

## Sky's the limit at New York Air Show at Stewart Airport

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NEW WINDSOR – The noise was deafening, but the spectators couldn't be happier as the C-17 roared overhead.

If any aircraft could call itself a native bird here in New Windsor, it's the C-17 Globemaster III, which nests at the New York Air National Guard 105th Airlift Wing at Stewart, along with 1,200 personnel.

Ask Capt. Brian Flanagan, who regularly pilots the 174-foot C-17, with its 170-foot wingspan, and he'll tell you: "It's a lot of fun. A lot of work, but a lot of fun."

The C-17's performance at this weekend's New York Air Show at Stewart Airport was its first anywhere in the country in six years, said Cathy Bassett, the air show's director of public relations.

"So they're flying not only for their hometown crowd, but for everyone," Bassett said.

Those eager for a closer look at the plane – which has a maximum payload of 170,900 pounds and is built to carry troops and cargo – could climb aboard the one parked on the runway, one of a dozen static displays at the air show.

But 4-year-old Maxim Capone of Somers was much more interested in the

MH-53E Sea Dragon, a minesweeper helicopter that belongs to the Navy's HM-15 Blackhawks Squadron based in Norfolk, Virginia.

Little Maxim climbed aboard with his dad, Jim Capone, and posed for photos with the Sea Dragon's pilot, Lt. Commander Jeff Spencer – known by his call sign, Silver Fox. "Helicopters are my favorite," Maxim said as he took in all the gauges, hoses, tubes and switches.

For many, the big draw was the chance to see the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds, which headlined the two-day show.

The crowd was smaller on day two of the air show, with an estimated 12,000 people attending Sunday, down from Saturday's draw of about 17,000 spectators, said Brendan Casey, Orange County's commissioner of emergency services.

"I think a lot of people stayed away (on Sunday) because they were worried about the weather," Casey said, referring to the threat from Tropical Storm Hermine that never materialized locally.

With Sunday's cooler weather, there were no heat-related illnesses and just a few minor injuries, Casey said. No arrests were reported all weekend, he said.

The air show, now in its second year at Stewart after a hiatus of more than a dozen years, is a collaboration between B. Lilley Productions, which organized the show; the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which owns the airport; and Orange County, which supplied emergency services equipment and personnel.

Next year's air show has already been scheduled for Sept. 16-17, with tickets on sale now. Visit [airshowny.com](http://airshowny.com) or call 877-766-8158 for information.

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