

November 2009

Pacific Crossings

The Official Newsletter of the 624th Regional Support Group

ORE:

48th APS practices
deployment capabilities
in New Jersey

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(Photo by Senior Airman Andrew Satran)

This Veteran's Day share the legacy

*By Gen. Gary North
Pacific Air Forces
Commander*

We recently concluded our fall gathering of senior PACAF leaders where we were joined by Vietnam veterans Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Steve Ritchie and former Navy corpsman and Honolulu Advertiser publisher Lee Webber. General Ritchie is an acclaimed ace with five kills, and Mr. Webber defended against an enemy siege at Khe San for 77 days in 1968. In the presence of these heroes I was reminded, as I often am, of the veterans who came before us and their contributions.

At one point during our conference, all PACAF commanders, directors and chiefs stood with me as the USS Ronald Reagan cruised past on the Pearl Harbor channel completing their successful combat cruise in the CENTCOM AOR en-route to the West coast. I was reminded again of our heroes—those who continue to defend freedom. We stood and saluted the sailors of the Navy's newest aircraft carrier from the soil where World War II began and just a few hundred yards away from the USS Missouri where the war would ultimately end on its deck.

You don't have to look far to discover our history and proud heritage. As we remember the many who have served, of all services, and those who continue to serve from Bagram to Baghdad to the DMZ, we can honor them by sharing a piece of our military heritage with those who may be unfamiliar. Tell your stories to others and learn those of our predecessors.

Our story in PACAF is still being written. The security and economic prosperity which prevails in many parts of the Pacific region, today, is largely a result of the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen who served and continue to serve. Equally important are the accomplishments and sacrifices of our families who stand behind us and give us strength.

This Veteran's Day, I ask all Airmen to reflect on the contributions of our total force team and to share the rich heritage of our Air Force and our joint team with others. I am proud of the work being performed by our great PACAF Airmen every day. Have a safe and enjoyable Veteran's Day and take care of your wingman so we can continue to Fly, Fight and Win ... in air, space and cyberspace.

Pacific Crossings

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Action Line

The Action line is your direct line to the 624th Regional Support Group Commander. If you have worked through normal channels and are not satisfied with the answer, the Action Line is your opportunity to ask questions or make suggestions about the subjects of concern to the 624th RSG community.

You may contact the action line at 624RSG.PA@hickam.af.mil.

Please include your name and phone number in case additional information is required. Action lines of general interest will be published in Pacific Crossings while others will be answered by phone.

On the Cover

Staff Sgt. Dennis Dedicatoria and other members of the 48th Aerial Port Squadron load a KC-135 for the return flight home to Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii after a week-long Operational Readiness Exercise at McGuire AFB, N.J., Oct. 4-10.

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(Photo by Chief Master Sgt. Leland How)

Training for operational readiness



Master Sgt. Alicia Player keeps hydrated while performing her Air Terminal Operations Center information controller duties while in full chemical warfare gear.



Senior Master Sgt. Craig Okazaki conducts an Engine Running Offload briefing. E.R.O. is a critical procedure in situations which require extremely short ground time for an aircraft.



Master Sgt. Nemesis Escosio tests a safety harness required when work is being performed on cargo loaders at a height of ten feet and above or in designated safety zones.

Photos by Chief Master Sgt. Leland How.

48th APS trains at McGuire

Forty-six members of the 48th Aerial Port Squadron traveled to McGuire Air Force Base, N.J., to participate in an Operational Readiness Exercise Oct. 4-10.

The ORE is in preparation for an Operational Readiness Inspection scheduled next year.

At McGuire, the 48th team, was assigned the task of providing Forward Operating Location aerial port operations, integrating with units from across the country each providing the various operational and support functions required for the task at hand.

This was the first time for a number of members to experience the challenge of working in conditions requiring the use of Chemical Warfare gear while performing their jobs.

Training included loading and off-loading cargo under various scenarios, logistics and planning, and the ability to survive under adverse conditions.

At all times safety and health concerns were emphasized, making sure that members were properly hydrated in their suits and that extra caution was taken due to the added restrictions involved.

“They did well for their first time performing their hands on and functional tasks, their overall teamwork was evident” said Chief Master Sgt. Leland How, 48th APS Chief Enlisted Manager and Exercise Evaluation Team Member. “by continually practicing these various tasks we should be successful during the inspection in March.”

For his outstanding performance, Tech. Sgt. Douglas Parish was recognized with a 4th Air Force’s Air Transportation Chief’s coin by Chief Master Sgt. Stephen Campbell.

CE in Afghanistan: The Expeditionary Prime BEEF Squadron

*By Lt. Col. Rich Parkinson
624th Civil Engineer Squadron
Commander*

We officially became the 577th EPBS a few days before the last note. Hard to believe it's already been nearly 3-weeks since I last wrote a note. We work for the All Americans - the 82 Airborne - and cover Eastern Afghanistan.

We're lucky enough to have the Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF-82) headquartered here at Bagram Air Field (BAF) and I get to attend many meetings -- for some reason people like to hold them when I would expect to be eating dinner...I should be very trim when I get home...although I make up for missed meals by eating very heartily, especially on Friday nights during surf & turf (yes, the lobster tails and steak rumor is true).

Back to the story...we support the Airborne mission here at BAF and Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) throughout eastern Afghanistan by providing contingency engineering and construction.

We rounded out the CE Operations and Programming flights by adding some additional craftsmen from Holloman AFB to the team. MSgt Corse rounded up folks and showed the



Master Sgt. Tara Corse in Jalalabad - Don't think she can claim credit for the MiG.

newbies tremendous Aloha when they arrived at 1 a.m.

They have integrated into the team very well, and I was surprised to see two craftsmen I'd worked with in Wyoming...a small Air Force. We also picked up some teams that were already working at the FOBs.

I sent MSgt Corse on a mission to Jalalabad where she "got eyes on the mission" and she was able to tell me what I need to do to support them out there.

The programming flight is extremely busy designing projects, surveying areas, and managing HUGE construction projects. They are the reason I get to attend sooooo many meetings! The operations flight is extremely busy helping the programming flight by doing small construction jobs and ensuring the construction meets US standards. They also train Afghani laborers as craftsmen -- some have already been hired by contractors and it brings a great deal of pride to know that our team is providing skills to people that will last long after we depart!

Till next time, thanks for your continued support and prayers.



Staff Sgt. Shin performs a survey mission.
(Courtesy photos)

New AF fitness standards to take effect in new year

*By Lt. Gen. Charles Stenner
Air Force Reserve Command
Commander*

New Air Force fitness standards will take effect on 1 Jan 2010 as the revision of AFI 10-248, Fitness Program, nears publication.

These new standards apply to Reservists, regardless of military status. A key change is the frequency of fitness testing increasing from once a year to twice a year. This decision promotes a lifestyle of fitness and aligns the Air Force Reserve with the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and their reserve components, who already test twice a year.

Another significant change is the requirement to pass all areas of the fitness test. Previous standards required only a cumulative passing score, but the new AFI requires passing scores in each specific area (waist measurement, pushups, sit-ups, and run) as well as an overall passing score.

As we make preparations for AF-wide implementation in January, I ask each of you to review the information and new fitness charts at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/af-fitnessprogram/index.asp>. Specifically note the FAQ area providing background and phase-in information. Lastly, if you are not doing so already, I encourage each of you to participate in a year-round physical conditioning program that emphasizes total fitness.



(Photo by Staff Sgt. Erin Smith)



Visit from the AFRC boss

Lt. Gen. Charles Stenner, Air Force Reserve Command commander, was in Hawaii for a town hall-style meeting Oct. 19 to discuss matters of importance to Reservists such as manday tours, 1095 limitations and new Air Force Fit to Fight testing standards.

While here he met with members of the 624th Regional Support Group. From Left - Master Sgt. Ferdinand Agostosa, Tech. Sgt. Jesse Sacayan, Senior Master Sgt. Roddy Paguyo, Master Sgt. Josephine Taitague, General Stenner, Master Sgt. Janet Hudson, Staff Sgt. Maria Tailo and Senior Master Sgt. Corinna Seitz. (Courtesy photo)

Reservist tours Pacific with Thunderbirds



*By Capt. Christy Stavolo
624th Regional Support Group Public Affairs*



The USAF Thunderbirds recently completed a 6-week tour of the Pacific including stops in Australia, Malaysia, Thailand, Japan and South Korea. As a member of the Pacific Air Forces Public Affairs team where I work on active duty orders, I had the rare opportunity to coordinate the media and community relations events at each air show venue.

Over the past six months, I worked closely with my counterparts in the various foreign militaries and US embassies. During the tour, I was part of the advance team arriving on the first C-17 to prepare for the arrival of the F-16s.

In the end, more than 1.2 million people in the Pacific saw the shows in person and another 120 million heard about the air shows through their national media. From a PA standpoint, it was a huge success and I was thrilled to be a part of it.

(Top) The air show in Australia Sep. 26 almost didn't happen because of a massive dust storm that forced the Thunderbirds to cancel part of their practice the previous day. At least 80,000 Australians watched the performance. (Photo by Maj. Vince Shrigley)

(Middle) More than 100,000 Thailand residents, including these children, were mesmerized by the team's daring maneuvers at the Bangkok air show Oct. 10. (Photo by Capt. Christy Stavolo)

(Bottom) Children from three orphanages in Malaysia came out for the Thunderbirds' arrival Oct. 1. During the tour, the Thunderbirds personally met and spent time with 500+ special needs children and orphans. (Courtesy photo)



Nominate your employer

By Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve

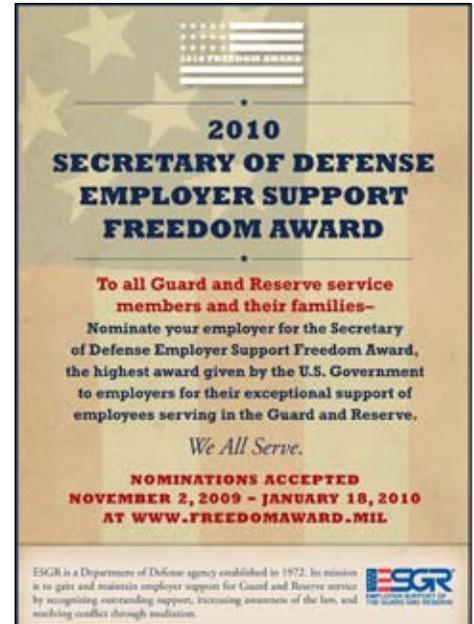
ARLINGTON, Va. – Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), a Department of Defense agency, today announced the opening of the nomination season for the 2010 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. National Guard and Reserve members and their families are eligible and encouraged to nominate employers who have provided exceptional support of military employees above the federal law requirements. Nominations will be accepted at www.FreedomAward.mil from Nov. 2, 2009 to Jan. 18, 2010. The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is the highest recognition given by the U.S. Government to employers for their outstanding support of their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve.

The 2010 recipients will be announced in the spring and honored in Washington, D.C. at the 15th annual Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award ceremony on Sept. 23, 2010. Recipients of the 2009 Freedom Award met privately with President Barack Obama and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. Dr. Jill Biden, Deputy Secretary of Defense William Lynn and Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs Dennis McCarthy presented the awards at

a ceremony attended by members of Congress and senior government and military officials.

Almost one-half of the U.S. military is comprised of the National Guard and Reserve. The Department of Defense shares these citizen warriors with their civilian employers, many of whom provide significant support to their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve. 2009 honorees ranged from AeroDyn Wind Tunnel, LLC, a small automotive racing wind tunnel testing company in North Carolina to large businesses including Microsoft and AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals to Santa Ana, California Police Department, a public sector employer. Past recipients of the Freedom Award have provided significant support including full salary, continuation of benefits, care packages and family assistance to employees fulfilling their military obligation.

The Freedom Award was instituted in 1996 under the auspices of ESGR to recognize exceptional support from the employer community. “There is much excitement surrounding the 15th anniversary of the Freedom Award,” noted acting ESGR Executive Director Ms. Polli Brunelli, “and we’re enthusiastic to begin selection of the 2010 recipients from amongst all of the heartfelt nominations that will be submitted by thousands of proud Citizen Warriors.”



The ESGR is a Department of Defense agency established in 1972. Its mission is to gain and maintain employer support for Guard and Reserve service by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law and resolving conflicts through mediation.

For questions regarding the Freedom Award nomination process, please visit www.FreedomAward.mil or contact Maj. Melissa Phillips, ESGR Public Affairs, at 703-380-9262.

Preventing residential fires

*By 624th Regional Support Group
Safety Office*

The United States has one of the highest fire death and injury rates in the world. Fire -- in the form of flames and smoke -- is the second leading cause of accidental death in the home.

More than 4,000 people die each year in home fires. Every year, there are more than 500,000 residential fires serious enough to be reported to fire departments. More than 90 percent of residential fire deaths and injuries result from fires in one and two family houses and apartments. Property losses exceed 4 billion dollars annually, and the long term emotional damage to victims and their loved ones is incalculable.

Cooking equipment is estimated to be associated with

more than 100,000 fires annually, and almost 400 deaths, and 5,000 injuries. Gas cooking equipment accounts for about 30,000 fires, and electric cooking equipment for about 55,000 fires.

Recommendations:

- Never place or store pot holders, plastic utensils, towels and other non-cooking equipment on or near the range because these items can be ignited.
- Roll up or fasten long loose sleeves with pins or elastic bands while cooking. Do not reach across a range while cooking. Long loose sleeves are more likely to catch on fire than are short sleeves. Long loose sleeves are also more apt to catch on pot handles, overturning pots and pans and cause scalds.

Information from U.S.

He sells sea shells by the sea shore

By Staff Sgt. Jennie Chamberlin
624th Regional Support Group

When Tech. Sgt. Edward Villanueva received a gift from his brother, it inspired him to learn more about Chamorro culture and learn a new skill.

The gift was a piece of shell jewelry. In ancient Chamorro culture, certain shells were used as a form of money. This particular use of shells interested Sergeant Villanueva, a Reservist from the 624th Regional Support Group and a native of Mangilao, Guam, and he began reading about other aspects of Chamorro culture.

Soon, he and his wife Leilani purchased the tools needed to make shell jewelry and both began studying the art under a master carver.

A piece of the Villanuevas' art starts in the ocean with the life of the shell. Sergeant Villanueva dives for his raw materials himself, and Leilani combs the beaches of Guam for others.

Once obtained, a shell is then cleaned and sanded, shaped and carved, enlaid, drilled or polished until it becomes a fine piece of jewelry. Under his hand, a rough clam becomes a smooth crescent moon, a Chamorro symbol worn by people of power, or a fishhook, another chamorran symbol.

For Villanueva, the most rewarding part of the process is seeing the outcome. Villanueva said he gets great satisfaction in seeing a finished piece.

"I got hooked on it," he said. Now he shares his passion for Chamorro culture and carving with his customers and admirers of his work.



Above: Tech. Sgt. Edward Villanueva, 724th Aeromedical Staging Flight, selects a shell bead to finish off a custom-made necklace for a customer at Chamorro Village in Hagatna, Guam. Sergeant Villanueva, a reservist with the 44th Aerial Port Squadron, hand-carves jewelry in a traditional Chamorro fashion using shells that he and his wife find diving and beachcombing in Guam.

Right: Hand-carved shells and jewelry created by Tech Sgt. Edward Villanueva and his wife Leilani, who hand-carve jewelry and sell their pieces at Chamorro Village, a local weekly market.



Developing tomorrow's logistics officers

By Capt. Patrick Lujan
44th Aerial Port Squadron

Capt Patrick Lujan and 1st Lt. Mike Meno, 44th Aerial Port Squadron, joined over 1400 logistics readiness officers and maintenance officers, who attended the Logistics Officer Association's National Conference Oct. 12-15 Las Vegas, Nev.

The purpose of the LOA is to enhance the military logistics profession by providing an open forum to promote quality logistical support and logistics officer professional development.

The emphasis of the conference was on Joint Focus and stressed the importance of Rapid Global Mobility and Agile Combat as two core competences of the U.S. Air Force.

Gen. Duncan McNabb, U.S. Transportation Command commander, a keynote speaker, said "Our ability to dominate logistics...that's global reach, that's global power."

Logistics Readiness Officers (LROs), such as those from the 44th and 48th Aerial Port Squadrons, are required to be well-rounded in six AFSCs. This is a major challenge in itself for traditional reservists and was a question posed by the Air Force's top logistician Lt. Gen. Loren Reno, Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, Installations and Mission Support, Headquarters U.S. Air Force.

"Have we asked too much of the 21Rs (LROs)?," Reno said during his presentation. "We need to do better at experiencing lieutenants. I challenge commanders to help improve this."

A new developing program has LRO's go through the Seasoning Training Program just like an enlisted member right after tech school.

The numerous benefits from STP will accelerate qualification levels and meet the challenge set forth by Lt Gen Reno with more experienced lieutenants.

More big-picture challenges for logisticians were presented by Deputy Under Secretary of Defense Alan



1st Lt. Mike Meno, 44th Aerial Port Squadron, meets with Lt. Gen. Loren Reno, at this years Logistics Officer Association's National Conference. (Courtesy photo)

Estevez: 1) our military are currently battling two wars; 2) we're doing it in the greatest economic challenge in our lifetime; 3) and we're tasked with a responsible drawdown in Iraq where there are 321 bases throughout that country.

These challenges make it essential that the forces work cooperatively in a joint environment to accomplish the expected results with less and much older resources.

The system and approach to successful logistics continues to evolve and remains flexible not unrecognized by our logistics leaders.

"If serving as a logistician is noble," General Reno said. "Then serving as a

joint logistician is princely."

Later in the week, Lt. Gen. (ret) C.V. Christianson Logistics strenuously emphasized Strategic Logistics as the Air Force enters the next decade in the 21st Century. General Christianson highlights that there are no perfect solutions to the ever changing conditions of the war-time environment.

In order to meet the challenges of the new war environments, we have to be ready to adapt and incorporate better collaborative ways of thinking. In his talk was the direction of the logisticians in attendance; the key ideas to improve come from the executers of a mission.



Distinguished visit

Col. Robert "Randy" Huston and the Honorable Daniel Ginsberg, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, discuss issues concerning personnel and quality of life for the 624th Regional Support Group during a visit to Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, Oct. 21. (Courtesy photo)

UTA Schedule

Hickam

November 7-8
December 5-6
January 9-10
February 20-21

Andersen

November 21-22
December 12-13
January 23-24
February 27-28

October & November promotions

The following personnel were promoted in the months of October and November.

AIRMAN 1st CLASS

Amber Pagatpatan
Nicole Thomas

SENIOR AIRMAN

Pomaikaiokalani Ahinga
Eric Hayes
Jack Larimer
Karen Oliveras
Matthew Pires
Angela Sablan
Antoinette Taitano

STAFF SERGEANT

Cllifton Claybrooks
Victor Reinares

TECHNICAL SERGEANT

Raymond Jardon
Nia Naumu
Brian Whitcraft

MASTER SERGEANT

Daryl Diras
John Mabayag
Peter Rieta
Ron Shimizu