

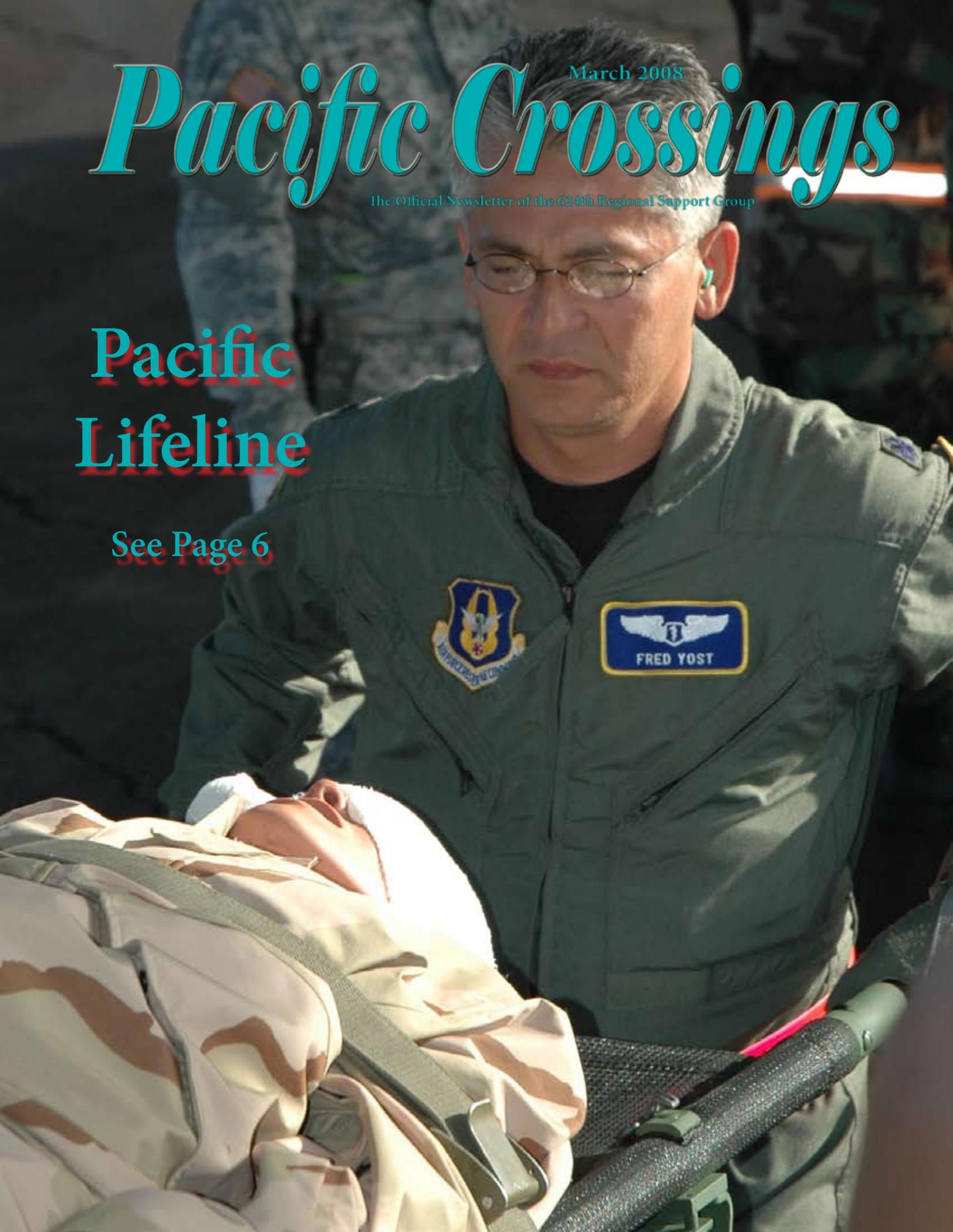
March 2008

Pacific Crossings

The Official Newsletter of the 624th Regional Support Group

Pacific Lifeline

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Readiness Above All

*By Col. John Morris
624th Regional Support Group
Commander*

624th Regional Support Group leaders, wingmen and fellow warrior airmen.

As warfighters, it is our responsibility to ensure we are always ready to serve, protect and defend our country. We are at war against a global terrorist threat and must ensure we are ready to meet our daily mission requirements as well as deploy and defend our nation whenever called.

For this reason, it is important that we be “Mission Ready Every Day.”

Being “Mission Ready Every Day” applies across the spectrum of the 624th RSG and concerns both solid program management administration and full wartime deployment readiness, which in my view are the bedrock of any military organization.

To ensure we establish solid program management administration, we must properly administer our respective unit programs in accordance with governing Air Force Instructions and command guidance on a daily basis; implement and maintain a viable self-inspection program to verify our programs are fully in compliance; ensure solid staff oversight of our respective unit programs through a viable group Management Control Plan; and document our self-inspections and program status in the group Management Control Plan.

In addition, we must maintain a full wartime deployment readiness posture every day which includes accomplishing and maintaining required AFSC skill level, mobility, and ancillary training; ensuring our medical, dental, and, occupational health exams and immunizations are current at all times; implementing and enforcing safety, force protection and OPSEC/COMSEC awareness and incorporating Operational Risk Management into our deployment planning processes; making sure we have all of our required personal gear, mobility equipment and weapons and ensure they are properly maintained and ready for immediate deployment; maintaining our mobility folders and ensuring wills and powers of attorney are prepared; keeping family care folder information current as required; and ensuring family financial affairs and other family-related issues are taken care of prior to deployment.

Having served in a combat zone in Iraq, I know how important it is to ensure our airmen are fully trained and ready for deployment; being mission ready every day can save their lives! An Air Expeditionary Forces deployment provides our warrior airmen the rare opportunity to serve their country in a potential combat zone and to experience the well-defined mission and strong sense of purpose of the AEF environment. During my deployment as the Deputy Group Commander for

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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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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 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

**Lt. Col. Fredrick Yost,
624th Aeromedical Staging
Squadron, transports
a patient during the
Pacific Lifeline exercise
Jan 26-Feb 9, 2008.**

Photo by
Capt. Jennifer Gerhardt,
446th AW Public Affairs,
McCord AFB, Wash.



Women serving *The sky's not the limit!*

*By Col. Gayle Seiffuen
624th Aeromedical Staging Squadron
Commander*

March is Women in the Military month.

Women in the U.S. military have always had a "tough row to hoe" and we owe a lot to those women who literally broke ground, opened doors, and made the choice of a military career easier for those who followed.

Beginning with the early pioneers, who were almost never recognized, let's take a look at women in the Air Force when it all began and how it changed over time.

Women in the Air Force (WAF) was a United States Air Force program which served to bring women into limited roles in the Air Force.

During the early months of WWII, there was a critical shortage of male pilots.

The women in the WAF could then take over some of the vital training and ferrying missions in the States, which would relieve male pilots for combat duty.

America's foremost female pilot, Jacqueline Cochran, convinced the

Chief of the Army Air Forces, General Hap Arnold that she could enlist a group of young women pilots and given the same training as male aviation cadets were receiving, they would be equally capable of flying military aircraft.

We should all know the story of the gallant women who flew every airplane made during WWII including an experimental jet at 350 mph at 35,000 feet, flown by Ann Baumgartner in 1944.

Finally, in 1948, President Truman signed the Women's Armed Services Integration Act, allowing women to serve directly in the military.

Initially, the roles of women in the military were limited to administrative or nursing positions. They could not fulfill other roles become flight surgeons as their male counterparts could.

Although movement forward was gained it wasn't until later in the 90's that women with families could maintain an active role in the military.

Over time women did gain more and more opportunities in the USAF.

In the 2004, 19.6 percent of the force was female.

*18.2 percent of the officers were

women and 20 percent of the enlisted corps was women.

* 60.2 percent of the female officers are line officers; 39.8 percent are non-line.

*The population of women in the Air Force was 73,074.

* Women first began entering pilot training in 1976, navigator training in 1977 and fighter pilot training in July 1993

*2004 there were 519 (3.8 percent) female pilots and 195 (4.1 percent) female navigators and over 600 enlisted crew members.

Women have excelled in the Air Force in ever-increasing numbers in diverse roles and missions. Women have flown and fought in combat. They have served in many positions to include a space shuttle mission commander, a Thunderbird pilot, and even chief master sergeants and general officers.

Today's Air Force boasts almost 70,000 women officers and enlisted airmen. Women are an integral part of who we are and what we do as an Air Force.

Finally - the sky is not the limit for women in the military!



Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel

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.

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the Fighting 447th Air Expeditionary Group, Sather Air Base, Baghdad International Airport, Iraq, we knew from the start that our mission and role was to serve as the primary air hub in support of United States and Coalition Forces fighting to retake Baghdad from Al-Qaida during the initial Battle of Baghdad in June 2006, to ensure the smooth flow of ammunition, supplies, and equipment to the frontline warfighters, and to help train, work with and support the new Iraqi Air Force.

All 447th AEG airmen knew their group, unit and individual roles and

responsibilities, and all of our airmen collectively worked together to ensure our group mission was accomplished.

Our airmen were fully trained in their wartime taskings, believed in the cause of their country and the importance of the mission, and served their country with honor and professional pride while under insurgent rocket and mortar attacks.

It is this same readiness posture, defined mission and sense of purpose that we should embrace within the 624th RSG on a daily basis.

A "Mission Ready Every Day" posture requires strong, pro-active

unit and group leadership; a clearly defined mission and vision and sense of purpose; optimum mission deployment readiness, and solid program administration.

Together, this will ensure the 624th RSG leadership establishes and maintains an inspection ready program management posture and full operational deployment capability to ensure our warrior airmen are ready every day to deploy in "Harm's Way."

Huah and Charlie-Mike!

This won't hurt a bit...

Staff Sgt. Melissa Weidner, 624th Aeromedical Squadron, draws a blood sample from Tech. Sgt. Leonard Samson, 624th Civil Engineer Squadron during the February drill weekend at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii. Taking the sample is necessary for various tests necessary to evaluate a member's health.

Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel



Logistics: Providing the lifeline to 'Pacific Lifeline'



**624th RSG units
participate in
island humanitarian exercise**

Senior Airman Nia Naumu directs a cargo loader driven by Master Sgt. Steve Yim into position. Both are members of the 48th Aerial Port Squadron, Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii.

Photo by Capt. Jennifer Gerhardt



Tech. Sgt. Jay Perez, 44th Aerial Port Squadron, Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, guides Staff Sgt. Joe Pruitt, 73rd APS, Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base, Fort Worth, Texas, Jan. 29 as he loads a pallet container of Meal, Ready-to-Eat packages at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii.

Photo by Airman 1st Class Jimmy L. Dang

*By Capt. Jennifer Gerhardt
446th Airlift Wing Public Affairs
Public Affairs*

Logistics planners deployed to Hawaii participated in the Pacific Lifeline exercise Jan. 26 through Feb. 9 working nonstop to ensure every moving piece of equipment, aircraft and people moved smoothly through the airflow system.

The team includes members from the 44th Aerial Port Squadron at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam.

Pacific Lifeline is a total force exercise designed to practice the military's ability to rapidly deploy a trained, equipped team anywhere in the Pacific in response to a humanitarian assistance or disaster scenario. Approximately 900 Department of Defense personnel are participating in the 13th Air Force-led exercise.

"These guys have been working 14-hour days with no days off," said 1st Lt. Patrick Lujan, the 44th APS flight commander. "Although it's been challenging to know where every item is every step of the way for cargo and passengers, these guys are working very hard to ensure the missions keep moving."

To do this, it's vital for the aerial porters to be proactive.

"For an exercise like this, if you sit around and wait for something, you are already behind," said Tech. Sgt. Jay Perez, one of the load planners from the 44th APS. "You have to take charge and have initiative to keep the missions

moving and on time."

The aerial porters are in charge of everything from cleaning the aircraft, to transporting passengers between job sites, to ensuring pallets are packed, netted and weighted properly before loading it onto the aircraft. They also manifest passengers and cargo for each plane departing and off-loading everything that arrives on the aircraft. During the exercise they have moved more than 600,000 pounds of cargo and more than 1,500 people.

"The most challenging thing we deal with is the constantly changing information," said Sergeant Perez. "You have to stay flexible and be able to multi-task. Every day is different and you need to be able to complete the task."

Within the first week, the aerial porters have worked with the C-17 Globemaster III, C-5 Galaxy, C-130 Hercules and UH-1N Huey.

"The most interesting thing we've done so far is off-load the Huey from the C-5," said Lieutenant Lujan. "But the second most interesting off-load was the ambulance bus."

In addition to moving cargo and passengers around, the aerial porters have also been busy training people on flightline driving, 10K all-terrain forklift driving and pallet build up.

"We noticed people needed some training in different areas," said Lieutenant Lujan. "So we coordinated with those folks and were able to provide them the training."

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Senior Airman Nia Naumu, 48th Aerial Port Squadron, chalks a new generation small loader.

Photo by Airman 1st Class Jimmy L. Dang



U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Jay J. Perez, 44th Aerial Port Squadron, loads a pallet container of meals, ready to eat packages.

Photo by Airman 1st Class Jimmy L. Dang



Tech. Sgt. Vincent Ray Toves, 44th Aerial Port Squadron, works on a cargo pallet.

Photo by Senior Airman Ashley Moreno





Desert Honors

Deployed members of the 44th Aerial Port Squadron were recently awarded for their accomplishments by Lt. Col. John Pepin, commander, 447th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron, Sather Air Base, Iraq.

Above - Senior Master Sgt. Peter Torres and Master Sgt. Allen Gagarin accept on behalf of the Team of the month
Below - Tech. Sgt. Monica Santos is Noncommissioned Officer of the month.

Air Force courtesy photos

March 2008



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Dining Out

Because of the long term renovation of Hickam Air Force Base's Hale Aina Dining Facility, Hawaii-based members of the 624th Regional Support Group currently dine at the Dolphin Bistro Cafe at Pearl Harbor.

Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel

UTA Schedule

Hickam

March 1-2
April 5-6
May 3-4
June 7-8

Andersen

March 29-30
April 26-27
May 17-18
June 21-22



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

While in uniform, standing or walking with hands in your pockets is unauthorized. Hands are only allowed to be placed in your pockets briefly to retrieve or insert a personal item.