

HAWAII ARMY WEEKLY

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INSIDE

Casey addresses 'don't ask, don't tell' policy repeal

Troops,
The U.S. Senate voted to repeal “don’t ask, don’t tell.” We expect that the bill will be forwarded shortly for the president’s signature and will then become law.

It is important to remind all of our Soldiers that the repeal will not take effect until 60 days after the president, secretary of defense and chairman of the joint chiefs certify that implementation of the new policies and regulations written by the department, is consistent with the standards of military readiness, military effectiveness, unit cohesion, and recruiting and retention of the armed forces.

The secretary of defense has pledged that implementation planning would be a deliberate process involving full consultation with the services and combatant commanders. We are confident that will be the case.

In the interim, stay focused on your mission. Continue to treat your fellow Soldiers with dignity and respect, and maintain the standards of conduct and discipline that have made us who we are today – the best Army in the world.

That same discipline requires that our role is now to support and defend the law of the land. Guide your public comments accordingly. We will implement this change in the same disciplined manner that has characterized the Army’s service for the past 235 years.



Casey



McHugh



Cpl. Daniel Eddy | 196th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, 25th Infantry Division

Maj. Gen. Bernard Champoux (left), commander, 25th ID; and Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Leota, command sergeant major, 25th ID; uncased the division’s colors, Dec. 20, during a transfer of authority ceremony at Camp Liberty, Iraq. The 25th ID assumed control of the USD-C Headquarters during the ceremony.

25th ID assumes authority of USD-C from 1st Armored Div.

SGT. KIMBERLY JOHNSON

196th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, 25th Infantry Division

BAGHDAD — Soldiers with 1st Armored Division, U.S. Division-Center passed the torch to 25th Infantry Div., USD-C Soldiers, during a transfer of authority ceremony at Camp Liberty, Iraq, Dec. 20.

The 25th ID has the task of continuing the advise, train and assist mission its predecessors, the 1st Armored Div., worked diligently to establish with senior Iraqi security forces and Iraqi government leaders throughout the greater Baghdad area and Anbar province.

“The 25th ID falls in on a well-oiled process and they will make the necessary adjustments they see fit, based on incoming commanding general Maj. Gen. Bernard Champoux’s actions,” said Maj. Gen. Terry Wolff, commanding general, 1st Armored Div., USD-C.

Wolff said communication has been constant between the incoming and outgoing divisions since the

summer of 2010. The 1st Armored Div. sent Soldiers to train and advise 25th ID Soldiers on what to expect when they got into theater. Topics focused on the evolving partnership between U.S. forces and their ISF counterparts, as the ISF is taking full control of the security in Iraq.

“I am very optimistic about the Iraqi leaders who have been conducting security in Iraq since July 2009,” Wolff said. “Since then, the Iraqis took ownership, responsibility and accountability for the security in Iraq. U.S. forces are the minority partner. The Iraqis are the majority partner. It’s their responsibility and they have to answer to their prime minister, their government and their people.”

Even though the Iraqis now have full responsibility for the security of their country under Operation New Dawn, the partnership between USD-C Soldiers and ISF existed long before the transition

SEE 25th ID, A-3



Rockin' out

25th ID Band entertains troops downrange during the holidays.

A-4

Locality Pay

Read about how locality pay is changing in Hawaii.

A-7



Seether

Rock band Seether performs at Schofield Barracks.

B-3

561st Eng. Co. collects most cans during 'Never Daunted, Never Hungry' Food Drive

Story and Photo by

2ND LT. LAURA BETH BEEBE

84th Engineer Battalion, 130th Eng. Brigade, 8th Theater Sustainment Command

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS — While many people are still finding creative ways to use up the turkey and mashed potato leftovers from their Christmas feasts, others are just grateful that the Soldiers in the 84th Engineer Battalion, 130th Eng. Brigade, 8th Theater Sustainment Command, made sure they had food on the table this holiday season.

The “Never Daunted, Never Hungry” Food Drive,

collected canned food from Nov. 22-Dec. 20. The battalion donated 7,754 cans to the Hawaii Food Bank.

The 561st Eng. Company, 84th Eng. Bn., 130th Eng. Bde., collected the most number of cans, totaling 4,198. The company also had the largest percentage of cans donated per Soldier, averaging 26.5 cans for each service member. This was quite an impressive feat for a single company.

SEE 561st ENG. CO., A-6

196th Inf. Bde. hosts pistol qualification course

CAPT. MARTY MONAHAN

Support Battalion, 196th Infantry Brigade, U.S. Army-Pacific

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS — Soldiers from various units in U.S. Army-Hawaii assembled here, Dec. 6, to train and qualify with the M9 pistol at the Army Combat Pistol Qualification Course.

The CPQC event’s primary goal was to qualify four Soldiers from the 30th Military History Detachment, who are currently conducting post-mobiliza-



Courtesy of the 3302nd MSB

Capt. Marty Monahan, Support Bn., 196th Inf. Bde., USARPAC, instructs Soldiers on the proper pistol grip.

tion training in preparation for an upcoming deployment in support of Operation New Dawn in Iraq.

The Support Battalion, 196th Infantry Brigade, U.S. Army-Pacific, also welcomed 18 Soldiers from the 3302nd Mobilization Support Battalion and two from USARPAC to participate in the training, including Brig. Gen. John Seward, deputy commanding general, USARPAC.

Soldiers received instruction from subject matter experts in the Support Bn., 196th Inf. Bde., on the fundamentals of pistol marksmanship, including safety, weapon specifications, proper handling, body position, draw, presentation and slow-aim fire. Instructors noted that the M9 pistol is a Soldier’s primary weapon in some deployment situations and, if available, a reliable backup to the M4 carbine.

The Army CPQC consists of five “tables of fire” that incorporate single and multiple engagements at distances from five to 25 meters. Other requirements, such as magazine changes and engagements while mobile, test the Soldier’s marksmanship skills. A total of 30 targets are presented, and qualifiers are required to hit a minimum of 16.

At the end of training, all 24 Soldiers who participated qualified. Seward set the example with an impressive 27 hits, but the high score went to

SEE 196th INF., A-6



A C-17 Globemaster crew member from the 535th Airlift Sqdn., guides a humvee belonging to the USARPAC CCP DAT B, off of a C-17, Dec. 7.

USARPAC team attains FOC status

Story and Photo by

SGT. 1ST CLASS KEVIN P. BELL

U.S. Army-Pacific Contingency Command Post Public Affairs

FORT SHAFTER — The U.S. Army-Pacific Contingency Command Post’s Deployable Assessment Team B, a new concept to the theater Army, is ready for contingency operations after Lt. Gen. Benjamin Mixon, commander, USARPAC, certified the team fully operational capable, here, Dec. 22.

The DAT B completed a certification exercise that consisted of convoying, loading and flying via a C-17 Globemaster from Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam to the Big Island, Dec. 7-10.

“This is the first time that the entire DAT B, with all of its equipment, had gone through the alert procedure, marshalling, conducting joint inspections, loading a C-17 and actually flying to another location,” said Maj. Keegan Leonard, DAT officer in charge, USARPAC CCP. “(Then) doing it all in reverse, conducting tactical movement to ... our tactical operations center, assessing the situation there, developing a course of action, and how ... (to) do our assessments.”

SEE USARPAC, A-6

Education connection

The military influences both local communities and service members’ children.

B-1

This issue

Footsteps in Faith A-2

Deployed Forces A-3

News Briefs A-7

FMWR B-2

Sports & Fitness B-4

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 656-3488, 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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101 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 1/6/11.

Voices of Ohana



"To make it into the newspaper."

Sgt. Nancy Chan
Executive administration NCO, HHC, 8th MP Bde., 8th TSC



"To learn from my mistakes and make new ones to build character."

Pfc. Angiel James
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IT specialist, HHC, 8th MP Bde., 8th TSC

Defender 6 sends AFAP updates employment and family support policies

LT. GEN. RICK LYNCH

Commander, Installation Management Command

I have an important responsibility to oversee the Army Family Action Plan process, which is a program that enables Soldiers, civilians and family members to communicate quality of life issues to Army leaders. Information provided through this process allows leaders the opportunity to affect changes that will lead to a more satisfied and resilient Army community.

Every month, subject matter experts from across the Army meet to analyze recommendations submitted through the AFAP process, to determine if they are achievable. These recommendations will then be presented at the next annual General Officer Steering Committee in January.

Issue 617 recommends providing greater visibility of qualified Wounded Warrior job applicants to federal hiring officials. The Civilian Human Resource Agency has made much progress with this issue. One accomplishment is the partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to integrate the use of its veteran resume inventory, available at www.VetSuccess.gov, into Army recruitment business processes. Additionally, CHRA has developed the Civilian Personnel On-Line Wounded Warrior website, the Wounded Warrior Referral Process and the Wounded Warrior and spouse website resume inventory.

Department of Defense State Liaisons and the Army have also made progress on issue 524, which recommends granting unemployment compensation to military spouses who leave their jobs when accompanying service members on a permanent change of station move.

To date, 38 states provide unemployment compensation while the District of Columbia and Maryland evaluate eligibility on a case-by-case basis. Ohio and Tennessee have active legislation in progress to provide unemployment compensation. Outreach efforts are being focused on the remaining states to solicit their support for these dedicated military spouses and their families.

Issue 556 is a recommendation to eliminate the financial inequities in the DoD Child Care Fee Policy due to a limited number of total family income categories. This resulted in the addition of three new categories and an expanded fee range in each category.

We are on track to achieve our 2012-2013 school year goal of reaching a single fee in each TFI category, Army-wide, which will result in more consistency and predictability for families as they move from post to post.

Issue 639 recommends that Advanced Individual Training Soldiers who require Exceptional Family Member services and have received an overseas assignment, remain at their current installation until notification of EFM service availability and command sponsorship is granted by the overseas travel approval authority. As a result of this recommendation, a rapid revision to AR 608-75, which governs the Army EFMP, is in the process of being published. The revision directs that all Soldiers with EFM's will remain at their current installation, pending notification of EFM service availability and command sponsorship from the overseas command.

Although we have made progress with some issues, we still have work to do on others. We will continue to analyze the attainability of many issues, including,

- Authorizing 100 percent of the death gratuity to any person designated as a beneficiary by a Department of the Army civilian who was killed in a military contingency operation, regardless of their relationship. Currently the law only recognizes spouses, children, parents or siblings as eligible survivors (issue 634).

- Establishing a centralized DoD donation bank for leave for civilian employees (issue 615).

- Aligning compensatory hours with standard overtime rates for Army civilians (issue 649).

- Standardizing and enforcing the Total Army Sponsorship Program by providing trained and available sponsors equipped with the information and referral resources needed for Soldiers and families during times of transition (issue 609).

- Accounting for the unborn children of pre-existing pregnancies when calculating the transitional benefits for family members of military personnel who were separated and discharged due to domestic abuse (issue 625).

- Coordinating with U.S. Citizen and Immigration Service for approval of DoD-administered fingerprinting and physical examinations (issue 515).

- Providing EFMP enrollment eligibility for reservists (issue 650).

- Conducting a holistic review of Family Readiness Group fundraising in the active and reserve components (issue 652).

I encourage you to learn more about the AFAP process and follow the progress on issues that are currently being worked.

Support and Defend.



Lynch

LT. GEN. RICK LYNCH

Commander, Installation Management Command

We often recognize and honor the commitment and sacrifice of our military families. The strength of our Army is the Army family, and we are asking more of families now, than during any time in the past. As such, the Army is aggressively working to support those who are the strength of our Soldiers.

More than 30,000 participants attended the 2010 Association of the U.S. Army Annual Conference in October, in Washington. AUSA supports Soldiers, civilians, family members and retirees by providing a platform to address their concerns. Every year, AUSA draws thousands of Soldiers and Army civilians to view exhibits on the latest technology and attend special presentations on various issues affecting the Army.

The conference hosts several forums for those who work on behalf of the Army family – senior leaders, subject matter experts and family members – to discuss critical issues families are facing. Family Forums have been a favorite for more than 10 years, with this year's being the most widely attended of all the sessions. Soldiers, family members and command teams attended this year's forums that were broken into four themes: our leaders, our children, caring for ourselves and caring for our survivors. Attendees got a chance to voice their concerns to senior Army leaders, who addressed their concerns.

Central to some of the concerns are the promises in the Army Family Covenant; promises to enhance family strength, resilience and readiness, and to provide an environment in which family members can thrive. These promises are non-negotiable, and Installation Management Command is charged with delivering on many of them by providing families with the right programs and services, in the right place, at the right time.

A common theme was the challenge of providing programs and services for all Soldiers and family members. Access can be an issue, particularly for those who do not live near an installation. That is why the Army is creating Army Strong Community Centers to provide information, resources and assistance to active duty, Reserve and National Guard service members, retirees, veterans and family members who cannot easily get to an installation.

Another important topic of discussion was the role technology plays in helping Soldiers and families access programs and services anytime and anywhere, such as MyArmyOneSource.com. The Army is continuing to look at different ways to use technology, such as Virtual Installations. While we cannot put a bricks-and-mortar installation in every community, we can build a Virtual Installation that provides localized support to all members of the Army family. The "our children" forum focused on

programs and opportunities that lessen the impact and effects of deployments on children. Currently more than 142,000 Army children are dealing with the absence of a deployed parent. Children are also dealing with separations, reunions, injuries and death. We want to help our children cope with these issues and, more than that, to help them grow into strong and resilient young adults. We are working with a number of partners, including universities, to provide programs that support the healthy development of our children, such as "Talk, Listen, Connect," 4-H; Boys and Girls Clubs; and "Backpack Journalism."

The "caring for ourselves" forum focused on caregivers and family readiness group leaders. Several initiatives, like "Coming Together Around Military Families," are in progress to better prepare the professionals who work with our children and help them understand the challenges and opportunities of military life.

Army marriages face challenges every day. The divorce rate has increased during the last nine years of conflict, but efforts are underway to strengthen Army marriages through a study called "Supporting Those Who Serve." The study is one of the largest ever conducted, includes data on the effects of combat exposure on Soldiers and their families, and highlights services available for couples. Programs that support relationships include "Oxygen for Your Relationship" and Strong Bonds.

This was the first year a special forum, "caring for our survivors," was held to focus on the needs of Army survivors. We owe a special debt to the survivors of Soldiers who have made the ultimate sacrifice. Survivor Outreach Services, launched two years ago, continues to grow and evolve in response to feedback from survivors. The importance of the SOS program cannot be overstated. We want survivors to know that they are a part of the Army family for as long as they desire.

IMCOM take its responsibility to provide quality services and programs for all Soldiers and families very seriously. We are always looking for ways to enhance our programs and services, based on research, program results and feedback. We are also looking for ways to communicate about what is happening with family programs. We want families to know what services and programs exist for them, and for them to let us know how they are working.

We are proud of the work we do to deliver on the Army's promises. It is part of our ongoing commitment to families, for the sacrifices they make; and to Soldiers, whose strength and readiness is rooted in the strength of their families.

Support and Defend.



Results from the AUSA forums are available at www.imcom.army.mil/hq/officecom/pao_stratcom/family_q_and_a/.



Appreciating the small things this year brings us closer to holiness

CHAPLAIN (MAJ.) KIL CHUNG

Staff Chaplain, 3302nd Mobilization Support Battalion

The year 2010 is gone and 2011 is now upon us. As the new year begins, we realize how fast time flies. We make New Year's resolutions, purchase new products and start new things to make the new year very special.

I have learned a lot of wisdom and many precious lessons from the Scriptures. The Bible says there is nothing new under the sun. Everything already existed and has simply changed into different forms. Nothing can make us new – unless we choose to have a new heart. Only God can create new things.

In Ephesians 4:22-32, the Bible provides us with principle of resolutions for

the new year.

We must put off our old selves, which are being corrupted by deceitful desires. To put off our old selves, we must put on the new self that is created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. We are God's masterpieces created for his purpose and glory. We are not here by accident. There is a reason for existing. Our lives are so valuable and important.

How can we put on the new self?

First, we must have a new attitude in our minds. We should be thankful instead of complaining about our dissatisfaction. We have a tendency to focus on what we do not have, rather than what we do have.



Chung

and sets an example for all of us about what can be accomplished – despite personal disabilities. Let us be thankful for our families, country and the service members who protect our freedom.

Secondly, let us make our lives more beneficial to others. Husbands should

Nick Vujicic was born without any limbs but is still happy. He has inspired millions of people as a motivational speaker. He teaches people to realize how blessed they are

be more supportive to their wives and vice versa. If we only focus on our interests and benefits, our lives will be dry and meaningless. When we serve others, we experience true joy and happiness.

Make it a priority this year to be helpful and available to others. You may save a person's life by your act of kindness. The Scripture commands us to be compassionate and encourage others to do the same.

Let us make a New Year's resolution to practice these principles. If we follow God's principles, God will guarantee us a happy and prosperous life in the new year.

Happy New Year!

What is your New Year's resolution?

Photos by 8th Military Police Brigade, 8th Theater Sustainment Command



"To make it into the newspaper."

Sgt. Nancy Chan
Executive administration NCO, HHC, 8th MP Bde., 8th TSC



"To learn from my mistakes and make new ones to build character."

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Sgt. Brandon D. Bolick | 982nd Signal Company, Combat Camera

Sight on

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARHORSE, Iraq — Left: Soldiers assigned to Company B, 225th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Bde. Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, prepare to engage their targets, here, recently. Soldiers assigned to Co. B, 225 BSB, 2nd BCT, qualified at the M4 carbine range.

Top right: Spc. Erica Schultz (left), Co. B, 225th BSB, 2nd BCT, fires at her target.

Bottom right: Sgt. Jose Anglada and Pfc. Dale Shiflett, both with Co. B, 225th BSB, 2nd BCT, review a target.



25th ID: Partnerships stay strong

CONTINUED FROM A-1

from Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“We have been working with the ISF for years, which is why we military (members) are quite optimistic about what we are seeing, and (the ISF’s) ability to astound us,” Wolff said.

Soldiers from 25th ID are responsible for training and advising Iraqi soldiers. The 25th ID will also continue the partnership with the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Inf. Div., USD-C, who was already in theater.

“We are seeing a lot of progress, as far as the Iraqis moving forward and building capacity within their government, their army and police forces,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph Altman, senior enlisted advisor, 4th BCT, 3rd Inf. Div.

“Enjoy your time with the Iraqis,” Wolff said to Champoux, during the transfer of authority ceremony. “The Iraqi leaders we deal with are quite remarkable.



Cpl. Daniel Eddy | 196th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, 25th ID

Command Sgt. Maj. Valerie Greene (front left), command sergeant major, Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 25th ID; and Lt. Col. Paul Romagnoli, commander, HHBN; uncased their colors, Dec. 16, during a transfer of authority ceremony at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

And virtually all of them are for a greater good. We spend an enormous amount of time with them and they are incredibly grand men who want a better Iraq.”



Lt. Col. Andrew Ulrich (right), commander, 1st Bn., 14th Inf. Regt., 2nd BCT, 25th ID, explains to the Kirkuk City Council the work that Capt. Tony Smith, commander, Co. A, 1st Bn., 14th Inf. Regt., 2nd BCT, did in making it possible for the Haweja Elementary School to reopen, Dec. 19.

Haweja Elementary School reopens after five-year reconstruction

Story and Photo by
PVT. ALYXANDRA MCCHESENEY
1st Brigade Combat Team Task Force Public Affairs,
1st Infantry Division, U.S. Division-North

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq – The Haweja Students of the Al Taufal Elementary School lined up the entrance of their newly reconstructed school, while clapping to celebrate the building’s grand opening, Dec. 19, in the Kirkuk province.

Lt. Col. Andrew Ulrich, commander, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, and Capt. Tony Smith, commander, Company A, 1st Bn., 14th Inf. Regt., 2nd BCT, joined members of the Department of State’s Kirkuk Provincial Reconstruction Team at the school’s opening.

“This was truly a team effort that, although it was a long time in coming, shows how we can cooperate together to make Kirkuk better,” said Doug Teper, a governance advisor for the PRT, who served as one of the leads for the school project.

The five-year project to renovate the school required the cooperation of the Iraqi government, the Kirkuk Provincial Council, Iraqi Security Forces, the PRT and the “Golden Dragons” of 1st Bn., 14th Inf. Regt., 2nd BCT.

During Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2005, insurgents severely damaged the school during an attack. Iraqi government officials surveyed the school soon after the attack, and determined it needed to be demolished and rebuilt from the ground up.

“This school and the paved roads leading to all of the schools are very important for Haweja,” said Jussain Abo Sadam, city council chairman. “Lt. Col. Ulrich and Capt. Smith, we all want to say, ‘thank you.’”

The U.S. Army funded the project through the Commander’s Emergency Response Program. The PRT worked closely with the Kirkuk Provincial Council and Haweja district officials to ensure the process of distributing money for the project went smoothly and according to proper CERP procedures.

“Part of our mission in the region is to find ways to allow economic growth and political stability, while encouraging ethnic and tribal rivals to work together peacefully,” said Daniel Fennell, the public diplomacy officer of the Kirkuk PRT. “The PRT was able to help get central planning approval for the project, and to find a middle ground when provincial planners and Haweja district officials disagreed on how the project should be carried out.”

Since 2003, the U.S. government has provided funds to renovate or reconstruct 135 schools in Kirkuk province, Fennell said, adding that the project helped to create good relations with the citizens of Haweja.

“We have built a very strong relationship with the U.S. and we will work hard to keep that relationship,” Sadam said.

“Our focus is on the economy and schools, to help Kirkuk in the long term,” Smith said, adding that the project is consistent with the overall focus of Operation New Dawn, which will help Iraq take the lead for security.



Sgt. Brandon D. Bolick | 982nd Signal Company, Combat Camera

Load ‘er up

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARHORSE, Iraq — Soldiers from Company A, 2nd Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Bde. Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, load Stryker parts onto a Chinook, CH-47 helicopter, here, recently. Chinooks are being used to transport supplies throughout Iraq in support of Operation New Dawn.

Staff meetings bring results, cohesion

SPC. ROBERT MICHAEL ENGLAND
2nd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARHORSE, Iraq – Four senior officers from 17th Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division, met with sheiks and tribesmen from the village of Hamayyid, at Forward Operating Base Atruz, in the southern Salah ad Din province, Dec. 21.

Lt. Col. John Steele, a member of the Stability Transition Team, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, and an advisor to the 17th IA Bde., described this meeting as a path toward cohesion.

“These meetings are to formulate synergy,” he said. “At these sync meetings, the staff officers in the 17th IA Bde. share intelligence aimed at establishing a more peaceful environment.”

Steele explained the intent of the IA officers as well as the increasingly limited role that U.S. forces play in these staff-to-staff meetings.

“The key point of all this is for the battalion intelligence officers in the 17th IA Bde. to bring all the (intelligence) together to establish appropriate courses of action,” he said. “For us, it’s a chance to bring our knowledge and experience to help them get better at establishing those plans.”

The IA staff officers have met every Tuesday for more than a month, but this particular meeting differed from the rest, said Capt. Ian Fleischmann, intelligence officer, 2nd Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd BCT. The Hamayyid tribesmen attended this meeting to discuss solutions for ending indirect fire that is originating from their village and aimed at Joint Base Balad, he explained.

During the meeting, the 31 tribal leaders signed a pledge stating they will work with the IA officers to stop the indirect fire coming from Hamayyid, and that they will report any suspicious activity to the 17th Bde., 4th IA Div.



From left, members of the 25th ID Band, “Show of Force,” Sgt. Brendan Owen, lead guitarist; Staff Sgt. Kristopher Boltinghouse, rhythm guitarist; Staff Sgt. Christopher Stone, lead singer; and Spc. Jonathan Crane, bass player; entertain troops with their finale during a holiday concert at Camp Liberty, Iraq, Dec. 25.

‘Tropic Lightning’ Band features rock ‘n’ roll during holiday concert

Story and Photo by
CPL. DANIEL EDDY

196th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, 25th Infantry Division

BAGHDAD – Air guitar, head banging and loud rock music reverberated through the crowd at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center at Camp Liberty, Iraq, Dec. 25, as the 25th Infantry Division Band entertained U.S. Division-Center Soldiers.

The six-member band, “Show of Force,” wearing Santa Claus hats, kept the Soldiers smiling and cheering as they high-fived the crowd, handed out candy, sang and played.

“I think the interaction the band had with the crowd (was the best part),” said Lt. Col. Paul Romagnoli, commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 25th ID. “Every person was there to be part (of the entertainment).”

Romagnoli said the band did an outstanding job and always draws a crowd.

“The band has a very unique mission,” he said. “Not only do they play patriotic music, but they really do help with morale. Playing music that someone is familiar with ... it really gives (Soldiers) a sense of be-

ing home, that little connection that they wouldn’t normally get in Iraq. It also helps to break up the day and it gives them something to look forward to.”

The music and high energy was maintained as band members kept an upbeat tempo throughout the concert.

“(Performing at a high energy level) is all part of the show,” said Sgt. Jared Bree, band operations noncommissioned officer and keyboardist with the division’s rock band. “You need to put yourself into the music, but not over the top so that you are drawing attention away from the singer, but still getting into it and increasing the level of enjoyment for the crowd.”

Bree said it’s nice to have people clap along with the band and smile, which makes him feel good about his job. Even though he cannot be home for Christmas, performing for the troops helps replace the time away from loved ones.

“It helps to make up for (not being home for Christmas),” he said. “Coming here and doing my job ... helps me have a great Christmas. I look forward to a year over here, doing a good job.”

‘Hope and Freedom’ USO show entertains deployed forces

SGT. MAHLET TESFAYE

25th Infantry Division Public Affairs

BAGHDAD – Service members, Department of Defense employees and civilian contractors gathered to enjoy a variety of entertainment offered by several artists who came to Iraq to support the troops during their mission overseas.

The Sergeant Major of the Army “Hope and Freedom” Tour 2010 brought entertainers to Camp Liberty, Iraq, Dec. 18, to put on a show for the troops.

As part of the USO tour package, this event included performances by the 25th Infantry Division Band, country music artists Keni Thomas and Buddy Jewell, and pop artist Alana Grace. Comedian Chonda Pierce and the Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders also entertained the crowd.

“I came out here on this tour because I wanted to bring you a piece of home, and to tell you how much I appreciate you,” Pierce said, to the audi-

ence during the show.

“The most important job military bands can do is come out and raise the morale of Soldiers who are stationed overseas,” said Staff Sgt. Ronald Strayhorn, a 25th ID Band member. “We bring a little bit of home to the Soldiers and make them feel good, even if it’s just for a little bit.”

Strayhorn said these kinds of shows give Soldiers that little boost of energy to keep them going during deployment.

Popular songs such as “Sweet Home Alabama,” “Help Pour out the Rain” and “Seven Month Itch,” got the crowd tapping their feet, clapping their hands and singing along.

“The show was definitely uplifting and heartwarming – especially this time of the year – for the artists to take time out of their busy schedules and come here, when they can be with their families,” said Spc. Juan Reyes, 25th ID Band member.



Staff Sgt. Mathew David | 25th ID Band Public Affairs

Musical interlude

BAGHDAD — Members of the “Sounds of Freedom,” the 25th Infantry Division Band’s brass quintet, perform in support of the National Guard’s 374th birthday celebration at Al Faw Palace, here, Dec. 13.

‘Warriors’ enjoy Christmas festivities away from home

SPC. ROBERT MICHAEL ENGLAND
2nd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARHORSE, Iraq — Though thousands of miles separated many Soldiers from their loved ones, a sense of family could be felt throughout the “Warrior” Brigade this Christmas.

Two Soldiers dismounted from a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter and were greeted by a third Soldier. As the three Soldiers toured several sections of the training base, the absence of activity prompted one of the Soldiers to speak up.

“This place is a ghost town,” said Lt. Col. Robert Forte, deputy commanding officer, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division. “I think that’s exactly the way it should be on Christmas.”

Forte, accompanied by Command Sgt. Maj. William Hain, command sergeant major, 2nd BCT, visited Soldiers at Kirkush Military Training Base and Contingency Operating Location Cobra, Dec. 25.

Forte said leaders visited the Soldiers to in-

crease morale at the more remote operating bases where amenities are sparse, and to ensure Soldiers know they were not forgotten during the holiday season.

“We just wanted to take this opportunity to show you that you are loved,” he said, to the Soldiers.

Forte and Hain conversed with Warriors of 2nd BCT, while serving a Christmas meal. They also dined with Soldiers from 2nd Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd BCT, 25th ID, and discussed topics ranging from work to holiday experiences.

For the rest of the 2nd BCT Soldiers here, in the Diyala province, they also celebrated Christmas with various festivities throughout the day and late into the night.

Soldiers lined up at the dining facility for a Christmas feast. Chief Warrant Officer Ruby Freeman, food service technician, 2nd BCT, said the Forward Operating Base Warhorse dining facility served approximately 1,500 people during the Christmas rush. She said the food service teams had their work cut out

for them with so many options being offered to such a large crowd.

“We served roast turkey, fried shrimp, glazed ham and prime rib for the main dishes,” Freeman said. “There were four different kinds of pudding, five different kinds of cobbler and cakes galore for dessert.”

More than 25 service members mounted stationary bicycles in the Cash Gym, here, from 12-8 p.m., for the Spin-A-Thon.

Then, as the riders finished the last leg of their stationary journey at Cash Gym, Soldiers gathered at the Faulkenberg Theater for the FOB Warhorse Christmas Party.

Speakers blared popular songs while Soldiers snacked on holiday treats and enjoyed the company of their “families” away from home.

Sgt. 1st Class Charlie Fragozo, assistant operations sergeant for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Bn., 21st Inf. Regt., 2nd BCT, said his main motivation for coordinating this party was to get Soldiers out of their rooms and to come together during the

holidays.

“I felt that putting on this event would get people out of their rooms and into the Christmas spirit,” he said. “I wanted to bring a piece of Christmas to Iraq.”

Fragozo said he received a lot of support in preparing for the event and in establishing the festive atmosphere. The brigade’s Equal Opportunity Office helped Fragozo acquire a Christmas tree, while the Supply and Logistics Office from 1st Bn., 21st Inf. Regt., 2nd BCT, provided the refreshments.

The group of attendees gradually thinned out as the clock approached 1 a.m., and as the Christmas Day festivities drew to a close. Soldiers wished one other a final “Merry Christmas,” before parting ways.

RELATED STORY

- Read about the “Warriors” Spin-A-Thon on B-4.



Spc. Gary Silverman
1982nd Combat Camera (Airborne)

Dig in

RAMADI, Iraq — Maj. Gen. Bernard Champoux (right, and above), commander, 25th Infantry Division and U.S. Div.-Center, serves Soldiers in the Camp Ramadi dining facility, here, Dec. 25.

Champoux served and ate alongside fellow Soldiers in celebration of the Christmas holiday.



‘Tropic Lightning’ sergeant relives the gift of giving during holidays

Story and Photo by
SGT. JESUS J. ARANDA
25th Infantry Division Public Affairs

BAGHDAD — During the holiday season, while many Americans are surrounded by the comfort of their homes and in the company of their loved ones, some Americans are far away, in service to their country.

Recognizing this, many military supporters, family members and volunteers donate hours of their time to ensure deployed service members know people back home are still thinking about them, still hold a special place for them and still honor their sacrifices.

For Sgt. Chase Martin, an intelligence analyst with Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 25th Infantry Division, the support of such people has always been available to him during his military service.

“The community I live in is very supportive of the military,” Martin said, of his hometown of Idaho Falls, Idaho. “We have a National Guard unit nearby, and many (people) know what it is like to have a loved one deployed.”

Many people in Martin’s family are active members of a charity group known as “Operation Iraqi Star,” a volunteer-driven group that sends gifts and care packages to deployed Soldiers during the holidays.

“My parents and wife took out an ad in the paper,” Martin said. “We had many vol-



Sgt. Chase Martin (left), intelligence analyst, HHBN, 25th ID, hands a care package to a fellow Soldier, Dec. 24, at Camp Liberty, Iraq. Martin received more than 100 care packages from members of his family and his hometown community in support of “Operation Iraqi Star.”

unteers who packed the boxes, donated items or shipped the boxes to help out.”

Martin said the experience of personally delivering the community’s gratitude was a fulfilling and familiar privilege.

“It feels great,” Martin said, with a smile. “It was two years ago that I was passing out gifts from home while deployed, and here I am again.”

During 25th ID’s prior deployment in 2008 to Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, Martin said just as many care packages were sent from his hometown in support of the Soldiers. Because of this, his co-workers were not surprised when dozens of care packages began to flood Martin’s mailbox.

“The mail clerk here recognized me from last deployment,” Martin said, laughing. “A lot of mail comes for me.”

Martin said because of this influx of mail, many deployed Soldiers could enjoy a gift when he or she may not have received one.

“It feels good knowing that as we draw down here – and live in an austere environment – that someone is thinking of us,” Martin said. “(People) here will appreciate a gift sent from a stranger, and their morale and spirits will be boosted.”

Operation Iraqi Star collected more than 100 care packages and special gifts that were distributed to the Soldiers serving at Camp Liberty, Iraq, on Christmas Eve.

45th STB conducts joint load exercise with 535th Airlift Sqdn.

Story and Photo by
1ST LT. MICHAEL HEIM
45th Special Troops Battalion, 45th Sustainment Brigade,
8th Theater Sust. Command

WHEELER ARMY AIRFIELD — As any Soldier who has deployed can testify, preparing equipment for transportation and deployment can be a daunting task. Soldiers from Company B, 45th Special Troops Battalion, 45th Sustainment Brigade, 8th Theater Sust. Command recently took on that task.

The 45th STB Soldiers concluded a loading exercise that had lasted for several weeks, Dec. 17. The training culminated with a joint exercise with 535th Airlift Squadron Airmen to practice the necessary steps to prepare and deploy equipment, and to improve overall unit readiness.

“I thought it was a really good refresher for the Soldiers who have deployed, and really important for the newer Soldiers to get hands-on (training),” said 1st Sgt. James McPhee, Co. B, 45th STB, 45th Sust. Bde. “They were able to go from ‘A to Z’ with the whole process. Now, they have an advantage over others who haven’t trained in those areas.”

The training consisted of preparing all vehicles and equipment necessary for deployment, including phys-



Sgt. Donald Burton (in vehicle), Co. B, 45th STB, 45th Sust. Bde., 8th TSC, backs up his humvee and trailer onto a C-17 Globemaster, while fellow Soldiers and Airmen standby, at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Dec. 17.

ically loading the vehicles and equipment onto a C-17 Globemaster, a military transport aircraft designed to

transport both troops and equipment. The lengthy process was led by 2nd Lt. Frank Guizar and Sgt. Geoffrey

Calloway, both from Co. B, 45th STB, 45th Sust. Bde. Soldiers inventoried six M1097 humvees, a M1152 humvee

with attached Joint Network Node Shelter and three Satellite Transport Terminals; then packed and loaded equipment into nine containers.

Once all equipment and vehicles had been prepared, Soldiers had the containers and vehicles inspected and certified by the Directorate of Logistics. Finally, once cleared for travel, Soldiers transported the vehicles and equipment to Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam and loaded them onto the planes for transport.

The final stage, loading the vehicles and containers onto a C-17 Globemaster, was conducted with the Airmen. Both Co. B and the 535th utilized this training as an opportunity to train Soldiers and Airmen on the proper procedures for loading and securing vehicles and containers onto a C-17. Soldiers practiced backing up the humvees with attached trailers, while Airmen guided them.

“It was awesome to train with the Air Force in a joint training mission, and that they were able to get something out of it also,” McPhee said.

“It was a good learning experience since I have never deployed before, and now I know more about what the Air Force does and how they help us deploy,” said Pvt. Daniella Wilson, Co. B, 45th STB, 45th Sust. Bde.



Spc. Musuai Finley, 561st Eng. Co., 84th Eng. Bn., 130th Eng. Bde., 8th TSC, helps a Hawaii Food Bank driver stack some of the cans her company collected during the “Never Daunted, Never Hungry” Food Drive.

561st Eng. Co.: Drive makes a difference

CONTINUED FROM A-1

This was the first food drive for many of the battalion’s Soldiers, including Pfc. Zacahry Haulman, 523rd Eng. Co., 84th Eng. Bn., 130th Eng. Bde.

Haulman said he was amazed by the number of households that would benefit from the cans he was carrying.

New findings published in Hunger

in America 2010, showed that 183,500 people received emergency food service in Hawaii this past year – 55,050 of which were children.

These donations collected by the 84th Eng. Bn., 130th Eng. Bde. will help to alleviate the burden of hunger shouldered by many Oahu locals.

Many of the people in need in Hawaii are forced to make very difficult decisions that drastically affect

their daily lives.

For example, 28 percent of Hawaiian households have to choose between buying food and paying rent. Similarly, 19 percent of households must choose between paying for medical bills and paying for food.

The 84th Eng. Bn., 130th Eng. Bde. was proud to help ease this burden, especially during the holidays, in the surrounding communities.

196th Inf.: Marksmanship skill is critical

CONTINUED FROM A-1

Command Sgt. Maj. Peter Woolsey, 3302nd MSB, with 28 hits out of 30 targets.

“Marksmanship is the bedrock of (Soldier skills), particularly in a combat area,” said Maj. Mark Snakenberg, senior team chief, Support Bn., 196th Inf. Bde. “Preparing Soldiers for

combat is a serious responsibility.” The Support Bn., 196th Inf. Bde conducts partnership and mobilization training for National Guard and Reserve units throughout the Pacific region.

In recognition of their superior performance, Seward presented Chief Warrant Officer 2 Nickolas Bidoli and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Sam

Massey with coins for their work as coaches, trainers and safeties, while re-emphasizing basic Soldier skills during the training.

“At the end of the day, it was a great experience,” said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Larry Magaoay, Support Bn., 196th Inf. Bde. “I love to train Soldiers and my assignment in the 196th often allows me to do so.”

USARPAC: DAT B gives real-world assessments

CONTINUED FROM A-1

The team deployed as part of an exercise scenario that simulated a tsunami strike to Hilo.

The DAT B is a team of 23 Soldiers who must be ready to rapidly deploy anywhere in the USARPAC area of responsibility to assess a crisis or disaster. The team can also deploy in a smaller module with nine personnel called DAT A, depending on the size and scope of the mission.

Whatever the size, within 24 hours of a disaster, a team of specialized experts must be en route. Each member serves a specific job function, but because the team is small, all must also apply tactical skills and work together regardless of rank.

“Our main focus is to provide assessment for the USARPAC commander based on the inherent skills set we have within our team,” Leonard said. “Whether (it is an engineer, medical, aviation, field services or logistics (issue), we can tailor that package to provide answers to questions that he might need initially, and that he can then use to assist in planning for his follow-on forces.

“Additionally, the DAT B provides expanded assessment capability, begins initial ... deployed/assigned assets and determines where the footprint for the expanded operational mission of the CCP is going setup,” Leonard said.

During the exercise, the team moved from Hilo to Pohakuloa Training Area, which sits between Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa mountains. The team established communications with the CCP here,

within minutes, using a combination of civilian and military communications systems. Within two hours, the team established a functioning workspace in several tents and was providing assessments to USARPAC.

“Conducting an assessment of the Hilo airport, harbor and road networks improved the logistics cell’s ability to conduct real-world assessments in support of humanitarian aid and disaster relief missions,” said Lt. Col. John Wimberley, DAT logistics officer.

“I believe the exercise allowed the DAT B to come together as a cohesive element and practice in a realistic environment,” he added. “I am confident that the DAT B can deploy on a moment’s notice anywhere in the Pacific (area of responsibility) and execute our mission in support of the USARPAC commander’s intent.”

“This mission was a tremendous success. The hardest thing was to alert, assemble and rapidly deploy, within 24 hours, the initial footprint of an expandable command post,” said Col. Marlin Remigio, CCP director of operations. “For a real-world event, it’s easier to get off the island because the assets will be provided to you. It’s harder to get the assets for training, specifically, the aircraft. During this flyaway, we executed the procedures needed to work with the Air Force.”

The 535th Airlift Squadron, stationed at JBPH-H, used the flights to train crews on aircraft loading procedures, and, while on the flight to the Big Island, practiced a tactical descent in which the plane dropped more than 15,000 feet in just a few minutes.

TAMC welcomes its first birth of 2011

Story and Photo by

JAN CLARK

Tripler Army Medical Center Public Affairs

HONOLULU – Tripler Army Medical Center celebrated the first Oahu birth of 2011, when Tehani Chiemi Tamashiro was born at 12:25 a.m., New Year’s Day.

The baby’s mother, Noelle, said her due date was actually Christmas Eve, but she didn’t begin labor until New Year’s Eve. That’s when she arrived at TAMC with her parents, Air Force Tech. Sgt. Nolan and Sharlene Tamashiro. After nearly 12 hours of labor, Tehani was born, weighing in at 6 pounds, 13 ounces.

“I thought I missed it because it was past 12 already,” Noelle said. “When she arrived at 12:25 a.m., they told me she was the first one.”

In addition to being the island’s first daughter of the new year, Tehani is the second generation of her family to be born at Tripler.

“Noelle was born Jan. 3, 1991, here at Tripler,” Sharlene said. “Twenty years ago, compared to now, the care was impersonal. Now, it was personal and comfortable, we (all) got close.

“I was amazed at the room; the staff; the two doctors, Dr. Lauren Guilleto and Dr. Kathleen Green; and the nurses – they were wonderful, very helpful,” she continued.

Brig. Gen. Keith Gallagher, commander, TAMC, stopped by New Year’s morning to welcome Tehani and ensure Noelle and family were well and comfortable. He presented Noelle with a commander’s coin for her new bundle of joy.



Noelle Tamashiro and her newborn daughter, Tehani Chiemi Tamashiro, are greeted by Brig. Gen. Keith Gallagher, commander, TAMC. Tehani was the first baby born on Oahu in 2011.

OPM addresses federal workforce’s locality pay concerns

HONOLULU-PACIFIC FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

News Release

HONOLULU – The Honolulu-Pacific Federal Executive Board met for a scheduled conference call, Dec. 14, to discuss how the Non-Foreign Area Retirement Equity Assurance Act has impacted personnel’s retained pay, the proposed pay freeze and an explanation of how the 16.51 percent locality pay rate was set.

The Office of Personnel Management believes – with or without the adoption of the Akaka bill (S. 3066, to correct the inequity for retained pay employees) currently being considered by Congress – that they have authority in the NAREAA to set locality pay for these individuals.

Equivalent supplemental payments will be made to the retained pay personnel to make up for the loss of what otherwise would have been their locality pay. Written guidance is expected to be provided shortly to get these retained pay personnel back-pay to Jan. 2010, to make up for the loss in locality pay this past year. In addition, equitable buy-in policies will be established for those retained pay personnel who are retiring before Dec. 31, 2012.

Congress has not acted on the president’s plan to freeze pay for two years, as of yet, but are expected to pass legislation during the lame duck session.

OPM said that the pay freeze will not impact locality pay conversion. The 2011 locality pay has been set at 11.01 percent or two thirds of the 2010 level, which was 16.51 percent. The 2012 locality pay level will be 16.51 percent.

There is a corresponding reduction in cost-of-living allowances when locality pay increases. For Oahu, 2011 COLA is 16.07 percent.

There will be one locality rate statewide in Hawaii, and it is based on Bureau of Labor and Statistics numbers.

Q: *How will the current pay freeze affect locality pay for the next two years?*

A: Currently, only the 2011 locality pay adjustment has been frozen in the president’s 2011 alternative plan.

The president’s plan kept existing locality pay rates the same as in 2010. It did not freeze locality pay for Hawaii, but rather established 2011 locality pay rates for Hawaii.

Q: *What is the impact of the pay freeze going to have on the locality pay conversion?*

A: The applicable rates for 2011 are 16.51 percent for Hawaii. Absent unexpected changes to the phase in provisions of the NAREAA, the payable rates would be 11.01 percent for Hawaii, or two-thirds of 16.51 percent.

Q: *Do we know how, or whether, the recently proposed freeze on locality pay will impact Hawaii’s transition from a COLA to locality pay?*

A: It is unclear at this time as no pay freeze legislation has been enacted.

Q: *Will we continue to receive some COLA up to 25 percent if locality pay doesn’t come up to at least 25 percent?*

A: Yes. You will continue to receive COLA as

reduced by the provisions of NAREAA.

Q: *Is OPM prepared to process buy-back provisions pertaining to the retirement of those federal employees in Hawaii retiring between now and Dec. 31, 2012?*

A: Yes, contact your agency’s retirement benefits officer for more information.

Q: *Will there be a separate COLA rate for those on retained pay status?*

A: OPM plans to issue future guidance on pay retention in the non-foreign areas to address this issue using authorities in the NAREAA.

Q: *Why is Hawaii’s newly established locality pay rate being set at a much lower rate than other locations that have lower costs of living than Hawaii? The locality rate for Hawaii is essentially the same rate as Richmond, Va., and Dayton, Ohio!*

A: Locality pay is based on the local cost of labor rather than the local cost of living. The locality pay rates were established in the same manner as for other new locality pay areas.



Visit www.opm.gov/oca/11tables/index.asp for 2011 salary tables. Contact Human Resources Offices for additional information.

Small Claims Court helps individuals resolve legal issues

LEGAL ASSISTANCE OFFICE

News Release

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS – Small Claims Court provides a simple, inexpensive way to enforce your rights.

In this informal court, the parties represent themselves, usually without an attorney accompanying them. However, attorneys, including legal assistance attorneys, can advise you before and after the hearing.

The hearing before the judge or magistrate usually happens quickly and the decision is made immediately or in a few days. The amount you can sue for is often limited. In Hawaii, the amount is limited to \$3,500.

Court costs are usually low, and the court procedures are simple and relatively informal. Small Claims Courts commonly hear landlord-tenant, debtor-creditor, contractual, motor vehicle or property damage disputes.

To resolve a dispute using a Small Claims Court, contact the appropriate clerk of the court. Clerks generally will provide information on the court process and the forms you will need to file a claim and take it through to trial.

Anyone, including non-citizens of the U.S., can sue or be sued. The court will appoint a guardian to act on the person’s behalf if a par-

Legal Assistance

Visit the Legal Assistance Office, Building 2037, on Humphreys and Aleshire drives, Schofield Barracks; call 655-8607; or search on Facebook, keywords “U.S. Army Legal Assistance-Hawaii.”

Legal Assistance can’t represent you in Small Claims Court, but will make helpful suggestions about how to prepare a case.

Appointments are from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday; and from 1-3 p.m., Thursday.

ty is under 18 years old and/or declared incompetent. Businesses and non-profit organizations also can sue or be sued in Small Claims Court. Before you file your case, check with the clerk to be sure.

People should use Small Claims Court when negotiations have failed and someone who owes you money will not pay it; including,

- A landlord wrongfully refuses to return a security deposit.
- An employer will not pay the money owed.
- You bought an appliance, which does not work, and the store where you bought it refuses to return your money.

- An automobile repair shop did not properly repair your car and you already paid the shop.
- Your car was damaged in a traffic accident, which was not your fault, and the damage is not covered by insurance.

In many states, Small Claims Courts only hear cases for money damages up to a small amount. Cases involving libel, slander, malicious prosecution and abuse of process generally cannot be filed in small claims court. Usually, Small Claims Courts cannot force a person to take a specific action – they can’t force the repair shop to make the repairs. Instead, the court can award money damages.



For more information, visit the Hawaii State Judiciary Small Claims Court at www.courts.state.hi.us/self-help/small_claims/small_claims.html.

Getting it Straight

The 196th Infantry Brigade was misidentified as the 196th Signal Bde. when listing the winners of the Oahu South Community Holiday Card Lane, throughout the Dec. 10 issue of the Hawaii Army Weekly.

News Briefs

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

Traffic Updates

Kolekole Pass – Kolekole Pass, connecting the Waianae Coast to Schofield Barracks through Naval Magazine-Lualualei, will be will be closed Jan. 7, 13-14, 20-21 and 27-28. Call 656-3152.

McComack Road – Road construction is underway on McComack Road, Schofield Barracks, across from Building 692, through Jan. 14. Call 656-2479.

Pierce Street Bridge – The bridge on Pierce Street, Fort Shafter, near the Post Exchange, is undergoing repair through Jan. 20. Traffic may be limited to one lane. Call 438-1314/0498.

Lyman Road – Lyman Road, Schofield Barracks, from Lyman Gate to Humphreys Road is being repaved through Feb. 1. Lyman Road will be drivable from 5 a.m.-6 p.m., daily. During the nightly closures, Foote Gate will serve as the visitor control center. Access to Duck Road in the evenings will be limited.

Tripler Army Medical Center – Incoming traffic will be limited to one lane at Jarret White Road, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., daily, through April 11. Outgoing traffic won’t be affected. Call 433-2809.

Wright Avenue – Road construction will be underway Jan. 11-13, on Wright Avenue, Wheeler Army Airfield, between the intersections of Sperry Loop and Lilienthal Road. Call 656-2476.

Today

Recall – Precision Xtra test strips with certain lot numbers have been recalled. Visit www.precisionoptiuminfo.com/EN/lookup.php to check the lot number on test strips. Call the Tripler Army Medical Center pharmacy at 433-7880, or the manufacturer at 800-448-5234.

10 / Monday

Financial Training – This eight-hour class is mandatory for all first-term Soldiers. The next class is scheduled for Jan. 10 and 24, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Army Community Service, Schofield Barracks. Call 655-4227. Register online at www.acsclasses.com.

3 / Thursday

Martin Luther King Jr. Observance – Chaplain (Col.) Rodney Lindsay will be guest speaker at the 500th Military Intelligence Brigade hosted event, 10-11:15 a.m., Jan. 13, Sgt. Smith Theater, Schofield Barracks. Call 655-9596.



Spc. Randall Peaslee (left) and Spc. Bruno De Alcantara, 558th MP Co., 728th MP Bn., 8th MP Bde., 8th TSC, demonstrate lunges during the Blue Ribbon Award field day, Dec. 16, at Waialua Elementary.



558th MP Co. helps students celebrate BLUE RIBBON STATUS

Story and Photos by
PFC. MARCUS FICHTL

8th Military Police Brigade Public Affairs, 8th Theater Sustainment Command

WAIALUA — Soldiers with the 558th Military Police Company, 728th MP Battalion, 8th MP Brigade, 8th Theater Sustainment Command, participated in Waialua Elementary's Blue Ribbon Award field day, here, Dec. 16.

The Soldiers conducted physical fitness class with students, showed off their humvee and donated school supplies.

"It's terrific that the Army comes out here to support the school; the best thing about them coming out is the interaction the children have with the Soldiers," said Scott Moore, principal, Waialua Elementary School. "It's great that the

children are being exposed to the values and culture of military, instilling into the kids how to get the job done and work through obstacles."

Unfortunately, obstacles are something these students are very familiar with.

"Fifty percent of our students are from low-income families and are on subsidized school lunches," Moore said.

But rather than accepting its fate as a low-income school, the school has embraced its challenges, earning Blue Ribbon recognition from the U.S. Department of Education through its Blue Ribbon Schools Program.

"The Blue Ribbon is awarded to low-income schools with exceptionally high test scores or a dramatic improvement in test scores; something

that couldn't be done without donations and volunteers," Moore said.

And role models.

"We see the military as nothing but a positive asset (that) we can never have too much of," Moore said. "The men and women of the military provide that strong, stable role model that many kids in our school need."

"Having the military come out, gives the kids something they can think about in the future, somebody to look up to, to realize what they can be," said Staff Sgt. Paoa Fua, 558th MP Co.

"I was born and raised in Brazil; it's a poor country (and) when we saw military people come to our school, we thought 'this is what we can be,'" said Spc. Bruno De Alcantara, 558th MP Co.

"When I came to America, an American family helped us out. There was no better way than joining the military, to pay them back."

As the Soldiers carried the school supplies to the school at the end of the field day, children flocked to the Soldiers from across the playground. The kids' appreciation helped remind the Soldiers who they are.

"Seeing the kids smile and appreciate what we were teaching them was great," Fua said. "You see Army people every day, (so) seeing the kids reactions makes you appreciate being a Soldier."

"There was a kid who came up to me and showed me his dog tags and (said) how he wanted to be a Soldier; those little things really impressed me," De Alcantara said.



Spc. Michelle Smith, 558th MP Co., 728th MP Bn., 8th MP Bde., 8th TSC, conducts physical training with Waialua Elementary students.



To help celebrate Waialua Elementary's designation as a Blue Ribbon school, the 558th MP Co., 728th MP Bn., 8th MP Bde., 8th TSC, collected and donated school supplies for the students.



Sgt. Karl Williams | 25th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs, 25th Infantry Division

Pure concentration

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS — Jared Bento, a JROTC cadet from Nanakuli High, uses the commando crawl to negotiate a rope bridge during the 2010 Punahou Adventure Challenge, Dec. 18, at East Range, here. About 125 JROTC cadets from schools throughout Hawaii participated in the Adventure Challenge. Competition events included rappelling, land navigation and leadership reaction courses. Soldiers from the 25th Combat Aviation Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, provided combat lifesaver support.

Military Child in Hawaii surveys families for second year

SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICE
News Release

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS — The U.S. Pacific Command-hosted longitudinal study by Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, in conjunction with the Curriculum Research and Development Group at the University of Hawaii, is currently in its second year of collecting data from military families.

All families are encouraged to fill out the survey and share their personal experience with the education in Hawaii. U.S. Army Garrison-Hawaii wants to collect 1,500 responses by July 1.

The study includes all military personnel on the island who are assigned to Oahu installations and includes all children 10-18 years old in private, charter, public and home-schools.

The survey is in the second year of its three-year span of collecting quantitative and qualitative data.

Children and their families' experiences will be followed through their stay here on the island and after they leave Hawaii, although separate questionnaires will be used for children and parents.

The survey can be accessed at www.hawaiikids.org. An unique identifier is provided to each user. Only children whose parents have provided consent for their participation can take part in this program.

On the anniversary of having completed the survey, all participants will be sent e-mail invitations to complete the survey again. Children who complete the survey are eligible for prizes, including digital music cards, MP3 players and a flat-screen TV.

For more information about the Military Child in Hawaii survey, contact Robert Blum, principal investigator, at rblum@jhsph.edu, or Kristin Mmari, study director, at kmmari@jhsph.edu.



Today

NFL Youth Clinics — Register today for free NFL All-Stars football and cheer-leading clinics, 2:30-5 p.m., Jan. 27, Stoneman Stadium, Schofield Barracks. Clinics are targeted for youth ages 7-10. NFL mascots will be available also. Register at www.mwrarmyhawaii.com. Clinics are limited to 150 football and 70 cheerleading participants. Call 655-0111/3.

NFL Ohana Day — Reserve a spot today for the NFL Pro Bowl's free Ohana Day, Jan. 29, by calling 655-0111/2/3. Deadline to register is 12 p.m., Jan. 24. The event includes prize drawings, a chance for kids to go on the field for contests and a sneak peek of the pre-game and halftime shows. Free transportation leaves 7:45 a.m., Schofield Barracks Bowling Center parking lot, and 8:15 a.m., Richardson Theatre, Fort Shafter.

Family Fun Friday — Enjoy great family fun, 6-9 p.m., Jan. 7, Tropics Recreation Center, Schofield Barracks. Free pizza is served on a first-come, first-served basis. Call 655-5797 or visit www.mwrarmyhawaii.com.

Latin Night — Dance to Latin music, 8 p.m.-12 p.m., Jan. 7, Kolekole Bar and Grill, Schofield Barracks. Get free cover, free parking and free dance lessons. Call 655-4466.

10 / Monday

Hula Classes — Learn hula at free classes sponsored by the Native Hawaiian Liaison Office, U.S. Army Garrison-Hawaii. Soldiers and families can participate in the classes, Jan. 10, at the Kalakaua Community Center, Schofield Barracks. Classes are held every Monday in January. A beginners' class starts at 6 p.m.; an advanced class is at 7 p.m. Classes feature the different types of hula and fundamentals of steps, movement and posture. Call 655-9694 or e-mail nhliaison@gmail.com.

14 / Friday

KMC Special — Get a \$75 dining credit by booking two nights or more at the Kilauea Military Camp in Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, through Jan. 14. The special is only for new bookings made online at www.kmc-volcano.com. While at KMC, take advantage of the U.S. Geological Survey's hikes and educational presentations about the island's volcanoes.

18 / Tuesday

Soldier Show — Nominations for performer and technician positions in



Capt. Vic Underwood | Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 196th Infantry Brigade, U.S. Army-Pacific

A visit from St. Nick

FORT SHAFTER — Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 196th Infantry Brigade, U.S. Army-Pacific family readiness group held its annual Christmas Party, Dec. 22, at the 1st Lt. Jonathan P. Brostrom Recreation Center, here. Activities included a potluck lunch, gift exchange and a visit by Santa Claus.

the 2011 U.S. Army Soldier Show are being accepted through Jan. 18. Interested Soldiers may self-nominate by sending packets directly to the the Army Entertainment Division.

All nominations must include a Department of the Army photo, copy of the Soldiers' enlisted or officer record brief, current physical test score and a copy of the latest noncommissioned officer Evaluation Report or officer Evaluation Report. Performers must also submit a video audition on DVD, and technicians are required to submit a resume and photos of past work.

Send nominations to: U.S. Army Soldier Show, Attn: 2011 Selection Committee, PO Box 439, Fort Belvoir, Va., 22060. For more information, visit www.armymwr.com.

20 / Thursday

Keiki Craft Night — Keiki can prepare arts and crafts for Valentine's Day, 6-8 p.m., Jan. 20, Hale Ikena, Fort Shafter. Call 438-1974.

Teen Theater Thursdays

— Teens can learn the basics of stage acting in the free, ongoing theater program at Sgt. Yano Library, Schofield Barracks. The next meeting is 4-5:30 p.m., Jan 20. Call 655-8002 to register. Walk-ins are welcome.

Texas Hold 'em and Bunco

— Do you have the best poker face on post? Find out, Jan. 20, 6 p.m., at the Tropics Recreation Center, Schofield Barracks. Call 655-5698.

14 / Friday

Dance Classes — Children ages 6-18 can learn ballroom dancing, 4-5 p.m., Jan. 14 and 28, Armed Services YMCA, Wheeler Army Airfield. Adult classes will be held 10-11 a.m., Jan. 8 and 22. Classes cover basic techniques and patterns in the American style of ballroom dance. Cost is \$10 per class, per person. Participants aren't required to have a partner. Don't wear slippers. Call 624-5645.

16 / Sunday

Bike Series — The Criterium Bike Series is a four-race bike series at the flight line on Marine Corps Base-Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay. The course will be a time-trial loop, which is about a mile long. The event is open to the public and all levels of competition. Race dates are Jan. 16, Feb. 6, March 13 and 27. Registration at www.active.com closes two days before each race at 4:30 p.m. Series registration will only be taken through the first race, Jan. 16. Call 254-7590.

Jam Session — Musicians of all levels and listeners are invited to Bluegrass Hawaii's free jam session, 1-6 p.m., Jan. 16, at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 1679 California Ave., Wahiawa. Types of music include acoustic bluegrass, newgrass, mountain, roots, traditional country, Hawaiian, Americana, folk, western, Celtic and Irish. The event is open to the public; military members and their families are welcome. Bring a potluck plate or dish to share, soft drinks and a warm sweater. Coffee will be available. E-mail caroline@bluegrasshawaii.com, call 206-3459 or visit www.bluegrasshawaii.com.

31 / Monday

Spouse Scholarships — Military spouses have until midnight EST, Jan. 31,

Ongoing

Tropics Music Studio — Jam alone or with friends at the Tropics Recreation Center, Schofield Barracks. Drums, guitars, bass, amps, mics, mixers and more are available. Cost for a single musician is \$5 per hour; two or more musicians is \$10 total. The first session is free through January.

Appointments and walk-ins are available 6-10 p.m., Monday, Wednesday and Friday; and 2-8 p.m., Saturday. Open to military personnel, family members and eligible guests 18 years and older. A parent or legal guardian must accompany youth 12-17 years of age. Call 655-5698.

Fitness Classes — Fitness classes at Tripler Army Medical Center have resumed after a holiday break. Cost is free for active duty and family members with ID. Retirees and federal civilians pay \$25 a month or \$4 per day. Call 433-5772.

Free Exercise Classes — Soldiers and family members can sign up for free classes at the Schofield Barracks Health and Fitness Center. Classes include group cycling, cardio-kickboxing and yoga. Visit www.mwrarmyhawaii.com or call 655-8007.

EDGE! — This program is free for Blue Star Card holders the first week of every month. EDGE! offers out-of-school opportunities for children and youth, ages 6-18, to participate in cutting-edge art, fitness, life skills and adventure activities. Normal cost is \$30 per week

for first- through fifth-graders, and is free for sixth- through 12th-graders. Visit www.mwrarmyhawaii.com or call 656-0095.

SOAR — Student Online Achievement Resources is a free online program offering testing and tutorials in reading and mathematics for grades three-12. Call 655-9818 or e-mail SoarHawaii@hotmail.com.

Study Strong (Tutor.com) — Tutor.com offers Army families free, online tutoring to kindergarten through college-prep students, 24/7. Tutoring services are available in all grade levels of math, science, English and social studies, at no cost to Army families. A live tutor can aid students on the subject matter. Call 655-9818 or visit www.myarmyonesource.com/cyss_tutor.

Blue Star Benefits — Child care benefits provided by the Blue Star Card program include fee reduction, additional funding for activities and classes, and 16 hours of respite care, per child, per month — beginning 30 days prior to deployment and ending 90 days after return. Call 655-0002.

Arts and Crafts — Visit the Schofield Barracks Arts and Crafts Center for creative fun:

- Basic quilting and sewing is taught 6-8 p.m., every Tuesday. Cost is \$25 for the first class and \$5 for each additional class. Call 655-4202.

- Learn watercolor mixing and abstract techniques, 12-2 p.m., every Wednesday. Four sessions are \$50 and include all the supplies needed. Call 655-9042.

to apply for the National Military Family Association's Joanne Holbrook Patton Military Spouse Scholarship Program at www.militaryfamily.org. Scholarships up to \$1,000 are awarded to military spouses to obtain professional certification or training, complete a two- or four-year degree, or attend graduate school. Spouses of uniformed service members (active duty, National Guard and Reserve, retirees and survivors) from any branch or rank are eligible to apply. The scholarship funds may be used to assist with tuition, fees and school room and board.

Ongoing

Hui Thrift Shop — The Hui Thrift Shop at Schofield Barracks offers great bargains and a chance to volunteer. Located at 2107 Ulrich Way behind Army Community Service, the shop is open 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays, and the first and third Saturday of the month. Consignment hours are 9-11 a.m. Call 624-3254 or e-mail huitriftshopliaison@gmail.com. Hui information is available at www.schofieldspousesclub.com and at www.facebook.com/people/Hui-Thrift-Shop/100001263414335.

Hawaii Military Child Survey — The Hawaii Military Child Survey, which focuses on Hawaii military service personnel and their school-age children, is available at www.hawaiikids.org. The study explores a range of issues related to schooling and education, such as academics; expectations, such as what people had heard about Hawaii schools, life in Hawaii and educational expectations; and family and child history. Call 438-4177.

Food for Families — The Armed Services YMCA at Wheeler Army Air-

field has an emergency food locker that assists military families who are experiencing financial difficulty, with a supply of canned goods, frozen food, dry goods and personal care items. Call 624-5645.

Club Beyond — Middle school and high school youth in grades 6-12 are invited to participate in the Club Beyond youth ministry group. The group meets 6-7:30 p.m., Wednesdays, at the Main Post Chapel, Schofield Barracks; and 6-7:30 p.m., Tuesdays, at the Aliamanu Military Reservation Community Center. Free dinners are available 30 minutes prior to the meeting. E-mail kschmidt@clubbeyond.org or call 372-1567.

Troops to Teachers — Troops to Teachers directly supports military members who have chosen teaching as a career. This program provides direct resource support, including hiring, and allows up to a \$10,000 bonus for teaching in high-need schools. Call 586-4054, ext. 409.

Schofield Chapel Family Night — Sessions for deployed spouses about marriage and finances are conducted Wednesdays at the Schofield Barracks Main Chapel. Youth group and Bible clubs also meet then. Meals are served at 5:30 p.m., with sessions starting at 6 p.m. Child care up for keiki up to 4 years old is free with RSVP. Aliamanu Military Reservation Chapel Family Resilience Nights are Tuesdays. Call 655-6645 or e-mail ktfaamaoni@hotmail.com.

A full list of all services, children's programs and educational classes the garrison's Religious Support Office offers can be found at www.garrison.hawaii.army.mil. Click on "Religious Support," under the "Directorates & Support Staff" menu. Call 655-6644 or 833-6831.

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
SC: Soldiers' Chapel, Schofield Barracks
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 Mass

- Tuesday & Thursday, 8:30 a.m. at AMR
- Saturday, 5 p.m. at TAMC and WAAF chapels
- Sunday services:
 - 8:30 a.m. at AMR
 - 10:30 a.m. at MPC Annex
 - 11 a.m. at TAMC
- Monday-Friday, 11:45 a.m. at MPC and 12 p.m.TAMC

Gospel Worship

- Sunday, 12 p.m. at MPC
- Sunday, 12:30 p.m. at AMR

Islamic Prayers and Study

- Friday, 1 p.m. at MPC Annex
- Friday, 2:30 p.m., TAMC
- 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

Pagan (Wicca)

- Friday, 7 p.m. at MPC Annex

Protestant Worship

- Sunday Services
 - 9 a.m. at FD, FS, MPC and TAMC chapels
 - 9 a.m. at WAAF chapel, Lutheran/Episcopalian
 - 10 a.m. at HMR
 - 10:30 a.m. at AMR

Single Soldiers' Bible Study

- Wednesday, 11:30 a.m. at SC. Lunch is provided.

community Calendar

Send announcements a week prior to publication to community@hawaiiarmyweekly.com.

Survey — The deadline to submit your ideas and comments about the Hawaii Army Weekly has been extended. Is the HAW your main source for what's going on? Do you use Facebook or Twitter? Let the U.S. Army Garrison-Hawaii Public Affairs Office know what you think. Take our quick HAW survey at www.garrison.hawaii.army.mil, and click on the survey link. Call 656-3153.

12 / Wednesday

Running Club — All levels of runners and walkers can join the free Hawaii Running Project Wednesday Run Club at Schofield Barracks. The club meets Wednesdays, 5 p.m., Bowman Field, at the end of Lyman Road. The club runs loops around the base of Kolekole Pass; workouts can be customized from two to eight miles. Go green and bring your own water bottle. E-mail mary.siegel@amedd.army.mil or call 655-9123.

5K Race — Registration closes at 4:30 p.m., Jan. 12 for the fourth annual King of the Hill 5K run, at 7 a.m., Jan. 15, Marine Corp Base-Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay. The run begins and finishes at Dewey Square. The run's main challenge is a steep uphill run to the Kansas Tower, providing a breath-taking view of Kaneohe Bay. The race is open to the public. Register and pay at www.mccshawaii.com. Call 254-7590.

This Week at the MOVIES Sgt. Smith Theater

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



Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows

(PG-13)
Fri., Jan. 7, 7 p.m.

Megamind

(PG)
Sat., Jan. 8, 4 p.m.
Sun., Jan. 9, 2 p.m.

Unstoppable

(PG-13)
Sat., Jan. 8, 7 p.m.

The Next Three Days

(PG-13)
Wed., Jan. 12, 7 p.m.

Saw 3D

*Presented in 2D format (R)
Thurs., Jan. 13, 7 p.m.

No shows on Mondays or Tuesdays.



Shaun Morgan, lead vocalist for Seether, performs for Soldiers and their families at the USO concert, Dec. 18, at Tropics Recreation Center, Schofield Barracks.

Seether concert kicks off holidays

Story and Photo by
PFC. MARCUS FICHTL

8th Military Police Brigade Public Affairs, 8th Theater Sustainment Command

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS — Rock band Seether sent hundreds of Soldiers off for the holiday with a USO-hosted concert at the Tropics Recreation Center, here, Dec. 22.

The concert was part of Seether’s tour of military installations on Hawaii and second USO tour in the 18 months.

“Playing for Soldiers is an important thing to us; we all have friends and family in the service,” said Shaun Morgan, lead vocalist. “It’s just something really special (with) all these people risking their lives so we can play music and have comfortable lives.

“The concert is a way for us to show our appreciation and give a little back to those young men and women who are making the real sacrifices,” he said.

“We’re honored to be accepted into this world and see the military from the inside,” Morgan said. “It’s something you can tell your grandkids one day, that you went to Hawaii and played for some of the finest men and women in the world.”

Coming to popularity post Sept. 11, a time when many bands took on a political edge, Seether did not. Rather they focused on the brotherhood within in their band and their common goal, like many military units do.

“We come from different countries and different

states,” said John Humphrey, drummer. “Two Americans, two South Africans – and music brought us together.

“You have to live together in that small confined space in a band,” Morgan said. “If you aren’t all geared toward the same thing, you can’t accomplish your goal. When we are out on the road, this is what we have, this is our family.”

For Spc. Anthony Woods, 8th Military Police Brigade, 8th Theater Sustainment Command, and his wife Erika, Seether’s camaraderie off the stage translated on the stage during the concert.

“The concert was great and (was) made even better by the fact that it was my wife’s birthday,” Woods said. “She was really excited to be able to take pictures with the band during the meet-and-greet and get an autographed photo.”

The excitement radiated from both sides of the stage.

“Tonight was great, I almost collapsed the barricade shaking everyone’s hand,” said Dale Stewart, bass player.

Seether even expressed an interest in future military affiliated shows.

“We’d love to do a USO show every six months and play shows in Afghanistan and Iraq,” Morgan said.

FRG sends pine trees downrange

STAFF SGT. RICARDO BRANCH

2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs, 25th Infantry Division

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARHORSE, Iraq — A real Christmas tree, complete with decorations, brought holiday cheer to the Soldiers of the 225th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, who are deployed to the Diyala province of northern Iraq.

Tracey Murray, family readiness group advisor and the wife of the deployed battalion commander, helped organize the effort to send Christmas trees.

“One of our FRG leaders, Sherri De Silva, was here during the last deployment and remembered how they sent live Christmas trees to the troops downrange,” Murray said. “We decided to do it again to bring a bit of Christmas cheer to our Soldiers.”

“The Christmas tree is a nice morale booster for Soldiers,” said Staff Sgt. Carlo Principio, generator mechanic, Company B, 225th BSB, 2nd BCT.

“It’s just amazing to see a real Christmas tree out here,” said Principio, who is serving his fourth deployment to Iraq, the third during the holiday season. “It’s one of the last things you expect to see over in the desert; the pine smell alone reminds me of home.”

The 225th BSB FRG contacted a tree nursery in McMillan, Mich., to begin the process of bringing the Christmas spirit to the troops, a journey of more than 6,235 miles.

The coordination to bring the 11 trees to the desert was no simple feat, Murray said, since the current deployment scattered the battalion across two provinces in Iraq, an area roughly the

size of Pennsylvania.

“The coordination was a little trickier for this deployment,” she said. “The brigade is responsible for a much larger area, and the (225th) BSB Soldiers are literally everywhere.

“After we coordinated with the rear detachment and our deployed Soldiers, each of our company FRGs adopted a (forward operating base) and sent a tree to the battalion point of contact there, regardless if it was ‘their’ Soldier,” Murray said.

Each company FRG leader also sent individual boxes of Christmas tree lights and decorations to their adopted bases.

“While it is hard for our families to be without their Soldier during the holidays, we know it must be even harder for the Soldiers downrange,” she said. “We hope this brings a little bit of Christmas cheer to every one of our Soldiers.”

Lt. Col. Scott Murray, battalion commander, 225th BSB, 2nd BCT, said he was touched to see the battalion families’ and friends’ amazing efforts in taking care of the Soldiers during the holidays.

“Every Soldier who is away from home always thinks about home,” he said. “Anything you can do that would remind them (of home) and what it feels like during Christmas, is important because it lets them know people back home are thinking about them.

“It’s great to see the Soldiers’ spirits lifted in such a way by our families back home,” he added.

The battalion commander said seeing holiday decorations arriving from home was also a great morale booster for the troops, because it changes the mood and atmosphere around the workplace.

Red Cross distributes holiday cards

HAWAII RED CROSS

News Release

HONOLULU — Wounded service members and veterans at Tripler Army Medical Center and several other locations in Hawaii had brighter holidays through the generosity of the American public.

Local Red Cross and Pitney Bowes volunteers screened and sorted holiday cards from the public, Dec. 18. The cards were then delivered to TAMC’s inpatient wards and clinics, Spark M. Matsunaga VA Medical Center, several Veterans Affairs clinics and military bases on the islands during the week of Christmas.

“Holiday Mail For Heroes” continues the Red Cross tradition of service to the armed forces. More than more than 1.4 million cards were collected for service members, veterans and their families in the United States and abroad.

“One holiday card is all it takes to make a difference in the life of the millions of active duty military men and women, veterans and family members,” said Coralie Chun Matayoshi, CEO, Hawaii Red Cross.

“The American Red Cross serves and supports members of the military, veterans and their families by providing emergency communications,

comfort and assistance each day,” Matayoshi said. “The Holiday Mail for Heroes program continues the Red Cross tradition of service to the armed forces.”

Last year, the Hawaii Red Cross helped more than 1,830 service members and their families with emergency communication and referrals in times of crisis. They also provided more than 18,016 members of the U.S. armed forces and their families with pre-deployment information on how to use Red Cross services to maintain connection with their families during times of crisis and separation.

Hawaii Red Cross

To learn more about the Hawaii Red Cross, visit www.hawaiiiredcross.org or call 739-8109.

130th Eng. Bde. competes in first Endurance Challenge

Story and Photos by
CAPT. STEPHEN ROBINSON
130th Engineer Brigade, 8th Theater Sustainment Command

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS — True grit became a lasting and crucial theme for participants during the first 130th Engineer Brigade, 8th Theater Sustainment Command, Endurance Challenge competition, Dec. 10, at the Martinez Gym, here.

The contest recognizes the brigade's most physically fit male and female Soldier of the month. Sixteen Soldiers endured six challenges in a one-hour time frame, testing their physical endurance and mental toughness. The competi-



Col. Jeffrey Milhorn (right), commander, 130th Eng. Bde, 8th TSC, congratulates Capt. Ray Mockus, top male competitor in the brigade's Endurance Challenge, Dec. 10. Mockus achieved the highest final score in the male category. The event was conducted at the Martinez Gym, Schofield Barracks.

tion began at 6 a.m., kicking off with the bench press event, followed by squats, military press, chin-ups, dips and ending with a three-mile run.

Competitors had one minute to perform the maximum number of repetitions for each event, except the three-mile run, with only a one-minute transition period between each event.

"This endurance competition gives Soldiers an opportunity to compete against some of the most physically and mentally fit Soldiers in the brigade," said Sgt. 1st Class Hans Drupiewski, event planner and grader, 130th Eng. Bde, 8th TSC. "There are no losers here. However, there will only be one winner for the males and one winner for the females."

"One sole purpose in conducting this event is to build unit pride, esprit de corps and to enhance the brigade's physical fitness program by allowing competition among the Soldiers of the brigade," said Col. Jeffrey Milhorn, commander, 130th Eng. Bde., who was also a competitor in the event.

Capt. Raymond Mockus, 130th Eng. Bde., was named top male competitor and Capt. Emily Hannenberg, 84th Eng. Battalion, 130th Eng. Bde, was the top female competitor. Mockus completed the challenge with a combined total of 193 points, while Hannenberg finished with a combined total of 104 points. Winners were decided based on highest score achieved.



Spc. Andrew Ranson (right), S-3 Operations, 130th Eng. Bde., 8th TSC, assists in totaling competitors' final scores.

"The challenge was tough," Mockus said. "On all the exercises, except maybe on the squats, the weights were heavy enough to bring you to muscle failure right before the clock stopped. I couldn't use my arms for the first half of the run."

"Going into the events, I knew a lot of the competitors were in real good shape," he said. "I was just hoping for a strong showing while trying to represent S-3 Operations (Section) the best I could."

Both Mockus and Hannenberg were awarded

Army Achievement Medals, a four-day pass and brigade T-shirts. They will also get to conduct and name a physical training event on separate Fridays.

"This was a good competition," said Sgt. 1st Class Andrew Campbell, S-3 Operations Section, 130th Eng. Bde. "It gave units the ability to have a lot of pride in their section or unit."

Milhorn announced that the competition will be held monthly and that previous winners will compete in the annual Winner's Circle.

Spin-A-Thon raises donations for Wounded Warrior Project

STAFF SGT. RICARDO BRANCH
2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs, 25th Infantry Division
FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARHORSE,

Iraq — Deployed troops raised money for the Wounded Warrior Project during the Spin-A-Thon event, Dec. 25, at the Cash Gym, here.



Spc. Robert England | 2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs, 25th Infantry Division

Sgt. David Alsop, operations sergeant, 66th Engineer Co., 2nd BCT, 25th ID; and Pfc. Christian Perez-Silva, systems maintainer and integrator, 185th Military Intelligence Co., 2nd BCT; ride stationary bicycles, Dec. 25, at the Cash Gym at Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Diyala province, Iraq.

Twenty-six volunteers took turns peddling two stationary exercise bikes to raise donations.

The Wounded Warrior Project counsels and helps wounded warrior return to the workforce after their military service, said U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Terry Prime, who planned and organized the Spin-A-Thon.

"They offer a variety of programs geared toward helping individuals get back into life, Prime said. "Often an injured service member will be faced with life-altering things in their life, and the Wounded Warrior Project is there to help get them through it."

Beginning at noon, Christmas Day, volunteers divided eight hours into 30-minute blocks, peddling and switching out partners in groups of two. The participants solicited donations from patrons visiting the gym.

Prime, the Air Force Weather Team noncommissioned officer in charge and attached to 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, said he felt the holiday season was the best time to host the event.

"I chose Christmas as a day to hold this event because it is obviously the biggest day of giving, and I can't think of a more worthy cause to give to our brothers and sisters-in-arms who have been injured defending our country," he said.

Pfc. Robert Rankin, 185th Military Intelligence Company, 2nd BCT, said he has heard about organizations raising money for wounded warriors and always wanted to do his part.

"My sergeant told me about this event," Rankin said. "There have been stories of Soldiers getting injured and (then) overcoming those (injuries) with help by organizations like the Wounded Warrior Project."

"Knowing you're making a difference for another service member is what makes me do this," he said. "You're only giving up a little of your time, but that time is going to help someone out there, possibly a Soldier, so it's the right thing to do."

Event participants raised \$1,000 in donations from individuals who visited the gymnasium on Christmas Day.

"We raised a sizable donation for the organization, which is going to go a long way to helping our wounded warriors in the military," Prime said. "The Wounded Warrior Project does a lot to help injured service members, so it was great to give back to them today."

The Wounded Warrior Project, a Veterans Affairs-accredited organization listed with the Combined Federal Campaign, is a charity designed to counsel and help wounded service members return to the workforce after their military service.



To find out more about the Wounded Warrior Project, visit www.woundedwarriorproject.org.