

Pacific Crossings

April 2009

The Official Newsletter of the 624th Regional Support Group



Ancillary Training:

624th RSG Airmen practice their wartime skills

See page 9



Fit to fight, not fit to test

By Col. Gayle Seifullin
624th ASTS Commander

Why does it matter that you are fit to fight, not just fit to test? Good physical conditioning is essential to working in the diverse weather conditions required to support global contingency operations. We applaud those who realize the importance of physical fitness as an ongoing personal responsibility rather than just passing the test. The test is only a snapshot of fitness, not a measure of fitness. If you only train to pass the test, chances are you are not truly fit. In order to support the Air Force mission, every Airman must be physically capable of performing at the highest level.

As a squadron commander, I've witnessed several of my Airmen celebrate their running assessment in various ways. From lying down with a sigh to high-fives and shouts of joy, you would think some of them had won the lottery. In actuality, they had just received a passing score on their assessment. I've also seen Airmen with heads hung low, eyes downcast and looks of defeat. I couldn't help but overhear them saying things like, "if only I had done one more push-up," and, "if only I had come in one minute sooner." I would rather hear Airman say they have what it takes to be a combat-ready Airman. If you were called upon to deploy, you should feel confident that you would be ready and able to cope with the stressful days and nights in either extreme heat or frigid cold.

The most important thing to remember

about being fit and passing the Air Force fitness assessment is that it begins with you. There's no time like the present to train. You should know your strengths and weaknesses as well as the value of each element of the test. The running and waist measurement are key and usually this is where most of us have problems. If running six laps around the track is your weakness, then start running now. Walking around the track will lead to a healthier lifestyle, but it probably won't help you improve your time on the run.

Regarding the waist measurement, don't wait until the week of the test to start dieting! Begin now. It is true you can eat to lose weight simply by cutting out sugary drinks like sodas and juices. My neighbor lost 25 pounds in one year by not drinking sodas and instead drinking water. You should also limit the amount of fats and empty carbohydrates you ingest. Just remember that it is a complete health assessment and diet is just one aspect of achieving fitness.

On testing day, I am always impressed by the deep sense of teamwork exhibited when squadron members cheer for each other during their assessments. On numerous occasions, I've seen wingmen running with those who are testing. For this and many more reasons, I'm proud to be an American Airman. We are wingmen, leaders and warriors. You will not falter and you will not fail if you remember the most important fact to being fit and passing the fitness assessment is that it begins with you and being fit, not fit to test!

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

On the Cover

Senior Master Sgt. Roddy Paguyo holds a canteen for Master Sgt. John Kim during Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear and Explosives training held during the March drill weekend. More photos on page 9.

(Photo by
Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel)

Warrior of the Month



JOB TITLE:

Air Transportation Craftsman

HOMETOWN:

Olongapo, Philippines

FAVORITE THING ABOUT UNIT:

"I really like the camaraderie within the unit whether we're in uniform or not."

FAVORITE THING ABOUT JOB:

"I enjoy PT, sharing my knowledge and experience as a forklift instructor and passing on my shared skills to help the unit members in fulfilling the mission at home or when they deploy."

LITTLE KNOWN FACT:

"I'm able to work in a high stress environment and able to adapt and overcome challenges."

Crisanto Vida

Staff Sergeant

48th Aerial Port Squadron

Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii

SUPERVISOR SAYS:

"Staff Sgt. Vida is an overachiever who strives at any task assigned to him. He's a vital Material Handling Equipment instructor for our unit MHE program."

- Master Sgt. Randall Ganigan

624th RSG PACAF OAY Winners



Senior Airman Derek P. Dumlao
48th Aerial Port Squadron
PACAF Airman of the Year, Reserve



Master Sgt. John F. Gabriel
624th Civil Engineer Squadron
PACAF Senior NCO of the Year, Reserve



Master Sgt. Tara J. Corse
624th Civil Engineer Squadron
PACAF 1st Sergeant of the Year, Reserve

Three 624th Regional Support Group members took top honors this year in Pacific Air Force's Outstanding Airmen of the Year and First Sergeant of the Year recognitions in the Reserve component category. The awardees who competed with other Reservists in the PACAF region will join their counterparts in the active duty and Air Guard for a week of various celebrations culminating in a banquet held in their honor. "Including Reserve and National Guard components in their yearly recognitions clearly demonstrates that PACAF embraces Total Force Integration," said Chief Master Sgt. Brian Wong, 624th RSG command chief.

Cope Tiger 09



Exercise in Thailand a total force success

The Total Force in action: A Hawaii Air National Guard KC-135 refuels an active duty F-15 during Cope Tiger 09 in Thailand. (Courtesy photo)

*By Col. Robert "Randy" Huston
624th RSG Commander*

Sitting in my office next to the flight-line, I could feel the rumble of the fighters taking off. The building shook as they pushed the throttles into afterburner. The roar drowned out any attempt at conversation. It was the sound of freedom, and it felt good!

Cope Tiger 09 was in the execution phase, and all the months of meticulous planning was paying off.

For those who haven't heard of Cope Tiger, it is an annual, multilateral, Combined/Joint exercise that brings together the Armed Forces of Thailand, Singapore and the United States to conduct a multinational air operation.

U.S., Thai and Singaporean aircrews

conducted dissimilar basic fighter maneuvers training, dissimilar air combat tactics training, close air support training, tactical airdrop training and large force employment training at both Korat and Udon Thani Royal Thai Air Force bases.

This year's exercise was the largest to date employing 119 aircraft, 34 air defense systems and more than 2,100 personnel who executed over 1,100 sorties.

The U.S. was well represented with more than 1,000 personnel and 53 aircraft from the Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force. There was an incredible range of aircraft to include the F-5, F-15, F-16, F-18, A-10, Alpha Jet, E-2, E-3, KC-130, KC-135, C-130, and C-17.

Cope Tiger also helps cultivate common bonds and foster goodwill between the United States and allied partner nations' forces by conducting multilateral humanitarian and civic assistance operations.

One way we did that was through medical outreach. Medical teams, comprised of U.S., Singaporean and Thai professionals, visited remote villages and set up clinics in schools across the country



An aircrew member passes out jump wings to Thai military paratroopers preparing to jump from a U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III. (Courtesy photo)

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where they provided dental, optometry and medical care to more than 2,000 underprivileged Thai citizens.

Imagine not being able to afford a “luxury” such as eyeglasses. During the course of our medical engagement, we distributed more than 200 pairs of prescription glasses each day. This is just one example of the impact we had on a daily basis.

In addition to the medical outreach, we donated school supplies, computers and sports equipment to local schools. U.S. forces raised more than \$4,400 through personal donations to support Thai schools.

We also spent time talking and sharing personal experiences with high school and university students. Most people in foreign countries learn about America through Hollywood movies, which can present a very distorted picture of Americans. This was our opportunity to show them that people in America and Thailand actually have a lot in common.

Finally, this year’s exercise was an example of how far we’ve come with the Total Force in the Air Force.

As the wing commander for Cope Tiger 09, this was especially apparent to me.

There was a time when the active duty would have never considered giving command of such a large, Joint operation to a Reservist, but these days such decisions tend to be “component blind.”

While approximately 95 percent of the



Col. Robert "Randy" Huston, 624th RSG commander and wing commander for Cope Tiger 09, meets with Group Captain (O-7) Chaiyaprik Didyarsarin, Thai exercise director, during an icebreaker at Korat Air Base, Thailand. (Courtesy photo)

Air Force positions were filled by active duty, we also had civilians, guardsmen and reservists who were chosen based on their specific competencies, and who were otherwise indistinguishable from their active duty counterparts. Civilians were present in communications, MWR, and mission support.

The Guard brought a KC-135, and a guardsman was the commander for a

combined active duty and Guard KC-135 detachment. Two guardsmen were mission directors in the Live Fly Cell, and the Hawaii Air National Guard commander, Maj. Gen. Darryll Wong, represented 13th Air Force during the closing ceremony.

Multi-national, joint, multi-component -- this exercise had it all and I'm proud to have been a part of it!



Thai school students take down a U.S. Marine with ease during a sports activity designed to foster goodwill between the U.S. and allied partner nations. (Courtesy photo)



A U.S. medical technician performs an eye exam on a Thai citizen. Medical professionals from the U.S., Singapore and Thailand provided medical care to more than 2,000 underprivileged Thai residents. (Courtesy photo)



Tech. Sgt. Monica Santos, Senior Airman Khrysallis Santos, and Tech. Sgt. Michelle Quichocho of the 44th Aerial Port Squadron based out of Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, are shown at Sather Air Base in Baghdad, Iraq, in February 2008. (Courtesy photo)

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

When Senior Airman Khrysallis Santos volunteered for a five-month deployment, she knew she would have to prepare her two young daughters as well.

Santos, a single mom and a reservist with the 44th Aerial Port Squadron based out of Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, said that while getting ready to deploy can be overwhelming, the key to a successful deployment is careful preparation and garnering support from your family and friends.

“My girls and I are really close, so whenever I go away I have to prepare them months in advance,” said Airman Santos. “I tell them that by sacrificing the little bit of time with me, they’re serving their country too. I try to give them the sense that they’re part of something bigger,” she said.

Legal paperwork, talking to the children and to the children’s schools, and making sure finances are in order are all part of the pre-deployment process.

Airman Santos tried to call her daughters every day when she was away, and relied upon her parents to care for the girls while she was gone. While she said it was difficult to be away from her family, she said she found support in her squadron family, including Tech. Sergeants Monica Santos and Michelle Quichocho, other 44th Aerial Port squadron members and single mothers who volunteered to deploy.

Sergeant Santos, said that the support of her family is what allowed her to volunteer for a deployment more than once. Sergeant Santos left her school-age daughter and young grandchild in the care of her adult son and daughter and her parents.

“I’ve taught my children to be very independent, and they take care of everything while I’m gone,” said Santos.

Sergeant Quichocho also has an adult son, and said though he worried about her deploying, she explained to him that she felt it was important for her to have the experience that comes with deploying. Sergeant Quichocho

said she felt deploying gave her the opportunity to learn her job inside and out.

Sergeant Santos agreed, and said that the fast-paced work environment of deployment helped her learn her job efficiently.

All the mothers said that deploying as a group made all the difference during deployment, and that people took notice.

“People used to say to me, ‘wow, you guys from Guam are always together,’” said Sergeant Santos. “We’d eat together and hang out together, and if anyone needed to talk or anything, we were there for each other.”

“The chamorro culture is really about family,” said Airman Santos. “We all take care of each other.”

The mothers also share a commitment to their aerial port mission and look forward to deploying again.

Airman Santos said of her squadron, “We really love what we do, and we’re really good at what we do.”

“We’ll go and we’ll go and we’ll keep going as long as they need us to.”

Addressing legal readiness issues now

By 624th RSG Family Support

While you are preparing your family for your upcoming deployment, it is important to start considering some of the legal documents you want to have updated. Taking care of legal matters is very important and highly recommended for all members, single or married. Making certain that your legal documents are accurate and up-to-date will help ensure that you and your family are prepared for the period of separation.

The two key legal documents are a will and a power of attorney.

A will is an important legal document that identifies how you want your property divided if you die. It ensures that your children or your parents, if caring for older parents, have someone to take care of them and that your estate is given to the person you designate.

If you die without a will, the state will make those decisions for you and it can be costly to your estate. The base legal office will help you prepare a basic and simple will if you are deploying. Always consult your legal assistance office to ensure that your will meets legal standards. Keep the original will safe and secure, and keep a copy of it. Let the executor, the person you designated to carry out your will, know where you stored the original.

Another key legal document is a power of attorney. It gives someone else— your spouse, a friend, a lawyer or a specially trusted person— the legal power to act on your behalf or carry out transactions when you are unable to act for yourself. Giving your friend a power of attorney, for instance, will allow him or her authority to sell your car or home. It is very important that you choose someone you know well and

completely trust to make decisions like you would.

The three main types of power of attorney are general, special and medical. A general power of attorney is very broad. It authorizes another person to act on all matters, therefore, should be used with extreme caution. A special power of attorney is limited. It authorizes another person to carry out specific matters. It expires once the matter has been completed, after a specific number of days or as you specify. Lastly, a medical power of attorney authorizes another person to obtain medical treatment for family members who are under 18.

Making sure your legal documents are updated will give you a peace of mind knowing your family is taken care of.

Next Month - Finance readiness.



Supporting families who support us

Staff Sgt. Sam De Costa, left, was one of several members of the 624th Regional Support Group who came out to a dinner held for families of deployed loved ones Feb. 26 at Nellis Chapel, Hickam Air Force Base.

Sergeant DeCosta, a 624th Civil Engineer Squadron electrical journeyman, who has been deployed himself, appreciates what families go through during this challenging time.

“It was wonderful helping out and giving back to the Air Force community,” he said.

Practicing bicycle safety at all times

This information is for all bike riders and those who have friends and family who ride bicycles. Please review the following information from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for a safe biking experience.

Protect Your Head. Wear A Helmet.

Never ride a bicycle without a helmet. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recommend that bicyclists wear a helmet that complies with the CPSC standard.

Bicycle helmets can reduce head injuries by 85 percent. Select a helmet that fits snugly and sits flat on the head.

For children, use the extra padding that comes with the helmet to ensure a proper fit. This padding can be removed as the child's head grows.

Make Sure Your Bicycle is Adjusted Properly.

Make sure you can stand over the top tube of your bicycle. Adjust your bicycle to fit you (see Owner's Manual).

Before using your bicycle, check to make sure all parts are secure and working well. The handlebars should be firmly in place and turn easily. Your wheels must be straight and secure.

Add a carrier to the back of your bicycle if you need to carry things.

Stop It. Always Check Brakes Before Riding.

Always control your speed by using your brakes. If your bicycle has hand brakes, apply the rear brake slightly before the front brake. Always keep your brakes adjusted. If you cannot stop quickly, adjust your brakes.

Consult your Bicycle Owner's Manual or have a bicycle shop adjust the brakes. When your hand brake levers are fully applied, they should not touch the handlebars. Each brake shoe pad should wear evenly and never be separated more than one eighth inch from the rim.

Ride slowly in wet weather and apply your brakes earlier – it takes more distance to stop.

See and Be Seen.

Wear clothes that make you more visible. Always wear neon, florescent, or other bright colors when riding a bicycle.

Avoid Biking At Night.

It is far more dangerous to bicycle at night than during the day. Most bicycles are equipped for daylight use and need to be adapted for nighttime use.

If you must ride at night, you should do the following:

- Ride with reflectors that meet CPSC's requirements. These should be permanently installed on bicycles for daytime use also. If a carrier is added, make sure the rear reflector remains visible.
- Add the brightest lights you can find to the front and rear of your bicycle.
- Wear retro-reflective clothing or material – not just white or florescent – especially on your ankles, wrists, back, and helmet.
- Only ride in areas familiar to you. Brightly lit streets are best. Always assume you are not seen by a driver.

Young children should NOT ride at night.

Always Keep A Lookout for Obstacles in Your Path.

Stay alert at all times. Watch out for potholes, cracks, expansion joints, railroad tracks, wet leaves, drainage grates, or anything that could make you fall.

Before going around any object, scan ahead, and behind you for a gap in traffic. Plan your move, signal your intentions, and then do what you planned. If you are unsure, or lack the skill to handle an especially rough area, pull off to the right side of the road and walk your bicycle around the rough area.

Be especially careful in wet weather and when there could be ice or frost on your path.

- Cross all railroad tracks at a 90 degree angle and proceed slowly.
- Use special care on bridges.

Go With The Flow.

Ride on the right side in a straight predictable path. Always go single file in the same direction as other vehicles. Riding against traffic puts you where motorists don't expect you. They may not see you, and may pull across your path, or turn into you.

Young children, typically under the age of nine, are not able to identify and adjust to many dangerous traffic situations, and therefore, should not be allowed to ride in the street unsupervised. Children who are permitted to ride in the street without supervi-

sion should have the necessary skills to safely follow the "rules of the road."

Always be Aware of The Traffic Around You.

Over 70 percent of car-bicycle crashes occur at driveways or other intersections. Before you enter any street or intersection, check for traffic. Always look left-right-left, and walk your bicycle into the street to begin your ride.

If already in the street, always look behind you for a break in traffic, then signal, before going left or right. Watch for left or right turning traffic.

Learn Rules of The Road. Obey Traffic Laws.

Bicycles are considered vehicles. Bicyclists must obey the same rules as motorists. Read your State drivers' handbook, and learn and follow all the traffic signs, laws, and rules for operating a vehicle on the road.

Always signal your moves. Be courteous to pedestrians and other vehicle operators.

Never wear headphones while riding as they impair your ability to hear traffic.

Become familiar with the accommodations that are available for bicyclists in your area. These include bicycle lanes and routes as well as off road paths. Take advantage of these whenever possible.

Don't Flip Over Your Bicycle.

If your bicycle has quick release wheels, it is your responsibility to make sure they are firmly closed at all times and to use the safety retainer if there is one.

Check your wheels before every ride, after any fall, or after transporting your bicycle. Read your Owner's Manual for instructions and follow them. If you are even slightly confused about what "firmly closed" means, talk to your bicycle dealer before you ride your bicycle.

Remember

- Read your bicycle owner's manual thoroughly before operating your bicycle.
- These recommendations are just that, recommendations, and are not meant to replace owner's manual instructions.
- For more information on safety and rules of the road, consult your State Department of Motor Vehicles.



CBRNE Training

Keeping up with ancillary training is a part of life in the Air Force. One such critical skill is CBRNE or Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear and Explosives training. All members are required to understand and practice the requirements for surviving in hostile environments. Knowing the equipment and how to use it properly can mean the difference between life and death.

Top - Master Sgt. Merle Horner, 624th RSG Computer Support, following the instructor's direction for inspecting a mask.

Middle left - Master Sgt. Janet Hudson, 624th RSG Family Support, donning mask during a practice drill.

Middle right - Dr. (Lt. Col.) Fredrick Yost, 624th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, examines practice nerve agent antidote injectors that are a part of the basic CBRNE kit.

Below left - After inspecting a mask it is important to document the date on the inspection tag. Masks require periodic inspection in order to maintain viability. A mask which does not pass inspection must be turned in.



Congratulations

Col. Giovanni Tuck , 15th Air Wing commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Ben Caro, academy commandant, congratulate Tech. Sgt. Elo Badua, 48th Aerial Port Squadron ramp services craftsman, on graduating Noncommissioned Officer Academy, Feb. 18 at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii.

(Courtesy photo)

UTA Schedule

Hickam

April 4-5
May 16-17
June 6-7
July 11-12

Andersen

April 25-26
May 30-31
June 27-28
July 25-26



Diamond Tips

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

Often times it is easier for us to walk by an infraction and not correct it. Unfortunately when we do that, we indorse the negative behavior and allow it to continue. Uphold the standards regardless of your rank or position.