

# 'Coming Home':

## Army Veteran Shull Sets AAFES Sights On Greater Heights, Performance

AAFES PHOTOS BY MATT NACHTRIEB

• DALLAS

In a June 14 ceremony, concurrent with the Army & Air Force Exchange Service's (AAFES) celebration of the Army's 237th birthday, Thomas C. "Tom" Shull was introduced to employees as the exchange service's new civilian director and chief executive officer (CEO).

Shull, who was announced by the AAFES Board of Directors as the Exchange's director-to-be on May 23 (see *E and C News* 6/12), was formally introduced to employees by AAFES's vice commander Brig. Gen. Francis "Fran" Hendricks, USAF, who took the reins of the Exchange at the end of March as the last uniformed commander in its 117-year history to-date.

With the official signing of the paperwork needed to effect this transition, the Exchange has been disestablished as a major command but remains a joint non-appropriated fund instrumentality (NAFI) of the Army and the Air Force, under the jurisdiction of the chiefs of staff of both services.

### "COMING HOME"

In an address to employees, Shull said, "Since arriving on June 12, I have visited the Fort Belvoir, Va., Exchange, the Myer Exchange at JB Myer-Henderson Hall, Va., the Andrews Exchange at JB Andrews, Md., the Bolling Exchange at JB Anacostia-Bolling, Washington, D.C., and the USMA West Point, N.Y., Exchange. This was like 'coming home' for me, since I am an Army brat, and a graduate of the military academy. I am honored to join the Exchange and to serve those who serve, and I know that's the passion of every associate.

"First and foremost, I want to thank each of you for your dedicated service to the Soldiers, Airmen and families of our U.S. military. There is no greater honor than to serve those who serve.

'I had long hoped to find a way to leverage my civilian business experience for the benefit of military families. I was humbled when offered the opportunity to join the Exchange team.'

— AAFES Director and CEO  
Thomas C. "Tom" Shull

"Secondly, I would like to recognize and thank two remarkable individuals. Brig. Gen. Fran Hendricks deserves our appreciation not only for his exceptionally loyal service as the longest-tenured vice commander in the Exchange's history, but also his superb leadership as the organization's final military commander. Since Maj. Gen. Bruce A. Cassella's retirement, Brig. Gen. Hendricks has led the effort to successfully and seamlessly transition the organization to a new era ... Our chief operating officer, Mike Howard, also deserves our gratitude for his lifelong commitment to the Exchange. I am both awed and humbled by his extraordinary and faithful commitment for more than 40 years.

"As I said previously, I'm coming home.

I served nearly 20 years on active duty and in the Army Reserves. My father served 30 years, my brother 23, my father-in-law 28, and my brother-in-law over 20 years as an Air Force pilot. All combined, our family represents over 120 years of service to our country. So I am truly grateful to be joining your family, the Exchange family, which, like mine, has an extraordinary history of service. Last week, in the field, to a person the people I met had passion for the people we serve, and it brought tears to my eyes. I can't think of a better mission than your mission. ... This is a noble organization, and we have

even greater heights to achieve. What I want to impress upon you is that I am part of the team. It's not about any individual; it's about all of us working collectively together, with passion, to serve those we love."

In a separate note to General Officers, Shull said, "While I did enjoy much success in the commercial sector, I had long hoped to find a way to leverage my civilian business experience for the benefit of military families. I was humbled when offered the opportunity to join the Exchange team."

— E and C NEWS



Brig. Gen. Francis "Fran" Hendricks, USAF, AAFES's vice commander, introduced the exchange service's first civilian director and chief executive officer, Thomas C. "Tom" Shull, to AAFES employees during a ceremony following AAFES's celebration of the Army's 237th Birthday, on Flag Day.



Shull addresses AAFES headquarters executives during a message that was broadcast to AAFES's store network from the exchange service's Dallas, Texas, headquarters.



Shull meets Exchange Headquarters staff officers Capt. Marco Garcia, USA, Negotiations & Compliance; Lt. Col. Jonathan Spears, USA, Army Program Manager, Military Clothing (MC), and Capt. Thomas Marbury, USA, Contingency Plans Officer.