

ISSUE 3

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- *New APO/FPO flat rate box*
- *About TroopTube*
- *First ever 4-star Chief of the National Guard Bureau*
- *Basic Pay Entitlements*
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1-299th CAV First to Travel into Iraq

First to venture into Iraq were the Soldiers of the 1-299th Cavalry Squadron when departing Kuwait on November 11th to conduct a convoy escort mission

They were accompanying the 1-148th Infantry Battalion as part of their final training validation. The 1-299th CAV will continue training with the 1-148th IN until next month, when they relieve them and assume responsibility of the escorts.

The missions require the Convoy Escort Teams (CET) to provide armed security for vehicles driving through Iraq. While training, the 1-299th CAV will observe how the 1-148th IN conducts its escorts, and then switch roles and conduct the escorts themselves.

"We're gonna be talking them on the road, showing them how we run things," said Staff Sgt. Eric Manicsic a 1-148th IN CET leader. "Just teach them all the stuff we wish we would've known when we first took these missions," Manicsic said.

Training with the 1-148th IN is proving to be more useful than training conducted in Hawai'i and Texas during these past six

months, said Sgt First Class Frank Vierra, a 1-299th CAV Plt. Sgt.

"Of course, what better way would you want to learn than with the guys who've been doing this for nine to ten months already," Vierra said.

Many tasks are necessary in preparing for a convoy escort mission, including issuance and inspection of equipment. As a CET leader, Sgt Kyle Peatfield is responsible for assuring mission preparations are complete as well as making sure his Soldiers are ready and able to conduct the mission safely.

One way he assures the Soldiers are prepared is by implementing a rest plan, which helps them cope with the change of working at different times in the day, said Peatfield.

"I make sure my guys are prepared as well as they can be. Make sure they know their mission and make sure they know their role in completing the mission. And make sure they complete the mission safely," Peatfield said.

This is the second deployment for many



Sgt. Peatfield (left) with his counterpart, SSG Manicsic, conducting pre-combat inspections of their equipment.

of the 1-299th CAV Soldiers, but their first time conducting escort missions into Iraq. Although many of the Soldiers have little escort mission experience other than training, it is because of that excellent training and their high level of motivation that makes the 1-299th CAV leaders feel ready to take on the mission ahead.

"Everyone's excited to get off the FOB and get their first mission underneath their belts," said Sgt Kyle Peatfield.

(Photo and Article by: Sgt. Crystal Carpenito)

29th IBCT Trains to Take Over Mission in Kuwait



100-442th IN Soldiers mount a .50 cal weapon into an ASV turret with the help of their 1-126th CAV counterparts.

With the 1-126th CAV redeployment date in sight there is still one more critical mission to accomplish. Relief in Place training is a very important mission in setting up the 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (29th IBCT) for success and giving them the tools for safely conducting missions in and out of Iraq.

"The training so far has gone very well," said 1st Lt. Troy E. Robertson of

Alpha Co. 1-126th CAV. "The Soldiers of the 29th IBCT come to the range everyday motivated and ready to put rounds down range as a typical combat arms unit."

The M1117 Armored Security Vehicle (ASV) training portion of the Relief in Place/Transfer of Authority (RIP/TOA) training was in-depth and informative.

Continued on Page 4: RIP/TOA

**29TH
LAVA
BRIGADE
COMMANDER**



**Colonel Bruce Oliveira
BDE Commander**

“It is especially appropriate during this upcoming Thanksgiving that as we count our blessings, we give particular thanks to our cherished Families. It is Families who give us strength and support and give our lives and our mission meaning.”



Col. Oliveira and his wife, Jeanne Oliveira, at the Fort Hood Farewell Ceremony.

Notes From The Commander

Lava Soldiers, we have boots on the ground! The entire Brigade Combat Team was able to deploy thousands of miles from our home safely and efficiently; a feat that in itself is worthy of note. We traveled as many separate groups, but we were all united by our team focus and warrior spirit, answering our nation’s call to arms.

Over the past few weeks, the Brigade's more than 1,700 Soldiers have been moving into their areas of responsibility. The Lava Brigade has a very diverse and challenging mission in Kuwait and Iraq. Our area of operation is extremely large, covering all of Kuwait and Iraq.

In the next few weeks, we will continue unloading our equipment and start our missions throughout our area. Train hard today, as tomorrow you may

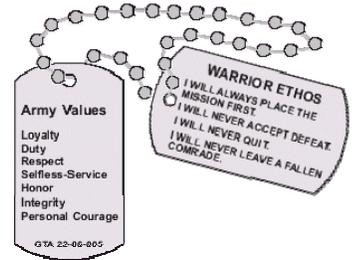
be using those very skills in combat. Do the right thing. Live the Army Values. Instill the Warrior Ethos within yourselves.

I want you to know how pleased I am with the amazing accomplishments of every Battalion, Company and Soldier. Each day I find a new reason to be proud of the trained, disciplined, and lethal team with which I have the privilege to serve.

Finally, remember to give thanks this Thanksgiving for the blessings and the benefits of freedom, liberty, and the bounty of our way of life.

We enjoy these blessings and many others due, in no small part, to the sacrifice and vigilance of you all, dedicated professionals, the men and women of the 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

It is especially appropriate during



this upcoming Thanksgiving that as we count our blessings, we give particular thanks to our cherished Families. It is Families who give us strength and support and give our lives and our mission meaning.

I offer my thanks to you, the men and women of the Lava Brigade, who each day stand watch against those who intend to do us harm. God bless you and your Families all.

Lava!

29th IBCT Proudly Honors Hawai'i's History

Ka Hae Hawai'i-the Hawaiian Flag was commissioned by Kamehameha the Great in 1816 during the Hawaiian religious Kapu system.

The eight alternating white, red and blue strips represent the eight major islands of Hawai'i. The British Union Jack represents Hawai'i's historical relationship with Great Britain as it's protectorate as well as suggesting a stylized representation of a *puela* - a triangular standard laying across two crossed spears called an *alia* - which is the symbol of an *ali'i*-chief. This representation is clearly illustrated at the center of the royal Seal of Hawai'i.

Although Hawai'i's independence was temporarily challenged by Lord Paulette of Great Britain in 1843, Great Britain sent Admiral Thomas to officially restore and recognize Hawai'i's independence and Hawaiian Flag on July 31, 1843 at what is now called Thomas square in Honolulu, Hawai'i.

On that same day at Kawaiaha'o church Kamehameha III first proclaimed the motto, "Ua mau ke ea o ka 'aina i ka pono." "The life [independence] of the land is perpetuated in righteousness."

How England's colors got into our Hawai'i State Flag? This goes back to the days following Captain Cook's discovery of the Hawaiian Islands. A British sea Captain by the name of Vancouver headed an expedition to the Islands 15 years after he had made the trip with Cook. Vancouver admired the Hawaiians and their

ways, and in turn, the Hawaiians really respected Vancouver. Now Vancouver had become very good friends with Kamehameha I and one day, it occurred to Vancouver that the Islands would most assuredly benefit by being placed under the protection of Great Britain and hence, in 1794, with a wave of his sword and the hosting of his motherland's flag over Kamehameha's royal home, Hawai'i was proclaimed a protectorate of England. Unfortunately, the British government did not concur with Captain Vancouver. So his action was never ratified and a real protectorate was never established.

Now England's colors continued to fly over the kingdom for many years, and that alone offered an implied protection. As a matter of fact, Kamehameha and his chiefs considered themselves "men of Britain" and as they conquered the remaining Islands to form the Kingdom of Hawai'i, they did so under the colors of England.

Once the kingdom was formed though, it was decided that their own flag should represent the Hawaiian Islands. Captain Beckley, an Englishman who was married to a Hawaiian woman, was given the task to create this flag, and with the aid of some English bunting material, he created what would represent a compromise between his love for his mother county, growing U. S. influence, and his respect for the Hawaiian people.

So what he did was to retain the Union Jack but reduce it in size and put it in the upper left-hand corner. He then also made the flag



Col. Oliveira stands beside the Hawaiian Flag as it went up in front of the 29th IBCT Headquarters TOC in Camp Arifjan

red, white and blue to keep U. S. growing influence happy by showing Kamehameha's friendship to all and then put in eight strips to represent the eight major islands in Kamehameha's kingdom.

The Hawaiian Flag has represented Hawai'i for over 180 years, and is presently authorized to represent the State of Hawai'i on land and sea and is the flag of the Nation of Hawaiian People - La Hae Hawai'i O Ka Lahui Hawai'i Nei!

(Courtesy of: hawaiiwaterpolo.com)

Command Sergeant Major's Comment

By the time that each of you read this message the 29th IBCT will have once again accomplished their mobilization requirements and will be fully engaged with our predecessors learning "the ropes of our new missions".

The memories and training events of North Fort Hood are now behind us. Many things have occurred since our last Soldiers left Fort Hood. A new President has been elected, which for those of us who boarded the last plane inbound to Kuwait heard the news while in flight. They are memories to remember and share with our families for years to come.

For those Soldiers that are deploying for the first time, all is new. Names like Arifjan, Buerhing, and Virginia, will now become part of the collective memory of the great missions you have been entrusted with and will surely perform with great distinction.

For Families that have endured previous deployments or those new Families that are still learning our way of living, please know that our Soldiers have the latest equipment available. It is a great feeling to see our Soldiers utilizing the best on hand. As time rolls on and more equipment is available, our Commander and every command team within the Brigade are fully committed to acquire it for your Soldiers. The Brigade logistics team is hard at work requesting the best for our Soldiers.

As most of us who have been in this theater of operation know, the food provided is more than enough. A Soldier can eat just about anything they desire. From sandwiches to noodles, it's all available even at the most remote of camps. Some of our camps have Starbucks, KFC, and Subway. Soldiers can satisfy just about any type of flavor they crave. As always, goodies from back home will always make our day when received.

Living arrangements have improved over the years and your Battalion Command teams will continue to strive to make them even better as we take over

the mission. Tent living for some and hard buildings for others are all part of the mobilization experience. No matter what others have, you the Soldiers of the 29th IBCT, continue your mission with a smile.

Communicating with Families is still a work in progress for some units. Not all camps have all of the amenities that some Soldiers are used to back home. It is Kuwait and Iraq and not all is perfect. As time develops all command teams are committed to look for avenues that will facilitate continued contact with your Families. Our goal is to minimize the cost of phone calls and internet use. As I tell everyone that I speak or write to in regards to the needs of our Soldiers, is that they need phone cards. Lastly, let us not forget that free mail is available for the average letter size. So take the time to write home to Family and friends. They appreciate it just as much as we do when the unit mail clerk calls your name when you receive a letter.

Physical fitness is not a problem in theater. Most, if not all camps, have very good facilities to help each of us improve ourselves. The mission ahead will require every ounce of energy we have. It is up to each individual to make fitness a priority whenever you can. From stretching those tired muscles before a mission to running at every opportunity. The gyms are open 24/7 for the most part, so every one of us has the opportunity to improve. Set your goals, achieve them and improve yourself.

Education opportunities are not traditional in theater for each of us. This is a challenge that can only be managed individually. I encourage each of us to make every effort to continue your civilian or military education. Whether you take a class online or choose the traditional resident course, use your time to improve your future. Contact your camp education counselor, or your home state educational counselor. You have earned your educational benefits.

Religious services are held at every camp in theater. The Unit ministry team

of the Army is fully committed to assist every Soldier in practicing their chosen faith. The Chaplains Corps is available at all hours to serve each of us with whatever the need may be. So go ahead and talk to your battalion, or camp chaplain. They are waiting to serve you!

Whether you are married or not, I can not overemphasize the importance of the Family Readiness Groups. Our Families and friends are working hard back home and are ready to assist each member of the Ohana with their needs. I encourage each Soldier, Family and friend to contact their unit volunteers. Our hats are off to them for all that they do for our Families.

The holidays are fast approaching, so make sure that you send your greeting messages to your Families. Likewise, I ask all Families to plan ahead for those bags of goodies that you want to send your beloved Soldier. Sending your message of love and care early in the month will ensure that your Soldier will receive their goodies on time

The Brigade Commander continues to strive to bring excellence to the varied missions at hand and those that may be entrusted to us. Have no doubt that the Brigade Command is in touch with your realities and is humbled by all that you do for the mission of the Army. We are honored to be with all of you during this mission.



CSM Edgardo Coronado
BDE CSM

"Have no doubt that the Brigade Command is in touch with your realities and is humbled by all that you do for the mission of the Army."



CSM Coronado and his wife, Gloria, with Hawai'i's Lt. Gov. "Duke" Aiona. CSM Coronado is holding the State flag presented by Governor Lingle during the Departure Ceremony which is now proudly flying over the 29th IBCT TOC at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.



A 1-299th CAV Soldier fires a flare into the air.



1-299th CAV Soldiers watch as a flare is discharged into the air.

“This time around, it’s good to have a build up to the missions, because the first hand knowledge we are receiving gives us a better feel of what to expect.”



A 100-442 IN Soldier receives instruction from a 126th Soldier in a M1151 turret



100-442 IN Soldiers train with the new Harris Radio System

100-442th IN Conducts Flare Training

Sitting in the open turret, manning the .50 cal. crew-served weapon, the Soldier constantly scans his sectors watching for anything out of the ordinary that can cause harm to the convoy he is charged to protect and escort throughout Iraq.

It can happen in a span of a few seconds, seconds which can seem like minutes or even hours.

It is during these precious few seconds that the Soldier turns to the Escalation of Force training taught to him during the Relief In Place/Transfer of Authority (RIP/TOA) process.

“A lot of Soldiers come into theater and don’t know how to shoot flares or even get the opportunity to do so,” said Sgt. Mark A. Kish, a member of Company C, 1-148th Infantry Battalion, and an instructor of the hands-on flare training.

Both Wrangler security force battalions are conducting simultaneous transitions with battalions assigned to the 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, which lead to the development of a 14-day plan in which all incoming personnel are given in-dept training to help crews adjust to the fast pace of mission requirements.

RIP/TOA: Continued from Page 1

The Soldiers learned how to fully mount and dismount the MK19 and .50 cal machine gun weapon systems on the ASV turret.

Using live .50 cal ammunition, the Soldiers also conducted familiarization fire with the weapon systems mounted on the ASV.

It was the first time for many of the Soldiers to receive training on these weapon systems and the ASV.

“Just like anyone in the Army we are trying to improve upon what we received,” said Staff Sgt. Joshua K. Harrison of Alpha Co. 1-126th CAV. “When we arrived in theater we did not get the training like the 100th is getting from us.”

“I like being on the road, but I don’t have a problem training our replacements,” said Spc. Kevin A. Dills, a gunner also with Company C, 1-148th. “With this training, we’ve given our replacements a head start toward understanding missions and giving them a framework to build upon.”

“We get Soldiers out here and teach them the correct way to shoot off a flare safely and without burning down the vehicle,” said Kish. “With an emphasis on safety, we have Soldiers shoot off flares outside of the vehicle and for the gunners we get them into the turret and have them launch flares to mimic real-life situations.”

“This helps a lot, this is my first deployment and the first time I’ve been in a turret as a gunner and first time having hands-on training with flares,” said PV2 Amren T. Kekahuma, heavy equipment operator and first time gunner with 1-299th Cav. “I was a late deployer and really got pushed through the training at Fort Hood, but coming out here, and going through the training that the infantry unit set up for us has really been beneficial to all of us,” said Kekahuma.

“We are more prepared because of it and have more situational awareness and know what to expect on the road,” he said. “I like the hands-on training.

The 240 Bravo Machine gun was also in the mix of the training as the Soldiers qualified in the prone position and fired from the mounted position of an M1151.

“One thing about the training is that all of the Soldiers never get as many rounds as they want to fire down range,” said Robertson.

Classes on learning how to deploy flares, like the pin and the star cluster flares, were also given to the Soldiers in a block of instruction and hands-on training. With all the movement into and out of Iraq, learning when and how to deploy flares is a very useful tool.

Communication skills are one of the many important tools to running a successful mission.

I’ve never done anything like this, so it’s a good thing to experience.”

“With this training, it is definitely better than the last deployment,” said Sgt. Brent S. Ortiz, a combat engineer from Hilo, HI, and a truck commander also with the 1-299th Cav.

“This is more thorough. When we deployed last time to Iraq, we zeroed our weapons and jumped right into the fight,” said Ortiz. “This time around, it’s good to have a build-up to the missions, because the first hand knowledge we are receiving gives us a better feel of what to expect.”

Ortiz further emphasized, “This is a good familiarization, and good for everyone to go through the training because it gives everyone a feel on how to do each others job just in case something happens.”

“We are trying to give our replacements all the tools and supplies for success,” said Kish. “We want to give them our knowledge we acquired over the past couple of months so they start off on a better foot than we did.”

“We just hope that we teach them to treat the flare as a weapon and learn how to deploy them properly and safely,” said Dills.

(Photos and Article by: SGT John Ortiz, 4th SB)

“With the new Harris radio system it makes it that much easier,” said Sgt. Angelo T. Willey of the Delta Co. 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry.

Although previously unfamiliar with the new radio system, the 100-442th IN Soldiers feel confident after receiving the block of instruction and are looking forward to taking it on the road and learning its capabilities first hand.

“The new radios are capable of doing a lot more than the old ones,” said Willey.

All of this training is critical in assuring mission success. The 29th IBCT is excited to be part of the convoy security mission and ready to execute it safely and successfully.

(Photos and article by: PFC Blakeney, 4th SB)

1-299th CAV Conducts Live Convoy Night Fire Exercise

Around 100 Soldiers of Bravo Troop, 1-299th Cavalry left to conduct live-fire night exercises at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Lance on November 11th. The exercise was conducted in order for the Soldiers to prepare and validate for their convoy escort missions into Iraq.

“The live fire gave us one last opportunity to work together as a gun truck team before we actually get out on the road,” Sgt Richard Sauque said.

The Soldiers felt motivated to get behind the wheel of the humvee and their weapon systems again. It has been a long journey getting to Kuwait, and finally they are here and ready to start their missions.

It takes skill as a gunner to make sure they aren't putting their fellow Soldiers in harms way while shifting the weapon from one side of the humvee to the other. The trick, or should I say technique, to moving the weapon without pointing the barrel directly at other Soldiers is to face the weapon toward the sky and rotate the turret. The turret moves independently of the vehicle, so the gun can move in different directions while the vehicle continues on its course.

The exercises went exceptionally well for the Soldiers. Even the new gunners were feeling comfortable. It is an amazing feat these young men have to endure at

such a young age. To be able to make a distinction between friend and foe in a split second is exceptionally hard to do. But these men are trained to recognize the difference and accomplish their mission with the least amount of collateral damage.

When the Soldiers drove humvees down the range road, targets would pop up with night lights attached to them. The lights enable the crew to see when an enemy moved into their sector and was about to fire. Once one of the crew members saw the enemy, that person let everyone in his truck know the distance, direction and description of that enemy. This way, everyone in their vehicle knew where the enemy was and could warn the other vehicles that there were enemy combatants in the vicinity.

The crew had to make positive identification prior to shooting at the targets. When on their actual missions, it is extremely important that the gunners only shoot when they can positively identify, with one hundred percent certainty, that the person they are about to engage is an enemy. Many other coalition forces are out in Iraq helping fight this war and these Soldiers must be sure that they are not shooting at one of them. A large key to the Armed Forces success in the Middle East is in keeping collateral damage at a minimum and winning over the hearts of the people

that live here.

FOB Lance consists of four Quanset huts, two of which are for the Soldiers to sleep in at night. In the evening it was pretty cold outside for Bravo Troop. Inside the Quanset huts it was much warmer from everyone's body heat. Some of the Soldiers decided to sleep outside under the stars. The humming from the lights energized by diesel generators helped the Soldiers fall asleep nicely. But sometimes the thoughts of a Sand Viper or a large scorpion came into their heads, so their sleeping bags were bundled tight. While out there, no one saw any animals other than camels. But they were off in the distance, so there was little wildlife interaction.

One of the big perks for the Soldiers in the field was their hot meals. Meals Ready to Eat (MREs) were there for those who wanted them, but for dinner, the cafeteria provided the Soldiers with a hot meal. It just so happened that this particular evening the cafeteria was serving prime rib. Who else eats prime rib in the middle of the desert! They didn't have Aus Jus sauce, but really who cares at that point. It was a great meal to finish off a good night of exercises.

(Article by: 1st Lt. Peter Ammerman, Photo by: Sgt. John Ortiz)



Soldiers stand in line to get their hot dinner meal.

“The Soldiers felt motivated to get behind the wheel of the humvee and their weapon systems again.”

Zero in on HHC, 29th IBCT

Selected Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC) 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (29th IBCT) began their journey on November 14th to Udari Range to zero their Close Combat Optics (CCO).

The Soldiers were accompanying A/1-487th Field Artillery, a Convoy Security Company (CSC) attached to the 1-299th Cavalry. Made of the various staff sections, HHC is responsible for Command and Control of both 29th IBCT battalions per-

forming CSC missions in Kuwait and Iraq; 1-299th Cavalry and 100-442nd Infantry.

In support of the Battalions, certain HHC Soldiers may be required to travel into Iraq. Since Soldiers traveling North of Kuwait need to carry their weapons, assuring their sight is properly zeroed in on their target is necessary.

The 29th IBCT began using CCOs last deployment in 2004. Now all Soldiers have a CCO or some type of secondary aiming

device, said Maj. Daniel Padello, the Brigade Logistics OIC.

When zeroed to the weapon such aiming devices provide an infrared beam along the weapon's line of fire and increase the Soldier's surveillance and target acquisition range.

(Article by: Sgt. Crystal Carpenito, Photo by Sgt. John Ortiz, 4th SB)



A/1-487th FA and HHC 29th IBCT Soldiers fire their weapons down range.

Looking Back on Pass—Through the Eyes of 1st Lt. Faleafine



zation training.

While at NFH, the Soldiers got word in early October that they would have a four-day pass prior to leaving for Kuwait. It was the thought of spending time with their Families and friends that kept them motivated through the long and busy work days.

It was just a little less than a month before pass. Families were called and flights booked. Everyone talked about what they were going to do and who they were going to see.

“As soon as we got the final dates, I had my wife start looking for flights. I decided on meeting her and the two boys in San Diego since we both have a sister there. We had places to stay, cars to use, and willing babysitters”, said Faleafine.

October 22nd rolled around fast for some and slower for others, but one thing was for sure - pass had finally arrived. But first, one thing was left to do and that was the Farewell Ceremony for Task Force Lava Thunder’s departure from Fort Hood.

Held for the Soldiers and Families of both the 29th IBCT and the 45th Fires Brigade, from the Oklahoma National Guard, the ceremony took place on the morning of October 22nd at III Corps Headquarter’s Sadowski Field on Fort Hood.

“For the Farewell Ceremony, I was tasked to make sure the PA system was setup and tested prior to the rehearsal and ceremony. We had to make adjustments at the rehearsal the day before and scrambled to secure a more powerful sound system for the parade field. It all worked out in the end,” said Faleafine.

It was an early morning and the Soldiers beat the sun to the field. There they unloaded the buses and grounded their luggage. Tired yet excited for the days ahead, the two Brigades formed up in preparation to march onto the field.

Those Families, friends and local supporters who came to see their Soldiers had arrived and taken their seats in

the bleachers by now. The Order of March had begun and the field was quiet except for the pitter patter of the Soldier’s boots as they hit the ground.

“I was impressed by the sheer size of our force as I monitored the audio from behind the VIP stand. Being stuck in the office and in meetings all the time, you forget that there are often hundreds or thousands of Soldiers affected by what we do or fail to do. It was sobering and reminded me of why we toil all those long hours day after day,” said Faleafine.

The ceremony included speeches from MG Mark Graham, Commander of First Army – Division West; COL Bruce Oliveira, Task Force Lava Thunder Commander; and also included a cappella renditions of Hawai’i Pono’i, Oklahoma and the National Anthem.

“The best part of the ceremony for me was listening to the National Anthem being sung with our forces arrayed before me at Present Arms. It’s moments like that that remind me why we wear the uniform and do what we do. We do it for our Families, for our Country, for the Soldier to your left and right. We lose focus of that in our day to day struggles,” said Faleafine.

After the ceremony ended and the Soldiers were released, a wave of Families rushed in to greet them with leis made of purple orchids, tears of joy, and of course hugs and kisses.

1st Lt. Faleafine’s wife, Myra, and sons, Sitia Jr. (three years old) and Conner (one year old) were not at the ceremony but on a plane to meet him in San Diego.

“I got in before my family, so I had time to drop bags and eat before going back to the airport. I was running late, so they were at baggage claim already when I was coming up on the airport. I parked so I could help with bags and the kids. I spotted them first, so I snuck up on them. My three-year-old spotted me first. He had this huge smile on his face and started playing hide-and-peek behind his mother. He was irritating my wife until he told her daddy was here. It was all hugs and smiles after that,” said Faleafine.

“We didn’t do much more than spend time together and eat. We’d been to San Diego many times, so we were more inter-

ested in just spending time together. Thursday, we slept in and just hung out. That night, we gorged ourselves on all-you-can-eat shrimp at Red Lobster. I got my money’s worth. The next day, Friday, we headed down toward downtown and did a little shopping and walking around. Come evening, we went to the cool little hole-in-the-wall Mexican restaurant down by Lake Hodges in Escondido,” said Faleafine.

“Saturday, we went to my sister’s house where we gorged on some of my local favorites like Kalbi, Meat Jun, Mochiko chicken, and Pansit,” he said.

“A few of my cousins who live in the area dropped in as well. It was a nice family day, one I needed before heading to Kuwait. We stayed in that night; we didn’t feel like doing much more since we both flew out the next morning. It was as difficult as I thought it would, saying goodbye to my family,” added Faleafine.

Before midnight on October 26th the Soldiers had to return back to NFH. They flew into Dallas, Killeen and San Antonio where buses waited in the airport parking lots to shuttle them back to base.

Three days later Faleafine left Texas on the first flight to Kuwait. Travel time took over 25 hours, with scheduled refueling stops in Maine and Germany.

When Faleafine and the other Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company 29th IBCT arrived, they drove to their new home at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.

After a day of rest and recuperation, he dove back into work as the Brigade S6 and has since been coordinating phones, computers, printers and scanners for the 29th IBCT Tactical Operations Center (TOC).

“Turning empty tents into working TOCs is a lot of work. We’re all working long days getting things up and running while transitioning with our counterparts. It’s exhausting, but everyone’s doing what they have to in order to get the job done. I’m smoked right now, but we’ll have a lot to be proud of when all’s said and done,” said Faleafine.

“I spotted them first, so I snuck up on them. My three-year-old spotted me first. He had this huge smile on his face and started playing hide-and-peek behind his mother.”





Fort Hood Farewell Ceremony

Task Force Lava Thunder Soldiers of the Hawai'i National Guard's 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) and the Oklahoma National Guard's 45th Fires Brigade came together on Wednesday, October 22nd to formally recognize the accomplishments of an intense and productive training period which began in mid-August, culminating with the Farewell Ceremony.

Dignitaries from Hawai'i to Washington, D.C., and everywhere in between, along with the Soldiers' Family and friends enjoyed a ceremony featuring words from COL Oliveira, the Task Force Commander, and MG Graham, Commander of First Army—Division West. In addition, there were a cappella performances of Hawai'i Pono'i, Oklahoma, and the National Anthem, and even a Firing Battery to honor LTG Lynch's presence—the ceremony was filled with all the appropriate pomp and circumstance. But certainly, the highlight for most was the visits with Family and friends that followed the ceremony as Task Force Soldiers enjoyed a 4-day pass before flights began flowing into Kuwait.



Did You Know?

Make A Movie—Save A Life

With the launch of the Peer to Peer Video Competition, the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center (USACRC) hopes to harness the power of peer influence to help prevent accidents and save lives. The competition tagline, "Make a movie - save a life", challenges Soldiers to personalize safety

messaging by creating short videos which promote off-duty safety awareness. The goal is to have Soldiers create safety messages that speak directly to their peers. Entrants post their video on any social networking site and send a link to USACRC to submit their video for consideration. The contest runs

through March 31, 2009, and is open to all military ID card holders including Army Reserve and National Guard Soldiers. Go to the following link for more information.

<https://forums.bcks.army.mil/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=668319&lang=en-US>

What Are You Thankful For?



"I'm thankful for my Soldiers. For the motivation that they give me. Okaaay," Sgt. Takumi Abe.



"We're thankful for our Families at home and our Families that took us in at 487," Spc. Jacob Wynn, Spc. Reed Kotake, Sgt. Francisco Barba.



"What I'm thankful for are my children for being there for me and being the real true heroes of the Army, and everything else in life that God has given me," SFC Lei Watson.



"I'm thankful for my wife and son and that we're in a relatively safe place," CPT Nathan Tyau.

Priority Mail APO/FPO Flat Rate Box



Priority Mail APO/FPO Flat Rate Box
12" x 12" x 5-1/2"
Minimum order: 1 pack of 10 or 25 boxes
Maximum order: 20 packs of 25 boxes (500 boxes total)
Price: No Charge

Introducing a quick, easy, convenient and **NOW 50% larger** way for you to ship Priority Mail packages to military personnel serving overseas. The **Priority Mail APO/FPO Flat Rate Box** features predetermined rates regardless of weight (domestically) or destination, similar to our other Flat Rate products.

Some key benefits:

- * Only \$10.95 when used to send to APO/FPO addresses; **\$2.00 less than our domestic pricing.**
- * Box features the "America Supports You" logo and APO/FPO addressing block.
- * Commercial prices are available for postage paid through Click-N-Ship service at usps.com, authorized PC Postage vendors, and other authorized postage payment methods. The APO/FPO price is \$10.50.

The U.S. Postal Service offers free Package Pickup from your home or office at a time and place convenient for you. To schedule Package Pickup and for other pickup options and availability, visit usps.com.

For more information, please visit: [The Shipping Center](#)

Note: Remember you will need to attach a Customs Declaration & Dispatch Note (form 2976-A) and attach it to your package with Customs Declaration Envelope (2976E) since packages will be going overseas.

Mailing Addresses:
Camp Arifjan
Soldier's Name (No Rank)
Unit
APO AE 09366
Camp Virginia
Soldier's Name (No Rank)
Unit
APO AE 09327
ISA
Soldier's Name (No Rank)
Unit
APO AE 09815
Camp Buehring
Soldier's Name (No Rank)
Unit
APO AE 09330
Camp Patriot
Soldier's Name (No Rank)
Unit
APO AE 09337

What to Expect with Your Monthly Pay

Get with your unit admin personnel if you have an issue with your pay as you identify a problem so they can get it corrected as soon as possible.

Basic Pay Entitlements:

Base Pay	Reference Military Pay Chart
BAH	http://perdiem.hqda.pentagon.mil/perdiem/bah.html
BAS	Officers: \$202.76 / month Enlisted: \$294.43 / month
COLA	http://perdiem.hqda.pentagon.mil/perdiem/ocform.html
Hostile Fire Pay	\$225 / month
Hardship Duty Pay	\$100 / month
Combat Zone Tax (Exclusion (CZTE))	Varies

What's Happening Back Home



Veterans and other participants walk in the Veterans Day parade held in Hilo, Hawai'i

2nd Annual Veterans Day Parade

HILO, BIG ISLAND OF HAWAII - The second annual Veterans Day parade held on Saturday, November 8th, honored Hawai'i's men and women who served or are serving their country in foreign conflicts from World War II to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Fort Ruger on Oahu, the Hawai'i Air National Guard, the Army Reserves, Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion Posts and over 30 other contingents proudly paraded through the streets of downtown Hilo in honor of Veteran's Day.

General Robert G.F.Lee, Hawai'i State Adjutant General.

Article and Photos by: 1LT Lisa Royce, Hawai'i Army National Guard, Hilo, Hawai'i

Participants, including a full military color guard, members of the 100th Infantry Battalion/442nd Regiment, the 111th Army National Guard Band stationed at

The theme of the 2008 parade was "All Gave Some and Some Gave All." Grand Marshall of the parade was Major



National Guard Soldiers sit in a promotional humvee.

2nd Annual Ho'oulu Ha'aheo Fair

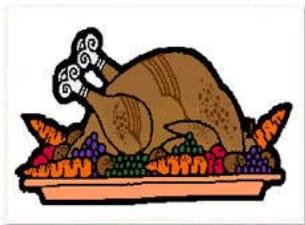
The Hawai'i Army National Guard was one of numerous organizations participating Sunday, November 2nd in Hilo High school's 2nd Annual Ho'oulu Ha'aheo Fair. Games, crafts, clubs, information booths, static displays and a variety of food stands and talented musicians marked this family fun-day event that kicked off the school's Homecoming Week.

Hoku Hanohano Award at the age of 16 and now has three albums with a fourth in the making.

Ho'oulu means "to make something grow" and Ha'aheo means "spirit/pride," making the Hilo High Viking event a celebration of growth, of spirit and pride.

Fans cheered on at the special appearance of guest performer Brittany Paiva who walked away with her first Na

Article and Photos by: 1LT Lisa Royce, Hawai'i Army National Guard, Hilo, Hawai'i



HAPPY THANKSGIVING

to the Families and friends of all 29th IBCT Soldiers!!!!!!!!!!

FRG Bulletin Board

 Our Military Kids Activity Grants - Children aged 3 through 12th grade of qualifying National Guard and Reserve Military Personnel who are deployed can receive grants towards activities. Go to www.ourmilitarykids.org for more information. Flyer and Application forms attached. Activities include but are not limited to: Youth Sports Programs, Fine Arts Programs, Tutor Programs, and more. There is a \$500 grant limit per deployment, and children may be eligible for more than one activity per deployment.

The Soldier's Family Website - New Website that has a number of care package ideas for Family Members. They have care package ideas for spouses, children, other Family and Friends. There are also care package ideas based on special occasions and holidays. Go to www.thesoldiersfamily.com to learn more.

Raytheon "Thanks" Military Children with a Free Book - The book is entitled, "It's a Family Thanksgiving! A Celebration of an American Tradition for Children and Their Families". To receive your FREE copy, please send an email to familyprograms@ausa.org with your mailing address. First come, first serve basis. Please limit request to two copies per mailing address.

November/December 2008 (Oahu) - Army Teen Scene Events. Contact the following Teen Centers for more information:

- *Schofield Barracks Teen Center, Building 556, 665-0451
- *AMR Teen Center, Building 1781, 833-0920
- *SKIES Schofield Barracks, Building 1283, 655-9818
- *HMR Teen Center, Building 25, 653-0717
- *Ft. Shafter Teen Center, Building 505, 438-6470

Settlement lets OHA access some Stryker training areas

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs and the Army have settled OHA's 2006 federal lawsuit claiming the Army failed to protect Native Hawaiian cultural resources when it brought the Stryker brigade to the state.

OHA representatives, along with an archaeologist, will be able to survey certain Stryker training areas at Schofield Barracks, Kahuku and Pohakuloa as a result of the agreement, the state agency announced yesterday.

Through the surveys, OHA said it and Army representatives "aim to ensure the appropriate identification and treatment of cultural and historic resources located in Lihu'e, the traditional name for the Schofield Barracks region," as well as other parts of Hawai'i.

The settlement means the Army can put behind it another legal case involving the \$1.5 billion Stryker brigade of 4,000 soldiers and about 328 of the armored eight-wheeled vehicles.

The unit is deployed to Iraq. The soldiers and vehicles are expected back in Hawai'i in February or March.

"This agreement will afford OHA the opportunity to have a firsthand look at

important cultural resources that would not otherwise be accessible to the general public, and to determine whether they were fully addressed in the Army's prior surveys of areas affected by Stryker activities," OHA chairwoman Hau-nani Apoliona said in a statement yesterday.

Col. Matthew T. Margotta, commander of U.S. Army Garrison, Hawai'i, said the Army values the "spirit of cooperation and communication with OHA."

Margotta added that the agreement will "build upon our existing robust programs to identify and care for these cultural and historical resources, while balancing the need for soldier training."

When it filed the lawsuit, OHA said cultural monitors had been partly responsible for the discovery of historically significant sites and burial grounds that were overlooked by the military's archaeologists.

On July 22, 2006, an unexploded-ordnance removal crew bulldozed across a buffer protecting Hale'au'au heiau at Schofield, according to cultural monitors hired by the Army.

OHA also said there were other

incidents involving displacement and damage of petroglyphs, the filling of a streambed known to contain Native Hawaiian sites and the construction of a road over burial grounds.

The Army in 2001 decided to base a Stryker unit in Hawai'i, and started about \$700 million in construction projects.

Based on a separate federal lawsuit, a federal appeals court ruled in 2006 that the Army had not adequately examined alternative locations outside Hawai'i for the fast-strike unit, and ordered the Army to do so.

The decision temporarily halted one of the biggest Army projects in the Islands since World War II.

The end of that lawsuit brought the resumption of about six construction projects related to the Stryker brigade. Work is projected to continue through 2017.

(The Honolulu Advertiser: Nov 14, 2008)



Margotta added that the agreement will "build upon our existing robust programs to identify and care for these cultural and historical resources, while balancing the need for soldier training."

Hawai'i Governor pays Visit to Troops in TX



Maj. Gen Lee and Governor Lingle take pictures with Soldiers after eating in the North Fort Hood, TX DFAC

(Photo by: CSM Edgardo Coronado)

On Sunday, October 27th our Lava Brigade Soldiers had the privilege of sharing a meal with our Commander-in-Chief, Hawai'i Governor Linda Lingle.

The Governor, accompanied by Hawai'i Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Robert Lee, first received a command update brief from Colonel Oliveira, outlining and highlighting the training Task Force Lava Thunder received while at Fort Hood, as well as an overview of our mission.

She was also presented with an HHC Lava Brigade t-shirt, which she promptly changed into for her visit with the troops. Although her visit was very quick, it was nice to have her visit our Lava Brigade Soldiers as we made final preparations for movement to Kuwait.

(Article by: MAJ Pam Ellison)



Maj. Gen. Lee (left) and Col. Oliveira (right) giving Governor Lingle a 29th Brigade t-shirt

(Photo by: CSM Edgardo Coronado)

History Made as Guard Chief Gets 4th Star



By William H. McMichael - Staff writer
Posted : Tuesday Nov 18, 2008



Gen. Craig McKinley, the first 4-star Chief of the National Guard Bureau, is now also the first to hold a position on the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

“The awareness will be much increased about the critical role that the National Guard plays for our nation, both at home and in combat operations around the world,” said Army Maj. Gen. Bob Lee, Hawai’i’s adjutant general.

Hearty cheers filled the Pentagon auditorium Monday afternoon as history was made when a fourth star was pinned on the shoulders of the new chief of the National Guard Bureau — for the first time in its almost four centuries of existence.

Just as important to the hundreds of Guardsmen in attendance, Air Force Gen. Craig McKinley also will serve as principal adviser to the defense secretary, through the Joint Chiefs chairman, on all National Guard matters. No such position previously existed.

McKinley will also continue as principal adviser to the Army and Air Force secretaries and staff chiefs on matters related to the Army and Air national guards.

“This elevation of the chief of the National Guard Bureau to four stars underscores the critical importance of the Guard to America’s overall national defense,” Defense Secretary Robert Gates told the gathering. “It also signifies the vital role the chief has in bridging the state and federal components of our government, and the active and reserve components of our military.”

McKinley’s promotion “is recognition of his outstanding leadership abilities, and shows the confidence the president and I have in him to be the nation’s senior Guard officer at such a critical time,” Gates said.

Several of the roughly 30 states adjutants general in attendance said the move is long overdue.

“The awareness will be much increased about the critical role that the National Guard plays for our nation, both at home and in combat operations around the world,” said Army Maj. Gen. Bob Lee, Hawai’i’s adjutant general. “When you add the Army and the Air Guard together, it’s just short of a half-million folks. So it’s about time we got a four-star general that controls so many resources.”

The fourth star and new advisory role follow recommendations by the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves and last year’s Defense Authorization Act, in which Congress also established the Guard as a joint activity of the Defense Department.

McKinley succeeds Lt. Gen. Stephen Blum, who in January will become the first National Guard deputy commander of U.S. Northern Command — another commission recommendation.

The commission based its recommendation to make the National Guard Bureau chief a four-star on several findings:

- * That a formal relationship should be established between the Guard and the defense secretary, the Joint Chiefs, the unified commands and other federal agencies on nonfederalized National Guard matters such as operations and exercises.

- * That the chief performs simultaneous service chief-like duties for the Guard components of both the Army and Air Force, which the commission called a “complex task.”

- * Two federal studies on general

officer responsibilities from which the commission concluded that the Guard chief’s duties rate four stars.

The commission also pointed out that making the Guard chief a senior adviser to the defense secretary would “expand access” to the chief’s expertise, particularly with regard to response to domestic emergencies, and would “mitigate the difficulties inherent in the current structure,” in which the Guard had to work through Army and Air Force channels to interact with other Pentagon organizations, such as North-Com and Joint Forces Command.

At the same time, the commission argued against making the Guard chief a full member of the Joint Chiefs, concluding that the duties of each of the Joint Chiefs are greater than those of the Guard chief. Doing so could also create the sense that the Guard is a separate service when, the commission agreed, it is not.

In his remarks, McKinley noted that he is meeting Tuesday with Gates to discuss the commission’s recommendations, issued in January.

According to a defense official, Gates is being briefed on where the Pentagon stands on all the 95 recommendations made by the commission, 18 of which have already been implemented.

The official said that if Gates is satisfied with what he hears, he may sign out an action memo on the remaining recommendations.

(Article courtesy of airforcetimes.com.)

Army General is Nation's First Four-Star Woman

WASHINGTON (CNN) -- An Army lieutenant general has become the first woman in U.S. military history to get four stars.

The military on Friday promoted Lt. Gen. Ann E. Dunwoody, who has served in several command positions in her 33-year Army career.

She will command Army Materiel Command, responsible for equipping, arming and outfitting soldiers.

"There is no one more surprised than I," she said of her promotion at a ceremony on Friday.

She had planned on a two-year enlistment upon leaving college, she said, and planned on being a physical education teacher.

Dunwoody, 55, hailed those who had helped her throughout her career and

pledged to do the same for those she now leads.

"The Army nurtured me and mentored me, and today the Army offers me the chance to return the favor," she said. She'll command 133,000 personnel around the globe.

"She is recognized as one of the foremost military logisticians in her generation," said Defense Secretary Robert Gates.

Dunwoody, a native of New York, was commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1975 after her graduation from the State University of New York in Cortland. She also holds graduate degrees in national resource strategy and logistics management.

She became the Army's top-ranking woman in 2005 when she received her third star and became deputy chief of

staff for Army logistics.

Her promotion highlights the growing role of women in the U.S. military over the years.

Fifty-seven active-duty women and 47 female reservists hold the rank of general or its Navy equivalent, according to the American Forces Press Service.

The Pentagon has said that more than 193,400 women have deployed in support of U.S. operations since September 11, 2001 -- the day the United States was attacked by al Qaeda.

Dunwoody was nominated by President Bush for her fourth star in June. The nomination then went to the Senate for confirmation.

(November 14, 2008 -- Updated 0258 GMT (1058 HKT))



Gen. Ann E. Dunwoody will command 133,000 personnel worldwide in the Army Materiel Command.

Pentagon Launches TroopTube

WASHINGTON — More than a year after banning US soldiers from using YouTube, the Pentagon has launched TroopTube, its own video-sharing site.

"TroopTube is the new online video site designed to help military families connect and keep in touch while miles apart," TroopTube said in a statement on its homepage at TroopTube.tv.

It said the site was meant for use by "Active Duty, Guard, Reserve and their families" — an estimated four million people.

Videos on TroopTube can be viewed by any visitor but registration is required to upload material to the site.

One of the videos on the homepage is a tribute to the troops from General David Petraeus, the new commander of

Central Command, for their "tremendous work" in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere.

TroopTube was created in partnership with a Seattle, Washington-based startup, Delve Networks, and Marion, Montgomery, Inc., a marketing and interactive agency.

In May 2007, the Pentagon banned US servicemen using Department of Defense computer systems from using YouTube, MySpace and 10 other social-networking websites.

It said the ban was intended to prevent military Internet connections from being clogged with uploads or downloads of data-rich files such as video clips.

The move was also meant to guard against infiltration by malicious or spy-

ing software hidden in files by hackers.

Until the ban, US soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan had been using YouTube and social networks to share videos, images or stories about their daily lives.

US soldiers are still allowed to write online journals, or "milblogs," using Department of Defense networks as long as they adhere to requirements not to reveal information that could jeopardize missions.

MySpace, YouTube and the other websites were targeted for restriction after a usage study showed they were the most visited websites by soldiers, according to the Pentagon.

To check it out, go to www.TroopTube.tv.

(Published: Nov 13, 2008 on AFP)



"TroopTube is the new online video site designed to help military families connect and keep in touch while miles apart."



WE'D LIKE TO HERE FROM YOU

ATTN: PAO
HHC, 29th IBCT
APO AE 09366

Camp Arifjan, Kuwait
E PAD , Zone 6, Tent 7

Phone: DSN 430-7864
E-mail: pam.ellison@us.army.mil
E-mail: crystal.l.carpenito@us.army.mil

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

LAVA FLOW STAFF

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER
MAJ PAM ELLISON

PUBLIC AFFAIRS NCIOC
SGT CRYSTAL CARPENITO

CONTRIBUTORS
UPARS



Meet the 29th IBCT Unit Public Affairs Representatives!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Front row, left to right: Maj. Ellison, Sgt. Carpenito, Sgt. Cox, 1st Lt. Leimbach, 2nd Lt. Reyes,
Sgt. 1st Class Rabanal

Back row, left to right: Sgt. 1st Class Alviar, Staff Sgt. Naluai, Capt. Zeisset, Spec. Harper,
Spc. Meredith Spc. Stansbury, 1st Lt. Espino, Sgt. Amano, Capt. Anno

Missing from photo: 1st Lt. Yukutake, 1st Lt. Turner, 1st Lt. Ammerman, Staff Sgt. Fuata, Staff
Sgt. Indalecio, Spc. Reed Kotake

Information For the Family

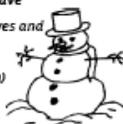


Common Gift Items That Have Restrictions On Mailing



Non-Mailable

- Air Rifles, Air Pistols, Air Soft Guns, Flare Guns, Toy Guns, Starter Pistols, BB Guns
- Animal Products, including: Hides and Skins, Wool and Hair, Bones and Horns, Elephant Hair or Ivory
- Counterfeit or Pirated Goods or Materials
- Cuban Cigars
- Dietary Supplements (if original seal is broken)
- Fingernail Polish and Polish Remover
- Food Products (any) laced with Alcohol
- Food: Cooked and Perishable Foods, Fresh Foods, Fruits and Vegetables
- Live or Dead Animals or Insects, Whole or Parts, including: Beetles, Spiders, Scorpions, Coral and Seashells
- Machine Guns (real or replica)
- Marble – except for souvenirs from the BX/PX
- Mouthwash Containing Alcohol
- Nutritional Supplements of any kind if original seal is broken
- Perfumes, Colognes, and Aftershave
- Plants: Live or Dead, Parts, Leaves and Flowers
- Powders (if original seal is broken)
- Rifles (real or replica)



Mailable

- Batteries - Common Household Dry-Cell Batteries (AA, AAA, C, D, 9-volt)
- Cigarette Lighters (new and unused) – must not have been filled with lighter fluid
- Currency with no real value of a disposed regime
- DVDs and CDs produced locally - are limited to one per title. See International Mail Manual for Country prohibitions and restrictions
- Fixed Blade Knives less than 6 inches
- Gerber and Leatherman Tools
- Imitation Items are limited to one like type per person. Example: One Watch, One Purse, One Pair of Sunglasses per package per day
- Rocks that have been bleached and polished are mailable (sand and soil are non-mailable)

Registered Mail Only

- Ceremonial or Decorative Swords (dull unsharpened edge) exceeding 6 inches
- Coins – if combined value exceeds \$500
- Currency with real value
- Diamonds
- Precious Metals and Stones (including jewelry)
- Watches / Jewelry with value over \$100

For a complete listing of all Non-Mailable Items please contact your servicing Military Post Office

USCENTCOM Reg 25-203, Non-Mailable Article, Suspicious Mail and IDS Policy and Procedures, 25 Jan 08
Policy 08-02, Postal Operation Division (POD) Theater Non-Mailable Article List, 20 Aug 08

Public Affairs Comment

We're finally boots on the ground here in Kuwait! We all know that as we go through our transition with the units that we are replacing and working with, there will be many changes as we take the reins, begin getting into our own Battle Rhythm and settle into our new ohana. We plan to change the look/organization of the Lava Flow; changing from a "Command" orientation to a "Camp" orientation, as we all take our places at the various locations throughout our Area of Operation (AO). However, there is one thing that will remain unchanged – our section's intent to support your Public Affairs requests.

As we progress through this deployment, we plan to spend as much time as possible out in the camps around our AO providing support to highlight your training, missions, and Command needs as well as to ensure that our 29th IBCT story is told. Our hope is to get as much information out about the great things that I'm sure that we

will be doing during our deployment to our Families, friends, as well as the state and national media outlets. Our story is a great one that we intend to get out front as much as possible.

As we get everyone settled in, we will once again push information out to you regarding who your Unit Public Affairs Representatives (UPARs) are and what their contact information is. Please continue to use the vFRG website as a location to get information and updates as Soldiers and family members. Also, don't forget to send us your ideas and material (photos and stories) to push out in future additions of the Lava Flow – as this is YOUR place to shine! It's an honor to be here serving with each and every one of you – LAVA!

Maj. Pam Ellison, PAO