HAWAI'I ARMY WEEKLY

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Serving the U.S. Army Community in Hawai i ★ www.garrison.hawaii.army.mil/haw.asp

Stop the presses! Subscribers will receive *The Military Times*, Dec. 25 & Jan. 1, when the *Hawaii Army Weekly* takes its two-week hiatus.

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The Tropics will host a holiday party for everyone staying in Hawaii for the holidays, Dec. 24, 3-8 p.m.

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Sgt. Ricardo Branch | 8th Theater Sustainment Command Public Affairs

Low crawl

HICKAM AIR FORCE BASE — Sgt. 1st Class Paul Valdez, 605th Transportation Company, conducts a 50-meter low crawl during the Waterborne Challenge, Dec. 8, here. See the full story on A-5.

45th Sust. Bde. returns home from Afghanistan

Story and Photo By
SGT. MAJ. TERRY ANDERSON
8th Theater Sustainment Command Public Affairs

WHEELER ARMY AIRFIELD – When Amber Murphy paid $11 to the 45th Sustainment Brigade Family Readiness Group for the chance to win the "First Kiss" raffle, she didn't expect her name to be drawn from the hundreds of entries.

She had one simple reaction when she was picked to be the first spouse to kiss her Soldier at the 45th Sust. Bde. Redeployment ceremony, Dec. 9, at the Multiple Deployment Facility (MDF), here.

"I cried," Murphy said.

More than 150 Soldiers of the 45th Sust. Bde. returned to Schofield Barracks to friends, family and loved ones from a 12-month deployment to Afghanistan. The remaining 150 are scheduled to return early next year.

Murphy says her 12-year-old son, Timothy, and her family got her through their first deployment. She kept her husband's morale high by mailing him a weekly care package.

"Every Thursday he went to the post office and picked up a care package," she said. "He got a lot of cookies, brownies, muffins, a lot of DVDs – Blockbuster knows

Lt. Col. Brent Barnes sings the Army Song during the 45th Sustainment Brigade redeployment ceremony, Dec. 9, at the Wheeler Army Airfield multiple deployment facility.

SEE RETURN, A-4

Warrior Care, VA collaborate to make transitions smooth

WARRIOR TRANSITION COMMAND
News Release

WASHINGTON – Army and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) are continuing to collaborate to assist wounded, ill and injured Soldiers in making a seamless transition to civilian life. In a Pentagon Channel interview, VA Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs, the Honorable Tammy Duckworth, who also serves as a major in the Illinois National Guard, and Brig. Gen. Gary Cheek, commander, Warrior Transition Command, discussed the goals of the Physical Disability Evaluation System (PDES) pilot program, the presence of VA advisors at military treatment facilities and warrior transition units, and the virtual lifetime electronic records system.

"We invest so much in our Soldiers when we are training them when they're serving on active duty. We need to invest just as much into their futures after they take off the uniform. They are just as valuable," Duckworth told the Pentagon Channel.

On The WEB

For more information on the Warrior Transition Command, visit its official blog at www.wtc.armylive.dodlive.mil.

Duckworth explained what the PDES pilot program will achieve:

1. A single disability exam conducted to VA standards to be used by both VA and DoD
2. A single disability rating by VA that is binding upon both departments
3. Expeditious payment of VA benefits within 30 days of a separation from service

Cheek says he relies on the VA liaison officer within his own command to assist with his mission of transitioning seriously wounded, ill and injured Soldiers back to the force or to productive civilian life.

"If we are to have Soldiers be able to step with confidence from the Army to civilian life then we have got to set the stage through our own relationships with the VA," Cheek said.

Other areas of Army and VA collaboration include the virtual lifetime electronic records system, VA collaboration with Transition Assistance Programs and VA liaisons and counselors located at military treatment facilities and warrior transition units. Cheek said his mission for wounded, ill and injured Soldiers is not only to heal but to transition to a life they want to lead.

"We have a comprehensive transition plan, which focuses the Soldier's future through a series of goal-setting. We look to inspire that warrior toward their future because if they're excited about their future they are going to heal faster," Cheek said.

25th ID says 'Aloha' to departing general

Story and Photo By
STAFF SGT. TIM MEYER
25th Infantry Division Public Affairs

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS – In the Ninewa province of northern Iraq, as tension grew between Kurdish Peshmerga forces and the mostly-Arab Iraqi Army over the security of the Mosul Dam in mid-2009, an American general successfully brought both sides together to craft an agreeable joint security structure and avoid armed conflict.

Whether bringing ethnic groups to the bargaining table in Iraq, or Soldiers and community members to the beaches on Oahu where he liked to surf, Brig. Gen. Robert B. Brown is known for building lasting relationships.

Brown, the 25th Infantry Division deputy commanding general (support), and his wife, Patti, were recognized for their dedication and service during a "Flying V" ceremony at Sills Field, Tuesday.

SEE ALOHA, A-6

'Stop Loss' payments on way

NAVY LT. JENNIFER CRAGG
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – After an initial delay caused by software and manpower issues, the first retroactive payments will be disbursed next week to Soldiers who were retained on active duty involuntarily under the so-called "Stop Loss" program.

Maj. Roy Whitley, program manager for the Army's Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay program, acknowledged problems over the program's first 50 days and said officials are working to reduce the current backlog for the thousands more who are expected to file their claims over the next year.

"We are going to plow through the backlog as quickly as we can," said Whitley, who spoke with bloggers and online journalists, Dec. 10, during an Army bloggers roundtable.

"We lost time (by) improving the claims end early on," he said. "For every day we spent working the claims, we knew we were losing a day on development and case management.

"We are building it out (and) improving software. (That is) the reason why you are seeing some delay."

Parts of the initial Web-based claims program, launched Oct. 21, lacked complete functionality, and many of the claims were processed manually, Whitley

SEE PROGRAM, A-5

Military leaders, community aim to reach solution on Furlough Fridays

MIKE EGAMI
U.S. Army Garrison-Hawaii Public Affairs

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS – The Joint Venture Education Forum (JVEF) is a cooperative venture between the U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) military community and the Hawaii Department of Education (DOE) serving to advance the military community's responsibility in the pursuit of quality education for public school students in Hawaii. The JVEF board is co-chaired by the Superintendent of Education and senior military officers representing all branches of service, leaders from the DOE, state Senate and House chairpersons of education, and select business leaders.

For the past 10 years, this partnership has promoted interaction between the military community and state educators where issues of importance to the education of our military children and the public school system can be raised and resolved together.

The forum encourages a positive learning environment and high quality educational opportunity for Hawaii's children with approximately $5.5 million in military-school partnership appropriations.

The military leadership in Hawaii has been engaged with select leaders on Furlough Friday issues out of the public eye. However, at the last JVEF board meeting, Dec. 10, at the Oahu Veterans Center, the military expressed its concerns about the education of its 90,000 school-age children, and the impact of Furlough Fridays. The military is concerned about Hawaii having the shortest school year of any state and how it impacts students.

"Taking away 17 furlough days or 10 percent of the school year as a solution to

SEE FURLOUGH, A-6

We want to hear from you...

The Hawaii Army Weekly welcomes articles from Army organizations, announcements from the general public about community events of interest to the military community, and letters and commentaries.

If you have newsworthy ideas or stories you'd like to write, coordinate with the managing editor at 656-3155, or e-mail editor@hawaiiarmyweekly.com.

The editorial deadline for articles and announcements is the Friday prior to Friday publications. Prior coordination is mandatory.

Articles must be text or Word files with complete information, no abbreviations; accompanying photographs must be digital, high resolution, jpeg files with full captions and bylines.

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Nondelivery or distribution problems in Army Hawaii Family Housing areas? If so, call 656-3155 or 656-3156.

19 days since last fatal accident

Number represents fatal accidents as defined by Army Regulation 385-10, which is inclusive of all active component U.S. Army units and personnel. Current as of 12/17/09.

'Tis The Season

CID safety tips for Army holiday shoppers

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION COMMAND
News Release

FORT BELVOIR, Va. – 'Tis the season to be wary. For many unsuspecting Soldiers, Department of the Army civilians and family members, the holiday season can be a time of crisis. Out on the streets and trolling the Internet lurks the seasoned holiday predator, searching for their next target of opportunity.

As part of the ongoing "CID Lookout" Crime Prevention/Awareness Program, the Criminal Investigation Command (CID) is advising the greater Army community who plan on visiting shopping centers/malls or who shop online during the holiday season, to take the following precautions to help prevent them or their loved ones from becoming a victim:

Shopping Safety

Don't leave valuables visible in your vehicle; especially, newly purchased items.

Newly purchased items should be stored in the trunk and, if you are returning to the store, move your vehicle to another location. If someone is watching the area, they will think you are leaving. This may prevent your vehicle from being targeted for the items stored in the trunk.

Don't flash a lot of money as you are paying for purchases. Make sure credit cards used are returned to you and keep them in your sight at all times.

Never carry more packages/bags than you can comfortably carry to your vehicle. Be aware of your surroundings and make eye contact with people as you pass by or approach. Have your car keys out and ready as you arrive at your vehicle.

Be alert for pickpockets. Their favorite environments are crowded places, revolving doors, jammed aisles, elevators, public transportation stops and vehicles, especially at rush hour. Carry the day's most expensive purchases closest to your body, and don't carry so much you lose the ability to react quickly.

During hours of darkness, park and walk in lighted areas if possible.

If you have access to a cellular phone, carry it and always ensure it is fully charged.

Shop in a group or at least in pairs. Always present an alert appearance.

Visit ATM's only at well-lighted and populated locations; visit during daylight hours if possible. Using the drive-up is usually safer than walking up or into a facility.

Holiday Personal Safety

If possible, leave your children with a baby-sitter or family while you are shopping. For holiday shopping, consider making arrangements with family, friends or neighbors, and take turns baby-sitting. If you take your children with you, keep a very close eye on them while shopping.

Teach your children to go to a store clerk or security guard if they ever get separated from you in a store/mall, and be sure they know their first and last name so they can tell someone who they are.

Return to the mall or store for assistance if you spot suspicious activity near your vehicle.

Carry minimal cash and valuables, and wear minimal jewelry.

Most important, keep vehicle doors and windows closed and locked when they are not in use.

Online Shopping Safety

Check out the seller: If you have not used a particular online shopping site, do some independent research. Call their phone number to verify that you can reach them if issues come up with your purchase. If they don't have a phone number, you should take your business elsewhere. Also, search the Internet to see if anyone else has had a positive or negative experience with the shopping site.

Read return policies: Make sure the online shopping site has policies that meet your needs and expectations. Some sites charge shipping and handling for returns, as well as a restocking fee. Sites with unclear or questionable policies should be avoided.

Know what you're getting: Read the product description closely. If name brand items are sold at an extremely low price, they could be counterfeit or stolen. Remember the old adage: "If it's too good to be true, it probably is."

Don't fall for a false e-mail or popup: Legitimate companies do not send unsolicited e-mail messages asking for your password, login name or financial information, but scammers do. Delete these emails without clicking on any links, since doing so could install spyware or other malicious programs on your computer.

Look for signs a site is safe: When you are ready to buy something from a seller you trust, look for signs that the site uses a secure connection such as a closed padlock on the browser's status bar before you enter your personal and financial information. When you are asked to provide payment information, the beginning of the Web site's URL address should change from http to shttp or https, indicating that the purchase is encrypted or secured.

Secure your home computer: At a minimum, your computer should have antivirus and antispyware software and a firewall. Security software must be updated regularly to help protect against the latest threats. Set your security software and operating system to update automatically.

Consider how you'll pay: Credit cards generally are a safe option because they allow buyers to seek a credit from the issuer if the product is not delivered or is not what was ordered. Also, if your credit card number is stolen, you usually will not be liable for more than $50 in charges. Do not send cash or use a money-wiring service because you will have no recourse if something goes wrong.

Keep a paper trail: Print and save records of your online transactions, including the product description and price, the online receipt, and copies of any e-mail you exchange with the seller. Read your credit card statements as soon as you get them to make sure there are no unauthorized charges.

If a member of the Army family believes they have fallen victim to an online shopping scam, CID advises to notify the appropriate law enforcement agency as soon as possible. For crimes occurring on an Army installation, contact the local CID office. For crimes occurring elsewhere, contact the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) online at www.ic3.gov. IC3 is a partnership between the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the National White Collar Crime Center and serves as a clearinghouse for Internet crime complaints.

On The WEB

To learn more about online safety, visit the Federal Trade Commission's "On Guard Online" Web site at www.onguardonline.gov.

For more information on CID or to report a crime, contact your local CID office, the Military Police or visit www.cid.army.mil.

Staff Sgt. Jaquelin Ong and her husband, Spc. Luis Ruiz, a transportation specialist for the 25th Transportation Detachment, 25th Infantry Division, work together to complete an interactive exercise in their workbook during the Strong Bonds couples training at Turtle Bay resort, Dec. 3-5.

311th hosts marriage training

Story and Photos By
LIANA MAYO
311th Signal Command Public Affairs

KAHUKU – Nearly a dozen Soldiers of the 311th Signal Command and their spouses, 23 couples in all, enjoyed a free three-day stay at Turtle Bay Resort while attending the Strong Bonds couples training, here, Dec. 3-5.

In addition to the complimentary two-night stay at the hosting resort, training participants received free meals and childcare during class time, and were allowed free time to enjoy activities available at the resort, such as swimming, tennis, golf and snorkeling.

For about six hours per day, couples learned a variety of techniques to improve relationships, through lecture presentations such as "Honey, Let's Talk," "Stress and Relaxation," "Forgiveness," and "The Sensual/Sexual Relationship."

Chaplains also used a variety of materials for the couples' course including the Strong Bonds workbook, a combination of video clips, interactive exercises and handouts and excerpts from the book "Fighting for your Marriage," a self-help book focused on marriage enhancement and divorce prevention.

"Communication was the main thing I learned how to use to help us as a couple, and I have a better understanding about his career," said Christian Perez, wife of Sgt. Luis Perez, noncommissioned officer in charge of Command Group, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 307th Integrated Theater Support Battalion (ITSB).

"Our best-case scenario would be for every couple in every unit to attend this program because it facilitates relational fitness, and it is a fact

SEE COUPLES, A-8

Getting it Straight:

A photo in the "Experts calm employee pay angst" article on page A-1 of the Dec. 11th edition was incorrectly attributed to Nancy Rasmussen. Instead, Master Sgt. Christina Bhatti, U.S. Army-Pacific Public Affairs, took the photo.

FOOTSTEPS in FAITH

Reflect, share, trust the light this holiday season

Light is powerful symbol across all different religions

CHAPLAIN (MAJ.) LESLIE FORBES-MARIANI
U.S. Army Garrison-Hawaii Religious Support Office

Light, it has power; it illuminates and it is a beacon in darkness giving direction. Light is described in idiom as smart, a good idea, and purity.

Forbes-Mariani

Scripture relates light to God. God is the direction; he is pure and the one who gives light to all. God is light.

Light is filled with power; it moves faster than the eye can see and has properties of color which are beautiful as seen in a rainbow. The rainbow is formed because of the light refracted by water as a prism and in scripture is the promise of God. Light helps us to see beyond what the darkness hides, warms our spirits and give us hope.

Long ago in the deep of night, a star shone in the darkness leading seekers to find a child who was the promise of hope. On a hill, light burst upon shepherds to announce the birth of a child in the city of David. This time of year the lights around the city remind Christians of the reason for the season of Christmas.

The child who would one day be the savior of the world is celebrated in song and verse. Christians see the power of light, the source of light and the lord of light as Jesus Christ, the son of God born of the Virgin Mary, so long ago.

Light is also recognized in a miraculous event this time of year by Jews around the world, as for eight days the light burned in the rededication of the temple when there was only enough olive oil for one day. The holiday lights of Hanukkah lit each night for eight days are to remind of the miracle of light. The blessing of the holiday candles call upon the wonders of God's salvation and the sacred use of the light.

Sharing the celebrations with family by giving gifts and remembering the source of light is found in many of the traditions observed during this winter season. Give the light.

In the Christian tradition of Advent, a candle is lit each week during the four Sundays leading to Christmas, representing the growing and expectant waiting for the celebration of Christ's birth and return. The light reminds of Jesus as hope, peace and joy.

So when you light your homes this year for the holidays, remember the source of the light. How does your faith speak hope, joy and salvation to you? Reflect the light, share the light, trust the light.

Voices of Ohana

What is your favorite thing about the holiday season?

"We have an annual family gathering, it means a lot to me."

Sgt. Corbin Giles,
3B STB

"We have a group of single Soldiers who come over and we make them part of our family."

Jessica Giles,
Family member

"The holiday spirit, especially here in Hawaii, even if you don't have a family you feel like you're a part of something."

Leah Hall,
Sales Representative, T-Mobile at Schofield PX

"It's a great time for family, everyone is so giving and happy."

Staff Sgt. Nathan Taylor,
8th STB

"I like getting the presents."

Angela Vickers,
Family member

8th TSC troops participate in Yama Sakura 57, experience local culture

Snowy isle provides training ground to strengthen military, cultural ties between nations

SPC. ASHLAND HARNISHFEGER
8th Theater Sustainment Command Public Affairs

CAMP HIGASHI-CHITOSE, Japan – More than 50 8th Theater Sustainment Command (TSC) Soldiers worked hand-in-hand with their Japanese counterparts during Exercise Yama Sakura 57, here. The Soldiers departed the warm, tropical climate of Hawaii for the cold, snowy northern island of Hokkaido in early December for exercise training and cultural experiences.

Yama Sakura is the 28th iteration of the Japan-based exercise series. Yama Sakura is an exercise designed to enhance US and Japanese combat readiness and interoperability while strengthening the relationship between the two nations. The focus of the exercise is tactical combat and battle staff training, giving Soldiers more experience in full-spectrum operations.

The Soldiers of the 35th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion (CSSB), based out of Tokyo and part of the 8th TSC, supported exercise participants by making sure there were enough latrines available, enough food to sustain the exercise and enough room in billeting to accommodate the Soldiers comfortably.

This was no easy task, but for the Capt. David Williams, support operations plans officer, coordinating with his Japanese counterparts is an opportunity to learn firsthand how the Japanese soldiers do business.

Lt. Col. Matt Garner | 8th Theater Sustainment Command Public Affairs

From left, 1st Lt. Jessica Dunn, and Staff Sgt. Nelida Wakefield, Support Operations Human Resources, 8th Theater Sustainment Command, participated in the Japanese home visit as part of Yama Sakura 57 with the Kubata family of Chitose. The Soldiers enjoyed sushi and a specialty their hosts described as "Japanese pancakes"— finely chopped fresh vegetables and pieces of pork in an egg batter that the family cooked on a tabletop grill

"Every day I attend a bilateral meeting where we sit down, and go over issues that pertain to our side and issues on their side and we always come to a mutual understanding on how we are going to resolve this issues," Williams said. "We also go to the social events so there's a chance for us to bond, not just on the work level, but on the friendship level as well. So we can also establish personal relationships."

For Yama Sakura 57, National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers worked alongside the active duty Soldiers of the 35th CSSB. Lt. Col. Stacy Townsend, commander, 35th CSSB, says this exercise is the first time many of the National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers have deployed outside the United States, and it's an opportunity that is unforgettable.

"For some of the Soldiers, working with the Japanese in an exercise may be the first time they've worked with a Soldier from another country," he said. "So you can always learn something from each other and take that back with you. For us in the 35th CSSB, it's continuing our partnership with the Japanese. We are just the logistics arm of it, but we are proud to support everybody."

Many Soldiers had the chance to experience a home visit with a Japanese family, and took part in cultural events during the exercise. One Soldier said working and socializing with the Japanese while on exercise Yama Sakura has been an interesting but memorable experience.

"When I've got some time, after working, I like to go to Friendship Hall and socialize with the Japanese army and my counterparts," said Sgt. Christopher Forecki, 8th TSC. "It's interesting because they don't speak perfect English and my Japanese is not so good either, so we tend to have a couple laughs and a good time. But just experiencing Japanese culture and the home visit is something I'll remember for a long time."

The exercise wrapped up with a closing ceremony Sunday.

Community, region leaders welcome home redeployed in American Samoa

1ST LT. MARYJANE PORTER
305th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

TAFUNA, American Samoa – Twenty-seven Soldiers from B and C Companies of the 100th Battalion/442nd Infantry were honored during a Welcome Home Warrior Citizen Award Ceremony held at the US Army Reserve Center, here, Dec. 6.

The Welcome Home Warrior Citizen Award is given to Soldiers upon return from their first deployment.

Each Soldier receives an encased American flag, a commemorative Army coin, a certificate, a lapel pin set and a Welcome Home Warrior Citizen flag.

The 100th Bn. recently returned from their one-year tour in Kuwait in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The deployment was a second tour for the battalion, but a first for these 27 warrior citizens.

Col. Gary Kamauoha, commander, Support Unit, U.S. Army-Japan; Sgt. Maj. Forrest Wacker, command sergeant major, 9th Mission Support Command; and Maj. Keith Horikawa, executive officer, 100th Bn.; were among the special guests who traveled from Hawaii to participate in the ceremony.

Kamauoha delivered the key remarks and commended the Soldiers for their loyalty and commitment to accomplish their missions without hesitation.

Kamauoha also thanked the families and community at large for their continued support and for doing all they can to ensure that Soldiers stay focused on their job during such difficult times.

Parents, spouses, children and members of the community packed the gathering room to witness and congratulate these young heroes.

"I'm very proud of my grandson, Pfc. Malauulu, for his courage to go through with this. He never hesitated from day one when he found out he was deploying. He knew he had a mission to accomplish and lived up to it," said his proud grandfather.

A pleasant surprise of the day was the crowd finding out that Kamauoha was one of their own, a native son of Samoa. Many did not think there was a Samoan colonel, least not to be leading the group from Honolulu for the ceremony.

"A lot of us were shocked, yet proud of the fact that Col. Kamauoha is Samoan. He's inspired me to reach for the stars and that anything is possible if you work hard and give it all your best," said Pfc. Sione Lefao, C Co, who is also a cadet with the University of Hawaii/American Samoa Community College Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC).

The Honorable Mapu Jamias, civilian aide to the Secretary of the Army (CASA), was in attendance and did not miss a beat when leading the crowd in singing the 100th Battalion/442nd Infantry regimental song.

The CASA smiled in the end and said there will always be a special place in his heart for the 100th Battalion/442nd Infantry.

3 Rs: Easing return for families

DR. TRISH PROSSER
U.S. Army Center for Health
Promotion and Preventive Medicine

Having the family together again and enjoying the return of a deployed father or mother can be a time of great joy, but is also a major transition that can have its difficulties for all those involved—returning Soldier, spouse, children and other family members. Managing the change that deployments bring about can help everyone to develop resiliency, especially children.

On The WEB

Find more resources on success-ful reunions at:
- www.militaryonesource.com
- https://www.cs.amedd.army.mil/youth.aspx#
- archive.sesameworkshop.org/tlc
- www.sesameworkshop.org/initiatives
- www.focusproject.org

Sgt. Maj. Terry Anderson | 8th Theater Sustainment Command Public Affairs

Spc. James Murphy plants a big kiss on his wife, Amber, during the "First Kiss" ceremony at the 45th Sustainment Brigade redeployment ceremony, Dec. 9 at Wheeler Army Airfield.

Even a few months is a long time in the life of a child, whether the child is an infant, toddler, pre-teen or teenager. Children go through periods of rapid development and change, and this impacts their view of the world around them. They grow physically and emotionally—from crawling to walking, from home to school, from elementary to high school.

While the deployed family member was away there may have been varying amounts of contact by Webcam, phone, e-mail or letters. This can be great, but it can also have its problems. Be aware for instance that a 3-year-old seeing mommy or daddy on the Webcam does not always understand why mommy or daddy cannot just come out of the computer, and this can lead to some challenging behavior. Teenagers may feel resentful that mom or dad was not there for an important game or the prom, have the insight to know that absence was not the parent's fault, and then feel guilty for feeling resentful.

Talking to your children about their expectations for the homecoming is a good way to begin engaging them in the readjustments to come. Find out about the fun things they want to do with their returned parent and the things they may be fearful of. Also be aware the returning parent has been in a different place, perhaps in difficult circumstances and may also have certain expectations or fears about reconnecting.

Routines will need to be readjusted. It is to be expected that as new routines develop there may be some friction. The parent that stayed at home managed to adjust to meet the challenges and changes over the period of the deployment and they find it difficult to change instantaneously.

Know what help is available to you and your family over this time. This is especially necessary for families of returning members of the Army Reserve and National Guard, who may not have as ready access to programs as active duty Soldiers and families who have regular access to a military installation. In addition to Army support for returning Soldiers and their families, there are many other resources and support networks that have sprung up that are not attached to military families. Many of these can be found on the Web or even from installation support services such as Army Community Services.

Above all, take things slowly. Be patient. There is no right way or wrong way to reconnect. The aim at the end, however long it may take, is that the family is still a family together.

(Editor's Note: Dr. Trish Prosser is a Public Health Psychologist with the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine.)

3 Rs: Making the most of redeployment for troops

Realistic goals, effective communication helps ease return process

DR. TRISH PROSSER
U.S. Army Center for Health
Promotion and Preventive Medicine

As the deployed member of your family, coming home can be a time of great joy and also nervousness. Changes have happened on both sides. You have been away, seen and experienced many different and often difficult things. Whether you are a husband, wife, parent, son, daughter or sibling, coming home can be tough.

The imagined reunion with family may not live up to the dream, and you may be confronted with a list of issues and problems that occurred while you were away. Intimacy and family relationships may not fall straight back into the place where you left them before being deployed.

Returning to duty also may bring about new issues for previously deployed Soldiers—perhaps some interactions have changed between those that were deployed together and those not deployed. Each individual responds differently to different stressors and the different experiences that occurred while on deployment.

As with most things, there are healthier ways than others to express the kinds of reactions one can have to these stressors.

Trying to keep to the healthier alternatives will ultimately make reintegration a smoother process. Reservists and National Guard members may be confronted with different problems if return to work and routine after deployments creates tension with colleagues who may want to hear about the war and bosses who may expect your work performance to be "business as usual."

On The WEB

Find more resources on successful reunions at:
- www.militaryonesource.com
- www.afterdeployment.org
- www.apa.org/psychologists/resilience.html
- www.apa.org/psychologists/pdfs/militaryfamilies.pdf

Some things to think about that may help in experiencing the 3 Rs:

- Set yourself realistic goals and help your family by letting them know what it is you need and how they can help you. Vice versa, your family has dealt with many things while you were away; don't just expect them to drop everything and focus on you.
- Don't come back and lay down the rules. Watch the new routine and then look for ways you can help out and become a part of it again.
- Listen to your family members. Listen to how your partner has been living while you were away. Listen to your children and what they were doing while you were away.

Early on, identify people who you can turn to for help and support. Some of these people may be friends who are good to talk to and some may be those that can offer more professional guidance, such as a social worker, chaplain or financial advisor.

Be patient-with yourself and with your family.

(Editor's Note: Dr. Trish Prosser is a Public Health Psychologist with the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine.)

Return: Remaining 150 troops to return home early next year

CONTINUED FROM A-1

me by my first name!"

More than 300 family members, comrades and loved ones packed the MDF and screamed with joy as the Soldiers marched in to the theme song from the movie classic "Rocky." Following remarks from 8th Theater Sustainment Command deputy commanding officer, Col. Steven Pate, Spc. James Murphy was called to the front of the formation to take part in the "First Kiss" ceremony.

Amber rushed out to embrace her husband, planting a long-awaited kiss on her Soldier.

"It was awesome," he says. "I wasn't really expecting it and it was very special."

Staff Sgt. John David Hilty, 45th Sust. Bde. Support Operations, and a native of Bowie, Md., held his one-year-old son, Jordan Drew, and reunited with his wifeJamie at the conclusion of the ceremony.

"He's huge, he's a little miracle," Hilty said of his son. "We've been married 10 years and we finally got one!"

This deployment was Hilty's third, but he said the welcome home ceremonies never get old.

"This is the best feeling in the world," Hilty said. "I'm going to take about 30 days off, spend time with the family, then attend my senior leader course, get back to training because the Army never stops. We've been doing this for 10 years and we love it, it's our life."

The brigade deployed last January in support of Operation Enduring Freedom where they were the only sustainment brigade in Afghanistan. They were responsible for providing items such as fuel, foodstuffs and equipment to the warfighters on the ground. To accomplish this, they ran an average of 41 convoys a month to forward operating bases throughout Regional Command-East and Regional Command-South.

During their year in Afghanistan, the brigade's footprint increased considerably. When they arrived in January they were responsible for 1,200 Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen. By December, these figures had increased to 3,300 personnel.

The 45th Sust. Bde. was also instrumental in providing training to the Afghan National Army. They provided vital training on subjects varying from noncommissioned officer professional development, to combat life-saving skills, to weapons handling.

This was the brigade's second 12-month deployment since transforming from the former 25th Infantry Division Support Command in November 2005. The brigade returned from Northern Iraq in July 2006.

Waterborne challenge tests 545th Trans. Co.

Story and Photo by
SGT. RICARDO BRANCH
8th Theater Sustainment Command Public Affairs

HICKAM AIR FORCE BASE – Army watercraft operators from the 545th Transportation Company put their bodies on the line during the waterborne challenge competition, Dec. 8, here.

The event came about as a way to bring the team together before many of them travel across the country on leave for the holiday season.

"Today's our day to get everyone together before the holidays for a friendly competition to test their fitness," said Capt. David Walters, company commander, 545th Trans. Co. "It's not a team challenge but more of an opportunity for them to compete individually against each other."

During the challenge, Soldiers began with a 3.5-mile run in body armor, followed by a 250-meter swim, a 100-meter chain drag and a 50-meter low crawl.

Spc. Daniel Mineweaser, a watercraft operator with the 545th Trans. Co., and overall winner of the competition, said the challenge really pushed his body to the limits.

"It was pretty hard," he said. "I'm a good runner, so I knew I'd do well on the run but then going right into the swim ... I was really beat at that point, which made the last two events really, really hard."

A Soldier from the 650th Transportation Detachment swims 250-meters during the Waterborne Challenge Dec. 8 at Hickam Airforce Base.

Mineweaser had one goal for himself: performing above and beyond in the competition.

"We have four different detachments in our company," he said. "Our detachment, the 603rd, always tries to be the top dog, and I wanted to do it for them."

Each age bracket recognized the first place finisher but for Walters, the real winners were everyone who competed.

"The Soldiers did outstanding," he said. "Any event to test their physical fitness is great and everyone here gave 100 percent and beyond. I'm proud of them all."

Program: Software program will ease wait

CONTINUED FROM A-1

said. However, he added, the case-management software is expected to be finalized this week, closing at least 1,000 cases. Those cases will then be forwarded to Defense Finance and Accounting Service for payment.

"The latest enhancement gives us the ability to close the cases," Whitley said, and will allow Army claims managers to advise claimants on the status of their claims.

He added that he is working on adding more claims managers to his staff of 14. "We saw the volume coming forward," he said, "and we knew we had to make some changes both on software and personnel."

As soon as the software changes are tested and finalized, he added, his staff will be better able to ease the backlog.

"We are hoping this will knock down on the anxiety caused by our backlog and e-mails," Whitley said. "We are really working through those and trying to focus exclusively on claims clearing."

The deadline to submit Stop Loss pay claims is Oct. 21, 2010.

(Editor's Note: Navy Lt. Jennifer Cragg serves in the Defense Media Activity's emerging media directorate.)

News Briefs

Send news announcements for Soldiers and civilian employees to community@hawaiiarmyweekly.com.

24 / Thursday

Office Closure – The 8th Theater Sustainment Command and U.S. Army Garrison-Hawaii Staff Judge Advocate offices will be closed Dec. 24, 25, 31 and Jan. 1, 2010, in observance of the holidays.

January

7 / Thursday

Battleship Missouri Re-enlistment Opportunity – Individuals who have held a military ceremony aboard the Battleship Missouri during 2009 are invited to man the rails of the ship, Jan. 7, 2010, as it returns to Pearl Harbor's Battleship Row after three months in dry dock.

In addition, a special mass re-enlistment ceremony will be held while the ship is in tow, providing a rare opportunity to re-enlist on a U.S. battleship while it is underway.

See your retention noncommissioned officer to arrange your re-enlistment, or call 455-1600, ext. 225, or e-mail mikep@ussmissouri.org.

11 / Monday

MLK Day Observances – The 8th Provisional Brigade and Team Equal Opportunity (EO) Hawaii will host two special observances for Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Everyone is invited to attend:

•Jan. 11, 7-9 a.m. – Join a breakfast gathering at the Hale Ikena, Fort Shafter. Tickets for the breakfast are on sale and can be purchased for $15, by calling Master Sgt. Ivan Brenes, 438-2253 or Sgt. 1st Class Nathaiel Chromczak at 438-9310. Seating is limited.

•Jan. 13, 10:30 a.m.-noon – Enjoy a cultural diversity experience through music, song and slide shows with special guest speaker Mr. Krish Dhanam during a special presentation at the Sgt. Smith Theater, Schofield Barracks.

Call Master Sgt. Ray McCall at 655-4802/4808 or e-mail ray.mccall@us.army.mil.

Ongoing

HECO Gate Closure – The HECO Gate, which is located near Wheeler Middle School and exits onto Kunia Road, is closed until further notice. Open during peak traffic hours to assist with traffic flow, the gate's use is not needed during the 25th Combat Aviation Brigade's deployment. Call 656-6751.

Fort Shafter Construction – Construction on Funston Road, Fort Shafter, Dec. 14-Jan. 1, 2010, will cause changes in traffic

SEE NEWS BRIEFS, A-8

SAMC wraps up successful year of service, community outreach

SGT. RICARDO BRANCH
8th Theater Sustainment Command Public Affairs

HONOLULU – The Sergeant Audie Murphy Club (SAMC) of Hawaii, an organization of noncommissioned officers (NCO) who make up a highly integrated, nonprofit organization to reach out to the local and military communities, are wrapping up a highly successful year.

"Our success in many events this past year is a direct reflection of the support we've received from our members," said Staff Sgt. Richard Yniguez, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 8th Theater Sustainment Command and SAMC president. "We've been successful because of them."

This past year, SAMC has been responsible for three food drives, collecting shoes and school supplies for orphans, four Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) events, and the coordination of numerous special military events for the community.

"One of the roles we have in the club is to show the civilian community the best representation of the Army," Yniguez said. "By showing that there's a group of individuals willing to support their community, everyone will know we are a valued asset to any community."

Over the past four years, SAMC have fostered good community relations with many programs in Hawaii. SAMC has sent many of its NCOs out to help local events, often with their members fulfilling the roles of community liaisons between the Army and locals.

"The best program we've had that's still going strong is the support to the local JROTC programs," Yniguez said. "Not only are we there to judge the events, but we're there to make sure the Army is represented by top-notch NCOs."

For Yniguez, the job is important work, but it's not about the work needing to be done, it's about Soldiers giving to others and impacting the community in a positive way.

"When an NCO in the Army supports the local community, he's setting a positive example for young Soldiers – that's our nature as NCOs, in addition to guiding, training and influencing."

Throughout the last year, NCOs from SAMC have donated 613 volunteer hours and thousands of dollars in donated food and goods to military and civilian communities. They have helped wounded veterans visiting the island, donated food to needy families and supported many nonprofit organizations, but it doesn't stop there.

Outside of community service, SAMC members have built an organization designed to strengthen the Noncommissioned Officer Corps.

"We have a large amount of diversity within our ranks," Yniguez said. "Because of military occupation specialties and positions, our members have become more successful because they can grow and learn from one another to become better leaders."

Staff Sgt. Bryan Haldeman, SAMC member, 7th Engineer Dive Team, summed up best what new members can look forward to upon joining the club.

"You are joining a team of other fellow NCOs who make up the top two percent of the Army in this club," Haldeman said. "When you join, you step out and become more that an NCO who leads Soldiers, you become a community leader who sets the example for the rest of the NCO Corps and others to follow."

Courtesy Photo

(From left to right) Staff Sgt. Richard Yniguez, Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC), 8th Theater Sustainment Command; Staff Sgt. Bryan Haldeman, 7th Engineer Dive Team; Connie Mitchell, executive director, Institute for Humane Services; Staff Sgt. Celeste Harris, 45th Sust. Brigade; and 1st Sgt. Martin Jenkins, HHC, 516th Signal Bde.; stand before the many donated goods collected during the November drive, at Honolulu Community College.

To become a member of the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club (SAMC), noncommissioned officers (NCOs) must first be selected and go through a rigorous selection board. Upon passing the board they are then inducted into the organization.

Since its creation in Fort Hood, Texas, in 1986, the SAMC has spread to all Army installations with membership stretching into the thousands.

Aloha: Brown departing to Europe

CONTINUED FROM A-1

"Assembled here before you are the various storied colors of this division, and they are here today to honor and to recognize Brig. Gen. Robert B. Brown, and his family, and everything they've done for the Soldiers of the Tropic Lightning Division," said Maj. Gen. Robert L. Caslen Jr., commanding general, 25th Inf. Div.

Brown has served the U.S. Army for many years in various roles and duties, including the executive assistant to the commander, United States Pacific Command. When the division deployed to Iraq as the headquarters for Task Force Lightning, Brown headed a separate command post in Mosul, the Ninewa provincial capital.

"As the commander of Task Force Lightning, I could not have been better served by Bob Brown and his team," Caslen said. "For many of you who know Bob Brown, his leadership and competence are unparalleled.

"He's provided tremendous support to this division with his talent and ability to manage the support and logistical needs of the Soldiers. He also projects a personality that matches his stature," continued Caslen, with a nod to Brown's impressive height. "Utilizing the combination of all these qualities, simply put – he builds relationships, the kind of relationships that benefit the Soldiers, our Army, and the nation.

Brig. Gen. B. Robert Brown, left, deputy commanding general (support) 25th Infantry Division, thanks Maj. Gen. Robert L. Caslen Jr., commanding general, 25th Inf. Div., after a "Flying V" ceremony honoring Brown for his service during his tour with the Tropic Lightning Division.

"Thanks for all you have done, and know there is always a place for you and your family here at Schofield Barracks and the 25th Infantry Division," Caslen said.

Brown thanked his wife, division leadership and staff, his mentors, his team in Mosul, and a group of friends he called the "North Shore Crew."

"They've taught me to surf, they taught me the culture in Hawaii, and I'm just grateful for the friendship of those in the community – it's just been fantastic," Brown said. "It's truly a great team, I'm really honored to be a part of it."

After the ceremony, attendees bid Brown and his wife Patti farewell with lei, hugs, handshakes and warm wishes as they prepare to depart for Europe. Nominated for appointment to the grade of major general, Brown will serve his next assignment in Germany as the chief of staff, U.S. Army-Europe and Seventh Army, deputy commanding general, U.S. Army-North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Unique to the division, the "Flying V" ceremony consists of brigade commanders and unit guidons from the battalion and above, posted in a V-shaped formation. The observance is similar to the more familiar change of command ceremony. The Marine Forces Pacific Band provided musical accompaniment.

Furlough: Letter urging change drafted

CONTINUED FROM A-1

the funding challenge is not acceptable. The impact of Furlough Fridays on the quality of education for our children in Hawaii is of great concern and importance to the entire military community," said Lt. Col. Richard Gledhill, JVEF board member and commander of U.S. Army Garrison-Oahu, who coordinates and integrates base operations support for all Oahu Army installations.

When the local newspapers announced that the Board of Education (BOE) was filing to restore instructional time, the military had hope. But, after closer review, the military felt the waiver action by the BOE appeared misleading.

"Actually only 17 percent of all the available days were requested to be converted back to instructional days. Of our 54 heavily impacted military schools, only eight schools chose to convert one day to an instructional day, five schools converted two days, and three schools converted three days back to instructional days" Gledhill said. "Let's at least have dialogue about issues and stop calling them misperceptions as if they don't exist except in our imagination."

He stressed that Furlough Fridays are very real to the military community. The military wants to look for possible solutions from a perspective of what is best for all of Hawaii's children.

A motion was made by Gledhill for JVEF board members to draft a letter addressed to key stakeholders regarding the impacts of furlough days and their resulting loss of instruction days. This motion was seconded by retired Col. John Penebacker, BOE and unanimously supported by Rep. Mark Takai, and the remaining board members. This letter would urge decisive and constructive dialogue to end this education crisis. JVEF is currently working to draft this letter to be published by the first of the year.

TSA works to let families see off, greet troops at airport

SAMANTHA L. QUIGLEY
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – It's a scene that's played out in airports across the country numerous times in the past eight years: Families and service members clinging to each other, either sad to leave or happy and vowing to never let go again.

The emotion always is appropriate, but the location of the scene – just beyond the airline ticket counters and before the security checkpoint - robs the actors of precious minutes with loved ones. Those lost minutes are unnecessary, at least as far as the Transportation Security Administration is concerned, a TSA spokesperson said.

"TSA permits the airlines to offer a gate pass to family members of arriving or departing U.S. service members," Greg Soule said. "Family members who want to accompany a ... service member being deployed to the boarding gate, or greet them (as they return) from deployment at the arrival gate may receive passes to enter the secure area of the airport."

Though TSA allows this practice, the final decision rests with the airlines, from which family members must request the passes. Each airline, and possibly even airport, has its own rules and procedures, Soule said.

Families interested in obtaining a gate pass need to check with the airline before arriving at the airport to determine the exact rules and procedures.

"It's an airline procedure," Soule said. "It is something that TSA has permitted the airlines to do, though we have security regulations that we provide to the airlines. "Typically, only passengers who are flying and have a boarding pass are allowed to pass through security."

TSA makes this allowance out of support for the armed forces, Soule said.

Though military family members with gate passes can pass through security, they must adhere to all security regulations. This includes removing coats, jackets and shoes, and the liquids regulation. Anything of a liquid or gel consistency must be 3.4 ounces or less and be sealed in a quart-sized storage bag to pass through security, Soule said.

On The WEB

The policy on gate passes is available on the Transportation Security Administration's Web site, www.tsa.gov, under the heading "Accommodations for U.S. Military Personnel."

Each family member would have to present the gate pass as well as a valid government-issued identification card, Soule added.

TSA doesn't keep statistics on how frequently military families take advantage of this opportunity. Volunteers at Washington-Dulles International Airport's USO lounge said they are not frequently asked about the program or for assistance in obtaining the passes.

Separations and reunions are emotional enough in normal situations, but with the holidays in full swing, they're even more poignant. And thanks to the TSA and cooperating airlines, they can be more positive.

"We're happy to do this and make this small exemption," he added, noting that TSA officials recognize that military families, as well as service members, make sacrifices for the country.

The TSA has no jurisdiction overseas, so U.S. military family members wishing to see off or meet their servicemember at a foreign airport are encouraged to check with the airline for local policy.

Oahu dining facilities open doors to patrons for Christmas holiday

Dining facilities keep tradition alive with feast

U.S. ARMY GARRISON-HAWAII
News Release

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS – Three dining facilities (DFACs) on Oahu are welcoming service members, their families, retirees and authorized guests of patrons to their Christmas feast.

The meals include traditional holiday favorites, such as glazed baked ham, roast turkey, mashed potatoes and eggnog.

According to Ron Bate, food program manager, Directorate of Logistics, U.S. Army Garrison-Hawaii, hosting Christmas dinner in the DFAC is a long standing tradition.

"Participation has dwindled somewhat in the mainland, (but the) commands here remain vigilant in recognizing that this is a time of year when family and friends come together to celebrate the season and to ensure what those far from their loved ones are remembered and offered a pleasant place to dine," Bate said.

The DFAC management understands the importance of the holiday tradition and providing a 'home-away-from-home' for Soldiers, their families and retirees, and finds many guests appreciate the gesture.

"We still have many retirees and their families join us in the DFACs as they recall the 'old days' when everyone showed up at the DFAC for traditional Christmas meal," Bate said. "I think for them it is a time of remembrance and also a way to help keep the tradition alive.

"Where else can you get a Christmas meal with so much food for just $7?"

DFACs open for Christmas dinner include the 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team "Warrior Inn," in Building 2085, Schofield Barracks; the 45th Sustainment Brigade Consolidated DFAC "K-Quad," in Building 780, Schofield Barracks; and the 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team "F-Quad," in Building 650, Schofield Barracks.

Meal prices are as follows:

- Meal cardholders: No charge
- Family and guests of E-4 and below: $5.95
- E-4 and below: $7
- E-5 and above, family, guests: $7
- Officers and enlisted on BAS: $7
- Retirees, authorized civilians: $7

(Editor's Note: The the U.S. Army-Pacific DFAC, in Building 503B, Fort Shafter, held its holiday dinner Wednesday.)

Meal Hours

•K-Quad, Building 780
Schofield Barracks
45th Sustainment Brigade
Holiday meal served Dec. 23.
Breakfast: 7-8 a.m.
Lunch: 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
Dinner: Closed
Contact: Sgt. 1st Class Petie Miller, 655-6315

•Warrior Inn, Building 2085
Schofield Barracks
2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team
Holiday meal served Dec. 23.
Breakfast: 7-8 a.m.
Lunch: 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
Dinner: Closed
Contact: Sgt. 1st Class Derek Smith, 655-1062

•F-Quad, Building 650
Schofield Barracks
3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team
Holiday meal served Dec. 25.
Breakfast: 7-8 a.m.
Lunch: 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
Dinner: 5:30-6:30 p.m.
Contact: Mr. Norman Lopes, 655-4833

Christmas Menu

~Spiced Eggnog
~Manhattan Clam Chowder
~Pimento Cheese ~Stuffed Celery
~Fruit Cocktail - Lime ~Gelatin Salad
~Shrimp Cocktail with Seafood Cocktail Sauce
~Baked Glazed Ham Studded with Pineapple and Clove
~Traditional Sliced Roast Turkey with Giblet Gravy on the Side
~Hand Carved Steamship Round of Beef and Horseradish Sauce
~Steamed Broccoli
~Savory Bread Dressing
~Carrot and Celery Amandine
~Favorite Mashed Red-Skin Potatoes
~Scalloped Sweet Potatoes and Apples
~Red Cabbage with Sweet and Sour Sauce
~Festive Salad Bar with Assorted Dressings
~Cornbread Muffins, Assorted Seasonal Fresh Fruits
~Holiday Layered Gelatin Salad, Cranberry-Orange Relish
~Assorted Rolls, Whole Grain Breads & Butter/Margarine Pats
~Hot Tea, Hot Fresh Coffee, Hot Chocolate
~Chilled Milk Selections, Iced Tea, Soft Drinks
~Dessert Bar: Decorated Cookies, Angel Food Cake
~Bread Pudding with Hard Sauce, Apple and Pecan Pies
~Ribbon Candy Pieces or Colorful Candy Canes, Mixed Nuts
~Decorated Holiday Cake to Wish You Joy-filled Happy Holidays!
~Layered Red & Green Whipped Topping - Chocolate Pudding Parfait

Couples: Training strengthens marriage bonds

CONTINUED FROM A-2

that Soldiers who are happily married perform better at work, earn more money and feel more fulfilled with their life," said Chaplain (Col.) Daniel Moll, 311th Signal Command, who co-taught the course along with Chaplain (Capt.) Jimmy Major, 307th ITSB, and Chaplain (Maj.) Richard Graves, 516th Signal Brigade.

The Strong Bonds program provides guidance and materials for chaplains to offer three types of events focused on increasing relationship skills: Marital enrichment, family enrichment and single Soldier enrichment. All three curricula were researched, developed and carefully adapted for the Army Chief of Chaplains office to ensure the use of validated educational procedures and evidence-based material.

"Our theme or focus changes, depending on the dynamics of the group," Graves said. "For example, this group only had one new couple, all the others had been married a while. Those who have been married longer can share their experiences with the others. The ones who can benefit the most are the younger couples, who have a whole life together ahead of them."

"We hope that they will keep using the techniques that we teach them, to help them work together to solve problems, and break unhealthy patterns of behavior," Graves said.

Sgt. Luis Perez, right, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 307th Integrated Theater Signal Battalion, and his wife Christian share excitement about enjoying some activities outside after the last lecture presentation during the Strong Bonds couples training at Turtle Bay Resort, Dec. 3-5.

"Many couples have told me the tool that really works well for them later is the speaker-listener technique."

"I learned the importance of giving the floor to my wife sometimes, and knowing when to reciprocate," Perez said. "We've already tried some of these techniques for communication, and we found that they do work."

The history of the Strong Bonds program actually started here in Hawaii, with the 25th Infantry Division in the mid-1990s. During the past 15 years the program has undergone many changes and considerable growth, to an Armywide funded program. It is one of many existing programs that will become part of the Army's new Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) program.

"Our main goal for couples who attend the training is that they take with them a new awareness of different ways to solve problems, and that they recognize these techniques as tools that they can put to use, to "think outside their foxhole," Moll said.

In order to attend a Strong Bond training, Soldiers must contact their chain of command or chaplain's office, complete a registration form that their supervisor must sign, and be willing to participate. All Strong Bond programs are free for Soldiers in the active component, Reserve and National Guard, and their spouses and families. Moll said the 311th is considering the possibility of offering training sessions during Battle Training Assembly (BTA) weekends for Reservists.

"We want a strong force, and we recognize that essential to this are several types of fitness: physical fitness, psychological fitness, spiritual fitness, and I believe a fourth and equally-important type is relational fitness," Moll said. "These are all ultimately vital to the accomplishment of our mission, and our ability to be resilient to the demands and hardship of combat."

News Briefs

From A-5

flow affecting military personnel and visitors.

All inbound and outbound lanes at Buckner Gate will be redirected through the Military Police (MP) Station parking lot. All visitors and trucks will be redirected through Patton Gate, located 100 feet from Buckner Gate, which will be open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Hours for other gates remain unchanged and can be viewed online at www.garrison.hawaii.army.mil/sites/traffic/gatehours. asp.

Motorists are asked to set aside additional travel time in light of expected traffic congestion during construction. Call 656-6751/6750 for more details.

IR Hotline – U.S. Army Garrison-Hawaii employees, (civilian, military and contractor) can report instances of fraud, waste or mismanagement to the Internal Review Office (IRO) "IR Hotline" by telephone, e-mail, fax or online. The IRO will refer reports to management or initiate an investigation.

Call the IR Hotline at 655-8121. Forms are available online at www.garrison.hawaii.army.mil (Click "Directorates and Support Staff"). Fax reports to 655-0791, or e-mail InternalReview@hawaii.army. mil. Please provide the required information on the hotline report.

Military Academy Admissions – West Point is recruiting the best qualified Soldiers, noncommissioned officers and officers to either become cadets, or join its staff and faculty.

Each year, regular Army Soldiers are offered direct admission to the U.S. Military Academy (USMA) or to the U.S. Military Academy Preparatory School.

For more information, contact Maj. Brian Easley, Soldier admissions officer, at 845-938-5780 or brian.easley@usma.edu.

Those interested in an assignment to USMA can complete a USMA interest form at swww.usma.army.mil/adjutantgeneral.

Commanders Referral Program – Commanders and first sergeants can approve up to $1,000 of basic living expenses from Army Emergency Relief (AER), which offers an essential training course that commanders and first sergeants must complete to use the program.

Classes run from 9-9:30 a.m., the fourth Wednesday of the month, at Army Community Service, Building 2091, Schofield Barracks. Call 655-4ACS (655-4227) to register or contact Jackie Torres, AER officer, at 655-7132, or e-mail jacqueline.torres1@us.army.mil.

Army Nurse Corps Scholarships – The Army Nurse Corps is offering scholarships to qualified individuals in the amount of $3,000 per applicant. Application deadline is April 1, 2010.

Questions concerning the application process should be sent to education@e-anca.org or the Web site www.eanca.org/ContactUs.html.

Kolekole Pass Hours of Operation – Kolekole Pass, the road that connects Schofield Barracks to the Waianae coast through Naval Magazine-Lualualei, is open Monday-Friday, 7 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Traffic is permitted to drive from Waianae to Schofield, 7-11:45 a.m., and traffic is permitted to drive from Schofield to Waianae, noon-5:30 p.m.

The pass is closed weekends and holidays, and operation times are subject to change. Motorists are urged to call 668-3007 before attempting to access the pass.

Fort Shafter Legal Assistance Office Relocates – The Fort Shafter Legal Assistance and Claims offices have relocated due to building renovations. They are now located on Fort Shafter Flats, Building 1599. Walk-in hours are from 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Wednesday and Friday, and from 1-3 p.m., Thursday. Call 438-6725.

Religious Services – A full list of all services, children's programs and educational classes offered by the garrison's Religious Support Office can be found online at www.garrison.hawaii.army.mil.

HAWAI'I ARMY WEEKLY

PAU HANA

www.garrison.hawaii.army.mil/haw.asp "When work is finished." FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2009

Season's Greetings

BILL MOSSMAN
Staff Writer

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS – Giving and receiving holiday greeting cards is an important part of celebrating the season for many. Annually the U.S. Army Garrison-Oahu (USAG-Oahu) Holiday Card Lane and contest gives units and organizations an opportunity to spread holiday cheer throughout the community in a really big way.

Open to all units, agencies and organizations within the local installations, the contest features giant wooden cards fashioned from two pieces of plywood, each measuring 4 feet by 8 feet.

"I've had several people tell me that they really appreciated the craftsmanship of the cards, and how beautiful they were," said Ted Taijeron, operations specialist for Oahu North Community, Director's Office, USAG-Oahu. "I also think it's amazing that we had as many entries as we did, considering how many of our Soldiers are currently deployed and how many units are currently here.

"I'd call it a success."

The North community entries, which totaled 21 in all, have been on display in front of Tropic Lightning Museum and along Macomb Road, since Nov. 20.

The Oahu North community card winners were announced during the annual tree lighting ceremony, Dec. 3. Taking top honors from the North community was the team from the Veterinary Command, Schofield Barracks, whose card production featured a three-dimensional house with an intricately designed Christmas tree.

Second place went to AAFES, whose card showcased ornamental balls with pictures of deployed Soldiers on them; while the third-place ribbon went to the 2nd Squadron, 14th Calvary, whose card featured Santa Claus on a horse.

The Oahu South community did itself proud this season, with a previously unheard of 15 entries for the Holiday Card Lane contest.

"It was the most we've ever had," confessed Mark Young, director, Oahu South community, USAG-Oahu. "Last year, we had 12 entries. So this was a good year for us."

During the Dec. 10 Oahu South Holiday Concert and Tree Lighting Ceremony at Palm Circle, Fort Shafter, the winning cards were also announced. They were: first place, 8th Theater Sustainment Command, Special Troops Battalion; second place, 311th Signal Command; and third place, AAFES.

Annually both the Holiday Card Lane contest and the community tree lighting ceremonies help kickoff the Christmas season for garrison Soldiers and their families. The holiday cards will remain on display for the public to enjoy until Jan. 4.

Above — Schofield Barracks Veterinary Services', three-dimensional card placed first in the Oahu North Holiday Card Lane contest.

On The WEB

See more photos of the Holiday Card Lane and the U.S. Army Garrison-Oahu tree lighting ceremonies at www.flickr.com/usag-hi.

Above — The third place Oahu North card submission by 2nd Squadron, 14th Calvary claims,"Santa Claus must be 'Cav.' because he wears red and white!"

Left — The top three winning card designs (from right to left clockwise) from the Oahu South community were awarded at the Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony, Dec. 10. Holiday cards in both communities will be on display until Jan. 4.

Photos by Amy L. Bugala and Mike Egami, U.S. Army Garrison-Hawaii Public Affairs

Holiday concerts, events, activities, scheduled islandwide

The holiday season is here. Families can get in the spirit of the season at a variety of magical events taking place around the island of Oahu during December.

Friday, Dec. 18

Christmas in Polynesia – The Polynesian Cultural Center will feature "Christmas in Polynesia" a variety of live entertainment by local performing groups, hula halau, and the center's own talented musicians and performers, as well as fun, family-friendly activities.

The center will also be outfitted with glimmering lights, cheery decor, Christmas trees, and a staging of the Nativity scene. Christmas in Polynesia performances are 6-7 p.m. and are free and open to the public.

The performances are as follows:

- Dec. 18, Kumu Hula Ed Collier's Hula halau
- Dec. 19, Halau o Pualoke
- Dec. 21, Nani Laie singers and dancers

For more information on each event, call 367-7060 or 293-3333 or visit www.Polynesia.com.

Sunday, Dec. 20

Concert – Na Leo will perform their 25th Annual Holiday Music Spectacular, Dec. 20, 22 and 23, 7:30 p.m., at the Hale Koa Hotel.

The concert is open to the public, and military discounts are available. Ticket prices start at $35. Call 888-995-5558, or visit www.naleo.net/holidayshow.

Friday, Dec. 25

USO Christmas – The Airport USO will host a Christmas dinner Dec. 25, 11:30 a.m. During that time, free phone and video calls will be provided by Skype to USOs around the world to keep traveling troops and family members connected with loved ones.

Call 836-3351 for more information.

Sunday, Dec. 27

Symphony Concert – Musicians of the Honolulu Symphony will present a free concert Dec. 27, at the Blaisdell Concert Hall. Matinee begins at 4 p.m.

Selections from Romeo and Juliet and Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 will be performed.

Tickets for this free event are available at the Blaisdell Box Office. Call 591-2211 for more information or visit www.honolulusymphonymusicians.org

MWR Briefs

Serving America's Army in Hawaii

18 / Today

Waikiki Party Bus – Let Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation be your own personal chauffeur to Waikiki on payday Fridays. The free party bus runs again, Dec. 18, 9 p.m.-4 a.m., and Dec. 31, for New Year's Eve.

The bus is free, but tickets are required to reserve your seat. Pick-ups are available at both Schofield Barracks and Fort Shafter. Call 655-9971 or 438-1985.

23 / Wednesday

Positive Psychology – Army Community Service will offer a new course throughout December. Learn the art of optimism and positive psychology to build resiliency and reduce stress. Upcoming class dates include the following:

•Dec. 23, 29; noon-1 p.m., Kalakaua Community Center, Schofield Barracks.

•Dec. 21, 30; 1:30-2:30 p.m., ACS Classroom (Building 2091), Schofield Barracks. To register, call 655-1670.

Money Management – Learn the basic tools for financial success, develop a spending plan, reduce expenses and make your paycheck work for you during the next Money Management class, Dec. 23 and 30, 10:30-noon, at Schofield Barracks Army Community Service. Call 655-4227.

Car Buying – Learn valuable information that can save you thousands of dollars and make the whole auto buying experience less stressful during a Car Buying class Dec. 23, 9-10:30 a.m. at Schofield Barracks Army Community Service. Call 655-4227 for more information.

24 / Thursday

Tropics Holiday Party – Calling all those staying on island for the holidays: Tropics Recreation Center, Schofield Barracks has your home away from home ready and waiting on Dec. 24, 3-8 p.m.

Join us for free food, great prizes, live entertainment and tons of other fun activities and games. Call 655-1130.

28 / Monday

Keiki Art Club – Join us for a special edition of the Keiki Art Club during holiday break on Dec. 28, 29 and 30 at the Schofield Barracks Arts and Crafts Center. The creative keiki classes will run 10-11:30 a.m. each day and registration is required.

For more information call 655-4202.

Rebecca Ellison | U.S. Army Garrison-Hawaii Public Affairs

Sesame Street Live

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS — Elmo and his pals Cookie, Zoe, Grover and Rosita brought Sesame Street to Hawaii for more than 2,000 family members at the Martinez Physical Fitness Center, here, Saturday. The half-hour show is an extension of Sesame Workshop's Talk, Listen, Connect program aimed at helping military youths deal with deployment related issues. See more photos from the event at www.flickr.com/usag-hi.

29 / Tuesday

Customer Appreciation Fish Fry – Outdoor Recreation is hosting a customer appreciation fish fry, Dec. 29. Call us for more information at 655-0143.

30 / Wednesday

Basic Investing – Learn the basics of investing Dec. 30, 9-10:30 a.m. at Schofield Barracks Army Community Service. Learn the difference between various saving accounts, CDs, Money Market Accounts, Mutual Funds, Bonds and stocks.

The Financial Readiness Program also has one-on-one personal financial counseling available by appointment. Call 655-4227.

Ongoing

Furlough Fridays – Looking for Furlough Fridays activities? The Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (FMWR) has you covered with a variety of options for students and teens in all grades. Programs offered at Child, Youth and School Services (CYSS), Army Community Service and Sgt. Yano Library will keep your keiki busy.

An FMWR Furlough Friday Activity program guide can be downloaded at www.mwrarmyhawaii.com, click on CYSS. The next Furlough Friday days are scheduled, Jan. 15, 29; Feb. 5, 12; March 5, 12; April 23, 30; and May 7, 14.

AFTB Survival Training – Army Family Team Building (AFTB) connects families to the Army one class at a time. Call today to find out how commanders, Family Readiness Groups and others can use AFTB to assist in team building, increase unit readiness, help new family members adjust to the Army lifestyle, and reacquaint other family members.

For more information on classes, concept blocks, and unit briefs, contact Catherine Baldwin or Shelly Hinzman at 655-1703 or e-mail catherine.baldwin@us.army.mil.

ITR – Let Information, Ticketing & Reservations (ITR) help you explore paradise. Use the online request form at www.mwrarmyhawaii.com, click travel, tours & tickets. Special military rates are available.

Call Schofield Barracks ITR at 655-9971, Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m; or Fort Shafter ITR at 438-1985, Monday-Friday 10 a.m.-6 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m.-3 p.m. The offices are closed on Sundays and federal holidays.

Tutoring Available – The Department of the Army has contracted tutor.com to offer free, online tutoring to students in kindergarten–high school and college prep. Tutor.com gives students access to live tutoring help 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The tutors are certified teachers, college professors, and graduate school students who provide tutoring services in all grade levels of math, science, english and social studies. This service is available at no cost to Army families.

Visit tutor.com via the Army One Source website at www.myarmyonesource.com/cyss_tutor. Contact the School Liaison Office at 655-9818.

Confidential Counseling – Military and Family Life Consultants (MFLC) are available to assist Soldiers and family members by providing short-term, situational, problem-solving counseling services, which are private and can be arranged by calling 222-7088. If your issue is financial-based, call an MFLC personal financial counselor at 265-8136.

Blue Star Card – Spouses of deployed Soldiers are eligible to sign up for a Blue Star card (BSC), which will give card holders discounts at Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation facilities, activities and special events. BSC's are valid throughout the entire deployment. To sign up, visit Army Community Service (ACS) at Schofield Barracks or Tripler Army Medical Center ACS, or e-mail sarah.chadwick@us.army.mil.

BSC Facebook page – Stay current on all upcoming Blue Star Card (BSC) events and activities at the BSC Facebook page. R.S.V.P. online to attend events, see photos, and tag your friends with special BSC stickers. Find BSC at www.facebook.com.

Worship Services

Additional religious services, children's programs, educational services and contact information can be found at www.garrison.hawaii.army.mil. (Click on "Religious Support Office" under the "Directorates and Support Staff" menu).

AMR:	Aliamanu Chapel
FD:	Fort DeRussy Chapel
FS:	Fort Shafter Chapel
HMR:	Helemano Chapel
MPC:	Main Post Chapel, Schofield Barracks
PH:	Aloha Jewish Chapel, Pearl Harbor
TAMC:	Tripler Army Medical Center Chapel
WAAF:	Wheeler Army Airfield Chapel

Buddhist Services
•First Sunday, 1 p.m. at FD
•Fourth Sunday, 1 p.m. at MPC Annex

Catholic Masses
•Friday, 9 a.m. at AMR
•Saturday, 5 p.m. at FD, TAMC and WAAF chapels
•Saturday, 6 p.m. a Hawaiian-style Mass (May-Aug. only) near the Army Museum (FD)
•Sunday services:
-7:30 a.m. at WAAF
-8 a.m. at AMR
-10:30 a.m. at MPC Annex
-11 a.m. at TAMC
•Monday-Friday, noon at MPC and TAMC

Gospel Worship
•Sunday, noon at MPC
•Sunday, 12:30 p.m. at AMR

Islamic Prayers and Study
•Friday, 1 p.m. at MPC Annex
•Saturday and Sunday, 5:30 a.m., 6, 7 and 8 p.m. at MPC Annex

Jewish Shabbat (Sabbath)
•Monday, 6 p.m. at PH (Bible Study)
•Friday, 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, 8:15 a.m. at PH

Orthodox Divine Liturgy
•Sunday, 9 a.m. at TAMC

Pagan (Wicca)
•Friday, 7 p.m. at MPC Annex

Protestant Worship
•Sunday Services
-9 a.m. at FD, FS, MPC, TAMC and WAAF chapels
-10 a.m. at AMR and HMR

Community Calendar

Send announcements to community@hawaiiarmyweekly.com.

18 / Today

Scholarships for Military Chidren – Applications are being accepted for the 2010 Scholarships for Military Children Program. Eligible applicants should prepare to submit an essay on the following topic: "You can travel back in time; however, you cannot change events. What point in history would you visit and why?"

Applications must be turned in to a commissary by close of business Feb. 17. At least one scholarship will be awarded at every store location with qualified applicants. To apply, visit www.commissaries.com or diwww.militaryscholar.org for an application.

AER Scholarships – Army Emergency Relief (AER) Scholarship opportunities for the 2010–11 academic year are now available.

Army Families with undergraduate college expenses for their dependent children may be eligible to apply for the Maj. Gen. James Ursano Scholarship Program. The Scholarship Program offers scholarships based on financial need, academics, and leadership/achievement for each academic year.

The Stateside Spouse Education Assistance Program (SSEAP) is a need-based education assistance program designed to assist spouses/widows(ers) in gaining the education required to allow them to qualify for increased occupational opportunities.

Scholarship applications are available online at www.aerhq.org. and due March 1, 2010.

20 / Sunday

Salvation Army Angel Tree – Pearlridge Mall shoppers can share their aloha for the community by choosing an angel from a Salvation Army Angel Tree and granting the wish of a child or a senior citizen who otherwise would not receive any gifts at Christmas. The Angel Tree will be located Uptown, now through Dec. 20, during center hours.

22 / Tuesday

Modified Holiday Hours – The Fort Shafter Thrift Shop will be closed Dec. 22, 24, 25, 29, 31 and Jan. 1, 2010 in observance of the holidays. The Fort Shafter Thrift Shop is normally open Tuesday and Friday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., and Thursday, 2-6 p.m.

31 / Thursday

New Year's Eve Cruise – Celebrate New Year's Eve aboard the Star of Honolulu, Dec. 31. Cruise departs from Aloha Tower Market Place, Pier 8, at 10:45 p.m. and returns Jan. 1 at 12:45 a.m.

Enjoy spectacular views of the fireworks at Aloha Tower Marketplace and along the Waikiki coastline, a "champagne" toast, special party favors, delicious dinner, live entertainment and dancing into 2010. Three cruise packages and Kamaaina/military rates are available ($125.55 per person and up with valid Hawaii or Military ID.)

For reservations or more information, call 983-STAR (7827) or visit www.staroofhonolulu.com.

Father Time Race – Looking for a unique and fabulous activity this New Year's Eve?

Come join Ravenchase Adventures for the Fourth Annual Quest for Father Time adventure race and after-party, Dec. 31.

The event is an adventure race and treasure hunt in downtown Honolulu and Chinatown, on New Year's Eve, 7 p.m-midnight. A combination of the Amazing Race, Da Vinci Code and Raiders of the Lost Ark, teams travel in any direction around the city looking for answers and puzzle pieces along the way.

The game ends with a pupu buffet, champagne toast, party favors and New Year's party.

Visit www.ravenchase.com/public_events/hi.php or e-mail hawaii@ravenchase.com, or call 266-0478.

New Year's Celebration – Ring in the New Year at the Aloha Tower marketplace, Dec. 31. The marketplace will be featuring live entertainment, fireworks, dancing and fun from 7 p.m.-2 a.m. For more infomation visit, www.alohatower.com

January

11 / Monday

MLK Day Observances – The 8th Provisional Brigade and Team Equal Opportunity (EO) Hawaii will host two special observances for Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Everyone is invited to attend:

•Jan. 11, 7-9 a.m. – Join a breakfast gathering at the Hale Ikena, Fort Shafter. Tickets for the breakfast are on sale and can be purchased for $15, by calling Master Sgt. Ivan Brenes, 438-2253 or Sgt. 1st Class Nathaiel Chromczak at 438-9310. Seating is limited.

•Jan. 13, 10:30 a.m.-noon – Enjoy a cultural diversity experience through music, song and slide shows with special guest speaker Mr. Krish Dhanam during a special presentation at the Sgt. Smith Theater, Schofield Barracks.

For more information call Master Sgt. Ray McCall at 655-4802/4808 or e-mail ray.mccall@us.army.mil.

Ongoing

NORAD Tracks Santa – For more than 50 years, NORAD and its predecessor, the Continental Air Defense Command (CONAD) have tracked Santa's Christmas Eve flight. Children can track Santa's progress across the skies of the Pacific or anywhere in the world at the North American Aerospace Defense Command, (NORAD), Web site at www.noradsanta.org.

Twitter – Do you Twitter? Follow the garrison at www.twitter.com/usaghi. For more information, call 656-3153.

Art and Essay Contest – The Armed Services YMCA's annual art and essay contest invites military children to create artwork and essays on this year's themes, "My Military Hero" and "My Military Family." Entries for the art contest must be postmarked no later than Feb. 19, 2010, and are for children in grades K–6.

Students in grades 1-12 are asked to write their essay about "My Military Hero" and postmark entries no later than March 19, 2010.

Winning entrees will be displayed in a number of locations in the Washington D.C. area, and winners will be recognized at a luncheon on Capitol Hill. Entry forms are available at www.asymca.org.

Operation: Military Kids Camp – Operation: Military Kids Camp (OMK), Hawaii, along with YMCA-Camp Erdman are offering two family camps geared toward helping recently redeployed service members and their families reconnect. The camp scheduled, April 9-11, 2010, is open for registration.

Visit www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/4h/omk, or e-mail omk@ctahr.hawaii.eduor, or call 956-4125.

Pacific Aviation Museum Offer – The Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor is offering one free keiki admission (4-12 years old) with each paid adult admission every Saturday and Sunday. Children under 4 are always free.Adult ticket rates are $14; $10 for kamaaina and military. The museum is open 9 a.m.-5 p.m., daily. Visit www.PacificAviationMuseum.org, or call 441-1000.

Recycling – Keep unwanted metals and plastics out of landfills by recycling old cellular phones. Proceeds generated from this initiative will help fund environmental projects and Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation events for the community. Call 656-5411 or 864-1048 for a pick up or drop off at the Environmental Division offices, Building 105, 3rd floor, Wheeler Army Airfield.

All items will be collected when customers request a regular pick up.

To learn more about on-post recycling efforts, go to www.garrison.hawaii.army.mil, and click on "Sustainability."

This Week at the Movies

Sgt. Smith Theater

Call 624-2585 for movie listings or go to aafes.com under reeltime movie listing.

The Fourth Kind
(PG-13)
Fri., Dec. 18, 7 p.m.

Amelia
(PG)
Sat., Dec. 19, 4 p.m.

Michael Jackson's This Is It
(PG)
Sat., Dec. 19, 7 p.m.

Astro Boy
(PG)
Sun., Dec. 20, 2 p.m.

Christmas Carol
(PG)
Wed., Dec. 23, 7 p.m.

No shows on Mondays or Tuesdays.

Women's association sends holiday care packages to troops

Story and Photo by
BILL MOSSMAN
Staff Writer

FORT SHAFTER – The holidays for many deployed Soldiers and Marines just got a little bit brighter, thanks to the efforts of volunteers from the North American Taiwanese Women's Association-Hawaii Chapter (NATWA-HI).

As part of the national organization's annual "Caring for Soldiers" project, six NATWA-HI volunteers paid a visit to the Fort Shafter Post Office, Dec. 8, to ensure the delivery of 11 care packages to troops overseas in time for Christmas.

"We chose to mail the boxes by today so that the troops would receive it by Christmas," said Julie Rohrer, president of NATWA-HI. "We think they'll like what's in them."

Five of the packages were mailed to Soldiers from the 130th Engineer Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, currently stationed in Iraq, while the other six were sent to Marines from the Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, now serving in Afghanistan. The boxes contained more than $700 worth of items requested by service members online through the "www.anysoldier.com" program, according to Rohrer. The goodies included edible items such as cookies, candies and beef jerky, as well as non-edible items like mosquito repellent, body lotion and sunscreen.

Fort Shafter Post Office clerk Kevin Soriano reviews priority mail paperwork as Jane Lee, a volunteer with the North American Taiwanese Women's Association-Hawaii Chapter (NATWA-HI), looks on. NATWA-HI volunteers paid the local office a visit on Dec. 8, hoping to get 11 care packages to Soldiers with the 25th Infantry Division currently deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan, before Christmas Eve.

Funding for the care packages was made possible through donations from the Taiwanese-American community in Hawaii and the North America Taiwanese Medical Association Foundation.

"These packages have things that the Soldiers and Marines specifically asked for," said volunteer Dr. Hwei-Shien Hahn, who previously worked in the Radiology Department at Tripler Army Medical Center before retiring in 2002. "So I'm sure they will appreciate these gifts."

Rohrer commended both the Soldiers and Marines for demonstrating bravery under adverse conditions. Her group's goal, she added, was to remind the deployed Soldiers that the Hawaii community continues to recognize their vigilant efforts on battlefields halfway across the world.

"Hopefully, the packages provide some sort of relief for them," said Rohrer, adding that each package contained a personal note thanking Soldiers and Marines "a thousand times over" for service to their country.

"They've sacrificed so much for us," she continued. "This is just a small way for us to show our appreciation, and tell them how fortunate we are to have them."

This was the second time in the past year that NATWA-HI has sent care packages to appreciative service members downrange. In February, the volunteers mailed similar items to Soldiers in time for Valentine's Day.

NATWA's "Caring for Soldiers" program began in 2005 as the brainchild of Vandy Chang, then president of the Kansas chapter. Since then, numerous care packages and letters have been sent to troops stationed in Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan, from NATWA chapters across the United States.

On The WEB

For more information on the "Care for Soldiers" project, visit www.natwa.com.

USO collects holiday cheer for Hawaii's Wounded Warriors

Community gives to local heroes during the holidays, help to transitioning Warriors

Story and Photo by
STAFF SGT. BRYANNA POULIN
25th Infantry Division Public Affairs

HONOLULU – Volunteers with the USO-Hawaii gathered at Pearl Harbor's Navy Exchange, Tuesday, collecting holiday goods and gift certificates for injured service members transitioning from active duty to civilian.

The first-time event generated early responses from local businesses and family members to recognize military personnel currently under programs such as the Wounded Warrior Transition Unit at Schofield Barracks, Tripler Army Medical Center, Warrior Transition Unit-Marine Corps Base Hawaii and the Fisher House.

Along with the generous donations from the local community, many people contributing to the event all shared a similar passion of helping service members who already sacrificed so much.

Regardless of the reason, donations were made with the sole purpose of helping the islands' Wounded Warriors celebrate the holidays and welcome in a new year, said Elaine Ota, USO center manager for Hickam, who has been with the organization for six years.

"One donation was given from a Vietnam veteran who wanted the Warriors to understand the support they have from the local community...unlike the support many Vietnam veterans got when they returned home," Ota said.

Ota explained why the bond between the USO and service members is so important.

"We (USO) are the last ones to see them off (service members) and the first to welcome them, and being out here is another chance for the community to support our military in Hawaii."

While most USO volunteers are retired service members or spouses, others volunteer for more personal reasons.

"People ask me all the time why I am out here, why I volunteer," said Ota whose husband is retired from the Air Force. "I do it for the vast majority of service members in Hawaii who don't call the island home...I want to give them a sense of home when they see us."

Elaine Ota, center manager USO, hugs a contributor for her donation to the Wounded Warriors in Hawaii. Throughout the month of December, the USO focused its efforts on helping Wounded Warriors celebrate the holidays with more than 500 gift packages distributed to the Warriors in Hawaii.

While many of the donations were monetary or gift cards, the USO did receive other items as well.

"We have an entire box of goodies and Christmas stockings we will hand out," Ota said. "We even have letters from elementary school children for the event."

Finally, all donations and goods collected at the event will be distributed to service members Dec. 20 at the Oahu Veterans Center to jumpstart the holiday season and give back to those who sacrifice so much.

Eva Laird Smith, director, USO-Hawaii summed up the spirit of the event and said, "The Wounded Warriors are a special group of heroes that need our care and compassion as they go through difficult stages in their lives, they deserve our Aloha, especially this time of year."

Dressed as Santa's helpers, Tripler Army Medical Center nurses (from left) Capt. Katrina Smith, Capt. Valerie Montoya and Sgt. John Sullivan hold Carl and Kristi Larson's one-month-old triplets, Ben, Brook and Blake during Tripler's first reunion of the neo-natal intensive care unit graduates, Saturday.

Tripler's NICU graduates reunited

TRIPLER ARMY MEDICAL CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS
News Release

HONOLULU – Tripler Army Medical Center's neo-natal intensive care unit (NICU) staff held its first reunion for former patients/graduates and their proud parents at a holiday party complete with Santa and some of his taller elves on hand.

More than 70 guests streamed in and out of Tripler's ninth-floor conference room, Saturday. Newborns to toddlers, including one set of quadruplets, three triplets and multiple twins, filled the room with joy and laughter.

"It was a huge success. Everyone had a good time, catching up with each other and showing off how much their babies have grown. We'll do this next year, for sure," said NICU head nurse, Lt. Col. Patricia Wilhelm. She noted that as of early December, more than 270 babies have been admitted to the NICU during the year.

Wilhelm said the staff worked hard on the decorations all morning and arranged entertainment that included music by a group of NICU staff physicians, singers from other Tripler departments, dancers from New Hope Leeward, and presents for children from donations received by the Fisher House.

2nd Lt. Julianne Barcia | 500th Military Intelligence Brigade Public Affairs

Rise and shine

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS — Master Sgt. Jason Geier and his daughter start their morning with a long stretch during a Furlough Fridays PT (physical training) event at Watts Field, here, Dec. 11. Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 500th Military Intelligence Brigade Soldiers and their school age daughters and sons participated in a morning PT routine to share quality time and the good habit of physical fitness.

The Religious Support Office will offer the following holiday services:

Aliamanu Military Reservation (AMR) Chapel
Dec. 21 11:15 p.m., Christmas Luncheon
Dec. 21 12:15 p.m., Christmas Program
Dec. 24 4:30 p.m., Keiki Christmas Mass
Dec. 25 10:30 a.m., Christmas Day Mass (Catholic)
Jan. 1 10:30 a.m., Mary, Mother of God Mass (Catholic)

Fort DeRussy Chapel
(near the Hale Koa Hotel, Waikiki)
Dec. 24 5:30 p.m., Christmas Eve Service
Dec. 24 9 p.m., Christmas Eve Mass (Catholic)

Fort Shafter Religious Activity Center
(Building 344)
Dec. 24 6 p.m., Christmas Eve Service

Helemano Military Reservation (HMR) Chapel
Dec. 21 6:30 p.m., Christmas Cantata

Main Post Chapel *(Schofield Barracks)*
Dec. 24 4:30 p.m., Children's Christmas Mass
Dec. 24 6:30 p.m., Candlelight Service and Cantata
Dec. 25 10:30 a.m., Christmas Mass
Dec. 31 10 p.m., Watch Night Service
Jan. 1 10:30 a.m., Mary, Mother of God Mass (Catholic)

Tripler Army Medical Center (TAMC) Chapel
Dec. 24 5 p.m., Christmas Eve Mass (Catholic)
Dec. 24 7 p.m., Candlelight Service
Dec. 25 11 a.m., Christmas Day Mass (Catholic)
Jan. 1 11 a.m., Mary, Mother of God Mass (Catholic)

Wheeler Chapel *(Wheeler Army Airfield)*
Dec. 24 9 p.m., Christmas Vigil Mass

Call the Religious Support Office (655-9355), AMR Chapel (836-4599) or TAMC Chapel (433-5727), for more information.

Mililani students discover culture, natural resources at Makua

Story and Photo by
KAYLA OVERTON
U.S. Army Garrison-Hawaii Public Affairs

MAKUA MILITARY RESERVATION – More than 150 Mililani Middle School students had an opportunity to explore many unique cultural and natural resources during two field trips to the area, here, this week.

Seventh grade "Laulima," (working together) students were welcomed to the Makua Military Reservation (MMR) to enhance their study of the Hawaiian ahupuaa system of sustainable land management. The ahupuaa concept is an ancient Hawaiian land division based on natural features such as mountains, streams, and valleys that also includes cultural, human, and spiritual resources.

"This field trip was a great opportunity to extend learning outside of the classroom. We're able to see, touch and experience the things that we learn and read about in books," said Michael Diggs, social studies teacher, Mililani Middle School.

After applying ample sunscreen, drinking plenty of water, being outfitted with proper footwear and getting a detailed safety brief by range personnel, students were ready for the field trip to begin. Separated into three groups, the students then hiked to archaeological sites and areas near endangered plant populations.

Kim Welch and Candace Russo, environmental outreach specialists from the Army Natural Resource Program (OANRP), gave a presentation on threatened and endangered species unique to MMR, and what actions the OANRP takes to protect them. The students learned about threats to these species such as invasive non-native plants (weeds), fire, and non-native predators such as rats that eat native bird eggs, plants, seeds and snails.

Some of the endangered species include the Hawaii state flower, Hibiscus brackenridgei; a small forest bird, the Oahu Elepaio; an endangered palm native to the northern Waianae Mountains, the Loulu; and the Kahuli tree snail.

The students also learned that the Hawaii state insect, the Kamehameha Butterfly and the Hawaiian Happy Face Spider can also be found at MMR.

Alton Exzabe, (far right) cultural resource specialist, points out cultural features at Makua Military Reservation during a student field trip to the area this week.

Students visited a petroglyph rock, where Carly Antone, cultural resource specialist, talked about the Army's efforts to protect and preserve fragile resources such as the petroglyphs.

Students viewed the weathered images of dogs, turtles, birds and people and discussed possible interpretations.

Each group then hiked to an archaeological site, passing various cultural and historic features and enjoying beautiful views of Makua's landscape along the way. Alton Exzabe, cultural resource specialist, led the students in a discussion on how archaeologists record, research, and interpret resources such as this site.

"The Army's Cultural Resource Program seeks to protect and preserve Makua's Resources," said Jaime Raduenzel, cultural resources outreach specialist. "An important part of that preservation is sharing the resources with the community. Through students visiting Makua, we can improve their awareness and appreciation of cultural resources and the Army's efforts to manage those resources."

"I really enjoyed seeing Makua, it's really neat to be able to actually see the things we read about in class," said student Megan Yamamoto.

After the field trip the group gathered in a large circle, and sang "Hawaii Aloha" to thank everyone for their visit and then ate their lunches under a mango tree.

Apply now for 2010 Scholarships for Military Children

DeCA scholarship deadline Feb. 17

TAMMY L. MOODY
DeCA Marketing

The holidays are fast approaching, and they can be a fun family time as children away at college come home, and other students get their holiday break. It's also a time for students and parents to apply for the 2010 Scholarships for Military Children Program that officially opened Nov. 3.

The Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) scholarship program is an example of commissaries supporting their local communities by helping to improve the quality of life for military families, said Philip E. Sakowitz Jr., director and CEO, DeCA.

"Being part of something that makes higher education more affordable for military families is thrilling, as we feel it makes a better future possible for their children," he said. "The program awards $1,500 scholarships to well-rounded, accomplished service members' children, enabling these families to save some on their children's tuition."

On The WEB

The 2010 Scholarships for Military Children applications are available online at www.commissaries.com or at www.militaryscholar.org.

Only dependent, unmarried children, younger than age 21 (age 23 if enrolled as a full-time student at a college or university) of active duty personnel, Reserve, Guard and retired military members, survivors of service members who died while on active duty, or survivors of individuals who died while receiving retired pay from the military may apply for a scholarship.

Eligibility is determined using the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System database. or DEERS. Applicants should ensure that they, as well as their sponsor, are enrolled in the DEERS database and have a current ID card.

The applicant must be planning to attend, or already be attending, an accredited college or university full time in the fall of 2010, or be enrolled in a program of studies designed to transfer directly into a four-year program.

Applicants should prepare to submit an essay on the following topic: "You can travel back in time; however, you cannot change events. What point in history would you visit and why?"

Applications must be turned in to the Schofield Barracks Commissary by close of business Feb. 17. At least one scholarship will be awarded at every commissary location with qualified applicants.

Scholarship applications are available in commissaries worldwide and online.

Since the program began in 2000, it has awarded $7.3 million in scholarships to almost 5,000 children of service members.

The scholarships program is administered by Fisher House Foundation. Scholarship Managers, a national, nonprofit, scholarship management services organization, manages and awards the scholarships. Commissary vendors, manufacturers, brokers, suppliers and the general public donate money to the program, and every dollar donated goes directly to funding the scholarships.

Healthy holidays should focus on friends, family

GABRIELLE KIRK
Tricare Management Activity

It's easy to over-indulge during the holiday season. It's a time when everyone whips up their most decadent recipes and heads to gatherings with family, friends and co-workers. Starting at Thanksgiving, many people find themselves with busy social calendars and less time to eat at home and maintain their regular fitness schedule.

On The WEB

Visit Tricare's "Get Fit" Web page at www.tricare.mil/getfit/ to find more information on how to lead a healthier lifestyle.

Beneficiaries can also visit www.cdc.gov/healthyweight for more information from the CDC about attaining and maintaining a healthy weight, and www.smallstep.gov for 100 tips toward a healthier lifestyle.

Researchers at the National Institutes of Health found the weight people gain during the fall and winter seasons is generally not lost during the rest of the year. Gaining just one pound may not sound like much, but over 20 years it could mean weighing an additional 20 pounds just from holiday indulgences.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offer these tips for having a healthy holiday season:

•Before heading out to a party, eat a light, healthy snack before going to help curb hunger and decrease visits to the buffet table.

•Modify a favorite holiday recipes to reduce the amount of fat and calories. Opt for low-fat cheese or vegetables in place of meat.

•Bring a healthy holiday dish to the party to help everyone eat a little lighter.

•Limit alcoholic beverage intake. Alcoholic drinks can have many calories, especially holiday favorites like eggnog. Cut or limit alcohol calories by drinking more water.

•Find fun and creative ways friends and family can spend time being active instead of eating. Be sure to spend time together that doesn't revolve around a meal.

•Sign up for a 5K walk or run to keep focused on physical activity goals. ake those New Year's resolutions even easier to attain by maintaining your physical activity during the holidays.

Practice balance and moderation and the only reminders of holidays past can be happy memories with family and friends.

MWR Sports

26 / Saturday

Stand-Up Paddling – Learn the newest sport that's taken Hawaii by storm, stand-up paddling, Dec. 26, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. with Outdoor Recreation. Lessons are $54 each and include equipment and round-trip transportation from Schofield Barracks. Call 655-0143.

27 / Sunday

Adventure Surfing – Surf like the pros, or at least look the part with Outdoor Recreation Dec. 27, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. This is a level two program suitable for those with a moderate level of skill. Lessons are $48 each and include equipment and round-trip transportation from Schofield Barracks. For more information call 655-0143.

Ongoing

Fort Shafter Biggest Loser Contest – Need a little motivation to lose weight? Try some friendly competition with the Fort Shafter Biggest Loser contest. Enter anytime after Jan. 4 at the Fort Shafter Physical Fitness Center. The contest will run through April 1. For more information call 438-1152.

Intramural Soccer – Entries for the 2009 Intramural Men's Soccer league are being accepted now. Active Duty Army, Army Reserve and National Guard units in Hawaii may enter a team.

Entries must be received by the USAG-HI Sports, Fitness and Aquatics Office, Stop 112, Building 556, Kaala Community Activity Center, Schofield Barracks by 4 p.m. Jan. 4. Entries can be faxed to 655-8012 or 438-2470. Call 655-0856 or 438-9572.

Great Aloha Run – Stop by any Army Physical Fitness Center to pick up individual or Sounds of Freedom Unit applications for the 2010 Great Aloha Run, Feb. 15, 2010. Participate as an individual or as an organized unit in Hawaii's premier road race through downtown Honolulu and into Aloha Stadium.

Blue Star Card holders can also enjoy a discount on the entry fee. For more information call 655-8006.

community Sports

Send sports announcements to community@hawaiiarmyweekly.com.

January

4 / Monday

Great Aloha Run – Entries are being accepted for the 26th Annual Great Aloha Run, scheduled for Presidents Day, Feb. 15, 2010, 7 a.m. The 8.15-mile flat course starts at Aloha Tower in downtown Honolulu, winds its way along the historic Honolulu Harbor, down Nimitz Highway, Kamehameha Highway and into the Aloha Stadium.

The finish line is the back goal line of the north end zone on the stadium floor. Running divisions available include elites, age groups, wheelchair and handcycle competitors, and military personnel running individually or in Sounds of Freedom formations.

Applications are available online at www.greataloharun.com. Only finishers receive a "finishers" T-Shirt.

Biathlon Series – Challenge the biathlete in you during the Waikiki Swim Club 2009/2010 biathlon series at Magic Island/Ala Moana Beach Park. Each race starts at 7:30 a.m. and consists of a 5K run and a 1K swim. Registration costs $25 per individual, $50 per team, per race. Entry fees include a T-Shirt.

•Magic Island Biathlon, Jan.17. Register by Jan. 4.

•Valentine's Day Biathlon, Feb. 14. Register by Feb. 1. Visit www.waikiki swimclub.org.

9 / Saturday

Aloha Readiness Series – The Mid-Pacific Road Runners Club is hosting a series of races designed to prepare runners for the 2010 Great Aloha Run in February.

•Harold Chapson 8K, Jan. 9. Register by Jan. 4.

•Johnny Faeber 10K, Jan. 31. Register by Jan. 25. Register for the entire series for $60 at www.active.com. Entry fee includes T-Shirt and timing chip. Visit www.mprrc.com for detailed race descriptions.

Shafter gymnasium expansion set, pending Army funding

Story and Photos by
BILL MOSSMAN
Staff Writer

FORT SHAFTER – Workout warriors at the physical fitness center, here, could have more room to exercise in the near future, should a planned expansion project receive the necessary funding from the Army.

The Fort Shafter Physical Fitness Center built in 1973 and located in Building 665 along Chapplear Road, is too small to meet the growing demands of those who utilize the facility according to project supporters. The weight room, they say, is inadequate to accommodate all authorized equipment. As a result, gym users have to carefully navigate their way around the machines in close quarters.

"You almost have to move sideways in order to make your way past the Nautilus equipment," observed Robert Antonio, program manager and master planner within the Army's Directorate of Public Works (DPW). "It's really packed in there."

> "So this addition, whenever it happens, would be great for us and our clientele."
>
> **– Joe Fischer**
> Supervisory Sports Specialist

The Army has taken steps to address Soldiers' concerns for improved conditions at the existing physical fitness center. In October of 2008, for example, the Fort Shafter facility converted one of two racquetball courts into a dedicated cardio room, equipped with 17 cardio theater treadmills and elliptical machines.

Still, it's an expanded weight room that gym users are clamoring for these days. Should the project be approved, the expansion would begin sometime late next year and add roughly 1,800 square feet to the weight room training area, and pave the way for new fitness equipment to be installed.

"The extra space would be huge for us, just because of the growing population of the Soldiers and families who use the gym," added the center's supervisory sports specialist, Joe Fischer. "It gets rather tight in here, and from time to time, we have people waiting to use the equipment.

"So this addition, whenever it happens, would be great for us and our clientele."

However, Antonio cautioned that while the recent call for a request for proposal remains a positive sign for Fort Shafter's workout warriors, the reality is that funding may still not be available in the immediate future. He noted that all projects submitted through the Unspecified Minor Military Construction Army program, and which have been approved to receive funding of $2 million or less, are considered "urgent" matters and essential improvements by the submitting installations.

Thus, once a project receives funding approval from the Army, the appropriated monies are rarely withdrawn.

"In order for these other installations' projects to fall by the wayside, they would have to fail to get across the necessary paperwork," Antonio explained. "Or, there would have to be environmental concerns or safety issues that still need to be addressed.

"At that point, (an installation's) project may be delayed another year or so, and only then could we move up (on the funding list) and take their place."

According to Antonio, the expansion of the Fort Shafter fitness center is seen as an interim step until a larger fitness center, currently planned for Rice Manor neighborhood, can be constructed.

"But that won't happen anytime soon," he added. "That's a $25 to $30 million project, and I'd say it's at least 15 or 20 years away from being built."

A Soldier enjoys the comforts of modern technology while exercising on the cardio theater treadmills during an early morning workout at the Fort Shafter Physical Fitness Center.

Rows of authorized Nautilus exercise equipment fill the weight room at the Fort Shafter Physical Fitness Center. A planned expansion may provide a bit of breathing room in near future. Exercisers are cautioned to watch their step as they navigate around the equipment in close quarters.

Right — Sgt. 1st Class Nathaniel Bryant, U.S. Army-Pacific, G3 Branch, gives his back muscles an early morning burn on the rowing bar, during a workout at the Fort Shafter Physical Fitness Center, Tuesday.