

# HAWAII ARMY WEEKLY

Vol. 33 No. 49

Serving the U.S. Army community in Hawaii

December 10, 2004

## What's Inside



### Fallen Soldiers

Two units remember four fallen Soldiers.  
A-3, A-5

**Ohana Day 2004** – Join us in showing support and appreciation for the families of deployed U.S. military personnel on Saturday, Dec. 11, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Army National Guard Aviation Hangar on Wheeler Army Air Field. Open to all active duty, Guard, and Reserve families with a deployed service member. Meet Gov. Linda Lingle, Santa, live music and more.



### USARHAW Holiday Fun

Santa, elves, holiday cheer and more.  
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**Hui O'Na Wahine Thrift Shop Closure**  
From Dec. 17 to Jan. 4. The thrift shop on Schofield Barracks will reopen at 9 a.m. on Jan. 4. Call Grace Gertin at 624-0405 for more information



### Sports

70 basketball enthusiasts participate in clinic; sports briefs.  
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**Adventure Race Hawaii Seeks Teams**  
ARH will sponsor a two to four person military team from each service to compete in a race of hiking, mountain biking, kayaking, ropes, rappelling, a mystery team builder, and an environmental project. See page A-4 or visit [www.adventurehawaii.com](http://www.adventurehawaii.com) for details.

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# Cheney, Rumsfeld visit troops

Master Sgt. Terry Anderson  
CJTF-76 Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – Vice President Dick Cheney and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld visited troops here Dec. 7 before attending the Afghanistan Presidential inauguration in the capital of Kabul.

Cheney and Rumsfeld arrived at Bagram early and had breakfast with troops at two different locations on Bagram, applauding their efforts in the Global War on Terrorism.

"A watching world has seen once again that the U.S. military is one of the greatest forces for good on this earth," said Cheney. "You're giving some of the best years of your lives in service to your country at the time when we need you the most. Your work is part of the worldwide campaign against terror. Your task is immense, it is urgent, and it is vital for our countries freedom and security. Your children and my grandchildren will live in freedom because of what you are doing today."

More than 200 troops from Combined Joint Task Force 76 attended an early morning breakfast at the Viper Dining Facility for the opportunity to



Vice President Dick Cheney reenlists 30 service members at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan's Viper Dining Facility on Dec. 7. Cheney was in Afghanistan to attend the inauguration of Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

eat with Cheney and his wife Lynne. Cheney reenlisted 30 Soldiers, and pinned on medals ranging from the Army Commendation Medal to the Bronze Star on several service members.

Cheney said the war on terror is going to be a long fight, and will take tremendous resolve.

"America's willingness to lead the fight against terror has come at a cost,"

he said. "We've lost some of the finest people in our military whose names we will honor forever. Recently, we experienced the great loss of Lt. Col. Mike McMahon, a cavalryman with 3/4th Cav. By their sacrifice and your continuing mission, we will one day overcome the threat of terror."

Cheney is the highest-ranking American official to visit Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban regime in

2001.

Secretary Rumsfeld toured Camp Vance, the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force compound on Bagram, and had breakfast with Soldiers there. Special Operations troops are spread out across Afghanistan, fighting insurgents and helping the Afghan people reclaim their country after 30 years of war. Rumsfeld spoke to the Soldiers on Camp Vance and said the coalition's presence has had a huge impact in Afghanistan.

"Twenty-five million people have been liberated," said Rumsfeld. "These (Soldiers) right here will look back in five years and know they have been a part of something enormously important for this part of the world."

Rumsfeld also said that the mission to liberate Afghanistan continues.

"There are still groups, extremists, that would like to take this country back – the Taliban, the al-Qaida – and use it for a base for terrorist activities around the world as they did on 9-11," Rumsfeld said. "But it's not going to happen."

After breakfast and briefings, Cheney and Rumsfeld flew to Kabul, where they attended Afghan President Hamid Karzai's inauguration ceremony.

## Tis the Season for Santa



Jaden McGilbra, 2, needed courage, provided by one of Santa's helpers, as he debated whether to tell Santa what was on his mind. (See story on page B-3)

## Soldier duty replaces extension woes

Sgt. Sean Kimmons  
25th ID (L) Public Affairs

KIRKUK AIR BASE, Iraq – As relief-in-place rehearsals went onward with the 116th Separate Armored Brigade last week, Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, received the rude awakening of being extended.

"For the Soldiers, it's obviously a disappointment initially but certainly it's not a surprise," said Col. Lloyd Miles, commander of the 2nd BCT.

More than 3,000 Soldiers from the 2nd BCT took over the area of operations in the vicinity of Kirkuk last February and were expected to stay at least a year in the country. Then, planning and preparations for the relief-in-place with the 116th began and rumors of being home by Christmas or New Year's Day spread like wildfire.

Now with the extension settled into Soldiers' minds, disappointment has been overturned by duty.

"The extension in Iraq is just part of the job that we have to do," Spc. Bruce Hillier, a M249 gunner with Company B, Task Force 1-27 Infantry.

"I miss my family just like everyone else, but they understand that we have a job to do over here," said Hillier, who has a wife and three kids.

"I was looking forward to going back to Camp Verde, Arizona, for my little sister's birthday and to visit the family," said Pfc. Kenyon Evans, a rifleman with Co. B, TF 1-27 Inf.

"But it's part of the job," Evans said.

With Iraq's first democratic election coming up on Jan. 30, these experienced Soldiers of the 2nd BCT will play a vital role in their area, which was the main reason for the extension.

"The reality is that we are the best unit to be able to handle this area at the time of elections because we know it so well," Miles said.

Hillier agreed by saying, "I think it's good that we have extra troops here for the simple fact that there's probably going to be a lot of problems because of the different ethnicities."

The area that 2nd BCT covers stretches from the border of Iran to the Tigris River at the tip of the Sunni Triangle. The region is made up of Kurds, Arabs, Turkomen and Assyrians.

The Kurds and Arabs have a long, troubled history that will take time to resolve.

"The elections will be a very important part of this country's march toward a democratic form of government," Miles said.

"Of course, I would rather be home with my little boy but I also know the mission and to get it right is very important not only to the Iraq government but to our government and the international community," Miles said.

Over the past year, 2nd BCT Soldiers have conducted difficult missions in hopes of bridging the gap between Iraqis.

"I am real proud of the job we've done till now," Miles said. "It really brings a tear to your eyes to watch [2nd BCT Soldiers] in action, day after day, and the sacrifices they make."

"I suspect that it is a similar feeling of pride and sacrifice being made by family members back home," he said.

Support from families and friends to their loved ones and the Soldiers that are over here has been very important, Miles said.

"Hopefully, they will con-

tinue that level of support until our Soldiers come home."

But as of right now, there is no definite answer of when 2nd BCT Soldiers will come home.

"So much of it is based upon what happens during the time of the elections and how soon we can transition afterwards," Miles said. "We all suspect a spike in violence [during the elections], whether it will be true or not, it's anybody's guess."

Beyond the extension, families may wonder how the extra months deployed will affect, if at all, their assignments, pay, or other personnel-related actions.

Maj. Brigitte Williams, 25th Infantry Division (Light) assistant chief of staff for personnel, said impacts will be minimal.

"Stabilization is the Soldier's right, and they cannot be moved until after the 90-day stabilization period or unless they ask for a waiver to leave earlier," Williams said.

Some reasons Soldiers might ask for an extension include assignments, personal issues such as the Soldier's family is on the mainland already, or retirement.

## Two Schofield Soldiers killed

25th ID (L) Public Affairs Release

The Department of Defense announced the death of two 25th Infantry Division (Light) Soldiers last week.

Spc. Isaac E. Diaz, 26, of Rio Hondo, Texas died Dec. 1 in Sharona, Afghanistan from non-hostile injuries sustained when his vehicle was involved in a rollover while on patrol.

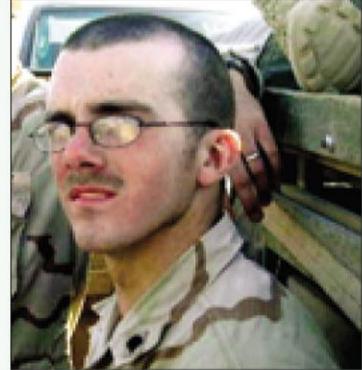
Diaz, an Infantryman, enlisted in the Army in Aug. 1998. He was assigned to Company Bravo, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division (Light) in Oct. 2001. He is survived by his wife Amber and son Aaron, 3.

Spc. David P. Mahlenbrock, 20, of Maple Shade, N.J., died Dec. 3 in Kirkuk, Iraq, when he was clearing a route and an improvised explosive device detonated. Mahlenbrock was assigned to the 65th Engineer Battalion, 25th Infantry Division (Light), Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

Mahlenbrock, a combat engineer, enlisted in the Army in October 2002. He was assigned to Bravo Company, 65th Engineer Battalion, 25th Infantry Division (Light) in February 2003. He is survived by his wife Melissa.

Prayer services are pending and both incidents are under investigation.

(Editor's Note: See articles about the memorial services for Diaz, McMahon, Miller and Grogan on pages A-3 and A-5.)



Spc. David P. Mahlenbrock



Spc. Isaac E. Diaz

The Hawaii Army Weekly welcomes letters and commentaries from readers. To submit call the editor at 655-4816 or e-mail editor@hawaiiarmyweekly.com.

The deadline for articles is the Friday prior to the week of publication. Send all articles in Microsoft Word or text format.

# OPINION & COMMENTARY

## Traditions are part of the meaning of Christmas

### Commentary

Lt. Col. Larry Conway  
U.S. Army Garrison, Hawaii

I have simply got to pull out the Advent wreath, that leafy green ring with four candles that acts as a sort of countdown for the Sundays before Christmas. I really do need to pull it out, and it is not because it is that time of year.

Also, I do not need to pull it out because it is something that I am "supposed" to do, since I am a Christian chaplain and do celebrate the birth of Jesus. Rather, I need to pull it out because I need it. Yes, need it, because traditions can do a lot of good for you — just like the Advent wreath does for my family.

Even though I am not deployed and due to PCS in just over a month, the now bare house with its scattering of aloha furniture cries out for me to put out the Advent wreath I saved from the main household shipment.

To put it simply, I need the tradition to help feel the meaning in this particular holiday season.

Why? Because traditions are like good habits, the kind of habits that help us and do not hurt us. They help us to remember past joys and keep a sense of normalcy in stressful times. They can help us capture that holiday spirit that we hear so much about in the stores' audio systems (while we stress ourselves silly buying lots of stuff and worrying if we spent as much on Aunt Sue as we did for Uncle Joe.)

I'm not trying to take a swipe at Santa, but do the people we buy so much for really need all of that stuff ... or even want it?

Traditions, though, can cost nothing and can help us to "know what to do" in situations. They give us ways

that we can clearly communicate what we feel and to recapture those feelings for ourselves on a deeper level. They can also remind us of other, more spiritual and eternal things, which is what the Advent wreath does for me this time of year.

Taking time to thank God for the good things we have had this year, to take the time to pull out and practice family traditions, to go to that worship service like the one that you used to go to in this time of year — these things can help a lot when a member of the family is far away, in a place that is not as safe as we are here.

It is sad but true that holidays can be the worst of times when loved ones are, to quote the old movie, "In harm's way". On the other hand, traditions can go a long way toward maintaining some sense of normalcy for our children as well as for ourselves. In my family we have the tradition of singing a verse when we light the Advent wreath.

It's amazing, but even though my children are now all adults and we are not all together in Hawaii, when the members of my family who are here do this the old tradition still works its power, reminding us of holiday seasons long ago and of what this season is really all about.

Yes, I really do need to get the Advent wreath out tonight for me and my family, to prepare and to celebrate the old, old story about the real meaning of Christmas with me and my family. Also, I humbly suggest that you actively seek out and practice your holiday traditions, or even to make a few new ones.

They can make the abnormal more normal, and help you cope in what is for most of us here in Hawaii a very different holiday season. May God bless you and remind you of His presence and hope in this last month of the year.

## Tree lighting goes back 122 years

### Commentary

Joy Boiselle  
Staff writer

Tree lighting ceremonies are not just a U.S. Army, Hawaii observance. Military communities, deployed units, and cities and towns across the nation and world enact their own versions of this long-standing tradition.

Just, how did the tradition evolve? Historically, records indicate that 16th century Europeans, specifically the Germans, who placed lighted candles on their "Tannenbaum" (German for Christmas tree), established the tradition. Centuries later, electric lights for the tree made their debut in 1882, thanks to an inventor friend of Thomas Edison.

Lighting trees really became popular when mass production of the electric lights began in 1890. By 1900, some stores began using large lighted trees as Christmas displays to draw customers.

Our nation can trace the first large scale tree lighting meant to be an expression of the holiday season and Christmas spirit to the White House in 1923. President Calvin Coolidge lit a 48-foot pine tree on the White House lawn and

thus, the National Tree Lighting Ceremony tradition was born.

Since 1923, the ceremony expanded and now, is the Christmas Pageant of Peace. Each year since 1954, trees symbolizing every state as well as the National Christmas tree are decorated and lit by the serving President.

In 1978, a Colorado blue spruce planted in the lawn of the White House became the first living National Christmas tree and today still stands, ready for its annual mission. This year, the National Ceremony took place on Dec. 4, with more than 75,000 lights adorning the national tree and 56 others.

Military units adopted the tree lighting ceremony as a way to bring unity and the Christmas spirit to their Soldiers and their families serving throughout the world. At Schofield Barracks, the Christmas tree ceremony took place at the division's headquarters at Fernandez Hall until the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the nation. The tree used still stands on the right side of the building near the flagpole.

The new location since 2001 is at Generals Loop in front of Quarters 227, the Commanding General's home. The solitary Norfolk pine, topping nearly 50-foot, stands in what used to be a reflecting pool and fountain used until the 1960's. Today, it takes an 8-man crew nearly 24 hours spread over three days



Courtesy Tropic Lighting Museum

A lit tree stands outside the Wolfhound's quad on Christmas Day in 1940. The tree lighting tradition continues to this day.

to ready the tree and surrounding displays for the big day.

The tree lighting ceremony is one of the most beloved of all holiday traditions. For many, it heralds the start of the Christmas season and represents the start of family traditions that make Christmas time special.

## Beasts buckle down for extension

### Commentary

Capt. Matt Marbella  
1st Bn. 62nd Air Defense Artillery

Beast Battery Families and Friends, As you might have heard by now, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld announced that several units in Iraq will have their tour of duty extended due to ongoing combat operations. This announcement extended Beast Battery, 1-62 ADA past the scheduled one year redeployment mark into 2005.

At 8 p.m. last night, I gathered the battery and personally told my brave young warriors our new redeployment date. As expected, a few heads hung low.

I told them, "Our nation is calling upon us to fight beyond our scheduled redeployment date. The Army is not for the weak and faint hearted. If that [extension date] is the road to home, let's attack it head-on with renewed vigor and not fail the American people to whom we swore to support and defend."



Courtesy photo

Battery B, 1-62nd ADA runs five miles to celebrate the half-way deployment mark in June. In 120 degree weather, the CO wore the vest to prove he wasn't too hot!

Afterwards I told them, "Beast, you have 10 seconds to scream, whine, and complain at the top of your lungs." They let off a loud and thunderous war cry that echoed across the entire camp.

To my amazement a few yelled, "Too Easy." When the 10 seconds were over,

these selfless warriors picked up their rifles, put their warfaces back on, and went back to the business of defending everything we cherish as Americans.

I told them to call home and let their loved ones know. I'm certain tears were shed as their spouses, parents, and children heard the news over the phone. Nevertheless, I'm comforted by the fact that just like us Soldiers, our Army families are just as resilient. Army wives are a special breed. They are one of a kind.

Team, the true measure of a man (or an Army family) is not during times of comfort and convenience but rather during times of challenge and difficulty.

Your service to our nation has exceeded all measures of dedication and selfless service. America is grateful for the sacrifices its troops and their families make while our nation is at war. You're an embodiment of everything that is good and noble as Americans. Thank you for your patriotism and love for our country.

God bless all of you and God bless America. Holding freedom's frontline — Iraq

## Voices of Lightning

What would you like to say to your loved ones this holiday season?



"Keep your head up and stay safe and hurry home baby because I miss you."



"Hi Derek, I miss you. Merry Christmas and I can't wait until you come home. I love you."



"Happy holidays daddy. I love you and miss you and I wish you could be here."



"Hi David, I love you and have a Merry Christmas."



"I love you daddy. Merry Christmas."



"I love you and miss you, and where is my diamond bracelet?"

Varonica Johnson  
Family member

Melanie Poole  
Family member

Rhian Alvarez, age 4  
Family member

Samantha Melton  
Family member

Scarlett Davis, age 3  
Family member

Carina Arroyo  
Family member

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Layout  
Sueann Carter

Editorial Office: 655-4816/8728  
Fax: 655-9290

E-mail: e-mail the HAW direct at editor@hawaiiarmyweekly.com or ed.aber-song@schofield.army.mil  
Address: Public Affairs Office  
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# Wolfhounds remember fallen comrade

By Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen  
CTF Thunder Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE ORGUN-E, Afghanistan – Cpl. Isaac Diaz didn't have to be in the Humvee. In fact, he didn't even have to leave the base.

As an armorer, Diaz spent most of his days in the company's arms room ensuring all of the company's weapons were accounted for and maintained.

However, after expressing a desire to get "outside the wire," Diaz was switched to a turret gunner on a Humvee.

Diaz's enthusiasm eventually cost him his life.

The 26-year-old Rio Hondo, Texas, native was killed Nov. 30 when his Humvee rolled over during a routine patrol about one kilometer south of Sharana, Afghanistan.

Diaz was born on July 3, 1978, and joined the Army in August 1998. He was assigned to Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, in August 2001 where he was a member of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment.

Spc. John Kelly, a friend from Company B, said he got to know Diaz about a year and a half ago when his wife and Diaz's wife became close friends and decided the two Soldiers needed to become friends as well.

Kelly said he was apprehensive to hang out with Diaz at first, but the first night the two couples got together, they sat out on Kelly's back porch until 2 a.m., talking and playing cards.

The next time Kelly's wife said the Diaz's were coming over for a barbecue, Kelly said he was excited.

"Isaac was a great guy to hang out with," Kelly said. "It became a regular occurrence – Isaac and his family were always at my house, and we always had a good time."

Kelly said his favorite memory of Diaz was after he had a few too many drinks, he turned on my wife's karaoke machine and started singing Shania Twain's "Man, I Feel Like A Woman."

"He must have sang that song for two hours, recording himself and making us listen to it," Kelly said. "My friend was a great guy, but he couldn't sing."

Capt. John Sego, commander of Co. B, 2nd Bn., 27th Inf. Rgt., said Diaz pos-

Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen

**Capt. John Sego, commander of Co. B, 2nd Bn., 27th Inf. Rgt., talks to the Soldiers of his company following a memorial service for Cpl. Isaac Diaz Dec. 5 at Forward Operating Base Orgun-E, Afghanistan.**

sessed the qualities all Soldiers strive for, and he was always in a good mood and quick with a joke.

"Sometimes I would ask him to do something, and he would take off running to accomplish it before I had the opportunity to finish explaining what needed to be done," Sego recalled.

Sego said during the first couple months in Afghanistan, Diaz was responsible for establishing the company arms room. Diaz never complained once, but Sego said he could tell Diaz was getting restless.

Someone told Sego that Diaz wanted to get outside the wire, so Sego made Diaz his gunner.

"Over the next few months he endured countless hours patrolling across the countryside on rough terrain in harsh weather and with the imminent threat of enemy attack," Sego said. "But his spirit never faltered, and the rest of us drew courage from him."

Spc. James Dufoe, another friend in the company, said he knew Diaz since he arrived in Hawaii and recalled Diaz as "a good friend who was always ready to crack a joke when you were down or upset."

Dufoe said Diaz took on the job of gunner in the commander's truck without complaining, and he stayed in the turret, often refusing to take breaks until the mission was complete.

"He was the first line of defense, keeping an eye out for any enemy and giving the commander the security he needed to run the company during ground movement," Dufoe said.

Dufoe said Diaz was fond of playing pranks on his friends, like dousing them with water when they weren't looking and taking all the furniture in the room and stacking it on one of their beds.

"Some of his jokes were only funny to him, but he would keep at it until he got a laugh out of us," Dufoe said.

Diaz is survived by his wife, Amber, and son, Aaron.



## Briefs

**Army Family Team Building's 10th Birthday Celebration** – There will be an open house on Thursday, Dec. 16 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Army Community Service, Schofield Barracks. The AFTB mission is to educate and empower members of the military community to develop skills and encourage behaviors that strengthen self-reliance, promote retention, and enhance readiness.

There are three different levels of AFTB and each level addresses a different topic or theme, and increases from a general overview to more advanced issues. Classes are open to active duty, Reserve, National Guard, retirees, D.A. civilians, and family members.

Everyone can benefit from attending classes. In addition to gaining life and job skills, Soldiers can earn promotion points, and family members can learn how to function more effectively in their communities. It's also a place to meet people. For more information, call 655-3054 or visit AFTB on the Web at [www.mwrarmy-hawaii.com](http://www.mwrarmy-hawaii.com)

**Race Hawaii Teams Wanted** – On Dec. 19 at Kuoloa Ranch, Adventure Race Hawaii is hosting the Sprint Adventure Race #2. The four to six hour race consists of hiking, mountain biking, kayaking or one-person canoeing, ropes, rappelling, a mystery team builder, and an environmental project.

Teams of two or four people will be provided with a map and coordinates. Using their navigation skills each team will be required to find these locations in a prescribed order. Also known as eco-challenge, this is one of the fastest growing sports in the world and Hawaii is the

perfect location for a race.

To encourage military participation in the Dec. 19 race, Adventure Race Hawaii will sponsor a two-person military team from each military installation on Oahu. This sponsorship includes waiving race entry and clinic fees. Also a free ropes and rappelling clinic will be offered to all U.S. service members this Sunday at Kailua beach park at 1 p.m. E-mail: [info@adventureracehawaii.com](mailto:info@adventureracehawaii.com), call John O'Malley at 234-1197 (after 5 p.m.) or call 591-9839.

Certification in Rope Skills (rappelling) and Water Skills (kayaking, canoeing) are required for the race, but ARH has organized training clinics to help competitors prepare. Mountain Bike and Navigation Skills (using topographical maps) clinics are also available.

There are minimal gear requirements for safety, but all of these items are being offered at a discount at the ARH retail outlet at 330 Cooke Street, in downtown Honolulu. All team members completing the ropes must have climbing gear, however not all members are required to complete the ropes. Each team must also have one survival gear kit.

Race categories are military, mixed teams, men, women, and family teams. At the end of the race there will be an awards party, live music, food and beverages.

For more information and clinic dates visit [www.adventureracehawaii.com](http://www.adventureracehawaii.com).

**AAFES Main Gas Station Lanes to Close on Schofield Barracks** – Due to surface seal coating at the gas station near Foote Gate, three lanes will close Dec. 9-23 during the weekdays. On weekends, all lanes will remain open. For more

## Wheeler's tree



Joy Boisselle

**An elf scurries up a ladder as he decorates the Wheeler Army Air Field Christmas tree. This display and others are located at the front gate entrance to WAAF.**

information contact Terry Lopez at 656-2914, ext. 3037.

**Ohana Day 2004** – Join us in showing support and appreciation for the families of deployed U.S. military personnel on Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Army National Guard Aviation Hangar on Wheeler Army Air Field. Open to all active duty, Guard, and Reserve families with a deployed service member. Meet Gov. Linda Lingle, Santa, live music and more.

**Protestant Women of the Chapel Meetings** – PWOC welcomes all military spouses to their weekly Bible Study and time of fellowship. Meetings are held

each Tuesday morning at 9 a.m. in the sanctuary of the Schofield Barracks Main Post Chapel. Pre-arranged onsite child care is provided. A supervised homeschool room is also provided. For more information contact Effie at 624-8251. For child care contact Sonya at 455-4011.

**Smoking Cessation Course Now Available** – What happens when you quit taking in nicotine from smoking and chewing tobacco? – Within 30 minutes of quitting, the pulse slows down and blood pressure drops towards normal rates. Within eight hours, the level of carbon monoxide in the blood drops, enabling it to

carry more oxygen. Within 48 hours, the nerve endings begin to recover and sense of smell and taste begin to return. Within 72 hours, the bronchial tubes of the lungs expand and the lung volume increases.

Within a month, shortness of breath diminishes. Within a year, risk for a heart attack attributed to smoking declines for both men and women. After two to three years, the risk of heart attack is virtually gone. After 10 years, the risk for developing cancer is about the same as for non-smokers. Don't let nicotine control you.

Smoking Cessation Course now available at the Community Health Nursing in Building 673 2nd floor on Schofield Barrack. Call 433-8675 for more information.

**Hui O' Wahine Scholarships Available** – The spouses' club serving Fort Shafter, Tripler Army Medical Center and Camp Smith, is offering three scholarships this year. Applications are available at the Fort Shafter Thrift Shop and Fort Shafter Library.

The following scholarships are available: one scholarship up to \$1,000 for a high school senior who is a child of a current club member, one scholarship up to \$1,000 for a high school senior who is a child of an Army (active duty, Reserve, Guard, or retired) service member living in Hawaii, and one continuing education scholarship up to \$1,000 for a current club member. The scholarships are for the 2005-2006 academic year.

Rules and applications can be picked up at the Fort Shafter Thrift Shop on Tuesdays and Fridays, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and at the Fort Shafter Library. Completed applications are due Feb. 15. For more infor-

mation contact Barbara Davis at 845-2036 or [barb-davis@verizon.net](mailto:barb-davis@verizon.net).

**Ten Steps To Federal Employment Workshop** – Interested in obtaining Federal employment? Learn about understanding job vacancy announcements, writing your federal and electronic resumes and tracking your applications. This workshop will be held on Wednesday, Jan. 12 at Army Community Service, Fort Shafter, and on Thursday, Jan. 13 at ACS, building 2091, Schofield Barracks.

Both workshops are 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. To register, call Fort Shafter at 438-2395 or Schofield Barracks at 655-2400.

**Hui O'Na Wahine Monthly Luncheon** – The Hui O'Na Wahine of Schofield Barracks will hold its monthly luncheon on Thursday, Dec. 16 at the Nehelani Club. Cost for the luncheon is \$12. Doors will open at 10:30 a.m. for shopping; lunch is at 11 a.m.

To become a vendor call Amy Snyder at 624-4989. For reservations call Judi Rossi at 778-3704. Limited onsite child care will be provided. Call central registration at 655-3929 or 655-5314 to make a reservation.

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**Blood Donations Needed** – The Tripler Army Medical Center Blood Donor Center is located on the hospital's second floor, Oceanside and is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Call 433-6148.

# Fallen comrades remembered in Afghanistan

By Staff Sgt. Terry Welch  
105th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Service members and civilians here held an emotional memorial service Saturday for six men killed when their plane crashed in the mountains near Bamian. The service was held at Bagram Air Field's Enduring Faith Chapel.

Lt. Col. Michael McMahon, Chief Warrant Officer Travis Grogan and Spc. Harley D. Miller, all members of 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, were killed when the CASA-212 aircraft crashed Nov. 27. Three civilians were also killed.

Col. B. Shannon Davis, commander of Combined Joint Task Force 76's Task Force Wings, spoke about the Soldiers his task force had lost. "They were all truly selfless Soldiers with extraordinary courage, who cared deeply for those around them and believed courageously in what they were doing here in Afghanistan," he said.

The Bagram site manager for Blackwater aviation, Paul Hooper, remembered his company's men as well. "We like to feel that our support of Operation Enduring Freedom will aid in our country's efforts to share our love of freedom with the Afghan people," he said. "To have such noble efforts marred by the deaths of these fine men is a tragedy beyond my words to express."

After the two men spoke, a cavalry Soldier recited the words to a traditional cavalry song, "Fiddler's Green," which speaks of a place "halfway down the trail to Hell" where "the shades of cavalymen dismount."

Following the reading, each man was eulogized by a friend and co-worker. Maj. Monty Willoughby, executive officer of 3/4 Cavalry, remembered McMahon – his commander – as a man who never gave up on either his mission or his Soldiers.



Staff Sgt. Terry Welch

**A Soldier salutes the memorial display of his fallen comrades. During the memorial, Chaplain Brian Simoneaux delivered a meditation on the lives and service of the fallen Soldiers and civilians. "They died with their boots on," he said. "That is, they died performing their mission."**

"I can tell you more than once he was the man who championed the cause of the underdog or the less fortunate. He was the one that gave many Soldiers another chance," he said. "The sergeant major and I, we thought we had the answer and we went to the commander and he said, 'No, we're going to give him one more chance.'"

Willoughby recounted a conversation he'd had with McMahon's wife, Jeanette, who is also an Army helicopter pilot, though she flies CH-47 Chinooks rather than the 3/4 Cavalry's OH-58D Kiowa Warriors. She told him, he said, that her husband was somewhere smiling humbly in the knowledge a Chinook was coming to carry him from the mountainside.

The last time the squadron saw its commander, Willoughby said, was Thanksgiving, when McMahon took part in

squadron sports and served every trooper in the squadron their Thanksgiving dinner. He'd also gotten the chance to speak by phone with his entire family. "As I talked to him later that night...," Willoughby said, "he was truly joyous."

Copies of speeches given at the squadron's memorial in Shindand were read to commemorate the service and lives of Chief Warrant Officer Grogan and Spc. Miller.

Chief Warrant Officer James Galendez wrote about Grogan, a pilot. He recalled both Grogan's quirks – his propensity to mumble when he was excited and his ability to sleep "for 18 hours in 100 degree heat in a crowded tent less than 500 feet from a runway like most of us wish we could sleep in the comfort of our own homes" – and his drive to excel. Grogan had applied to fly in Task Force 160th, which supports special forces. "He had a job to

do and...he was not only going to succeed but he lapped the competition," Galendez wrote. "A pack of Marlboro Lights, a tin of Jelly Bellies and a room temperature Dr. Pepper and this guy was in the groove."

A tribute to Miller, written by Chief Warrant Officer Kevin Knight, was also read. The men wrote of a Soldier who had grown up in adversity but never used his childhood difficulty as an excuse to not succeed. Before his death, he had been in the process of applying to become a warrant officer and helicopter pilot. "Harley Miller came



Staff Sgt. Terry Welch

**Col. B. Shannon Davis touches the dog tags of his friend and comrade Lt. Col. Michael McMahon.**

to this unit and constantly strived to do his best," Knight wrote.

"He never liked being compared to other Soldiers, only the standard. Harley always tried to achieve the standard and I, as well as others who knew him, would say on most occasions that the standard needed to keep up with him."

Miller was a crew chief on an OH-58D and Knight wrote about the first time he ever flew in Miller's helicopter. "When I went to the aircraft there were two bottles of

water in each seat, along with a breakfast bar and muffin. When I asked him who those were for, he looked at me like I was crazy, as if this was the standard, and replied, 'Sir, those are for you and your other pilot. Please be safe and I'll see you when you return.'"

The plane's civilian crewmembers – Noel English, a native of Emory Miss.; Loren Hammer of Redmond, Ore.; and Melvin Rowe of Tontogany, Oh. – were also eulogized.

# 25th ID Association takes care of its own

By Sharee Moore  
Editor

Riddled with memories from an era long gone, Vietnam veterans from the 25th Infantry Division Association commit themselves to ensuring "invisible heroes" get a proper welcome home.

On a recent visit to Hawaii, Tropic Lightning Association members Tom Jones and David Garrod spoke of the ongoing mission for the division's wounded at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

"The 25th has had Soldiers in World War II, Vietnam, Korea and now in the Middle East, so we have a broad spectrum of interests," began Jones.

"About a month after the deployment - we'd come [to Hawaii] for both deployment ceremonies - and we said we really need to do something for the Soldiers and especially the ones that are injured and coming back to Walter Reed," said Garrod, picking up where Jones left off.

Butch Sincok, an association member, began a letter writing campaign, garnering support from 16 veterans while Joe Finch called number after number trying to make their vision a reality.

Other groups had tried

unsuccessfully for years to gain entry to Walter Reed, but this band of determined veterans, 14 of which wear the Purple Heart Medal, made it work, described Finch.

Once the recreation services office agreed to host a welcome home party, "[We] arrived with a carload of chips, dips, soda, 23 pounds of cookies and cakes from Oregon and a cake with an American flag on it ..." Finch recounted. Since then, it has become a monthly event.

For the party, Eli, an injured Soldier, made his first trip outside the hospital in four months when his parents rolled him outside on a wheeled bed.

Eli displays courage every day as he faces the unspoken question: "will they take my leg today?" explained Finch.

Another Soldier, association members recently visited named Aaron, suffered major leg wounds and extensive surgeries, skin grafts and more. He wore a contraption on his left leg to stabilize the bone.

"He got married at the chapel at Walter Reed and when he pulled up to the door in his wheelchair said out loud, 'I am not rolling up there in this wheelchair, I am walking to my wedding.' He got up out of the wheelchair, and walked to the altar," Finch described.

Finch said there wasn't a

dry eye in the house.

The Tropic Lightning Association sponsors other programs in support of division Soldiers and their families:

- Scholarships
- Anonymous Soldier letter campaign for deployed Soldiers who don't receive mail.
- Care packages
- Aid to Soldiers and families in Hawaii. Requests should be sent through the Association of the U.S. Army.
- Monument to be erected in front of Fernandez Hall. Completion date in 2006 (see editor's note for details).

For Jones, Vietnam experiences triggered the commitment to a program described as, "not for the faint of heart."

"In our era ... people were wounded on the battlefield, people were evacuated and the guys never knew what happened to them," Jones began.

"... For many [veterans], it took them 30 years to find out where that best friend of theirs had ended up ... They don't want this generation to have what happened to them, happen again."

Garrod emphasized that support of division Soldiers is not optional.

"I think it's very important to us that [the wounded] have that welcome home. We have to make sure that they're not



Courtesy photo

From Left: Eli, an injured Soldier, poses with President George Bush, his mother, father and Laura Bush at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

forgotten, that they get the support that a lot of the times we didn't get because of the unpopularity of the Vietnam War.

"We don't want to see that happen and I think each and every one of us, in our own communities, are doing our part to make sure the Soldier is remembered," Garrod said.

"You can hate the war, but

#### See page A-7

For an article about community based programs for injured Soldiers.

#### See page B-4

For an article about enhanced DA and VA benefits for injured Soldiers.

not the warrior."

(Editor's Note: The monument represents the associa-

tion's commitment and gift to the division. The association still needs \$400,000 to complete the project. Donations can be sent Attn: 25th Infantry Division Soldier Monument, P.O. Box 7, Flourtown, Pa. 19031 or call Tom or David at 215-248-2572. E-mail tropiclt@ AOL.com or visit association Web site at www.25thida.com)



## Kids' art featured in readiness group Christmas cards

By Joy Boisselle  
Staff Writer

Family Readiness Groups are busy baking cookies, selling magnets, and wrapping presents, all in an effort to raise funds toward their unit homecoming parties and care

packages for single Soldiers. The 2nd Battalion, 25th Aviation Regiment FRG has elevated their fund raising to an art form - literally.

Recently, the FRG held an art contest for unit children asking them to draw a Christmas themed picture.

The FRG, then, used the drawings to create Christmas cards for fund raising purposes.

A fund raising veteran, Carol Brown, battalion leader and wife of Lt. Col. Steve Brown, unit commander, said, "I was looking for creative

fund raising ideas, and I really love this one because it comes from our children. They are doing something to support the cause (a welcome home luau for families)."

The young artists are Gyllian Katz, 8, Gus Harrington, 11, Elizabeth

Francis, 11, Rachel Francis, 8, Mitch Brown, 7, and Michael Metcalf, 9. Brown said, "All of the kids' dads are deployed to Afghanistan and it's special because they did this for their dads."

Cards come in packs of 12 featuring six designs with an

interior holiday message, with artist and unit information on the card back. Brown said, "We can even customize the packs if someone wanted more of one card than another."

(Editor's Note: Contact Carol Brown at 624-4555 for information. Cards are available through Dec. 22.)



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25th Infantry Division (Light) & United States Army, Hawaii

# TF 2-11 FA donates supplies and desks to Iraqi schools

Sgt. Sean Kimmons  
25th ID (L) Public Affairs

NEAR DIBBIS, Iraq – Soldiers from Battery C, Task Force 2-11 Field Artillery, along with Iraqi Police and Airmen, helped donate school supplies and refurbished desks at two elementary schools in villages outside of Dibbis on Nov. 30.

About 165 school supply bags were handed out between the Qaradara and Baihassan elementary schools. The school supplies were part of an ongoing Operation Crayon mission that 2nd Brigade Combat Team has been carrying out since September.

Airmen who volunteered to help package these bags were invited to hand them out and interact with the Iraqi children. Iraqi Police officers also assisted in this effort.

While at the Baihassan elementary school, the village's sheik expressed his gratitude for the school supply donations.

"I want to say thank you very much to all the families and Soldiers who sent these school supplies to our school," Allw Abdullah said through an interpreter. "Hopefully they will send more supplies to all the schools around Dibbis."

Along with school supplies, 30 refurbished desks were delivered to

the Qaradara elementary school that came from a Btry. C, TF 2-11 FA mission, where they pay local Iraqis to renovate old desks from schools in their area of operations.

"The desks they had before were not suitable for these kids," said Staff Sgt. (P) Kevin Donegan, a platoon sergeant with Btry. C, TF 2-11 FA.

A good desk will give students something to look forward to when they go to school, Donegan added.

It's about a three-day process for the old desks to get repaired and painted before Soldiers can deliver them back to the schools.

These types of operations, in which the Iraqi children benefit, are among the favorites of Btry. C, TF 2-11 FA Soldiers.

"Soldiers like coming out here and dropping off these supplies," Donegan said. "What they get out of it is the satisfaction of knowing that they've done something to help these Iraqi children."

1st Sgt. Chris Rummell, first sergeant for Btry. C, TF 2-11 FA, has even seen his Soldiers spend their own money to get an Iraqi child to smile.

"Every time they go to the PX, they buy hard candy and stuff like that to pass out to the children. They just want to see the smiles from kids' faces," Rummell said.



Sgt. Sean Kimmons

Iraqi children sort through their newly acquired school supplies donated by Btry. C, TF 2-11 FA Soldiers and Iraqi Police at the Baihassan elementary school on Nov. 30.

Rummell and his Soldiers believe if Iraqi children are raised in a better environment, the future of Iraq could be brighter. "I think the only way we can keep them a better way of life," Rummell said.

## More community-based programs to treat injured Soldiers

By Sgt. 1st Class Tammy M. Jarrett  
Army News Service

WASHINGTON – More Soldiers in the Medical Holdover Program may soon be able to receive healthcare in their hometowns as the Army expands the Community Based Health Care Organization program from five to eight organizations.

CBHCOs will open in Virginia and Alabama around Feb. 7 and a third in Utah around March 1, medical officials said during a media roundtable briefing Dec. 2.

The CBHCO program is an integral part of the medical holdover program and was originally started to relieve pressure on medical facilities and installations, said Col. Mike Deaton from the Army Surgeon General Office.

"It is also a means for us to provide care to Soldiers while they live at home and work at nearby military facilities," said Deaton.

The current five programs, operating in Florida, Arkansas, California, Massachusetts and Wisconsin, service a total of 23 states and cares for more than 1,100 Soldiers.

Deaton said the success of the Community Based Health Care Initiative pilot program led to the Army to expand the program to provide regional medical coverage across all 50 states.

"They have evolved from a pilot initiative to be an integral part of the MHO mission," Deaton said. They ensure a high standard of medical care—bottom line, the CBHCO is a success story for the Army, its Soldiers and their families."

Medical holdover Soldiers are mobilized Reserve-component Soldiers who remain on active duty to receive medical treatment.

Deaton said the program is the Army leadership's top priority, and they are continuing to evaluate and improve the program.

"The Army is committed to taking care of its people and to providing the best possible healthcare—regardless of the Soldier's component and regardless of the nature of the illness or injury," said Deaton. "Our Soldiers have volunteered to stand in harms way for our nation and they deserve the best in healthcare."

One such Soldier is Spc. Logan G. Brown, who received multiple injuries July 22 when his convoy was ambushed in Iraq July 22. Brown received emergency

surgery and eventually sent back to Fort Hood. The El Dorado, Ark., native now receives his care at CBHCO at Camp Robinson, Ark. He said when he returned from his 30-day convalescent leave from Fort Hood, his paperwork had been processed.

Nearly 800 additional physicians, nurses, clerks, and case managers have been hired or mobilized to help with the MHO mission. Based on projections from the

Army Medical Department, the Army anticipates a peak of about 6,500 MHO patients between now and January. Once all the CBHCOs are fully open for business, future MHO Soldiers will be afforded opportunity to use them instead of military installations.

The "saturation point" for the first [CBHCOs] was a capacity of 300. This has been expanded to 500 and additional manpower was

mobilized to support them, said Col. Kevin Garroutte, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. He said because all the personnel are mobilized, they can be moved around to other organizations if needed.

A \$23 million budget for next year has been set aside to run the CBHCOs, said Col. Barbara Scherb, who manages the program from Forces Command.

# Armed robots soon marching to battle?

By Sgt. Lorie Jewell  
Army News Service

ORLANDO, Fla. – Soldiers may have armed robots as battle buddies by early next year, according to industry and military officials attending the biennial Army Science Conference.

The Special Weapons Observation Reconnaissance Detection System, or SWORDS, will be joining Stryker Brigade Soldiers in Iraq when it finishes final testing, said Staff Sgt. Santiago Tordillos, a bomb disposal test and evaluation NCOIC with the EOD Technology Directorate of the Army's Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center at Picatinny Arsenal, N.J.

"We're hoping to have them there by early 2005," Tordillos said. "The Soldiers I've talked to want them yesterday."

The system consists of a weapons platform mounted on a Talon robot, a product of the engineering and technology development firm Foster-Miller. The Talon began helping with military operations in Bosnia in 2000, deployed to Afghanistan in early 2002 and has been in Iraq since the war started, assisting with improvised explosive device detection and removal. Talon robots have been used in about 20,000 missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, according to Foster-Miller reports.

"It's not a new invention, its just bringing together existing systems," said Tordillos, who has been involved with the project since its inception about a year and a half ago.

Different weapons can be interchanged on the system – the M16, the 240, 249 or 50-caliber machine guns, or the M202 –A1 with a 6mm rocket launcher. Soldiers operate the SWORDS by remote control, from up to 1,000 meters away. In testing, it's hit bulls eyes from as far as 2,000 meters away, Tordillos said. The only margin of error has been in sighting, he added.

"It can engage while on the move, but it's not as accurate," Tordillos said.

The system runs off AC power, lithium batteries or Singars rechargeable batteries. The control box weighs about 30 pounds, with two joysticks that control the robot platform and the weapon and a day-light viewable screen.

SWORDS recently was named one of the most amazing inventions of 2004 by Time Magazine.

There are four SWORDS in existence; 18 have been requested for service in Iraq, Tordillos said. So far, each system has cost about \$230,000 to produce, said Bob Quinn, lead integrator for the project. When they go into production, Quinn estimates the cost per unit will drop to the range of \$150,000 to \$180,000.

Quinn credits Soldiers with getting the project started.

"It's a classic boot-strap effort," said Quinn.

Tordillos fielded a variety of questions while showing off the system in the exhibit hall. Soldiers wanted to know what military occupational speciality they have to sign up for in order to work with the system. There is no specific MOS for it, he said.

Other questions were more thought provoking. Does he envision a day when armed robots outnumber humans on the battlefield? Tordillos firmly said no.

"You'll never eliminate the Soldier on the ground," he said. "There'll be a mix, but there will always be Soldiers out there."

Sgt. Lorie Jewell

**With a weapons platform mounted to a Talon robot, the SWORDS system allows Soldiers to fire small arms weapons by remote control from as far as 1,000 meters away. The system, demonstrated this week at the biennial Army Science Conference, may soon join Soldiers in Iraq.**



# Air assets keep troops moving, supplied

By Spc. Dijon Rolle  
17th Public Affairs Det.

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – Moving troops and equipment to the battlefield quickly and effectively is an important part of any successful combat operation.

Aviators from Task Force Diamondhead are helping to ensure the success of the coalition by providing air support for various missions throughout the southern region of Afghanistan.

This support often comes in the form of air assault missions, during which aviation assets are used to rapidly insert ground troops and equipment into remote locations. The air support can also be in the form of resupply.

Regardless of the specific task, each mission is a carefully orchestrated operation between Task Force Diamondhead and the requesting unit. Air support has proven itself to be faster and more effective than ground convoys for deployed troops serving across Afghanistan.

“Here in Afghanistan, the majority of the movement that we do is by aircraft,” said Maj. Robert Ault, Task Force Diamondhead Operations officer. “The distances here are pretty great and Afghanistan doesn’t always have the highway infrastructure system or roads to be able to move around.”

“If you want to move large concentrations of Soldiers, troops or supplies, or evacuate personnel, we rely on aircraft to do that – and that’s where Task Force Diamondhead comes in.”

A major benefit of using air assets to move troops and supplies is the added safety. The aircraft lands just long enough to drop off personnel and equipment, before leaving the area.

“We can move them in



Soldiers from Co. A, 2nd Bn., 35th Inf. Rgt., rush away from an aircraft during a combat air assault.

Spc. Dijon Rolle

quickly and move them out a lot quicker than you can on a ground convoy,” said Staff Sgt. Deddra French, Task Force Diamondhead operations non-commissioned officer. “It’s a lot easier to move a larger amount with the aircraft than with the convoy, and we can use the element of surprise with the air assault.”

Soldiers said they are also pleased with the benefits of the air assault.

“With the air assault, we can

position troops better and there’s less (of a risk),” said Spc. Tambouzi Green, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, team leader. “It positions me with my team and helps me to maneuver better with them on the battlefield. Once we land, we have a better idea of what needs to be done and where we need to go.”

Air assault missions not only insert ground troops directly into a desired location, but supplies and equipment as

well.

“As infantry, we’re already carrying a lot of gear,” said Staff Sgt. Kenrick Rampersad, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, squad leader. “This makes it a little easier for us to move our Soldiers and all of our equipment from one point to another. We can fit a whole platoon in

one Chinook.”

After the initial air assault mission is complete, the aircraft often makes a second trip to the area to drop off supplies like food, water and fuel that ground troops will need to successfully accomplish their mission.

“It aids the commander and his decision making

process, and allows him to move personnel and equipment around the battlefield more effectively,” said Staff Sgt. Bruce Bryant, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Bn., 35th Inf. Rgt., support platoon sergeant. “This helps us accomplish our mission and meet the commander’s intent.”

# Pearl Harbor Day: remembering the attacks on U.S. forces

Story by Heike Hasenauer  
Soldiers Magazine

The golden sun sparkling on the Pacific Ocean heralded a new day – Sunday, Dec. 7, 1941 – on the tropical paradise of Oahu, Hawaii.

Many of the 43,000 Soldiers stationed there – among them 35,000 men of the 24th and 25th Infantry divisions, and some 8,000 Army Air Corps personnel at Hickam, Wheeler and Bellows fields – slept in.

Two hundred and twenty miles north of Oahu, 352 warplanes of the Imperial Japanese Navy readied for takeoff. It was 6 a.m. The tremendous blow to U.S. forces in the Pacific would draw America into World War II.

The relentless bombing and strafing of the fleet anchored at Pearl Harbor and Ford Island disabled or sank 18 vessels, including the USS Arizona with 1,177 men aboard and the USS Oklahoma with more than 400 men aboard. All 1,577 men died in the attacks.

But the devastation wasn't confined to the U.S. Pacific Fleet or Pearl Harbor. Some of the Japanese



Army photo

**Japanese attackers swooped down and blasted the neatly parked American planes. Dec. 7 commemorates Pearl Harbor Day.**

planes struck the Army garrison at Schofield Barracks, where the headquarters of the 24th Inf. Div. was located, and attacked Hickam, Wheeler, Ewa and Bellows fields.

Thirty-three Americans died at Wheeler, 75 were wounded and nearly half of the P-40 fighters on

the ground were destroyed.

Shortly after the first bombs fell at Wheeler, 2nd Lts. Ken Taylor and George Welch radioed Haleiwa Field, to learn that the field had not yet been attacked. They raced from Wheeler to Haleiwa, jumped into their P-40 fighters and together

shot down six Japanese fighters.

A dozen U.S. planes managed to get off the ground before the attack was over, and the U.S. pilots boasted 10 confirmed aerial kills, Higa said.

Taylor, today a retired brigadier general living in Anchorage, Alaska, said officers and enlisted personnel at Wheeler Field "cared for casualties, battled fires, dragged equipment and supplies from burning hangars, and towed undamaged planes to shelter."

Hickam's brand-new, 3,200-man consolidated barracks, then the largest in the Army Air Forces, took several direct hits that killed most of the men on the top floor. And, in the 1,000-man mess hall located in the center of the barracks, 35 men died while eating breakfast.

Retired Air Force Col. Leslie Bratton stationed at Hickam at the time said, "Within 30 minutes after the first attack, by the time I got to the hangars, everybody was doing what they were supposed to do," Bratton recalled. "I didn't see anyone running around with their hands on their heads screaming."

Some 166 civilian employees

reported to Hickam in response to radio appeals to help clear runways, tend to the wounded and help fight fires.

All across the island, Soldiers reacted without hesitation. Hastily organized units from the 24th and 25th Inf. divisions secured defensive positions, with the 25th defending Pearl Harbor and Honolulu.

Altogether, 2,403 U.S. service members were killed, 1,178 were wounded, 188 aircraft were destroyed and 151 were damaged.

By comparison, the Japanese lost 64 men, 20 bombers, nine fighters and all five of the "secret-weapon" midget submarines.

By noon on Dec. 7, the skies quieted and the smoke of burning wreckage dissipated. By Christmas, non-essential personnel had been evacuated to the mainland. Many native Hawaiians fled to the fields and farmlands, and bomb shelters were dug all over the island.

And in the next few years, from December 1941 to June 1945, Army strength in Hawaii swelled from 43,000 to 250,000 troops.

(Editor's Note: This article has been edited from its original version.)

## Soldier thanks supporters for their Afghan school donations

**Commentary**

**Maj. Joseph P. Walsh**  
2nd Bn., 35th Inf. Rgt.

QALAT, Afghanistan – Today was special after having the pleasure of revisiting the women's high school. After my first visit during the presidential elections, I had made some commitments to bring back school supplies, soccer balls and

polling site for more than 3,050 women voters this year and is home to students in 1st through 12th grade.

Today I was introduced to a class of women studying health care who will go on to help approximately 80 people in outer villages. They will assist with basic medical and hygiene care for their respective areas. This is a giant step for the women here. As you can tell by photos included in this story, many Afghan women still

Soccer and Volleyball are sports they enjoy most. Kite flying is popular, but few are available.

Items for donation still readily accepted by the battalion include:

**School supplies:** Note books, pens and pencils.

**Wall maps:** (new idea). Most of the women and men for this matter have very little knowledge of the outside world. Schools that you know of back in the states with old maps would be great donation gifts to the schools here.

**Kites:** The more the merrier. The children love to fly these in the open fields. In the time of the Taliban, kite flying was banned. Today, the activity is slowly coming back.

**Women:** Finger nail polish. This is a big thing. Any old or wild colors you might have received as a gift or thought would look perfect on your hands, but actually doesn't, send the remains this way. The women definitely would appreciate the gesture.

Okay everyone, another day has past and our work is done. Tomorrow the sun will rise and 600 other Soldiers and I from the Cacti Battalion will again venture out into the hinterlands of Zabol Province to ensure the safety and security of the Afghan people is maintained.

God bless, and continue to keep us in your prayers.

(Editor's Note: To make a donation, mail items to Maj. Joe Walsh at HHC, 2-35 IN, APO AE09355)



Courtesy photo

**Students from the women's high school in Qalat, Afghanistan rely on donated school supplies.**

hand-held two-way radios per a request from Ms. Parvin, the school's principal.

The book bags in the pictures contain some of the supplies many of you contributed. The women were amazed and thankful that people, like all of you, so far away, would give freely these needed supplies. Everyone in the classrooms were ecstatic.

Thank you so much for your selfless donations. I know there are more of you who have committed themselves to helping in this cause. If I have missed your names, it is just an oversight on my part; but rest assured, your generous donations of school supplies are reaching the people in need.

The school you contributed to served as the

shroud their faces from being seen.

The school is currently under reconstruction and needs a lot of work. By the Spring, this should be a better facility for educating the woman of Qalat. 2-35 Infantry is going to continue to push school supplies to the teachers along with the possibility of funding some of the courses like math, English and reading.

I promised to return with chalkboards, white boards and clocks for the classrooms. This is easy to acquire and is a quick "bang for the Afghani (buck)" so to speak. The Provincial Reconstruction Team will remain focused on the building construction.

Gym or Recess: Afghan woman are eager to jump into it these new concepts.

## New Army environment strategy based on sustainability

By Joe Burlas  
Army News Service

WASHINGTON – "Mission-based with an eye to the future" is the language officials have used to describe a new Army environment strategy.

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker and then-acting Secretary of the Army Les Brownlee signed the policy, titled "The Army Strategy for the Environment: Sustain the Mission – Secure the Future," Oct. 1.

The new strategy is based on an organizing concept known as sustainability, which requires that the Army move beyond traditional environmental compliance to balance mission requirements, community needs, and natural resource protection. In a letter endorsing the strategy, Schoomaker and Brownlee stated, "We must become systems thinkers if we are to benefit from the interrelationships of the triple bottom line of sustainability: mission, environment, and community."

For decades, the Army's environment policy has been to meet legal standards set by the Environmental Protection Agency and those set by state and local laws, according to George Carellas, the assistant for Sustainability within the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Installations and



Environment. Carellas helped lead the development of the new policy.

"The old strategy was managing the environment as an independent function at the installation -- its own separate entity, often apart from other installation activities, Carellas said. The new strategy makes sustaining the environment an integral part of all installation functions – from planning to execution."

The new strategy does not relieve the Army from its responsibility to comply with environmental law Carellas said, but places heavier emphasis on going beyond compliance by focusing on what the Army can do today to ensure a profitable "triple bottom line."

The new strategy has six goals:

**• Foster a Sustainability Ethic:** Foster an ethic within the Army that takes it

beyond environmental compliance to sustainability.

**• Strengthen Army Operations:** Strengthen Army operational capability by reducing the environmental footprint through more sustainable practices.

**• Meet Test, Training, and Mission Requirements:** Meet current and future training and testing and other mission requirements by sustaining land, air and water resources.

**• Minimize Impacts and Total Ownership Costs:** Minimize impacts and total ownership costs of Army systems, materiel, facilities, and operations by integrating the principles and practices of sustainability.

**• Enhance Well-Being:** Enhance the well-being of Soldiers, civilians, families, neighbors, and communities through leadership in sustainability.

**• Drive Innovation:** Use innovative technology and the principles of sustainability to meet user needs and anticipate future Army challenges.

"The actions that we take today will ultimately determine the success of tomorrow's soldier," Carellas said.

(Editor's Note: For more information on the new Army environment strategy, see [www.asaie.army.mil/Public/IE/default.html](http://www.asaie.army.mil/Public/IE/default.html).)



# COMMUNITY & SPORTS



Friday

B-1

December 10, 2004



1st Lt. Kimberly Luft  
The Santa Train gives families a tour during the Holiday Fun Festival.

# U.S. ARMY HAWAII

*Holiday cheer, activities in abundance this season*

1st Lt. Kimberly Luft  
17th CSB  
Contributing Writer

U.S. Army Hawaii has fanned holiday cheer's flame this season.

Aliamanu Military Reservation put on its annual Holiday Fun Festival at the Community Center Dec. 4.

Organized by the AMR Teen Center and a combination of resource groups, the spirited activities unfolded in the gym, library, youth gym, and outside field. The tempo of the festival was high as music played from the gym speakers and children rushed around, laughing and seeking out all the different displays and games, most likely hosted by an elf or two.

"It is one of those days planned to bring the community of AMR together and highlight the different activities provided at the Community Center," said Shanell Yoza, Program Assistant for school-aged children at AMR.

Entertainment for the day was provided by singer Matt Pablo. A fast-paced double dutch demonstration by The Unique Style also took place in the gym.

Many people came out to see the acts of The Music Works, a rock school for varying instruments and ages, The Movement Company, a dance group, and the Okinawan Kenpo Karate class. All of which are activities the children of the military community can get

involved with.

"These are more examples of community service. The kids can have something to do on the weekends and have some fun," said Gaylyn Hoshide, Youth Sports Director at Fort Shafter.



1st Lt. Kimberly Luft

**Matty Wise a.k.a Santa asks Ashlyn Jones, Danielle Hall, and Devin Hall what they want for Christmas this year**

One of the hot spots during the day was the youth gym which had inflatables and bouncers set up. Children were also treated to photos with Santa on the gym stage. Holiday arts and crafts ranged from ornament and tree decorating to a face painting booth hosted by the Pentagon Federal Credit Union. Yet there was still more to choose from.

Children also had a wide variety of game booths to test their skills and earn holiday prizes. The present pyramid knock-down and the basketball shoot-out were a couple of the favorites. "It is a great chance to get the kids out of the house and away from the X-box," said Staff Sgt. Clarence Toussaint, 95th Maintenance Company, and busy father of four.

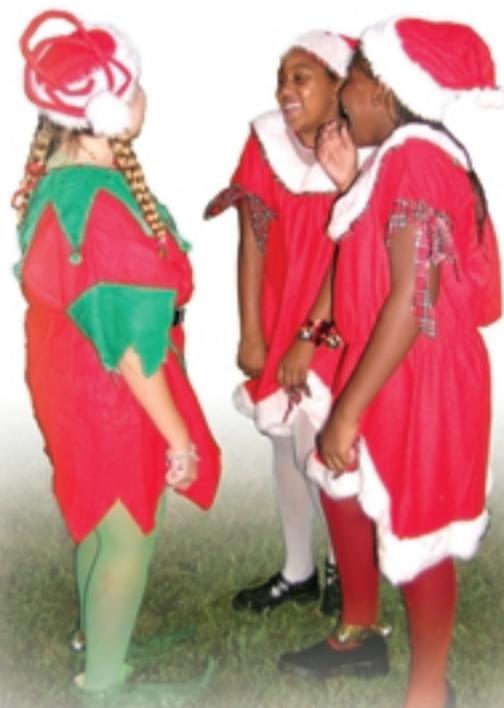
Outside on the field, the fun continued. Holiday races and relays took place, along with an obstacle course to run through. The big draw, however, was the Santa 4-wheeler train which pulled children and their parents on a path out and around the field.

For a Christmas decoration tour, drive through Schofield Barracks to see the calling cards on display outside Macomb Gate.

For spectacular night light views, also visit Wheeler Army Air Field, Fort Shafter and Aliamanu Military Reservation after dark.

This promises to be a busy and exciting season full of holiday activities and spirit for the community to enjoy.

*(Editor's note: See page A-4 for a sneak peak of Wheeler's lighted tree and scurrying elf display. Turn to page A-6 for information on the holiday schedule. Page B-3 reveals the Schofield Barracks 50-foot Norfolk Pine adorned with 3,300 lights. Christmas cards from Iraq are on the same page.)*



Joy Boiselle

**Christina Barraza, 10, Alea Hamm, 10, and Kadajah Smoots, 11, Solomon Elementary Junior Police Officers, masquerading as Santa's helpers, spread a little holiday cheer at the Schofield Barracks Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony held Dec. 2 at Generals Loop**



Joy Boiselle

**Macomb Street takes on a whole new look over the holidays. "Christmas cards" from units and organizations across post line the entryway. Winners of this year's contest are: First place - C Co., 25th Aviation Regiment, Second Place - 68th Medical Company, and Third place - 556 Personnel Support Battalion.**



1st Lt. Kimberly Luft

**Christina Sando, Branch Manager of the Fort Shafter Pentagon Federal Credit Union, applies a snowman to Eriq Carrasco during the Holiday Fun Festival.**

**Ready 4 Reunion Conference** – Prepare yourself for reunion by participating in a conference with numerous seminars offered Saturday, 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the Nehelani on Schofield Barracks. Interact in a panel discussion with the instructors and listen to featured

speaker, Dr. John Covey. Register today, spaces are limited. Registration is also taken online at [www.mwrarmyhawaii.com](http://www.mwrarmyhawaii.com). There is a \$5 registration fee which is payable at the door. Fee includes cost of water and coffee in classrooms as well as lunch. Free child care is available to all Blue Star Card holders by calling 655-3929.

**Kalakaua Pro Shop Sale and Course Closure** – Major deals and discounts at the Kalakaua Golf Pro Shop until Dec. 31, when the course closes. Look for information about Kalakaua II in 2005 Call 655-9833.

**Looking for That Perfect Gift?** – MWR has many ideas for that special someone. The Tropics, building 589, Schofield Barracks, has Tropic Lightning Travel Mugs or Tropic Lightning Coffee. Call 655-0002 for more information. At Information, Ticketing, and Registration, purchase the 2005 Entertainment book for \$30. Call Schofield Barracks ITR at 655-9971 or Fort Shafter ITR at 438-1985. Can't make a choice? Purchase a gift certificate at any MWR facility.

**Army Mini-Sports Baseball Registration** – Register your child, born in 2000 or 2001, at any Youth Sports Office to learn baseball fundamentals until Dec. 28. Cost is \$10 and includes a T-shirt. Programs conducted at Bennett Youth Center Field and Aliamanu Baseball Fields, and run from Jan. 4 - Feb. 24. Call the nearest Youth Sports Office for more information.

**MWR Holiday Hours** – The Child and Youth

Services Branch will close on Dec. 24, 25, 31 and Jan. 1 and 2. The Schofield Barracks and Aliamanu Teen Centers will be open on Jan. 1 from 1 – 8 p.m. All Community Recreation Division facilities will close on Dec. 25 and Jan. 1, except for the Pet Kennel, which will be open on those dates from

9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. MWR facilities may change or alter hours during the holiday season. Contact the specific facility for more information.  
**Commissary Scholarship Program** – A \$1,500 scholarship is open to single persons under the age of 21 (23 if enrolled in school) of active duty, reserve, guard and retired military. Applicants must plan to attend or already attend an accredited college or university full time for the fall term of 2005. Applications available at the Commissary Administration Office, Mon – Fri, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Submission deadline is Feb. 16. For information, call 655-2263.

**Information, Ticketing and Registration Grand Opening** – The Schofield Barracks Information, Ticketing and Registration office will be located at Flagview Mall beginning Dec. 13. Join us for a celebration on Dec. 17, 9 a.m. – noon for cake and punch. Enter our prize drawings during normal business hours, Dec. 13 – 16. Winners announced noon on Dec. 17. The new office will be open seven days a week, Mon – Fri, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Sat and Sun, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., closed on holidays. Go to [www.mwrarmyhawaii.com](http://www.mwrarmyhawaii.com)

for pictures of our new location.

**Spouse's Night Out** – An ACS free adults-only program at Schofield Barracks designed to get spouses out of the house every Thursday night from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. for fun and activities. Dec. 16, participate in "Making a Wreath," supplies provided, "Free Art Lesson", Learn to Draw and Sketch, "Create your Own Family Web Page" and "Quilting", supplies needed for table top Christmas tree. Call for details. MWR Blue Star Card holders receive free child care from 6 - 9 p.m. by reservation only at Peterson Child Care Center. Call 655-3929 by noon of the Tuesday before each Thursday event to make child care reservations. Child care reservations can be made two weeks in advance. Pre-registration for classes required, call 655-2736.

**Holiday Lunch Buffet** – Dine on turkey, ham, all-American stuffing, cranberry sauce and more at Reggie's Dec. 17, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Cost is \$8.95 per person. Call 655-0660.

**Breakfast with Santa** – Have a breakfast buffet of pancakes, eggs, sausage, juice and coffee with Santa on Dec. 18, beginning at 10 a.m. at the Tropics on Schofield Barracks. Cost is \$5 for ages 9 and up and \$3 for children ages 8 and under. Have a picture taken with Santa for \$3. Register your child today and receive a special gift from Santa. Call 655-5697 or 655-5698.

**Army Holiday Celebration** – Single Soldiers and Army families are invited to enjoy a free turkey dinner with all the

fixings, spades, free throw basketball, 9-ball tournaments, a visit with Santa, Karaoke contest with a \$100 first place prize, door prizes, train rides and more at the Tropics, Schofield Barracks on Dec. 24, 4 – 8 p.m. Enter to win the Grand Prize of a neighbor island trip with lodging at Kilauea Military Camp for two nights with air for two people. Presents will be distributed to all single Soldiers. Santa will also have presents for registered family members under the age of 18. Registration will be open until 4 p.m. Dec. 22. For a schedule of events and to register, visit the MWR Web site at [www.mwrarmyhawaii.com](http://www.mwrarmyhawaii.com) or call 655-0111, 655-0112.

**Food Donations and Volunteers Needed** – Food donations (desserts) for the Army Holiday Celebration are needed and can be dropped off between 3 – 4 p.m. at the Tropics on Schofield Barracks. Late donations will be accepted. Volunteer servers and turkey roasters are also needed. Call 655-0111 or 655-0112 for information.

**Mililani Craft and Gift Fair Trip** – Receive free transportation from Schofield Barracks Commissary parking lot on Dec. 18, departing 8:30 a.m. and returning 1:30 p.m. Visit over 150 craft and food booths featuring Hawaii's most talented and creative exhibitors. Call 655-0111 or 655-0112 to register.

**Kid's Club at the Tropics** – Held every Wednesday at 2:30 p.m., children can enjoy a variety of activities. On Dec. 15, holiday games and contests, Dec. 22, holiday movies. Register your child today at the Tropics, Schofield Barracks. Cost is \$1 per day. Call 655-8522 or 655-5697.

**Santa at Library** – Santa will be at the Fort Shafter Library on Dec. 14, 3 – 5 p.m. to read stories to children and listen to their holiday requests. Call 438-9521.

**December Food Special at Tropics, Schofield Barracks** – Purchase a sub with your choice of soup for \$5.25. Call ahead to order two large one topping pizzas for \$16.99. Call 655-0002.

**Reggie's Sing for a Free Supper** – Come early on Fridays and win a free dinner. Starts at 6 p.m. Winner will be announced at 7:30 p.m. and regular karaoke begins at 8 p.m. Call Reggie's, Schofield Barracks at 655-0660 for more information.

**Grand Opening Information, Ticketing**

**and Registration** – The Schofield Barracks Information, Ticketing and Registration office will be located at Flagview Mall beginning this Friday. Join us for a celebration on Dec. 17, 10 a.m. – noon for cake and punch. Enter into our prize drawings during normal business hours, until Dec. 16. Winners will be announced noon on Dec. 17. The office will be open seven days a week, Mon – Fri, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Sat and Sun, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. closed on holidays. Go to [www.mwrarmyhawaii.com](http://www.mwrarmyhawaii.com) for updates and pictures of our new location.

**Santa at Library** – Santa will be at the Fort Shafter Library on Dec. 14, 3 – 5 p.m. to read stories to children and listen to their holiday requests. Call 438-9521.

**House your Pet Over the Holidays** – Are you returning to the mainland for the holidays? The MWR Boarding Kennel located at the Halawa State Quarantine site in Halawa can assist housing your pet while you're gone. Kennel is an outdoor facility and is open to cats and dogs only. The cost to board a dog is \$14 per day, second family dog in same kennel, an additional \$10. Cats are \$10 per day, second family cat in the same kennel, \$5 more. Limited spaces are available for eligible patrons who include active duty, DoD civilian, retirees and Reserve personnel. Blue Star Card holders receive 10 percent off. Call 368-3456 for more information.

**Aliamanu and Tripler Aerobic Classes** – Cardio Kickboxing classes will be held at Aliamanu Physical Fitness Center on Tuesday and Thursday at 6 p.m. Step Aerobics with Cardio Kickboxing classes will be held at Tripler Physical Fitness Center every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 4:30 p.m. First class is free, classes thereafter are \$2 or purchase a coupon book for 12 classes for \$11. Call 433-2031 for information.

**Open Recreation Program School-Age Services** – Program is now offering free open recreation care on Saturdays for three hours at the following youth centers: Bennett, Helemano, Aliamanu, and Fort Shafter. Activities include computer lab, sports and crafts, and self-directed games. Participants must be in grades K-5 and be a current member of Child and Youth Services. Reservations must be made 24 hours in advance. Call the nearest center for more information.



**Sgt. Smith Theater**

Today  
**The Grudge**  
7 p.m. (PG-13)

Saturday Dec. 11  
**I Heart Huckabees**  
7 p.m. (R)

Sunday Dec. 12  
**The Grudge 2**  
7 p.m. (PG-13)

Monday Dec. 12  
**Closed**

Tuesday Dec. 13  
**Closed**

Wednesday Dec. 14  
**Closed**

Thursday Dec. 15  
**Closed**

**Hickam AFB Movie Schedule**

Today  
**Ray**  
7 p.m. (PG-13)

Saturday Dec. 11  
**The Incredibles**  
2 p.m. (PG)

Saturday Dec. 11  
**Ray**  
7 p.m. (PG)

Sunday Dec. 12  
**The Incredibles**  
2 p.m. (PG-13)

Monday Dec. 13  
**Closed**

Tuesday Dec. 14  
**Closed**

Wednesday Dec. 15  
**Alfie**  
7 p.m. (R)

Thursday Dec. 16  
**Alfie**  
7 p.m. (R)



## HACN TV Schedule | Dec. 10 - Dec. 16

	Morning		
	6:00 Sign on	3:45	OIF Photo Montage 5
	6:30 Fit for Life	3:51	Volunteers
	7:00 Bulletin Board	4:00	Pentagon Channel
	7:30 SHAMU-Wild Babies		
	7:54 Dash and Grab	6:00	Community Focus
	8:00 Pentagon Channel	6:15	Bulletin Board
	9:00 Pentagon Channel	6:44	Army Values - Respect
	10:00 ASAP-Drugs	6:50	OIF Photo Montage 3
	10:30 OIF Photo Montage 7	6:54	Jake Shimabukuro
	10:46 Bulletin Board	7:00	NFL-Tight on the Spiral
	11:30 Hawaii Hidden Beauty, Danger	8:00	Bulletin Board
	11:50 OIF Photo Montage 6	8:47	History of JAG
	12:00 Pentagon Channel	9:00	Anti Terrorism FP
		9:24	Oakland Army Base
		10:00	Youth Protection
		11:00	NFL-'58 Championship Game
		12:17	Bulletin Board
	Afternoon		
	2:02 Hurricane Safety		
	2:25 OIF Photo Montage 2		
	2:30 SHAMU-The Manatee Story		
	3:00 SHAMU-The Sea Turtle Story		
	3:35 OAHU-Aloha Begins		
		Overnight	
		12:51	Pentagon Channel



Staff Sgt. Mariano Hoffpauir

The Schofield Barracks Tree Lighting Ceremony and Concert featured a visit from Santa, holiday goodies and the glow from 3,300 lights on a 50-foot tree Dec. 2.

# Schofield Barracks tree lighting brings holiday spirit, despite rain

Joy Boisselle  
Staff Writer

Not even a cold, chilly, constant rain could dampen the holiday spirit of the nearly 500 revelers who attended the annual Schofield Barracks Tree Lighting Ceremony and Christmas Concert Dec. 2 at Generals Loop.

Armed with umbrellas and jackets to ward off the "wintry" weather, the smiling throng seemed undaunted by the elements. Calling to mind last year's ceremony held under similar circumstances, one person laughingly commented that the rainy weather is now a

blue skies, and warmth. This is a beloved holiday tradition that symbolizes life and hope and is significant to many cultures."

He asked the crowd to share a gift of the season with others. Loneliness he said is easy to feel over the holidays particularly with nearly 15,000 USARHAW Soldiers deployed in harm's way. "Take a message of joy, hope, and giving to all that you meet throughout the season," he asked of the group.

With those words, 13-year-old Victoria L. Coleman pushed the button sending electricity to the 3,300 white and multi-colored lights adorning the 50-

known.

Many organizations provided volunteer support for the evening. One of those on hand to make the evening run smoother was Solomon Elementary School junior police officer, Mikayla Lassiter, 10. "My job as one of Santa's helpers is to ask kids what they want for Christmas and help keep the kids cheered up while they wait to see Santa," she said proudly.

Another helper was Girl Scout Ryan Murphy, 11. She said, "This is pretty cool because everyone comes together and you get to see people you know. It's really neat when they light the tree."

In an informal poll, people were asked, "what is better, the tree lighting or the arrival of Santa?" Although split nearly 50/50 with kids opting for the arrival of the jolly man himself, all said the ceremony just wouldn't be the same without both events.

Huddled under umbrellas and seated on folding camp chairs were retired Sgt. Maj. George Smith and his wife, Francis. They have a long history with the military including his participation in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. And, he served with the 25th Inf. Div. in 1963. Both said the event to them signifies the start of the Christmas season.

"It's a beautiful lighting ceremony, just very special," remarked Francis, "For us, it will be a special month as all three of our children are coming for Christmas."

The event was also special for Capt. Brennan Cook, 65th Engineer Battalion, who brought his 2-year-old son, Hayden. Just home from Afghanistan, he said, "This is Brennan's first Christmas in Hawaii and we have another one on the way. It's special because I will celebrate Christmas at home with my family."



Joy Boisselle

Santa's helpers from left: Spcs. Aelia Leon, Audry Baltzer, Staff Sgt. Jeritz Jones, Spc. Patrick Carney (Santa), Spc. Amy Byrne (Mrs. Claus), Spc. Shavonda Bouie holding son, Jalien, and Sgt. Vanessa Cardides. Soldiers are from Installation Troop Command.

part of the annual tradition too.

While waiting for the evening's main event, the crowd listened to performances by the Hale Kula Elementary Chorus and the 25th Infantry Division (Light) Tropic Lightning Band.

Kicking off the event, guest speaker, Col. Michael McBride, commander, U.S. Army Hawaii, said, a little tongue in cheek, "Welcome and I hope you are enjoying the sunshine,

foot Norfolk Pine. A collective "Ahhh!" rose from the crowd.

Afterward, a shout of "he's coming!" quickly turned the unabashedly excited crowd in the direction of a fire truck siren signaling the arrival of the event's most popular couple, Santa and Mrs. Claus. Santa made his way to a covered tent where his sled and eight reindeer awaited his arrival along with a large line of parents and children ready to make their hearts' desires

# TF 1-21 Inf. lights up the holidays in Iraq

Sgt. Sean Kimmons  
25th ID (L) Public Affairs

KIRKUK AIR BASE, Iraq – In an effort to spread holiday cheer and ease some of the loneliness Soldiers may have from being deployed at this time of year, Task Force 1-21 Infantry decorated their headquarters area here with holiday cards and lights.

"Being the holiday season, we wanted to actually have a holiday card lane here like we do back on Schofield [Barracks]," said Sgt. Maj. Errol Snyder, operations sergeant major for TF 1-21 Inf. "So, we asked every company to make a card and then we made one for the battalion."

On Dec. 3, TF 1-21 Inf. held an official lightning ceremony to light up the five holiday cards. Each card is wrapped in holiday

lights and includes a holiday saying with a picture.

An example of one is Alpha Company's card which says, "Happy Holidays." Below the saying is a picture of gators, the company's mascot, pulling Santa Claus in a High Mobility Multi-Purpose Wheeled Vehicle over an Iraqi village.

"We took photos of all the cards and sent them back to Schofield to let them know that we're keeping with the [commanding general's] guidance of having holiday cards," Snyder said.

Snyder hopes that one of the cards will win the annual holiday card contest.

Besides the cards, TF 1-21 Inf. extended their holiday spirit into its headquarters' building with a Christmas tree and a replicated fireplace that welcomes anyone who enters the building's front door.

"An eight-foot Christmas tree and a fireplace makes [people] feel that they are coming into a friendly, cheery home," Snyder said.

"We wanted to make our own little Christmas wonderland here," Snyder said about all the holiday decorations.

The TF 1-21 Inf. holiday decorations may not be as grand or widespread as the ones sprinkled throughout U.S. Army, Hawaii installations, but to many of the Soldiers it doesn't matter.

"It's a sense of home when we can actually enjoy these times although we are far away," said Spc. Nathaniel Escobedo, a communications specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Co., TF 1-21 Inf.

"It gives me a little warmth in the heart, every time I pass by them," Escobedo said.



Sgt. Sean Kimmons

Spc. Nathaniel Escobedo, a communications specialist with HHC, TF 1-21 Inf., gets a closer look at the holiday cards in front of the TF 1-21 Inf. headquarters building Dec. 3.

# Holiday calendar

**Half-day Schedule for Schofield Barracks** – Runs Dec. 17 through Jan. 1.

**Santa Claus helps military parents connect with their kids for Christmas** through Operation G.I. Jingle - Dream Big Media, Inc. is offering members of the U.S. Armed Forces stationed overseas an exciting, new way to connect with their kids back home during the holiday season.

Through "Operation G.I. Jingle," military moms and dads can send heartfelt holiday sentiments and well wishes to their children with a free "Jinglegram™ Greeting" – a streaming video and personalized letter delivered via the internet by none other than Santa Claus himself.

To learn more about Operation G.I. Jingle, go to [www.jinglegram.com](http://www.jinglegram.com), or contact Mark Shilensky at 845.336.7500. Members of the U.S. Armed Forces can obtain a coupon voucher for a free G.I. Jingle Greeting by visiting [www.jinglegram.com](http://www.jinglegram.com).

**December Coloring Contest** – Pick up a blank coloring form (ages 12 and



**Holiday lights and decorations light up Tripler Army Medical Center for their Christmas Tree Celebrations Dec. 1.** Gov. Linda Lingle was among the attendees at the events.

under). Coloring forms will be displayed at the Tropics all month long and a random winner will be chosen at the end of the month.

For more information call 655-0002.

**Santa Claus will be at the Fort Shafter Library** on Dec. 14, 3 - 5 p.m. to

read stories and listen to requests for Christmas from children. Feel free to bring your camera.

**Visit Reggie's**

– Dec. 17, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. and enjoy turkey, ham, All American stuffing, cranberry sauce, and more. Cost is only \$8.95. For

more information call 655-0660.

**Army Holiday Celebration** – Single Soldiers and Army families are invited to enjoy a free turkey dinner with all the fixings, sporting event tournaments, a visit with Santa, karaoke contest, door prizes, train rides, and more Dec. 24, 4 - 8 p.m. Presents will be distributed to the single Soldiers and Santa will present gifts for registered family members.

To register your children for Santa's gift, please call 655-0111 or 655-0112 or visit [www.mwrarmyhawaii.com/Holiday\\_Celebration\\_Registration.htm](http://www.mwrarmyhawaii.com/Holiday_Celebration_Registration.htm).

**Breakfast with Santa** – Dec. 18, at 10 a.m. Cost is \$3 per child under 8 years old, \$5 for 9-years-old and up. Pictures with Santa also available

**Reindeer basketball challenge** – Dec. 20 at 2 p.m. for \$1, participate in games and shooting contests and win prizes.

**Santa's volleyball serving contest** will be Dec. 21 at 4 p.m. for \$1. There will be designated spots on the court worth points.

## Reunion's shark infested waters: Part three

### Commentary

**Michele Adams-Thompson**  
Contributing writer

The waters off the Waianae coast are well-known for sharks in certain places. One of our sons is a diver and he used to tell us all about the shark infested waters near the electric plant out that way. Sharks are attracted to certain areas and since they're sharks, they get to go where they want.

We humans mark the spot and try to stay clear. You don't reason with sharks, you avoid them.

Reunion is the best part of a deployment but the research also tells us that in many ways, it can be the hardest part. Have you noticed that is the way with life a lot? I've often told people that being a parent is the best or hardest part of life, and it's true.

You have to wonder if there is a correlation between the things that cost us the most emotionally and the depth of their value to us. The hard stuff is usually the biggest gift, but a gift we aren't always sure we want to open.

Reunion's best gift to us will be having our Soldier home. But if we think that's all there is to this picture, we are really just fooling ourselves. Military families around the globe have been facing these long post-9/11 deployments for several years and they are here to tell us that reunion isn't over in a single day; it's a process that takes place over time – probably more time than you think.

If you go into this phase of deployment without realizing this, you're



asking for trouble.

Soldiers who have done this in recent years have said, right up front, that part of what they want to come home to is their same old comfortable place in the family. They have been missing how things used to be for what's been such a long year.

It makes all the sense in the world that they would come back ready to insert themselves into the role they left. But while it makes sense why our Soldier feels this way, experience has taught a lot of military families that this doesn't work well for most.

Spouses have had to fill both shoes for a year and have gotten good at it. We've had to come up with new routines, making changes to how the family was run – out of necessity. It's running smoothly now. How do we keep some of the new independence? How do we renegotiate the roles, the rules and the tasks of life?

Oh, and there were a few problems we were working on in our families and marriages when our Soldier left. Funny thing, they've just been waiting patiently there in the background. Were you hoping they'd just magically evaporate? Well, they don't; they wait, sometimes smoldering a bit. If you had work to do on your relationship before the deployment, it'll be waiting to make an appearance sometime after it's over.

How much have you and your Soldier worked to communicate dur-

ing this deployment? I get the sense that once military families start getting as smart about long, recurring deployments as we are about PCS moves, this area will be where we take what we learn to the "next" level.

But for now, it seems quite a luxury to talk about communication with our Soldier who's more than half a world away. This much is clear from the incoming research on long deployments: the more you are able and willing to communicate with your Soldier while he or she is deployed, the better things go in reunion for you.

We all have a lot to learn about how to do this. Call it part of marking where the sharks are in these waters and trying to stay clear. You can't reason with a shark.

Once the Soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division (Light) start coming home, they will be required to attend an Army-mandated reintegration program. Tropic Lightning Academy will work to help Soldiers navigate the waters of reunion, and to point out the sharks – so they can avoid them.

Now when something is "mandated" we are all tempted to turn off to it. This is a mistake where Tropic Lightning Academy is concerned. With courses offered on reunion for married Soldiers, helping the single Soldier who's a parent, dealing with the changes in relationships, how to heal from battlefield stress and other big "sharks," Tropic Lightning Academy is anything but just another "mandated" program. And spouses, you are invited to attend the free classes, too.

For more information call Army Community Service at 655-2400 or the Tropic Lightning Academy Administration Office, located in the post library, at 655-8382.

## Delayed redeployment offers chance for last minute improvements

### Commentary

**Nadja Gassert-Depape**  
Contributing writer

You've just found out that your Soldier won't be returning soon. You're understandably disappointed. Depressed even. But there are advantages to your Soldier returning later than expected:

In preparation for your Soldier's anticipated arrival, you tried out a new hairdo and it looks horrible. Now there will be enough time to let your hair grow, find a better hairdresser, change the brassy orange into a warm brown or shop for a sexy wig.

You had plans to abstain from all holiday foods so as not to gain any weight. Go ahead, stuff yourself. There is plenty of time to work off those extra holiday pounds at the gym. And if you were unhappy with your weight to begin with, well, what are you waiting for? Sweat and work out those muscles.

Has your tan begun to fade? Curiously enough, there are tanning salons in Hawaii. Give yourself a healthy looking present and bronze that skin.

House messy? Yard unkempt? Do-it-yourself project unfinished? You have a few weeks to beautify your home, reseed the lawn and custom build his decorative coin holder or her cedar shoe rack.

Kids aren't ready yet? The extra time might be just what they need to clean their rooms, work on that welcome home-play or learn to say "dada."

Have you discovered a recent interest in college/self-improvement/spiritual enlightenment? You might be able to finish a

semester of higher education, learn to hula, cook or quilt and get in touch with your inner child – all in time before redeployment.

The holidays with your family are stressful enough – Here is your chance to take a deep breath, get some quality you-time and prepare in peace and quiet for your Soldier.

The dog you bought to keep you safe still hasn't learned to sit? The cat you adopted to keep you company still hides under the bed? Clearly, more time is needed.

You missed all the reunion workshops and have found little time to browse Army OneSource Online? There should be a few hours in your hectic schedule now to read up on reunion and get information about how to alleviate the initial awkwardness with your returned spouse.

Kick butt abs not quite as kick butt, yet? They just might be by the time your Soldier returns.

The scrapbook you started to chronicle your time without your Soldier only includes the first few weeks? Get those scissors and the glue ready. A scrapbook is a great idea to share what you've done.

Chances are, there are countless things you wanted to do or wanted to have done before you rush to the airport to greet your Soldier.

This delay in his or her return is a procrastinator's second chance. Take the opportunity, set some new goals and keep busy.

Or revel in the freedom to watch endless reruns of your favorite show, in your pajamas, on the couch, with the dirty dishes in the sink. No one will see.

## DA, VA help Soldiers injured, ailed during service

By Spc. Daniel P. Kelly  
Assistant Editor

Soldiers and service members who were injured or had their health go bad during Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom have the support of the Department of the Army and the Department of Veteran Affairs.

"Our goal is to provide excellence in patient care, veterans' benefits and customer satisfaction," Anthony J. Principi, Secretary of Veteran Affairs says in a statement on the VA's

website. "We have reformed our department internally and are striving for high quality, prompt and seamless service to veterans."

"Our department's employees continue to offer their dedication and commitment to help veterans get the services they have earned. Our nation's veterans deserve no less."

With the death of thousands of Soldiers and service members in the Global War on Terror, there are thousands more injured and sick. That's where

the Army and VA come in.

In a press release from the Army on April 30, an announcement of a new initiative that gives Soldiers wounded during the Global War on Terrorism an additional means of getting help once they are medically retired from the Army was introduced.

The program is called the Disabled Soldier Support System, or DS3.

Through DS3, the Army provides its most severely disabled Soldiers and their families with a system of advocacy and follow-

up to provide personal support and liaison to resources, to assist them in their transition from military service.

DS3 is a holistic approach program that provides them with assistance. DS3 is an extension of the philosophy that the Army takes care of it's own – once a Soldier, always a Soldier.

DS3 links the Army and the organizations that stand ready to assist these Soldiers and families, such as the Department of Veterans' Affairs

and the many Veteran's Service Organizations, to the Soldier.

Severely disabled Soldiers and families are able to better understand what their future holds, and how to access the services they may require with a phone call or mouse click at 1-800-833-6622 or on the Web at [www.armyds3.org](http://www.armyds3.org).

Soldiers who were not seriously injured or acquired a disease that was aggravated by their service can apply for benefits with the VA at their Web site [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov).

# Nehelani Conference Center and Reggie's changes aim to please

Story & photos by  
Joy Boisselle  
Staff Writer

The Nehelani Conference Center and Reggie's at Schofield Barracks have undergone numerous changes, some subtle, others more obvious since Sept. 1.

According to Roy Yamane, general manager, "The facility's purpose is to serve the Soldier and their family. We want to be a gathering place on post where you can come have a good time, eat, and socialize with your friends."

Yamane emphasized that the Nehelani Conference Center and Reggie's are one and the same. "The perception has been that there are two facilities here, but that is not the case," he said.

Making positive changes in an effort to transform the center's image is at the forefront of the makeover. The most visible change is the new Reggie's luncheon buffet. Before, lunchtime customers could eat at the Tropic Lightning Buffet located on the Nehelani lanai or order off the menu at Reggie's.

Now, customers still can order from the menu or elect to sample the buffet all under one roof. Another lunchtime change is the ordering process. Customers make their selection from a menu board located in the bar area and pay before seating.

Yamane said, "By consolidating our meal service at one location, we have increased our speed of service and decreased our waiting time, decreased our staffing requirements, and increased the food variety." And, according to Yamane, customers seem happier too.

"Since we implemented the changes, we have only received four customer comments and

those dealt with menu selection, instead of service," he said. Yamane seeks customer feedback as a way to better the facility and customer satisfaction.



**Amy Barnes, Santa's Helper, and Hannah Barnes, 5, sing Christmas carols karaoke-style at "Breakfast with Santa" held Nov. 27 at Reggie's**

One upcoming change brought about by customer comment is a menu that highlights low-carb selections, like Reggie's wraps.

"Nobody wants to hear bad news, but I look at customer comments as information to see what needs to be fixed and fix it," Yamane said, "We want to be the best club in the system." Yamane pointed out that Reggie's is the only sit-down dinner restaurant on Schofield Barracks.

Reggie's still offers full-service at dinner with a reduced menu. "We chose the most popular items on the menu to offer at lunch and dinner. By reducing the menu, the kitchen operates more efficiently and customers get better service," he added. The lunch menu emphasizes sandwich fare, while the dinner menu features meat platters, Mexican selections, and pasta

bowls.

Sgt. David Barnes, 68th Medical Company, said, "I have noticed that the time to get served at lunchtime is faster, ordering at the bar really helps, and the new buffet is more convenient on the Reggie's side versus the Nehelani side."

Programming is another area of change. In an effort to be the community's gathering place, Reggie's now offers more entertainment and special programs. Yamane said, "All of our programming is receiving a lot of participation. Karaoke continues to be a popular program, but the Mongolian BBQ has also been a success."

Recent and ongoing special program events include a Labor Day Picnic, a Halloween themed get-together, Sing for your Supper, monthly Hawaiian Luau lunch special, and Breakfast with Santa. "Sing for your Supper" is a chance for karaoke lovers to sing and get \$20 towards their meal every Friday.

Breakfast with Santa, a first for the facility proved to be popular with parents and children alike. Nearly 200 people enjoyed a low cost buffet, pictures with Santa and his helper, and a Christmas carol karaoke sing-along.

To newcomers and people who haven't been to the Nehelani and Reggie's recently, Yamane had this to say. "Come on in, the service is faster and better and we need your support. Our future actions [programs and specials] depend on your patronage and feedback."

(Editor's Note: The Nehelani Advisory Council, a feedback forum, meets monthly on the second Tuesday of each month at 11:30 a.m. Community participation welcomed. Call 655-4466 for information.)

# Cultural sharing this holiday season

Commentary

Maj. Stacy Bathrick  
CJTF-76 Public Affairs

I recently had the opportunity to celebrate the Islam holiday of "Eid" with the Afghan people. It was an incredible cultural exchange. The Eid holiday is the three-day period at the end of Ramadan where the Muslim people have a festival with gift exchange.

Before I deployed to Afghanistan, I knew very little about the Ramadan holiday. But after spending time witnessing local Afghan people who work on our base here, I realized what a huge sacrifice the Muslim people make to fast during hours of daylight for one complete month. It shows such commitment to their faith.

I felt such a connection with the Afghan people during this time-although our religious beliefs differ as much as the Afghan desert differs from the Hawaiian Islands that I will return to in a few more months. The connection I felt was the sense of a strong, committed belief in faith.

I could tell that the Afghan people were making such a huge sacrifice, just by looking in their eyes. But it wasn't until I went on a mission during Ramadan that I realized how little I really understood about the sacrifice.

The mission was to teach Afghan school girls - ranging in age from 2nd grade to high school - how to brush their teeth. We noticed that the girls were not putting toothpaste on their brushes. We later learned that the reason for this was that they were fasting and they weren't allowed to put anything in their mouths. At that point, we all realized what it really meant to make a commitment to fast.

As we were standing in the schoolhouse, an Afghan man approached me and began asking me why I had a bottled water with me ... he proceeded to tell me that we are fasting and no water is allowed.

After this great adventure, I needed to experience the celebration at the end of Ramadan - the Eid. I traveled with a group of Soldiers to one of the poorest areas of Afghanistan during the Eid cele-

bration. We took blankets, clothes, school kits and live goats to share in the celebration with the people.

When we arrived at the site, we were greeted by about 2,000 Afghan people. The mullahs (religious leaders) organized the group according to women, children and handicapped to receive the gifts first. I saw four men standing on crutches with big smiles on their faces. They were so happy to see us - knowing that we had gifts for them.

Each man had only one leg. They explained to me that they lost their legs due to anti-personnel mines in Afghanistan. Even as they were explaining this to me, they continued to smile from ear to ear, because they knew they were about to receive gifts they have waited so long for.

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to give many of them blankets that will keep them and their families warm during the brutal Afghan winter, clothing that will most likely be the only other set of clothing they own aside from the one they are wearing, and school kits that will allow young children to attend school once again.

The greatest feeling was seeing how grateful the Afghan people were to receive such small gifts to commemorate their holiday. Many of the women grabbed me because they had received the greatest gift of their lives.

There were young children who were in tears because they didn't understand who the coalition Soldiers were. For many of them, this was probably the first gift they have ever received.

I am certain that the Afghan people we visited that day will never forget this Eid holiday. And it's my hope that they realize that we respect their faith and honor their traditions.

This Christmas in Afghanistan I will celebrate the birth of Jesus with thousands of others. I will take a special moment on Christmas Day to reflect on the opportunity I had to spend the Islamic tradition of Eid with the Afghan people, and remember how grateful they were to receive the smallest of gifts.

Although our religious beliefs differ greatly, we share the brotherhood and common bond of being freedom-loving people. And that's part of being a Soldier - understanding the culture you are called to serve with.

# Bennett's basketball clinic

Story and photo by Rafi Grant  
Contributing Writer

Future talents of all ages had the chance to practice the basic moves of basketball during the clinic at the Bennett Youth Center, Schofield Barracks Dec. 3.

Bryan Hill and his team organized the clinic in which new and seasoned young athletes prepared themselves for the upcoming season in a two and half hour introductory practice that covered the basic fundamentals of basketball, warm-ups and stretching.

The season starts early next year with games beginning in March. For a detailed program and price information call Bill Baier or Bryan Hill at 655-6465.

Upcoming programs at the center also include the baseball clinic in March 2005, and the mini-sport baseball program.

Moreover, a variety of ongoing programs are offered like gymnastics and karate. For more information contact the youth center at 655-6465 or visit the Web site at [www.mwrarmyhawaii.com/cys/cyssand-fit.asp](http://www.mwrarmyhawaii.com/cys/cyssand-fit.asp).



## Sports Briefs

**Great Aloha Run Registration** – Get ready to run in the 2005 Great Aloha Run on Feb. 21. Entry forms are available at all military fitness centers or online at [www.active.com](http://www.active.com). Be sure to select the military form, \$1 from each

entry returned to Army programs. Entry fee is \$20 until Jan. 21. Call 555-8789 for information.

**Christmas Basketball and Volleyball** – Participate in games and shooting contests to win prizes at the Reindeer Basketball Challenge at the Tropics on Dec. 20, 2 p.m. Cost is \$1. On Dec. 21, 4 p.m., participate in Santa's Volleyball Serving Contest. Cost is \$1. For more infor-

mation, call 655-0002.

**Christmas Golf Sale** – Beginning Nov. 26 find a "Par"fect gift at Nagorski Pro Shop. For more information, call 438-9587.

**Lost in Paradise** – Want to lose some weight before your Soldier returns home or succeed with your New Year's Resolution? Then, gather up 10 people in your battalion and register for this motivational program. First weigh-in is now Jan. 5.

Open to all active duty Soldiers and family members. Winners will receive a \$1,000 unit party at the Nehelani. Winning group member will receive three months free membership (\$50 value) at the Health and Fitness Center. For more information, call 655-0112 or 655-0111.

**Yu-Gi-Oh Tournament** – Tournament on Dec. 11, 4 p.m. at the Tropics, Schofield Barracks.

Registration begins at 3 p.m. Cost is \$5. Participants receive free Yu-Gi-Oh merchandise. Call 655-0002.

**Quarter Mania Bowling** – Only two quarters per game and two quarters for shoes, Mon – Fri, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. at the Wheeler Army Air Field Bowling Center. Call 656-1745.

**Pro Bowl Tickets on Sale** – Visit the nearest Information, Ticketing and Registration office to pur-

chase Pro Bowl tickets. Tickets currently available in the following sections: Makai and Mauka Orange, Makai Yellow, and North Endzone Orange. Call 438-1985 or 655-9971 for more information.

**American Hero's Bowling League** – Join the league, bowl 18 sessions and earn one of six Viz-A-Ball bowling balls celebrating America and the Armed Services. Call 655-0573.