

Pacific Crossings

July 2009

The Official Newsletter of the 624th Regional Support Group



Serving country and community:

Guam nurse practices her skills as civilian and Reservist

See page 3



By Chief Master Sgt. Brian Wong
624th RSG Command Chief

I recently heard an analogy involving a common breakfast meal, Ham and Eggs. "With Ham and Eggs, the hen is involved, while the pig is committed." I enjoyed reading this, since it involves food, but I don't think we can substitute any other pair – spam and rice, fish and chips, hotcakes and sausage, and peanut butter and jelly all don't work very well. So, let's start this off by asking, "Are you a hen or are you a pig?"

I guess in some situations, one can be a hen, while on other occasions, a pig, but for today, let's focus on being a pig.

I like to think that our leaders are pigs. What did I just say? Leaders are pigs? Well, maybe not really, but for analogical purposes, let's say that the better ones are.

A leader is more than being able to yell the loudest... more than having everyone liking you... more than being a consummate speaker. A leader has qualities, that when put together, resonate, "He knows what's going on, the direction is steady, follow him (her)!" It has been said that some people are "born leaders" while for others, leadership is a life journey filled with events, big and small, that build upon one another. I think I fall into the latter.

So, how does one become a pig? There are many books, examples, courses, and other resources that will help to hone your leadership skills. I will share a few thoughts that have helped me in my career.

Integrity First - Yes, this is right from our Core Values. Leaders must have impeccable integrity. Without this cornerstone, all else is fluff. You must be true to yourself and to others. Do not jeopardize integrity for self gain. Stay on the straight and narrow – always. Temper all decisions with this core value and everything else should fall into place easier.

Two ears and one mouth – use proportionately. Some people like to hear themselves talk. We need to listen more than we speak. Many times we can miss important facts by interrupting or speaking too much. I'm not saying that you should not get your point across, but rather ensure that you make an intelligent contribution based on all relative information.

Service Before Self - Here's another Core Value. Be careful with this one. We must all focus on the mission and do whatever we must to achieve the objective, our own interests notwithstanding.

Along this line, not all decisions are immediately made with the

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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

Capt. Betty Ann Buentipo, 724th Aeromedical Staging Flight nurse, treats a patient at her civilian job as an emergency room nurse at Guam Memorial Hospital. Story on page 3.

(Photo by
Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel)



Capt. Betty Ann Buentipo, 724th Aeromedical Staging Flight nurse, administers a vaccination during the June drill weekend at the Andersen Air Force Base clinic. As a civilian, Captain Buentipo works as an emergency room nurse for Guam Memorial Hospital (Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel)

Working as a nurse in two worlds

*By Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel
624th RSG Public Affairs*

She made a promise to her grandmother that she would become a nurse.

“My grandmother always wanted to go into nursing, said Capt. Betty Ann Buentipo, 724th Aeromedical Staging Flight.

But due to lack of money, her grandmother was not able to pursue her dream. Nor did any of her grandmother’s children choose this path for themselves, and since Betty Ann was the only grandchild interested in nursing, she made this promise to her grandmother... at her deathbed.

In 1999, she began as a nurse’s aide at Guam Memorial Hospital while pursuing her Bachelors in Science of Nursing degree at the University of Guam. Graduating in 2000, she finally worked her way to become a nurse at GMH that same year.

Working in the Emergency Department at Guam Memorial Hospital is a very challenging experience, said Maria Perez, Guest Relations Coordinator. The ED sees more than 27,000 patients a year and this load is growing quickly due to increasing population on Guam and influx from neighboring islands.

“The hardest thing is that we are the

only hospital on Guam,” said Captain Buentipo. “We don’t have a big enough facility to take care of the population of Guam and we have a lot of sick people.”

“So in the ER, I am not only an ER nurse, I have to transition to becoming an ICU nurse, to being a pediatric nurse, to a surgical attendant to a telemetry nurse because there are no rooms and we have to take care of all of these patients,” said Captain Buentipo.

But despite these challenges, she reminds those who work with her to treat everyone like they would their own family.

It was her own brother’s service in the Air Force that inspired her to join the Reserve and the 724th ASTF in July 2007.

There are significant differences between her nursing work in the civilian sector and in the military.

As an ER nurse, she performs a significant amount of hands-on clinical work and some paperwork. While on the Reserve side, she does some clinical work and handles a lot more of the administrative work.

Her experiences in the both the civilian and military worlds crossover into and influence each other. The 724th ASTF has definitely benefitted.

“Captain Buentipo brings invaluable skills as an ER nurse,” said Capt. Leonora Urbano, 724th ASTF clinical nurse. “She trains our medical technicians in skills such as gastric tube insertion, resuscitation skills, care of fixator pins and more.”

Her military experience has not gone unnoticed by her co-workers at Guam Memorial. One popular story involves a doctor who ordered her to do something that she correctly believed she didn’t have to do.

“She told him that he wasn’t in her chain of command,” said Jennifer Cruz, nursing administrator, laughing.

She has definitely shown a lot of growth since joining the Air Force, said Ms. Cruz.

This military experience with concepts such as ‘chain of command’ has definitely helped her as she takes on extra administrative duties at the hospital.

Though she made it, fulfilling her grandmother’s wish wasn’t always easy.

“I remember going through nursing school and I would go to her grave site every day and cry ‘I want to quit, I want to quit,’” she said. “But I always went back to the promise I made her on her death bed that I wouldn’t stop until I finish.”

“I think that she would be proud,” said Captain Buentipo.



RSG commander talks with Guam TV station about Reserve issues

Col. Robert "Randy" Huston, 624th Regional Support Group commander, makes his Guam television debut taping a segment for the "KUAM News Extra" show with host Sonya Artero July 24 at the new Guam USO. Several members from the RSG's Guam-based units assisted in renovating the facility. Colonel Huston discussed a number of issues with Sonya including employer relations, upcoming mobilizations and caring for Reservists and their families. The show aired July 25 on KUAM-TV. (Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel)

Recognizing the employer who supports you

Nominate your employer for the "Patriot Award."

The National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve conducts an awards program designed to recognize employers who support a strong National Guard and Reserve force. Employers qualify for recognition when they practice leadership and personnel policies that support employee participation in the Guard and Reserve.

For both speed of processing and accuracy in the nomination process, nominate your employer online. Nominations may also be sent to ESGR by mail using a downloadable form.

When completing the employer recognition form, take a few moments to explain why your employer deserves to be recognized. Your local ESGR committee will review your explanation



Col. Robert "Randy" Huston, 624th Regional Support Group commander, exchanges business cards with David Peredo, Guam Fire Department Fire Chief. Colonel Huston visited employers on his most recent trip to Guam to discuss how the RSG can best support them. The Guam Fire Department employs a number of 624th RSG Reservists as fire fighters and emergency technicians.

when selecting nominees for higher-level employer support awards.

It may lead to bigger things. ESGR reviews all award nominations for consideration for higher levels of recognition at the Local, National and State levels.

Every employer nominated will

receive a Patriot Award certificate and accompanying lapel pin. Your state or local ESGR Committee can help you arrange the presentation of the award to your employer.

For more information on this and other ESGR programs go to esgr.org.

Operation Maka'ala Airmen

By Capt. Kathleen Izon
332nd Expeditionary Logistics
Readiness Squadron

It's been hectic since my fellow aerial porters and I arrived at Joint Base Balad two months ago. We work long hours building pallets, loading them onto aircraft, and taking care of passengers headed off to various destinations around the AOR.

It's great to be here (despite the unrelenting heat), but I have missed one thing in particular--my unlimited access to Hawaiian-grown coffee. So, you can imagine how thrilled I was when I saw the stack of boxes arriving off the mail delivery truck marked "Operation Maka'ala Airmen..."

For those of you who don't speak Hawaiian, "maka'ala" means "alert" or "vigilant." We thought that was a perfect name for this all-important operation to get 100% Kona coffee to Airmen deployed to Iraq.

Not long after we arrived, I was thrilled to find out that there was a gentleman on the Big Island who wanted to send Kona coffee to Hawaii-based military members deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. Apparently he's been sending coffee on behalf of Kona coffee farmers to Army and Marine units throughout the AOR. He wanted to find some deployed Air Force members to send coffee to and that's how he found out about us. My crew and I are from the 48th Aerial Port Squadron, which is part of the 624th Regional Support Group based at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii. Many of us are native Hawaiians and can truly appreciate good coffee, so there was quite a bit of anticipation built up when we found out 40 pounds of it was headed our way!

It's awesome to walk into work each morning and smell the aromatic Kona coffee, and it means a lot that a group of coffee farmers in Hawaii whom I've never met would want to do something so kind. Along with the coffee beans, they sent us grinders and so far out of the 8 5-lb bags we received, we've



Care packages from home such as these received from Operation Maka'ala Airmen are a much needed and cherished morale booster for deployed members of the Armed Forces. (Courtesy photo)

grounded 5 of the bags and delivered coffee to 18 different sections within the Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron here at Joint Base Balad.

On this 4th of July weekend, I just want to say "thanks" to the Kona coffee farmers for taking care of our troops. My Airmen want to extend a heartfelt "mahalo" for their support to the men and women of the 332d Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron! Your coffee has boosted morale and ensured we stay alert for our mission!

Capt Kathy Izon is currently deployed

in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom along with 25 other members of the 48th Aerial Port Squadron, 624th Regional Support Group, Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii. Capt Izon is the commander of the Distribution and Deployment (D&D) Flight, which falls under the 332 Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The D&D Flight is responsible for the centralized command and control, planning, and execution of all wing deployment operations and the distribution of cargo, passengers, and personal property.



Capt. Kathleen Izon and members of her office proudly display some of the coffee that they received from Operation Maka'ala. The coffee was generously donated by coffee growers from the Big Island of Hawaii who routinely send Kona coffee to Hawaii-based military members deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. (Courtesy photo)

Volunteering in a war zone

*By Tech. Sgt. Scot Parry
332nd Expeditionary Logistics
Readiness Squadron*

Ever since I heard that I could volunteer at the base hospital I've been interested in taking advantage of the opportunity.

I enjoy helping people and because I missed my family, I thought it would be the perfect way to fill this void. In fact, there were three of us from the Load Planning Office who attended the hospital volunteer orientation on May 19.

The orientation was designed to give us an idea of the areas we could volunteer for.

By the following week we began getting our days off from work and so I started volunteering May 23rd at about 10:30pm. That night and into the morning I helped organize the linen room in the Intensive Care Ward (ICW) and received basic training for taking patient's vital signs.

In addition, I received training on carrying patients from the helo-pad. The next week I spent my time trying to find out when and where I could be the most helpful.

Finally on June 7, I went into the ICW at 5:00 a.m. and found out that the 5:30 a.m.

shift change could get quite hectic.

Critically injured patients are taken to the Intensive Care Unit to prepare for surgery and to recover after surgery. Once they become stabilized, American soldiers are often sent to the Continental United States or to the hospital at Ramstein, Germany. A few of the American patients and many of the Iraqi patients go into the ICW to completely recover to the point where they can return to active duty or simply go home.

Since that day I've tried to put in four to five hours every Monday morning.

On one occasion I assisted in the Operating Room by pushing the patients in and out of surgery and standing by in case any of the surgical team needed anything.

On another occasion I helped prepare a patient to move from ICU into ICW. The nurse and I needed to remove all of the tubing from his nose and from the IV in his arm etc.

I also took part in giving a critically injured patient CPR. The doctors and nurses in ICU were involved in several attempts to revive her after she flat lined. They included me in the final attempt to revive her but unfortunately the patient did not survive. The patient was then prepared for

the morgue and cleaned up in the sterile room.

My experiences at the hospital have taught me a number of things.

First of all, I have learned that no matter how safe I feel at Joint Base Balad, the United States is at war with Iraq.

I think that sometimes it is easy for people to forget that simple fact.

Secondly, I have learned how important it is to know first-aid and to be ready to use it under stressful situations.

I am grateful the nurses and doctors were around to assist me with the CPR process but there may come a day when I will need to help someone on my own and I now feel more prepared.

I have also learned that sometimes we all in the world share the same universal needs.

In my capacity as a load planner I don't get the chance to speak with many of the locals. But at the hospital I've had the chance to meet some wonderful people from Iraq who in many ways are just like me and my family.

Tech. Sgt. Scot Parry is assigned to the 48th Aerial Port Squadron, Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii.



Senior Master Sgt. Mark Hatori, left, at Heroes Highway awaiting the arrival of the helicopters carrying patients. Sergeant Hatori is one of several deployed members of the 48th APS who regularly volunteers at the same hospital as Tech. Sgt. Scot Parry (not pictured).

On his first night as a volunteer, Sergeant Hatori had the fortune to experience one of the worst dust storms in years.

"As I stood watching through the glass, I could see my colleagues standing in the arrival tunnel called "Heroes Highway" and suddenly behind him as the helo's made their decent, a thick, huge wave of dust enveloped him and the others. The dust hit the glass pane abruptly and I couldn't see anything."

He was definitely nervous.

"When I was readying to transport one of the patients, all I was thinking to myself was please don't drop him. You want to do it right the first time...this was my first time."

Sergeant Hatori did it right the first time and safely transported him from the helo to the gurney to the emergency room.

Warrior of the Month



Brian Whitcraft

Staff Sergeant
624th Regional Support Group
Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii

JOB TITLE: Client Support Administrator / Knowledge Operations Management Assistant

JOB DESCRIPTION: Deploys, sustains, and manages data, information, and knowledge-sharing services in a fixed and expeditionary environment. Includes planning, coordinating, sharing, and controlling an organization's data and information assets. Manages technologies to capture, organize, and store tacit and explicit knowledge. Performs, supervises, and manages client software and hardware tasks and functions.

HOMETOWN: Bangor, Calif. and Mililani, Hawaii

FAVORITE THING ABOUT UNIT: "My favorite thing about the 624 RSG is our sense of family and support we give each other."

FAVORITE THING ABOUT JOB: "The best part of my job is ensuring our units get the support they need to get the mission done."

LITTLE KNOWN FACT: "I enjoy learning new things, so when I'm not studying, I take a break with the Discovery Channel or even the History Channel. I definitely like science fiction in almost any form, reading, computer games, and even anime! But above all I love Star Trek and Doctor Who, which allows us a glimpse of an unlimited future for mankind."

SUPERVISOR SAYS: "I don't know how we would be able to get as much work done without him. He always goes above and beyond without complaint. He is truly beyond compare." - Master Sgt. Marilyn Kinoshita.

Personnel Briefs

Civilian Employer Information

It is the duty of each individual member of the Ready Reserve to comply with the requirements of the Civilian Employer Information (CEI) Program.

A member of the Ready Reserve who knowingly fails or refuses to provide required employment-related information or who knowingly provides false employment-related information may be subject to administrative action or punishment for dereliction of duty under Article 92, Uniform Code of Military Justice.

You can enter your employer data by going to the Defense Manpower Data Center Web site located at: <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/Guard-ReservePortal>. After clicking on the Web site, enter your employment status.

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve staff will not directly

contact any employer about an individual reservist unless the reservist asks for assistance with an employer issue.

We ask that you please continue to update any changes in the future.

Virtual Record of Emergency Data

Servicemembers are required to keep their Virtual Record of Emergency Data current at all times and are required to review their vRED at least annually. Additionally, the member must also review their vRED during in/out-processing, RSG annual mobility folder inspection, and prior to all deployments. Each command support staff orderly room will outline in writing specific review procedures to ensure in/out processing and pre-deployment review requirements are met. An automatic suspense is already established through the vMPF for annual member review. The vRED is accessed through the vMPF using the

AF Portal through AFPC secure website at <https://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil>.

MILITARY PERSONNEL FLIGHT HOURS

Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

DRILL WEEKENDS

Saturday:

Open hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Closed for in-processing - 7-10 a.m.

Sunday:

Open hours: 7 a.m.- 1 p.m.
2:30 - 4 p.m.

Closed for training: 1-2:30 p.m.

If an ID card is required, please call before coming to MPF to check if DEERS is up and running.

CC signs New HRDC charter

By 624th RSG Public Affairs

Col. Robert “Randy” Huston, 624th Regional Support Group commander, signed a new Human Resources Development Council charter on May 17.

The overall goal of the charter is to create and maintain a fully diversified work force and a healthy and productive work climate.

Colonel Huston wasn’t always a strong advocate for HRDC.

“Until about two months ago my opinion of HRDC was pretty low,” said Colonel Huston. “My experience with other bases was that it seemed to be a glorified supper club but when I read the charter I realized that was exactly what we are already trying to do.”

An executive group will oversee the progress of the Inreach, Outreach and Diversity Awareness working committees.

The Inreach Committee will be responsible for developing initiatives to help members within the group. One approach will be to prevent re-inventing the wheel by searching out best practices, such as performance report or awards writing, from each unit and applying them as required.

The Outreach Committee will facilitate activities and projects related to the local Hawaii and Guam communities in which the members live. Examples include activities the various units within the Group are already committed to such as the volunteer work that the 724th Aeromedical Staging Flight does with Erica’s House in Guam.

The Diversity Committee will concentrate on celebrating the diversity within the group.

“Diversity is one of our strengths,” said Colonel Huston. “Our members and their families come from around the Pacific region and bring with them cultural and language abilities, which add value to our missions in the region.”



Fire fighting fundamentals

Above - Staff Sgt. Frank Abreu, 15th Civil Engineer Squadron, and Staff Sgt. Jonathan “Kaipo” Onekea, 624th CES, prepare their fire gear for their annual aircraft live fire burn training requirement.

Left - Staff Sgt. Jordan Fong-Aiu, 624th CES, disconnects a hose from a fire truck.

Master Sgt. Edward Lee Jr., 624th CES Reserve Fire Training Facilitator, coordinates required training with the host 15th CES Fire Department when they require use of facilities or need training resources such as the 15th CES aircraft live fire training facility to accomplish annual training requirements.

(Photos by Capt. Christy Stravolo)



Congratulations

Col. Giovanni Tuck, 15th Airlift Wing commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Ben Caro, academy commandant, congratulate Tech. Sgt. Tammy Castro on graduating from the Pacific Air Forces Noncommissioned Officer Academy at a ceremony on May 20. Sergeant Castro is a medical technician with the 724th Aeromedical Staging Flight, Andersen Air Force Base, Guam.

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brain. Sometimes the heart needs to get involved. Take the time to think about the people that will be affected by your decision, and how they will be affected. Sometimes there's an equitable solution in challenging situations when you use both the heart and the brain.

Take a chance –make a decision. In whatever position you are in, you will make decisions at that level. Use all information available to you to make decisions, and do not waffle. By not making a decision, a decision has been made for you. Remember, be a pig.

Excellence in all we do - Did you think I was going to leave this one out? Great leaders do great stuff. They don't go halfway. In all that you do, do it with

all your might. Remember how much effort we used to put into that art project when we were kids? We were so proud to show it off to our parents. That's what we need to do. Do things great enough to want to tell your parents.

I just gave you a few nuggets to help stimulate a hunger for more. There are many books to read, "Good to Great," "Integrity," "The Fred Factor," "We Don't Need a Title to be a Leader," and many more. Latch on to a mentor. We don't need to be like the great leaders of times passed. We all can be a leader in our own regard. You are a leader if you decide to undertake the mission for the unit. You are also a leader if you focus on your skill level training, setting the unit in better readiness position. Strive to be better each and every day and you too can be a pig.

Carpe Diem!



Behind the wire

Staff Sgt. Tiana Duenas, 724th Aeromedical Training Flight medical technician, keeps on smiling while on deployment. Sergeant Duenas is currently assigned to the 332nd Contingency Aero-medical Staging Facility at Balad Air Base, Iraq. (Courtesy photo)

UTA Schedule

Hickam

July 11-12
August 8-9
September 12-13
October 3-4

Andersen

July 25-26
August 22-23
September 19-20
October 24-25



Diamond Tips

*By Senior Master Sgt. Leony Macapagal
48th Aerial Port Squadron
First Sergeant*

Men's hair must appear tapered with or without headgear (block cut permitted if tapered); not worn in an extreme or fad style; not exceed length or bulk standards nor violate safety requirements; not touch the ears (only closely cut or shaved hair on the back of the neck may touch the collar).