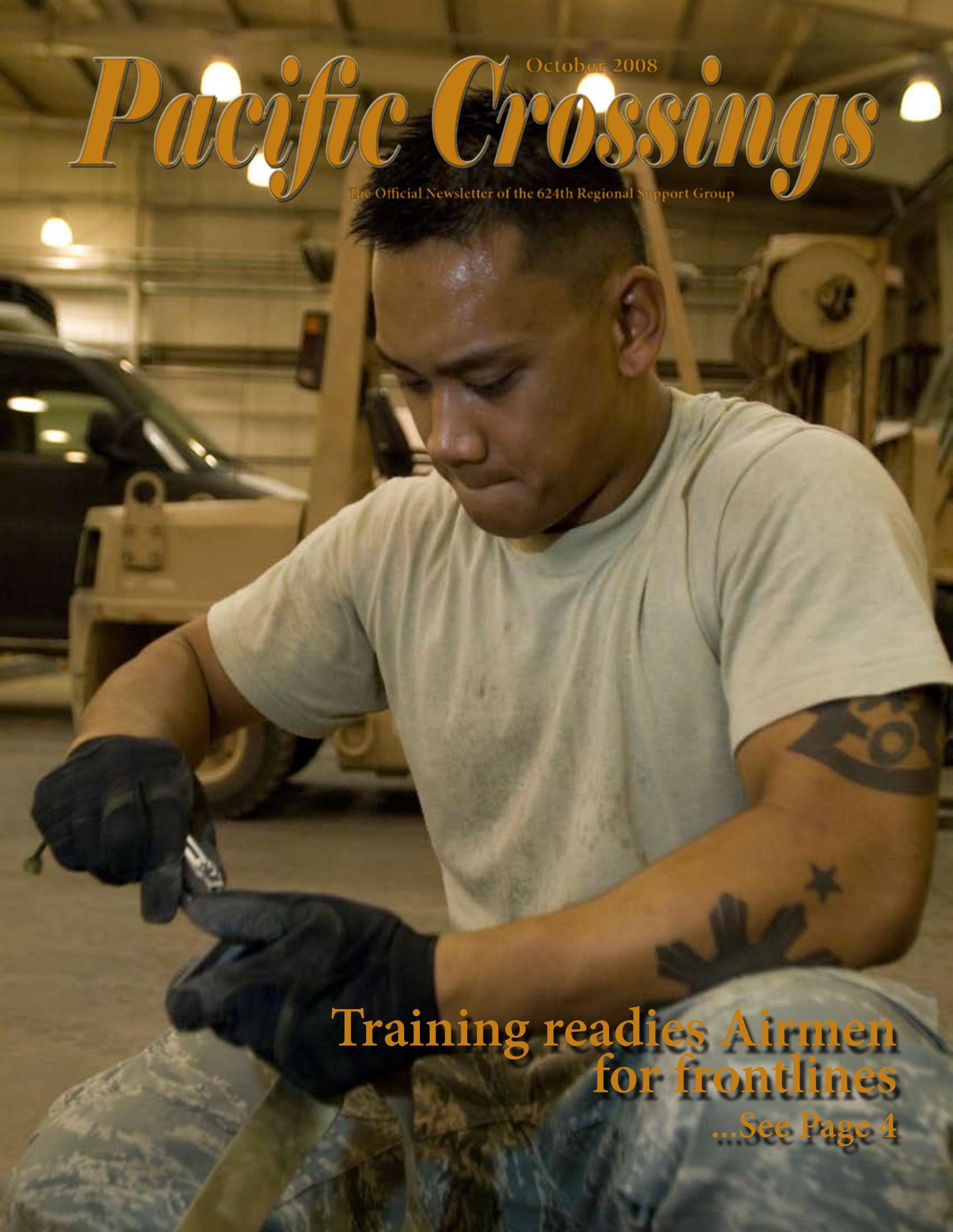


# *Pacific Crossings*

October 2008

The Official Newsletter of the 624th Regional Support Group



**Training readies Airmen  
for frontlines**

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## Exemplify excellence

*Having a can-do attitude,  
embracing the challenge*

*by Master Sgt. Alan Aspera  
624th Aeromedical Staging Squadron  
1st Sergeant*

As Airmen, we have heard the saying “Excellence in all we do” since the day we were greeted so pleasantly by our training instructors.

We have followed and embraced this important aspect in our military careers. However, it is imperative we take this very principle to heart and make it a way of life. Whether it is applied to your family, civilian career, or faith, it not only brings out the best in us, but greatly influences those around you to do the same.

Nobody expects us to be perfect, but any imperfection must not be the result of our lack of effort.

I remember a co-worker whose son was a junior varsity football player as a sophomore. A year earlier, he broke his arm during a game and had to go through weeks of rehabilitation before he was able to play football again.

He could have easily given up on football, but he hung in there and came back even stronger. He was summoned to play quarterback as a sophomore for the varsity football team because all the varsity starting quarterbacks were injured.

Having a positive and can-do attitude, he embraced the challenge. He did not let the thought of moving from JV to Varsity intimidate him. He did not know what to

expect but he promised his team and family he would do his best in all he did despite the pressure. What people wouldn’t know is this young sophomore quarterback would lead the Leilehua High School football team with wins throughout the playoffs and eventually a victory in the 2007 Hawaii State Football Championship game.

This is one of many examples that exemplifies to me the meaning of “Excellence in all we do”.

One thing is for sure, the Airmen of the 624th Regional Support Group have set the standard with the term “Excellence in all we do.”

It is evident by the outstanding feedback we obtain from our active duty counterparts while our members are deployed or TDY including Pacific Lifeline, our deployments in the Middle East, and just recently an annual tour in Montana.

It’s no surprise why the active-duty Air Force requests so many of our Airmen to do an MPA tour with them. It’s the invaluable experience, work ethic and positive attitude, which are a few examples of the many remarkable qualities we bring to the table.

To all the members of the 624th Regional Support Group, let’s continue to exemplify the true meaning of “Excellence in all we do.”

Great job!

## 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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## 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, and others will be answered by phone.

## On the Cover

**Senior Airman Derek Dumlao, 48th Aerial Port Squadron, builds a pallet while deployed with the 332nd Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron, Joint Base Balad, Iraq.**

Photo by  
Airman 1st Class Jason Epley

# Senate confirms Donley as next Air Force Secretary

10/3/2008 - WASHINGTON (AFNS) -- Michael B. Donley will be the next secretary of the Air Force based on an Oct. 2 Senate confirmation vote here.

Secretary Donley had been designated by the president to begin serving as acting secretary on June 21, 2008.

The former director of administration and management for the Defense Department, he was nominated for the secretary of the Air Force position and provided testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee July 22. Senate confirmation now clears the way for Secretary Donley's formal appointment by the president.

"Our way ahead includes a recommitment to upholding the high standards that have always been the Air Force's hallmark and for our core values -- integrity first, service before self and excellence in all we do -- to underpin every Airmen at all times," Secretary Donley said.

Following appointment by the president, Secretary Donley will be sworn-in as the 22nd Air Force secretary.

Secretary Donley has more than 30 years of experience in the national security community, including service in the Senate, White House and the Pentagon. In his most recent position, he was responsible for Washington Headquarters Services, a 1,300-employee entity that oversees management of the Pentagon and DOD services within the National Capitol Region, and the Pentagon Force Protection Agency.

Secretary Donley, who was acting secretary of the Air



Force for seven months in 1993 and served as the service's top financial officer from 1989 to 1993, also served on the National Security Council and was a professional staff member on the Senate Armed Services Committee in the early 1980s.

He served in the Army's 18th Airborne Corps and 5th Special Forces Group from 1972 to 1975. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees in international relations from the University of Southern California.

## Tricare Reserve and Guard family benefit now permanent

10/2/2008 - FALLS CHURCH, Va. (AFNS) -- Eligible families of activated National Guard and Reserve members will continue to save up to \$300 in annual deductibles now that a Tricare "demonstration" program is a permanent benefit.

Eligible family members of Guard and Reserve personnel activated for more than 30 days under federal orders in support of a contingency operation are made eligible for Tricare Standard and Tricare Extra, which have annual deductibles. While they may be eligible to enroll in Tricare Prime or Tricare Prime Remote for Active Duty Family Members, which have no deductibles, many may choose to stay with Tricare Standard or Extra.

Introduced as one of the first Tricare healthcare enhancements after Sept. 11, 2001, to assist the increasing number of National Guard and Reserve

service members activated to support the war on terrorism, the benefit waiving annual deductibles has been a demonstration project for more than seven years.

"The demonstration has worked well and the benefit is not changing," said Army Maj. Gen. Elder Granger, the deputy director of the Tricare Management Activity. "We simply want to make sure our Guard and Reserve families know this is a permanent benefit now that final federal regulation has been published."

Guard or Reserve families often meet annual deductibles under their commercial plans before they get activated. Waiving the Tricare Standard and Extra deductibles means eligible families will not have to pay additional deductibles under Tricare. The annual deductible for Standard and Extra is \$300 for families.

"National Guard and Reserve members and their families make huge sacrifices to protect our freedom. We don't want to see them sacrifice even more by paying deductibles twice in one year," General Granger said.

The published regulation also contains provisions that make it easier for Reserve and Guard members to continue to see their family physicians by potentially increasing the amount that can be paid to out-of-network health care providers.

Since eligibility for Tricare benefits is determined by the services, to ensure family members are eligible for the Tricare Reserve Family Benefit, activated Reserve and Guard members should visit their local military ID card-issuing facility and update their information in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System.



Airmen 1st Class Shane Costa (left) and Dennis Gaxiola, push a pallet train off a 60k-loader driven by Senior Airman Derek Dumlao onto a high line dock at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, the 48th Aerial Porters were recently deployed with the 332nd Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron. (U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Jason Epley)

# Seasoning Training readies Airmen for frontlines

*by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel  
624th Regional Support Group  
Public Affairs*

Four years ago, three young men who graduated together from high school in Hawaii never thought they would find themselves serving together in Iraq.

Senior Airman Derek Dumlao, Airmen 1st Class Shane Costa and Dennis Gaxiola, 48th Aerial Port Squadron reservists and alumni of Leilehua High School on Oahu, just recently deployed with the 332nd Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron, Joint Base Balad.

Their job is to help ensure that people and cargo get to where they are needed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“Just the thought that I am on the other side of the world is crazy,” said Airman Dumlao. “Never thought in my life that I would be here but I am, and I’m proud to be serving my country at a time when my country needs me.”

Of course, serving in the desert has its hurdles.

“Being away from my two-year old daughter is a big challenge,” Airman Gaxiola said. “Otherwise, it has been great.”

For Airman Costa, it’s the heat, the food and “living in a one-mile radius for four months.”

Then there are the hazards.

“Just the constant bombardment of mortars keeps me on my toes and alert,” said Airman Dumlao. “Other than that, it’s pretty much day to day.”

What is not a challenge for them is how they perform their jobs. They are able to meld seamlessly with their active duty counterparts because of the Air Force Reserve Command’s Seasoning Training Program (STP), which allows Airmen to reach job proficiency sooner than they would through the traditional Reserve process of one week-end a month and two weeks a year.

“Had I not been through the STP most of my training would have been received through this deployment, so I’m definitely ahead of the game,” said Airman Gaxiola.

After completing their initial technical school training, the Airmen did 90 active-duty days of “seasoning training” with the 735th Air Mobility Squadron at Hickam.

# Feature

“Much of the credit for the success of our Squadron’s Seasoning Training Program should be given to the 735th AMS,” said Lt Col Randall Honke, 48th APS commander. “They have bent over backwards to ensure our personnel are trained in 100 percent of their core tasks by the end of their 90-day STP tour.”

Since the beginning of 2007, the 48th APS has made it their goal to get their Airmen upgraded to a journeyman 5-level in 15 months through the Seasoning Training Program.

So far they’ve been able to meet that goal.

“If not for the Reserve Seasoning Training Program, I wouldn’t have been comfortable with allowing these young Airmen to deploy to Balad,” said Lt Col Honke. “The hands-on training and experience they received would normally take any other traditional reservist more than three years to accomplish.”

The length of seasoning training depends on the nature of the career field with some needing only a month and others up to a year to receive the necessary polish.

Since June 2007, the 48th APS in conjunction with the 735th AMS has successfully graduated 10 personnel in the STP. Four of these graduates have



Airmen 1st Class Shane Costa and Dennis Gaxiola and Senior Airman Derek Dumlao wait for an aircraft to arrive here shortly after dawn at the Joint Base Balad flightline (U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Jason Epley)

deployed in support of the Global War on Terror.

“The Seasoning Training Program enabled me to hit the ground running,” said Airman Costa. “While certain things are done differently here, I was able to adapt quickly with the training I had already received.”

As for being deployed with fellow high school graduates?

“It’s pretty cool,” said Airman Costa.

“It made for a fun time when we weren’t working.”

Airman Gaxiola agrees.

“I think this whole entire environment is interesting. You have helicopters flying around, F-16s taking off, sometimes sounds of gunfire in the background, and an occasional mortar attack. All the while, I’m still able to have fun with my friends and get the job done.”

## Briefs

### GTC Transition

Reminder, Citibank will succeed Bank of America Nov. 30 as provider of Air Force government travel card services.

Air Force members and civilian employees don’t need to take any action other than ensuring their mailing address with Bank of America is correct. Citibank will use that information for its card distribution, which starts in mid-August.



### Readiness Management Period

Commanders may authorize an Readiness Management Period to satisfy a four hour minimum requirement. In special cases, a commander may waive the four-hour minimum for an RMP.

Use this authority only in exceptional circumstances and not for the personal convenience of the member. The member must attend the RMP for at least two-hours.

Commanders may extend an RMP beyond the normally scheduled 4-hour period to meet mission needs.

NOTE: The extension of the RMP beyond the four-hour period does not entitle the member to any additional pay or points.

### 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. T

# The Dreaded Dunk Tank

## Asato v.s. Izon

Photos by Tech. Sgt. Peter Rieta



Looking to raise both morale and money for the unit fund, the 48th Aerial Port Squadron held a dunk tank competition during the September drill weekend.

Those sitting in the seat of honor were selected from a list of candidates who had either the highest or lowest bids next to their name.

Photos - Despite failing to hit the target, Senior Airman Daniel Asato, cargo specialist, finds a way to send Capt. Kathy Izon, operations officer, to her watery reward.



# Fall Safety Campaign: Halloween Safety

As summer comes to an end, the first-ever joint service Fall Safety Campaign will be led this year by the Air Force and will run from 2 September until the end of November. The Fall Safety Campaign will be the bridge from where the 101 Critical Days of Summer Campaign leaves off and where the Winter Safety Campaign begins.

Statistically, fatal vehicle mishaps (automobile and motorcycle) are the leading cause of death to our warriors from all branches of service. Historically, we have focused much of our effort on the 101 Critical Days of Summer.

Unfortunately, one portion of the year that we have not placed enough attention on is the period of September through November. As we reviewed our numbers over the past three years for these three months, we noticed a significant increase in vehicle related fatalities.

During the last three years in this timeframe, we have lost 41 people, which is a 29 percent higher rate than during the 15 week period of the 101 Critical Days of Summer.

Our target audience will continue to be our young warriors under 26 years of age who are at the highest risk.

We need to ensure we place the same support and emphasis on our Fall Safety Campaign that we did on the 101 Critical Days of Summer Campaign.

## Halloween Safety Tips

### **Decorating:**

- Clear all tripping hazards from porches, lawns, and sidewalks.
- Paint scary faces or designs on pumpkins instead of carving them.
- Use battery powered light sources to illuminate and show off your Jack-O-Lanterns.

### **Costumes:**

- Purchase costumes made of flame-retardant materials.
- Make sure costumes are bright enough to be seen at night, and attach reflector strips or light sticks to costumes to make children more visible.
- Prevent tripping by avoiding high-heeled or over-sized shoes, hats that slide over the eyes, and baggy or dangling costumes.
- Choose props are made of flexible plastic that will bend if fallen on.
- Use face paints instead of masks. If masks are worn, choose masks with eye holes big enough to see in front as well as peripherally.
- Choose unique costumes or attach names and addresses to costumes for easy identification.

### **Trick or Treating:**

- Have an adult accompany children under 12.
- Plan a safe route and set a curfew for older children.
- Instruct children to stop only at familiar, well-lit houses and to stay on porches rather than going inside.
- Instruct children not to eat any treats until you have inspected them.
- Remind children to use flashlights, stay on sidewalks, cross streets only a corners, use crosswalks, and look left, right, and left again before crossing the street.

### **Pets:**

- Keep chocolate and candy wrappers out of your pets' reach.
- Place your pets in a room with some food and water for the night to keep them from darting out through open doors and to protect them from exposure to lighted candles, loud noises, and lots of people. Be sure to check on them periodically.
- Don't cause your pets unnecessary stress or discomfort by dressing them in costumes unless they are extremely receptive to this type of thing.



# Aloha from Korea

Maj. Edilbert Castro, Air Force Reserve nurse 624th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, gets to know Capt. Min Kyung Kim, Republic of Korea Army nursing officer, at the second annual Asia Pacific Military Nursing Conference. Major Castro was one of more than 40 Air Force, Army and Navy nurses and medical professionals who attended the conference with attendees from seven countries Sept. 1-5 at the Korea Armed Forces Nursing Academy in Daejeon, Republic of Korea.

The conference, titled Nursing Together - For the People, For the World, was designed for senior leadership and chief nurses to share ideas and practices and to learn from each other while building relationships between the countries of the Pacific.

Photo by Master Sgt. Steve Yim

## UTA Schedule

### Hickam

October 4-5  
November 8-9  
December 6-7  
January 10-11

### Andersen

October 18-19  
November 22-23  
December 13-14  
January 17-18



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

Members are prohibited from attaching, affixing or displaying objects, articles, jewelry or ornamentation to or through the ear, nose, tongue, eyebrows, lips or any exposed body part (includes visible through the uniform). Exception:

Women are authorized to wear earrings. These restrictions apply to members both in uniform and in civilian attire while on official duty, as well as when members are off duty on a military installation.