



FROM HAWAII TO KUWAIT: 29TH IBCT HOSTS ALOHA RUN



Soldiers of the 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team from Hawaii pose for a picture before commencing the 8.15 mile Aloha Run on Life Support Area, Kuwait.

*Article and photo By: Sgt. Crystal Carpenito
Public Affairs*

Carrying on the Great Aloha Run (GAR) tradition, Soldiers of the 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, out of Hawaii, participated in their own version of the annual 8.15 mile run, the Aloha Run, at LSA, Kuwait, Feb. 14. Though it has been organized several times before in Iraq, by other units based out of Hawaii, this was the first Aloha Run held in Kuwait.

The event was sponsored by

the Morale, Welfare and Recreation, the United Service Organization and the Harley Davidson Sales Shop, who also donated for food and T-shirts, and volunteers from the Army, Navy and Australian Coalition Forces made sure the event went smoothly.

More than 165 Servicemembers, from camps across Kuwait, including Soldiers from the Australian Coalition Forces, participated in the race.

The run began at 8 a.m., with a quick loop around the LSA and then continued across seven miles of perimeter surrounding the base.

Traditional Hawaiian leis and souvenir T-shirts were passed out to participants as they crossed the finish line. In addition, Soldiers painted a colorful mural of Waikiki Beach and Diamond Head Crater, two popular places on the island of Oahu, for participants to use in photographs.

After the run was complete, participants gathered at the

MWR stage for an award ceremony where the top two male and female runners of four separate age groups received medals, local island candies and mochi crunch from the 29th Brigade Support Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Keith Yoshida. In addition, the overall top male and female runners received gold trophies and more local treats.

The top runners were Cpl. Richard Johnston, Australian Coalition Forces, in the male
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We would like to make a few corrections to past editions of the Lava Flow and give our sincere apologies

- In the December issue on page 6, CSC 3 CET 4 was incorrectly labeled as CSC 1 CET 4.
- In the January issue on page 15, the picture caption was labeled "right to left" and should have read "left to right."



From Left to right: Lt. Gen. Joseph Peterson, Sgt. Norison Ibera, Col. Bruce Oliveira, Sgt. Jerome Balbin, Command Sgt. Maj. Edgardo Coronado.



*A/29th BSTB
CSC 3 CET 4
(Their 1st Solo Mission)
Friday, November 29, 2008*

COLONEL OLIVEIRA'S NOTES

29TH LAVA BRIGADE COMMANDER



Colonel Bruce Oliveira

We've ticked another month off the calendar and the Soldiers of the Lava Brigade continue to do a magnificent job supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. Time goes rather quickly here with the myriad of taskings and support requirements we perform every day.

The month has been a busy one, with 311th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) leaving

and the 1st Sustainment Command (Theater) taking their place. With the change, we said farewell to Brigadier General Frink and welcomed Major General Rogers as the 1st TSC Commanding General. Even though our leadership has changed, the mission and the Soldiers have remained steadfast in supporting the warfighter on the ground in making

this country a safer place for all Iraqis. Our Soldiers have done this every day and will continue to accomplish this mission until we leave. I cannot sing the praises of our Soldiers enough for the spectacular job they do every day.

I would be remiss if I did not thank all of the Family Readiness Groups, friends and supporters of the Lava Brigade for the numerous Valentine's gifts and letters we received during the holiday. The Soldiers and I are humbled at the support we receive daily from you all.

We continue to take the fight to the enemy in theater with our Convoy Escort Teams, and we're moving supplies and equipment around the battlefield where they are needed most. By my count, more than 1,000 convoy mission have been completed and 450,000 miles driven in theater. We are accomplishing this all safely and professionally and supporting those on the ground – coalition and Iraqi – in the best possible manner.

The Brigade is now well above the glide path for re-enlistments. If you're considering re-

enlistment, now's the time to act – bonuses won't be around forever. I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to all the Lava Brigade Soldiers and their Families who have made the commitment to continue their service. Your experience, dedication and selfless service are proof that you are the Army's most important asset.

Keep safety uppermost in your mind, no matter what you're doing. Each and every one of you are a vital part of our Brigade Combat Team.

Continue the great work. I am proud of the way each of you are representing your units and your Army.

Lava!



COMMAND SGT. MAJ. CORONADO'S COMMENT

29TH LAVA BRIGADE SERGEANT MAJOR



CSM Edgardo Coronado
BDE CSM

This edition of the Lava Flow is full of great information thanks to the BDE PAO staff and Unit Public Affairs Representatives assigned to our battalions. I am sure you will agree. I do not wish to duplicate the reading so I will focus on four issues very important to most, if not all Soldiers within the brigade, in regard to promotions.

They are the Enlisted Promotion System (EPS), the Non Commissioned Officer Enlisted School System (NCOES), the Military Occupational Specialty (MOSQ), and finally civilian education. Each of these issues are an important part of the total Soldier.

The most common concern and question I often discuss with

our Soldiers is the EPS program. A common question amongst Soldiers is "How do I get promoted? Why can't I get promoted?" And many more questions along these lines.

The EPS is a process that manages promotions of each enlisted Soldier in the Hawaii Army National Guard. The primary reference is AR 600-8-19, Enlisted Promotions and Reductions, 20 March 2008; this regulation being the basis for our state system.

Now I have the reference, but still am not promoted. This book appears to be complicated and full of terms I am not familiar with; nor do I want to become familiar with it – I hear these comments even from the savviest of Soldiers in our formations.

Well, I would advise you to view the EPS manuals and regulations as if it were a

studyguide for your drivers' license, your first college exam, your pilot test, or a dreaded calculus final. Each of these books and reference manuals may seem foreign to you at first, but by studying them you will obtain something you really want.

The challenge seems difficult, but learning the process of how it works is only a click away on the computer. You will not learn it in one day, or a month for that matter, but it will come easier if you remember to research and ask questions.

Learning the process is one task; many others tasks must be accomplished in order for you to become a better Soldier.

Physical fitness is the next

topic that I wish to speak to you about.

Soldiers all know physical fitness is part of the Army's way of life. You, the Soldier, must adhere to some type of physical fitness program that will help you maintain or improve your current physical standing. The Army Physical Fitness Test is part of the requirements all Soldiers must maintain on record. As the Army fills its formations, overall physical fitness will become a very important factor once again; especially if you want to get promoted. Every push up and sit up will take you one step closer to your personal goal. So finish that run as fast as you can.

Another question often presented to me by Soldiers is how they can go about attending military schools, like NCOES. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of attending these schools at your earliest opportunity. These schools are designed to hone the skills and abilities of tomorrow's leaders. They are absolutely necessary if you wish to attain increased rank; or reach the pinnacles of the enlisted rank structure.

The days of NCOES schools such as WLC, or the First Sergeants Course, not being a requirement for promotion are long gone. In my professional opinion, attendance and graduation will become a "must have" if you want to get promoted to the next level. The decision is up to you. So go ahead, take the challenge and prepare for tomorrow. Tell your first line supervisor you want to attend the next available course. It may not be available the next day but your preparedness and willingness to attend will pay dividends when that phone call from your unit is made to you.

Please remember that you do not have to be an NCO to attend the first level course, WLC, to be accepted in the class. However, you must be physically fit

and have no negative administrative pending actions, nor medical conditions that may prevent you from completing the required curriculum.

Lastly, I want to talk to each of you about civilian education and promotions. Yes, civilian education has a high value worth when promotion points are computed in order to establish the promotion lists.

Education is not only available in the classroom, but in the virtual world of the internet. The opportunities are almost endless if you have the drive and dedication to further your personal educational standing and add valuable points to your military career as well.

I know that it is extremely tough to complete a course with the limited amount of time available between missions, or your scheduled shift, at the various locations where each of you are performing countless duties. Your time is limited and resources scarce, but not improving your education is too high a price to pay. So please consider reviewing your current battle rhythm and see how you may be able to best utilize that extra two hours that you did not know you had. The possibilities are endless. The investment in time will pay off in the long run.

In closing please read the information regarding the new POST 9/11 GI Bill Overview. There is some exciting news regarding your well earned school benefits which may assist you in the near future.

As always, I thank each Family member, friend, employer and brethren in arms that continue to support the Soldiers of the Lava Brigade; you keep us Lava Strong.

Gracias and Mahalo

Continued from page 5:

category with a time of 53:34, and Airman 1st Class Gina Marciano in the female category with a time of 57:32.

"I always challenge myself and determination is what it's all about," said Marciano. "It just goes to show, don't get discouraged, just go out and do it! You'd be surprised what your body can do if you set your mind to it."

29th IBCT Soldiers, Sgts. 1st Class Mark Britos, Nelson Uehara and Eugenia Gansit received awards for second place in their age groups with times of 1:02:48, 1:25:04 and 1:24:10, respectively.

After the awards presentation, participants enjoyed a Hawaiian-style BBQ which offered teriyaki burgers, beef and chicken skewers, and other entrees provided by the USO.

Responsible for organizing the run were the 29th Brigade Support Battalion Soldiers and command cell Soldiers: 1st Lt. Christine Leimbach, Command Sgt. Maj. Virgine Kanoa, Sgt. 1st Class Mario Tabaquin, Staff Sgt. Ludyann Capitle and Sgts. Mariessyl Erese and Ray Rosete. The Soldiers received additional support from MWR Fitness Manager Gregg Smith, MWR Recreation Manager Susan Kraft and USO representatives Yukiko Smith and Pamela Russell.

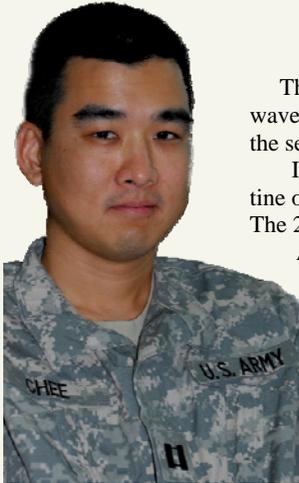
Two days later, more than 20,000 runners and walkers, including 2,250 Servicemembers celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the GAR on the island of Oahu. The GAR, a charity event founded by Carole Kai and Jack Scaff in 1985, has since been conducted every year on President's day with proceeds benefiting Hawaii non-profit organizations.

Photos by: Maj. Pam Ellison and Sgt. Crystal Carpenito, Public Affairs



JOINING THE LAVA BRIGADE IN KUWAIT

Cpt. Renny Chee, HHC 29th IBCT



The winter season was slowly creeping in on Baghdad. The water level in the lake halted its retreat, heat waves stopped dancing on the sidewalk and one could walk from the Perfume Palace to the DFAC without the self-inflicted salt water drench.

I remember reading the October 2007 online edition of the Honolulu Advertiser, as it was a daily routine of mine while employed at Camp Slayer. The article boldly called to me and raised some questions: The 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team is deploying again? What in the world?

A peculiar circumstance as I was in Baghdad at the time. I felt the initial apprehension and anxiety of deploying overseas again as the article's words flowed in my mind like a scrolling LED sign. As I slipped into a surreal out of body experience I realized that I was already half a world away from Hawaii – away from dreadful morning commute and sticky weather. Whilst in this bubble of fantasy, I entertained a thought of a FedEx parcel that consisted of my TA50, weapon and uniforms as I waited arrival of the Lava Brigade.

I left Camp Slayer about a year later and returned to Hawaii to prepare for deployment with the Brigade who had already reached Kuwait at the time.

The other late deploying Soldiers and I left Honolulu for Kuwait a day after Christmas.

For the nineteen of us, we endured a similar experience through Fort Benning –

the journey here was a testament to our patience. The process at CONUS Replacement Center took six days.

Two weeks later we found ourselves on Kuwait soil, armed to the hilt with four obese duffel bags. I thought the stuff we carried was a result of President Obama's stimulus package.

The atmosphere is warm here at Arifjan despite emerging from the winter season. The fine desert sand is familiar as well as the nuances of living in a confined area no bigger than Kalihi Valley, minus commercial civilization as we know it. For a short period, the notion of strolling through Kam Shopping Center is suspended.

We are treated to a daily, seemingly unchanged landscape of gravel, where events happen with melancholy consistency. Sanitary personnel tend to the facilities religiously. The dining facility guarantees a meal and we are assured of a simple, content existence. But despite the confiscation of our normalcy, we are amongst friends; familiar faces that keep the cold weather at bay and thoughts of home at ease.

As we are reunited with the Brigade and melt into daily operations, our primary mission is obvious: to support and guide fellow Soldiers through the perils of escorting convoys into Iraq. I am in the midst of a busy operations hub, where personnel are feverishly preparing briefs, attending meetings and searching for bits of information like squirrels gathering nuts for the winter. Vital information and equipment are disseminated to the units tasked with providing essential convoy security and this is where I find solace, as images of Bill Murray in Groundhog Day are drowned out by duties to support those venturing north.

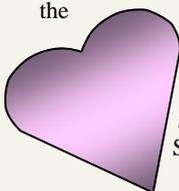
As we are occupied with our new found workload and chase personal goals of fitness, enlightenment or dreams of material wants; we are reminded that time is the fire in which we burn. Calendars are marked counting down the days back home. Pictures are hung of loved ones. It is a familiar ritual for many of us who previously wear combat patches on our right shoulders. And in this ritual we are reminded of our duty to our great nation and to the state of Hawaii.

LOVE FROM THE HEART

*By: Chelsea Stansbury,
HHC, 29th IBCT Public Affairs*

The 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team is celebrating Valentine's Day 2009 in Kuwait. Soldiers have wives, husbands, children, significant others, mothers, fathers, and Family back home waiting for the

day when we step off the plane and greet them with open arms. For our Soldiers this



year, the special someone or somebody's in their life will be waiting for greeting cards and gifts in the mail to signify their love. Yet more importantly, it's the Soldier that is gone that longs for that card or gift from that loved one. If anyone would know, it would be the Soldiers overseas that once again will be gone for another holiday.

According to Wikipedia, Valentine's Day "is the traditional day on which lovers express their love for each

other by sending Valentine's cards, presenting flowers, or offering confectionery." As the talk of the day arises, Soldiers are sharing what special surprises they did for their loved ones: ordering flowers online to show up at their wife's workplace, sending personally inscribed candy, ordering gift certificates to a salon to pamper their loved ones, or writing greeting card that has the words "I love you." But nothing brings a smile on a Soldier's face more than when

they receive a package full of love from their special someone's back home.

As the days carry on — some good and others tough — take time to realize how much your special someone in your life means to you. Always remember we are all still looking at the same stars, the same moon, and the same sun that one day will guide us back to them.



BEHIND THE MISSION: MAINTENANCE PLATOON

By: *Spc. Justin Fuentes,*
1-299th CAV contributor



Sgt. Addyson Lai works on the undercarriage of an M1151.

The Soldiers of Task Force Koa, 1-299th Cavalry, are tasked with providing security for logistical convoys traveling from Kuwait to Iraq. The Convoy Escort Teams (CET) roll out in M1151 Up-Armored Tactical humvee as their horses, determined to complete the mission. The maintenance platoon of Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1-229th Cavalry, strive to work hard behind the scenes in order

to keep the 1151s ready and mission capable.

Comprised of 63B and 92A Soldiers from different units within the 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, and led by Chief Warrant Officer Wade Kaneshiro, with Sgts. 1st Class Cory Vierra, Eric Fujiwara and Larry Hara in charge of the SAMS-E and Parts, the Maintenance Platoon keeps the humvees free of deficiencies that may hinder the CET's mission.

Assembled in Fort Hood, Tx., and now stationed at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, mechanics of the Maintenance Platoon are divided among two motor pools; each in charge of maintaining M1151s from all of the Cavalry's Convoy Security Companies. Together, the Maintenance Platoon maintains more than 130 vehicles – not an easy task.

The heavily armored tactical vehicles roll through rough conditions on the roads of Iraq. Bumps, potholes, debris and constant stops can eventually cause problems to

any vehicle but, cause more frequent wearing of suspension and other mechanical components on 1151s due to their extra tonnage of armor. Harsh weather conditions occasionally cause electrical components to fail on and off the road, such as the vehicle's heater, which Soldiers rely on during severely cold temperatures. The M1151 is a very effective vehicle, though high in maintenance.

After returning from a mission, CET leaders make an appointment to have their vehicles checked out by mechanics. Normal repair jobs include suspension, transfer case, electrical components, brake pad replacement, and leaks. Whether it is a big job or a series of small ones, the mechanics are efficient in repairing them and usually return the vehicles to the CETs in one to two days.

The Maintenance Platoon's successes strongly reflect the amount of experience they receive back home as military technicians, civilian mechanics, and backyard mechanics. Many of the Soldiers also deployed with the Brigade to

Iraq in 2005 as mechanics.

Soldiers like Spec. Edward Kam and Sgts. Shane Stone, Patrick Galapir, Eliseo Peralta, and Addison Lai, all share their knowledge and experience with other less experienced Soldiers, so that they may all work at the same level of proficiency to get the job done.

The CETs have been given an important mission but it is the Maintenance Platoon that keeps the cavalry rolling. They are the men behind the mission, the black smiths of the cavalry.



Spc. Isagani Piedad tightens a bolt that holds in the drive shaft of an M1151.

CSC 1, 1-299TH CAV RE-ENLISTS TOTAL OF 17

What does \$202,500 and 88 years equal to? It equals an astounding 17 Soldiers from Convoy Security Company 1, 1-299th Cavalry re-enlisting into the Army National Guard.

Soldiers can decide to re-enlist for another six years, three years, or one year at a time. A rewarding advantage of re-enlisting in combat theater is the enticing tax-free benefit Soldiers receive. The current monetary trend of re-enlisting entitles a Soldier to \$15,000 for six years or \$7,500 for three years.

The military gives re-enlistment bonuses based on the current Military Occupation Specialty, or MOS, a Soldier holds. A bonus will be given for a certain MOS depending on the need of that MOS in the particular unit.

With the current economic situation in the U.S. and the overall situation in the civilian job market, it is probable that the dollars available for bonuses will decline, like the overall military budget. Additionally, the requirements for entry into the military have increased, with the required ASVAB scores increasing to a 50th percentile from the previous 31st percentile; all of these factors make membership in the military more competitive and the need for large bonuses less essential.

We would like to thank all our Service members and their Families for their sacrifice and dedication to CSC1, 1-299th CAV and the Hawaii Army National Guard. Also, we would like to recognize the following Soldiers for their recent re-enlistments:



The Convoy Security Company 1 Commander, Cpt. James Fe'a-Flame, re-enlists **Sgts. Christopher Harvey** and **Michael Murata** on the flight line in front of a UH-60 Blackhawk Helicopter.

SFC Gaoteote – 6 YRS	SPC Concepcion – 6 YRS
SSG Antolin – 6 YRS	SPC Correa – 6 YRS
SGT Cariaga – 6 YRS	SPC Kahoonei – 6 YRS
SGT Esteron – 6 YRS	SPC Schenk – 6 YRS
SGT Fejeran - 6 YRS	SGT Harvey – 3YRS
SGT Hill – 6 YRS	SPC Matutino – 3 YRS
SGT Murata – 6 YRS	SPC Rivera – 3 YRS
SGT Rasquero – 6 YRS	SGT Halemano – 1 YR
SGT Tandal – 6 YRS	

29TH BSTB SOLDIERS ENROLL IN CLASSES

By: 1st Lt. Elisa Smithers,
29th BSTB contributor

It is now February and almost half way through the deployment. Routines have been established, and some Soldiers of the 29th Brigade Special Troops Battalion are starting to find ways to pass the time.

Many have learned deployment offers opportunity to take on new challenges, whether it be working on physical fitness, catching up on some reading or working toward a degree.

Some seek the challenge of school for knowledge and others as a head start for when they redeploy back home.

It is no secret to the Soldiers that the job market back home is becoming more competitive due to change in the economy.

As Hawaii residents no longer enjoy an open employment market, finding new employment is becoming increasingly difficult.

To ensure marketability Soldiers must gain the necessary tools needed to compete in today's job market - one tool that



Spcs. Esther Cho, Joyce Guieb, Jeffrey Palomares, Sgt. 1st Class Lelanya Watson, and Sgt. Sherylyn Banday listen as instructor, Akhvein Kambiz conducts a roll call for MATH 103 at the Education Center on Camp Virginia.

serves this purpose is a degree.

According to the Hawaii Census in 2000, 26 percent of Hawaii's population had a Bachelor's degree or higher. Although the census is from the 2000, Hawaii government data has shown a marked increase in awarded degrees from the University of Hawaii since then.

What does this all mean? It

means about 35 percent of Hawaii residents held a Bachelor's degree or higher in 2007; with more people getting degrees, the harder it becomes to find jobs for younger Soldiers and those looking to make career changes.

Another reason for seeking a degree: according to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, an individual with a Bachelor's degree earns

approximately \$54,392 per year, compared to the \$31,044 average yearly salary of a worker with only a high school diploma.

You will be proud to know that many of your loved ones here have recognized these challenges and have taken a proactive approach to improving their future.

But with limited internet access and long working hours it is not always an easy task for those pursuing courses online, however, many opportunities for education are available through the Education Office on Camp Virginia.

Along with classes held in basic Math, Sociology, and English, Soldiers are also able to take online courses in subjects such as business, management, and criminal justice here in Kuwait.

Paying for college is one challenge Soldiers seldom face; the VA's GI Bill - both Chapters 1606 and 1607, as well as the Federal Tuition Assistance have made attending these courses nearly free.

BSTB MINISTRY TEAM



Chaplain Ronaldo Pascua leads Sunday Worship services with prayer. To his left: Members of the church band and BSTB Soldiers.

God is with the 29th Brigade Special Troops Battalion. The Christmas season reminded us of the scripture verse, "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" - which means, "God with us." And in the midst of adjusting to our new life in Kuwait and coping with the

problems of deployment as they arise, we find that God's presence is here "with us" to strengthen us.

I would like to introduce myself. I am Chaplain Ronaldo Pascua. I have been with the unit for two years. I've pastored for 17 years in Hawaii, and also currently serve as a Police Chap-

lain with the Honolulu Police Department.

The 29th BSTB Unit Ministry Team consists of my Chaplain Assistant, Spc. John Olipani, who assisted the Brigade Chaplain on the last deployment to Iraq, and me. The ministry team extends beyond the two of us however. Fellow Soldiers give their time and talents to minister others as well.

A couple nights a week, Lt. Col. Moses Kaouiwi, 2nd Lt. Elisa Smithers, First Sgt. Christopher Tourtellot, Sgt. 1st Class Carmen Kanei, and Spcs. Lillian Park, Leticia Timothy, and Cwislyn Walter rehearse for hours as they perfect their songs for Sunday worship services. Maj. Shawn Tshua is also there working on the PowerPoint slides so that the congregation can see song lyrics as they worship. Spc. Daniel Ramos sets up the microphones and instruments, and controls the sound board from in back of the chapel.

Our Spiritual Fitness Pro-

gram provides worship services for Soldiers of various faiths. Other Chaplains and Faith Group Leaders assist me in providing Christian Protestant, Latter-day Saint, Catholic, and Jewish Worship services. The UMT also provides our Soldiers the opportunity to grow strong spiritually by showing Christian movies and teaching Bible Studies each week.

We believe in the power of prayer so Kanei leads our Intercessory Prayer time at the chapel every weekday from 6 a.m. to 7 a.m., lifting up to God our leaders, Soldiers, and Families.

As I counsel and talk with Soldiers I am grateful for their testimonies of how God is speaking to, guiding, and helping them. We have experienced God's presence *with us*, and I know that God will do the same for you, our Families, back home. The Lord says, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

~ Chaplain Ronaldo Pascua

FRINK VISITS 100TH BATTALION IRON WARRIOR CHAMPION

*By: Capt. Timothy Zeisset,
100-442nd IN Public Affairs*

Iron Warrior Champion and 100th Battalion 442nd Infantry Soldier, Capt. Michael Pullen, received a gold medal, certificate and T-shirt from the commander of the 311th Theater Support Command, Brig. Gen. William Frink Jr. when he visited Camp Virginia, Kuwait, on Jan. 13.

Pullen participated in the Iron Warrior competition on Dec. 17, 2008 at Camp Arifjan. The competition consisted of pull-ups, pushups, sit-ups, dips, and a two-mile run. Pullen exceeded the gold standard completing 15 pull-ups, 77 pushups, 82 sit-ups, 30 dips, and his two-mile run in 13 minutes, 36 seconds.

Capt. Michael Pullen receives the gold medal from for his performance at the Iron Warrior competition in December.



100TH BATTALION TAKES OVER GATEWAY MISSION



Command Sgt. Maj. Glenn Gomes looks on as Lt. Gen. Joseph Peterson gives the re-enlistment oath to 100-442nd Soldiers, from left to right: Sgts. Otto Thomsen, Fred Blas, Dave Aiono, Spc. Quinn Robinson, and Sgt. Lloydnar Gamiao.

The Deputy Commanding General of Forces Command, Lt. Gen. Joseph Peterson, returned to Kuwait on Jan. 11 for his second visit with Hawaii's 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team – this time he met with Soldiers of the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry at Camp Virginia.

Peterson, who is also from Honolulu, Hawaii, spoke to Soldiers about the merits of serving in the Army. He also took the opportunity to re-enlist five Soldiers: Sgts. Dave Aiono, Fred Blas, Lloydnar Gamiao, Otto Thomsen, and Spc. Quinn Robinson.

After the ceremony, Peterson congratulated each Soldier for their commitment and joined them for dinner before he departed.

MEDICAL TRAINING MARKS FIRST OF MANY PLANNED

By : Sgt. 1st Class Arnold Rabanal, 1-487th FA Contributor

Bravo Battery, 1-487th Field Artillery Battalion conducted integrated training with the Kuwaiti Army on Jan. 15 which marked the beginning of many planned training events that will happen between the Hawaii National Guard unit and Kuwaiti Army.

The training was requested by Capt. Mishari of the Kuwaiti Army, who wanted his Soldiers to learn from the highly trained Bravo Battery SECFOR Soldiers. 1-487th FA Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Robert Lesher, assigned Pfc. Roberto Ramilo and Spc. Randall Corpuz to head up the requested training, starting with some basic medical training such as evaluating casualties.

The training went smoothly and the five Kuwaiti Soldiers who participated said they had a great time and couldn't wait to do it again.

The day ended with a lesson in some local Hawaii words and phrases where the Kuwaiti Soldiers learned that "assala mulaikum" and "mulaikum salam" can be translated to "howzit" or "aloha," meaning "hello" and "kammel kalamek" as "pau hana," meaning "done."



Pfc. Roberto Ramilo demonstrates how to evaluate a casualty on Spc. Randall Corpuz.

1-487TH FA TRAINS KUWAITI NATIONAL GUARD



Sgt. Glenn Kailiawa role plays in a vehicle assault as he surrenders to an armed Kuwaiti National Guard Soldier approaching him.

Picture and article by: Sgt. Crystal Carpenito, Public Affairs

Soldiers of the 1-487th Field Artillery, along with MPRI trainers, conducted a training exercise for Kuwaiti National Guard Soldiers to react to vehicle assaults at Camp Kasma, Jan. 29th.

The training, which started in early November 2008, is part of a 20-week course led by MPRI experts from around the world, along with the 1-487th FA Soldiers, and is designed to mold KNG Soldiers into basic counter-terrorist specialists. In its role as the Counter-terrorism Battalion, the KNG is responsible for responding to such criti-

cal tasks as rescuing hostages and capturing terrorist.

The vehicle assault exercise, which brought KNG Soldiers into their eighth week of training, was just one of many collective exercises already conducted, to include urban operations, room clearing and individual weapons familiarization.

Vehicle assaults involve searching for a known or possible suspect. Starting with stationary assaults the KNG Soldiers moved tactically through a horizontal formation of cars as they cleared each one safely. The training ended with mobile

assaults where the Soldiers stopped suspect vehicles driving along roads in an urban training site.

Tasked as armed and unarmed vehicle passengers, the 1-487th FA Soldiers monitored the KNG Soldiers to see whether or not they used proper rules of engagement.

Those who attended the training included assistant instructors Capt. Edward Choo and Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Odoardi, as well as Military Police Sgt. Glenn Kailiawa, Spc. Ryan Manuel and Pfc. Rainier Frost.

The MP platoon from the 29th Brigade Special Troops Battalion – who during the current deployment fall under the command of the 1-487th FA – have been tasked to help train the KNG Soldiers in addition to their main mission as the Area Reaction Force around Kuwait.

All Soldiers within the platoon have, or will have, the opportunity to train with the KNG or be involved in other host nation training before the end of their deployment this year.

As training progresses, the KNG Soldiers continue to show significant improvement, said Frost who also had the opportunity to participate in the weap-

ons training last month.

On the range, Frost said some of the KNG Soldiers didn't know how to properly hold a weapon and aim. The 1-487th FA Soldiers assisted the KNG Soldiers by showing them techniques and standards learned through their own experiences in Army training.

Once they establish proper target acquisition, the KNG Soldiers had to learn to discriminate targets by confirming the presence of a threat prior to shooting at it. One of the main problems they're having right now is shooting everything in sight, whether a threat exists or not, said Mike Francisco, MPRI Program Coordinator and Instructor.

It is not unusual to see the assistance of U.S. Soldiers in such training and is actually much of the reason for their presence in Southwest Asia. It's necessary to provide assistance to the Kuwaiti military because they're not as well established as the U.S., said Kailiawa.

"From what I saw today as my first time out, I think the training went pretty good," Kailiawa said. "I feel they haven't exceeded the standard but met it."

BSB SOLDIERS TAKE PART IN HOST NATION CAMPSITE VISIT



Spcs. Ambreh Holi, back left, and Chalcedony Silva, back right, pose for pictures with two Kuwaiti boys during the campsite visit.

By: Crystal Carpenito, Public Affairs

Soldiers of the Brigade Support Battalion, 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team visited a local social gathering at the invite of Ali Al Salem Air Base Deputy Commander, Brig. Gen. Khalid Abdul Razak Al Dae, in an effort to build upon their military-to-military relationship Jan. 27th.

The 29th BSB Commander, Lt. Col. Keith Yoshida, and Command Sgt. Maj. Virgine Kanoa, as well as Sgt. Mariesyl Erese and Spcs. Ambreh Holi, Chalcedony Silva, Kalai Kahalekai and Colin Lau attended the get-together at the desert

home located several kilometers from Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.

These Hawaii Soldiers were amongst a variety of Servicemembers from the Air Force, Navy, as well as Australian and Japanese Coalition Forces, who had the unique opportunity to be part of this visit.

The ways which host nation support and cooperation happen may vary throughout the camps in Kuwait, but one goal remains the same – the goal is to promote long-term regional stability through winning the hearts and minds of those we have contact with.

Visits that join Servicemembers from different countries help aid in the development and maintenance of good partnerships between those cooperating military forces.

The dinner was an event that brought everyone together and enabled the 29th BSB Soldiers to witness firsthand the Kuwaiti way of life. Cultural pride is something the Soldiers cherish and practice themselves back home in Hawaii; it seems that here in Kuwait it is no different.

Traditionally, Kuwaitis set up tents in the desert from November to late March in order to re-

acquaint with nature and get back to their roots. The campsites resemble more permanent housing than a weekend get-away at Bellows Beach, Oahu.

The campsite had 9 tents; inside was a kitchen, bathrooms with flushing toilets, carpets and sleeping quarters. Outside the tents was a pigeon coop, duck pond and a large seating area with carpet and hookah pipes with an assortment of tobaccos.

Prior to dinner, guests took turns riding on Arabian horses brought there by one of Brig. Gen. Khalid's officers. Afterward they played games such as tug-of-war and arm wrestling, after which the hosts passed out prizes for the participants.

There was chai tea, Arabian coffee, fruit juices, soda and an abundance of food and deserts served to the guests while they relaxed by camp fire and socialized as the night drew to an end.

When asked about her favorite part of the night's activities, "Besides the food and drinks, the best part was watching the kids play and take pictures with us, because it reminded me of my daughter at home." replied Holi.

COL. OLIVEIRA HANDS OUT PATCH TO ECHO BSB

By: 1st Lt. Jason Kimbrough,
E BSB Contributor



Pfc. Ashley Christopher receives combat patch from Col. Bruce Oliveira. (Photo taken by Sgt. First Class Genie Gerner)

Soldiers of Company E, 29th Brigade Support Battalion had the distinct honor of being awarded their right shoulder sleeve insignia, better known as combat patch, from the 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Commander, Col. Bruce Oliveira on Jan. 20.

Although Echo Company does not currently fall under the operational control of the 29th IBCT, but is also currently serving in the Iraq Theater of Operations, Oliveira felt it was important to make a special trip to visit one of the many companies that belong to his Brigade.

During the ceremony, Oliveira spoke to the Soldiers of Echo Company, giving

them a lesson in the proud history and service of the 29th IBCT. The Brigade's history includes service in every major conflict the U.S. has engaged in dating back to World War I, including the distinction of being one of the only National Guard units to have been called upon for service in Vietnam. Units of the 29th IBCT have served in both Iraq and Afghanistan, with the Brigade itself being called to active duty twice to serve in Iraq, proving yet again their significant role in the current global war on terrorism.

Although receiving a combat patch wasn't new to every Soldier in Echo Company,

many of the Soldiers that have deployed in the past were impressed with the way this one was awarded. Having the honor of being awarded their patch by the Brigade Commander and having the history and meaning of their new patch explained with the pride of the man awarding it to them has made this patch a little more special and meaningful. Knowing that they are now part of the long and distinguished service of the men and women that have served before them makes wearing their new combat patch that much more meaningful.

AROUND THE WORLD AND BACK AGAIN

By: Maj. Pam Ellison,
Public Affairs Officer

How is it that you can go all the way to Kuwait to end up being home again? It seems that two of Hawaii's own Soldiers, now in Company E, 29th Brigade Support Battalion, Forward Support Company, Infantry, from the Arizona Army National Guard have come half-way around the world, only to find themselves as close to Hawaii as they've been in some time.

The connection is a bit unusual, in that Echo, Forward Support is a unit of the 29th IBCT's Brigade Support Battalion but is attached to the 1-158th Infantry Battalion of the AZARNG. This happened when the brigade transitioned from a Separate Infantry Brigade organization into the modular IBCT creating FSCs to provide sustainment support to the maneuver, reconnaissance, and fires

battalions of the brigade.

Sgts. Kaleo Anderson and Kiory Potes, formerly of the 29th BSB of the Hawaii Army National Guard moved to Arizona in order to attend college, and in doing so, transferred to the 1-158th IN's Company E, FSC, a unit that is now deployed to Camp Bucca, Iraq. Camp Bucca is considered a model detention facility and has a significantly important role in the detention of enemy prisoners of war.

Their transfer to Echo company has allowed them to finish their college education, while maintaining their membership in the Army National Guard. Obviously, their college attendance is on hold right now, while they are performing their duties at Camp Bucca. But, once they return to Arizona, they can jump back into their studies before returning to Hawaii, where they say they intend to



Sgt. Potes, left, and Sgt. Anderson giving shaka at Camp Bucca, Iraq.

rejoin their fellow Soldiers of the brigade back home in Kalaheo, Hawaii.

Brigade Commander, Col. Bruce Oliveira, was able to visit the Soldiers of Company Echo as they were transitioning through Kuwait on the way to their new home in Iraq. He was able to share with the Soldiers of the unit the connection between the members of 1-158th IN and the 29th IBCT; clarifying the relationship of the Arizona

and Hawaii Army National Guard units and explaining the background of the shared unit right shoulder sleeve insignia.

Only in the Army can you travel half way around the world and find yourself serving with Soldiers that you have either served with in the past or have a direct connection to – in this case, Kuwait is closer to Hawaii than you might ever imagine.

LAVA WARRIORS



In honor of the Year of the Non-Commissioned Officer, the monthly Lava Flow will be highlighting those NCOs within the Lava Brigade who have been designated as outstanding Soldiers, specifically outstanding NCOs, within their respective Commands. This will be a monthly opportunity to show them our appreciation for their commitment to excellence and to recognize the daily sacrifices that are made in their service to our Country. They are without a doubt, true Lava Warriors!



“HIKI NO” WARRIORS

Sgt. Vincent Gonzales, B Battery, 1-487th Field Artillery Battalion, is an integral member of the unit and the Camp Patriot SECFOR mission. In true Hiki No fashion, Gonzales has consistently been called upon to perform duties as an NCO far beyond his pay grade, and has shown to be the kind of Soldier all should strive to emulate. Since receiving the assignment of First Squad Leader, Gonzales has filled the breach with poise, diligence and dedication to duty which is truly second to none. Simply put, Gonzales is an E-5 doing the job of an E-6, without complaint, at a level of competence rarely seen in a Soldier so young. Though he does not seem to require reward or recognition, his actions demand them.

Sgt. Vincent Gonzales

Sgt. Sanford Chun, B Battery, 1-487th Field Artillery Battalion (Area Reaction Force SECFOR -South), has consistently performed above his pay grade as a team leader within first squad, 4th Platoon. His dedication to duty and the mission is remarkable. From the onset of this deployment he has always taken initiative and accomplished the task at hand. He voluntarily trained the whole squad on Command Post Operations, developed and implemented squad level physical fitness training that resulting in passing scores for three of four Army Physical Fitness Test failures, developed a Platoon Load Plan for ARF Up-armored humvees developed and implemented a duty schedule for the entire squad, generated Smart Cards for the squad, and provided training to multiple squads on Five Military Police Functions. He consistently leads by example and takes initiative to complete the overall Platoon Mission.



Sgt. Sanford Chun

“KOA” WARRIORS



Sgt. 1st Class Michael Mackinaw, A Troop, 1-299th Cavalry Squadron, 3rd Platoon Sergeant and Convoy Escort Team 6 Leader for Convoy Security Company 1 – one of the 13 “Bad Boys” of CET 6. Mackinaw’s leadership plays an integral role in the successes shared by the members of CET 6 as they are performing convoy security escort missions throughout Iraq. He consistently displays characteristics found only in the best of NCOs which proves true with his desire to have all members of his team included in the picture for this article. He credits any recognition that goes to him as a direct result of the great support that he receives from all of the “Bad Boys”.

Sgt. 1st Class Michael Mackinaw

Sgt. First Class Norbert Baluyot, A Battery, 1-487th Field Artillery Battalion, is the Operations NCO for Combat Security Company 4’s Tactical Operations Center. In this role, Baluyot is a major part of the day-to-day, sometimes minute-to-minute, execution of duties in support of the Convoy Escort Teams as they perform missions into Iraq. It is due to the outstanding performance and dedication to duty that is shown by him and the Soldiers under his leadership that the CSC 4 CETs experience successes as they do. He sets the standard as an exemplary NCO that should be emulated by those around him.



Sgt. 1st Class Norbert Baluyot

NCOs... BACKBONE OF THE ARMY



LAVA WARRIORS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

“KOA” WARRIORS

Sgt. Saul McGirr, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1-299th Cavalry Squadron, is one of 24 medics who are part of the CAV’s “pool” of medics required to respond to the needs of the mission on a moment’s notice. McGirr

continues to perform his mission, not only for his assigned Command, but also other units who need additional medic support. Reflective of his outstanding qualities as an NCO is the incident where McGirr, being the only medic on the mission, took charge of personnel who provided assistance to a two-vehicle accident with eight casualties. McGirr’s swift actions and performance of duties resulted in the extraction, triage and evacuation preparation of all casualties. At least two of the casualties lives were saved as a direct result of his actions. This is just one example of the outstanding performance McGirr continues to exemplify that makes him an exceptional NCO.



Sgt. Saul McGirr

“GO FOR BROKE” WARRIOR



Staff. Sgt. Joshua Akiona

Staff Sgt. Joshua Akiona, Company D, 100-442nd Infantry, exemplified the “Go for Broke” spirit by earning a Gold Medal in the 311th Expeditionary Sustainment Command Iron Warrior Competition Feb. 25, 2009. This being his first attempt, Akiona trained tirelessly for the competition during his off time. The Soldiers have very little personal time, often with only eight to ten hours in between missions, which goes to show Akiona’s dedication did not come easy. SSG Akiona is a stellar example of what it takes to be an NCO. He is a consummate professional in all he does.

“SERVICE ALL WAYS” WARRIOR

Staff Sgt. Clayton Mitsui, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 29th Brigade Support Battalion is a hard working NCO with a positive attitude and a motivational drive to excel. He attends weekly meetings for the Audie Murphy Club and volunteers for the Junior Enlisted Council - all while managing the Army Direct Ordering (ADO) Program to ensure our Soldiers have the items they need. He handles the weekly uniform detail and covers down on other Soldiers’ duties and responsibilities when needed, assisting anyone and everyone. He is what all NCOs should be – a good Soldier, mentor and leader.



Staff Sgt. Clayton Mitsui

“POHAKU” WARRIOR



Sgt. Louis Race

SGT Louis Race, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, works in the Brigade Tactical Operations Center (TOC) in Arifjan, Kuwait. He consistently displays a “Can Do” attitude and always maintains the highest level of professionalism. Race is a Soldier and leader who will always take the time to assist the Soldiers of the unit in whatever he can, whether or not it’s his official responsibility – no matter what, he takes the initiative to do whatever he can to help the Soldier find a solution. He performs all tasks in a professional manner and sets the tone for what all other NCOs and subordinate Soldiers should strive to be. He exemplifies a true Lava Warrior spirit in all that he does!

NCOs... BACKBONE OF THE ARMY

CONGRATULATIONS NEWLY PROMOTED SOLDIERS

GO FOR BROKE 100-442nd Infantry				HIKI NO 1-487th Field Artiller		
Staff Sgt. Joshua	Akiona	Spc. Julius	Adungo	1st Lt. Alexander	Ladao	
Staff Sgt. Ryan	Almagro	Spc. Andrew	Cabral	Staff Sgt. Robert	Aiwohi	
Staff Sgt. Werner	Castillo	Spc. Jobani	Camacho	Sgt. Thomas	Kaiawe	
Staff Sgt. Faatafuna	Esene	Spc. Andrew	Constantino	Sgt. Li	Taase	
Staff Sgt. Uluiva	Faalevao	Spc. Brandon	Demapan	Spc. Peter	Chargualaf	
Staff Sgt. Ioelu	Fouvale	Spc. Derek	Dimapan	Pfc. Alexander	Mataia	
Staff Sgt. Hume	Getchel	Spc. Emilio	Dinson	Pfc. Andrew	Paderes	
Staff Sgt. Nakoa	Hoe	Spc. Jeremy	Dunivan	Pfc. Ryan	Unico	
Staff Sgt. Jimmy	Kaaihue	Spc. Tagillima	Esene	KOA		
Staff Sgt. Tad	Kabage	Spc. Iapesa	Fanolua	1-299th Cavalry		
Staff Sgt. Jarod	Kennedy	Spc. Bradley	Garner	Cpt. Peter	Ammerman	
Staff Sgt. Shan	Lin	Spc. Billy	Gibson	Cpt. David	Hosea	
Staff Sgt. Barry	Lovett	Spc. Marcanthony	Ho	1st Lt. Kealihoolulahu	Ichimura	
Staff Sgt. Brennen	Makuakane-Jarrell	Spc. Ronnie	Hodges	1st Lt. Jake	Kamihara	
Staff Sgt. Raimundo	Manglona	Spc. Casey	Honma	1st Lt. Sean	Smith	
Staff Sgt. Eldon	Naone	Spc. Aukustino	Iulio	1st Lt. Gary	Tani	
Staff Sgt. Charles	Pinuala	Spc. Alexander	Labodalyman	Staff Sgt. Kyle	Peatfield	
Staff Sgt. Jeffrey	Poole	Spc. Liu	Levu	Staff Sgt. Roger	Uganiza	
Staff Sgt. Joseph	Roche	Spc. William	Lurbe	Sgt. Ritchael	Cariaga	
Staff Sgt. Heath	Stolee	Spc. Justin	Magner	Sgt. Daniel	Kaiawe	
Staff Sgt. Dale	Sutton	Spc. Joseph	Malae	Pfc. Amren	Kekahuna	
Staff Sgt. Agaetai	Tagaloo	Spc. Vernon	Malakai	SERVICE ALL WAYS		
Staff Sgt. Michael	Terlaje	Spc. Martin	Martin	29th BSB		
Staff Sgt. Angelo	Uele	Spc. Initia	Matavao	Cpt. Manuel	Llanes	
Staff Sgt. Eugene	Wase	Spc. Devon	Parkhurst	IKAIKA MAU LOA		
Staff Sgt. Matthew	Yelverton	Spc. John	Perez	29th BSTB		
Sgt. Kalford	Amana	Spc. Guy	Rapoza	Ltc. Neal	Mitsuyoshi	
Sgt. Christopher	Arakawa	Spc. Daxon	Rowden	1st Lt. Elisa	Smithers	
Sgt. Dick	Baluscang	Spc. Kenneth	Sasakiloya	1st Sgt. Christopher	Tourtellot	
Sgt. Kriston	Campos	Spc. Mose	Sele	Staff Sgt. Reginald	Condes	
Sgt. Adrian	Carlos	Spc. Ionatana	Seumalo	Spc. Terina	Blue	
Sgt. Ronnie	Cuenco	Spc. Fola	Tanielu	POHAKU		
Sgt. Caleb	Edwards	Spc. Laautuilevanu	Tue	HHC 29th IBCT		
Sgt. Darnall	Fuiava	Spc. Elisha	Vandell	Cpt. Sitia	Faleafine	
Sgt. Jeremy	Greer	Spc. Kevin	Wong	Spc. Christian	Kamau	
Sgt. Yu	Gu	Pfc. Jacob	Ferrer	Spc. Britney	Wolf	
Sgt. Jacob	Holliday	Pfc. Matthew	James			
Sgt. Taitos	Joseph	Pfc. Kekaulike	Jose			
Sgt. Robin	Kaai	Pfc. Timothy	Miller			
Sgt. Joshua	Lund	Pfc. Johnn	Ngaue			
Sgt. Crisryan	Makinano	Pfc. Elijah	Rabon			
Sgt. Edward	Nohira	Pfc. Manuel	Ramalho			
Sgt. Ryan	Ontalan	Pfc. Justin	Siatunuu			
Sgt. Zachariah	Phillips	Pfc. Pop	Sophabmixay,			
Sgt. Michael	Sanchez	Pfc. Nicholas	Suapilimai			
Sgt. Cameron	Shriver	Pfc. Presley	Tagaloo			
Sgt. Fagalele	Simati	Pfc. Enrique	Torjesen			
Sgt. Lance	Skewis	Pfc. Erqi	Wang			
Sgt. Brad	Skroback	Pvt. John	Benjamin			
Sgt. Michael	Strong	Pvt. Ulysses	Ioane			
Sgt. Alvin	Tinio	Pvt. Travis	Malauulu			
Sgt. Kevin	Tourville	Pvt. Korama	Moetala			
Sgt. Kenneth	Tyquiengco	Pvt. Rudeinn	Sablan			
Sgt. John	Vuncannon	Pvt. Juan	Santos			
		Pvt. Douglas	Satele	Thru 31 Jan 09		

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR
NEWLY RE-ENLISTED SOLDIERS**

KOA 1-299th Cavalry					HIKI NO 1-487th Field Artiller								
Sgt. 1st Class	Eric	Fujiwara	Spc.	Marc	Aquino	Master Sgt.	Gary	Kuakini					
Sgt. 1st Class	Palale	Gaoteote	Spc.	Ryan	Billaber	Sgt. 1st Class	Balendran	Anandarajah					
Staff Sgt.	Shon	Antollin	Spc.	Raoul	Clemente	Staff Sgt.	Cassius	Baker					
Staff Sgt.	Alwin	Antonio	Spc.	Kellen	Concepcion	Staff Sgt.	Lorajan	Basuel					
Staff Sgt.	Dillon	Ching	Spc.	Adrian	Cook	Staff Sgt.	Reynaldo	Blando					
Staff Sgt.	Reyman	Huerbana	Spc.	Michaelfrancis	Correa	Staff Sgt.	Jojo	Bongolan					
Staff Sgt.	David	Kalta	Spc.	Jayson	Fisher	Staff Sgt.	Calvin	Nalpo					
Staff Sgt.	Kevin	Okumura	Spc.	Benjamin	Fontes	Staff Sgt.	Brandon	Sousa					
Staff Sgt.	Damien	Ragasa	Spc.	Derwin	Ganiron	Staff Sgt.	Edward	Trevino					
Staff Sgt.	Juanito	Riglos	Spc.	Ira	Houston	Sgt.	Jeffrey	Cox					
Sgt.	Duc	Bul	Spc.	Alan	Hudman	Sgt.	Michael	Gelsler					
Sgt.	Carlito	Camat	Spc.	An	Huynh	Sgt.	Isaac	Kidani					
Sgt.	Gary	Costales	Spc.	Desmon	Inere	Sgt.	Dominico	Manding					
Sgt.	Daniel	Delgado	Spc.	Levardis	Kahoonei	Sgt.	Tial	Matau					
Sgt.	Christopher	Esteron	Spc.	Wayne	Kenison	Sgt.	Wilger	Mazzini					
Sgt.	Joseleandr	Gaceta	Spc.	Reed	Kotake	Sgt.	Kainalii	Nee					
Sgt.	Keoni	Halemano	Spc.	Lexamar	Lagundi	Sgt.	Clifford	Pablo					
Sgt.	Christopher	Harvey	Spc.	Howard	Mateo	Sgt.	Eric	Sandoval					
Sgt.	Clark	Hill	Spc.	Celestino	Matutino	Sgt.	Sal	Torres					
Sgt.	Christopher	King	Spc.	William	Miura	Sgt.	Allen	Vergara					
Sgt.	Logan	Luta	Spc.	Garren	Mousser	Sgt.	Blayne	Wong					
Sgt.	Michael	Murata	Spc.	Kyle	Nalpo	Cpl.	Kyle	Tokuda					
Sgt.	Keokolo	Paakonia	Spc.	Daryl	Ranis	Spc.	Alisaceline	Akana					
Sgt.	Michael	Pakani	Spc.	Keith	Reiswig	Spc.	Christian	Bumagat					
Sgt.	Edward	Payne	Spc.	Walter	Ribao	Spc.	Burt	Calaycay					
Sgt.	Kyle	Peatfield	Spc.	Christopher	Rivera	Spc.	Daniel	Carvalho					
Sgt.	David	Rasquero	Spc.	Valentine	Roberts	Spc.	Courtney	Chang					
Sgt.	Shane	Stone	Spc.	Cherry	Roldan-Gador	Spc.	Christopher	Cluneygentzler					
Sgt.	Isaac	Tandal	Spc.	Lowen	Schenk	Spc.	Jacquelyn	Cordeiro					
Sgt.	Jonathan	Wong	Spc.	Dane	Shiraki	Spc.	Demelle	Domiguez					
Spc.	Constante	Agudo	Spc.	Christopher	Sinfuego	Spc.	Keoki	Duarte					
Spc.	Francis	Agustin	Spc.	Scott	Whitleynoah	Spc.	Anacleto	Frando					
Spc.	Anthony	Aquino	Spc.	Paul	Wong	Spc.	Stephen	Garrett					
GO FOR BROKE 100-442nd Infantry					Spc. Allen Greig								
Sgt. 1st Class	Aleksander	Nalual	Spc.	Adrian	Carlos	Spc.	Jeremy	Judson					
Sgt. 1st Class	Freedom	Silveira	Spc.	Wendel	Dryden	Spc.	Bradford	Juliano					
Staff Sgt.	Mike	Amilale	Spc.	Siaosi	Faaululi	Spc.	Kristofer	Kem					
Staff Sgt.	Julius	Amisone	Spc.	Jon	Goodhue	Spc.	Sherwin	Lawian					
Staff Sgt.	Anthony	Chung	Spc.	Noah	Keuma	Spc.	Patricia	Ortiz					
Staff Sgt.	Jv	Fuamatu	Spc.	Markjowel	Limos	Spc.	Jennifer	Pescador					
Staff Sgt.	Trevor	Husselni	Spc.	Bradley	Maugaoteaga	Spc.	Noland	Rapanot					
Staff Sgt.	Serafin	Justo	Spc.	Iosefa	Maulupe	Spc.	Martin	Trevino					
Staff Sgt.	Mark	Moana	Spc.	Edward	Nohira	Spc.	Willie	Turner					
Staff Sgt.	Justin	Pedro	Spc.	Quinn	Robinson	Spc.	Matthan	Uelese					
Staff Sgt.	Savalki	Sua	Spc.	Ignosy	Toeava	Spc.	James	Versola					
Staff Sgt.	Palamu	Tuku	Spc.	Alava	Tupal	POHAKU HHC 29th IBCT							
Sgt.	Dave	Aiono	Spc.	Elisha	Vandell	Sgt.	Jerome	Balbin					
Sgt.	Fred	Blas	Spc.	Victor	Yurtola	Sgt.	Norison	Ibera					
Sgt.	Luis	Deleonguerrero	SERVICE ALWAYS 29th BSB					IKAIKA MAU LOA 29th BSTB					
Sgt.	Brian	Domingo	Sgt. 1st Class	Burl	Hirashima	Staff Sgt.	Justin	Aeto					
Sgt.	Uluiva	Faalevao	Sgt.	Raena	Madeira	Staff Sgt.	Michael	Moore					
Sgt.	Ioelu	Fouvale	Staff Sgt.	Ludyann	Capitle	Sgt.	Lorinda	Ballesteros					
Sgt.	Lloydnar	Gamiao	Staff Sgt.	Meinert	Sheldon	Sgt.	Christopher	Nakama					
Sgt.	Shan	Lin	Spc.	Rayarchie	Rosete	Spc.	Jean	Dubrall					
Sgt.	Celon	Mccloskey						Spc.	Joyce	Guleb			
Sgt.	Carl	Moore						Spc.	Richmond	Penales			
Sgt.	Sili	Pauu						Spc.	Aldrich	Tumamao			
Sgt.	Rami	Pule						Spc.	Jeffrey	Ulep			
Sgt.	Jae	Sutton											
Sgt.	Jarrett	Tachibana											
Sgt.	Otto	Thomsen											
Sgt.	Alvin	Tinio											
Sgt.	Damien	Tua											
Sgt.	Eugene	Wase											

THE BENEFITS OF OUR SERVICE

There are many reasons that each of us initially came into the military and potentially even more reasons why we stay. For many, it may have been the appeal of money for college; it might have been the offer of an enlistment bonus or the possibility to have federal student loans repaid; and depending on your age, it may have prevented you from going to jail! The reasons that we stay are just as varied, from re-enlistment bonuses to retirement, I feel certain for most it is also due to a sense of pride and patriotism.

But what are the reasons our Families continue to support our service in the military? Are there benefits for them?

There are, in fact, many ways that our Families benefit from our military membership besides the obvious pay and allowances received by our performance of duty. If you look at

the benefits matrix, many of the items listed are benefits to not only Service members, but Family members as well. There are the overall pay related items, the benefits of shopping at the Exchange and Commissary, space available travel and military recreational facilities at military installations; there are even many financial incentives for remaining in the military and staying until retirement, so you can take these benefits with you when you retire.

When it comes to the education benefits that we may have enlisted for, there are countless ways to get the degree you've set your sights on; from a vocational degree to a doctorate, career counseling to CLEP testing, or simply utilizing the G.I. Bill, the benefits to achieve your educational goals are there for the taking.

What about the re-enlistment bonus many

want to receive? While we're in Theater the tax benefit for your re-enlistment is just like your pay – it's TAX FREE! What does that mean to you? That means additional cash that comes to you instead of having it withheld when they make your lump sum payment. That's certainly a consideration when it comes to deciding whether to re-enlist now, or once we get home. You can re-enlist up to one year before your actual ETS date in order to benefit from the lump sum, tax free payment, here in Theater – so weigh your options as time is running out.

The last area I want to highlight is a new G.I. Bill benefit that goes into effect August 1, 2009 – the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill. One of the most dynamic changes to come about is that this benefit will pay tuition and fees directly to the school not to exceed the maximum

in-state tuition and fees at a public institution; pay a monthly housing allowance based on BHA for an E-5 with dependents at the location of the school; pay an annual book and supply stipend of \$1,000 (or proportionally based on enrollment); AND most significant, will allow you to transfer your benefits to your spouse or children. For Soldiers who have already met your education goals and no longer need to use the benefit yourselves, you are now able to transfer these benefits to your spouse or children.

In looking at all the opportunities available for Soldiers and their Families, one can say that the Guard has made great strides in providing benefits for “our” – the Soldiers and their Families – service. Now, take that first step and go out there and start using the many benefits you have earned.

Benefit Matrix: Page 18

Website References

Pay, allowances & compensation: <http://www.virtualarmory.com/WellBeing/pay.aspx>

ARNG Education Support Center – Educational Counseling: <https://esc.pec.ngb.army.mil/>

Education Benefits: <http://www.virtualarmory.com/WellBeing/education.aspx>

<http://www.gibill.va.gov/>

http://www.dantes.doded.mil/Dantes_web/DANTESHOME.asp

AARTS Transcripts: <https://aartstranscript.army.mil/>

Troops-to-Teachers: <http://www.proudtoserveagain.com/index.html>

Spouses-to-Teachers: <http://www.spousestoteachers.com/>

DoD MWR Libraries – Education/Lifelong Learning Resource: <http://www.petersons.com/dod/>

Army e-Learning Courses: <https://www.atrrs.army.mil/channels/eLearning/smartforce/>

Health Care: <http://www.virtualarmory.com/WellBeing/healthcare.aspx>

Housing & Workplace Environment: <http://www.virtualarmory.com/WellBeing/housing.aspx>

Family Support: <http://www.virtualarmory.com/WellBeing/family.aspx>

Cohesion (MWR): <http://www.virtualarmory.com/WellBeing/cohesion.aspx>

<http://www.military4life.com/mwr/>

Military Installations: <http://www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil/ismart/MHF-MI/>

Operational & Special Interest: <http://www.virtualarmory.com/WellBeing/interest.aspx>

BENEFITS MATRIX

Benefit	DRILL	ACTIVE	RETIRED
	Inactive Duty Training Assembly	AD,ADSW, AT, ADT, IADT	Retired Reserve (Age 60 and over)
Pay & Allowances	Basic pay, special pay if authorized	Basic pay, BAS BAH, special pay if authorized	Retired or retainer pay
Enlistment/Re-Enlistment Bonuses	Amounts Vary	Amounts Vary	No
*ARNG Education Spt Center	Yes	Yes	No
*G.I. Bill	Benefits Vary by Chapter	Benefits Vary by Chapter	Benefits Vary by Chapter
Federal & State Tuition Assistance	Yes	Yes	No
*Free CLEP/DSST Testing	Yes	Yes	No
*Troops/Spouses-to-Teacher	Yes	Yes	No
*Career Counseling (eDISCOVER)	Yes	Yes	No
*Exchanges	Yes	Yes	Yes
*Commissary	Yes	Yes	Yes
Retirement Points	1 per drill (Max 2/day)	1 per day (Max 365/366 per year)	No
Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)	Yes	Yes	No
*Space Travel Available	CONUS/HI/AK PR/VI/GU	Worldwide	Worldwide
*Military Clothing Sales Store	Yes	Yes	Yes
Legal Assistance	Limited	Yes	Yes
*Transient Billeting	Yes	Yes	If available
*Military Recreation Facilities	Yes	Yes	Yes
Burial Flag	Yes	Yes	Yes
*Post/Base Facilities	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wearing of Uniform	As required	As required	On appropriate occasions
*Official/MWR On-line Library Svc	Yes	Yes	Yes
*Military Red Cross Assistance	No	Yes	Yes
*Base/Post Theater	Yes	Yes	Yes
Military Burial Assistance	Yes	Yes	no
Military Death Gratuity	Yes	Yes	No
Military Medical/Dental	Medical, only if duty related	Yes	Yes
VA Medical/Dental	If injury or illness sustained in LOD or if veteran status	If injury or illness sustained in LOD or if veteran status	Yes
*TRICARE	30 days coverage for mem- & family post-release from contingency operation	Yes, for dependents if on AD, ADSW for more than 30 days	Yes at age 65; TRICARE is second payer to Medicare
Service Members Group Life Insurance	Yes	Yes	No
Veterans Group Life Insurance	No	No	Yes
*Survivor Benefits Plan	Yes, with 20 yrs service, if elected	Yes, with 20 yrs service, if elected	Yes, with 20 yrs service, if elected

* Indicates that this benefit may be applicable to the Soldiers' Family and/or Dependents

THE SOLDIER'S SAINT

By: Maj. Pamela Ellison, PAO

For most of us here, Valentine's Day was another special day spent away from our significant others and loved ones. Be it our spouse, children or close friends, for most, there is a special someone we normally send a valentine.

For Col. Bruce Oliveira, Valentine's Day was an opportunity to send a special message back to our loved ones in Hawaii through the video teleconference (VTC) conducted with the Governor, The Adjutant General and members of the Family Readiness Groups.

In his Valentine's Day VTC message, Oliveira highlighted the history of this day and its namesake, St. Valentine. The story he highlighted referred to the priest, Valentine, who served during third century Rome when Claudius, the Emperor at the time, outlawed marriage for young single men, believing they made better Soldiers than those with wives and Families.

Realizing the injustice of this decree, Valentine defied the Emperor's new law and performed marriages for young couples in secret until Claudius found out and sentenced Valentine to death. The story goes on to tell how Valentine falls in love with a young girl, who may have in fact been his jailor's daughter, who visited Valentine during his confine-

ment. Prior to his death, it is said, he wrote her one final letter which he signed, "From Your Valentine", leaving us with the common Valentine expression used today.

Oliveira told the Families Valentine was very much a hero, like our Fami-

Soldiers. But, many individuals may not realize we have married Soldiers deployed together in Theater with us – Soldiers married to other Soldiers here in Kuwait. We have seven married couples to be exact.

For those couples, life here can be better in some

Sgt. Elia and Sgt. Gloria Leui; Sgt. First Class Ronald and Spc. Severn Medeiros; Staff Sgt. Junito and Spec. Cherry Gador; Staff Sgt. Irving "BJ" and Sgt. Nicole Harper; Sgts. Michael and Maryrose Jose and April and Devon Parkhurst .

In talking with several of the couples, the one thing they have in common is how they cope with challenges of deployment through a strong faith in God and believing he will get them all safely back home. As expected, each Soldier believes having their other half here in Kuwait has its advantages, but for those who are also parents, being away from their children is another difficult challenge.

For the Harpers, they feel very fortunate to have seen each other on Christmas Day before Irving, a member of a 1-299th Cavalry convoy escort team, pushed out on a mission, while his wife Nicole, a member of the 1-299th Cavalry's S-1 section, stayed behind at Camp Buehring to perform her duties.

As Oliveira concluded his remarks during the VTC, it significant to highlight his reminder that the success of the Lava Brigade depends on the whole team; Soldiers and Families. So, no matter which side of that equation you fall, it's up to you to do your part to make our mission a success – we couldn't do what we do it without you all!



From left to right: Staff Sgt. Elia and Sgt. Gloria Leui are just one of seven married couples currently deployed together in Kuwait.

lies are to us. He further affirmed single Soldiers do not necessarily make better Soldiers; strong Family ties do! It's from the Families that we, as Soldiers, get our purpose and strength; the stronger the Family, the stronger the Soldier.

Obviously, the Lava Brigade is comprised of both married and single

regards and worse in others. If available, the policies in Theater allow the Soldiers to billet together – although, there is currently only one couple who live on the same camp and have been able to utilize the benefit.

Our married Soldiers are: Cpt. Normandy and 1st Lt. Elisa Smithers; Staff

HISTORY OF PRESIDENTS' DAY



“Abraham Lincoln. He fought for both sides of the Civil War. And he is the 16th president and I was born on the 16th and am a Libra.”

~ Sgt. First Class Paul Michael Hayes, Alpha BSB / 1-487th FA



“Abraham Lincoln because he has courage. Because he fought for things, he knew he was going to get killed for, but he did it anyway.”

~ Sgt. Jose Villa, 100-442nd IN



“George Washington because he stood up and kept himself focused even when times were bleak for him and the Continental Army. He kept the Army Strong.”

~ Cpl. McDonald, Echo 29th BSB



“John F. Kennedy because he stood for the little working man during the civil rights for equality.”

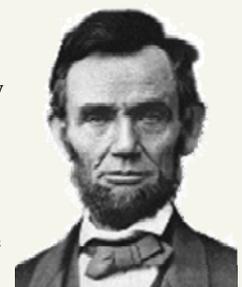
~ 29th BSB Command Sgt. Maj. Virgine Kanoa

Until 1971, both February 12 and February 22 were observed as federal public holidays to honor the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln (February 12) and George Washington (February 22). In 1971 President Richard Nixon proclaimed one single federal public holiday, the Presidents' Day, to be observed on the 3rd Monday of February, honoring all past presidents of the United States of America.

GEORGE WASHINGTON (February 22, 1732 - December 14, 1799). Early in his life George Washington became an experienced surveyor. Following these years, he fought in the French and Indian War. After the war he returned to Mount Vernon in 1758, married Martha Dandridge in 1759, and became a planter. That same year he became involved in politics when he was elected representative to the Virginia House of Burgesses. He was a representative until 1774 when he became a delegate to the Continental Congress. In May of 1775 George Washington was appointed Commander of the American army during the Revolution. He was the first President, (1789 1797) governing the 13 states.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN (February 12, 1809 - April 15, 1865). Abe Lincoln was born into a poor family and had little formal schooling. He basically taught himself to read and write and walked long distances to borrow books. He failed in early business and political ventures, yet became President in 1861 and guided the Union through the Civil War. He shaped his own character and education as was evident in the simple language he used in his speeches. His famous Gettysburg Address was delivered in 1863. Lincoln was assassinated on April 15, 1865 during a performance at Ford's Theatre in Washington just a few days after General Robert E. Lee and his army surrendered.



WHAT'S HAPPENING BACK HOME FRG / REAR

Future events back home:

Monday, March 23 . Saturday, March 28, 2009 . Annual Family Programs Youth Training (Location RTI, Waimanalo, HI). Cost is \$75.00 for each Youth (all islands). Open to first 100 applicants. Volunteers needed. POC is Youth Coordinator, Clifford Duro, 672-1439, fax to 672-1436 or lefty.d.duro@us.army.mil. Please mail applications to HING Family Program, 3949 Diamond Head Rd, Honolulu, HI 96816. Make checks payable to .HING Family Program Conference Fund.. Application attached. **DEADLINE for applications: Friday, February 27, 2009.**

Nominate a Dad!!!! - The National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) and Lockheed Martin Military Fatherhood Award recognizes a father who goes above and beyond his duties as both serviceman and dad to make sure he and his family stay connected and strong. The awardee and his family will be brought to Washington, DC for the awards ceremony where he'll receive a custom engraved award and mentions in local and national press!* Show the Military Dad in your life just how much he means to you -- and that he's worthy of an award! Go to: <http://www.fatherhood.org/Gala/MilitaryAward/index.asp> to submit your nomination! Nomination submissions are being accepted through February 27th, 2009. Last year's awardee, a National Guardsmen from Mississippi!

NEW! OEF/OIF VA Website: The VA has recently released an upgraded website specifically for military personnel involved in OEF/OIF. The new website is as follows: www.oefoif.va.gov



Reversing the traditional custom of receiving gifts as a deployed Soldier, Chief Warrant Officer Janell Coyaso, sent home gifts for two boys and their teacher at Pearl Harbor Kai Elementary School on Oahu for her son, Shelden Balatico, and boyfriend, Chief Warrant Officer Brian Sakai, to pass out as thanks for their support.

GIFTS FROM KUWAIT

*By CW2 Janell Coyaso
HHC, 29th IBCT Contributor*

As Soldiers, we're always remembered by Family

and friends back home through such things as care packages sent to us with local goodies. Well, Chief Warrant Officer, Janell

Coyaso, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, and her family decided to reverse the giving and sent a care package to two students from Pearl Harbor Kai Elementary School, Richard and Keante.

Knowing how special her gifts meant to them helped to brighten up her spirits while being separated from Family.

The gifts of "thanks" were delivered with the help of her boyfriend, Chief Warrant Officer Brian Sakai and son, Shelden Balatico.

All Fifth grade classes were pulled into the boys'

classroom so they could open their gifts. Both boys received a T-shirt and boonie cap with their names embroidered on them. Their teacher, Ms. Teri Yoneha, received a marble swan.

When asked how many students had parents that were in the military and deployed, about half of the class raised their hands. Shelden was surprised there were other students in the same situation as himself.

Brian and Shelden were so touched with the presentation and knew that Coyaso would have been proud.

This recognition was to say "mahalo" to everyone who takes the time out to think about our "Hawaii Warriors" currently serving our country in Kuwait.

O B A M A T A K E S O A T H A S 4 4 T H P R E S I D E N T



WASHINGTON: Amid high expectations of a change in some controversial policies pursued in the last eight years, Barack Hussein Obama assumed power on Tuesday as the first ever African-American of the United States. US Supreme Court Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. administered the oath of office to Barack Obama.

Crowds streamed into the U.S. capital, jamming subway cars

and packing the National Mall from the Capitol building to the Washington Monument when President-elect Barack Obama came to be sworn-in.

For weeks, officials urged people to arrive early for the historic inauguration of the first black U.S. president and throngs of revelers heeded that advice, streaming onto the Mall hours before daybreak.

Meanwhile, thousands of people gathered

near the parade route on Pennsylvania Avenue, occasionally erupting in spontaneous cheers and chants of "open the gates!"

The large crowds made it difficult for many to figure out where checkpoints into the secure area were. Police projected that crowds were ranging between 2 and 3 million for the inauguration.

Attendance topped the 1.2million people who were at Lyndon

Johnson's 1965 inauguration, which remained the largest crowd the National Park Service, had on record.

The unprecedented enthusiasm on the historic occasion both domestically and globally rests on the 47-year old Obama's campaign promises to set America in a new direction aimed at restoring its prestige that especially suffered in the aftermath of the US invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan.

On top of the legal, moral and political questions connected to the two wars, US economic recession is bound to test Obama's skills in the backdrop of the Bush Administration's unpopular policies.

Vice President-elect Joseph Biden, who recently visited Pakistan and Afghanistan, will also take oath of office.

Courtesy: www.defense.pk

O B A M A T A K E S O A T H A G A I N

*The Associated Press
Stars and Stripes online edition, Tuesday, January 21, 2009*

WASHINGTON (AP) — Chief Justice John Roberts has administered the presidential oath of office to Barack Obama for a second time just to be on the

safe side.

The unusual step came after Roberts flubbed the oath a bit on Tuesday, causing Obama to repeat the wording differently than as pre-

scribed in the Constitution.

White House counsel Greg Craig said Obama took the oath from Roberts again out of an "abundance of caution."

The chief justice and the president handled the matter privately in the Map Room on Wednesday night.

L I N G L E V I S I T S P R E S I D E N T O B A M A

U.S. President Barack Obama poses for a photo with Hawaii Gov. Linda Lingle during a visit to the White House in Washington, Sunday, Feb. 22, 2009. Lingle had her first face-to-face contacts with Hawaii-born President Barack Obama as the nation's governors visited the White House.

Associated Press / Governor's Office



T O R N A D O T E A R S T H R O U G H G O L F C O U R S E



By Rob Shikina

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Feb 12, 2009

A twister touched down on Kapolei Golf Course yesterday, blowing an employee into a glass door and hospitalizing him, officials said.

The man, in his 30s, was taken to a hospital in stable condi-

tion, said Bryan Cheplic, Honolulu Emergency Services Department spokesman.

The tornado surprised motorists on the H-1 freeway and scattered golfers at the sold-out course as it cut across six holes. It was

the first tornado on Oahu since one in Aiea in December 2005, according to the National Weather Service.

The tornado touched down yesterday at about 1 p.m., caused by the unstable atmosphere across the island chain, weather service officials said.

The air mass was still unstable early today with some thunderstorms occurring across the state and a chance of more heavy showers this afternoon, said weather forecaster Henry Lau.

He said the "significant" weather was expected to end tonight. "However,

we're looking for trades to get stronger as the evening progresses."

A high-pressure system building in the northwest is increasing the trades and pushing away the low that is causing the unstable atmosphere, Lau said.

The weather service issued a high-wind watch for all islands starting tomorrow night and continuing to Sunday afternoon, with possible sustained winds of 40 mph and gusts of 58 mph.

At Kapolei the tornado came with little warning.

Courtesy of: Starbulletin.com



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Contributors
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Sgt. Carpenito and Maj. Ellison

P A O C O M M E N T

As I think of what would be appropriate to write this month, I keep coming back to the overarching theme of this month's Lava Flow - **RE-ENLISTMENTS** - with highlights of the benefits of re-enlisting and stories about the Soldiers who have re-enlisted since we've been in Kuwait.

I find myself, although not eligible for bonuses, without a service obligation beyond the current deployment and about to receive my 20-year letter, asking, "Why **do** I stay?"

I even went so far as to write down what I believe are the reasons that Soldiers stay and continue to serve. There were the initial obvious ones; pay and allowances, retirement, bonuses, education benefits, life insurance coverage, travel, the list of these "tangibles" goes on and on.

Then the list became things that are a bit more difficult to put a "price tag" on, things like; training, adventure, being part of a team, networking opportu-

nities for everything from employment to home repairs, family tradition, pride, honor, patriotism – these are the things that seem a bit more "non-tangible" and abstract.

So, I ask you, "Why do **you** stay?"

This is definitely a very personal question with an endless list of answers. But, I ask you, have you ever really thought about why it is that you stay – this answer is possibly very different than why you initially joined. I'm guessing, since we live in such incredibly beautiful places across the Pacific Rim, that the answer isn't because we don't have anything else to do with our weekends!

In looking for my answers, I realized that, as the past 20 years have so quickly passed, I've never really thought about why I stay. I realized that the Guard has become my extended family – my Ohana – it has helped shape me from the young "wet-behind-the-ears" PFC to what I believe is a more honorable,

knowledgeable, mature MAJ who is proud to serve her Country. Although I am thankful for all the "tangible" benefits that I do receive, I realized I value those "non-tangible" benefits that I receive even more.

I stand a little taller when I hear the National Anthem, knowing it means more to me than most; I enjoy the feeling that I get when I am honored, as citizen Soldier, to assist a fellow citizen through a difficult time; I also know that the sadness I feel throughout my whole body when I hear TAPS played has been influenced by my membership in this organization – all of these are things that I couldn't get through if I were part of any other organization.

I am proud to serve with each and every one of you – and only hope to make you proud to serve next to me! So, I ask you again, "Why do **you** stay"?

LAVA! MAJ Ellison