



## Commander's Corner

Aloha Lava Brigade,

Tremendous progress has been made in each of the areas our soldiers are working with our Iraqi allies. Many of our brigade's units are intimately involved in the training of soldiers in the Iraqi Army as well as members of the Iraqi Police Force and other security forces within their respective areas of operation.



In Baghdad the 1st Battalion of the 184th Infantry has been working tirelessly alongside five Iraqi battalions of security forces including: the Iraqi Police, the Iraqi Public Order Brigade, the 1st Battalion of the Wolf Brigade (Ministry of the Interior) the 16th Ministry of Oil Forces, as well as elements from the Iraqi Army. These cooperative relationships have allowed the soldiers of the 184th Infantry to teach as well as learn from their Iraqi counterparts as Iraqi forces begin to assume responsibility for the security of areas previously maintained by US forces in Baghdad. The soldiers of the First Battalion, 184th Infantry have used tact, diplomacy and professionalism in the training of these units. As a result of the superb training they have received, elements of the Iraqi security forces there have detained up to 40 suspected insurgents at a time during operations there.

In its area of operations near LSA Anaconda, the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry has created an Iraqi Police training task force. This task force is comprised of citizen soldiers who work as police officers in civilian life. These soldiers were reassigned from their normal duties from various units throughout the 29th BCT and they now train members of the Iraqi Police Force. This

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## CSM's Message

In this article, I want to extend my gratitude on behalf of the entire 29th BCT for the support we received from our communities and Rear Detachments from our home states. Beginning with the flood of rice, we've also received batteries, phone cards, snacks, letters of support, coffee, and I know there's still a big shipment still heading our way via surface transportation. We try to write Thank You letters to everyone as much as possible.



Beginning 1 September 2005, our Service members Group Life Insurance increases to a maximum coverage of \$400,000. This is automatic. If the Soldier decides he or she wants to make any changes, he or she must complete a new SGLV form. It's a great opportunity, but I realize it's not for everyone.

We also asked for and received a Retention NCO for our ARNG Soldiers, 1st Sgt. Gollero. He is based out of LSA Anaconda, but he will travel as needed to help any unit in the 29th BCT. Retention starts at the leader level, but don't hesitate to pick his brains for the latest benefit updates.

Retention is an important concern as we start planning for demobilization, and the future transition to the Brigade Unit of Action. One key word I used during our Post-Mobilization Training is "Patience". It will be just as important during our redeployment and demobilization. Those processes are complex and there will be hang-ups. Soldiers will need to exercise patience during the processes so that we can meet our end state as painlessly as possible.

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## NEWS FROM THE FIELD

### Hawaiian soldiers ensure the security of LSA Anaconda

By Spc. Jayson Howell

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – In the third century B.C., the Carthaginian general, Hannibal, led a campaign of conquest across the Mediterranean, invading much of the land surrounding the City of Rome. For centuries following Hannibal’s death, one phrase was used to invoke fear of Rome’s impending doom. It was not the threat of disease, famine, or victory over the city’s heavily defended walls. It was the fear of Rome’s greatest enemy exploiting the city’s weakest point – “Hannibal is at the gates!”

From that ancient city, to the castles of Europe, to modern military installations, gates remain a liability to the defense of those within. At Logistics Support Area Anaconda, the defense of those who live and work on post is the designated main effort of the 29th Brigade Combat Team’s mission in Iraq. The 29th Support Battalion, part of the 29th BCT, is entrusted with the defense of the LSA’s three entry control points in addition to its role supporting brigade operations. While supplies and personnel move to and from the LSA by air, a great deal of traffic moves through those gates every day. From Iraqi civilians arriving by the hundreds to work on the base, to military and civilian convoys sometimes hundreds of vehicles long, it’s critical that nothing threatening can get into or out of the LSA that could threaten the 30,000 personnel who reside on post.

The three entry control points of LSA Anaconda are the North, South, and East ECPs. The East ECP, a pedestrian gate, is managed by Headquarters, Headquarters

Company of the 29th Support Battalion. The South ECP, a gate for military and contractor convoys, is operated by Company B, 29th Support Bn. Company A is responsible for the North ECP, the largest of the three. Each ECP also has medics on duty 24 hours a day from Company C.

Operations on LSA Anaconda are achieved by military service members, or by civilian contractors. Although most civilians come from other countries and live on post, many local Iraqi personnel also find employment on the installation. From skilled tradesmen such as electricians and masons, to simple manual laborers, the constant improvements to the LSA provide employment opportunities for many who live in the surrounding area. For many, it’s a chance not only to find work, but to provide for their families during a period when their country is trying to redefine itself. Murthanda Kamal, an Iraqi man who lives nearby and walks to work on the LSA each morning, is eager to share his apprecia-



*Photo by Spc. Jayson Howell*

**Spc. Stevi Gaines and 1st Lt. Joshua Jacobs, Co. A, 29th Support Bn., 29th BCT, help screen all pedestrians entering and exiting LSA Anaconda for any contraband items. Over 5,000 local nationals enter the LSA each month for contract work or as day laborers.**

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tion for the chance to provide for his family. “Thank you very much, soldier... American... [I] work here [in] Anaconda” he says in broken English. “You help me. My mother [is] sick... my father [is] sick... you [paid] me money... [I’m able to take them] to [the] hospital. You help me soldier, thank you. You [offered] me work here... thank you very much.” As Kamal speaks, the six men surrounding him all nod their assent and give “thumbs up” gestures to anyone willing to speak to them. Although the “thumbs up” is considered rude in many areas of Iraq, the improving relationships between American troops and Iraqi civilians has led to the adoption of many American greetings by those Iraqis who interact regularly with the soldiers.

Kamal’s is not an isolated case by any means: the soldiers of the 29th Support Bn. process over 5,000 personnel every month. Since taking over operation of the ECPs in March, the battalion has processed the equivalent of the entire population of Hilo, Hawai’i. Many of those are people like Kamal who come back day after day, but there are many new faces each day as well. Dealing with so many people, both familiar and new, requires a delicate balance of community relations skills and a steadfast attention to detail in ensuring that each person coming in won’t present a threat to those already on post. Every morning, Iraqi personnel must pass through multiple security checkpoints. They are screened with a broad array of detection techniques from classic “pat down” searches to chemical and electronic detection devices. Every visitor to the post is assigned a brightly colored badge, and those who have not undergone a thorough security screening must be accompanied by armed escort before leaving the processing area.

Although some pedestrian traffic passes through the East ECP, much of the Iraqi laborers come through the North, which also accepts vehicles. Though most workers are encouraged to leave their vehicles in the expansive parking lot outside of the gate, many tools and supplies are simply too cumbersome to carry by hand. Cars and trucks laden with supplies come to the gate and, just like pedestrian traffic, go through a series of security checks.

The soldiers at the North ECP also employ a tried and true system for sniffing out potential threats – dogs. Grommit and Timer, with assistance from their respective handlers Brad and Giray Jones, do their part to keep the LSA safe by putting their noses to work searching for contraband. Although Mr. and Mrs. Jones are civilians, they live and work alongside soldiers of the 29th BCT. When not hard at work, the dogs relax in a small air conditioned area and welcome the attention they get from anyone passing by. “As long as we’re not actively walking down the line, checking vehicles, people are welcome to pet and to love the dogs” says Brad. For many soldiers, especially those who have pets waiting at home, a little interaction with the animals provides a welcome stress relief.



*Photo by Spc. Jayson Howell*

**Giray Jones, a civilian contractor, and Timer take a break between vehicle searches. The dog is just one of the many tools the soldiers use to ensure that no threats enter the LSA.**

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At the end of the day, the Iraqis go through the same process in reverse, this time ensuring that in addition to normal contraband items, any information gathering devices are seized. An item as innocuous as a tape recorder or disposable camera could have devastating effects if used for malicious purposes.



*Photo by Spc. Jayson Howell*

**Sgt. Alvin Acob, Co. B, 29th Support Bn., 29th BCT, greets the lead vehicle in a convoy entering the South Entry Control Point LSA Anaconda.**

While the movement of local workers in and out of the LSA every day is impressive, the primary function of both the North and South ECPs is to secure entry and exit lanes for convoys. The 29th Support Battalion handles 2,400 contractor vehicles in addition to its 3,200 military vehicles that pass through the gates. Although the Battalion assumed control of preexisting control points, it hasn't let what's worked in the past limit its abilities in the present. Through joint efforts by the Brigade's 227 Engineer Company, and the Support Battalion, each of the ECPs has been reinforced, improved, and had more obstacles emplaced to restrict traffic flow. From serpentine to speed bumps, vehicles now have to negotiate hazards more slowly in order to enter the LSA. The reach of the ECPs has extended as well. Physical barriers and additional checkpoints have been placed further from the gate, enabling the soldiers to establish a greater umbrella of security over the access

ways to and from the post. Gunner teams sit vigilant at weapons stations providing a watchful eye over their sectors of fire. With .50 caliber M2 machine guns emplaced and designated marksmen with .50 caliber rifles standing by, the offensive reach of the ECP personnel has been extended as well.

Still, for the men and women assigned to the fore of the base defense operations, the threat of possible attack is never truly abated. In a combat zone that includes suicide bombers and vehicle borne explosives, every incoming person or vehicle poses a potential threat. "It's a hard job" says Spc. Angel Santos, of Co. B, "if something does happen, we have to make sure that vehicle doesn't get into the [LSA]... there's no way that we would allow that to happen." The troops who provide security at each of the gates knows that every day holds the possibility of attack, and each of them is prepared to do whatever it takes to ensure that the men and women in the LSA are protected from any attack that may come.

Terrorists aren't the only enemy the soldiers working at the gates have to face. The desert weather of Iraq can be as trying, and as lethal, as any insurgent. During dust storms, when most who live on the LSA seek shelter, the guards at the ECPs must stand resolute against the elements and stay vigilant. On a clear and quiet day, the monotony of an unchanging landscape threatens to dull the soldiers sharp wits and lull them into complacency. Many soldiers have come up with a number of activities to keep themselves and those they work with from becoming bored or distracted by the lack of action that often occurs. These inconveniences are minor however in contrast to the oppressive heat. Without exception, every soldier working at the ECPs names the heat as the greatest challenge they face. With temperatures regularly rising above 120 degrees, the need to stay hydrated is of paramount importance. "Preventative health is always better than treating" says Spc. Colby Takata, a medic of Co. C. "We always want to prevent heat casualties." The medics remind soldiers to "drink water, stay cool, get as much shade as possible" and, perhaps less obvious "you have to eat, even if you're not hungry, get something in your stomach."

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“Ultimately it goes beyond drinking water” adds Spc. Jason Ryan, also of Co. C. “If you don’t have enough salts, you’re still going to dehydrate.”

The medics of Co. C, while primarily dedicated to supporting the American forces at the gate, also provide medical assistance to anyone in need who comes to the ECP. Assistance can range from helping someone re-



*Photo by Spc. Jayson Howell*

**Spc. Lloyd Kamaka (top right) mans his .50 caliber M2 machine gun as designated marksmen Spc. Bryant Cabral (left) and Spc. Jacob Dalton (bottom right) sight in with their M107 rifles. The marksmen use their weapons and their training to enhance the defensive capabilities of the LSA’s ECPs.**

move a splinter to providing lifesaving aid to trauma victims who enter the LSA through the ECPs to get to the hospital. Many Iraqis also come to the ECPs requesting medical assistance. For serious injuries – those that jeopardize “life, limb, or eyesight” as the popular Army saying goes – the medics will provide aid regardless of nationality.

Lt. Col. Norman Saito, commanding officer of the 29th Support Battalion and a 33 year veteran, is proud of the role his soldiers play in the security of the LSA. He credits much of the success of his soldiers to the fact that they are a Hawaiian unit. With soldiers used to a culture and climate of showing dignity and respect to others, they have received the same in return from the

local Iraqi population.

LSA Anaconda, due to its sheer size and nature, has many amenities available to soldiers that are absent on many of the smaller emplacements throughout Iraq. Soldiers have air-conditioning, a movie theater, even Baskin Robbins ice cream. It’s easy moving about the LSA to forget that while they are enjoying these perks, it is only because other soldiers – those of the 29th Support Battalion – stand vigilant against possible threats, and are willing to make whatever sacrifice is necessary to keep those soldiers within the LSA secure. Unlike the Romans in Hannibal’s time, the men and women of LSA Anaconda can be certain that their gates are anything but weak.

## Female soldiers assist in a medical assistance mission

By Sgt. Lauran Robinson

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – Regardless of the controversy over female soldiers in a combat zone, some missions require their services to accommodate cultural and gender barriers. Two female soldiers from 29th Support Battalion, 29th Brigade Combat Team, take on the challenges of leaving the security of the post to contribute their services for a mission greater than the gender issues.

To help the Iraqis, some missions require soldiers to venture out to the local villages around Logistic Support Area Anaconda. To respect Iraq’s strong cultural beliefs, female soldiers are needed to interact with the local women, during missions.

On July 16, 2005, a group of medics, doctors and security elements from 29th Support Bn. and 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry traveled to the Village of Yethrib to provide medical assistance. Over a hundred Iraqis soon took advantage of the aid which was advertised only by word of mouth. Spc. Losivale Faaiu and Spc. Alexis

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*Photo by Sgt. Lauran Robinson*

**Spc. Alexis Hernandez, a medic from 29th Support Bn., 29th BCT, comforts her young Iraqi patient as she examines him during a medical assistance visit.**

Hernandez, two female soldiers from 29th Support Bn., were among the soldiers who wanted to go “outside the wire” to help with the mission despite the dangers of insurgent activities.

Spc. Faaiu was looking forward to her first mission outside of LSA Anaconda, and wanted to see the country and interact with Iraqis in their communities. “I’m excited and anxious. You never know what’s going to happen. I feel lucky to have gotten the chance to go on this mission.” A chemical operations specialist for 29th Support Bn., she played a different role for this mission by providing security. All Iraqis seeking medical care had to be searched as a precaution, and Faaiu was responsible for searching the females. This usually “happy, go lucky” soldier was all business as she helped control the crowd of villagers waiting to be seen by the medics and doctors.

Spc. Hernandez is a medic who has gone outside the wire a few times before to support the soldiers of 100th Bn., 442nd Inf. during their patrols. This was her first medical assistance mission with the intent to treat the Iraqis. “The concept of the mission is great. We help a lot of local nationals” she said. During the mission she attended patients of all ages and treated various illnesses.

“Gender should not be considered, it should be based on ability. Some Iraqis are hesitant to see me because I’m a female but I know they were raised this way so I don’t let it get to me. Most of them see us as equal” said Hernandez.

With the training they received before coming into Iraq, both female soldiers were confident in traveling outside the confines of the post. Precautions were taken throughout the mission and all IEDs found along the route were safely eliminated. “The news is negative; they don’t mention the [Iraqi] people pointing out the bombs to us. You don’t see what the Iraqis are trying to do for their country” said Hernandez.

## **Iraqi Army company moves closer toward conducting independent operations**

Story by U.S. Army Maj. Sean E. Wilson  
27<sup>th</sup> Public Affairs Detachment

The key to a self-sustaining Iraqi democracy is a strong and capable security force. An Iraqi Army company is one step closer to achieving this goal as it completed a recent mission in an Iraqi village just south of Balad July 20.

Soldiers of Company A of the 4th Iraqi Army Battalion conducted a joint cordon and search mission near the town of Salaman.

These troops conducted the mission with limited support from the military transition team of Task Force Konohiki from the 29th Brigade Combat Team and Task Force 1-128 from Forward Operating Base O’Ryan. This was an Iraqi-lead and executed mission which incorporated coalition planning support.

“As they complete this mission as a company, they will be on the road to performing independent operations,”

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asaaid 1st Lt. Christian Knutzen, TF Konohiki.

The Iraqi soldiers secured the town and conducted a systematic search of its buildings in the early pre-dawn light. They conducted a house-to-house search looking for contraband items and possible insurgent activity. As the Iraqi soldiers were searching the town, security elements of the company and its Coalition partners maintained security around the perimeter to ensure the soldiers were protected while they were conducting the searches.

The Iraqi soldiers' efforts were rewarded as they arrested two suspects that were caught with suspected improvised explosive device material. The searches also netted various contraband items to include a light machinegun, and unauthorized ammunition.



*Photo courtesy 27th PAD*

The Iraqi company has been training hard alongside the military transition team to get to this point. They have been trained and certified to operate at the squad and platoon level. What made this operation unique was that this was the first time they incorporated company level command and control to manage its simultaneous platoon operations. "They have come from leaps and bounds," said Capt. Paul Shannon, a company advisor from K Troop, 3-278 Regimental Combat team. "Five months ago they wouldn't have been able to do this."

*Maj. Wilson is commander of the 27<sup>th</sup> Public Affairs Detachment out of Fort Drum, NY.*

## Hawaiian soldiers sharpen skills beyond simple first aid

By Sgt. Suzette Fernandez

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq — Remember the Hollywood military movies in which a soldier would be desperately trying to save another soldier's life, while shouting, "MEDIC!?" During these action scenes, a medic always seemed to magically appear.

Ask any of the 29th Brigade Combat Team Soldiers at the North or East Entry Control Points in LSA Anaconda, "Who here is a 91Whiskey [the military's jargon for a medic]?" Maybe two soldiers of a platoon sized group will raise their hands. But ask, "Who here is a qualified combat life saver?" About one third of the soldiers will proudly raise their hands.

Combat life savers are important extensions of the Army's emergency medical system. A medic can't be everywhere and may not be available to respond to every incident that arises. Many soldiers take it upon themselves to receive additional training to become a certified "combat life saver." A combat life saver or "CLS" qualified soldier takes on added responsibilities and extra duties — one of which is to maintain the special skills attained for emergency situations.

On 26 August, 2005, at 1830 hours the 29th Support Bn. held a Combat Life Saver Recertification class. Soldiers who are CLS qualified are required to renew their certification every 12 months. However, 29th Support Battalion tries to stay ahead of the game and requires that their soldiers renew their certification before their current certification expires. Support Bn. encourages soldiers to visit their recertification class held twice a month to both maintain as well as to sharpen their emergency medical skills.

The class was taught by Staff Sgt. Douglas Barbieto, a federal fire fighter in civilian life and supervised by Maj. Aurther Sampaga Jr., an emergency room RN at Hilo Hospital. Three assistant instructors, all experienced 29th Support Battalion medics, lended a helping hand.

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Each of the soldiers who attended the class were voluntarily taking on this additional duty to attend the evening class. Many of them had already pulled a day long shift at the ECP and were at the class to renew their proficiency in combat life saving techniques.

The soldiers in the class practiced clearing an obstructed airway, monitoring a patient's pulse and respiration, applying a tourniquet, and administering an IV. Staff Sgt. Barbieto quizzed the soldiers throughout the class. Both Staff Sgt. Barbieto and Maj. Sampaga stressed the importance of proper application of the tourniquet. After many lessons learned, the Army has decided to emphasize training in the use of tourniquets. Barbieto stressed that Soldiers need to clear their minds of the old school myth that if a tourniquet is applied to a leg or arm, the limb will have to be amputated.

The 29th Support Bn. soldiers worked in small groups and rehearsed their life saving skills. The assistant instructors stood by to make helpful suggestions or lend a helping hand. Spc. Howard Jackson, an east ECP medic, sensed one of the soldiers was hesitant to insert an IV needle into his partners arm, so Spc. Jackson stuck out his own arm, and with his other hand inserted an IV needle to demonstrate that the process was not harmful and was nothing to be fearful of. As he did this, Spc. Jackson calmly talked the soldier through the steps of properly inserting an IV needle into a patient's vein. Other medics reminded the soldiers that "tape and gloves don't mix," as some of the soldiers comically shook their gloved hands trying to remove the medical tape stuck to them during the training.

By the end of the class, all the soldiers had rehearsed critical life saving skills. They were all proficient in applying various forms of tourniquets, determining vital signs, and the chux (the white and blue absorbent pad placed under the arm for those accidental leaks) may have absorbed more blood than the medics would have liked, but these are combat life saving skills and neatness is not graded.

Barbieto engrained in his soldier's mind, "The challenge is to make yourself a better combat life saver — prac-

tice, practice, practice." The 29th Support Battalion soldiers can be sure they will see Staff Sgt. Barbieto critiquing and praising their combat life saving skills at their weekly entry control point battle drills (a reactionary rehearsal for possible incidents).

There aren't enough medics for everyone to have one in their squad. However, there are about 1,200 qualified Combat Life Savers throughout the brigade ready to react when necessary. With that said, in today's military movies when a soldier needs help saving the life of another soldier they should be yelling at the top of his or her lungs, "CLS, CLS, CLS!"



*Photo by Capt. Kyle Yonemura*

**Sp. Domingo of Co. B, 29th Support Bn., 29th BCT, attended the Combat Life Saver course recently. Soldiers practiced giving each other life saving IVs.**

## Medic! Medic!

By Maj. Arthur Sampaga Jr.

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq — The Combat Medics of the 29th Brigade Combat Team are well trained, ready to respond, and capable of caring for a fallen comrade. In order to ensure this high level of readiness, a "91W" or "combat medic" attends four months of advanced indi-

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vidual training at Ft Sam Houston, TX. Since 2001, the Army has increased the requirements to become a medic. The Active Army has until 2007 and the Reserve Component has until 2009 to complete the upgraded transitional training of current medics.

Current statistical data proves the 29th BCT is way ahead of the Army's transition goal. For FY 2005, 50% of the transitional training should have been completed. Presently, the Hawaii guard's medics lead the nation with 73.8% completion rate. The second place state came in at 58.5%. Most states have not reached the Army's annual goal. The 29th BCT's combined medic force is at an 83% completion rate. Where as, the active component average is at 79.1% completed.

With the activation of the brigade, all medics were required to meet further mobilization prerequisites which meant further training to enhance existing skills. The transition course includes courses in Basic Life Sup-

port (BLS), Emergency Medical Technician Basic (EMT-B), Prehospital Life Support (PHTLS), Trauma Assessment, Advance Airway, Intravenous Therapy, Medication/Pharmacology, Shock treatment (TA), Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TC3), and Trauma lanes training. The medics attended a grueling 21 day (250 plus hours) course of instruction at Ft Bliss's Mobilizing and Sustainment Training course before deployment. These medics are now fully qualified National Registered Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) and fully transitioned medics. For medics who didn't have the opportunity to upgrade their training at Ft. Bliss, the opportunity came as the 44th MedCom school house opened it's doors at LSAA in May 2005. Soon all medics will have received their upgraded training.

The Hawaii Army National Guard's training section initiated this upgraded training for guard medics in 2002. Coordinating, tracking, weekly refresher training, evaluating both battle drills and care done on actual trauma

patients is done by the 29th Support Bn.'s Charlie Med/BDE medical trainers MAJ Sampaga, who is a registered nurse and SSG Barbieto, and emergency medical technician.

All of the additional training the medics of the 29th BCT have attended has produced highly qualified medical professionals capable of performing their tasks under sometimes extreme conditions, often in austere environments.



*Photo courtesy 29th Support Bn.*

**Medics of the 29th BCT low crawl while moving a patient on a litter during a training exercise.**

## **Purple Heart awarded to Puyallup Soldier**

By Haz Anguay  
Task Force Konohiki

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq — Spc. Stephen Brown of Puyallup, Washington was presented the Purple Heart by Brig. Gen. Joseph Chavez, the military's prestigious award for wounds received in combat.

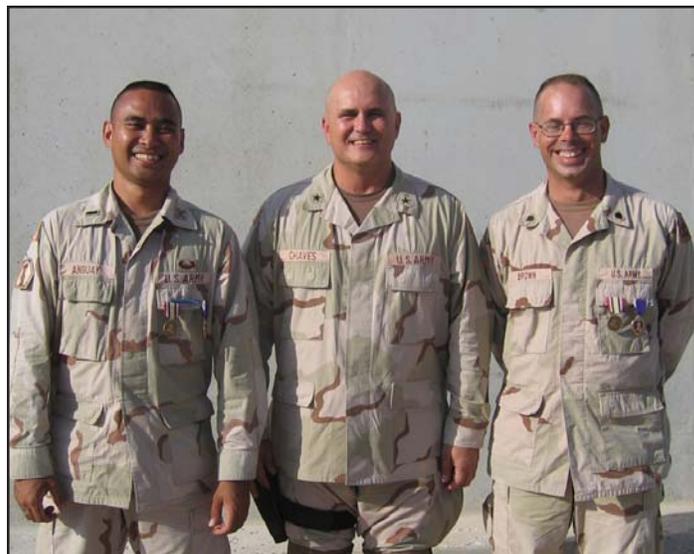
Spc. Brown is a member of the Washington Army National Guard assigned to Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 146th Field Artillery, based out of Montesano, Wash.. He has been a state resident for the past three years. He deployed with OIF II and volunteered to extend for another tour with the 29th Brigade Combat Team.

Brown is currently a member of Task Force Konohiki, which is comprised of soldiers from the 29th Brigade Combat Team, Hawaii Army National Guard, 100th Battalion 442nd Infantry, U.S. Army Reserves, Active Component soldiers, and fellow Washington Guardsmen from the 81st Brigade who chose to extend their service when their brigade redeployed in March 2005.

In addition to receiving the Purple Heart, Spc. Brown also received the Iraqi Campaign Medal for his participation in Operation Iraqi Freedom III. He has been recommended for the Army's newest award, the Combat Action Badge (CAB).

On June 29, 2005, at about 1140 a.m., Brown and his team were conducting a patrol with a platoon of Iraqi Army soldiers in the vicinity of northern Iraq. Brown, the vehicle's gunner, had just sat down in his turret after scanning his area, when an improvised explosive device, exploded. The explosion tore off a 60-pound steel shield from the gunner's turret, sending it flying over his head. "I didn't even know at the time, it happened so fast," said Brown. He was lucky. If he hadn't sat back down at exactly that moment, the turret would have decapitated him.

Brown received shrapnel wounds to his hands and neck from the explosion that also damaged his left eardrum.



*Photo courtesy TF Konohiki*

**(from left) 1st Lt. Haz Anguay, Brig. Gen. Joseph Chavez, and Spc. Stephen Brown pause for a photo following a ceremony in which Chavez presented Anguay and Brown with both the Purple Heart, and the Iraqi Campaign Medals.**

1st Lt. Anguay, the vehicle commander, received a minor wound to his neck from shrapnel. The driver of the vehicle, Spc. Moore from Hawaii, received the worst from the explosion. Shrapnel tore through his right hand and injured his left elbow. Moore was later evacuated to Germany. Brown was fortunate, after receiving treatment for his wounds at LSA Anaconda, he was back in the combat zone a day later, conducting more missions with the Iraqi Army.

Brown credits Spc. Moore for doing a great job in driving the humvee. Even though he was in great pain, Moore was still able to drive the vehicle out of the kill zone, ensuring the safety of the team from possible enemy small arms fire.

Thinking back to that day, Brown believes that a higher force was watching over them. "It was by the grace of God, that we walked away from that explosion. I think he had his hand on every single one of us that day."

## QUESTION OF THE MONTH

### What has this deployment taught you?

By Sgt. Suzette Fernandez

**Sgt. 1st Class  
Lemuel Mangayam**

HHC  
2nd Bn., 299th Inf.

“Be flexible in capturing logistical requirements at all levels.”



**Sgt. 1st Class  
Michael Kist**

HHC  
100th Bn., 442nd Inf.

“I learned what it actually takes to deploy a unit.”



**Sgt. 1st Class  
Michael Smith**

HHC  
1st Bn., 184th Inf.

“Retirement is sure going to look good when this is done.”



**Staff Sgt.  
Junito “JoJo” Gador**

HHC  
29th Support Bn.

“It’s [deployment] more difficult than it looks.”



**Capt.  
Shawn Tsuha**

HHC  
29th BCT

“Time is precious, God is love and I can’t live without my wife Dahlia and my kids Gloria, Ryan, Joseph and Tamara. Please have some lomi salmon, huli-huli chicken and a nice chocolate shake ready.”

# STAFF SECTION

## Commander's Corner

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is an excellent example of how Guard soldiers have used their civilian acquired skills to assist in the rebuilding of Iraq.

Another fine example of progress lies with the second platoon of Company E, 100th Battalion, 442nd Inf. This platoon has spent the past seven months completely integrated with soldiers of the Iraqi Army's 4th Battalion to provide security for Forward Operating Base Vanguard. The American and Iraqi soldiers assigned this security mission performed all base security missions as a single cohesive force—including QRF missions and security patrols around the base's exterior. The Iraqi Forces that defend the base have reached the point that they are fully capable of defending it without assistance from our soldiers and they will soon conduct this mission on their own. FOB Vanguard was recently turned over to the Iraqi Army and the base has been renamed Mowtani.

Task Force Konohiki continues to train the Fourth Battalion of the Iraqi Army and has made tremendous strides in ensuring that our Iraqi allies are prepared to assume responsibility for the security of some of the areas that surround LSA Anaconda. TF Konohiki recently supported the Iraqi Army's 4th Battalion as they conducted two battalion sized operations in the City of Abyachi. These operations resulted in the capture of suspected insurgents and illegal weapons. The Iraqi Army's 4th Battalion's most recent mission incorporated coalition air assets, dog teams and mine detectors and culminated in a successful joint combat mission. The soldiers of TF Konohiki saw the hard work they invested in the training of the Iraqi soldiers come to fruition as the 4th Battalion conducted large scale cordons and searches of parts of the city. The Iraqi soldiers, swept door-to-door in a search for bomb and vehicle-borne improvised explosive device-making materials, weapons caches, as well as specific persons of interest. A company of Soldiers from the Iraqi Army's 4th Battalion also assist us in our security mission here at LSA Anaconda.

One final unit I'd like to highlight is the squad sized

element of engineers from the 227th Combat Engineer Company here at LSA Anaconda. They have done some amazing work. One of the recent missions they completed included the emplacement of barriers surrounding an Iraqi Police Station in Yethrib, increasing security there. They also conducted a barrier and concertina fencing mission at a Yethrib Polling Station to make the area safer for the upcoming elections. These joint missions were performed with the Iraqi Police conducting security with soldiers from the 100th Battalion, 442nd Inf. while soldiers from the Iraqi Army assisted the engineers in the emplacement of the obstacles.

While I focused on some of the joint missions the 29th BCT has been performing, I'd like to emphasize that all of the 29th Brigade's units have been doing a splendid job. I'm proud of all of you. I firmly believe that our Army today is the greatest Army our nation has ever fielded. Our Army is one of compassion and we fight for a common cause. Stay vigilant and hang in there, we're in the final stretch of our historic deployment.

## CSM's Message

*(continued from page 1)*

The UA transformation is a significant event that will have a profound effect on the 29th BCT soldiers. We will lose some CONUS units and we will gain some. The Unit of Action is how the Army is going to organize and fight under current doctrine and threats; to become more responsive and rapidly deployable. This transition will be tough on Soldiers and their families. It will involve Soldiers getting retrained and going to schools. I went through this 15 years ago, and it wasn't easy, but it's survivable. We won't forget our heritage of being Guard and Reserve – to protect and serve our country, state and communities, but we're also Soldiers and we will make it happen.

If you haven't already done so, start working on your NCOERs. Although each State, the 100-442nd Inf, IRRs, and our AC units follow different schedules, the bottom-line is that this is an important document that

## **STAFF SECTION**

needs to be completed by the time we demobe.

The G3 has worked with the different units on Training Year 2006 schools, especially OES and NCOES. Priority will go to Soldiers who require completion of the NCOES who were conditionally promoted. MOS qualification will also have top priority, especially in TY07.

We're over the hump, but let's not get lax. Keep your edge and continue to incorporate safety.

Lava!

### **29th BCT Safety**

By CW2 Richard Hargrave  
29th BCT Safety Officer

#### **ENFORCING & MAINTAINING STANDARDS**

**RISK MANAGEMENT:** As soldiers of the 29th Brigade approach the next few months towards the end of their deployment, Risk Management becomes an integral part of their mission. Implementation of Risk Management into every mission at every level is necessary, to ensure the possibilities of hazards are reduced or eliminated.

Statistics from Operation Iraqi Freedom I & II have shown that the risk of injury and death increases during the transfer of authority. Soldiers in a hurry and becoming complacent about their duties and how they perform missions. Analysis of accident data have indicated that outgoing forces have experienced more incidents compared with incoming forces. It was also indicated that fatalities were on the rise during the same period. Commanders are responsible to ensure their soldiers are aware of the high-risk operations they deal with and how to mitigate the hazards associated with each risk.

**MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS:** Vehicle rollovers

accidents are the leading cause of personal injury and deaths to our soldiers. The predominant contributing factors in all accidents were; speed, seatbelts (not being used) and situational awareness with handling up-armor vehicles. Most rollovers occur near canal roads. These types of hazards must be addressed in all pre-mission planning. Recon and identify potential hazards.

**PERSONAL INJURY:** Electrocutation, Slips, Trips and Falls. Accidents like these can be prevented by maintaining situational awareness, wearing of proper personal protective equipment and following standard procedures.

**NEGLIGENT DISCHARGES:** The largest contributing factors are soldiers; Failing to correctly clear their weapons, Leaders Not Enforcing basic standards. Commanders at all levels must ensure leaders train and re-train correct procedures. Use the buddy system and check each other to help reduce incidents. Lack of self-discipline, failure to enforce standards and inadequate training has been identified as the underlying reason for injuries and deaths from negligent discharges.

We are approaching the ending stretch of our deployment and must enforce standards to reduce accidents and prevent fatalities. Each junior leader is responsible and will be accountable for enforcing the standards.

**BE SAFE — MAKE IT HOME**

## **STAFF SECTION**

### **Important Retention Information**

By Maj. Keith Yoshida  
29th BCT Adjutant

Several deployed soldiers in the 29th BCT are approaching their Expiration Term of Service (ETS) or have already past their ETS. Now is the time to seriously begin considering your future in the Armed Services and continue serving as a proud member of the National Guard or Army Reserve. Many benefits and entitlements await our young men and women who chose to extend. Highlights of the educational and monetary bonus entitlements are listed below. Take serious consideration and full advantage of these benefits. You have earned them through hard work, sacrifice and allegiance towards serving your community, State Guard and Reserve organization and your Nation in time of war as a proud citizen soldier.

#### **Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) Kicker:**

Additional \$200.00/month GI Bill Benefits  
MOS Qualified/Served last 3 consecutive years in NG  
Requires 6 year contract  
MTOE units only  
M-day soldiers only, E1-E5, less than 14 years of service  
Active duty GI bill recipients (1985 to present): the 10 year requirement to use your benefits will restart at the end of your mobilization  
Soldiers who have not maxed out their contribution of \$1800.00 will have the chance to make a one time payment of \$600.00 at DEMOB site

#### **Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP)**

Soldiers with existing loans may reenlist or extend for 6 years for the SLRP agreement  
The amount of SLRP will not exceed 18,000 with a maximum payment of 15% or \$500 which ever is greater (\$3000 cap per soldier per year)  
Soldiers must have served the last 3 consecutive years in an active drilling status in the ARNG  
Inactive National Guard (ING) service constitutes a break in service  
Soldiers may not have received the SLRP as an enlistment, reenlistment or extension option in the past

Soldier reenlisting or extending will not be authorized payment on loans established after the contract has been signed

#### **GI Bill/Reservists**

Soldiers with current eligibility for GI Bill/Reservist and mobilized have their 14 year time period suspended during mobilization

All time served during the mobilization will not count against their 14 years to use or lose

Four months of eligibility added

Soldiers must remain in active drilling status

Under Chapter 1607 GI Bill (mobilized reservists) eligible for enhanced GI Bill Benefits

Deployed 90 days but less than one year \$401.60

Deployed one year but less than two years \$602.40

Deployed for over two years \$803.20

(amounts shown above are monthly payments)

Soldiers need to apply for this benefit once they return to home station. DD 214 will be source document for eligibility

#### **Federal Tuition Assistance**

Federal tuition assistance offered to all M-day Soldiers in the Army National Guard

This is 100% tuition assistance program

The annual cap for program is \$4500.00 per year paid at a rate of \$166.00/per quarter or \$250.00/per semester hour

#### **Bonus**

1st Three year option: \$7500.00 one lump sum payment

2nd Three year option: \$6000.00 one lump sum payment

Six year option: \$15,000.00 lump sum payment (two payments back to back)

All payments for contracts signed in theater are tax free  
Soldiers currently under Prior Service Enlistment Bonus (PSEB) may reenlist for a second three year (\$6000.00) bonus (if in 12 month window, paid 50/50) or three year (\$7500.00)/six year (\$15,000)

Soldiers that received previous three year NG reenlistment bonus may reenlist/extend for another three year (\$6000.00)/six year (\$15,000.00) bonus

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Soldiers that already completed both a 1st and 2nd three year reenlistment bonus may contract for either new 1st three year (\$7500.00) or six year (\$15,000.00) bonus

Soldiers may reenlist/extend within 12 months (in theater) of their current ETS or immediately if currently under stop loss and past their ETS

Soldier must have less than 16 years of total service at ETS (15 years, 11 months, 29 days on extension/reenlistment start date)

Soldiers may have received previous reenlistment/extension bonuses

Soldiers in theater don't need to be MOS qualified

Soldier cannot be barred or flagged

Soldier can be in either an Modified Table of Organization/Equipment (MTOE) or Table of Distribution Allowance (TDA) unit

Soldier on stop loss and past their ETS may reenlist any time. These soldiers reenlistment date will establish a new ETS date. Time served under stop loss will not be deducted from the new reenlistment obligation. Active Guard Reserve (AGR)/technicians must serve six months from the start date of their new contract prior to reaffiliating with their full time state position in order to retain the full bonus

The monetary and educational benefits are tangible incentives and retention tools available to help you make an informed decision on your career goals in the Guard and Reserve. However there is also an intangible aspect to your reenlistment decision that bears much larger organizational implications. The experience, knowledge and leadership skills acquired during your 18 month mobilization/deployment are invaluable. Retention is a key component to the future of the 29th BCT. Consider your future, the future of the 29th BCT and the future of the Guard and Reserve as a combat multiplier in the ongoing Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). Make the right decision. Contact your unit retention NCO.



*Photo by Capt. Kyle Yonemura*

**The sun sets behind a TF Konohiki armored humvee.**

## **Non-Citizen Soldiers, Your Country is Calling!**

CPT Lloyd Phelps II

29th BCT Legal Assistance Attorney

For 29th Brigade Combat Team soldiers who have yet to apply for citizenship under the new military expedited citizenship program, there truly is no time like the present. Many hundreds of soldiers throughout the armed services have taken advantage of this unique opportunity, gaining their United States citizenship in a fraction of the time and expense the process would otherwise require. More specifically, approximately 150 Lava Brigade soldiers, or roughly five-percent of the Brigade, initiated their application process after call-up last August, and have acquired their U.S. citizenship during ceremonies held at in El Paso, Texas; New Orleans, Louisiana; and Baghdad, Iraq. Civilian benefits of citizenship include the right to vote, while military benefits include the ability to apply for, and possibly acquire, a security clearance when and where applicable.

As members of the Armed Services serving in a combat theater, non-citizen soldiers are eligible to immediately apply for citizenship. Soldiers seeking to begin the pro-

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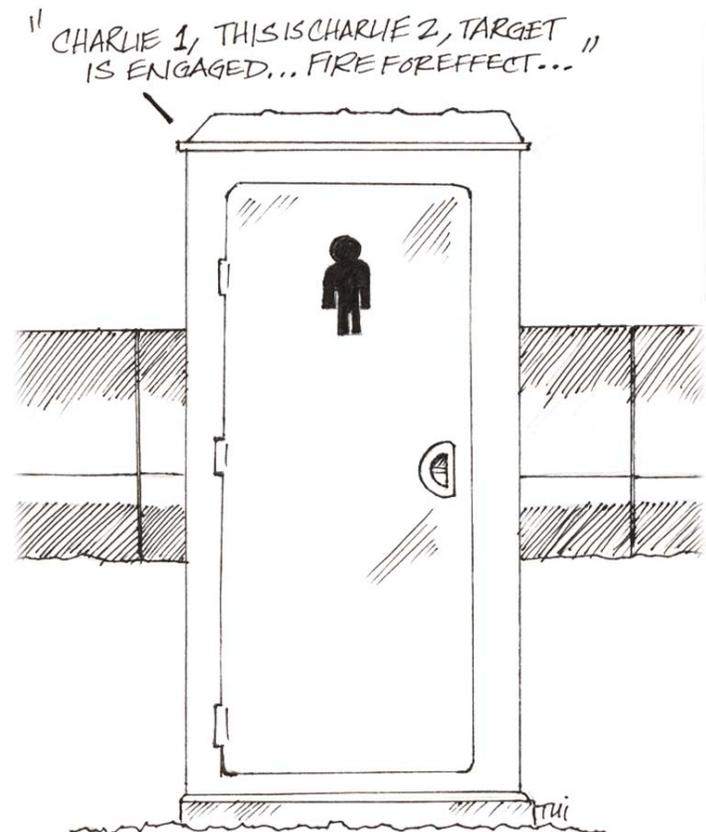
cess should contact their nearest legal assistance office. Legal assistance personnel will then walk the soldier through the seeming myriad of required forms and documents. These include the N-400 Application for Naturalization, which is a ten page background questionnaire; the N-426, a three-copy request for certification of military service; and the G-325B biographic information sheet. Soldiers are also required to fill out two complete FD-258 FBI fingerprint cards, and must submit two passport size (2"X2") photographs. Legal assistance has copies of all required forms, along with fingerprint and camera equipment, so soldiers can normally complete the application process in one visit. In order to expedite the process, soldiers should be prepared to provide their residential addresses for the last five years, along with the names and addresses of all employers for the last five years.

Once the application paperwork is properly filled out, it is forwarded to the INS Processing Center in Lincoln, Nebraska, where the request is processed and background investigation conducted. INS will then send a Notice of Action letter back to the applicant's home of record. If the application was approved, the notice will inform soldiers of the time and place of their interview, along with any additional paperwork they must bring to the interview. If, for some reason, the application is disapproved, the letter will give the reason why and list the steps the soldier must take to rectify the problem and become eligible to interview. The notice is an extremely important document and soldiers awaiting word from INS must ensure they have access to their notice when it is mailed to their homes. Family or loved ones back home must be relied upon to forward the information contained in the notices. Of particular interest is the application number provided in the upper left hand corner of the notice. It is by this 13-digit number that INS tracks the status of soldier's packets, so it is critical that applicants have this number when contacting INS regarding the status of their case.

For soldiers who have already submitted their applications and are awaiting possible interview and swearing in here in theater, it is extremely important that they monitor their case status and contact the 800 customer

service number listed on their notices should they have questions or issues regarding their case status. INS conducted interviews and a swearing in ceremony in July at Victory South in Baghdad, at which time several Lava Brigade soldiers received their citizenship. Though a definitive return date to Iraq and Kuwait has yet to be determined, soldiers will want to remain in contact with their unit paralegal for the latest information on future INS in-theater interviews. Soldiers who are unable to complete the process and swear in while deployed will want to continue to monitor their case status, and check with legal assistance, in order to request final processing upon return to home station.

Whether soldiers opt to swear in overseas, or wait until they return home; whether they have long since submitted their applications or are just starting the process, legal assistance personnel stand ready to provide timely and vital legal support in their quest for United States citizenship. For non-citizen soldiers of the Lave Brigade, the time take to take advantage of such free support is now.



Original artwork by Staff Sgt. Donovan Tuisano

## Chaplain's Blessing



*Photo by Sgt. Terry Eldred*

I'd like to highlight the power of prayer in this message. When Elijah the prophet found himself burdened by the weight of his calling he prayed to God for help and looked to Him for answers. Elijah faced many challenges and as a result, experienced great discouragement, depression, and despair at times. It is during challenging times such as these that the Lord wants us to pray for peace and strength, just as Elijah did.

Jesus Christ, himself prayed when he suffered. While Jesus was suffering under the burden of the sins of the world, He "fell on the ground" (Mark 14:35). He knelt down and prayed. An angel came to strengthen Him (Luke 22:43). "And being in agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground: And he [Jesus] said unto them [disciples], Why sleep ye? Rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." (Luke 22:44,46)

J. Willard Marriott the late chairman of Marriott Corporation (O'Brien, 1977, p.265) gave his son Bill 15 guideposts. He counseled Bill to "Pray about every difficult problem."

When we are without hope and want to give up, prayer holds the answers we seek. We must remember that the work is not entirely ours, but the Lord's also. As the author Joseph Scriven wrote in "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" (The Armed Forces Chaplain Board, 1974, p.106).

Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?

We should never be discouraged: Take it to the Lord in

prayer!

Can we find a friend so faithful, Who will all our sorrows share?

Jesus knows our every weakness-Take it to the Lord in prayer!

Are we weak and heavy laden, Cumbered with a load of care?

Precious Savior, still our refuge-Take it to the Lord in prayer!

Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer!

In his arms he'll take and shield you, You will find a solace there!

Despite discouragement, may we — just as Jesus and Elijah did — find calmness, and answers through Prayer.



*Photo by Capt. Kyle Yonemura*

**Members of Co. B, 100th Bn., 442nd Inf., were looking at the stuffed animals they were going to hand out to children when their patrol leader gathered them for a prayer before leaving the wire.**

## MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

To my husband SSGT Jared Keala Miguel with 29th SPT BN, B Company “ Happy 4th Anniversary” (on August 11) wish you could be here to celebrate! Bray, Ryder and I Miss You So Much!!! Can’t wait till you get home. We LOVE You with all our HEART! Take care and be safe! Love you always, Alaynna

Lt. Joshua A. Jacobs, 29th Support Battalion, A Company. You so loved and supported back home. Your homecoming will resound greatly. GO BUFFS!!! Love Dad, Kimberly ,AJ and many others

Sgt. Stanley Acedo, HHC 29th BCT MP

Happy Birthday (9/19/05) Daddy!!!! We had a wonderful and unforgettable time during R&R! Be Safe and stay strong in the Lord. We love you and can’t wait to see you again! Love, Your Baby Girls

Happy Birthday to my son, MSG Christopher Tourtellot 29th BCT on September 11, 2005, love you...stay safe. Love, Mom (and everyone in Mass.)

For SSG William Castillo, A Co. 29 BCT 2-299 IN: Joshua, Aaron and I loved every moment with you during your R&R. We are so, so very proud of you- and we are just looking forward to having you home for good! We miss you every day, and we love you with all of our hearts. Your ohana- Wendy, Joshua and Aaron

To my husband Spc. Delbert Kaawa 2-299 Inf. D.Co. Happy 43rd Birthday and Happy 22nd Anniversary (Aug.25). Love you and miss you, can’t wait till your home for good! Until then God keep you and guide you safely. We are very proud of you! Love your wife Julie, Bryson, Tua-Nei, soon to arrive Teiraua, Nicole,Auli’i, and Maka.

To my husband, Victor Mejia (29th BCT 100/442 INF): Happy Anniversary, September 1st, I can’t wait to share the day with you! We love you and pray for you, and all of the soldiers. Your wife and children

SPC Hinkle, Bryan C. CO 29th Spt Bn. Aloha Bryan, the Browns miss you and can’t wait until you are back in Hawaii!

To My Wonderful Husband and Best Friend 1LT Michael Caraang 29th Spt Bn, C Co... Happy Anniversary Love!! Time spent with you during R&R was spectacular :) Continue to be strong and faithful. May God bless you always. We miss you so much and love you dearly... Aileen, Neelia & Naiya

To all of the soldiers of the 29th Brigade Combat Team, we’re sending our aloha and support from the Big Island. Stay safe! Love, the Fuata ohana.



Photo by Capt. Kyle Yonemura

Following a recent article in a Honolulu based newspaper, soldiers throughout the 29th BCT have been receiving a steady supply of rice from people back home willing to show their support for the troops. Rice, a staple in the diet of many soldiers of the 29th BCT, is unavailable locally. The soldiers are thankful for every bag that is generously donated.

## PHOTO GALLERY



Spc. Jasmine Ocampo, a medic assigned to Co. C, 29th Support Bn., 29th BCT, speaks to reporters from the New York Times about her work at the North Entry Control Point. With hundreds of Iraqis coming to the gate every day to work on the LSA or receive urgent medical care, the soldiers there have become a focus for national media attention from newspapers, to magazines, to television documentary crews.

*Photo by Spc. Jayson Howell*



*Photo by Spc. Jayson Howell*

Maj. William Spray, the 29th BCT Operations Officer (left), listens to Lt. Col. Kenneth Hara, Commanding Officer, 2nd Bn., 299th Inf., at a recent commander's conference in LSA Anaconda.



*Photo courtesy 27th PAD*

A pair of Iraqi soldiers cautiously enter a house to conduct a search. The soldiers received training from the 29th BCT's Task Force Konohiki, who assisted in the mission in an advisory role.

## PHOTO GALLERY



*Photo by Capt. Kyle Yonemura*

Master Sgt. Luke Octavio, HHC, 29th BCT, puts his carpentry skills to work crafting cabinets and counter tops. In over 41 years of service with the Army National Guard, Octavio has never missed a single drill or a day of annual training.



*Photo by Sgt. Lauran Robinson*

Spc Forsythe, a medic from 100th Bn. 442nd Inf takes the pulse of an Iraqi man seeking medical care during a medical assistance visit.



*Photo by Spc. Jayson Howell*

1st Lt. Keith Bishop, an officer in the 29th BCT's Civil Affairs section, lays a payout for a legal claim on a table in front of the recipient, a young Iraqi boy. The Civil Affairs section processes legal claims for Iraqis who have suffered property loss as a result of accident or negligence on the part of U.S. forces. In this case, the original claimant died before the matter was resolved, and a portion of his claim was paid out to his youngest son in accordance with Iraqi estate law. The boy was placed on the table because he was too small to see what was happening from the floor.

## PHOTO GALLERY



*Photo by Sgt. Lauran Robinson*

**After a long mission fraught with danger, a military patrol team approaches the North ECP of LSA Anaconda, welcoming the security that entering the base brings.**



*Photo by Spc. Jayson Howell*

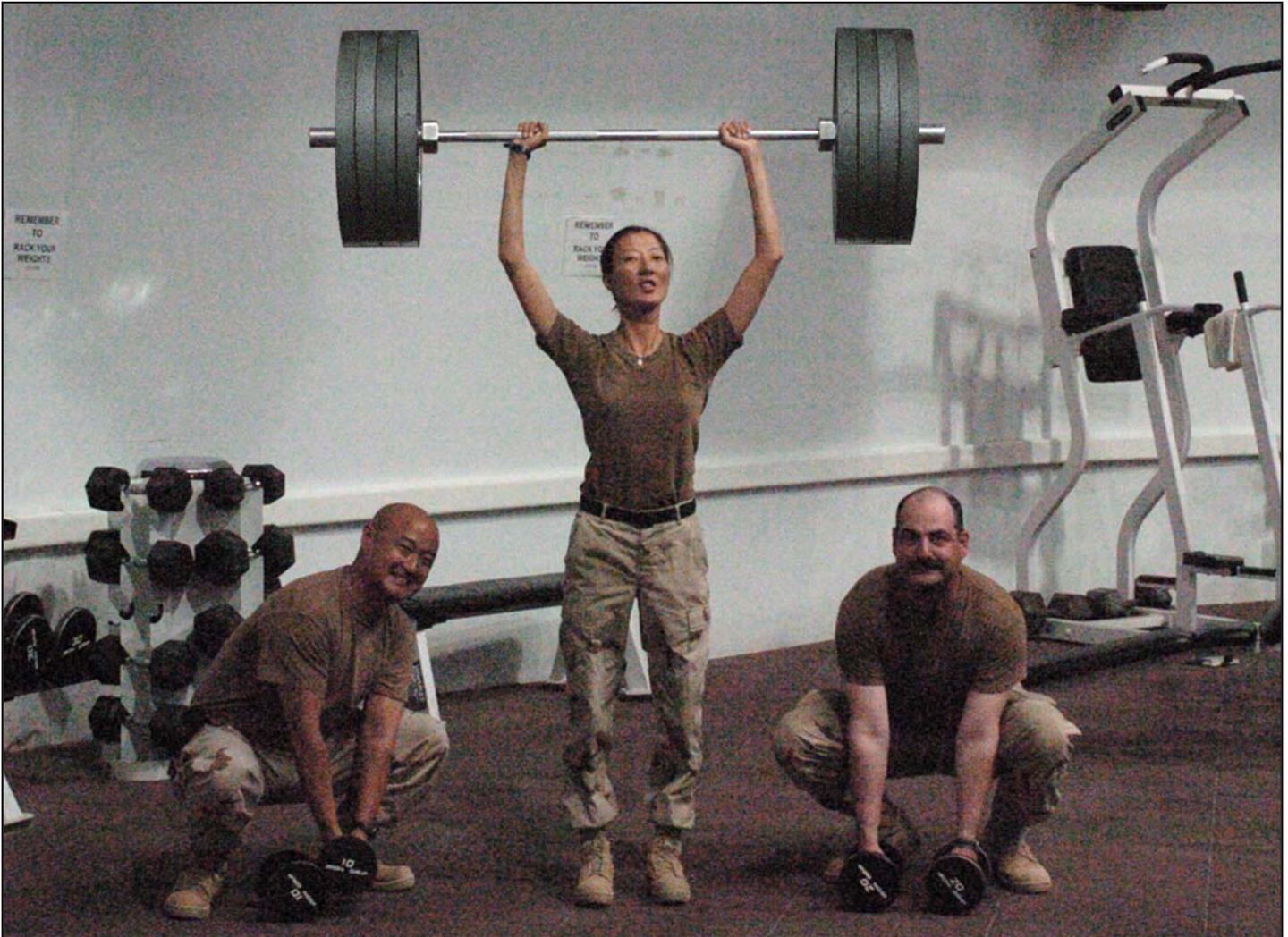
**Lt. Col. Colbert Low, Commanding Officer, 100th Bn., 442nd Inf. (right) shakes the hand of the 29th BCT's Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Inouye shortly after receiving his "combat patch" from the Brigade Commander, Brig. Gen. Joseph Chaves (center). The patch, worn on the right sleeve, is authorized for units deployed in combat areas for at least 30 days. Brig. Gen. Chaves presented the first of the patches on August 16, 2005 — the one year anniversary of the Brigade's mobilization.**



*Photo by Capt. Kyle Yonemura*

**Two Iraqi men escort women from their family seeking medical aid during a recent medical assistance visit. The Iraqi sensitivity to gender issues has made the inclusion of female soldiers an invaluable necessity for the success of such missions.**

## ***SHAMELESS SELF-PROMOTION***



### **The Lava Flow Staff**

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

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.

As a morale booster, we'd like to include messages of support from family members for the brave men and women of the 29th, please contact us at the following address:

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

All submissions must be no more than one line, and contain the soldier's name, rank, and unit along with the message of support. Please limit your submissions to one per family per month.