

Pacific Crossings

June 2009

The Official Newsletter of the 624th Regional Support Group



48th APS wins Air Force-level award

See page 3

Keeping morale in the crosshairs

By Maj. Paul Cruz
44th APS commander

I distinctly recall a conversation with one of my squadron mates who had just returned from a deployment to Baghdad. When I asked how his deployment fared, he excitedly described all the great things the team accomplished, the list of new opportunities he was able to undertake and the host of new people he had met. He then ended with "and morale was really great." I thought this was an interesting final comment because I had always heard from fellow unit members, outside agencies like 4th Air Force and visiting dignitaries about the "high morale of the 44th Aerial Port Squadron." Thus hearing one of our own describe how "morale was really great" left me feeling like my leadership cadre and I still had some work to do to improve our morale.

Truth is, morale is like driving a car. Take your eye off the road, even for the split second, and your whole trip will quickly become one bad experience. This cautionary note takes on heightened meaning when driving through difficult terrain where a momentarily loss of situational awareness can have disastrous effects. Likewise, for a squadron, failing to constantly assess its own morale can undermine its mission effectiveness, more so, if that squadron is undergoing challenges. The objective is by keeping "morale" in the leadership's crosshairs, you have the ability to empower a unit with an "any time, any place" kind of ethos and bravado that it will conquer any challenge or hardship.

This breaks down into four categories – Dialogue, Active Listening, Communication Channels and Responsible Reaction.

DIALOGUE: The difference between a whiner or complainer and a person providing feedback is that I've found whining and complaining involves a lot of the blame game and little of anything else whereas open communication involves frank discussion about responsibility. Open communication not only illuminates problem areas but also suggests what actions should or could be undertaken to alleviate or remove those problems.

ACTIVE LISTENING: This involves

engaging behaviors that demonstrates to a speaker he or she is being heard, empathized with and the information being sent is being processed. In fact, offering solutions before the person is finished speaking is a clear sign of not actively listening. True active listening can involve such behaviors as direct eye contact and non-verbal affirmation, such as nodding as well as note taking.

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS: Having formal and informal channels, such as Top Three or suggestion boxes, assists leadership in uncovering an issue or concern before it becomes a larger problem. Like many other units, I leverage one specific formal channel, the Chiefs' Meetings, to keep tabs on issues that can affect the unit's morale. Trust me, if I don't come away with at least a page of notes and solutions for a multitude of concerns levied, it's only because we are in intermission.

RESPONSIBLE REACTION: Regardless of how questions or problems are tabled, ultimately the follow through is what is being measured by the unit. A lack of follow through or responsible reaction can signify that communication channels are just processes and not management tools. Thus, even if a unit can't fix a problem, then addressing the problem or educating the unit on the complexity of an issue can still be considered responsible reaction. Our members understand we can't solve everything. But, we should attempt to address them.

Several weeks later, I approached that Baghdad deployer and asked him about his "great morale" comment. I was curious to find out what could we do locally to generate that same type of deployment enthusiasm. After realizing there were things that I couldn't do (such as give him more time off), we realized that what he truly enjoyed was being busy and contributing to the mission. So, my responsible reaction to his concern was to put him on our Operational Readiness Inspection Team. I've not heard through any formal or informal channels that he is regretting that decision.

Too bad all our morale issues can't be that easily solved. But, if you don't dialogue, listen, keep open channels and react not even the small issues will be solved.

Pacific Crossings

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Content is edited and prepared by the 624th Regional Support Group Public Affairs Office, 290 Vickers Avenue, Building 1050, Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii 96853. All photographs are U.S. Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.

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Pacific Crossings is a monthly newsletter published online at www.4af.afrc.af.mil/units/624rsg. Submissions may be sent to 624RSG.PA@hickam.af.mil. Submission deadline is Friday two weeks prior to the next Hickam UTA weekend. All submissions are subject to editing and acceptance of any material does not guarantee publication. Public Affairs can be reached at (808) 449-7232 or DSN [315] 448-7232

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

Tech. Sgt. Daniel Elvenia and Senior Airman Derek Dumlao, 48th Aerial Port Squadron, discuss the best approach for loading cargo. Story on page 3.

(Photo by Capt. Christy Stravolo)

48th APS captures top award

The 48th Aerial Port Squadron was named the Air Reserve Component Air Transportation Activity of the Year for 2008 at an award ceremony in Washington, D.C. May 29. Lt. Col. Randall Honke, 48th APS commander, Chief Master Sgt. Leland How, 48th APS air freight superintendent, and Col. Robert “Randy” Huston, 624th Regional Support Group commander, traveled to the nation’s capital to receive the award from Maj. Gen. Robert H. McMahon, Director of Logistics, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C.

“This award is a result of the accomplishments of the squadron as a whole as well as each individual member,” said Colonel Honke. “It is their dedicated service to our nation, willingness to voluntarily deploy, and always giving their best efforts that won us this award and the recognition that comes with it.”

Members of the 48th APS have routinely volunteered for missions around the world including contingency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and exercises such as Pacific Lifeline. More than 20 percent of the squadron is currently deployed to Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

In order to foster this volunteer mindset, the 48th APS is always looking for better ways to get their members fully trained and equipped. One success story is the Seasoning Training Program, which allows their Airmen to work 90 active-duty days with the 735th Air Mobility Squadron at Hickam. The program essentially gives Airmen the opportunity to achieve job proficiency sooner than they would through the traditional Reserve process of one weekend a month and two weeks a year.

“Training is critical to mission success and we will continue to provide opportunities for our Airmen to excel,” said Chief How. “I am very proud of the level of dedication we have in this unit and volunteerism is at an all-time high. Being recognized for this accomplishment reenergized every member’s commitment to excellence and puts us on the road towards earning even more awards in the future,” Chief How said.



Tech. Sgt. Samuel Bagay and Senior Airman Oliver Corpuz, 48th Aerial Port Squadron, check to make sure there are no problems prior to loading cargo on an aircraft. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jennie Chamberlin)



Col. Robert “Randy” Huston, 624th Regional Support Group commander, Lt. Col. Randall Honke, 48th Aerial Port Squadron commander, Chief Master Sgt. Leland How and Tech. Sgt. Peter Rieta are on hand to receive the Air Reserve Component Air Transportation Activity of the Year for 2008 award May 29 from Maj. Gen. Robert H. McMahon, Director of Logistics, Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, Installations and Mission Support, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C. (Courtesy photo)



Master Sgt. Kelly Fitzpatrick puts in the next song on the playlist for his show on Guam Public Radio. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jennie Chamberlin)

Come get your kicks on 'Route 66'

*By Staff Sgt. Jennie Chamberlin
624th RSG Public Affairs*

Master Sgt. Kelly Fitzpatrick has always been a fan of public radio. About 10 years ago, he and his wife Maria joined the effort to bring a public radio station to Guam. Supporters recruited members, raised funds and did everything necessary to bring about KPRG-FM 89.3, Guam's own public radio station.

"The station's motto, 'Something new, something different, something for everyone' perfectly describes what we had been missing on the few commercial radio outlets available to us," said Sergeant Fitzpatrick, a science teacher and Reservist with the 44th Aerial Port Squadron based out of Andersen Air Force Base, Guam.

"Kelly donates his time here," said Christopher Hartig, KPRG general manager. "Whatever he can do, he is willing to do. He has been a big supporter of public radio."

Public radio everywhere always leads a precarious financial existence.

This is especially true of one serving a small remote community like Guam.

"We participate in many fund raising activities including dinners, parties and a silent art auction to which Maria regularly contributes original pieces," said Sergeant Fitzpatrick.

On several occasions, Sergeant Fitzpatrick and his wife have produced and hosted the 'KPRG Thrift Store Ball.' The ball features food, drinks and live classic rock; all on a wide-open dance floor under the moon.

"It's a great way to gather the KPRG clan for a little fund raising and a lot of fun," said Sergeant Fitzpatrick. "Attendees ransack their closets and local resale shops for the most horrifyingly ugly outfits they can assemble."

But his involvement in the station evolved into something new when he was asked if he would be interested in hosting a Saturday radio show. Sergeant Fitzpatrick had never had any broadcasting experience, but agreed to give it a go.

"I thought, I'll try it," he said. "I found out that I love it. What do you

know, it turned out to be my bliss."

Sergeant Fitzpatrick's three-hour show is called Route 66, and plays once a month.

"He is cool on the mike and loves to throw out interesting pieces of trivia surrounding many of the 'golden oldies' that spin on his show," said Maj. Paul Cruz 44th APS commander. "I've found it a nice way to relax after a week of hustle and bustle."

The name "Route 66" is a hand me down from the previous host, Larry Kennedy, who originated the show soon after the station opened. It describes the basis of the program as a musical tour of America through Roots Rock and Blues music, with the occasional dash of Jazz, Salsa, Cajun and the like adding spice to the stew.

"I pride myself on playing stuff that no one here would be exposed to otherwise," he said. "A recent show featured Mavis Staples, Ry Cooder, Johnny Otis, John Lee Hooker and The Mothers of Invention, none of

RADIO continued on page 5

RADIO continued from page 4

which would ever grace the local commercial airwaves. I also throw the occasional bone to our English cousins like The Beatles and Stones.”

“He’s a well-known personality on the air,” said Hartig. “Very jovial, very off the cuff and jokes a lot.”

“You can tell he’s having fun,” Hartig said. “That’s the main thing.”

He is a well-known personality at the 44th APS as well.

“His knowledge of the music, the calm of his voice, while detecting a smile is synonymous with how he serves the 44th,” said Chief Aguon, 44th APS Air Operations Superintendent. “In the 44th, Master Sgt. Fitzpatrick is a subject matter expert. He is a master of the English language, who shares his knowledge and is always ready and willing to assist. He does all this while maintaining a smile and usually sharing a laugh.”

His commander seconds this.



Master Sgt. Kelly Fitzpatrick poses a question to Chief Master Sgt. Patricia Thornton, 4th Air Force command chief, during a Senior NCO Leadership class held in January.

“He completely throws himself into his work and is not afraid to put in the long hours necessary to ensure our troop’s personnel issues are squared away,” Major Cruz said. “Fitz’s weekend role as a ‘DJ’ on NPR is no different.”

Wearing an aloha shirt amid stacks

of CDs, Sergeant Fitzpatrick said the most rewarding part of having his own show is having his own time in the studio.

“For three hours once a month, I go in, play music and no one bothers me,” he said. “For me, it’s almost zen.”

Hafa Adai and Aloha from sunny Camp Arifjan, Kuwait

*By Maj. Richard Rosario
44th Aerial Port Squadron*

I work in the Requirements Cell of Central Command Deployment and Distribution Operations Center. Within the cell, I am in charge of the Intra-Theater Airlift Request System section at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. In a nutshell, CDDOC coordinates a majority of the movement within the Area of Responsibility. The Requirements cell runs 24 hours a day and is easily the busiest cell here with all sorts of requests for airlift of cargo and/or personnel.

Everyone wants to get their stuff on yesterday and it is our job to prioritize all requests. This is my first joint assignment working together with Army, Navy, Marine personnel in the same cell. It has taken some getting used to the way the different services work together. Though we know one language, we speak in different terms for the same thing.

I have been here since May 20 and will be here until after November. The weather here has been hot with the high ranging from 105 to 118 degrees. I



Maj. Richard Rosario, lower left, with his Requirements Cell team. It is a Joint-Service operation, which handles requests for airlift of cargo and/or personnel. (Courtesy photo)

pretty much try to stay indoors as much as possible. Fortunately, we are able to wear our civies while off duty. I’m currently billeted in an open bay type room. This is probably something our Navy and Army folks are accustomed to. I am used to a little more privacy and waiting patiently for my room assignment. Me complaining? No! I am happy that I am not in a tent for now.

I miss most of all my family. I call everyday to see how they are doing. I do all I can to keep up with what is going on with my son and daughter. Every so often, like during lunchtime, I get sudden urges for some red rice and chicken keleguen but I’m looking forward to a good Thanksgiving dinner back home with plenty of that stuff.

624th ASTS medics practice their suture skills

Staff Sgt. Latisha Gosha-West, a 624th Aeromedical Staging Squadron medical technician, practices her wound closure skills on a pig's foot.

Pig feet and chicken legs are used for practice because they closely resemble what it's like to perform sutures on a patient with a laceration.

In order to maintain a high level of proficiency, 624th ASTS medical technicians practice different skills each drill weekend. (Photos by Capt. Christy Stravolo)



Warrior of the Month

JOB TITLE: Air Transportation Apprentice



Ken Siongco

Senior Airman

44th Aerial Port Squadron

Andersen Air Force Base, Guam

JOB DESCRIPTION: Performs and manages air transportation activities. Plans, schedules and processes eligible passengers and cargo for air movement. Loads and unloads passengers, cargo and baggage moved on military and commercial-contract aircraft. Prepares and maintains air movement records and reports. Performs aircraft cleaning services and delivers meals and comfort item supplies to aircraft. Operates forklifts and aircraft loading equipment. Uses computer systems to provide in-transit visibility over passenger and cargo movement operations.

HOMETOWN: Yigo, Guam

FAVORITE THING ABOUT UNIT: As a new Airman to the 44th APS, I would have to say that my favorite thing about this unit is that it is very family-oriented and they have welcomed me to a work environment that has made me feel right at home.

FAVORITE THING ABOUT JOB: My favorite part of the job as an Airman to the 44th APS is that I have the opportunity to work with a group in which there is camaraderie where we are able to work efficiently as a team to complete the mission or task at hand.

SUPERVISOR SAYS: Always in early to work, never complains, helps others, effectively works well with active duty, completes all missions, ask for help when needed, great PR, always practices customs and courtesies, accepts all challenges. - Tech. Sgt. Rickey Iglesias

Personnel Briefs

Family Care-AFI 36-2908

All Air Force members with families will have family care arrangements that reasonably cover all situations, both short and long term.

Single parents, dual military couples with family members and members with civilian spouses who have unique family situations, as determined by the commander or first sergeant, are required to develop a written plan (AF Form 357) to be maintained by the commander or first sergeant. It will detail and provide a smooth, rapid transfer of responsibilities to designees during the absence of the member.

Unit commanders are required to brief unit members on Family Care responsibilities yearly. Those that currently have a Family Care plan must review and recertify these plans with the First Sergeant and/or Commander yearly.

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, Group 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 AFPC secure website at

<https://www.my.af.mil/afpc2ww3/vmpf/Hub/Pages/ConfirmInfo.asp>

Out-Processing

All members that are going TDY to attend school (CONUS), AEF deployment, local MPA tours, transfer to another unit (CONUS), inactive reserve and retirement must out-process through their respective unit orderly rooms and the Military Personnel Flight. Failure to do this can result in loss of certain benefits.

Military Personnel Flight office
448-3824

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

DRILL WEEKENDS

Saturday-Sunday: 7 a.m.-4 p.m.
Saturday: 7-10 a.m. Closed for in-processing
Sunday: 1-2:30 p.m. Closed for in-house training

Checking in from Iraq

Twenty six members of the 48th Aerial Port Squadron are currently deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom to the 332nd Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Left - Tech. Sgt. Elo Badua, ramp section, works the night shift and prepares a load by pulling cargo pallets and loading them up onto 60K tunners, which expedite the onload of aircraft.

Below - Tech. Sgt. Brandon Arredondo and Tech. Sgt. Glenn Matsuo discuss the daily schedule and plan the workload.

Bottom - Tech. Sgt. Kevin Tagawa, Tech. Sgt. Glenn Matsuo, Senior Airman Ryan Kanagusuku a.k.a. Goose, Tech. Sgt. Louis McCabe a.k.a. Uncle Louie, Staff Sgt. Devin Caringer, Senior Airman Bree Davis.



Making this year's summer our safest one yet

By Michael B. Donley, Secretary of the Air Force and Gen. Norton A. Schwartz, USAF Chief of Staff

All Airmen - officer, enlisted and civilian - are our number one priority. Each of you is a member of our Air Force family. Just like in your family, throughout the coming months it will be important for us to watch out for each other as we enjoy summer activities. To help this effort, on 22 May we begin our annual "Critical Days of Summer" campaign.

This year's campaign lasts 109 days and ends on 7 September. Reaching our goal of zero accidents and fatalities requires every Airman to be a wingman, mentor and safety leader.

Whether it is personal leadership in risk management or calling "knock it off" as appropriate, you must be proactive in your approach to saving lives this summer. There are four campaign focus areas this summer:

Traffic Safety - Motorcycle and automobile mishaps are the greatest single killer of our Airmen and as of this date, we have already lost as many Airmen this year as we did all of last year.

We must reverse this negative trend immediately. Airmen everywhere must carefully manage trip risks and reduce their speed. We also have an unusually high number of passengers killed in automobile collisions. This alarming trend is reversible if all Airmen wear their seatbelts regardless of their seating position in an automobile.

Alcohol Awareness and Fatigue - Slightly more than one-third of our automobile fatalities include alcohol as a factor. Personal accountability and wingman intervention are our best tools to reduce drinking and driving. Likewise, fatigue is another contributing factor to fatalities that needs our focus.

Drowning Prevention - Several Airmen drown every year, typically in lakes and local "swimming holes." Do not mix alcohol and swimming, and watch overextending yourself. The number one mishap prevention tool for drowning is a personal flotation device.

During the last 11 summer campaigns, we lost an average of 24 Airmen and even though last year we experienced one of our safest summers ever, we still lost 17 Airmen.

The Air Force Safety Center will provide high quality mishap prevention information for this year's campaign, but information alone does not prevent mishaps. It takes each of us to save lives, and we have a responsibility to teach, mentor, and provide the right message for the Critical Days of Summer Campaign.

Let's make this year's summer our safest one yet.



Preparing CE families for deployment

The 624th Regional Support Group Family Support Office and the 624th Civil Engineer Squadron held a pre-deployment briefing and family dinner on May 16. It was an opportunity for deploying members and their families to get to know what Airman & Family Readiness is and what it can do for them and know they are not alone when a loved one deploys. Briefings were held on a number of important topics from medical benefits and legal obligations to Veterans Affairs and Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve concerns. The families also had a chance to ask questions and get to know other members in the unit

Above - Lt. Col. Richard Parkinson, 624th Civil Engineer Squadron commander, addresses his advice and concerns for deployers and their families.

Right - Capt. Allence Ribao and son. (Photos by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel)



Hail to the new Chief

WASHINGTON (AFNS) -- Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz and Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Rodney J. McKinley have announced the Airman selected to be the service's next enlisted leader.

Chief Master Sgt. James A. Roy will become the 16th chief master sergeant of the Air Force during an appointment ceremony June 30, which will coincide with Chief McKinley's retirement.

"This is a good day for all Airmen," General Schwartz said. "While they will lose a tremendous leader and advocate in Chief McKinley, they gain a worthy successor in Chief Roy. Given his record and reputation, I am confident that Chief Roy will carry the best interests of our Air Force family forward to our nation's leaders as we support today's joint fight and rebalance our force for the challenges ahead."

Chief Roy and his wife, Paula, will come to the Pentagon from Camp Smith, Hawaii, where the chief currently serves as the senior enlisted leader and advisor to the U.S. Pacific Command combatant commander, representing more than 200,000 Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors and Marines.

Chief Roy joined the Air Force in 1982. His career includes assignments as a heavy equipment operator in the civil engineer career field and then in leadership positions at the squadron, group, and numbered air force levels. He has served as the command chief master sergeant at wings in Air Education and Training Command, Air Mobility Command and Air Combat Command. He was also deployed as the command chief master sergeant of the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing in Southwest Asia. Prior to assuming his current position he was the command chief master sergeant for U.S. Forces Japan and 5th Air Force at Yokota Air Base, Japan. (Courtesy photo)



UTA Schedule

Hickam

June 6-7
July 11-12
August 8-9
September 12-13

Andersen

June 27-28
July 25-26
August 22-23
September 19-20



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

When wearing jewelry:

- Watches and bracelets must be conservative, thinner than one inch and worn safely around the wrist
- A maximum of three rings may be worn on both hands combined
- Necklaces must be concealed under the collar or undershirt