

Pacific Crossings

February 2009

The Official Newsletter of the 624th Regional Support Group



RSG family welcomes new commander

See page 3



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

Family is our number one priority. Whether it be your family at home, your Group/Squadron family or your Community family, nothing is more important. I was pleased when our PA shop asked to run the current photo on the cover of *Pacific Crossings*, as it directly relates to the family aspect of our service. The uniform and the "Jets on a Stick" represent what we do, and my daughter represents who we do it for, and without whose support it would be impossible to continue.

One of my favorite words in the Hawaiian language is 'Ohana, a word that, as defined by the *Illustrated Hawaiian Dictionary*, "emphasizes that family and friends are bound together and members must cooperate and remember one another." With this in mind, you'll hear me talk often about our 624th 'Ohana and the tremendous value that I attach to it.

At the center of our 'Ohana are our families at home. We could not serve our country as reservists without their support, and their health and well-being is of utmost importance to us. It's not always easy as we juggle our commitments to family, employers and the Air Force, but if we don't get the balance right with our families, the other two will never work out. So focus on the needs of your families, and ensure that they have everything they need to be prepared for scheduled, or unscheduled, deployments.

Our Group/Squadron 'Ohana is the next level, and it complements the first. Often it is the camaraderie we have with our teammates, along with the belief in serving others, that keeps us participating year after year. (As we all know, it's certainly not the money!) And when we deploy, it is our Group and Squadron teammates back at the base that help look after our families. It is my commitment to ensure that the support structure is in place when you deploy so that your families are taken care of, well informed, and understand that the 'Ohana is there for them at all times.

The final level is our community family. As citizen warriors we are all members of our local communities, often with very close ties formed over many years. In case of natural or man-made disasters, we ARE the first responders. We protect, serve, and often supply leadership to our local community, and at the same time are provided support and encouragement from our fellow citizens. You can be proud of the job you do for our country. Your community certainly is!

In closing, I'd like to thank you all for the warm welcome we've received from everyone in the 624th 'Ohana, and to let you know how much I value the privilege of serving side by side with each and every one of you.

Mahalo Nui Loa!

Pacific Crossings

This Air Force Reserve newsletter is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military. Contents of *Pacific Crossings* are not necessarily the official view of, nor endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force.

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.

Command Staff

Col. Robert "Randy" Huston, Commander
Lt. Col. Deric Wong, Deputy Commander
CMSgt. Brian Wong, Command Chief

Public Affairs Staff

Capt. Christy Stravolo, Chief
MSgt. Daniel Nathaniel, NCOIC
SSgt. Jennie Chamberlin, Editor

Pacific Crossings is a monthly newsletter published online at www.4af.afrc.af.mil/units/624rsg. Submissions may be sent to Daniel.Nathaniel@hickam.af.mil or Jennifer.Chamberlin@us.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) 448-3652 or DSN [315] 448-3652.

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.

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

On the Cover

Col. Robert "Randy" Huston presents a lei to his daughter Nadya after assuming command of the 624th Regional Support Group at a ceremony held Jan. 10, 2009, at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii. Full story on page 3.

(Photo by
Master Sgt Daniel Nathaniel)



624th RSG hails new commander

Col. Robert "Randy" Huston addresses members of the 624th Regional Support Group prior to the assumption of command ceremony.

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

Col. Robert "Randy" Huston assumed command of the 624th Regional Support Group during a ceremony at Hickam Air Force Base Jan. 10.

Many distinguished guests attended the event including Lt. Gen. Loyd "Chip" Utterback, 13th Air Force commander, and Col. Giovanni Tuck, 15th Airlift Wing commander. Maj. Gen. Robert Duignan, 4th Air Force commander, was the guest speaker and transferred the 624 RSG guidon to Colonel Huston.

"It's an honor and a privilege to take on this new role," said Colonel Huston. "I look forward to working with the men and women of the 624th Regional Support Group, who are known for their professionalism and dedication to the mission."

Prior to assuming command, Colonel Huston was the Reserve advisor to the 13th AF Commander, Hickam AFB, Hawaii, and deployed in support of operations JUST CAUSE, DESERT SHIELD/STORM, ALLIED FORCE, ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM. He is a command pilot with more than 4,000 flight hours, primarily in the C-141 and C-17.

Colonel Huston is now responsible for managing the largest Air Force Reserve presence in the Pacific, which is comprised of five units in Hawaii and Guam. The group provides the combatant commander more than 650 combat-ready Airmen who specialize in aerial port, aeromedical staging and civil engineering operations for worldwide employment.



Maj. Gen. Robert Duignan passes the RSG guidon to Colonel Huston as Chief Master Sgt. Brian Wong, 624th RSG command chief, looks on. (Photos by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel)

4th AF bids farewell..

By Master Sgt. Linda Welz
4th Air Force Public Affairs

Family and friends of Maj. Gen. Robert E. Duignan, Commander, Headquarters, Fourth Air Force, Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC), gathered at the historic Mission Inn, Riverside, Calif., for the general's retirement dinner. His official retirement date was Feb. 6, 2009.

Throughout dinner, guests were able to see glimpses of him growing up, thanks to a slide show put together by his wife, Karen Petruskevich.

She said one particular photo (of the young officer standing by his jet in his flight suit holding his helmet) always left her with this impression, "You bet I can fly this baby, because I am a zipper-suited sun god."

When the laughter subsided, she turned more serious and relayed a story about one of her husband's instructors who had asked his students to write their epitaph. She said the general simply wrote, "He made a difference."

She then presented her husband



Maj. Gen. Robert E. Duignan, former 4th Air Force commander, March Air Reserve Base, Calif., holds a plaque from past and present command chiefs presented to him during his retirement dinner. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Hector Garcia)

with a book of memories compiled from emails she received from those who knew him, telling about a memory they had of the general.

"This book proves your simple statement," she said. "He, you, made a difference!"

Chief Master Sgt. Patricia Thorn-

ton, 4th Air Force command chief, presented Ms. Petruskevich with a gift to honor her for her support over the years, and then explained how Maj. General Duignan made a difference for the enlisted.

... and welcomes new commander



**Brigadier General Eric W. Crabtree
4th Air Force commander**

By Maj. Colleen Johnson
4th Air Force Public Affairs

Hundreds gathered here Jan. 25, 2009, in a vivid ceremony as Maj. Gen. Robert E. Duignan relinquished command of the Fourth Air Force to Brig. Gen. Eric W. Crabtree. General Duignan retired during the ceremony concluding a 36-year career in Air Force service.

General Crabtree assumed command after serving as the Headquarter Air Reserve Personnel Center commander in Denver since September 2007.

Held in a C-17 Globemaster III maintenance hangar, the ceremony kicked off with the arrival of past and present senior Air Force leaders, local civic leaders, friends and family members who traveled from across the country to witness the event.

Over the stage, a 70-ft American flag hung from the rafters, framed by cloudy

skies and flanked by a KC-135 Stratotanker and a C-17 Globemaster III. From their vantage point, audience members took in this impressive backdrop for a ceremony filled with well-wishes, reflection, and encouragement for the future.

Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner, Chief of Air Force Reserve and Commander, Air Force Reserve Command, presided over the change of command.

He challenged the new commander, General Crabtree. "I welcome you and have confidence in your leadership as we pass the baton to you," he said.

After addressing the audience, General Crabtree recognized the three former commanders of Fourth Air Force in attendance. "It is a daunting task to fill the shoes of these great men," he said. "You left a valuable mark on Fourth Air Force, and I intend to do the same."

Warrior of the Month



Faatupu Faamuli

Senior Airman

624th Civil Engineer Squadron
Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii

JOB TITLE:

Entomology Technician

HOMETOWN:

Alegra, American Samoa

FAVORITE THING ABOUT UNIT:

"Unit members are team players, never hesitate to help and are friendly."

FAVORITE THING ABOUT JOB:

"I get to learn different varieties of pests and ways to deal and control them. They all have different characteristics and behave different that surprises me most of the time."

LITTLE KNOWN FACT:

"I am always willing to learn new things even if not related to my field. I always try to strive for excellence regardless of the tasks assigned to me and the quantity of work reflects quality."

SUPERVISOR SAYS:

"Senior Airman Faamuli is a very hard-charging Airman. She is currently on MPA tour with the 15th Civil Engineer Squadron Entomology shop. She took advantage and completed her core tasking and Career Development Courses in minimum time. She averaged 97 percent on tests and is on pace for promotion. Her eagerness to learn earned her high praises from Mr. Abad and has set an example to her active duty counterparts." - Master Sgt. Ronpaul Aea, Readiness Flight Superintendent

BRIEFS

OPPORTUNITY FOR TEEN DEPENDENTS

624th RSG Family Care office wants members to know about a great opportunity for their teenage dependents.

The Air Force Reserve/Air National Guard Teen Leadership Summits are open to all 15-18 year old dependent teens of current AFR or ANG members. Applicants will be required to complete the 2009 AFR/ANG Teen Leadership Summit application to include essay questions and Code of Conduct.

Airfare, transportation while at the Summit, camp fees, lodging and meals are paid for by Air Force.

ARRANGING FAMILY CARE NEEDS

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.

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.



Silver Flag 2009

Thirty-two 624th Civil Engineer Squadron members joined their active duty and guard counterparts at Kadena Air Base, Japan, to participate in a Silver Flag exercise Jan. 18-24.

Silver Flag is a week-long event which provides expeditionary combat support training to Airmen in the civil engineer, personnel services, contracting and services career fields, preparing them for upcoming deployments to support deployments around the world.

The training week culminates with a 12-hour exercise where the deployed team puts everything they learned into action.

"This was truly a Team Hickam effort," said Capt. Kim Hubbard, 624th CES. "We were one team with one goal."

Top - Lt. Col. Dwayne Thomas, troop commander, and other members of Team Hickam plot exercise airfield damage on a Minimum Airfield Operation Strip.

Left - Chief Master Sgt. Geoffrey Tavares, Maj. Reid Matsuda, and Senior Master Sgt. Rivera, 624th CES, observe airfield damage repair operations.

Page 7 Top - Firefighters from the 624th and 15th CES engage in a live fire exercise.

Page 7 Bottom - The Team Hickam firefighters pose for a picture after completing Silver Flag.

(Photos by Master Sgt. Bobby Duncan)





Military OneSource Offers FREE

Tax Consultation and E-Filing

- Maximize your refund
- Simple, easy process
- Use your tax refund wisely – *save and pay off debt!*

Visit

www.MilitaryOneSource.com
to file your federal and state taxes.

You name it. We can help – 24/7!

Provided by the Department of Defense as no cost to active duty, Guard and Reserve (regardless of activation status) and their family members.

Tax website help available for military members

624th Regional Support Group members are encouraged to check out Military One Source for their tax questions.

Those eligible for the program are active duty, Guard and Reserve regardless of activation status, spouses and dependent children authorized in DEERS, family members handling the affairs of a deployed service member, DoD employees working in support roles (Army Community Services, Fleet & Family Services, Family Support Center, Marine Corp Community Services), and severely injured service members or family members handling their affairs. Participants will have free access to the H&R Block Basic TaxCut program.

Users must register for Military OneSource and log on to the site for access to the online TaxCut program. A separate logon for the TaxCut site is required.

Those with more complicated returns may incur charges if they upgrade to the H&R Block TaxCut Premium program. Participants can e-file one state resident return for each federal return that they e-file with TaxCut Online.

Practicing child seat safety

By 624th RSG Safety Office

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of unintentional deaths to children. Proper child restraints are the key to preventing fatalities to children under 16 when riding in a motor vehicle. When properly installed in passenger cars, child safety seats reduce fatal injury by 71 percent for children under age one, and by 54 percent for toddlers ages one through four. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The following information is provided by United Services Automobile Association, National Programs extracted from studies conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:

Although parents and other adult caregivers have become more aware of the need to secure their children in vehicles, they still are not aware of the best way to use these child safety seats.

Still there are many actions adults can take to help protect young passengers in their vehicles. Some of the

most important child occupant safety tips from safety experts relating to infants and children are:

- Place all child safety seats in the rear seat of a vehicle.
- NEVER place a child in a rear-facing child safety seat in the front seat of a vehicle with a passenger-side air bag.
- Infants under 26 inches tall and weighing less than 20 pounds must ride in rear-facing infant safety seats.
- Children who weigh at least 20 pounds and can sit up by themselves should ride in forward-facing safety seats.
- Children weighing between 40 and 60 pounds who are too big for forward-facing seats may need a booster seat that allow adult seat belts to fit them properly.
- Remember to carefully read your owner's manual and your child safety seat instructions to ensure you are installing your child safety system properly. If instructions are not clear, contact the customer service department of your vehicle manufacturer and/or child safety system manufacturer.
- Once a child safety seat is installed, remember to check it again each time before you place your child in it.
- NEVER, NEVER transport children in the bed of a pick-up truck.



Promotion Poker

Senior Master Sgt. Craig Okazaki, 48th Aerial Port Squadron, stands pat while Master Sgt. Kelly Fitzpatrick deals a card to Master Sgt. Phil Ada, both 44th APS, for an exercise called "the hand you are dealt." Players make the best poker hand in order to determine who receives a promotion. This exercise was one of many used to demonstrate leadership and management principles during the Senior Leadership Development course held at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, Jan. 10 and 11, 2009.

*(Photo by
Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel)*



Capt. Chun's blog

For those members who have not done so, please check out Capt. J.D. Chun's blog on the 624th RSG website. Captain Chun is a logistics readiness officer with the 48th Aerial Port Squadron and is deployed to Afghanistan. To read about his adventures working with the Army go to www.4af.afrc.af.mil/units/624rsg and click on the blog button. (Courtesy photos)

UTA Schedule

Hickam

February 7-8
March 7-8
April 4-5
May 16-17

Andersen

February 21-22
March 21-22
April 18-19
May 30-31



Diamond Tips

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

Men's hair is limited to 1 1/4 inches in bulk. Women's hair is limited to three inches in bulk. Bulk is how far the hair protrudes from the scalp on the top and sides.

Note: A pony-tail or "bun" is part of the bulk measurement.

Source: AFI 36-2903