



1-487th Field Artillery continues to strengthen Kuwaiti partnership through training

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Sgt. Joe Lewis leads security teams through a building during a field training exercise in Mutlaa, Kuwait.

Story and photos by:

Cpt. Eddie Choo, 1-487th FA

Soldiers from the 1-487th Field Artillery Battalion, of the Hawaii Army National Guard, are doing joint anti-terrorism training with the Kuwait National Guard using their “Hiki No” attitude, a battalion motto meaning “can do.

This training relationship started with Soldiers from the Virginia National Guard in the year 2007. The Virginia Guardsmen started off training with the KNG Riot Control Team on skill level one Riot Control Training, setting a strong foundation for future partnerships with the Army National Guard units to follow. Soldiers from the 1-134th Field Artillery Regiment out of Ohio followed the lead from the Vir-

ginia Guardsmen and worked with the KNG Counter-Terrorism and Riot Control Teams. They were the first unit to conduct field training and command post exercises (FTX and CPX) with the KNG.

Upon arrival in fall 2008, the 1-487th FA continued to build upon the successes of previous unit accomplishments. The Hawaii Guardsmen provided skill level one support for KNG’s Counter Terrorism course, from the time of their arrival in November until June 2009.

The 1-487th FA improved upon the FTX and CPX planning and participation facilitated by Military Professional Resources Incorporated, training partners for the KNG. The Hawaii Guardsmen were involved in working side by side with the KNG G3, operation

and training planners, and were welcomed to participate in all in-process reviews for this year’s FTX and CPX.

Building on the CPX and FTX conducted by the 1-134th FA, this year’s exercises focused on joint cooperation with different units of the KNG, Kuwait Ministry of the Interior, Fire Rescue and U.S. Forces.

The FTX was conducted at a radio facility in Mutlaa, Kuwait, while the CPX was ran at Camp Tahreer, Iraq. The FTX was a Joint Operation between the KNG’s Counter Terrorism, Explosive Ordinance Disposal team, Fire and Rescue, KMOI, and U.S. Forces.

Extraction teams were made up of Hawaii Guardsmen and members of the KNG CT Team. Medic support was provided by the U.S. and Kuwaiti Forces. The opposition forces were played by the 61st Chemi-

cal Company and the Hawaii Guardsmen, who also provided intelligence and liaison support during the CPX.

An after action review followed the exercise, where many good comments were made as to the successes of the exercise. One of the more memorable AAR comments was the positive remark by Brig. Gen. Zayed, Director of Military Authority, who addressed the continued involvement and support of U.S. forces with the KNG.

The Hawaii Guardsmen were appreciative of the opportunity to train and work alongside the KNG. Future units will have the opportunity to continually build the bonds started with the Virginia, Ohio and Hawaii Guardsmen, and become a positive force in the growing relationship between the U.S. military and the Kuwaiti forces.

Maj. James Faleafine, left, 1-487th Field Artillery, addresses Brig. Gen. Zayed, Director of Military Authority for the KNG, during the command post exercise.



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Soldiers, Family members and friends of the 29th IBCT:

It's time again to change the calendar to a new month. We have successfully hit the eighth-month mark in the deployment. You can be very proud of your Soldiers for all of the milestones they have accomplished to date. The amount of personnel and material transported and the combat missions completed keeps growing as the Lava Brigade continues to support combat operations throughout Iraq and Kuwait. The numbers are very impressive and it's your sons, daughters, husbands and wives making it happen. Their efforts to launch, recover and launch convoys escort teams around the clock is what makes us successful. It's their strict adherence to standards and safety procedures that makes this all possible. The professionalism and teamwork they demonstrate on a daily basis is amazing. I am genuinely honored to command such an outstanding organization.

In the upcoming two months the 29th IBCT will be transitioning its duties and responsibilities to the 115th Fires Brigade comprised of more than 2,300 soldiers

from the Wyoming, Colorado, South Dakota, Minnesota and Alabama National Guard. The 115th Fires Brigade arrived at Fort Hood in mid-April to train with First Army Division's West's 120th Infantry Brigade. Concluding their training at the end of this month they will begin to move into Kuwait and conduct a Relief in Place/Transfer of Authority (RIP/TOA) with the 29th IBCT.

At this time in our deployment end I need every Soldier's attention on safety as our number one priority. Not as a reaction to any incidents, but actually a proactive deliberate assault on complacency. One of the most dangerous forms of human error is complacency. In my experience, the last hundred days of deployment result in more mishaps from this cause than from any other. We are all vulnerable, and perhaps through your awareness, you can help prevent some potentially dangerous, even deadly situations. We have all said, either outwardly or to ourselves, "I've done this so many times, I can do it in my sleep." We get so bored with repetitive tasks that we just engage autopilot, and free our mind for more important thoughts, or more

typically, to engage in more interesting conversation. In a combat environment, there is no level of skill which negates caution, and no provision in the human blueprint for an autopilot switch. The nature of our work demands that we maintain a constant state of situational awareness and make every step a deliberate one. If we understand the potential consequences and have a little more respect for our line of work, we can do a lot more to minimize accidents. Stay focused!

As we move forward to complete our mission, I have heard some compare our mission over here to a chapter of a book. As we turn the page, and prepare to hand off the mission to our brothers and sisters in the 115th Fires Brigade, we will establish the conditions for a smooth transfer of authority; as the 37th IBCT

29TH LAVA BRIGADE COMMANDER



**Colonel Bruce Oliveira
BDE Commander**

did for us on our arrival. As we end this chapter, I am confident that we will meet the challenges ahead with the same professionalism and dedication that has made us such an effective combat multiplier for ARCENT.

To the entire 29th IBCT, thank you for all that you do. I am proud to serve with you and I sincerely appreciate your selfless service to our nation.

LAVA 6

1st Sgt. Dana Wingad's Comment



1st Sgt. Dana Wingad, Operations Sergeant Major, HHC 29th IBCT

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Families of Soldiers from the 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team. More than 83 percent of the Soldiers deployed with us now are on their second tour to a combat zone in theater. For a good majority this second time around has been more stressful on both the Families and Soldiers; one reason is because this marks two and a half years of separation from their loved ones out of the past five years.

Due to all of the multi deployments, the Secretary of Defense initiated the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program which provides information, services, referral, and proactive outreach programs to Soldiers and their Families through all phases of the deployment cycle. During this month the "Yellow Ribbon" program has begun conducting Re-Integration Events for all of our Families back home; this will help prepare them for our return. The goal of the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program

is to prepare Soldiers and Families for mobilization, sustain Families during mobilization, and reintegrate Soldiers with their Families, communities, and employers upon redeployment, or REFRAD.

During this time when the brigade is preparing for our Redeployment, it is critical that every Soldier has a "Battle Buddy," and that we all listen to the guidance set by our leadership. The Non-Commissioned Officers in the 29th IBCT have been doing an

outstanding job in providing leadership and guidance to the Soldiers. It is very important all NCOs continue to enforce the brigade commander's number one priority throughout this entire deployment, "SAFETY". The brigade is in a critical phase of this deployment, during which time Soldiers become complacent with the missions they are conducting.

I call out to every NCO in the brigade to "Lead from the Front" and continue to conduct those Pre-Combat Checks and Pre-Combat Inspections every time their Soldiers conduct a mission. It is our duty as NCOs to remember "my two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my mind – accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my Soldiers". With that being said, we must continue to enforce the standards, do the right thing and bring every brigade Soldier home to their Families.

In addition, the year 2009 has been declared the "Year of the Non-

Commissioned Officer" by Secretary of the Army. I would like every NCO and future NCO to take time and read the following roll-up of the NCO history from Sergeant Major of the Army:

"Army NCOs trace their roots to the beginnings of American military history. They helped Washington preserve the Continental Army at Valley Forge, stood with Winfield Scott at Chippewa, and directed Zachary Taylor's guns at Palo Alto. They carried the Nation's colors at Gettysburg and Vicksburg, fought yellow fever in Cuba with Walter Reed, and led Pershing's and Eisenhower's legions into Germany. Whether helping local populations build a village in Southeast Asia or teaching young Iraqi soldiers to conduct operations, American NCOs are leading from the front and are some of our nation's best ambassadors.

Over time, through various changes in tactics and technology, Army NCOs have emerged as the Army's small-unit leaders, trainers' and guardians of standards.

Our NCO Corps is unrivaled by any Army in the world, envied by our allies and feared by our enemies. Throughout the Army's history, the NCO has been a pivotal figure, but never more so than today with our full spectrum of operations - tank-on-tank fighting as during the invasion of Iraq; the guerrilla/insurgency war ongoing in Iraq and Afghanistan; and peacekeeping operations in Kosovo. As NCOs embrace their ever-growing responsibilities in the 21st Century, this volume will help them remember how they came to be the 'backbone of our Army.'

~Kenneth O. Preston
Sergeant Major of the Army

THE NCO CREED

No one is more professional than I. I am a Noncommissioned Officer, a leader of soldiers. As a Noncommissioned Officer, I realize that I am a member of a time honored corps, which is known as "The Backbone of the Army". I am proud of the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers and will at all times conduct myself so as to bring credit upon the Corps, the Military Service and my country regardless of the situation in which I find myself. I will not use my grade or position to attain pleasure, profit, or personal safety.

Competence is my watchword. My two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my mind – accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my soldiers. I will strive to remain technically and tactically proficient. I am aware of my role as a Noncommissioned Officer. I will fulfill my responsibilities inherent in that role. All soldiers are entitled to outstanding leadership; I will provide that leadership. I know my soldiers and I will always place their needs above my own. I will communicate consistently with my soldiers and never leave them uninformed. I will be fair and impartial when recommending both rewards and punishment.

Officers of my unit will have maximum time to accomplish their duties; they will not have to accomplish mine. I will earn their respect and confidence as well as that of my soldiers. I will be loyal to those with whom I serve; seniors, peers, and subordinates alike. I will exercise initiative by taking appropriate action in the absence of orders. I will not compromise my integrity, nor my moral courage. I will not forget, nor will I allow my comrades to forget that we are professionals, Noncommissioned Officers, leaders!

29th IBCT JAG pushes through minimal staffing



29th Infantry Brigade paralegals, Sgt. Bianca Asato, right, and Spc. Kirby Suginaka, seek information from a Military Criminal Justice book. Photo by: Staff Sgt. Crystal Carpenito, HHC 29th IBCT PAO

Story by: Sgt. Bianca Asato

HHC, 29th IBCT JAG

The Judge Advocate General Brigade Operational Law Team is comprised of a Command Judge Advocate, Trail Counsel, and brigade paralegal, whose responsibilities are to provide guidance to the command and subordinate units on operational, administrative, and military justice.

Also assisting the brigade section are paralegal

specialists assigned to each battalion.

Deployment for our section proved slightly difficult due to under manning and mission requirements. Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team was only allotted slots for two JAG officers, one which was sent to 1st Theater Sustainment Command upon arrival to

Kuwait, and one paralegal. In addition, two of three battalion paralegals were also cross leveled to Area Support Group-Kuwait to support the Trial Defense Services and Legal Assistance office.

Spc. Kirby Suginaka, 1-487th Field Artillery, working in the TDS office, didn't know what to expect when moving from his battalion, but found the new experience quite gratifying. When asked about his position he said with excitement, "I get to view and Quality Check hundreds of cases across Kuwait, the southern part of Iraq, Qatar, and United Arab Emirates. In addition provide Soldiers the opportunity to seek counsel or further their knowledge in their individual rights."

Sgt. Rayarchie Rosete, 29th Brigade Support Battalion, working in the Legal Assistance office, has been quite busy providing notarial, tax, civilian court issues and Service member Civil Relief Act Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act to Soldiers throughout Kuwait.

Staff Sgt. Donald Lardner, of Alaska, volunteered to deploy and fulfill the need for a paralegal within the 100-442nd Infantry. With many years of active duty and civilian paralegal experience, his knowledge, skills, and abili-

ties played a vital role to the JAG team. On top of his battalion responsibilities with investigations and military justice, he cares for and provides the majority of the legal assistance for Camp Virginia.

Military justice cases and investigations have been the bulk of what we have been handling. But our range of support does not stop there; our office also created, and is on the verge of completing, the 29th IBCT Naturalization Project. With the full support of the Command and units, it has been both a learning experience and honor to assist our non-citizen Soldiers attain their citizenship.

In order to provide satisfactory legal support to the Brigade, we all had to undertake additional duties and responsibilities. Fortunately, the majority of the personnel in the section deployed with the brigade 2004-2006 and built a close rapport with one another, making the shift of duties seamless this time around. Providing exceptional legal assistance wherever needed is our top priority and the legal personnel deployed were up to the challenge.

I am so proud of all deployed paralegals and know the trials and tribulations they had to overcome when switching from National Guard to Active Duty status. With the change includes protocols, regulations, and jurisdictions, all of which our paralegals have adapted to seamlessly.

12 miles through sand and desert for their wings



Soldiers requesting to attend Air Assault upon redeployment, Sgt. 1st Class Glenn Lamosao and Spc. Francis Agustin, starting their 12 mile ruckmarch at Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

Story by: Cpt. Wayne Anno
1-299th CAV UPAR

“Left, Left, Left Right; Left, Left, Left Right; 9 miles Left, Aaalll Right; Left, Left, Left Right.” This little chant might be one of many thoughts in the minds of Soldiers as they try to keep a steady rhythm of movement along the long, dusty course while conducting the 12 mile Air Assault ruck march.

AAC is considered a “Hooah” school like Airborne, Pathfinder, and Expert Infantryman. It is a rite of passage for Soldiers who endure the training and schooling that will push them to the limits of their physical and mental abilities in order to earn their Air Assault Wings.

Part of the training is rappelling from a tower and helicopter, sling loading properly secured equipment for pick up by a helicopter, and passing written and oral exams.

The physical examinations included passing the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT),

completing an obstacle course which includes a 20-foot rope climb, and the dreaded 12 mile ruck march.

This ruck march is no walk in the park; each Soldier must be in full Army Uniform with issued boots; where their helmet, Load Bearing Vest (LBV) or the equivalent, two full canteens of water; while carrying a 35 pound rucksack and rifle. This does not include the extra water that each Soldier carries to hydrate along the route. Soldiers are allowed to eat things such as a PowerBars or Cliff Bars for energy during the march, but the use of supplements prior to the march will only add to dehydration and is therefore restricted by the AAC.

As directed by the brigade commander, Soldiers of the 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team are required to complete a 12-mile ruck march prior to attending AAC in order to target possible failures. Presently eight of 35 candidates are reserved for AAC which takes place in Fort Benning, Ga., Sept. 2-14. Task Force Koa of the 1-299th Cavalry has scheduled four separate days for

this event, to be completed at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Two marches have already been completed with two more scheduled to ensure Soldiers requesting to go to AAC can successfully complete this rite of passage. The final test, for first timers or retest for previous failures will be on July 4.

The course starts at about midnight and each Soldier must cross the finish line no later than 3 a.m. or be marked as a failure and have to retest.



Along the route there are checkpoints with Soldiers and water stationed to help the marchers and ensure they don't deviate from the route.

Staff Sgt. Mario Alfaro, an infantryman who completed AAC in 1989 with the 25th Infantry Division at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, volunteered to hump the 12 miles and set the pace for Soldiers who need help. Alfaro maintains a 15 minute per mile pace during the ruck march, that way if Soldiers stay 100 to 200 meters in front of him they have an excellent chance of passing. As stated, it is not easy, and the temperature, even at midnight, is about 95 to 99 degrees. Compared to 130 to 135 degrees during the day, this is a break. The dust, sand, and wind also make it a challenge along the route, but then again: **“IF YOU WANT YOUR WINGS, YOU DIG DEEP AND DRIVE ON.”**

Staff Sgt. Mario Alfaro, middle, a prior Air Assault graduate and current pace-setter, and 29th IBCT Soldiers recovering after marching 12 miles.



100-442nd Infantry Soldiers drive over 1 million miles

Article by: Capt. Timothy Zeisset
100-442nd IN Public Affairs

For the last eight months the 100th Battalion 442nd Infantry Regiment, has been escorting convoys to and from Camp Cedar, Iraq and numerous camps in Kuwait. As of June 11, battalion Soldiers logged 1,069,099 miles of driving time while maintaining an excellent safety record of fewer than five accidents.

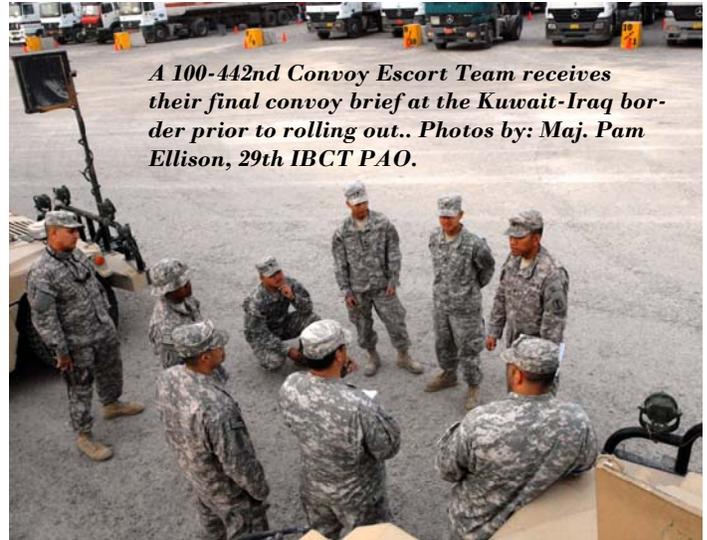
“This is what we have been doing since day one. We emphasized discipline in our training, from annual training to post mobilization and deployment. By now it is so ingrained in the Soldiers of the 100-442nd IN that it’s second nature, so this is the kind of result we expect,” said Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Michael Peeters.

There were approximately 6.5 million accidents in the U.S. in 2008, accord-

ing to the U.S. Census Bureau, and Caraccidents.com. This equates to about two percent of the population in the U.S. having been in a vehicle accident. The battalion averaged less than one half of one percent of their Soldiers having been involved in a vehicle accident, with no accidents resulting in injury or death.

Battalion Command Sgt. Maj. Glenn Gomes complemented his Soldiers and leaders in their adherence to discipline within the organization, calling it a tremendous accomplishment and achievement by all.

This amazing feat has been accomplished due to the emphasis placed on discipline by leaders at all levels within the battalion. Soldiers of the 100-442nd IN enforce standards which ensure drivers maintain posted speed limits and use ground guides.



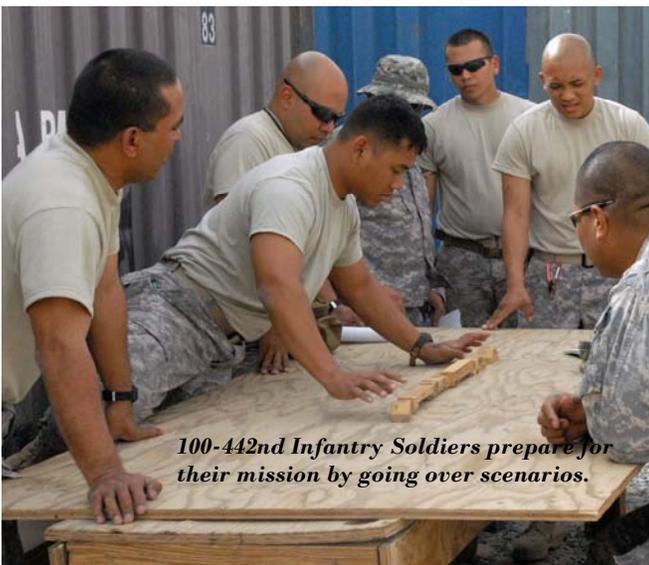
A 100-442nd Convoy Escort Team receives their final convoy brief at the Kuwait-Iraq border prior to rolling out.. Photos by: Maj. Pam Ellison, 29th IBCT PAO.

When asked what he thought about the battalion’s safety record, 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Commander, Col. Bruce Oliveira said, “The bottom-line is that the 29th IBCT has a lot to be proud of. I am encouraged by the positive

reports and congratulate the 100-442nd IN on their excellent safety record. I also want to underscore the importance of staying vigilant and making safety a top priority every day. Thank you for putting safety first at the 100-442nd IN.”



Soldier of 100-442nd Infantry always conduct pre-combat checks and inspections as well as discuss details and safety procedures pertaining to their mission prior to departure—one of many reasons why their safety record is so superb.



100-442nd Infantry Soldiers prepare for their mission by going over scenarios.

BSTB strives toward health and fitness — from top to bottom

By: 1st Lt. Erica Salvador
29th BSTB Contributor

In Kuwait, Lt. Col. Moses Kaoiwi, Commander of the 29th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, stood in line amid his Soldiers to do the push-ups and sit-ups event for the Army Physical Fitness Test, shortly followed by the two mile run which he ran amongst the fast group. Last year in Hawaii, he scored 235 on his APFT with 49 push-ups, 49 sit-ups and a 16:19 two mile. Now, he does 87 push-ups, 74 sit-ups and a 13:37 two mile, giving him an improved APFT score of 327, exceeding the maximum standard of 300.

“One day Sgt. [Robin] Tuaniga was taking pictures at Fort Hood. I was leaning against the humvee, not really paying attention to anything, so I didn’t know she was taking pictures at the time. Later, she gave me a disc and my picture was on it. I was looking at my stomach in the picture and that’s when I realized I was fat,” said Kaoiwi.

He continues, “I was 30 years old when I had to be taped for the first time and I was taped every time after



BSTB Soldiers often participate in motivational runs at Camp Virginia, Kuwait, to keep in shape and boost moral.

that for 13 years. Each year I gained weight. The difference is stuff you don’t take notice of. Like, I used to want to doze off at work every day after lunch.”

During mobilization period at Fort Hood, he decided to take the step towards being healthy. He went on a strict “Watson Diet,” named after Sgt. 1st Class Lei Watson, which meant eating a lot of green vegetables and a side of meat (chicken, turkey, or sometimes beef). For the first two weeks he cut out sugar drastically. Ignoring those sweet sugar cravings was the hardest part of his diet, he explained.

Now, he will only snack on nuts, moderate amounts of carbohydrates, or treat himself to ice cream once or twice a month. He works out on average, three times a week for an hour and includes such activities as the treadmill and bicycle. Every Saturday he runs the base perimeter with a group of other motivated Soldiers for a distance of 7.3 miles.

Between eating healthier and working out regularly, Kaoiwi went from 200 pounds to 160 pounds since that day in Fort Hood. Even though he lost one fifth of his body weight, Kaoiwi says, “Now, I feel more energetic, stronger, faster, and more alert. This was the first time in my life that I maxed out on all three events for my PT test and reached the extended scale. If I can lose that much weight, anyone can.”

And others have... The Battalion Executive Officer, Lt. Col. Neal Mitsuyoshi, who doesn’t have much to lose, lost seven pounds. He said that “as you get older, it gets harder just to maintain your weight.” To stay healthy he pays attention to what he eats but also believes the key is eating in moderation. Instead of six scoops of ice cream, he will only eat

one. “Staying active plays a very big role,” said Mitsuyoshi, referring to weightlifting, playing sports, and running.

MAJ Shawn Tsuha, Force Protection Officer, motivates the lower enlisted by being the first line of support and running alongside Soldiers, pushing them to keep going. He lost 30 pounds from cutting down on junk food and by adhering to a bet he made to run five times a week, no less than 30 minutes each time.

2nd Lt. Allen Tudela, S1 Officer in Charge, lost 15 pounds by putting himself on the strict Atkins Diet and consistently working out. Staff Sgt. Christian Calavera, S6 and Information Management Officer NCO, dropped weight drastically over the last couple of years and has maintained an optimum physical standard since. He does cardio and lifts weights frequently. Calavera eats lots of protein and chocolate in order to maintain his weight today.

Sgt. Geoffrey Gabayan, S6 and IMO NCO, went from 215 pounds to 175 pounds by eating better and working out more. He said “I got motivated to meet the standard of a Soldier in the United States Army.” He passed his

APFT for the first time in three years and just got promoted in March.

Sgt. Tiffany Medina, S2 NCOIC, lost 15 pounds. She disciplined herself and said she eats “smaller portions, breakfast is a must, and I stick to the green labels [at the DFAC].” Her frequent work-outs include cardio, push-ups, and sit-ups.

Spc. Jeffrey Ulep, PAD manager, lost 32 pounds since the beginning of deployment. He said that “working outside made me realize I had to lose weight in order to be an effective PAD manager,” which includes a lot of physical work.

By being “losers,” these Soldiers gained a sense of confidence and self-worth through discipline, motivation, and taking responsibility to maintain physical fitness. These are just a few of the many other BSTB Soldiers who have taken the individual initiative to improve their health and fitness on this deployment.



Lt. Col Moses Kaoiwi’s motivational picture before he lost weight and got in shape.



Lt. Col Moses Kaoiwi, 29th BSTB Commander, left, running with his Soldiers around Camp Virginia.

Camp Patriot celebrates Asian Pacific day

Story by: *1Lt. Wanda Barnes*
1-487th FA

Asian Pacific Day hits home for, 1-487th Field Artillery, of the Hawaii Army National Guard. Hawaii's diverse population and culture makes it one of the most unique places in the world. It is also known as the melting pot of the world. The unit itself has Soldiers from all walks of the Asian Pacific Islands.

On May 23, Hawaii Soldiers took privilege in hosting the Asian Pacific Day Luau at Camp Patriot, Kuwait. Servicemembers from the Army, Navy, Coast Guard and Moral, Welfare, and Recreation contractors also worked hard to put on a good show.

Every day they practiced different cultural dances in preparation for the celebrations. Such dances included Chamorro, Filipino, Tahitian, Maori, Fijian, Tongan, Korean, Hawaiian and Samoan. This was a rare opportunity where Soldiers from different armed forces came together and shared their different cultural backgrounds. It created unity and cohesiveness amongst the coalition forces here on Camp Patriot.

The Asian Pacific Day Luau was held along the beautiful beach, east side of base. Soldiers from all over Kuwait as well as the Kuwaiti military and civilian

contractors joined together in this celebration. The Luau was filled with delicious Polynesian food from Kalua pig to Pancit.

The event started off with a traditional Hawaiian prayer, blowing of the shell horn and lighting of the tiki torches. Then the show began with Soldiers dressed in native costumes as they made their entrance through the large crowd. The audience cheered the Soldiers through their performances, as camera flashes could be seen from all directions. It was evident that the audience and the Soldiers of Hawaii felt at home on this day.

The setting on the beach was perfect and everyone enjoyed the festivities from beginning to end. The teamwork and unity of the staff and performers made this day a memorable one for everyone on this deployment.

Top right, Hawaiian dancers; below, Fijian dancers; bottom right, Cpt. Eddie Choo performs a Korean dance; bottom center, Spc. Pausisi Talaipa performs a fire dance of Polynesia and bottom left, Staff Sgt. Edmundo Gascon performs in the Cardinosa Filipino dance, during Asia Pacific Day on Camp Patriot, May 23.



Proud to be the Junior Enlisted Council

Story by: Sgt. Christopher Balboa
29th BSB contributor



Spc. Ambreh Holi, 29th Brigade Support Battalion, looks into the crowd as she reads the names of fallen Soldiers at a Memorial Day service held on Logistic Support Area, Kuwait, May 25. Holi was one of many Junior Enlisted Council members as well as other base volunteers who took turns reading the 874 names of those who have died from January 2008 to May 23, 2009.

Not even a week into deployment, I received an email saying that there was a mandatory meeting for all E-6 and below at the Chapel at 8 a.m. I thought to myself, why is it mandatory and why is it only E-6 and below? Also, why is it at the Chapel? Are we being punished and being put on some sort of detail? The next morning, I leave my room already five minutes after 8 a.m. Many thoughts and questions go through my mind as I'm walking past the DFAC. As I reach the chapel doors, I'm already thinking, "Man, I'm gonna get busted again." As I walked in, I see several Soldiers from my unit as well as a couple of Navy sailors. As soon as all eyes set on me, Spc. Ambreh Holi along with several other Soldiers call out, "There is our new Vice-President!" I was baffled by the statement and wondering what in the world was going on as I sat down. Little did I realize, but my role and responsibilities through out this deployment would slowly change from that day on.

The Junior Enlisted Council voices the issues, concerns, and

opinions of the entire junior enlisted on the camp. Currently the four officers of the JEC are President (Sgt.) Christopher Balboa, Vice-President (Sp.) Ambreh Holi, Secretary (Warrant Officer) Lucille McElroy, and Treasurer (HM3) Charlene Ortiz. What makes our council unique is that there are different military branches as well as coalition forces, such as the Australian Forward Support Unit. Our secretary and treasurer are from a different branch

of service, McElroy is with Navy Customs and HM3 Ortiz is a Navy sailor working in the Troop Medical Center.

During our tour here, many issues have been addressed to the council. We have encountered issues such as Soldiers dumping trash into recycling bins, Servicemembers asking for more variety of food in the DFAC, and people

talking too loudly at the Education Center while other students are studying. We try to direct those issues to the appropriate channels. For example, if there is a light-set that needs to be repaired, we would refer that person to the Camp Engineers. If there is someone who wants to make a suggestion on the menu at the DFAC, then we would give them the DFAC meeting schedule where they can make the suggestions there. If there is someone who needs assistance in college courses and someone within the council can help, they will help that person. When there are issues that can't be resolved within our council, we turn to Camp Command Sgt. Major Virgine Kanoa. She is also our advisor and helps us by supporting all JEC functions.

Not only do we address issues, but we also carryout recreational events and ideas suggested through the JEC. If there is an event that Servicemembers want to have, then we work together to make it happen.

Currently, without a way to generate funds, we rely on the help of MWR and the United Services Organization as a way to resource for events. MWR has been more willing to help our council on whatever we need. In turn, the JEC supports MWR whenever they need volunteers or participants for their events. We have held a Hip-Hop dance, read

names of the fallen on Memorial Day, and are currently planning Wacky Olympics at the end of June.

When our previous president left and I took over, I was telling myself, "What did I get myself into?" After being elected Vice-President I was already thinking about giving my position to another Soldier. All of the other officers are Specialist, and here I am a NCO as VP. Back then, I didn't realize how the junior enlisted council would benefit the Life Support Area which is the base we reside in Kuwait. I just thought the council was a mimic of the camp leadership. Instead of officers and senior NCOs, we have junior enlisted. However, over time, things began to change. We went from two months of meetings with just one person attending, to a full room with different Servicemembers from all tenant units.

Preparing the meetings and addressing issues has become more meaningful. I stay late after work waiting for emails and make plans for events to ensure everything runs smoothly. When we had everyone from the different branches of service and tenant units participate in reading the names of the fallen during the Memorial Day Ceremony, that's when I felt real proud to be part of the JEC. That's when I told myself that being in the junior enlisted council is well worth it.



Life Support Area JEC and volunteers at the Memorial Day service, one of many camp events Soldiers lend their time to make happen.

Warriors of God — always there to nurture, care and honor our Soldiers



Soldiers from the 1-487th, chaplain (1st Lt.) Terri King (center), medic Sgt. Vaatofu Fa'I (left) and chaplain assistant Spc. Learthur Sanders (right), pose for a photo opportunity during their Kuwait deployment earlier this year.

**Story by: Maj. Pam Ellison
29th IBCT PAO**

Chaplains are charged to do three things; nurture the living, care for the wounded and honor the dead. Here in the Kuwait and Iraq Theaters of Operation, the Soldiers of the 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team are very fortunate to have a strong assembly of Chaplains and Chaplain's Assistants to assist in meeting their spiritual 29th IBCT and across the various camps within Kuwait, there are organic assets to assist the Lava Brigade Soldiers. These spiritual leaders are: Chaplain (Cpt.) Kevin Gilbert and Sgt. Ruben Dela Cerna, 100-442nd Infantry; Chaplain (1st Lt.) Terri King and Spc. Learthur Sanders, 1-487th Field Artillery; Chaplain (1st Lt.) Ronald Pascua and Spc. John Olipani, Brigade Special Troops Battalion; Chaplain (1st Lt.) Ray Kitagawa, Brigade Support Battalion; and Sgt. Tyson Watarida, 1-299th Cavalry.

While each of these chaplains and/or chaplain teams is organic to a Command and may be primarily located at a specific camp, there are additional religious assets available for our Soldiers from other Services and Commands at each of the locations where we have Soldiers, including the various locations the Convoy Escort Teams travel to throughout Iraq. So, no Soldier should ever be without the opportunity to seek out the spiritual assistance that they may need through the multitude of ministry teams in Theater.

"It is the ministry of presence," responded King when asked what she felt was the most helpful service she provides to Soldiers. "Present to remind Servicemembers that there is a God who loves them and is present with them here in the desert."

There have been incredibly difficult times during this deployment where the demands on our ministry teams were tremendous; specifically in our

struggles with the untimely deaths of Staff Sgt. Julian Manglona and Spc. Cwislyn Walter. There have been personal situations for many of our Soldiers where the guidance provided by a member of the ministry team may well have been the one thing that allowed the Soldier to continue to perform their mission. These spiritual leaders are here to listen, offer words of encouragement, pray with our Soldiers, and provide advice to Soldiers who are in need.

"Many times we cannot choose our circumstances in life, but we can choose how we respond to it," said Pascua. "I am encouraged when I see Soldiers who have no hope find hope in life, to see Soldiers angry or depressed change their attitude." For him, this is the most rewarding part of his job.

For many, the CET missions make it difficult to reach out to the ministry personnel of their Command, although, for Gilbert, that's not a problem

because he goes out on the CETs with the Soldiers of the 100-442nd, traveling to Cedar several days every week, providing ministry to the Soldiers as their missions take them to Cedar.

"I feel richly blessed with supportive chains, both Command and Chaplain, with courageous men, with fulfilling challenges," said Gilbert, "and with feedback that says the UMT makes a difference."

Our chaplains' days may be best summarized by Kitagawa's description of his days here in Kuwait; "some days are slow and boring; others are run and gun. But no matter what, give thanks in all circumstances for this God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

It just goes to show, no matter where you are required to be to perform your mission, there is a very strong likelihood that there's a chaplain nearby to provide for your needs. They are there when you need them, just reach out and make that connection.



Chaplain (Cpt.) Kevin Gilbert, 100-442nd Infantry Battalion chaplain talks with C Company, 100-442nd Inf Battalion gunner, Spc. John Maynard, prior to the historic departure from the Kuwait/Iraq border-crossing as the 1st 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team MRAP vehicle to be used in a convoy in April this year.

Army birthday re-enlistment ceremony

Top photos by: Staff Sgt. Anthony Taylor, USARCENT PAO

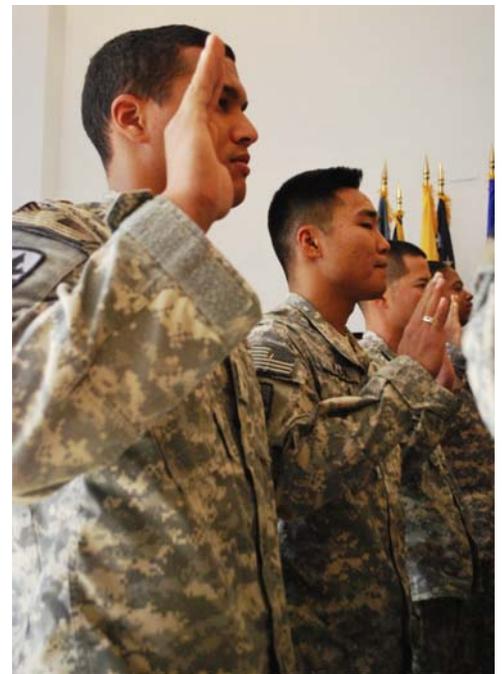


On June 13, 1775 the U.S. Army was established. From it emerged America's heroes – Soldiers who have served to defend our Nation for the past 234 years.

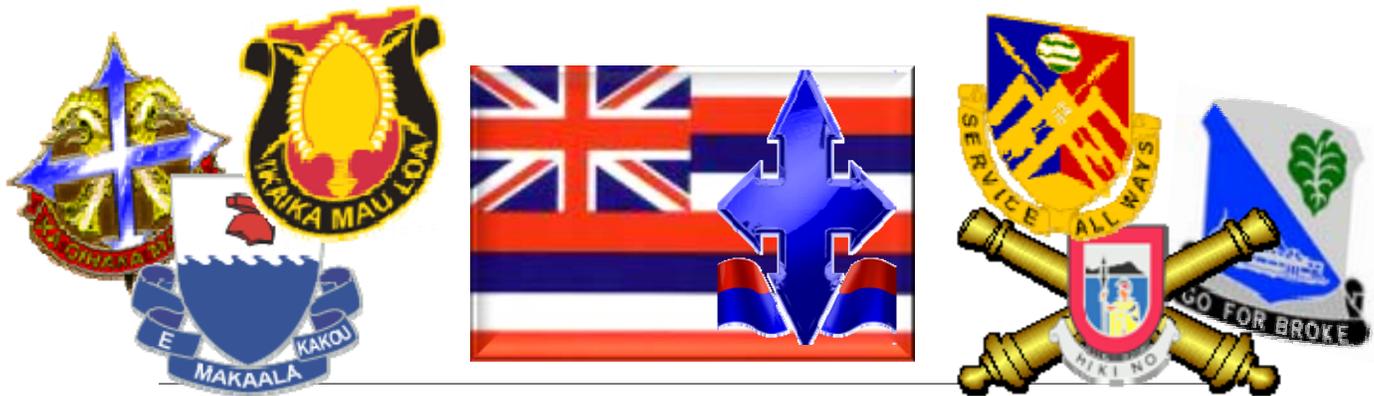
On June 13, 2009 Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, celebrated the Army's Birthday with a re-enlistment ceremony that recognized more than 120 Soldiers from bases throughout Kuwait, who have made the selfless decision to continue defending our Nation in the months and years to come.

From the 120 came 29 Soldiers of the Hawaii Army National Guard, 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team: Sgt. 1st Class Richard Matsumoto, Staff Sgts. Robert Uiwahi, Douglas Urahawa, Crystal Carpenito, Rimoni Janu, Gregory Miyashiro, Nathan Nütani, Lance Taufaaasau, Fogaa Toleafoa, Sgts. Phillip Aldan, Kelvin Alexander, Brian Kivak, Kevin Maratita, O'Brien O'Brien, Patrick Rivera, Robin Tuuniga, Spcs. Preston Baisac, Ronson Bosque, Rudolph Daog, Dietrix Dukaylonsod, Clement Kaipat, Colin Lau, Danielle Little, Oliver Orsino, Niel Shiroma, and Pvt. Sang Ii.

Brigadier General Kevin Wendel, MD and Director of Operational Maneuver, U.S. Army Central, Kuwait, administered the Oath of Reenlistment and awarded each re-enlistee with a certificate, coin and knife alongside William Hardwick, Command Sgt. Maj. of the 335th Signal Command (Theater).



Bottom photos by: Staff Sgt. Lorajan Kaonohi, 1-487th FA



Congratulations Soldiers

PROMOTIONS

HIKI NO 1-487th FA	SERVICE ALL WAYS 29th, BSB
Staff Sgt. Mitch Massey	Staff Sgt. Jonathan Serrano
	KOA 1-299th CAV
	Staff. Sgt. Brenden Minei

RE-ENLISTMENTS

GO FOR BROKE 100-442nd Infantry	KOA 1-299th CAV
Staff Sgt. Rimoni Ianu	Sgt. 1st Class Richard Matusmoto
Staff Sgt. Fogaa Toleafoa	Staff Sgt. Lance Taufasau
Sgt. Kelvin Alexander	Spc. Rudolph Daog
Sgt. Kevin Maratita	Spc. Sang Ki
Sgt. Obrien Obrien	IKAIKA MAO LOA 29th, BSTB
Spc. Ronson Bosque	Sgt. Brian Johnson
Spc. Clement Kaipat	SERVICE ALL WAYS 29th, BSB
HIKI NO 1-487th FA	Sgt. Brian Kwak
Staff Sgt. Robert Aiwohi	Sgt. Patrick Rivera
Staff Sgt. Gregory Miyashiro	Spc. Colin Lau
Sgt. Phillip Aldan	Spc. Oliver Orsino
Sgt. Michael Johnson	POHAKU HHC, 29th IBCT
Sgt. Michael Jose	Spc. Danielle Little
Spc. Preston Baisac	
Spc. Dietrix Duhaylonsod	

LAVA WARRIOR

Story and photo by: Staff Sgt. Crystal Carpenito

29th IBCT PAO NCO



Spc. David Kamaka, S3, HHC 29th IBCT, briefs the day's events to Soldiers reporting for their shift at the brigade tactical operations center on Camp Arifjan Kuwait, Jun 16.

Spc. David Kamaka graduated from the Youth Challenge Program in December 2003. He was the first graduate ever to receive both the Adjutant General's Leadership Award and the Governor's Distinguished Graduate Award. Right out of graduation he joined the Active Army and a month later was off to basic training as an 11B, Infantryman.

He spent one year at his first duty station in Korea where he worked under the 6th Battalion, 37th Field Artillery. Not soon after his transfer to Oklahoma, Kamaka found himself deployed into Iraq with the 6th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery. For more than a year he traversed along the dangerous roads outside Forward Operating Base, Speicher, as part of the Quick Reaction Force team that recovered downed vehicles caused by such things as improvised explosive devices.

At the end of his enlistment contract, Kamaka returned home to the island of Oahu, where he decided, on a whim, to join the Hawaii Army National Guard.

In March 2007, he was assigned to Headquarters and

Headquarters Company, 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team as part of the S3 Operations section. When the brigade received word of their upcoming deployment, Kamaka was put on Active Duty Operational Support orders to help with the various pre-mobilization tasks.

The brigade mobilized to Fort Hood, Texas, in August 2008 and in October Kamaka was deployed to Kuwait. For the past eight months he has taken on the job title of brigade Radio Telephone Operator within the 29th IBCT Tactical Operations Center at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. However, answering radio transmissions is the least of his responsibilities, as he also acts and performs the job of a Brigade Battle NCO.

On a daily 12-hour shift, Kamaka is responsible for tracking all Brigade Convoy Escort Team movements; consolidating and updating command update and shift change briefs; activating Commanders Critical Information Requirements; distributing pertinent information to sections within the brigade staff; maintaining situational aware-

ness by mastering Army Battle Command Systems such as Command Post of the Future, Blue Force Tracker and Military Tracking System; cross-coordinating with higher, adjacent and subordinate units when changes to the mission occur; operating Report In-Process Review Network; and lastly taking on additional miscellaneous company level tasks – all with pride and without complaint.

"The success of our day shift here in Current Operations is significant because of him. He is the rock," said Capt. Ronald Kozan, company commander and S3 Current Operations Battle Captain.

Kamaka is an outstanding Soldier because he is always ahead of the game and anticipating the next step, explained Kozan.

"He's got a real grasp on how operations are supposed to work," Kozan went on. "And that's important because it makes everything run smooth." Kamaka exemplifies discipline, physical and mental toughness, and proficiency in all warrior tasks and battle drills. He always places the mission first, often

times eating lunch in the operations center rather than the DFAC to assure operational soundness. He's constantly looking to better himself as a Soldier and a leader by actively seeking knowledge specific in his occupational skill or tactical operations and then sharing his newly found information with fellow coworkers. Reflecting what it takes to be a leader and an NCO, Kamaka motivates and inspires subordinates and superiors alike.

"I'm the type of Soldier that if I'm going to do something, I'm going to do it right and put some care behind it," Kamaka said.

His experience over two deployments, both outside and inside the operations center, has developed him into what he believes to be a more well-rounded Soldier, as his leadership would agree.

"As long as you do what you're told, you're on time, and in the right uniform, you can get through your whole military career like that," Kamaka said. "But it's up to you to take that one extra step."

Hawaii Soldiers train Philippine forces

Story by: *Cpt. Lisa Royce*

1-299th CAV R-Det PAO

The primary mission of the Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines (JSOTF-P) is to train the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP)'s Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) and to conduct civic actions. More specifically, it entails a total team effort between the government, fellow partners in AFP along with U.S. Soldiers, together working side-by-side in its goal of implementing civil-military efforts in a joint resolution to foster peace, enhance humanitarian efforts and bolster security measures for the local populace and fight the war on global terrorism. American military activity there is done only with clearance and authority from the Philippine military.

Geographically, the JSOTF-P is situated over roughly 8,000 square miles in the southernmost area of the Philippines and whose area of operation is home to al-Qaida-linked terrorist groups. "The southern Philippines is a very demanding environment on the Soldiers," said First Sergeant (1SG) James Jimenez of the First Squadron, 299th Cavalry unit in Kapa'a Kauai. "We had nine cases of dengue fever and the daily temperature averaged 100 plus degrees with no trade winds." 1SG Jimenez deployed with JSOTF-P from September 2008 to April 2009.

In terms of its operational profile, the JSOTF-P has been conducting a variety of humanitarian and training missions, including useful disciplines that range from amphibious tactics to combat medicine training and aid projects. More specifically, through the implementation of its training efforts in areas of convoy security, force protection, re-supply of ships and aircraft, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, security and counter-terrorism tactics and techniques, the formation of medical and engineering teams and the establishment of civil action and outreach programs, the successful design of JSOTF-P continues to make possible the peaceful securing of the region in accordance with the desires and objectives of its government partners.

While they are not engaged in direct combat action, JSOTF-P Soldiers do retain the right of self-defense; however, they are always accompanied by AFP allies who have the primary duty for security. Under

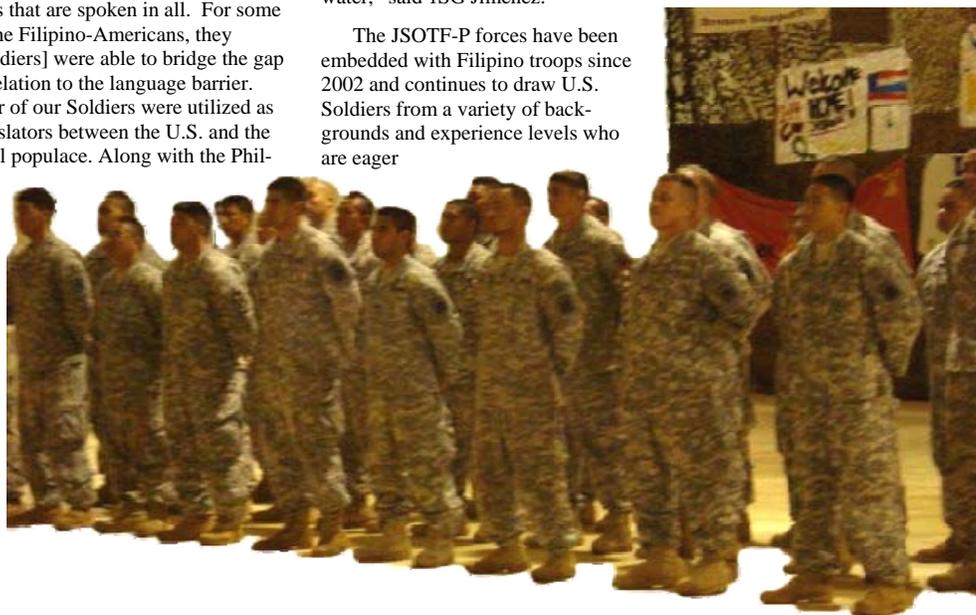
the U.S.-Philippine Visiting Forces Agreement, U.S. troops may provide only training, information and humanitarian aid and not engage in combat. Staff Sergeant (SSG) Alex Duldulao, a co-worker of 1SG Jimenez who served as an interpreter during past JSOTF-P missions said, "It is not just a mere military mission, but more so, a humanitarian one. I was able to talk with school principals, teachers, police officers and civilians on the quality of their lives and how their community can be built into a better place to live in." SSG Duldulao went on to say that he often times pointed out to Filipino community members the resourcefulness of their island and its richness in natural resources and that with continued aid and support that it could become a beautiful place not only to live in but also for agriculture and commercial businesses. He reminded them that the U.S. government's intent was to help see that happen. SSG Noel Melchor, a co-worker of SSG Duldulao and 1SG Jimenez who served with JSOTF-P from October, 2007 to July 2008 commented, "The Hawaii Army National Guard is tasked to advise on logistics, engineering and maintenance and trains in tactics. The task force is broken down into seven groups and stationed in the remote areas of Jolo. The majority of the task force consists of first generation Americans, having been born in America or having come to the U.S. with their immigrant parents as young children. Thus, many still speak the language, whether Tagalog (national language of the Philippines) or Ilocano. There are over 100 dialects that are spoken in all. For some of the Filipino-Americans, they [Soldiers] were able to bridge the gap in relation to the language barrier. Four of our Soldiers were utilized as translators between the U.S. and the local populace. Along with the Phil-

ippine Armed Forces, the task force also engages in medical programs, DENCAP, MEDCAP and humanitarian projects such as renovations of old rundown schools." SSG Melchor is a full-time Police Officer on the Island of Kauai, when not deployed.

"The Philippines Security Forces consist of both police and military and both elements take the leading role in all counterterrorism and combat operations in the Philippines. However, Philippine law and the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) prohibit U.S. and other foreign forces from taking part in combat missions. My platoon was the main security element on the Island of Sulu. Any logistical resupply that was conducted was secured by us. This included ground convoys, air resupply and the provision of clean water. We also provided base security for Task Forces and participated in numerous Subject Matter Expert Exchanges (SMEEs) with both the Philippine Marines and the Philippine Air Force. We exchanged ideas and experiences with the units, greatly increasing their survivability on the battlefield and worked with the AFP and other non-governmental organizations on numerous MEDCAPS and DENTCAPS programs. We delivered free medical and dental services to people living in remote areas, which was a team effort focused on people who were without easy access to those kinds of services. We also participated in a few Engineering Civil Action Programs (ENCAPS) and assisted the AFP and the government of the Philippines in building roads, schools, community facilities, and digging wells to provide clean water," said 1SG Jimenez.

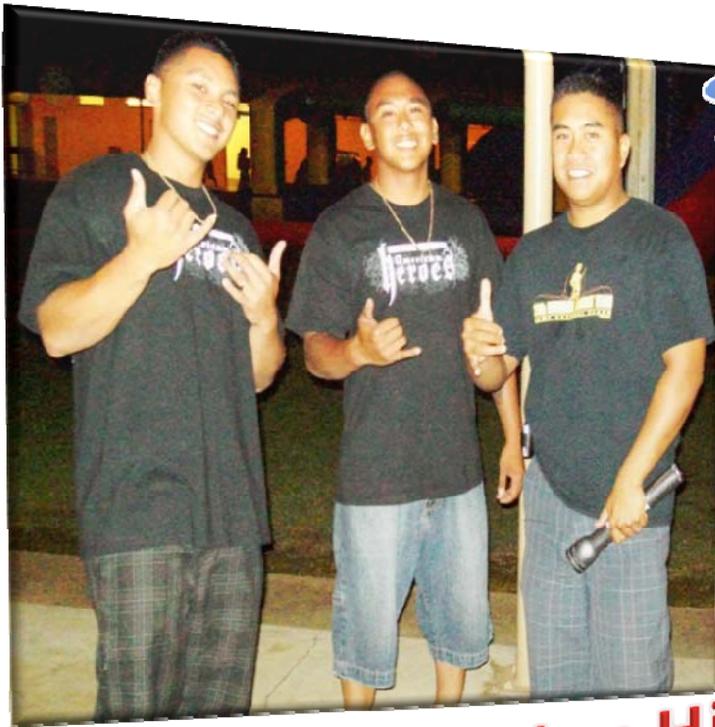
The JSOTF-P forces have been embedded with Filipino troops since 2002 and continues to draw U.S. Soldiers from a variety of backgrounds and experience levels who are eager

to contribute in any way they can toward the unit's mission to advise and assist their counterparts in the AFP in counterterrorism activities. "The mission was a great success!" said SPC Vincent Taja of TRP B who deployed with the JSOTF-P from October 2007 to June 2008. Taja added, "We accomplished a lot in helping the community by teaching classes and assisting the Philippine Army with weapons, how to handle C4 explosives, radio operations, reacting to contact with the enemy, combat life saver classes, scouting, conducting preventive maintenance checks and services on equipment, cleaning weapons and pulling guard duty. It wasn't just a job; it was an adventure that I would love to do again!" Sergeant Richard-Kevin Largo, also of TRP B, located in Pearl City, Oahu said, "This mission changed who I am. It allowed me to grow up from a junior enlisted Soldier to an NCO [Non-Commissioned Officer] and enabled me to learn a lot about my job, myself and why I joined the National Guard. Working closely with a host nation and seeing our helpful impact on them has especially changed my life." Specialist Francis Mansinon, a fellow comrade in arms of Taja and Largo, further added, "I am thankful for the numerous civil affairs projects that I had the privilege to be a part of and the impact we had on the local civilians who kept thanking us. Likewise, this experience has bettered me as a Soldier and as a human being." Specialist Justin Burnett also agreed with the success of the deployment, saying, "I recommend this deployment for every Soldier to take part in."



Da happenin's back home

Congratulations
to Keau'au High
Graduates!!!



Story by: *Cpt. Lisa Royce*
1-299th CAV R-Det PAO

Kea'au High School Grad Night

Members of the 1-299th Cavalry and the Army National Guard Recruiter at Kilauea Military Reservation, Hilo, Hawaii hosted and sponsored the "Kea'au High School Grad Night Event", June 5.

Laughter and music filled the atmosphere all evening with roughly 200 graduating students who were enjoying the all-nighter event at the Armory.

A spread of food fit for kings and queens preceded the night's events, with high-adrenalin, hip-hop music and an assortment of games and entertainment, bringing the otherwise still armory to earth-quaking life until dawn. Entertainment included water slides, volleyball, tug-of-war, a rodeo bucking bronco, carnival-style basketball, inflatable cage boxing and a coconut tree climber.

Students also enjoyed familiarizing themselves with a number of military vehicle static displays, hand-outs and computerized informational videos, courtesy of the Army National Guard.





Reintegration Training for Families *Schedule of Events*



ARE YOU READY?????

The 29th IBCT's Soldiers will soon be returning from Deployment and Family Members are eager to know more about the following:

Morning Class Sessions

- Demobilization at Ft. Hood
- Welcome Home Ceremony
- Dates of Arrival Home
- PDMRA (Additional Mandatory Post-deployment Leave)
- Finance and Pay
- Reunion and Reintegration:
What to expect when your Soldier comes home
Reconnecting for Spouses, Children and Family Members
Signs and Symptoms of Distress
Getting Your Soldier Assistance

Afternoon Class Sessions

- VA Benefits
- Vet Center Services
- TRICARE Benefits
Continued Medical Benefits after Deployment?
Tricare Reserve Select
- Transition Assistance & ESGR
Employment Assistance and Services
Returning to an existing job
- Family Support Services after Deployment
Military One Source
Confidential Counseling for Soldiers and Family Members

Oahu

June 13 & 14, 2009
July 11, 2009 (BDE Classroom, Kalaeloa)

Big Island

June 20, 2009 (Hilo Armory)
June 21, 2009 (Kona Armory)

Maui

Please RSVP!!!!

Children's Activities and Lunch will be provided and an accurate head-count is needed.

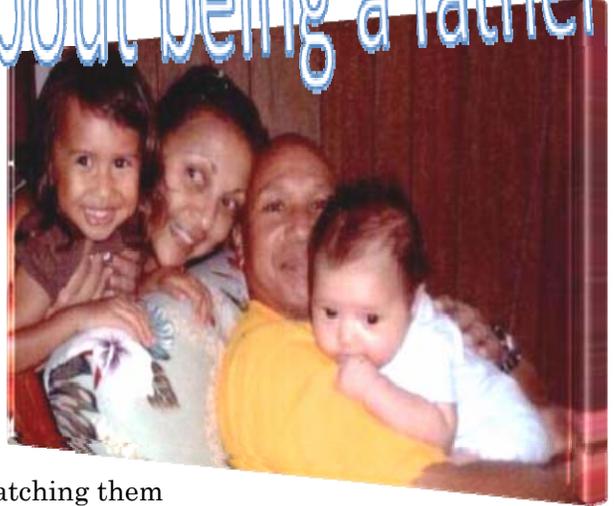
Oahu: RSVP, SFPO – 808-672-1047

Big Island: RSVP – 808-844-6632

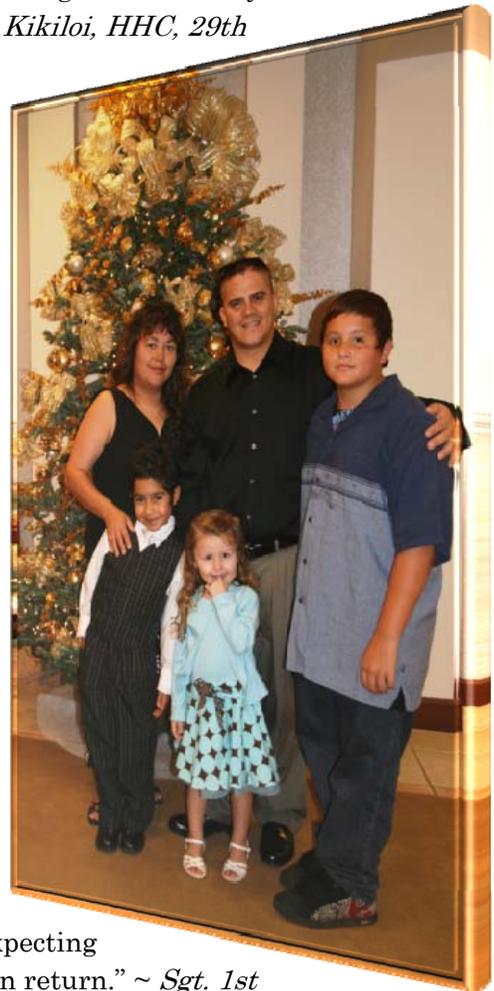
What's the best thing about being a father?



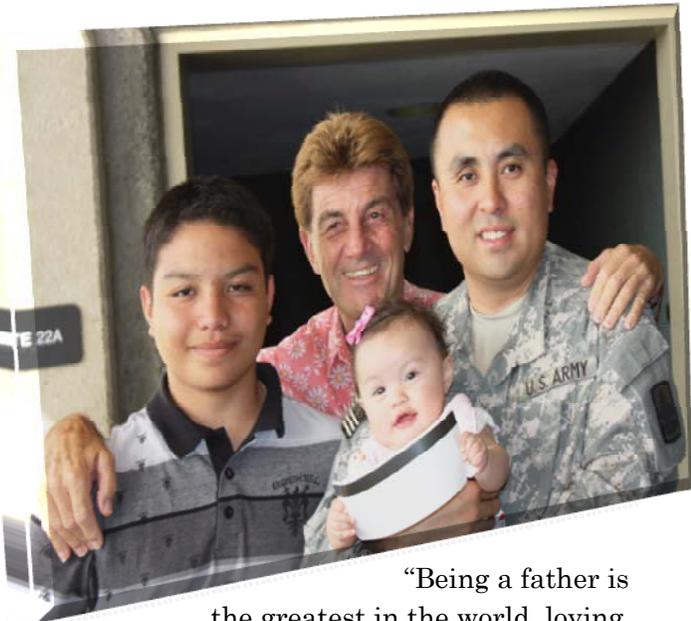
Just spending time with my family. Family nights with steak and Chocolate cake.” ~ *Cpt. Kenneth Tafao, 100-442nd IN*



“Watching them grow up and make the same mistakes I did, then telling them it’s okay.” ~ *Master Sgt. Jerry Kikiloi, HHC, 29th IBCT*



“When your kids out of nowhere come and hug you and tell you they love you without expecting anything in return.” ~ *Sgt. 1st Class Vladimir Hidrovoalban, 1-487th FA*



“Being a father is the greatest in the world, loving your children along with having the responsibility of someone else's life.” ~ *2nd Lt. Allen Tudela, HHC, 29th BSTB*

ALOHA FROM KUWAIT



*PREMIERES JULY 4TH
7PM HST ON OC16*

JOURNEY WITH OC16 TO KUWAIT AS WE TAKE AN INSIDE LOOK AT THE MEN AND WOMEN OF
THE ARMED FORCES AS THEY SERVE OUR COUNTRY

LOG ON TO WWW.OC16.TV

Repeated airings: Sun, July 5, 1pm (hst)
Mon, July 6 5pm (hst)
FRI, July 10 9am (hst)
Sat, July 11 7pm (hst)

Archived on www.oc16.tv shows page

29th IBCT



We'd like to hear from you!

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APO AE 09366

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Public Affairs Officer
Maj. Pam Ellison

Public Affairs NCOIC
Staff Sgt. Crystal Carpenito

Contributors
Unit Public Affairs
Representatives



Staff Sgt. Carpenito and Maj. Ellison

WE'RE ON THE WEB AT
WWW.ARMYFRG.ORG

PAO Comment

In a very short time, we will be welcoming the Soldiers of the 115th Fires Brigade to each of our respective areas. With the excitement of our return home just around the corner comes a sense of responsibility; the responsibility to ensure that we properly bring our counterparts up to speed on the ins and outs of our mission - their mission.

The professionalism that we have brought to the "fight" will ensure that our replacements are able to seamlessly transition into the mission. We have per-

formed in an outstanding manner, building on the successes of our predecessors, and taking what was passed on to us to the next level.

Our Families, friends and the citizens of Hawaii should be very proud of the way that we have represented them in such an exceptional manner throughout this deployment. We have brought to the people of Kuwait and Iraq all the great things about Hawaii and shown them the true meaning of the Aloha spirit. We have displayed what it

means to be true warriors, living the Warrior Ethos and Army Values in all the ways we do our jobs.

So, as we continue through these critical upcoming months, it's important that we keep the focus, drive and enthusiasm that we have shown throughout this whole deployment all the way to the end. We must make certain that the Soldiers of the 115th are provided the best possible "battle-handover" so that they continue to build upon our successes. They deserve nothing less.

So, keep your minds focused on the mission, and we will be able to return to our Families and friends, to the citizens of Hawaii, knowing once again, that we have performed our mission as the true professionals that we are.

Lava!