

Pacific Crossings

June 2008

The Official Newsletter of the 624th Regional Support Group



**Patriot Force
2008**

On the home front

the sacrifices that our families make for us

*By Maj. Randall Honke
48th Aerial Port Squadron
Commander*

With Mother's Day and Memorial Day last month, Father's Day coming up this month and twelve of our squadron's finest Airmen deploying to Balad Air Base, Iraq, in the past month, it got me thinking about the sacrifices that our Airmen go through.

Seeing Hawaii Air National Guard members on Mother's Day at Moanalua Shopping Center eating lunch also got me thinking about the sacrifices our families go through to support their spouses, fathers, mothers, sons and daughters - our Airmen.

Whether it is a deployment, UTA or Annual Tour, our families make sacrifices to support us while we serve our country.

Whenever I deployed, my wife took care of our children and our home while I was away. Honestly, I don't know if I could have done the same.

Whenever my wife went on business trips during the past five years, my mother used to help me take care of my children. After my mother passed away, my wife has taken her mother and our sons with her on the

most recent trips. Somehow she is able to make it work while I am away, but I have never taken care of my sons without assistance and never for more than one week.

She always said it is not easy and I now believe her.

I never thought that my being away or what we did as reservist affected my kids. I was a reservist before I got married and before we had children. I always thought that they did not really care about what I did as a reservist; They always seemed so indifferent.

In 2006, I deployed to a high threat area of the Philippines. We deployed with body armor and weapons.

My nephew thought it was cool that I was deploying with all this gear, even asking if we were taking weapons. He even put on my helmet and body armor to have his picture taken. My sons never touched any of my gear.

I just thought they were disinterested. They only asked where I was going and how long I would be gone. They never

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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 rsgactionline@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, and others will be answered by phone.

On the Cover

Hawaii-based members of the 624th Regional Support Group practiced their wartime-skills during the 2008 Patriot Force exercise, May 4, 2008.

Photo by
Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel

Makalapa Time

Members of the 624th Regional Support Group volunteered their services during Makalapa Elementary School's Field Day, May 28-29.

In addition to supervising the students at the event, the Group has donated labor and equipment over the years to help the school. The 624th RSG has been involved with Makalapa since 2004 as part of the Hickam School Partnership Program.

G.I.H.W.

Tech. Sgt. Robert Brown, 624th CES, helps Alexa, a Makalapa student, out of the Giant Inflatable Hamster Wheel.

Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel

Sack Race

Master Sgt. Steve Adachi, 624th RSG Safety Manager, explains to his charges the safe and proper method of potato sack racing.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Jennie Chamberlin



Tug O' War

Master Sgt. Robert Tancayo, 624th CES, tries to give his team the edge in a four-way tug of war match.

Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel



***FAMILY** continued from page 2*

really asked any questions about what I did when I got back.

Last year, while getting ready to leave for Korea for our annual tour, my older son, Alex, asked me if I needed to bring a weapon or body armor with me. I told him no, we were going to Kunsan AB, an American base.

I asked him why. He told me that he was glad because he would not have to worry about anything happening to me, that I would be safe unlike last year. I had not told him what we had done than construct a school building, but he may have overheard me telling my wife that we convoyed to and from the job site with our body armor on and weapons loaded every day.

What he said about worrying about my safety made me think about how my serving in the Air Force Reserve affects my wife and sons.

I now believe my sons may act disinterested in what I do because they do not really want to know what I am going to do.

I will never forget what my son said and how it affects him. I now know that everything we do affects our families and that not knowing can be worse than knowing. One's imagination can be far worse than reality.

I have used this example to remind my deploying Airmen to communicate frequently with their families and to let them know as much as possible about how and what they are doing without compromising operations and communications security.

Our families sacrifice a lot: the missed birthdays, anniversaries, ball games, recitals, and school programs, not to mention the separation from us. I would like everyone to take some time this month to thank their family members for the sacrifices they make that allow us to serve.

Hickam AFB has a program, the Children's Home Front Hero Medal. The program's purpose is to recognize the children of Airmen who are frequently TDY, returned from deployment, or currently deployed.*

Airmen may nominate their children to be recognized for their sacrifices and support on the "home front" during the separation period. Some of my Airmen have had their children participate in the last ceremony and the kids loved it. Again without the commitment of our families, we would not be able to do what we do.

*For more information - <http://www2.hickam.af.mil/units/15mssaaf/f/index.asp>.

The 101 Critical Days of Summer: Fireworks Safety

624th Regional Support Group
Safety Office

The Fourth of July holiday is coming up soon and fireworks is a very popular way of celebrating our nation's birthday.

Unfortunately, every year, hundreds of people are seriously injured or killed because they failed to use fireworks safely. It is best to leave the fireworks show to a professional, but if you decide to "do-it-yourself," the bottom line is fireworks are explosives and must be handled with care.

Also, please make sure to comply with all local regulations with regards to fireworks. Acquire a permit if necessary.

FIREWORKS OPERATIONAL RISK MANAGEMENT

- ALWAYS read directions. If in doubt about how to use an item - DON'T!
- IGNITE all fireworks outside, and away from flammable materials (dry bushes, flammable liquids etc.)
- NEVER try to mix your own fireworks.
- DON'T take fireworks apart or mix anything with their contents.
- NEVER give fireworks to small children. They can not comprehend the possible DANGER involved in using fireworks.
- KEEP water and a fire extinguisher on hand at all times.

- DISPOSE of malfunctioning fireworks properly by soaking them in water before throwing them away.
- NEVER ignite fire works in glass or metal containers.
- STAY in the designated watching area far away from the fireworks display. Also, be sure to park your car away from the area to prevent possible damage to the paint.
- CHECK with the local fire department to determine if fireworks are permitted in your local area.
- Don't become a statistic on the Fourth of July. Make safety first and foremost when handling fireworks.

Information courtesy - 436th AW Safety Office

Patriot Force rides again!

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

In what is now an annual rite of passage, Hawaii-based members of the 624th Regional Support Group participated in this year's Patriot Force exercise, May 3-4 at Hickam's Base X training area.

"Patriot Force is a mechanism for assessing our unit readiness and ensuring our personnel's wartime skills are proficient," said Senior Master Sgt. Bob Prather, 624th RSG Logistics Plans Division superintendent. "This venue also makes certain our personnel know how to respond to certain situations and make sound decisions while deployed to a simulated location."

Capt. Kim Hubbard and Senior Master Sgt. Ronpaul Aea, both 624th Civil Engineer Squadron, were able to get instructors from 4th Air Force, 15th Airlift Wing, 624th CES, and 624th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, in order to create a comprehensive schedule which allowed unit members to participate in the training.

Members learned vital war-time skills such as Weapons Familiarization, Self Aid and Buddy Care, CPR Awareness, Air Base Defense, Defensive Fighting Positions, Small Shelter System, Work Party Security and Convoy Operations.

While he considers Patriot Force to be very important, Sergeant Prather sees it as but a step in the training process.

"I would like to see the 624th RSG participate and integrate with the 15th AW in an installation exercise," he said. "Our personnel need to see how the deployment process functions and what part they play in the process."



Staff Sgt. Godfrey Manera, 48th APS, practices convoy operation tactics in full chemical warfare gear.

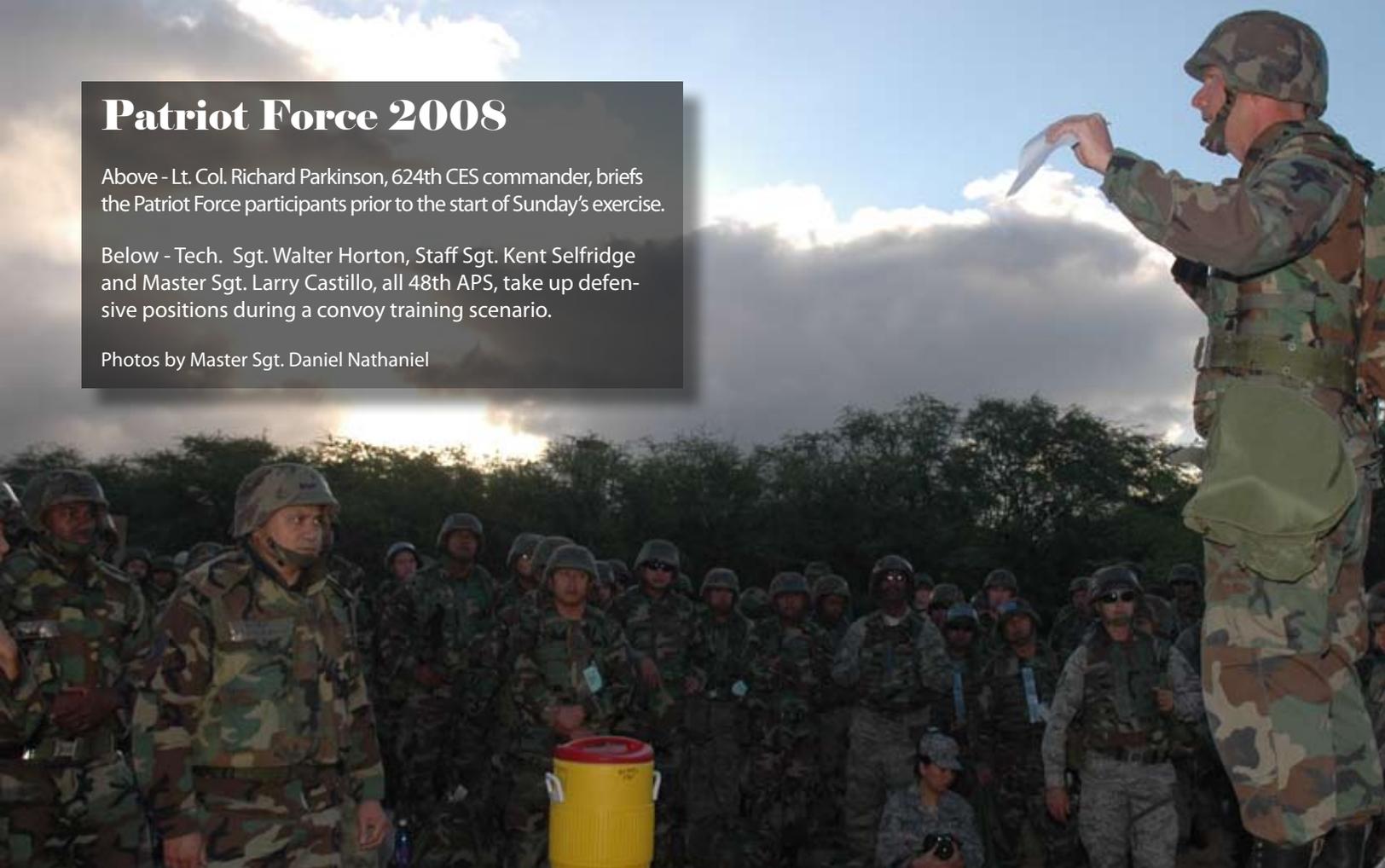
Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel

Patriot Force 2008

Above - Lt. Col. Richard Parkinson, 624th CES commander, briefs the Patriot Force participants prior to the start of Sunday's exercise.

Below - Tech. Sgt. Walter Horton, Staff Sgt. Kent Selfridge and Master Sgt. Larry Castillo, all 48th APS, take up defensive positions during a convoy training scenario.

Photos by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel



Patriot Force 2008

Chief Master Sgt. Bryan Voigt, 4th Air Force, evaluates how Master Sgt. John Gabriel apprehends a would-be intruder.

Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel



Patriot Force 2008

Chief Master Sgt. Robert Torres, 624 th CES, holds a tent stake in place while Staff Sgt. Edward Dumlao uses a sledge hammer to pound it.

Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel



Patriot Force 2008

Under the watchful eye of Senior Master Sgt. Donald Souron, 4th Air Force, Master Sgt. Gary Komoto, 624th CES, clears his M-16 to ensure that it is dis-armed.

Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel





Friend or Foe

Master Sgt. John Gabriel, 624th Civil Engineer Squadron, checks Tech. Sgt. Wayne Harp, 624th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, against an authorization list. This was to ensure intruders did not enter the Base X compound during the Patriot Force Exercise held during the May drill weekend at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii.

Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel

UTA Schedule

Hickam

June 7-8

July 12-13

August 2-3

September 6-7

Andersen

June 21-22

July 26-27

August 23-24

September 20-21



*By Master Sgt. Leony Macapagal
624th Civil Engineer Squadron
First Sergeant*

The flight cap is worn slightly to the wearer's right, its vertical crease in line with the center of the forehead and nose.

It will be worn approximately one inch from the eyebrows. When not wearing the cap, it should be tucked under either side of the belt between the first and second belt loops.

It is never folded over the belt.