birthdays. Staff Sgt. Laondra Bryant, 20th Fighter Wing, is both. He is the first-time father of a now one and a half-year-old boy, Lavell, with whom he says he missed quite a bit of developing time. Sgt. Bryant was deployed July – November 2003.

"I missed his first steps and him learning how to walk," said Sgt. Bryant. "Children change quite a bit in the early months of their lives. He grew so much while I was gone and looked a lot different when I got back because he was so young."

According to Senior Airman Tynesha Bryant, 20th Mission Support Squadron and Sgt. Bryant's

wife, their son also had his first birthday party while his father was away and learned how to say I love you, which he told his father over the phone.

Sgt. Bryant said this deployment was his first in a couple of years but was difficult because of the time in his life when it happened. He is not looking to do anything special for Father's Day. He said he just wants to spend quality time with his wife and Lavell. His wife said it's very important for their son to have his father around for Father's Day.

"I am very excited my husband is home for Father's Day," said Airman Bryant. "Even though our son is very young and doesn't really know what the day is all about, I think it's important to his development and over the years to his learning about being a man."

There are those who would say being a father is one of the most challenging endeavors in life. For military fathers, there is sometimes the added challenge of not being there for special times or just those days to spend together. On this Father's Day, for those fathers who have been away in response to their country's call, just being with family may be a special gift.



Spirit Spotlight



Senior Airman Jennifer Heath



Organization: 20th Mission Support Squadron

Duty title: Personnel program manager

Job duties: Monitor government travel card and leave web, schedule and administer fitness test and other duties of commander's support staff

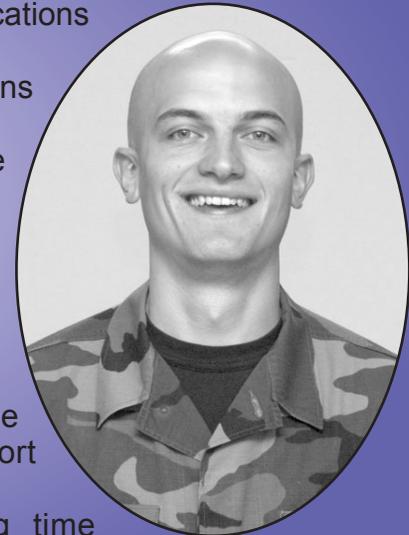
Hometown: Acton, Calif.

Time in service: Four years

Off-duty interests: Shopping and hanging out with friends

Words I live by: "Winners make things happen. Losers let things happen."

Staff Sgt. Andrew Craig



Organization: 20th Communications Squadron

Duty title: Base communications security accountant

Job duties: Account for more than 5,000 pieces of COMSEC material and train/manage more than 40 base COMSEC user accounts

Hometown: Chattanooga, Tenn.

Time in service: Six years

Family: Wife, Staff Sgt. Jaime Craig, 20th Mission Support Squadron, and daughter, Gillian

Off-duty interests: Spending time with my family and playing basketball

Words I live by: "If everyone is thinking alike, then somebody isn't thinking." -- Gen. George S. Patton

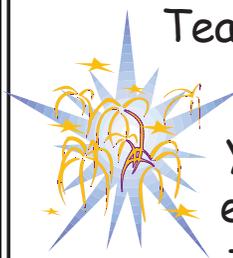
Did you miss last week's *The Shaw Spirit*?

If you did, you can still access it and other back issues of *The Shaw Spirit* on the Web. Log onto www.shaw.af.mil and get access as far back as August 2003 when you click on Base News. Information on the following topics can also be accessed through the public site:

- ❑ The history and organization of the 20th Fighter Wing
 - ❑ Shaw leadership
 - ❑ Links to Airman Magazine, Air Force Link and Air Combat Command News Service
 - ❑ Phone numbers for various base facilities
- Check with Shaw's public site each week for updated information.

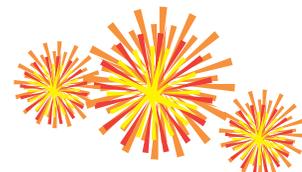


Jammin' July 4th



Team Shaw members and their guests are invited to this year's Jammin' July 4th celebration. It is scheduled for July 4 from 5 to 10 p.m. in

the area adjacent to the Community Center.



Live entertainment will include classic rock band, Flashback, and Motown band, Stage 3. The event will have rides, games, food, beverages, fireworks and more. No coolers or pets. For more information, call **895-4897**.