



Friends of Seymour Johnson AFB

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Dear Friends and Supporters,

This year certainly has not been anything like any of us were expecting. COVID-19 has disrupted everyone's lives as well as our plans for Friends of Seymour. Unfortunately, we had to cancel our annual Gala that was scheduled for April. As you know, the Gala is our only fundraising event annually. I am happy to report that several of our Sponsors have continued with their financial support that will allow us to continue to promote Seymour Johnson's importance in the defense of our nation and that of our allies and we certainly appreciate their continued support. For any of you who have traditionally supported FOS but have not yet renewed your commitment for 2020, we urge you to send in your check now.

While a lot of businesses have cut back on operations, the Air Force has not and that is very true for Seymour Johnson AFB. I am sure most of you saw the news report a couple of weeks ago on the arrival of our first KC-46A tanker. The good news is that there are eleven more on the way. Unfortunately, due to COVID 19, we were not allowed to go out and watch the arrival. Hopefully, we will be able to get a close up view soon. As we explained in a previous newsletter, the KC-46A Pegasus tanker will replace the Air Force's aging fleet of KC-135 Stratotankers, which have served as the primary refueling aircraft for more than 50 years. The KC-46A will provide improved capabilities including worldwide navigation and communication, cargo capacity on the entire main deck floor, receiver air refueling, improved force protection and survivability and multi-point air refueling capability.

We continue to work with The Roosevelt Group (TRG) to find ways to enhance the value of Seymour Johnson AFB (SJAFB) to the Air Force and the Department of Defense. Significant efforts and accomplishments over the last year include the following:

- TRG was instrumental in making sure that SJAFB received the funding that was necessary to prepare SJAFB for the arrival of the KC-46 Tanker. Projects that were supported by this funding included over \$120,000,000 for construction projects, completion of a new Air Traffic Control Tower (the first Air Traffic Control Center the Department of Defense has funded in over a decade) ramp expansion and flight line improvements. TRG authored language to institutionalize funding for Razor Talon and enhance the Dare County Range and East Coast Battlespace. Air Combat Command plans to make the East Coast Battlespace the first regional range to receive the new EW Threat Emitters. These Emitters will dramatically improve the quality and effectiveness of pilot training at Seymour Johnson AFB.
- TRG also assisted Air Combat Command with security support and funding for their Adversary Aircraft (ADAIR) program and the optional bed down at the Global TransPark. ADAIR is a program where privately owned military aircraft are used in training exercises. This will keep flying hours off of our aging F15E's but allow the training to continue. In addition to keeping hours off our jets, it provides good paying jobs for pilots retiring from the Air Force and they can remain in our community. This will also provide revenue for Lenoir County and the Kinston Jetport.

- The project that is being worked hardest now is funding for a new Small Arms Range Complex. This is a multi-million dollar project that we feel could get approval very soon. In addition, TRG is assisting with an application that hopefully will lead to the Department of Defense providing some funding for a new Greenwood Middle School. All of these construction projects bring jobs to our community and local businesses have the opportunity to bid for these jobs as well as supply building materials.
- TRG was involved in negotiating the location of the Rocky Forge Wind Farm. This Wind Farm is located in Virginia so we could not task our Legislators to step in and help with keeping a low-level training route operational. Fortunately, TRG also represents the State of Virginia and they were able to work with them to make some very important changes to the placement of the Wind Turbines which will minimize the impact on our pilots flying operations.
- TRG worked with the City on congressional language for the next NDAA, seeking to transfer the Bryan Sports Complex land to the City. For administrative reasons, the Air Force pushed back, so TRG negotiated an acceptable compromise that the Air Force is now working on.
- Association of Defense Communities (ADC) – Representatives from FOS and TRG attended the national ADC convention in February, 2020, where networking opportunities with other communities and senior DOD leaders took place. TRG arranged meetings with Assistant Secretary of the Air Force Henderson for the FOS delegation at the last conference. That meeting provided face to face unfiltered access to senior Air Force decision makers. The annual June ADC conference in Washington was cancelled due to COVID.
- TRG has provided recently published information and advice on the spousal employment and licensing issue. This is very important for Air Force members who are coming to SJAFB if their spouse wants to continue to work. In a lot of cases unfortunately the spouse will make the decision to not move and the Air Force member has to leave his/her family behind. Over time, this can make SJAFB a less attractive assignment.

As you can see, there is a lot going on during a very difficult time. Attached is the most recent Economic Impact information. Please take the time to review this information and if you have any questions please let me know.

Sincerely,

Jimmie

Jimmie Edmundson