



Vol. 16, No. 1

State of Hawaii Office of Veterans Services

April 2012

New OVS Staff & Advisory Board Members



DeAnn Ferreira is our new Cemetery Operations Assistant at the Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery (HSVC). She has been temporarily appointed to assist at HSVC.

Photos by Jayme Sato



Felicia Castro is the first person you meet at the reception area at HSVC in Kaneohe. She is our new Office Assistant.



Debbie Harada is our new Administrative Services Assistant at the Oahu Office. She came from our State Civil Defense Division at DOD.

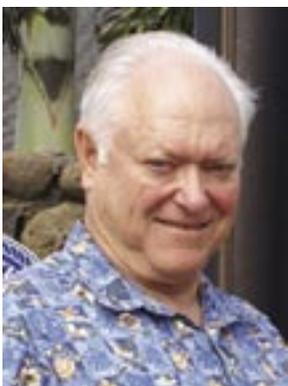


Vi Lee is the first person you will meet at our reception desk at Tripler Hospital. She is our new Office Assistant at the Oahu Office.



Judy Ranger has joined the island of Hawaii's OVS staff as a Veterans' Services Counselor. She will be stationed at the Hilo Office. Judy is an Army veteran.

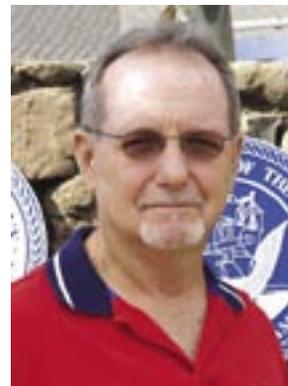
Joe Flores photo



Michael Golojuch is our new Advisory Board on Veterans' Services member for Oahu. He is an Air Force veteran.



Carolle Brulee-Wilson is our new Advisory Board on Veterans' Services member for Hilo. She is a Navy veteran.



Wilbert Pereira is our new Advisory Board on Veterans' Services member for Kauai. He is an Army veteran.



Ann Greenlee is our new Advisory Board on Veterans' Services member for Oahu. She is an Air Force veteran.



Nancy Yurow has joined the island of Oahu's OVS staff as a Veterans' Services Counselor.

Nancy Yurow photo

We would like to welcome all of our new employees and Advisory Board members to OVS. We serve its veterans to the best of our ability.



Director's Message

COL-R Ronald "Ron" P. Han Jr.

Director State Office of Veterans Services

In the short time I've been appointed, I have had the honor of meeting numerous veterans and their families. My appreciation for the warm welcome and for spending time out of your busy schedule to chat about issues with me. My thanks to the Korean War Veterans Association for inviting Jennifer Aina, my wife Terry, and I to your Annual Installation of Officers Luncheon. It was great to meet so many veterans and their spouses and to see the pride and camaraderie of this heralded organization. It was there at this luncheon that I had a chance to meet and spend some time with retired officers Brig. Gen. Irwin Cockett, Col. Walter Ozawa, Col. Ed Cruickshank, and Maj. Mark Moses, all former directors of the State Office of Veterans Services (OVS). I also had a chance to meet retired Lt. Col. Lawrence Lee, the first OVS director at the Veterans Day Ceremony and to touch base over e-mail exchanges with Greg Jackson my predecessor for this position. Greg gives his very best to all as he is busy working for the State Dept. in South Sudan. My sincerest thanks to each of these past directors for their offer of assistance and support!

On behalf of the Gov. Neil S. Abercrombie and Maj. Gen. Darryll Wong, the state adjutant general, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of our dignitaries, families, veterans, veterans' organizations, our performers, and our volunteers who came to pay homage and to honor those who sacrificed all at the 2011 Governor's Veterans Day Ceremony held at the Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery in Kaneohe. Our "More than Warriors" theme was very evident at the ceremony as highlighted in Jennifer Aina's article in this newsletter. Again, thank you all for honoring those who served!

Solemn ceremonial events surrounding the 70th anniversary of the bombing of Pearl Harbor were also held throughout the State in December I had the honor of

meeting a few of these veteran survivors and their families throughout the week and was touched by their sacrifice and love of country.

We would also like to express our heartfelt congratulations to the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, 100th Infantry Battalion, the Military Intelligence Service, and the 1399th Engineering Construction Battalion who were honored during a victory parade, a luncheon featuring as the keynote Veterans Affairs Secretary, Gen. (Ret) Eric Shinseki, and a memorial service at Punchbowl with retired Lt. Gen. Joseph Peterson providing remarks. The 442nd, 100th, and MIS were honored for earning the U.S. Congressional Gold Medal and the 1399th received the World War II Victory Medal. Special kudos to retired Maj. Gen. Robert G.F. Lee, Ms. Barbara J. Tanabe, and Mr. Jimmy Kuroiwa, and so many others for such a special weekend of celebration and remembrance.

Tribute paid to veterans who continue to serve

On Dec. 23, 2011 at 2300 hrs to coincide with Christmas Eve in the Far East, many veterans of the wars in Vietnam, Korea, and current war campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan gathered at our war memorials at the State Capitol to pay tribute to our fallen warriors, our veterans, and for those who continue to serve. Even with the heavy wind and rain that chilly evening, you could not dampen the pride and hearts of those in attendance. Lt. Gen. Frank Wiercinski (USARPAC) and Maj. Gen. Stephen Tom (JPAC) provided poignant comments during this ceremony. Caz Ross and I would

like to recognize Tom Stirling, Allen Hoe, Fred Kobashikawa, Walter Ozawa, Thomas Kalakukui, and numerous others who put this ceremony together year after year.

Special recognition to

Governor's Advisory Board on Veterans' Services Board Member, Pat Weiland who serves as a VA Volunteer Officer. She has increased the number of VA volunteers from less than 20 personnel to over 250 volunteers. Pat hosted an annual volunteer luncheon honoring them for their exceptional service. Six of our outstanding OVS Oahu volunteers were honored at the luncheon.

It goes without saying that I am deeply humbled to have this opportunity to serve our men and women in the Armed Forces, our veterans, and their families. Thanks in part to our past directors who worked very hard with our staff to acquire three more veterans services counselors (VSC) that included an additional one for Oahu, Maui, and Hawaii.

The Veterans Treatment Court initiative for Hawaii is gaining momentum. The Dept. of VA for the Pacific Islands under Dir.,

Dr. James Hastings and Ms. Tracey Betts, have forged ahead by bringing state, federal, law enforcement, community/non-profits, and care providers to the table to formulate the precepts for an implementation plan.

Expansion of the Makawao State Veterans Cemetery is also picking up steam as key agencies led by Lt. Col. Neal Mitsuyoshi (DOD Engineering) and Gina Ichiyama (Dept. of Accounting and General Services/Engineering) are pressing forward with the initial steps in the land acquisition process.

Advisory Board on veterans' services

The Governor's Advisory Board on Veterans' Services, chaired by retired Col. Lloyd Sodemani, with neighbor island representation, had a very successful meeting on Oahu in December to discuss issues affecting our veterans and their families. We continue to get closer with the implementation of our Network of Care website that will be more user friendly and offer invaluable service support links to our customers. The veterans' identification card initiative continues to be worked by our staff and with corresponding implementing agencies. Pres. Obama also recently signed into law 6 tax breaks for companies hiring veterans. Part of this law covered beefing up job training and counseling programs for veterans as well. Veteran issues continue to remain at the forefront on all levels.

Again, I look forward to meeting you throughout the year and to serving you! On behalf of Team OVS, best wishes for a safe and joyous year!



Veterans waiting in the shade for the parade of flags and presentation of floral leis to start.

Sgt. Katie Gray photo



The Korean War Veterans Association members saluting during TAPS at the Veterans Day Ceremony at Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery.

Jayme Sato photos

Update your information for the Hawaii Veteran Newsletter

Aloha Kakou. OVS needs you. Over the years, we've always maintained the strictest fiscal discipline and because of this we can justify getting even more resources to spend just as wisely. OVS enjoys this reputation often directly because of the generosity of the veterans who we exist to serve. Our veterans have given everything from man-hours and cash donations to furniture and computers. This newsletter, however, operates

entirely on state funding. We need to find efficiencies in that budget to survive these difficult times. You will be able to download the newsletter from our website. Or we can email the newsletter to you. Copies will also be available in all of our neighbor island offices. Please kindly fill out and return the form below, or email us your current email address. Mahalo nui loa.

Cut out and mail responses in a stamped envelope to:
Office of Veterans Services
ATTN: HI VETERAN NEWSLETTER
459 Patterson Road
E-Wing, Room 1-A103
Honolulu, HI 96819-1522

Yes, I would like to be emailed the Hawaii Veteran Newsletter. Please add me to your email mailing list.

No thanks, Please remove me from your mailing list.

Email Address: _____

Or email us at:
jsato@ovs.hawaii.gov

Veterans Day at the HSVC in Kaneohe

Story by Jennifer Aina

Veterans Day at the Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery was a most appropriate affair for veterans who fought and gave their lives and who are now resting in our sacred grounds.

Veterans in attendance were many; they stood with a proud stature knowing that Veterans Day is a tribute to the men and women who served in the military; it is a day of honor and appreciation to these veterans and military warriors.

The Governor's Veterans Day ceremony started with an overcast of rain clouds. Many of our veterans attending had just participated in the National Memorial Punchbowl Cemetery and had driven in with much diligence to partake in another ceremony. The theme for our ceremony was "More than Warriors..." and yes they are. Of our attendees in the audience was Pfc. James Hunt who was wounded during battle with a brain injury while stationed in Afghanistan. Hunt's family had accompanied him and had been residing at the Fisher House while their son was being treated at Tripler Hospital. Hunt expressed a strong need to be at the Veterans Day Ceremony. Another Honorable Vietnam veteran in attendance was Sgt. Maj. Allan Kellogg; who received the Medal of Honor for saving his unit by hurling himself on a grenade. He continuously joins and participates in our Veterans Day ceremonies. These are just two stories to be told. However, many stories of our veterans who are with us today, remains untold.

We opened our ceremony with Kahu Manu Mook who is also a Vietnam veteran and served in the U.S. Navy. His Oli' with the traditional Hawaiian blessings of our sacred grounds brought much mana (power) to our program. After the Oli', 50 veterans' organizations marched in presentation of their flags and floral leis. Accompanying

the veterans in their march were our Youth Challenge Academy students dressed in their marching uniforms proudly carrying each veteran's organization flag. To give the opening remarks was our new OVS director retired Col. Ronald Han, Jr., USAF. Han continued by announcing the National & State Colors presented by our Joint Services Color Guard and the Hawaii Royal Guard. Singing our National Anthem and Hawaii Pono'i was the beautiful and talented Tomoko Hotemo who's father served in the military. Kahu Kekapa Lee from the First Chinese Church of Christ resonated his prayers in the Invocation for the blessing of our troops on the battlegrounds around the world.

Performing the sacred Hawaiian warrior Ha'a ceremony in preparation for battle were the Pa Ka 'Ai Kanaha Elua Warriors. These Vietnam veterans led by Sonny Kaulukukui honored their legions to their nation. Maj. Gen. Darryll Wong, State Adjutant General gave welcome remarks and recognized our troops nationwide and overseas. Retired Vice Admiral Robert Kihune gave a remarkable speech as our guest speaker on our past battles with outstanding data on the dates and number of casualties. His delivery of America's history of battles has left our audience with a better understanding of what our nation sacrificed. To follow with the Musical Interlude was the Ukulele Rendition by Staff Sgt. Bryan Sanchez of the 111th Army Band, Hawaii Army National Guard. Immediately after the rendition Gov. Neil Abercrombie

gave an outstanding delivery of the meaning of Veterans Day. He praised our warriors and their families who have given and continue to give so much to our Nation and State.

As I stood motionlessly in the back of the audience, I watched as our community leaders, veterans, their families and military commanders stand with pride and patriotism to the military medley. As I looked suddenly up into our blue skies, our Coast Guard H-65 Dolphin helicopter slowly and patiently hovered down to the audience with great and powerful reverence. The magnificence of this flying machine displayed great patriotism and honor to our veterans and all who attended. I am sure our veterans

who lay resting in our burial grounds were touched by the ceremony.

We ended the entire program with another veterans group, Fleet Reserves Assoc. Branch 46 providing delicious refreshments. They donate

their time and service twice a year for our audience and program participants.

In closing, "More than Warriors..." comes to mind as I watched with pride at the many veterans who had built our nation to what it is today. Their endless patriotism in past battles continues today, not only in the Middle East and around the world, but more importantly, in their every day lives. They continuously come together in support of our Warriors while suffering quietly and unselfishly with battle wounds earned in support of freedom and liberty for our nation.



Pa Ka 'Ai Kanaha Elua Warriors performed "Ha'a Maha U." An ancient warriors dance & chant.

Sgt. Katie Gray photo



Hawaii Veteran Newsletter

State of Hawaii Department of Defense

The Hawaii Veteran Newsletter is funded and published by the State of Hawaii, Office of Veteran Services. It is an offset publication. Views and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of the Dept. of Veterans Affairs. All photos are State DoD and OVS photos unless otherwise credited. Circulation: 14,250.

Gov. Neil Abercrombie
Commander in Chief

Maj. Gen. Darryll D.M. Wong
The Adjutant General

COL-R Ronald P. Han Jr.
OVS Director

Jayne E. Sato
Editor/Layout

www.hawaii.gov/dod/ovs
email: ovs@ovs.hawaii.gov

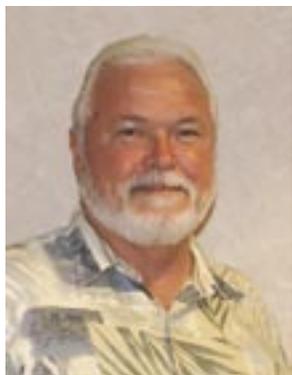
433-0420 (OVS)
433-0385 (OVS fax)

733-4258 (DoD)
733-4236 (DoD fax)



Office of Veterans Services
State of Hawaii
459 Patterson Road
E-Wing, Room 1-A103
Honolulu, HI 96819-1522

PRESORTED
STANDARD
US POSTAGE
PAID
HONOLULU, HI
PERMIT #1023



Veterans Burial Benefits

By Tony Elliott
Kauai Veterans Services Counselor

The Dept. of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers four benefits to deceased veterans and certain other persons as indicated below. They are: 1. Gravesite or

niche in any veterans cemetery; 2. Headstone or niche marker; 3. American flag and 4. Memorial certificate

Eligibility

- Active duty and veterans of the Armed Forces
 - Discharged under conditions other than "dishonorable".
 - Enlisted personnel who entered active service beginning after Sept. 7, 1980 and service after Oct. 16, 1981 as an officer must be for a minimum of 24 continuous months or the full period for which the person was called to active duty (in the case of a Reservist called to active duty for a limited duration).
 - Undesirable, bad conduct, and other types of discharges characterized as "other than honorable" may or may not qualify the individual for benefits, depending upon a determination made by the VA.

- Reserve Component and members of the Army/Air National Guard
 - Who, at time of death, were entitled to retired pay under Ch. 1223, Title 10, U.S. Code, or would have been entitled, but for being under the age of 60. (Specific categories of individuals eligible for retired pay are delineated in section 12731 of Ch. 1223, Title 10, U.S. Code.)
 - Who die while hospitalized or undergoing treatment at the expense of the U.S. for injury or disease contracted or incurred under honorable conditions while performing active duty for training or inactive duty training, or undergoing such hospitalization or treatment.
 - Who, during a period of active duty for training, were disabled or died from a disease or injury incurred or aggravated in line of duty or, during a period of inactive duty training, were disabled or died from an injury or certain cardiovascular disorders incurred or aggravated in line of duty.
 - NOTE: Members or former members who served at least one enlistment or, in the case of an officer, the period of initial obligation, or were discharged for a disability incurred or aggravated in line of duty, or died while a member of the Selected Reserve or member of the Guard are eligible for an American flag only.

- Other persons - The following individuals may also qualify for burial benefits. To view specific eligibility criteria, visit <http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/bbene/eligible.asp>:

Spouse and dependent children burial benefits

Benefits include burial with the veteran, perpetual care, and the name, date of birth and death of the deceased will be inscribed on the veteran's headstone, at no cost to the family. Eligible spouses and dependents may be buried, even if they predecease the Veteran.

Preparing in Advance

Without exception, a legible unaltered hard copy of the veteran's military discharge papers (DD-214, WD 53-55, or similar document) is required to prove eligibility before any benefits may be provided. It is the veteran's sole responsibility to advise his/her family of any wishes and where discharge papers are kept. Veterans may also consider making pre-needs arrangements with a local funeral home and inquiring into burial arrangements at a veteran's cemetery. (Note: Gravesites in veteran's cemeteries cannot be reserved in advance.) The VA does not make funeral arrangements or perform cremations. Families should make these arrangements with a funeral provider or cremation office. Any item or service obtained from a funeral home or cremation office will be at the family's expense.