

# HAWAII VETERAN

Vol. 19, No. 1 State of Hawaii Office of Veterans Services May 2015

## Launch of 50th Commemoration of Vietnam War



The State of Hawaii and the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) formalized a partnership to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. The Office of Veterans Services formed a 50th State Commemorative Committee with partners in the military, community and industry to plan major events from 2015 to 2017. We want to make sure we pay tribute to the service and sacrifices of these brave men and women.

*Photo by Jayme Nagamine*



Retired Col. Gene Castagnetti is the Chairperson for the Vietnam War 50th Anniversary Commemoration Program for Hawaii.

*Photos by Tyler Kruse*



The 50th State Commemorative Committee formally accept the commemorative certificate and flag.



# 60th Anniversary of the Korean War Recognition Ceremony in Hilo on April 25, 2015



Thank you to the Office of Veterans Services Staff, the Sueoka Family and the University of Hawaii - Hilo Baseball Team for making this ceremony a success.



Left to Right - Mr. Randy Kurohara, Consul General Walter K. Paik, Republic of Korea, and Colonel Kenneth Hara, Deputy Adjutant General.

*Photos by Lyndie Michioka*



# Update your information for the Hawaii Veteran Newsletter

Cut out and mail responses in a stamped envelope to:

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## 60th Korean War Recognition Ceremony Pictures



Photos by Lyndie Michioka



# Ewa Field Battlefield Determination of Eligibility

Story By John Bond  
Ewa Field Historian

Ewa Field Battlefield Determination of Eligibility (DOE) by the National Park Service in Washington, DC.

The entire 1941 Ewa Field, (also known as Ewa Mooring Mast Field, which was a Navy airship field built in 1925,) has been recognized by the National Park Service Keeper of the Register in Washington, DC as eligible for nomination as a National American Battlefield.

Ewa Field is a very rare intact 1941 airfield and battlefield site that was attacked on Dec. 7, 1941 by Imperial Japanese naval air forces and has largely remained in 1941 condition. Even though it was expanded in 1942-45 into a much larger Marine Corps Air Station Ewa that trained top Marine ace fighter pilots, the runway layout and bullet marked concrete ramp remain as it was in 1941.

Fortunately after the base closed in 1952 it was brought into the base property management of the larger Naval Air Station Barbers Point and used as a recreational area with the addition of a golf course built over the 1944-45 taxiways. The Barbers Point Golf



Everything within the green border (minus a few small parcels) has been determined as eligible for a national battlefield nomination.

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## Hawaii Youth Challenge Cadets Help Clean HSVC



Thank you to the Hawaii Youth Challenge Academy Cadets. We appreciate the help you provide OVS and HSVC on Memorial and Veterans Day Ceremonies.

Photo by Willie Hirokane  
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# Ewa Field Battlefield Determination of Eligibility

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Course was carefully designed around the 1941 airfield, preserving it intact. A few then very Top Secret Cold War era buildings were also added by Ewa Gate on Roosevelt Road as adjuncts to the major Patrol Wing Two NAS Barbers Point Soviet submarine tracking mission.

The 89 year old airfield is now on



**John Hughes speaks with another Ewa veteran about the old days**

*Photo by Jacque Martin*

track to become a future historic park as the National Park Service determination provides important official recognition that Save Ewa Field supporters have been waiting years for. The first Save Ewa Field Commemoration was held on Dec. 7, 2007 when preservation looked very bleak. The DOE also helps preserve the Cold War era buildings at Ewa Field which could serve as museum and maintenance facilities.

These steps follow the original intent of the 2009 Hawaii State Legislature concurrent resolution HCR49 HD1 which urged the President of the United States, Secretary of Defense, and Secretary of the Interior to preserve Marine Corps Air Station Ewa, or a portion of it, as a National Monument.

The Dept. of Land and Natural Resources, Historic Hawaii Foundation, and many concerned individuals and

veterans also supported this concurrent resolution. While taking five years to come to fruition, the people of Ewa West Oahu will finally be getting their historic heritage park.

<http://ewafield.blogspot.com/2014/07/hawaii-state-legislature-2009-hcr49.html>

## Take a look at the “re-sume” of this very remarkable 89 year old airfield...

- Ewa Mooring Mast Field, one of the very earliest aviation fields in Hawaii, constructed in 1925 as a then high technology US Navy airship port with a state-of-the-art 100 foot high steel tower and circular railway.

- One of the very first military bases attacked on Dec. 7, 1941 and remained under nearly continuous attack for approximately two hours due to the Japanese use of Ewa airspace as their key air attack staging objective.

- Ewa Field was the site of major air battles involving Japanese planes, Navy SBD's from USS Enterprise and P-40's from Haleiwa air field. Unarmed civilian planes with off-duty Army soldiers were also shot down over Ewa.

- Ewa Field Marines and aircraft which had just been placed on Wake Island were in the first frontline Pacific War land, sea and air battle fought by the United States. The first Medal of Honor in WWII went to Ewa USMC pilot Capt. Henry Elrod.

- Ewa Field USMC pilot Capt. Richard Fleming was the only Naval aviation pilot to receive the Medal of Honor at the Battle of Midway in 1942.

- Recognized in resolutions

passed by the Hawaii State Legislature and three local neighborhood Boards recommending preservation of Ewa battlefield as a National Landmark, Monument, park and museum site.

- Ewa Field WWII history spawned movies “Wake Island” and “Flying Leathernecks” and was a key Oahu set location for filming the classic “Tora, Tora, Tora” in 1969.

- MCAS Ewa was visited by many famous military, political and historic figures, including FDR, Adm. Nimitz, Gen. MacArthur, Adm. Halsey, Gen. Geiger, and was an F4U Corsair fighter aircraft training base for legendary aviation pioneer Charles Lindbergh and baseball great Ted Williams.

- MCAS Ewa was an aircraft training base for many legendary USMC fighter squadrons, ace fighter pilots and 12 Medal of Honor recipients.

- Ewa Field-MCAS Ewa was the original first home of US Marine Corps aviation in the Pacific, a forward development base of key air support concepts and pivotal operational aviation airport used to win back the Pacific Islands from Imperial Japanese control.

- Federally recognized, National Register eligible “Leina a ka ‘uhane” – native Hawaiian spirit leaping off place – a spiritual portal back to the ancient homeland of Tahiti. This “wahi pana” (sacred place) is the area where native souls enter the afterlife.



**US Navy veteran and 7 year Vietnam POW Jerry Coffee remembers living on the base.**

*Photo by Jon Launer*

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## Community Service provided by St. Louis School



The 6th Grade class from St Louis Middle School came to volunteer their services at the Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery in Kaneohe on Thurs., Jan. 29, 2015. 30 students, 5 teachers and chaperones cleaned headstones and picked up brown flowers. Everyone did a great job cleaning the headstones. We appreciate their time and hard work.



*Photos by Willie Hirokane*

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