

## Commander's Corner

Aloha Lava Brigade,

On every OIF deployment, there are three killers that infiltrate the ranks of soldiers. These killers operate quietly, with unfortunate and sometimes deadly effectiveness. They have already harmed soldiers here on post.



Their names are: complacency, rumors, and the environment.

After four months on the ground, we've settled into our mission. Daily operations have become routine, if not boring at times. Do not allow complacency to settle in, as it may cause soldiers to lower safety standards or fall into patterns of convenience in their operations. The insurgents watch for opportunities and will not hesitate to use our own complacency against us. Complacency on guard duty, in maintenance shops, during searches at ECPs, or on combat patrols can lead to avoidable accidents or leave us vulnerable to enemy activities.

Complacency may also lead to negligent discharges of weapons. Negligent discharges have injured as well as taken the lives of many soldiers in Iraq. Negligence is inexcusable, and I will not stand for it. Negligence is the failure to exercise reasonable care or the neglect of duties; it is the indifference to safety and military standards. Make no mistake, negligence will be treated as a criminal act, especially if a soldier is killed or injured as a result. If you make it a habit to check your weapon's arming status constantly and always follow the proper clearing procedures, you'll never have a problem with a negligent discharge.

*(Continued on page 19)*

## CSM's Message

Since the last article, I've had the opportunity to visit with more 29th BCT soldiers. It was a good feeling to be able to greet new soldiers arriving in Camp Doha, Kuwait from Fort Carson for the first time. Those soldiers had that same bewildered look just like we did when we arrived here 4 months ago. I was glad that I could talk to them before they broke up to go to their different units.



Due to space limitations, I can't go into detail about some of my battlefield circulation. My visit to Kuwait Naval Base and the SPOD (Surface Port of Debarcation) allowed me to see how our 1-487th Field Artillery and some of the 227th Engineer Company troops are doing there. They are in good spirits and take their job seriously.

The following week, I flew down to the International Zone and visited the 1-184th Infantry Battalion and some of the E Battery, 216th Air Defense Artillery soldiers. They have an important job performing security and helping to protect local infra-structure such as the power plant and refinery. Besides that, they have a soft side and work humanitarian missions, too. I watched as they visited a family basically living in a dump, and handed out donated supplies.

The week after, I visited the 2-299th Infantry Battalion soldiers at Camp Victory. They are the SECFOR or Security Force for not only their camp, but the surrounding camps. Camp Victory is home to the Multi-National Force and Multi-National Corps – Iraq. "Second Batt" has a very large area to cover both in and outside the perimeter, or "wire". The Alaskan soldiers,

*(Continued on page 19)*

# MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR

Aloha!

During recent Memorial Day services, Hawai‘i paid tribute to all the men and women in uniform who sacrificed their lives in defense of our great state and nation. We are especially saddened by the loss of service members who paid the ultimate price in Iraq and Afghanistan. Their courage, duty and honor will never be forgotten.

Recently, my Administration was proud to honor the next generation of talented young men and women who aspire to serve this great country. As part of an “Excellence in Education” celebration held at Washington Place, Lt. Governor Aiona and I recognized more than 30 outstanding Hawai‘i high school students who competed against thousands nationwide for Reserve Officer Training Corps Scholarships. These exceptional students will participate in ROTC programs at universities and colleges around the country and will be commissioned as officers following graduation.



*Photo provided by the Governor's Office*

In addition, I am happy to announce that more than 30 topnotch Hawai‘i students received appointments this year to study at America’s prestigious military service academies and preparatory schools. Two of these students will attend the U.S. Military Academy at West Point starting next month. Lt. Governor Aiona personally recognized these future leaders in a special ceremony at the State Capitol, while their families and teachers looked on.

This month, I will lead a business, technology, tourism, arts and culture, and educational mission to China and Korea. During that time, I look forward to meeting with members of the 8th Army HQ in Seoul, Korea, and troops from the 2nd Division serving at the demilitarized zone.

Finally, I want to thank Mid-Pacific Country Club, which sponsored a charity golf tournament to purchase phone cards for soldiers of the 29th Brigade. Over \$30,000 was raised, and 3,000 100-minute phone cards were generously donated to the Hawai‘i National Guard for “Operation Phone Home” so that you, our dedicated troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, can keep in touch with your loved ones back home.

On behalf of the people of Hawai‘i, we are proud of and grateful for the courageous efforts of Hawai‘i’s 29th Brigade Combat Team. You are in our hearts and prayers as we wait for your safe return.

Malama Pono,

Governor Linda Lingle

## ***NEWS FROM THE FIELD***

### **Lt. Col. Hara leads infantry at Camp Victory**

By Sgt. Lauran Robinson

BAGHDAD – The commanding officer of 2nd Battalion, 299th Infantry, Lt. Col. Kenneth Hara, demonstrates determination and experience, and maintains his Soldier's morale as he leads his troops through Operation Iraqi Freedom III.

Lt. Col. Hara began his military career in 1984 when he enlisted in the Hawaii Army National Guard as a helicopter mechanic. "I joined the military for two reasons. The first was for the benefits, especially the GI Bill for college," he said. He earned a bachelor's degree in human services from Hawaii Pacific University. "The second reason was because the rest of my family was in the Hawaii Guard."

With aspirations of becoming a helicopter pilot, Hara graduated from Officer Candidate School in 1987, from the Hawaii Military Academy, now known as 298th Regional Training Institute. Instead of becoming a pilot, he followed his father's advice and became an infantry officer. Still determined to fly, he later attended flight school at Fort Rucker, Ala.

Lt. Col. Hara has worked in different fields and levels of command, preparing him for his current position. In 1991, he gave up flying UH-1 helicopters to work full time as an active duty guardsman in the operations section of 2nd Bn., 299th Inf. He was later attached to the 25th Infantry Division Rear Operations Center as an operations officer. The mission he supported there was similar to the current operations his unit is conducting in Iraq. In August 2004, Lt. Col. Hara assumed command of the 2nd Bn., 299th Inf., taking on his most challenging role thus far. He has adopted tactics, techniques and procedures learned throughout his military career.

Lt. Col. Hara leads a light infantry unit which has been tasked with providing force protection at key locations, and patrols around Camp Victory. "I am impressed with the Soldiers in their various missions, from patrols to



*Photo by Sgt. Lauran Robinson*

security, they are getting national recognition for their efforts" said Lt. Col. Hara.

To maintain the morale of his troops, Lt. Col. Hara brings some Hawaiian culture to Camp Victory by sharing some of his favorite pastimes, playing his guitar and singing Hawaiian music. He has been rehearsing with other Soldiers in the unit for a hula show that takes place on May 27, in celebration of Asian Pacific Appreciation Month.

The father of five children – Kristin, 15; Julia, 13; Nichole, 12; Justin, 9 and Alicia, 5 – Lt. Col. Hara says his top priority after this tour is to spend time with his family.

### **The "Koa" Security Mission**

By Capt. Kyle Yonemura

CAMP VICTORY, IRAQ-The 2nd Battalion, 299<sup>th</sup> Infantry, also known as the "Koa Battalion," is stationed at Camp Victory, Baghdad, and is tasked with a variety of missions there. The battalion is lead by Lt. Col. Kenneth Hara, who has been its commander for about 2 years. The battalion is supplemented by Company A, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 297<sup>th</sup> Infantry, from the Alaska Army National Guard. The battalion gets its name from the Hawaiian word "koa" which means "warrior."

## NEWS FROM THE FIELD

Camp Victory sits on the grounds of former dictator Saddam Hussein's Baghdad palace complex. Many of the lavish structures Saddam built are now being occupied by units stationed there, including the soldiers of the Koa Battalion. Accommodations for the soldiers range from rooms in ornate palaces, to humble trailers. Saddam's main palace, called Al Faw, as well as most of the other palaces built for his sons and other family members are built either in the middle of or along the shores of several huge man-made lakes.

Al Faw is being used as an administrative building and is guarded by soldiers from Headquarters, Headquarter's Company. Since they took over this duty, Lt Col. Hara has received reports praising the courtesy and "Aloha Spirit" the soldiers from Hawaii exude while performing their security mission there.

In addition to protecting Al Faw, the soldiers of the Koa Battalion also man five of Camp Victory's entry control points, known as ECPs. ECP 1A allows Department of Defense and military convoys into the base and is manned by the soldiers of Co. A from Kauai. Route Irish, a.k.a. "IED Alley" ends at this ECP. Spc. Jimmy Tumbaga has grown used to the sounds of battle further up the road from this ECP. "Almost everyday I hear explosions," he said. According the Sgt 1<sup>st</sup> Class Philip Kamakea, the soldiers who man the ECP and the tow-

ers that overlook it took small arms fire nearly every day during the month of April from the neighboring town of Al Farat. The soldiers of Co. A stand in the blistering heat on the black asphalt road wearing all of their equipment during 12 hour long shifts, checking vehicles and occupants to ensure the safety of those on the base.



*Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura*

**Spc. Denny Tabura checks out a truck prior to allowing it into the base.**

ECP 8 is manned by the soldiers of Co. B. This ECP controls the ingress and egress of base workers, Global Security (a private security firm) employees, and military personnel from the Baghdad International Airport, aka BIAP. Pvt. Kyle Nagata from Maui spent May 10, his 19<sup>th</sup> birthday, inspecting vehicles on one of his normal 12 hour guard shifts. With only one day off every 2 weeks, Pvt. Nagata described the work as "hot and tiring."

ECP 7 is also manned by soldiers from Co. B. This ECP is used by military personnel as well as DoD workers and leads to the exterior of the base. Spc. Dane Shiraki, a full time student from Maui mans an M240B machine-gun there. He described the long hours as "rough," "I really miss surfing," he said. Swirls of dust from the unpaved road cover the soldiers in a light brown powder as tracked vehicles pour through the ECP. According to Shiraki, in the first week of May, a lengthy firefight broke out right next to the ECP. "I feel like



*Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura*

**Spc Chris Kealoha mans his 50 Cal. at the ready at ECP1A**

## NEWS FROM THE FIELD

I'm doing something meaningful," said 19 year old Spc. Ryan Billaber as he over watched the ECP for suspicious vehicles or activity from a forward tower. "This experience has really helped me to grow up," he said.

ECP 2 is the main point of entry for the hundreds of Iraqis who work on the base along with the many dozens of vehicles they bring in. "[Dozens of] trucks line up here every day along with [several hundred] pedestrians," said 1st Lt. Chad Williams, who oversees operations there during the day. This gate is also manned by the soldiers of Co. A.

ECP 5 is manned by the soldiers of Co. D, Co. C, and a few soldiers from HHC. "We've made lots of improvements since we took over," said Sgt 1<sup>st</sup> Class Regan Pelekai. Before making any changes, Pelekai sought input from all of the soldiers who man the ECP. The input paid off. From being nothing more than a gated road with a tent on it, the ECP now features overhead cover, bunkers, improved security measures, a graded road and a holding area for local nationals who wish to enter there. "It's a lot safer for both us and the local nationals who come in this way," said Pelekai. ECP 5 serves base vendors, local Iraqis, as well as civilian contractors.

The soldiers who man the ECPs work long hours under extremely hot, dusty and at times hazardous conditions, however, the mission these soldiers perform day after day is a critical one for the base's security. The humility and dedication as well as the aloha with which the "local boys" from Hawaii perform their ECP duties is noteworthy.



*Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura*

**Spc Ryan Billaber keeps a vigilant watch while guarding ECP 7.**

### Abu Ghraib Patrol

By Capt. Kyle Yonemura

ABU GHRAIB, IRAQ—Aside from its mission of securing entry control points, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 299<sup>th</sup> Infantry patrols an area in Abu Ghraib, about 30 km west of Baghdad. On May 11, 2005, we joined infantrymen from Company B who were about to conduct a routine patrol through a rural area outside the city, made infamous by the prison located there. Capt. Paul Agena, the company's commander, explained that they have named their area of operations (AO) "Black Dog," as a comedic reference to the culinary preferences of some Pacific cultures. Capt. Agena laughed as he explained that the inference was completely lost on soldiers not from Hawaii, some of whom thought the name was a very rugged sounding one for an AO.



*Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura*

**SFC Regan Pelekai shows off recent upgrades he and his men have made to their ECP.**

## ***NEWS FROM THE FIELD***

We conducted a standard patrol briefing, however, prior to leaving we got word that Iraqi soldiers were pursuing armed insurgents into Co. B's sector. Our patrol assignment was quickly changed into a blocking mission to intercept them. While an assignment such as this might excite less experienced soldiers, Co. B has been conducting combat operations for months now, and such assignments are routine for them. As we prepared to leave the wire, we received word that the insurgents had been captured, so we continued on with our former mission—a search of a farmhouse for weapons to be followed by the setting up of a traffic control point. The patrol would be lead by Capt. Agena and his 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon Leader, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Justin Otto.

The area surrounding Abu Ghraib features lush green farmlands interspersed with some forested areas. We navigated the rutted dirt roads through the area. The roads are raised so that they are not subject to flooding during irrigation or the rainy season. We bounced along the edges of one of the roads with a river below us on one side and at times a sheer drop on the other until we were near our objective, a small farm on the perimeter of a village in Co. B's sector. We dismounted and approached the village cautiously. None of the soldiers were surprised to find the family standing outside its

humble farm house awaiting our arrival. The communication network among the Iraqi villagers letting each other know that our patrol was in the area is an amazing one.



*Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura*

**Cpt. Agena and 2nd Lt. Otto lead a patrol through a village in Abu Ghraib.**

We cordoned off the small farm and the soldiers asked for and received permission to conduct a search. The search turned up nothing, and the soldiers thanked the family for its cooperation. The entire transaction was conducted in a respectful manner, and there were no hard feelings either way. I took some digital photos of the family and showed them how they looked on the image screen while other soldiers enjoyed speaking with the family through our interpreter.

The patrol moved into the center of the village and some of the soldiers began passing out candy, while Spc. Justin Tavares, a 27 year old warehouseman from Honolulu passed out much needed school supplies to the village children, "I like the feeling of helping people," said Tavares. "I like focusing on changing the way the children feel about us," said Capt Agena, a former elementary school teacher from Ewa. "I can't change the way some of the adults feel about us, but some day these children will grow up and remember that the Americans were nice to them while we were here," he said.



*Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura*

**Soldiers conduct a recon before moving into position to search a farm for hidden weapons**

## ***NEWS FROM THE FIELD***

For Sgt. Eric Kritz, who pulled perimeter security for the patrol, combat is nothing new; the 36 year old accountant from Honolulu served in Operation Just Cause where he conducted a combat parachute jump into Panama with the famed 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division. Kritz summed up how he felt in one sentence, “I’m homesick and I miss my family-like everyone else.”

We left the village and returned to our Humvees, proceeding to a paved intersection a few miles away. The soldiers set up a traffic check point at the intersection, stopping vehicles that came through, and checking the occupants and vehicles for weapons. Activities such as these “flash check points” deny the insurgents free movement through the area. After making some checks, the soldiers shut the check point down and returned to base.



*Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura*

### **Spc Justin Tavares hands out school supplies to grateful children in Abu Ghriab**

Although this was a routine patrol for the soldiers, with nothing eventful happening, Capt. Agena informed me that Co. B patrols have taken sporadic small arms fire since they took over this sector of Abu Ghraib. “Mostly it’s been pot shots here and there,” he said. “Our aggressive patrols have kept [enemy] activity to a minimum here.”

## **Soldiers from Hawaii provide security at ECP 2**

By Sgt. Lauran Robinson

BAGHDAD – The Soldiers of 1st Platoon, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 299th Infantry ensure security at Entry Control Point 2 with a lengthy yet effective process, which is appealing to local nationals because they feel safe using this gate to get to work everyday.



*Photo By Sgt. Lauran Robinson*

### **Spc. Arnold Sagun of Co. A, 2nd Bn. 299th Inf. maintains security at ECP 2.**

The Soldiers start their day with a briefing, hours before opening the gate. At 7:00 a.m., they open ECP 2 where hundreds of local nationals and vehicles with cargo are lined up, waiting to enter Camp Victory.

Local nationals entering the base begin the process at Check Point 1. The Soldiers check identification cards and thoroughly search every person entering the gate. Contraband such as: cell phones, cameras, thumb drives, DVDs and weapons are confiscated. Any local nationals caught with contraband are denied entry. Iraqis with a permit may carry one pistol for protection. Upon arrival, pistols are stored at the gate and returned when the worker leaves the post.

Other Soldiers check vehicles, and guide them through

## NEWS FROM THE FIELD

the gate to Check Point 2, where a thorough screening is done. Vehicles are lined up with hoods, trunks and doors open. Trained dogs are used to assist in the search. Trucks carrying cargo are inspected in detail. If a questionable vehicle enters the checkpoint, everything at ECP 2 comes to a halt, and the Soldiers close the gate for further investigation.

At Check Point 3, Iraqis must show legal identification to receive a badge. These badges permit access to the post, and indicate restrictions. Sgt. Bryan Doo of Co. A, 2nd Bn., 299th Inf., has become a subject matter expert on identifying fake ID cards, and has taken the initiative to begin writing a standard operating procedure on the topic. He keeps his team current on the latest forging techniques, confiscating an average of 8 to 20 fake ID cards a day.

Finally, the workers are assigned security escorts while in Camp Victory. Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 2nd Bn., 299th Inf., ensures there is at least one escort for every five Iraqis.

The Iraqis employed on Camp Victory work at various jobs ranging from construction to engineering. They work for the Department of Defense or base contractors, such as KBR and Flour Daniels.



*Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura*

**Soldiers of 1st Plt., Co. A 299th Inf. Bn. conduct pat down searches at ECP 2.**



*Photo By Sgt. Lauran Robinson*

**2nd Lt. Chad Daniels shows leaders of Co., A, the latest forging techniques discovered at badging.**

Despite the lengthy entrance process, hundreds of workers use ECP 2 everyday. “I understand it is for security and I feel safe” said Bashar, who works in the media center and does not mind waiting an average of one to two hours at ECP 2 everyday. “The gate [Soldiers] are very good people”.

The Soldiers of 1st Plt., Co. A, 2nd Bn., 299th Inf. work six days a week, over 14 hours a day, ensuring safety at ECP 2. To overcome the language barrier, time is set aside for the Soldiers to learn Arabic. The Soldiers maintain high morale, knowing that their job is important. “The [Soldiers] are doing fantastic. They are motivated because their hearts are into the mission.” said 2nd Lt. Chad Daniels, the 1st Plt. Leader of Co. A.

## The Dragoons of Baghdad

By Capt Kyle Yonemura

CAMP VICTORY, IRAQ- On May 11, 2005, we met up with Co. A, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 297<sup>th</sup> Infantry of the Alaska Army National Guard’s “Dragoons” to patrol their sector of Baghdad with them. Co. A is attached to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 299<sup>th</sup> Infantry in Baghdad, and works out of Camp Victory. According to Cpl. Khris White, the Alaskan infantrymen call themselves “Dragoons” as, “during the Napoleonic Wars as well as the American Civil War, mounted soldiers called Dragoons rode into battle on horseback and dismounted to fight.”

On that day, the Dragoons were preparing to conduct a

## NEWS FROM THE FIELD

mounted patrol of three of the towns in their area of operations, the Airport Village, Al Farat, and Iraqi Family Village. A mounted patrol is a patrol conducted in vehicles, usually gun trucks i.e., Humvees outfitted with an assortment of weaponry. All three towns border Camp Victory. A standard patrol brief was given by the patrol leader, Staff Sgt. Chris Cederberg, a 35 year old railroad engineer from Anchorage Alaska.



*Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura*

### **Sgt. Chris Kratt and Staff Sgt. Roy Brendible hand out candy in a village in Baghdad**

After our patrol brief, we “mounted up,” exited the secure entry control point, and drove a patrol route through the surrounding area into Airport Village, checking for suspicious activities that might indicate the presence of insurgents. We eventually pulled into a local schoolyard and were quickly surrounded by Iraqi children. Since taking over responsibility for patrolling this sector, the infantrymen have formed friendships with the area’s children. The children were happy to see the Dragoons, and soon Frisbees were being thrown, games of marbles were being played and toys and other goodies were being handed out by the soldiers.

After the social stop, we left the village to the waves of the smiling children and continued on our patrol, bouncing along roads filled with potholes through neighborhoods of rundown low-rise concrete buildings. The neighborhoods here have a tough look to them; blanketed with trash, rubble, and abandoned cars they re-

mind me in some ways of public housing projects I’ve seen in the US. We traveled along a stretch of Route Irish, alert for signs of IEDs that are frequently placed along this roadway. The day is slightly overcast, and the lack of children playing on the streets has the soldiers worried as this sometimes indicates the presence of terrorists.

We stopped in a trash strewn square in Al Farat and as if by magic, children begin appearing from every direction, sprinting toward the Dragoons. Many of the children were without shoes and ran barefoot through the festering trash. I’ve noticed that as in other small towns across this country, there exists some form of communication within the villages that’s faster than using the telephone. Although the children give the soldiers a warm welcome, the adults are for the most part absent or aloof. The Al Farat area has been used by insurgents to fire on Camp Victory’s ECP 1 almost daily.



*Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura*

### **SSG Chris Cedarberg gives a stuffed animal to a little girl in Baghdad.**

After passing out sandals, toys and candy in Al Farat, we continued our patrol, ending up in Iraqi Family Village. The children here are much more aggressive than the other villages I’ve been to. They pushed and shoved each other to get to the soldiers that were handing out candy and toys; one boy tries to reach into one of our humvees to steal something. According to Staff Sgt. Roy Brendible, these are the children of squatters in the

## NEWS FROM THE FIELD



Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura

**Sgt. Chris Kratt gives a barefoot child a new set of sandals.**

area. The soldiers, as with the other stops, are familiar with the children—if not by name, they know them by face. I asked Spc. Mart Velasco, a 39 year old aerospace security guard from Kodiak what he thought of his mission here, “People like us,” he said, “we’re making a difference.”

It hasn’t always been toys and candy runs for the Dragoons. They’ve made contact with insurgent forces on a number of occasions. One instance occurred on an afternoon in mid-April, in Al Farat. According the Capt. Wayne Mitchell, the company’s outer perimeter patrol lead by Staff Sgt. Brent Bartlett had cordoned off an unexploded rocket propelled grenade (RPG) that had been discovered and reported by a young Iraqi boy. While holding a perimeter around the explosive to keep the community safe, a group of four vehicles suddenly pulled up along Route Irish. According to Capt. Mitchell, the vehicle occupants quickly began setting up a machine-gun, while other insurgents readied an RPG to fire. The machine gunner in the turret of one of the gun-trucks, Spc. Enrico Sanchez, immediately opened fire on the RPG team, causing them to fire the projectile hastily. The RPG that had been meant for the last Humvee in the formation instead streaked into the ground in front of it. Staff Sgt. Bartlett initially thought the explosion of the RPG round was an IED. “I started

running toward the last Humvee to see if any of my guys had been injured. While running I heard the snap of rounds over my head and automatic weapons fire being exchanged,” said Barlett, who immediately took cover. He began using the Humvees for cover as he moved toward the fighting. The firefight between the insurgents and the Dragoon patrol was short lived, with the insurgents running away. “Our M240 [machine]gunner on our trail vehicle saved the day,” said Staff Sgt. Bartlett, “if he [Spc. Sanchez] hadn’t been alert and fired right away the RPG might have hit one of our vehicles.”

## Crusaders remain united in Baghdad

By Spc. Jayson Howell

BAGHDAD — The infantrymen of 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment know that the soldier to their left and right are more vital to mission success than their equipment or their training. For three young men from Richmond, Calif., a friendship born in high school has only been strengthened by the rigors of serving together in combat.

Spc. Justin Flood, 21, Spc. John Taylor IV 20, and Spc. Brandon Baker, 20, were all active in sports at Modesto Christian High School, home of the “Crusaders.” Competing on the school’s football and wrestling teams together, the three built a quick friendship that carried them through high school — and beyond.

In the spring of 2002, with graduation fast approaching, Flood began looking for direction in his life. Though offered a football scholarship, he chose to enlist first in the California Army National Guard before enrolling in college. He approached Taylor with his decision, and the two enlisted together as infantrymen in May of 2002.

In delayed entry training, the pair began learning the basics of Army life. One weekend a month they would attend weekend drills; learning military bearing, protocol and basic skills to prepare for basic training at Fort

## ***NEWS FROM THE FIELD***

Benning, Ga. In January, 2003, they began the arduous 16 week process of becoming not just soldiers, but infantrymen.

During training they called home whenever they could, talking to family, and also to their high school friend Baker who was finishing his senior year. Their accounts of the realities of training only served to inspire Baker who followed them to the infantry a year later.

With high school behind them and their training complete, Flood and Taylor returned to the challenge of facing the rest of their lives. Flood attended college in pursuit of his associate degree in criminal justice. Taylor moved to Pennsylvania. They stayed in touch with Baker and with each other. Taylor even returned to Fort Benning to attend Baker's graduation, a trip Flood had planned to join until he learned the date conflicted with additional training he had signed up for.

Though Taylor was living hundreds of miles from his former schoolmates, the three vowed that if ever any of them were mobilized, they would reunite to serve together. A few months later, in the summer of 2004, that vow was tested. The 1st Bn., 184th Inf. Regt. received its orders to deploy with the 29th Brigade Combat Team in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Flood and Baker, both working in the battalion operations section, were thrilled when Taylor was assigned to their unit, having just transferred from the Pennsylvania National Guard.

The three now serve together in the battalion headquarters at Forward Operating Base Falcon in Baghdad. Baker, the Battalion Commander's driver, and Flood, his gunner, still work in battalion operations when not on missions. Taylor, assigned full-time to the battalion headquarters, still manages to get out on missions with his friends.

Though they have at times found themselves separated, they always try to ensure that they'll be kept together. During a recent restructuring of assigned billets, Flood and Baker found themselves in a three man room with another squad member, while Taylor was billeted on the other side of the FOB. In making room for a fourth person and asking that Taylor be assigned to their bil-



*Photo By Spc. Jayson Howell*

**(From left) Spc. Baker, Spc. Taylor and Spc. Flood — friends since high school — spend time together before a mission in Baghdad.**

lets, they were admonished that “they’d have to live together for the entire year” if the request were approved. They wouldn’t have it any other way.

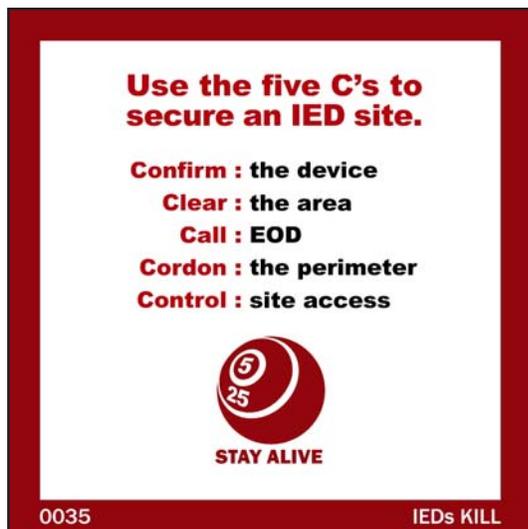
The three don’t always get along of course. Spc. Baker is the first to admit that one of the many things he and Flood have in common is a short fuse. “We have really hot tempers,” said Baker, “sometimes we get into it.” Each of them can easily point out faults in the other two, but they’re even quicker to point out virtues that each possess.

“I can trust them with anything... I trust them with my life” said Flood. Baker and Taylor silently nodded, affirming that the sentiment was equally true for each of them.

### **‘5-25’ campaign increases IED awareness**

MNC-I Public Affairs

Improvised explosive devices are the number one killers of America’s sons and daughters serving in Iraq, and the Joint IED Defeat Task Force at Camp Victory is kicking off an information campaign May 25 in an effort to increase IED awareness and save lives.



The “5-and-25” campaign, as it is called, is designed to increase IED awareness and reduce the effectiveness of the mountain of makeshift bombs being produced by insurgents. Officials say the deceptive devices account for more than half of the coalition deaths that have occurred since the start of the Iraq war in March 2003.

Efforts to date have reduced the IED casualty rate by more than 45 percent during the period of April 2004 through February 2005 – but that is not seen as enough.

“IEDs are our number one killers here,” said Eric Eglund, who works at the Iraq headquarters of Joint IED Defeat Task Force at Camp Victory. The task force is responsible for developing innovative ways to rid the country of IEDs.

The deadly devices are considered a highly effective means of killing people because they can quickly be set up anywhere and be set to blow at any time. They have been disguised as virtually everything from tree trunks and dead animals to bicycles and pregnant women. Royal Australian Air Force Group Capt. David Stockdale, deputy chair of the IED Working Group at Multi-National Corps-Iraq, said there is no limit to what insurgents will use for IEDs.

Stockdale, who serves as the equivalent of a colonel in the American Air Force, has been actively working the issue of IEDs and their effects since arriving in Iraq a few months ago.

“The IED is one of the most dangerous threats to coalition forces,” Stockdale said. “To mitigate their effects, we wanted to put together an information campaign that would make the IED reaction drill a normal part of daily activities for the coalition forces.”

Eglund said several different counter-IED organizations were already delivering good messages and possible solutions out there, but with no real emphasis or impact to the troops who needed it the most. “It wasn’t as good as it could be. Some channels just naturally don’t flow as well as others,” he said.

The working group, deputy-chaired by Stockdale, represents a cross-section of coalition forces formed as a result of this issue.

The group’s solution for getting vital information to the forces required three objectives: First, ensure information gets to those troops who need it most; second, develop an effective counter-IED organization that can take the fight to the enemy; third, produce pinpointed products from one organization which can be approved and delivered in a timely fashion.

“IEDs can be any time, anywhere, any shape; the trends change,” Stockdale said. “The aim is to get the message to the field. It’s dangerous out there.”

To push information to the troops anywhere and any time trends change, the working group assembled a small team of designers to brainstorm effective ways to get the word out. The first idea also seemed the most obvious one to start the campaign — military publications.

Task force members agreed they needed some common thread to tie all the messages together – like a logo.

“The [designers] suggested we needed to have [a logo] that everybody recognizes,” said Lt. Col. Theodore Martin, field team leader, Joint IED Defeat Task Force-Iraq. “5-and-25” became that logo. “The most important thing coalition forces can accomplish is situational awareness when they’re outside the wire; it is the most basic [tactic] that you have to master.”

“This seemed appropriate because 5-and-25 means awareness,” said Master Sgt. William Johnson, one of three designers. “5-and-25 means checking the area around you for a threat. Every time you stop outside a secure area, you always should check. Not checking could get you killed.”

More specifically, 5-and-25 requires that troops look for anything out of the ordinary within a five-meter radius of their vehicles, according to counter-IED policies. If halted long enough, forces should then exit their vehicles and conduct a 25-meter sweep around their position. Halting for as little as four minutes can prove costly.

“Evidence shows that [many] Soldiers, who are at a short halt [for as little as] four to five minutes, are getting hit by IEDs near their vehicles,” Martin said.

Besides the recognizable 5-and-25 logo getting printed in military publications, the campaign will also produce messages to other outlets that could potentially reach as far away as the Department of Defense and Afghanistan.

“This time it’s [newspaper ads], next time it will be commercials on TV and radio,” Martin said. “After that, we’re looking at expanding it. The sky is the limit.”

Included in the laundry list of ideas are bumper stickers, flash screens on Web sites, stress balls and even Frisbees, according to Martin.

Whatever the means, Stockdale said the message must stay focused with one purpose: to save lives.

“There’s no predicting exactly where, when or how you’re going to meet an IED when you’re driving around,” Stockdale said. “Practicing those basic methods and regularly using them significantly enhances your chances of survival.”

## The Heart of a Patriot

By Capt. Kyle Yonemura

Hollywood star Denzel Washington and his family recently visited soldiers at the Brook Army Medical Center, a hospital on Ft. Sam Houston, in San Antonio, Texas. The Brook Army Medical Center is known for its advanced treatment of burn victims. The post has buildings called “Fisher Houses,” where the families of soldiers can stay at little or no charge, while their soldier is being treated. Ft Sam Houston has a number of these houses, however, with ongoing wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, they are often filled.

While Mr. Washington was visiting the medical center, he received a tour of one of the Fisher Houses. He inquired how much it would cost to build one. After being told, Mr. Washington produced his check book and wrote a check for the full amount—on the spot. The soldiers were overwhelmed with his kindness, generosity, and patriotism.



*Photo Courtesy of Brook Medical Center*

**Denzel poses with the staff of the Brook Army Medical Center**

## NEWS FROM THE FIELD

### Still Going For Broke

The 29th BCT Public Affairs Officer, Capt. Kyle Yonemura, has been corresponding with a 100th Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team veteran's group in California. The veterans just held a reunion and wanted to share some photos of themselves as well as offer a few words of encouragement. This group is made up of World War II veterans from Co. E.

Hello,

Here are some photos I'd like to share with the current 442nd soldiers deployed in Iraq. We had about 12 veterans present at our reunion, but I was busy organizing the day to get a lot of photos done. But I grabbed a few of my friends that I have known for a while now at the end of the day when I had time to run and take pictures.



*Photo Courtesy of Michael Furukawa*

**Mas Tsuda and Ike Yamauchi were both members of Co. E, 442nd RCT**

These are all Co. E veterans. Lawson Sakai was a squad leader and was awarded the Purple Heart several times. He refused his last Purple Heart because he felt his wounds were too minor for an award. Mas Tsuda was interned in the camps when he volunteered (for service in the Army) with his best friend, they cut the wires surrounding the intern-

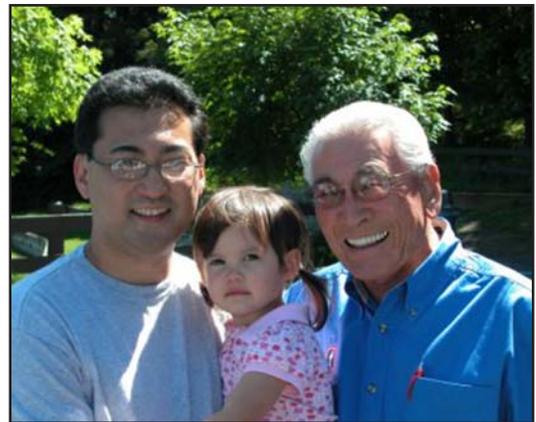


*Photo Courtesy of Michael Furukawa*

**From left to right: Hiro and Hisa Asai, Lawson Sakai, and William and Michael Hanley (the sons of Col. J. Hanley, the Commander of 2nd Battalion, 442nd RCT)**

ment camp to walk all night to the nearest recruiting station. His father did not approve of his volunteering at first, but Mas could not let his friend go into the war without him. Ike was severely wounded in the stomach during the war. The Hanley brothers never heard too much about the war through their father but the guys in Co. E have taken them in as if they were their own. Same goes for me. My cousin was in Co. M, KIA July 8, 1945. I knew the widow of Tad Masaoka (there were 3 brothers who went together to the war).

Hopefully you can use these photos for your next newsletter or at least show them to the current infantrymen of Co. E.



*Photo Courtesy of Michael Furukawa*

**Michael and Kira Furukawa and Lawson Sakai, Co E, 442nd RCT**

## ***NEWS FROM THE FIELD***

The veterans all wish you well and are sad to hear more Purple Hearts are being added to the tally but wish for a speedy recovery to all of the injured soldiers. They were very excited to see their Co. E banner being trooped and their colors for the regiment in that photo that you emailed. They want you all to come home safe, “No need for more Purple Hearts.” Mas said to me.

- Michael Furukawa

### **An American Story**

“Rising to the defense of their country, by the thousands they came, these young Japanese American soldiers from Hawaii, the states, America’s concentration camps, to fight in Europe and the Pacific during World War II. Looked upon with suspicion, set apart and deprived of their Constitutional rights, they nevertheless remained steadfast and served with indomitable spirit and uncommon valor, for theirs was a fight to prove loyalty. This legacy will serve as a sobering reminder that never again

shall any group be denied liberty and the rights of citizenship.”

Inscription on the “Go For Broke” Monument in Los Angeles, CA



*Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura*

An awards ceremony was held at 10:00 a.m., on May 2, 2005 to present the Purple Heart to five soldiers from the historic 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry Regiment who had been wounded when their combat patrols were attacked. The awards were presented by Brig. Gen. Joseph Chaves, the 29th Brigade Combat Team’s Commander in front of the 100-442nd’s Operations Center. The five awardees were: Capt. Jeffrey Wyatt, from Orange Park, Florida, Sgt. 1st Class Aaron Nakashima, from Honolulu, Hawaii, Sgt. Dominador Ruiz, from Honolulu, Hawaii, Specialist Milovale Soliata, from American Samoa and Private Adrian Quick from Fayetteville, North Carolina. All of the soldiers have recovered from their injuries and have returned to duty with the famed battalion.



## **STAFF SECTION**

### **29 BCT SAFETY**

#### **ELECTRICAL SAFETY And NEGLIGENT DISCHARGE**

*By Chief Warrant Officer Hargrave*

##### **ELECTRICAL SAFETY:**

Convert from 115 to 220 Volts of Electrical Power. When are you suppose to think about making that conversion? Is it immediately after the first time you experience a loss, frying that expensive Clock Radio or your favorite CD player? (“Oh no, I forgot the Power is different.”) No! Not at all, you should be completely aware of your surroundings. The electricity used in your work areas are important for you to know, especially when you are in a different country. It is a hard and expensive lesson, if you do not play it safe. Do your homework, and do not let it be the electrifying experience, from which you may not recover. Electrical safety, like all safety related activities and missions, is a leadership issue. Leaders must be alert and watch for signs of electrical leaks and overloads.

Since we depend on electricity for many activities, the potential for electrical hazards may increase as we adapt (plug in) our electrical equipment to the local electrical power systems. Leaders must ensure that soldiers do not create electrical hazards, and that all electrical equipment and wiring are compatible with the local electrical power system. Maintain vigilance to protect ourselves against this invisible “Enemy.” Report all electrical hazardous conditions to the appropriate personnel for correction and repairs. If you recognize signs of; burnt or discolored electrical wires, switch plates or outlets, flickering lights, strange sounds from appliances and frayed or lose wires, report them immediately to the chain-of-command and your Safety NCOs / Officers.

All incidents are preventable. Perform proper Risk Assessment to identify a hazard and implement controls to reduce the possibility of an incident happening. Supervise and enforce the standards. Know how to re-

act, if an electrical incident is evident. Immediately cut off power, pull the plug, before rendering assistance or moving a victim from an electrical accident scene. Symptoms for electrical shock are; loss of consciousness, not breathing, weak/nonexistent pulse and burn marks. Act quickly and perform CPR until victim has been revived or emergency personnel arrive. Victims are sometimes knowledgeable about working with electricity, but maybe over confident in their abilities. Where are the leaders?

Just over a year ago, several electrocution cases investigated were during the 2004 OIF II. Each case was preventable, with proper risk assessment and leadership involvement. You should practice electrical safety and stay alert to hazards, such as: keeping wires from wet areas, removing combustibles from electrical appliances, overloading power strips, the smelling of burning rubber or plastic and daisy chaining extension cords or power strips.

##### **NEGLIGENT DISCHARGE:**

WEAPONS HANDLING, WEAPONS CARRYING, WEAPONS CLEARING, WEAPONS SAFETY RULES, ACCIDENTAL / NEGLIGENT DISCHARGES AND LESSONS LEARNED. Have we really learned anything from our experience with weapons? As soldiers from our first day at basic training, that Drill Sergeant acted like your Mother, your Father and even God, when he trained you how to handle your weapon. Did we really learn anything? You were school trained, taught and re-taught several times over and then qualified as an Expert, Sharpshooter or Marksman, to shoot the paper targets standing still. Are we really qualified to handle weapons? Now in the war zone, we must display the quality of experience we learned, except now the targets are shooting back. New lesson to learn as we enter the battlefield, “GO Amber” we are going out the gate. “GO Red” we left the gate, stay alert and be ready to act. As we return and roll through the gate again, “CLEAR” your weapon and “GO Green” we are back on friendly ground.

## **STAFF SECTION**

Accidental/negligent discharges have continued throughout each deployment, for the same reasons but with different victims. A number of techniques were applied, attempting to reduce or eliminate accidental/negligent discharge, but the corrective action remains with soldiers. Soldiers need to adhere to and understand their weapons status requirements and leaders guidance to enforce those standards. "Oops! My Weapon Went Off." Cannot be reversed to bring someone back to life. Many accidental/negligent discharges reported in theater, were contributed to the 9MM Pistols. The identified cause is lack of knowledge, lack of procedure and lack of leadership supervision, not complying or maintaining the standards. Accidental/negligent discharge is a result of deviation from the established standards.

Safety has an important impact on how we conduct each task to complete assigned missions. Whatever the mission; convoys, escorts, guards or patrols the process of implementing safety into what we do affects our combat readiness. It comes down to this, soldiers do become complacent and leaders must maintain and enforce established standards. Non-complacent performance standards will increase productivity and sustain combat readiness.

Commanders are responsible for soldier safety and the quality of their safety program. Unit Safety Reps in each unit recommends to the commander sound principles for a successful safety program. Do not accept any unnecessary risk and ensure all risk decisions are made at the appropriate level.

**YOUR INVOLVEMENT SAVES LIVES**

**"BE SAFE — MAKE IT HOME"**

### **Passport to R&R Abroad**

CPT Lloyd Phelps II

Many Lava Brigade soldiers, deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, will return home to the beautiful shores of Hawaii to spend their much deserved fifteen-day R&R break. Some soldiers, however, may want to indulge their adventurous half, take advantage of the free government airfare, and travel abroad. Prior to packing their international to-go bags, these soldiers will need to insure they have a valid passport, and the necessary Army mandated pre-travel paperwork.

For first time passports, or renewals of passports 12 years or older, soldiers must appear in person at the U.S. embassy in Baghdad. The U.S. Department of State, through the embassy, issues the latest state-of-the-art passports. Soldiers must present a completed, but unsigned, DS-11 passport application, along with two recent identical 2" X 2" photographs with a plain white background. Applicants born in the United States must have an original birth certificate, with a raised state seal, from the state vital statistics office for the state in which they were born. (The embassy will not accept hospital issued birth certificates) Naturalized citizens must present an original naturalization certificate. Soldiers claiming U.S. citizenship through birth to American citizens while outside the U.S. must present an original Consular Report of Birth Abroad. All soldiers must provide proof of identity containing their name, and signature, along with a physical description or photograph. This can be a driver's license, certificate of naturalization or previous passport.

Applications for passports are accepted on a walk-in basis at the U.S. consular office located on the ground floor of the U.S. Embassy. Hours of operation are 1 to 4 PM, Sundays through Thursdays, and the \$97 fee is payable in U.S. dollars, cash only. Once approved, the soldier's application is forwarded to the U.S. National Passport Center, which issues a ten-year passport, though this process can take up to one month so soldiers must plan ahead.

## ***STAFF SECTION***

Prior to leaving theater for their R&R break, soldiers must go online and complete the level one anti-terrorism force protection certification course. This consists of a short block of instruction and test, after which soldiers must print out a certificate of completion to be included in their leave packet. Though soldiers received their level one certification prior to deploying to Iraq, they need to take the on-line exam in order to print out the required certificate.

Next, soldiers need to contact their unit travel representative to receive a threat brief and clearance for the country or theater they plan on visiting, and an individual force protection plan (IFPP Plan). Once soldiers have the three required documents, the level one anti-terrorism certification, theater or country clearance, and IFPP Plan, they must hand walk them to the 29<sup>th</sup> BCT Provost Marshal's Office (PMO). The PMO will then forward the documentation through command channels for the proper signatures, after which, it is added to the soldier's leave packet. Questions regarding these documents can be directed to the brigade PMO office.

Though this entire process may sound onerous and lengthy, soldiers wishing to travel internationally, and experience all the joys such adventure brings, will find the effort well worth it. The 29<sup>th</sup> BCT legal assistance office stands ready to answer any questions soldiers may have.

### **NEED TO SEE THE IG?**

MAJ William Foss, 29<sup>th</sup> BCT IG

29<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team soldiers have many resources available to them for assistance in solving problems. Primary among these resources, and most often the best choice, is a soldier's chain of command, to include his or her commander's open door policy. In addition, soldiers may request assistance from a Chaplain or an Equal Opportunity (EO) Representative. Another resource that's available to assist soldiers is the Brigade Inspector General (IG).

In addition to conducting inspections, inquiries, and investigations at the Commander's direction, one of the IG's primary missions is to assist soldiers with solving problems. The IG can assist a soldier with any problem within the Brigade Commander's jurisdiction. However, it is often appropriate for the IG to refer a soldier to another resource. For example, EO complaints may be made to the IG, but the IG will typically refer them to the EO Representative. Any soldier may present issues to the IG, and regulations prohibit Department of the Army (DA) personnel from taking any actions that restrict a soldier from filing a complaint with, seeking assistance from, or cooperating with an Inspector General. Additionally, DA personnel are also prohibited from taking any disciplinary or adverse actions against a soldier for filing a complaint with, seeking assistance from, or cooperating with an IG. However, if a soldier lies, knowingly provides false or misleading information, or knowingly makes false accusations to the IG, there are penalties, and any soldier doing so may be subject to disciplinary action. A soldier does not have to tell anyone why they want to see the IG. However, a soldier must have permission to be away from his or her duties if wishing to visit the IG during duty hours.

When seeing the IG, keep in mind that the IG is not a policy maker and can only recommend, not order a resolution. The IG's role is to advise the commander. Also, remember that IGs can only resolve an issue on the basis of fact. A claim that someone has violated the rules doesn't necessarily make it a fact, and claims must be supported by evidence. Additionally, note that the IG has a duty to protect confidentiality to the maximum extent possible. This is true for all persons who ask the IG for help, make a complaint or give evidence to the IG, assist the IG during an inspection or investigation, or otherwise interact with the IG. However, IGs never guarantee confidentiality because the nature of the complaint may require the IG to reveal the person's name in order to resolve the issue. If this is the case in a particular situation, the IG will let the complainant know.

## STAFF SECTION

Soldiers can contact the 29<sup>th</sup> BCT IG by calling DSN: 829-1125, or by stopping in at the IG office located in The Warrior Support Center (the trailers located on the north side of 1<sup>st</sup> COSCOM headquarters) on LSA Anaconda. The IG can take cases over the telephone, or a soldier can arrange for an appointment. To complain without fear of reprisal is the right of any soldier seeking IG help. After all, problem solving is the IG's primary mission.

### Commander's Corner

*(Continued from page 1)*

Rumors can quickly destroy the morale of a unit. If you are not certain about something you hear, ask your chain of command for clarification. Rumors spread like viruses. Don't spread the disease of a rumor to your buddies, as you're not doing them any favors if you provide them with suspect information.

The environment can be a deadly adversary. The desert heat is a silent killer. Know the signs of dehydration as well as the symptoms of heat injuries and monitor yourself and your fellow soldiers for them. Ensuring proper hydration is a critical soldier and leader responsibility. Exercise and drink a lot of water at every opportunity. Proper exercise will help you to acclimate to the coming summer.

Discipline and professionalism are the two powerful weapons we have to fight these silent killers. Hold yourselves and each other to the highest standards.

Be sure you apply this same level of discipline and professionalism when you return home on your R&R leave. Drive safely, watch your speed, and do not drink and drive.

I'd like to close by wishing our great Army a happy 230<sup>th</sup> Birthday. We've come a long way from flintlock rifles and black powder cannons, but the fighting spirit of our Army still lives in our minutemen of today.

Always maintain the warrior spirit in all that you do.

Lava!

### CSM's Message

*(Continued from page 1)*

A Company, 3-297<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion attached to them are doing great.

At LSA Anaconda and Eskan Village, Saudi Arabia, the other 29<sup>th</sup> BCT units are also still doing a great job. Soldiers are pretty much settled into their daily routines and try to make their lives as comfortable as possible. Not everyone lives under the same living conditions, but morale is still good.

I'd like to share part of a letter I received from a dear friend who was one of my first First Sergeants back in the early '70s. It's just a different perspective to what some of soldiers face as far as equipment and resources now, but from a different time. *"For over a week, we didn't get even a rifle [reference to first arriving in Vietnam]. Much later, I got a rifle, flak jacket, steel pot and gas mask. But, get this, no bayonet and ridiculously, no bullets. I didn't even know if the M-16 was operable. Working out of my MOS [supply], going to the ammo point to hook up slings with ammo (105mm) and fuses under a hovering Chinook [CH-47 helicopter], and going on convoys. Finally managed to scrounge a couple of bandoleers from grunts nearby. Guard duty at night along the wire, or on the road between our camp with a village across the road. In fact, the commander laughed when I reported for guard duty with a steel pot and flak jacket. When the rockets come in, my short legs and speed faster than superman, diving for the ground between the rounds making it to the bunker."* We've come a long way from those days – thanks Top.

As the weather starts getting hotter, make sure you drink enough fluids and maintain a regular diet. It's not enough to just drink water. You've got to eat too to sustain the electrolytes in your body. When you have down time, take advantage of it and take the time to perform some maintenance on your body and mind. Read, exercise, watch a TV show. Don't forget to write a personal letter home once in awhile. This goes for Leaders too.

Lava!

## MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

### Chaplain's Blessing



Photo by Sgt. Terry Eldred

Aloha to all!!!

Finances are an important subject because it affects us temporally and spiritually. This is a highly important subject because we are commanded to pay our debts, and to return to others what we owe them. I endorse ten important points on the matter.

1. Pay tithes and offerings.
2. Be prompt to pay an obligation to the last penny.
3. Pay off debt as quickly as possible, avoid debt.
4. Pay as you go.
5. Use the Thrift Savings Plan, and Savings Deposit Program.
6. Be financially self-reliant and independent.
7. Instead of asking what others can do for us, rather ask what can we do for ourselves.
8. Be economical, and never waste resources.
9. This tax free income will end soon enough, prepare for this by saving now for leaner times.
10. Get out of debt, and stay out of debt. Good money management as well as an honest heart can lead to financial and spiritual freedom.

Chaplain (MAJ) Leonardo Jamias  
29<sup>th</sup> BCT

Happy 21st Birthday to Spc. Kuiokalani Gapero, on June 23rd, with HHC 29th BCT! We love you son, and are very proud of you! Come home safe and soon! God Bless you always! Love Mommy & Poppi

I would like to wish my loving husband Spc. David A. Steege of the 100th/442nd Inf. Charlie company a Happy 9th Anniversary on May 23rd. Keep safe and hurry home, I love you with all my heart, Dee

Ssg. Ronald Asuncion, A Company, 29th SPT. BN. We love you & miss you soooooo much!!!! God Bless you & ALL the soldiers. All our Love, Hugs & Kisses-----Lenora, Na'ulei, RJ & Kiana

To my husband, SGT Sheldon Gaison, Delta Co, 2-299 INF, "Happy 21st Wedding Anniversary!"(June 4).I LOVE YOU! The Lord is our light and salvation! Be safe and see you when you get home! Love, Bonnie

Wish all our brother and sister the best of luck and safe return. former member of the 100th Bn 442nd Inf. B Co. Also I like to wish my little brother Spc. Kisiueta Tufono much Aloha. SSG Paulsin Tufono

For SGM Harry Estabrooks, 100th BN, Happy Fathers Day to the best dad in the world. We love you and miss you, Keith, Jimi and Tegan. Thru and Thru, Shana.

Happy 25th birthday SSG Michael Moore, from Noni, Dad, Mom, Diane, Ron, Katie, Ed, Kat, KC, Lady, Pua and Custard, we all love you.

Spc. Brad Howard, We pray for you every day and we love you so much. Come home soon and marry our girl! Love, Jess, Mike, Carlie, and Carter MacVicar

Congratulations New Daddy, CPL Michael Ellis, Co C, 100 BTN, 442nd INF, 29th BCT, on birth of daughter Brenna Kristine 4/22/2005, thanks for my 1st grandchild, love Mom

## **MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE**

Happy Birthday to SGT Matthew Miyahira (5/25), Alpha Battery! We are all proud of you, and are praying for a safe mission and speedy return home. Love & prayers, Dad, Mom & family.

SFC Doug Patterson; HHC 29th BDE: Happy Birthday Doug! We're thinking of you and awaiting your return to the team! Love, Bev, Carolyn, Elyse and Mark

SGT.Greg Santiago HHC 29th SPT. Honey, Congratulations on your promotion we are so proud of you. Love you Always, Geri, Calden, Chassy, Isaiah To my husband SSG Roberto Razon, C Co. 29TH SPT BN. Happy 14th anniversary on June 20 from your wife Cora. We love you very much and hugs and kisses from me and your boys Rico and Robby.

Our Brave Son, SGT RODEL EUGENIO, C Co 29th Spt Bn. We're very PROUD of you and we're praying for everyone's SAFE return Home. Love, Mom & Dad

Congratulations to Scot Lee Yamasaki of Bravo Co. 29th Spt. Bn. on your 1st anniversary 28 May 2005. We love you and miss you very much. Please take care. Love you always Donna Lee and Mason Lee.xoxoxo

CONGRATULATIONS. Sgt. Joseph Lewis III & Natalie Lewis On the birth of your second child born at Tripler Army Medical Center on May 15, 2005, Sunday at 2:41 p.m., Kainalu Shy Lewis, 7lbs 3 oz, 19 1/2 inches long. Happy Father's Day. Sgt. Joseph Lewis III

For Sgt.Naea Straus, CoB, 2nd BN, 299th. Love you lots and miss you madly! `Ano`i, Keola, Kamalani and your wife, Roselani

Spec Damien K. Place, III, HHC Damien, we think about you and pray for your safety and well being every day. Love from Mom, Dad, Mele and da buggas.

Happy Father's Day to Maj. Bob Leshner, 1-487th FA HHSB. We Love & Miss You! From your girls: Charla, Brittney, Jessica and your Wife-To-Be-Again Char. See you in September!!

Happy Fathers Day to SPC. Sepulona Falealii with the HHC 29th BCT; May God continue to bless you all and bring you home soon, all our Love and Aloha from Molokai your Wife Kapua and our 2 daughters Hepuakea and Ha'iola along with big brothers Ha'aheo, Hau'oli and Haloha Falealii.....

To My husband and My Daddie SFC REGAN K. PELEKAI with 5th platoon (DELTA CO.) We wanted to wish you the greatest FATHER'S DAY to you and all our 2-299th Charlie Company Ohana from Maui: GOD SPEED ALL OF YOU HOME SAFELY. Don't worry we'll GOLF for you on that day...Luv and Aloha Georgie-Gurl,Kaika,Babie-Gurl and Nelle

Happy Birthday SFC Douglas Patterson, HHC 29th BDE (June 8). We love you and we are very proud of you. Enjoy your special day and we will celebrate when you come back. Myrna, Justin & Kaitlyn

Happy 5th anniversary to Sgt. Albert H. Braine of HHC 29th BCT from his loving wife, Lydia. I will love you forever and ever, my soul mate and can't wait to have you home in Waimanalo with us again soon. Ana, Ena, Lani and Ua send big kisses + hugs to their awesome Dad!

Happy Father's Day Daddy, Spc. Nicanor M. Abelardo (Nic) 29thbct , Unit s1 from your son, Noah Abelardo. miss you love you and will see you soon Daddy. Love,Noah

Aloha to COL Bruce Oliveira: Aloha e Makuakane! *Ha'o makou ia 'oe* - we miss you very much! *Hau'oli la Makuakane* - Happy Father's Day. Keal

To SPC Colby Takata, C Company, 29th SPT BN We are all so proud of you and miss you! Love, Chandelle, Mom, Dad, and Andyoha Pumehana, Your 'ohana!

# PHOTO GALLERY

**The Night Stalkers of the 1st Battalion, 184th Inf. recently had a noteworthy re-enlistment ceremony.**



*Photo By Sgt. Lauran Robinson*



*Photo Courtesy of 184th Inf. Bn.*

**Soldiers of the 1-184 Inf conducted an Air Assault into Saber Stadium.**

Once the stadium was secured, the “Stalkers” held a re-enlistment ceremony under the famous crossed sabers of Baghdad. Morale is high in the unit as evidenced by the high re-enlistment rate.



*Photo Courtesy of 184th Inf. Bn.*

# PHOTO GALLERY

On May 22, 2005, an Awards Ceremony was held for the Soldiers of 100th Bn. 442nd Inf. for their contributions in OIF III.



Photo By Sgt Lauran Robinson

Pvt. Donald Weir had just graduated from Waiane High School when he was activated for a combat tour in Iraq. The 18 year old had only one word to describe his experiences, "Interesting." This photo was taken in a village in Abu Ghraib.



Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura

(Right) Bird's Eye View: This is what a typical Baghdad neighborhood looks like through the windshield of a Humvee.



Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura

Sgt. Frank Peterson, a 29 yr. old police officer from Kodiak Island, Alaska, plays a game of marbles with Iraqi children.

Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura



Photo By Sgt. Lauran Robinson

Pvt. Kyle Nagata celebrated his 19th Birthday checking vehicles at ECP 7, in Camp Victory.



## PHOTO GALLERY



*Photo Courtesy of Maj. Chris Slavens*

Sgt. Marvin Cadiz demonstrated a painful leg lock on Spc. Brandon Cho during a recent class.



*Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura*

**Garrett's Garden:** Sgt. 1st Class Garrett Iha shows off the small garden he maintains outside his quarters at LSA Anaconda. In civilian life, Garrett is a Certified Public Accountant. He is the Director of Financial Planning and Operations for Kaiser Permanente, Hawaii and took a substantial pay cut to serve in Iraq. Iha has run 26 consecutive Honolulu Marathons, missing only last year's Marathon because he was deployed with the 29th BCT.



*Photo Courtesy of Maj. Chris Slavens*



*Photo By Sgt. Lauran Robinson*

Lt. Col Hara and Soldiers of 2nd Bn. 299th Inf., rehearse for a Hula Show to celebrate Asian Pacific Appreciation Month

## PHOTO GALLERY

Former dictator Saddam Hussein built many beautiful structures, such as this mosque, along the man made lakes in his palace compound, which are now part of Camp Victory.

*Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura*



*Photo Courtesy of Sgt. Roy Kitagawa*

**Fishing tale:** Sgt. Roy Kitagawa caught this whopper in Lost Lake, one of the four large manmade lakes on Camp Victory. The carp weighed in at 32 lbs. and it took him three hours to land it on the light fishing tackle he was using. The lake features walleye, bass, catfish, carp and fresh water eels. Sgt. Nagata gives the fish he catches to local Iraqi's who work on the base. He's made some new friends this way.

**Palacial setting:** Capt. Paul Agena and 2nd Lt. Justin Otto spend a quiet moment outside their company HQ.

*Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura*



*Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura*

**Saddam's main place, called Al Faw, was damaged by US bombs earlier in the war.**

# PHOTO GALLERY



Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura

From left: PFC Francinette Holokahi, Staff Sgt. Sueanne Koanui, and Spc. Janine Dorsey practice hula three times a week outside the JDOC. Their halau, Hula 'O Lava Brigade, recently participated in an Asian Pacific Month celebration at LSA Anaconda

Photo By Sgt. Lauran Robinson



Photo By Sgt. Lauran Robinson

Soldiers from 29th BCT, Spc. Henry Valiente, Sgt. Christian Calavera and Spc. Angeline Pascua met actors Amanda Swisten and "Superman" Dean Cain, who visited LSA Anaconda.

"Polynesian Paradise" - guest performers from Hawaii brought the spirit of the Islands to the Soldiers on May 24th.



Photo By Capt. Kyle Yonemura

From left: Spc Nick Kamono, Sgt. Jon Merchant, Spc Kevin Mahoney and 1st Lt. Stodard Binder waited in a 1/4 mile long line to see the opening showing of Star Wars



Photo By Sgt. Lauran Robinson

Brig. Gen. Joseph Chaves gets the best seat in the house during the hula show on May 24th.

## *SHAMELESS SELF-PROMOTION*



### **The Lava Flow Staff**

Happy Father's Day!

The Lava Flow is published monthly by the 29th Brigade Combat Team's Public Affairs Section.

**There will be no Lava Flow produced for the month of July.**

The 29th BCT PAO is dedicated to telling the story of the men and women serving with the 29th BCT in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, as well as bringing messages of support to the troops. Our newsletter, The Lava Flow, is a Command Information bulletin, used by BG Joseph Chaves to keep his brigade's soldiers informed.

If you'd like to contact us, here's our e-mail address:

[pao.lava@us.army.mil](mailto:pao.lava@us.army.mil)