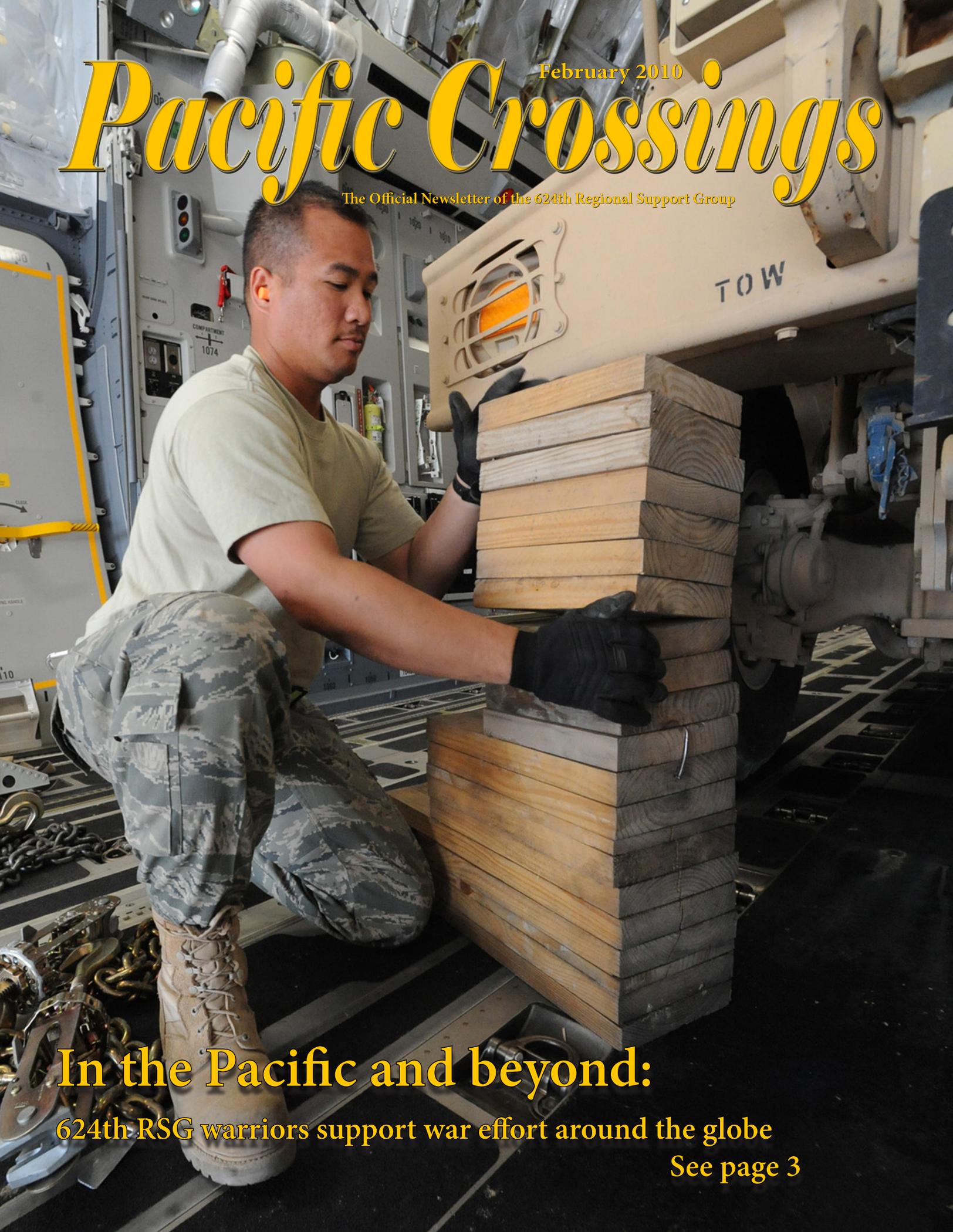


February 2010

Pacific Crossings

The Official Newsletter of the 624th Regional Support Group



In the Pacific and beyond:

624th RSG warriors support war effort around the globe

See page 3

Mission Possible: teamwork key to AF success

By Lt. Col. Randall Honke

48th Aerial Port Squadron commander

Football has been called the ultimate team sport by some because even if you have one dominant player that one player does not make a successful team. With eleven players on the field, it requires all eleven players executing their responsibilities for a play to be successful. In other words, every player must do their job.

An example of this is the play I felt was the turning point in the Super Bowl earlier this month--the successful onside kick by the New Orleans Saints at the beginning of the second half. The two players given the most credit for the play's success were Thomas Morstead, the kicker, and Chris Reis, a backup defensive back and the one who recovered the kick. These are players you don't normally hear about.

Compared to other players on the roster, these two might be at the bottom of the list as far as perceived "importance" to the team, but they were key factors to the success of this play which ultimately turned the momentum around. New Orleans went on to score a touchdown six plays later and would go on to win the game over the favored Indianapolis Colts. It was a gutsy play call by their coach, well executed by their players, and it demonstrated the importance of every player on the team.

How does this relate to the Air Force and our mission? Each individual in the Air Force has his or her job and the responsibilities that come with the position. It is the work of each individual that collectively makes the Air Force successful in executing its missions. In the Aerial Port, for



example, we have a collection of individuals that have skills in their areas of expertise. From passenger services to cargo, load planning to air terminal operations, each Airman has his responsibilities. If everyone executes their roles successfully working together toward a common goal such as loading an aircraft, the team will meet the scheduled departure time. Failure by one person to successfully complete his or her responsibilities could lead to a busted chalk and overall mission failure. So,

it's important to realize that everyone on the team has an important role in the team's success. In the words of Vince Lombardi, "Individual commitment to a group effort – that is what makes a team work, a company work, a civilization work."

As my squadron prepares for an Operational Readiness Inspection next month, we, along with the 434th Air Refueling Wing and 167th Airlift Wing have the shared goal to successfully pass the inspection, similar to winning the game. The Inspector General has a scenario for the inspection, different aircraft missions and situations that make up the scenario, much like the plays in a game. If everyone does his job - safely, competently and with the proper sense of urgency - we should be able to win the game. However, this will only occur if every participant comes together as a team. Each unit and each individual will be the key to success. These ideas about teamwork can be best summed up with the words of Henry Ford, "Coming together is the beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success." With the current world situation and operations tempo, we cannot afford to be less than successful.

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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.

Command Staff

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

Public Affairs Staff

Capt. Christy Stravolo, Chief
MSgt. Daniel Nathaniel, Superintendent
Staff Sgt. Erin Smith, NCOIC

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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 624RSG.PA@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 while others will be answered by phone.

On the Cover

Staff Sgt. Thomas Daga, an 8th Expeditionary Air Mobility Squadron aerial port transporter, straps down a Mine Resistant Ambush Protective vehicle inside a C-17 Globemaster III aircraft at a non-disclosed Southwest Asia location, Feb. 12, 2010. Sergeant Daga is deployed from the 44th Aerial Port Squadron at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam. (U.S. Air Force Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michelle Larche)

RSG Airmen make an impact in OIF, OEF



Master Sgt. Alvin Dela Cruz, deployed from the 44th Aerial Port Squadron cargo section, Andersen AFB, Guam, discusses aerial port operations with Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley, U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Steven Kwast, commander, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing, and Chief Master Sgt. William Jackson of the 455th Expeditionary Aerial Port Squadron on Bagram Airfield, Feb. 2, 2010. Secretary Donley was in Afghanistan to monitor the training efforts of the Afghanistan National Army Air Corps and to meet with Airmen. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jeromy K. Cross)

Staff Sgt. Thomas Daga assists other aerial port transporters from the 8th Expeditionary Air Mobility Squadron as they strap down a Mine Resistant Ambush Protective vehicle inside a C-17 Globemaster III aircraft at a non-disclosed Southwest Asia location, Feb. 12, 2010. Sergeant Daga is deployed from the 44th Aerial Port Squadron at Andersen AFB, Guam. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michelle Larche)



Members of the 577th Expeditionary Prime BEEF Squadron troop labor team just finished construction of the Joint Interrogation and Debriefing Center at the Detention Facility in Parwan, U.S. Forces Afghanistan. (Courtesy Photo)

Warrior of the Month



JOB TITLE: Passenger Service Agent, C - Flight Leader

JOB DESCRIPTION: Focal point of contact between the customer and the MPF offices. Manages the issuance of CAC, dependent, retiree' and civilian identified cards and maintains hardware capability of DEERS. In-processes new members and preparing records for Basic Military Trainees for Boot Camp; assuring their pay and benefits paperwork are completed immediately and correctly. SME for Dress and Appearance, Family Care, SGLI/FSGLI, and VPC-GR/VMPF matters.

HOMETOWN: Ewa Beach

FAVORITE THING ABOUT UNIT: "The favorite thing about my unit is the people I work with!"

FAVORITE THING ABOUT JOB: "Being in Customer Service I get to interact with the whole unit, that's my favorite thing."

SUPERVISOR SAYS: "Hardworking, caring, helpful, dedicated are just a few words that describe Maria. She isn't afraid to be challenged and continues to grow in both her professional and personal life. I can see her as the next Military Personnel Superintendent." - Senior Master Sgt. Corinna Seitz

Maria Tailo

Technical Sergeant
624th RSG Customer Support chief
Hickam AFB, Hawaii

Families begin final countdown to homecoming

By Capt. Christy Stravolo

624th Regional Support Group Public Affairs

The excitement hung in the air as spouses, moms and children of deployed 624th Civil Engineer Squadron members gathered at the Airman and Family Readiness Center at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, Feb. 20 for the fourth and final time before the big day: homecoming.

Fifty-four members of the 624th CES deployed to Afghanistan in August for a 6-month tour providing engineering support for the eastern part of the country to include the forward operating bases. Over the course of the deployment, their family members have met several times to make Christmas cards, leis, welcome home banners and, most important, to offer support to one another.

Donna Torres, wife of Chief Master Sgt. Robert Torres and a key spouse for the 624th CES, said she's enjoyed getting together with the other family members and she thinks it has been key to surviving the deployment.

"This is the first deployment for most of us and it's kind of scary," said Mrs. Torres. "Getting the family members together gave us a connection."

Kandis Bainter, a military and family life consultant, was on hand to talk to the family members about the upcoming reunion. She said she tries to set realistic expectations for the spouses, especially when many of them are experiencing their first deployment.

"Often spouses think of their reunion like it'll be another honeymoon, but that isn't the case," said Bainter. "I want them to know that things might not go as smoothly as they are picturing and that that's okay."



Crishelle Ildefonso, 5, makes a welcome home poster for her father who is currently deployed to Afghanistan. (Photo by Capt. Christy Stravolo)

See **COUNTDOWN** page 6

Reservist revitalizes language, fosters community

By Staff Sgt. Jennie Chamberlin
624th Regional Support Group Public Affairs

Guam, an island whose native people enjoy a rich history and culture, is facing the decline, and possibly loss of, its native tongue Chamoru, a Malayo-Polynesian language spoken in the Mariana islands by 47,000 people. This is due to the wide influence of English as the dominant language of business, media and the military there.

Senior Master Sgt. Ray Arceo, a Reservist with the 44th Aerial Port Squadron, raised in the language by a grandmother who spoke it exclusively, decided that something had to be done before it was too late.

In 2004, Sergeant Arceo and his wife Anne Marie conducted a survey concerning the use of the Chamoru language on Guam. Their findings suggested that primary speakers were members of the older generations and that the language was seldom spoken among families.

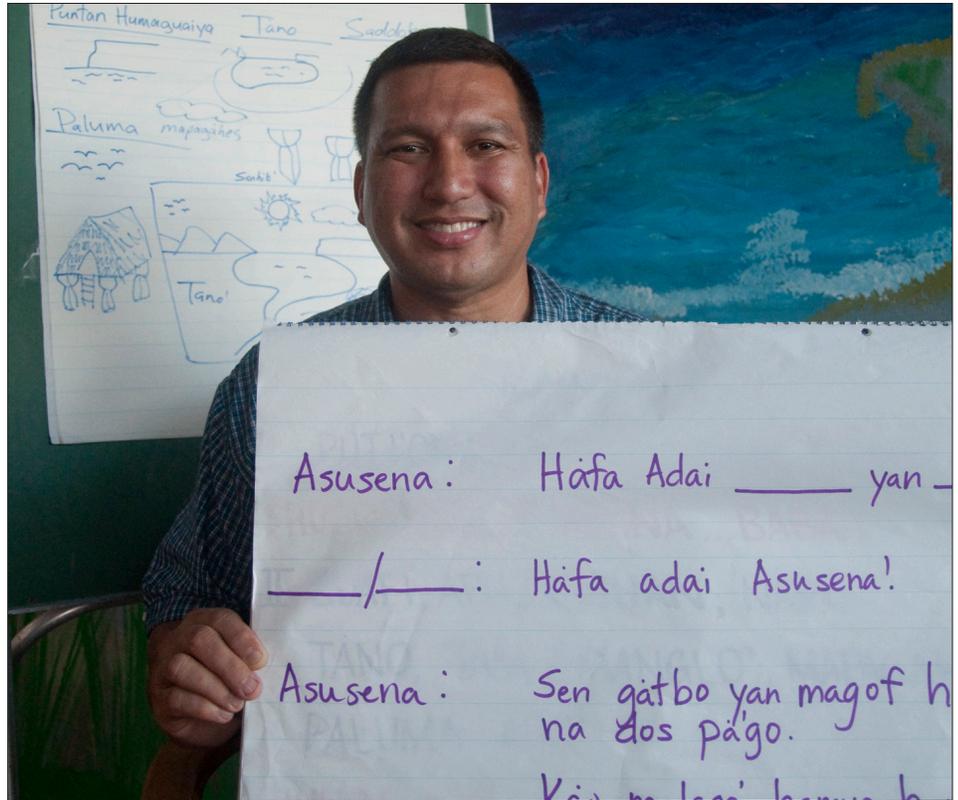
To change this they created Hurão Inc, a non-profit organization (named after a chief who resisted Spanish colonization in the 17th century) dedicated to educating children and their parents about the Chamorro culture.

Using the example of Hawaiian and Maori language immersion programs as their guide, their first step was creating a summer camp for kids geared to immerse children in Chamoru.

"Most of the parents' reaction was 'This is another daycare, right?' At the end of the summer, parents were shocked," he said. "They had no idea that the goal was to teach them language and culture."

Since then the school has grown to include a daily after-school program, which includes instruction in traditional Chamorro skills such as weaving, carving, and cooking for children, and classes for parents as well.

"The afterschool program just came



Senior Master Sgt. Ray Arceo, 44th Aerial Port Squadron started a nonprofit organization, devoted to educating children and their parents about the Chamorro culture. He hopes to encourage families to speak Chamoru in their homes and keep the language and culture alive. (Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel)

together because of the support of our parents and the interest of our students," Sergeant Arceo said. "They love the program. It was the parents that prompted us to keep the program going, and we've been doing it for six years."

"Hurão has provided us with a great opportunity to provide motivation within our family and bring us back to the roots, bring us back to the whole concept of the Chamorro family and to preserve it," said Master Sgt. John Hernandez, one of several members of the 44th APS who has a child in the program.

"It was our children that prompted us to teach other children," Sergeant Arceo said. "We knew the younger generation was going to keep the language alive."

"Gof ya-hu para bai hu kuentos gi fino' Chamoru," (I really enjoy learning Chamoru.) said Jeniece Ann, 11, the daughter of Sergeant

Hernandez. "I really want to pass it on to the people who really want to learn the language."

Sergeant Arceo's hope is that the school will encourage families to speak Chamoru in their homes and to keep the language, and thereby the Chamorro culture alive.

"Our school is making efforts to educate our children about where they came from, to give them back what is theirs, and that is the language," he said. "Without language you don't have culture. Language identifies a person. Language supports a culture," said Sergeant Arceo.

"The most rewarding part is watching the students learn the language and use it among one another. Every person that learns it is helping to keep Chamoru from extinction," he added.

"Even if it's just one student, we've made a difference."



Senior Airman Guy Hall, 624th Civil Engineer Squadron, Hickam AFB, Hawaii, and Chief Master Sgt. Mary F. Aguon, 44th Aerial Port Squadron, Andersen AFB, Guam, pose for a photo upon Airman Hall's graduation from Airman Leadership School. "The advantage to having attended ALS rather than CDC-style course was that there is a much broader array of lessons that are learned through one-on-one scenarios, speeches and team building exercises," said Airman Hall. "ALS is that vital 'stepping stone' into the reality of being a leader." (Courtesy Photo)

UTA Schedule

Hickam

March 6-7
April 10-11
May 1-2
June 12-13

Andersen

March 20-21
April 24-25
May 22-23
June 26-27

COUNTDOWN from page 4

Bainter, who travels throughout the Hawaiian islands consulting with military members and their families, has spoken to the 624th CES family members throughout the deployment and plans to come back for a couples workshop once the members return home.

Lois Matsuda, mother of Maj. Reid Matsuda, said her son has deployed two other times making this deployment a little easier to deal with.

"It's not that you get used to it, but we're doing fine," said Mrs. Matsuda. "We've been receiving boxes from Reid and just the other day we got a huge trunk in the mail so they must be coming home soon," she said. "It seems like the time has just flown by."

Sitting across from Mrs. Matsuda is five

year old Crishelle Ildefonso who is very focused as she writes her name across the top of the welcome home banner she's made for her dad, Tech. Sgt. Chris Ildefonso.

"I made that banner because Daddy's almost coming and it's also going to be Daddy's birthday in March," Crishelle said. "My Daddy is in Afghanistan to fight for freedom for the wars," she added.

Crishelle's mom, Thalia Ildefonso, said before her husband left they pulled out a world globe and showed their daughter where Afghanistan was compared to Hawaii. Apparently it didn't faze Crishelle.

"She's been just taking it all in," said Mrs. Ildefonso. "She's extremely excited now that her dad is coming home soon."

The 624th CES members are scheduled to return in March.