

# *Pacific Crossings*

March 2009

The Official Newsletter of the 624th Regional Support Group



**Inspection time:**

**624th RSG squadrons demonstrate their readiness**

**See page 3**



# Maintaining the mobility mindset

By Lt. Col. Richard Parkinson  
624th CES Commander

Finally! We completed our Operational Readiness Inspection and the endless drill weekends bringing in our personal bags, studying our Airman's Manual and participating in Wing Operational Readiness Exercises, where we processed our pallets and people through the deployment center.

Some people told me we can now get back to our normal UTA schedule and get away from this "mobility stuff" – they miss the point.

Before Desert Storm, we were a "strategic reserve" where we were called up during a major contingency and had some time to prepare for a deployment.

Today we are an "operational reserve" where Reservists are out supporting the Air Force mission every day. We are members of an expeditionary Air Force with continuous deployments to support national objectives.

Those of us in the Civil Engineer career field are being involuntarily mobilized and sent out to support the mission, in fact, even CE Individual Mobilization Augmentees are now being mobilized

with the intent of sending them "down range" to support the mission.

The days of coming in for a weekend each month and a two week annual tour are over – we need to be mission ready every day and have an expectation of deploying several times during our career.

As individual Reservists, we need to be prepared to deploy – today! You need to have every item required for your personal deployment bag and be able to bring it in to the unit at a moment's notice. You need to take care of personal issues, such as wills, family care and financial arrangements NOW.

Medical readiness is also important – complete your personal health assessment, dental and any other occupational health assessments on time.

Don't forget your personal physical training; you need to be fit enough to get through some demanding days. We need to be physically, mentally and spiritually prepared to perform at a high level during an extended deployment.

In summary, as an expeditionary Airman in an operational Air Force we need to have a mobility mind set where we are always prepared to deploy to support the Air Force mission.

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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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#### 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 [jennifer.chamberlin@us.af.mil](mailto:jennifer.chamberlin@us.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. Andrew Sana (top) and Tech. Sgt. Dedric Brown, 624th Civil Engineer Squadron, fasten a net on top of a pallet loaded with CE support equipment. 624th CES, which is part of the 624th Regional Support Group, participated in an Operational Readiness Inspection Feb. 5-18 at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii. Full story on page 3.

(Photo by Capt. Christy Stravolo)

# Medics score “Outstanding” for HSI

By 624th RSG Public Affairs

The 624th Aeromedical Staging Squadron earned an “Outstanding” score following a Health Services Inspection Feb. 5-8 at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii.

Auditors from the Air Force Inspection Agency assessed medical readiness, management effectiveness and quality of healthcare delivery to determine whether or not the 624th ASTS was performing successfully while supporting readiness.

“This inspection rating validates the quality care we provide to our Airmen,” said Col. Gayle Seifullin, commander of the 624th ASTS. “It also ensures that we are meeting all other health needs and keeping our Reserve members ready for war.”

An HSI is comparable to a unit compliance inspection Air Force wings undergo every four years, but with a focus on healthcare.

“I’m very proud of the men and women of the 624th ASTS,” said Col. Robert “Randy” Huston, commander of the 624th Regional Support Group. “This was, without a doubt, one of the most in-depth, detail-oriented Health Services Inspections seen to date, and they came through with flying colors. The 624th RSG ‘Ohana salutes them!”



Members of the 624th Aeromedical Staging Squadron practice using an Automated External Defibrillator on a medical dummy, one of many critical skills 624th ASTS members possess in order to deliver quality health care. (Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel)

# CE supports Team Hickam in ORI

By 624th RSG Public Affairs

Team Hickam’s hard work and preparation for its recent Operation Readiness Inspection paid off when it received a score of “Excellent” from the inspectors at the outbrief.

Col. Giovanni Tuck, 15th Airlift Wing commander, thanked the combined active duty, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard members of Team Hickam for “setting the bar high” for their performance during the inspection.

“Our unit integrated with the 15th and 154th CES seamlessly during the ability to survive and operate scenario,” said Lt. Col. Richard Parkinson.

This year marked the first time that the 624th CES participated in a 15th AW ORI.

“I am tremendously proud of the contributions our unit made to the base’s “Excellent” rating,” said Colonel Parkinson. “We worked very long hours, kept a positive attitude, and performed impressively throughout the high-stress scenarios.”



Staff Sgt. Isaia Ahkiong helps Airman First Class Kathrina Domingo attach the cargo netting to the equipment pallet. Both Airmen were part of the 624th Civil Engineer Squadron “pallet team” supporting the Operational Readiness Inspection at Hickam Air Force Base Feb. 5-18.

(Photo by Capt. Christy Stravolo)

# Warrior of the Month



## Tiana B. Duenas

Staff Sergeant

724th Aeromedical Staging Flight  
Andersen Air Force Base, Guam

### JOB TITLE:

Medical Technician

### HOMETOWN:

Yona, Guam

### FAVORITE THING ABOUT UNIT:

"I appreciate the intimate size of the unit because it allows members to comfortably build a rapport with other members."

### FAVORITE THING ABOUT JOB:

"I value the training and experience I gain from working with Reserve members, active duty members and the civilians. It allows me to build better leadership traits and challenges me to put it into practice."

### LITTLE KNOWN FACT:

"I enjoy challenges and I work well with others. I can adapt to change especially if the outcome is positive. "

### SUPERVISOR SAYS:

"Staff Sgt. Tiana Duenas is an achiever who will conquer any challenge. She continues to stay focused on the mission and is a few tasks away from obtaining her 7-level. She spearheads the Unit's Community Outreach program and her morale is impeccable." - Tech. Sgt. Tammy Castro.

# Poison Prevention Safety

*By 624th RSG Safety Office*

March 22 through 28 is National Poison Prevention Week. This event is intended as a means to raise awareness of the dangers of unintentional poisonings and to take such preventive measures as the dangers warrant. Let's help keep our members and our families safe throughout the year with some sound advice from the poison prevention council.

To reduce the risk of poisoning:

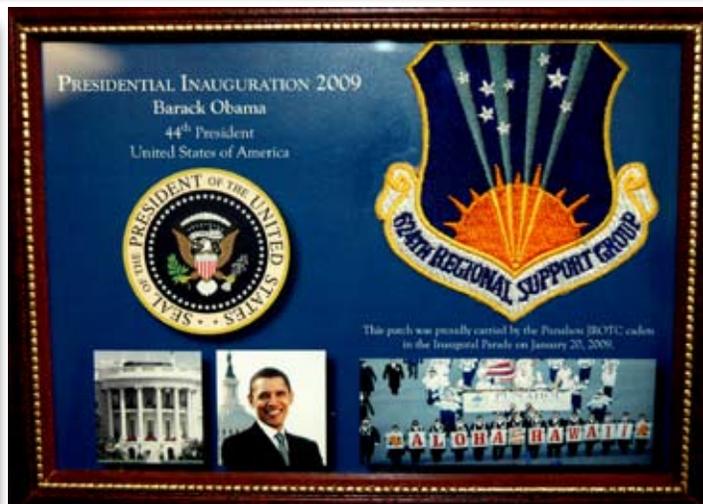
1. Keep household products and medicines out of reach and out of sight of children, preferably in a locked cabinet or closet. Even if you must leave the room for only an instant, put the container in a safe spot.
2. Store medicines and dietary supplements (especially iron pills) separately from other household products and keep these items in their original containers - never in cups or soft-drink bottles.
3. Be sure that all products are properly labeled, and read the label before using.
4. Always turn the light on when giving or taking medicine to be sure you have the right medicine and

the correct measure or count of the dosage.

5. Since children tend to imitate adults - avoid taking medications in their presence. Avoid drinking medicine from the bottle.
6. Refer to medicines by their proper names. They are not candies.
7. Clean out your medicine cabinet periodically. Get rid of old medicines by flushing them down the drain or toilet, rinsing the container in water, and then discarding it.
8. Ask for and use household products which are available in child resistant packaging. Insist on safety packaging for prescription medicines. Re-secure safety feature carefully after using. Safety packaging gives extra protection to your children.

If there is a poisoning incident:  
Call the Poison Control Center 1 (800) 222-1222

All 50 states, American Samoa, the District of Columbia, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands are served by at least one poison control center.



**From Hawaii to Washington and back**

When the Junior ROTC cadets of Punahou were invited to march in the Presidential Inauguration parade, they wanted to represent not only themselves and their school but also “Hawaii.” So, they sent out a call to various military and civil service organizations on the islands for badges and patches. The 624th Regional Support Group and 48th Aerial Port Squadron were among those who answered the call. These patches which were carried by the cadets in the parade were then framed and presented to the respective organizations.

Top - Punahou JROTC cadets present arms at patch presentation ceremony  
 Above - The 624th RSG patch marched in the parade framed and presented back to the Group.

Left - Col. Robert “Randy” Huston, 624th RSG commander, shakes hands with Cadet Capt. Hunter Hunt, one of the Punahou cadets who marched in the Inauguration parade.

(Photos by Tech. Sgt. Peter Rieta)

Attention to detail  
in all he does

Chief Dan Cogar  
turns his passion for  
collecting into art



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

Chief Master Sgt. Dan Cogar is a collector of things, and of hobbies.

A part-time artist and a Reservist with the 44th Aerial Port Squadron based out of Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, Chief Cogar said he's collected things on the beach as a way to relieve stress for over 20 years.

"If I see something on the beach that's not normal and it's not going to hurt to pick it up, I collect it," said Chief Cogar. "I've always been a raccoon-type of person."

His collections include petrified crabs, rocks and beach glass that have washed up on the shores of the beach.

He'd amassed a collection of three five-gallon buckets of colored beach glass before he decided just what he wanted to do with it all. Chief Cogar began creating sculptures with the bits of smooth broken glass, beginning with a green glass turtle. Soon other nautical creatures came to life, including a dolphin, a shark, a mermaid and a crab made from petrified crabs.

"They're fun things, something you can share and move around," he said. "They're one-of-a-kind pieces; you won't find another just like it."

In addition to sculpting with beach glass, Chief Cogar also carves wood, builds models and takes photographs. He said that variety of hobbies prevents him from getting bored.

"If you get too bored with one hobby, you do another one," he said. "You don't want an industrialized assembly line for your hobby."

This passion for his craft reflects in his service with the 44th APS.

"His attention to detail and pride in his workmanship with his artwork and sculptures manifests itself in the unit through his pride and in the high standards with his military work ethics, results-oriented expectations and professionalism," said Senior Master Sgt. Carlos Shoda, 44th APS Air Transportation Manager.

"As much as he goes out of his way to 'think green' using 100 percent recyclable materials at no cost to create his works of art, he also subscribes to the concept that we do what we can



with the limited resources we have to get the job done," Sergeant Shoda said.

For Chief Cogar it is more basic than this.

"I do it because I enjoy it, not for world popularity," he said.

Chief Cogar said he shows the sculptures and other works on occasion at different venues throughout Guam, such as art shows or charity

fund raisers, but does not sell his work. He said he enjoys creating things and prefers to keep his art as a hobby and a way of relaxing.

**Facing page - Chief Master Sgt. Dan Cogar presents a turtle he created from glass he collected on the beach.**

**Above - Other of his aquatic inspirations include mermaids, dolphins and crabs.**  
*(Photos by Staff Sgt. Jennie Chamberlin)*



## The Tax Man Cometh

April 15th is not too far away. Don't get frustrated by waiting till the last minute to file your taxes. 624th Regional Support Group members can retrieve their W-2 forms via their MyPay accounts. Federal tax forms are available at the Internal Revenue Service website at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). Members are also encouraged to check out [www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com) for their tax questions.

*(Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel)*

# Preparing your family for deployment

*By 624th RSG Family Support*

Deployment can be a highly emotional and stressful event. Getting ready for deployments can be a very busy time, but taking the time to get a head start on some of these issues will make the transition a little less stressful.

At Airman and Family Readiness, we would like to help ease your mind by letting you know some ways to prepare.

Deployments are never easy and it often takes a toll on both the military member and their family. Keeping families strong and supportive is essential to a healthy, strong and successful military career. Key items

to consider are preparing a Family Care Plan, obtaining and/or updating ID cards for all family members and talking with family about upcoming deployment-benefits and services.

Make sure your family is taken care of by updating your FCP. A FCP is important for all families and is especially critical for single parents and dual military parents.

It is an item that can often be overlooked because 'you've already created one', but situations change and it is important to make sure the legal guardian is going to take care of your family the way you want.

A few things to consider are to assign a special Power of Attorney and make sure the guardian understands

his/her responsibilities, arrange for housing, food, transportation, financial matters and emergency needs. Along with establishing a FCP, it is important to check all of your family members' ID cards. Again, this is an overlooked item because 'you know they all have one', but check and make sure they aren't about to expire and the information is accurate to ensure easy access to the military services they are entitled to. Even though your deployment may seem a long ways out, it is important to take some time to start talking with your family. Let them know what is going on with your deployment and help answer any questions they may have.

*Next Month - Legal readiness.*

## Anchors aweigh into the wild blue yonder

The 624th Aeromedical Staging Squadron bid aloha to retiring veteran member and chief nurse Maj. Charles K. Tilton during the March UTA.

Major Tilton began his military service as a Navy Corpsman and operating room technician in 1969. He was honorably discharged as a Petty Officer Second Class in September 1973.

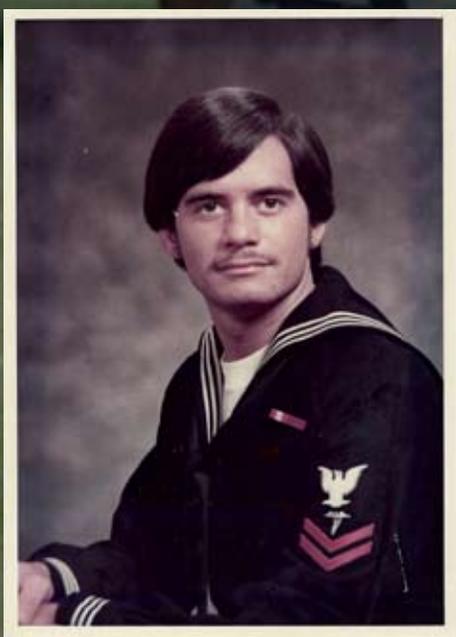
Following a thirteen year break he entered the Naval Reserve as Petty Officer Second Class in March 1988.

In September 1995, he received a direct commissioning as a Second Lieutenant in the Air Force Reserve with the 604th ASTS, forerunner to the 624th ASTS.

So, what was it like to go from being a Navy Corpsman to an Air Force officer?

“Interestingly, when I initially enlisted in 1969, my first choice was Air Force, but at the time – ‘I didn’t meet the needs of the Air Force’ So I went Navy. Then when I applied for commissioning with the Navy ‘I didn’t meet the needs of the Navy’ so I went Air Force,” said Major Tilton. “Go figure! It may have taken a long while, but I finally got what I wanted.”

*(Photo by Staff Sgt. Jennie Chamberlin)*



*(Courtesy photo)*



## Last word



# Congratulations graduates

The 624th Regional Support Group congratulates its latest group of Academy graduates. Chief Master Sgt. Mary Aguon, 44th Aerial Port Squadron, was on hand to represent the 624th RSG when Senior Airman Melvin D. Ramos, Senior Airman Raymond P. Ichihara and Tech. Sgt. Edgar Z. Tiamzon respectively completed Airman Leadership School and Noncommission Officer Academy Feb. 13, 2009, at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base, Tenn. Airman Ramos received the ALS Distinguished Graduate Award.

*(44th APS courtesy)*

# UTA Schedule

## Hickam

March 7-8  
April 4-5  
May 16-17  
June 6-7

## Andersen

March 21-22  
April 25-26  
May 30-31  
June 20-21



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

While in uniform, rings will be worn at the base of the finger and will not be worn on the thumb.

People cannot wear more than three rings. Wedding sets count as one ring.