



HAWAII VETERAN

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State of Hawaii Office of Veterans Service

Jan-Apr 2007

Outpatient clinic opens on Lanai

By Department of Veterans Affairs

WASHINGTON – Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson announced today that the Department of Veterans Affairs will open a new outpatient clinic for veterans on the island of Lanai.

“VA is committed to improving access to our care for Hawaii’s veterans,” Nicholson said. “This facility will ensure that veterans on Lanai have access to the world-class VA health care that they have earned by their service to our nation.”

The new facility joins nearly 900 existing outpatient clinics that provide primary health care for America’s veterans. This year, VA outpatient clinics are expected to treat veterans during more than 64 million visits.

The new facility will replace most outpatient care now provided under contract to veterans by the Lanai Community Hospital. VA will

continue to purchase care from the hospital for certain inpatient and some outpatient services.

Telemedicine — the use of telecommunications technology to provide health care from distant locations — will link the clinic to additional services at other VA clinics and hospitals.

Additionally, VA is working with the Hawaiian Health Systems Corporation, the Native Hawaiian Health System and local providers to obtain Federally Qualified Health Clinic status for the Lanai hospital, which would increase the availability of specialty care for all Lanai residents.

Last year, VA spent \$343 million in Hawaii to provide health care, disability compensation, pensions and other benefits to the islands’ 102,000 veterans. VA currently operates a major medical center in Honolulu and outpatient clinics at Hilo, Kona, Maui and Lihue.

Putting Memorial back in Memorial Day

By retired Sgt. Maj. Tony Elliot, USMC

This year by an act of Congress, America will celebrate Memorial Day on Monday, May 28. If you ask 5 different people their plans for this Memorial Day, you can bet that their responses will include words like “BBQ”, “beach”, “surfing” and “shopping”. Now I’m not saying that spending quality time with your family isn’t a great way to spend a day off, but exactly what do any of these activities have to do with Memorial Day? Sadly, it appears that most of us have forgotten the true importance of this observance.

Growing up as a child, I learned that Memorial Day could be any day. It was the day that I stood in awe of as our Nation’s flag passed. I saw not only the flag - but also what it stood for. I learned that it was the day our nation mourned the loss of her citizens who had died defending her for more than 200 years. It was also the day that these citizens, young and old - men and women, remained mostly anonymous except to the families who loved them. It was also certainly the day that I paused in wonder of our country’s loss when the last veteran would be gone and the nobility of his generation passed with him. And most importantly, it was the day that I realized that to our fallen veterans, Memorial Day is every day that someone remembers.

As a young Marine, I learned that Memorial Day was really the essence of our thoughts, our feelings and our emotions. It was the overwhelming sense of patriotism that captured my breath each time I heard the National Anthem. It was the pride that ran down my cheek as the local High School marching band played my service’s hymn. It was the commitment I felt when I stepped forward to volunteer as an Usher, as a Color



Memorial Day 2006 - Hawaii

Bearer or as an Honor Guard in some long ago ceremony. It was the respect I felt as I served as a pallbearer and laid to rest yet another veteran. It was the sense of duty I felt as I reverently saluted a folded flag that I had just placed in a loved one’s trembling arms while offering condolences on behalf of a grateful nation. And it was the solemn chill I felt as the somber notes of Taps tore at my very soul.

As an old Veteran, I have learned that

Memorial Day is the day that America’s veterans stand united in memory of our fellow Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen who through their sacrifices, humble all of us who share their legacy. Those of us who have stood in the footsteps of these brave men and women need no reminder that Memorial Day is a day of duty... a day of remembrance... and a day of honor:

...it is our “duty” to set aside our minor differences and petty jealousies, and stand together under our American Flag in unity proud that we have worn, and continue to wear, our nation’s military uniform.

...we “remember” our brothers and sisters who are unable to stand proudly with us because they did not come home. We remember their loved ones and the unthinkable sacrifices they continue to endure. We remember our fellow veterans, who whether due to failing health or misfortune need our help and support to ensure they are not left behind.

...we “honor” every veteran by reaffirming our allegiance to our flag and to our country, and to upholding the sacred values passed to us by the brave men and women who served before us.

Perhaps the most profound tribute of all was made on the first national memorial observance on May 30, 1868 by then Gen. James A. Garfield when he said, “*They summed up and perfected, by one supreme act, the highest virtues of men and citizens. For love of country they accepted death, and thus resolved all doubts, and made immortal their patriotism and virtue.*”

In closing, I would like to share the simple words of a great but humble American, Red Skelton, who reminded us that “*In life, you don’t give till it hurts - but until it feels good.*” On this and every Memorial Day, I don’t ask that you remember because it hurts ...but because it feels good. God Bless.



Director's Message

Col. Edward R. Cruickshank, U.S. Army (Ret.)
Director, State Office of Veterans Services

Great news, we have hired Mr. Michael (John) Condello as our new veteran's counselor. John's

background will help this office immensely, as he possesses a great deal of legal knowledge and counseling experience. He will be working to support our veterans on Oahu and will travel to meet our neighbor islands veterans' needs as well.

As we go forward into this legislative session we have a very busy schedule. We have submitted our request to the legislature seeking funding for a clerk typist/receptionist to support our enlarged counseling staff. Our aim is to improve our services whenever you come to our office for help. Many of you may recall that we previously had a typist/receptionist but lost the position in 1998 when our budget was cut due

with VA, is an integral part of the community. Collectively we bring in over 328 million dollars annually to support our economy; but more importantly we take care of Hawaii's Veterans.

We are again submitting a legislative request for funding for our Veterans Newsletter. We continue to be very optimistic that with the great support we've gotten from the veteran community as a whole, the funding will continue. As I mentioned the last issue, Shelly Ichishita, who was our editor and layout specialist, moved to State Civil Defense. What I didn't mention was that this was a promotion and great career advancement opportunity for her. Congratulations and Thank You Shelly, for all your hard work in supporting our veteran community!

On a sad note, we have lost a great friend and colleague in the passing of Frank Cruz. He was the Chairman of the Advisory Board

to the State's financial constraints. Since that time, we have proven to everyone that this Office, along

of my office for many years and simply did a superb job. Frank passed away on February 23, 2007. The entire Board attended his services as he was laid to rest on his beloved Island of Kauai. Frank, you will truly be missed. Your dedication to the veterans of Hawaii will be long remembered.

Congratulations-Lanai! We have just been informed that Lanai veterans will be getting a Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) to better serve the needs of veterans there. There are also discussions going on about the possibility of placing a CBOC at Kalaeloa (Barbers Point). This Clinic would accomplish two things: first, the veterans on the Leeward Coast would be better served by a clinic close to home, and second, it would serve the needs of the homeless veterans and other veterans who require help on a temporary basis and are housed at Kalaeloa.

I will certainly keep you informed about how our bills are progressing through the legislature. My office will continue to do everything we can to best serve you, and provide you with the benefits that you rightly deserve.

Wishing you a wonderful spring season and warmest personal regards.

Veterans Affairs news updates

Replacement copies of discharge certificates can be obtained with your home computer

The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) has provided a website for veterans to gain access to their DD-214's online: <http://vetrecs.archives.gov>. This may be particularly helpful when a veteran needs a copy of his or her DD-214 for employment, health care and burial benefits. NPRC is working to make it easier for veterans with computers and internet access to obtain copies of documents from their military files. Military veterans and the next of kin of deceased former military members may now use a new online military personnel records system to request documents. Other individuals with a need for documents must still complete the Standard Form 180, which can be downloaded from the online web site. Because the requester will be asked to supply all information essential for NPRC to process the request, delays that normally occur when NPRC has to ask veterans for additional information will be minimized. The new web-based application was designed to provide better service on these requests by eliminating the records center's mailroom processing time. You can obtain a SF 180 form either online, or at the Honolulu VA Regional Office.

Replacing lost medals available on VA website

An Internet search for "military medals" will generate considerable advertising links from private firms selling replica medals including miniatures. Retirees may wish to check with military exchanges or military clothing stores. Under certain circumstances official replacements for lost or damaged medals

may be obtained from the government by veterans by sending a request to the appropriate branch of service. More information and links to initiate requests are available at <http://www.va.gov/veteranspride>. Service histories are available from government archives to veterans and to their next of kin. Information about these sources and request procedures is available from the web site listed above.

Eligibility requirements to receive a VA pension

Veterans with low incomes who are permanently and totally disabled, or are age 65 and older, may be eligible for monetary support if they have 90 days or more of active military service, at least one day of which was during a period of war. (Veterans who entered active duty on or after Sept. 8, 1980, or officers who entered active duty on or after Oct. 16, 1981, may have to meet a longer minimum period of active duty). The veteran's discharge must have been under conditions other than dishonorable and the disability must be for reasons other than the veteran's own willful misconduct.

Payments are made to bring the veteran's total income, including other retirement or Social Security income, to a level set by Congress. Un-reimbursed medical expenses may reduce countable income for VA purposes.

Congress establishes the maximum annual improved disability pension rates. Payments are reduced by the amount of countable income of the veteran, spouse or dependent children. When a veteran without a spouse or a child is furnished nursing home or domiciliary care by VA, the pension is reduced to an amount not to exceed \$90 per

month after three calendar months of care. The reduction may be delayed if nursing-home care is being continued to provide the veteran with rehabilitation services. For more information on VA pensions, contact the VA Honolulu Regional Office, (800) 827-1000.

VA establishes website to assist surviving spouses in seeking benefits

The Department of Veterans Affairs recently activated a new website aimed directly at surviving spouses of military members who died on active duty and surviving spouses of veterans who died after serving their country. The site, at <http://www.vba.va.gov/survivors>, not only has links to the VA pages describing survivor benefits but also to other government sites that may offer valuable information and assistance.

The link to *Frequently Asked Questions* answers most questions. For more specific questions, the site also tells how anyone can help to contact the VA directly.

For other general questions and inquires remember the main VA web site is at <http://www.va.gov>.

Be careful of attempts to obtain information by telephone

There have been reports on the mainland where VA patients have received a telephone call from a man indicating he was from the VA pharmacy, and

asking the veteran or his wife to provide the veteran's full social security number, followed by a complete list of medicines/dosages under the guise of new co-pay regulations. He then indicated that the new regulations would mean the vet owed \$800, and asked for credit card information to pay the bill. Fortunately, in one case the veteran indicated he was a 100% service connected veteran who wouldn't pay co payments and hung up. This is a complete scam. VA Pharmacy co-payment regulations have not changed and VA employees do not call veterans requesting social security numbers or credit card information. This is not the first attempt to gain personal and financial information from veterans or senior citizens for the purpose of emptying their bank accounts. It is a good practice never to give out a social security number, bank information and credit card numbers over the telephone.



Hawaii Veteran

State of Hawaii Department of Defense

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If you are interested in obtaining a copy of the Hawaii Veteran newsletter please mail your address to OVS at 459 Patterson Rd., E-Wing, Rm. 1-A103 Honolulu, HI 96819-1522. For any change of address please include both old address and new address.

More VA news updates

Funding for CLEP exams extended to eligible military veterans

NEW YORK – Military veterans can now receive full reimbursement for CLEP (College Level Examination Program) testing fees, thanks to a recently- implemented law that enhance veterans’ educational benefits. The Department of Veterans Affairs will reimburse veterans for the \$60 CLEP examination fee as well as test center administration fees.

CLEP has been a critical part of the education services program for active duty service members since 1974; this new funding option provides valuable continuity in benefits for those transitioning out of the military. Nearly 3,000 colleges and universities grant credit or advanced standing based on CLEP exam performance. By earning satisfactory scores on CLEP exams, veterans earn college credit in subject areas they have already mastered as a result of training or independent learning. Earning credit by exam saves a significant amount of time as veterans avoid taking courses in subject areas for which they already have knowledge. Veterans earning credit can make the most of their GI Bill tuition benefit by applying those funds toward needed coursework. The 90-minute CLEP exams are administered on computers at 1,300 college test centers across the country; veterans will receive their scores immediately after completion of the exam. CLEP exams are offered in 34 subjects ranging from English Composition to U.S. History, Spanish, and College Algebra.

“The College Board is proud to serve military personnel as they transition from active duty to civilian life,” said Ariel Foster, executive director of the CLEP program. “Most veterans move on to other careers after leaving the service and CLEP can help them reach their goal of a college degree.”

Since the program’s inception in 1967, more than six million CLEP exams have been taken. For more information about CLEP and the benefits available to veterans, visit www.collegeboard.com/clepveterans.

TRICARE Prime reminds retirees of convenient payment option

TRICARE makes it easy for retirees to pay their TRICARE Prime enrollment fees by establishing a monthly allotment from their service retirement pay. The Defense Finance and Accounting Service, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the U.S. Public Health Service deducts the

retirement pay allotment. More information can be found at <http://www.dod.mil/dfas/dfas-newsletters/retpay/february07/TRICARE.htm>.

VA retro update

The Disabled Military Retiree Retroactive Pay program, commonly called VA Retro, is well underway. Eligible retirees are those receiving either Combat- Related Special Compensation (CRSC) or Concurrent Retirement Disability Payments (CRDP) and have been awarded a retroactive disability rating increase by the Department of Veterans Affairs since their date of initial entitlement. For more information about the VA Retro program, please go to <http://www.dod.mil/dfas/dfasnewsletters/retpay/february07/VA.htm>.

Memorial Day 2007 Activities

Saturday, May 26, 10:00 am	Memorial Day Observances in Keaau	Puna Hongwanji
Sunday, May 27, 9:00 am	Submarine Veterans of World War II	Submarine Memorial Park
Sunday, May 27, 10:00 am	Roll Call of Honor	National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl)
Sunday, May 27, 10:00 am	Memorial Day Services	Waikiki War Memorial
Sunday, May 27, 10:00 am	Memorial Day Services	Haleiwa Park Monument
Sunday, May 27, 6:00 pm	Vietnam Veterans Candle Light Services	Punchbowl
Monday, May 28	Memorial Day Services in Kohala	Civic Center
Monday, May 28	Memorial Day Ceremony	Kona Veterans Cemetery
Monday, May 28	Memorial Day Ceremony	Hilo Veterans Cemetery
Monday, May 28, 9:00 am	Mayor’s Memorial Day Observance	Punchbowl
Monday, May 28, 1:00 pm	Governor’s Annual Memorial Day Ceremony	Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery
Monday, May 28, 1:00 pm	National Park Service Memorial Day Ceremony	U.S.S. Arizona Memorial Visitor Center
Monday, May 28	Maui Veterans Day Ceremony	Makawao Veterans Cemetery
Monday, May 28, 10:00 am	Kauai Veterans Day Ceremony	Kauai Veterans Cemetery

Health News/ Miscellaneous

VA expands polytrauma network for wounded troops care

Improved explosive devices and rocket-propelled grenades often result in devastating injuries, including amputations, sensory loss and brain injury. Modern body armor and advances in front-line trauma care have enabled combat veterans to survive severe attacks that in prior wars were fatal. In response to the demand for specialized services, VA expanded its four traumatic brain injury centers in Minneapolis, Palo Alto, (closest to Hawaii and part of our network), Richmond and Tampa to become polytrauma centers encompassing additional specialties to treat patients for multiple complex injuries. This is being expanded into a network of 21 polytrauma network sites and polytrauma clinic support teams around the country providing state-of-the-art treatment closer to injured veterans’ homes.

These centers treat traumatic brain injury alone or in combination with amputation, blindness, or other visual impairment, complex orthopedic injuries, auditory and

vestibular disorders, and mental health concerns. VA has added clinical expertise to address the special problems that the multi-trauma combat injured patient may face. This can include intensive psychological support treatment for both patient and family, intensive case management, improvements in the treatment of vision problems, and rehabilitation using the latest high-tech specialty prostheses. Polytrauma teams bring together experts to provide innovative, personalized treatment to help the injured service member or veteran achieve optimal function and independence.

Because brain injury is being recognized as the signature injury of the current conflict, VA launched an educational initiative to provide its clinicians a broad base of knowledge with which to identify potential traumatic brain injury patients, mechanisms for effective care, and a better understanding of patients who experience this condition. VA has made training mandatory for physicians and other key staff in primary care, mental health and rehabilitation programs.

VA weight management program online

The VA has designed a weight management program to reduce the high rates of illness among VA’s patients caused by obesity. Seventy percent of the veterans VA cares for are overweight and one in five has diabetes, both of which increase the risk of many diseases. The MOVE program “Managing Overweight Veterans Everywhere” not only encourages veterans enrolled in VA care to get in shape but also offers information to family members and anyone trying to lose weight through an Internet link. Through individual and group counseling, physicians, nurses, dieticians and recreational therapists help; enrollees change their eating behavior and increase their exercise. Primary care teams at all VA medical centers stay in touch with participants to track their progress. Anyone can log onto www.move.va.gov, where a questionnaire helps identify personal barriers to weight control. The questions link to about 100 informational materials on the site. People not enrolled in VA health care can take the information about themselves to their personal health care providers. For more information on the MOVE program you can contact the VA Medical Clinic at 433-0600 or 433-7676.

Returning combat veterans separate from Armed Forces eligible for 2 years of VA health care

During the two-year period following their separation from active duty service, these Operations IRAQI and ENDURING FREEDOM veterans have no co-payments for any medical service related to condition(s) that: was/were made worse by or during service; did not exist before joining the service; started before leaving the service; or is/are clearly related to service, based on the VA clinician’s judgment. In other words, a combat veteran might have to make co-payments during the two-year period if: their care does not meet any of the criteria above, and they classify into a priority group with co-payment requirements.

After the two-year period is up, the veteran will be moved to the appropriate enrollment priority group and co-payment category based upon their income and other eligibility factors. If their income places them into Priority Group 8, co-payment required, their VA enrollment will continue regardless of the date of their original VA application. For additional information, contact the VA Spark M. Matsunaga Medical Center at (808) 433-0600. For disability claim information contact the VA Honolulu Regional Office at 1-(800)-827-1000.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

The State Office of Veterans Services (OVS) is in dire need of volunteers to clean the Korean and Vietnam War Memorials on the State Capitol Grounds!

Starting from the dedication of the Korean and Vietnam War Memorials on July 24, 1994, hundreds of veterans and volunteer groups have maintained these exceptional War Memorials. We thank these veterans' organizations and Korean residents in the community who have sincerely attended to the needs of these memorials once a week. They have washed and polished its pedestals; pulled weeds and raked leaves. They have taken upon themselves to keep these memorials alive since July 1994; however, they can no longer do it alone. They need your help and assistance. As you are aware our Korean War veterans are age 75 plus.

As a volunteer you would add honor to the Korean and Vietnam War veterans who served America so valiantly during some of the most divisive times of this century. Their testament is embodied in these Memorials, which reside on the State Capitol grounds, allowing all, residents and visitors alike, to reflect upon the experiences of those whose names are inscribed on the 766 pedestals. Each week hundreds of visitors to these War memorials bring pictures, flowers, cultural ornaments and memorabilia to leave at this shrine to express honor, love, friendship, and loss. Unfortunately, these items of expression age with time and cause marring or staining to the pedestals, which now require cleaning.

Those of you who are interested in maintaining one of Hawaii's cherished War Memorials located on the Capitol grounds to please contact Jennifer Aina at 433-0423. All who visit this place of memory will appreciate your kokua.

Kaua'i Veterans Corner

Hello veterans! We are introducing the Kauai Veterans Corner for the first time in the Hawaii Veteran. The column format will be the same as printed in the Garden Island newspaper. We will keep you abreast of veteran activities and other items of interest to Kauai veterans and their families.

Hawaii Veteran newspaper

Was this newspaper delivered to your home address? If not, a copy can be mailed to you. Write to the Office of Veterans Services, 459 Patterson Rd, E-Wing, Room 1-A103, Honolulu, HI 96819-1522.

Kauai Veterans Council

The veterans council consists of the 14 veterans' organization on the island. The purpose of the council is to support the programs of all veteran clubs and organizations and it has executive control of the management of the Kauai Veterans Center.

The officers of the council are Ed Kawamura, Commander; Rod Yama, Vice Commander; Johnette Chun, Secretary and Paul Endo, Treasurer.

Kauai Veterans Center

Are you looking for a hall large enough to host 500 or more individuals for a party? The Veterans Center on 3215 Kapule Highway is available and special rates are extended to veterans. For information, call Terry Reyes at 246-1135 or her cell at 647-0463. The income is used to subsidize veteran programs and for maintenance of the facilities

Office of Veterans Services

The State of Hawaii Office of Veterans Service (OVS) is responsible for the development and management of policies and programs related to veterans, their dependents and/or survivors. The OVS acts as a liaison between the governor and veterans' organizations and also between the VA and veterans.

Its objectives are to assist in obtaining state and federal entitlements, supply the latest information on veterans' issues and provide advice and support to veterans making the transition into civilian life. The office is located at 3215 Kapule Highway. For information, call Tony Elliott at 241-3348.

Department of Veterans Affairs

The federal government's resource is the VA office located at 3367 Kuhio

Highway. The center provides a key access link between the veteran and other services in the Department of Veteran Affairs. It also provides quality care to include professional readjustment counseling, community education and outreach services. A VA benefits counselor from Honolulu is available on the third Wednesday of each month. For questions or an appointment, call 246-1163.

Community Based Outpatient Clinic

The Community Based Outpatient Clinic is located at 3367 Kuhio Highway and provides non-emergency medical and mental health services to eligible veterans. Consultative specialists are available including neurology, cardiology, optometry, rheumatology, orthopedics and nephrology.

Veteran dependents are ineligible for care. Visits are normally by appointments. Emergency medical care is not available and veterans will be directed to the Wilcox emergency facilities. For information, call the clinic at 246-0497.

Home Based Primary Care

The Kauai Clinic has a new Home Based Primary Care program providing health care in the home of homebound or bedridden veterans and whose caregivers are capable and willing to assist in their care. It is an outpatient program providing health services for those whom follow-up in an outpatient clinic is not feasible. The program is for veterans already established with and referred by the Kauai CBOC.

VA and OVS representatives

There are individuals representing veterans' interests in committees for the Department of Veterans Affairs and the state's Office of Veterans Services. The island representatives meet periodically.

Veterans having issues or are aware of items which may be of benefit to veterans at the state or national level may contact the Kauai's VA representatives, Ed Kawamura at 652-6706 or Lynn Aylward-Bingman at 332-6095. Call the state representative, Bill Honjiyo, at 335-3273.

On personal issues for health and benefits, contact the Kauai offices listed above.

Burial in a veteran's cemetery

Veterans discharged under conditions other than dishonorable are eligible to be buried in a veteran's cemetery. With certain exceptions and after Sept. 7, 1980, enlisted personnel must have served a minimum of 24 months continuous service (after Oct. 16, 1981 for officers) or the full period for which the person was called for active duty.

Besides the vet-

eran, the spouse and dependent children may be eligible for burial in a veteran's cemetery. The veteran does not have to pre-decease the spouse or dependent. The documents required will be the veteran's discharge certificate and proof of relationship to the veteran.

For burial of a veteran and upon request, the Department of Defense will provide military funeral honors consisting of the folding and presentation of the United States flag and the playing of Taps. The military provides a firing squad to render the three traditional volleys, but only to certain veterans. Kauai has a volunteer group providing a firing detail to all veterans.

Transportation Service

Free on island transportation can be provided for veterans to and from medical appointments scheduled by the CBOC. If scheduled for an appointment on Oahu, a bus shuttle is available between the inter island terminal and the VA facilities at Tripler Army Hospital. Those desiring transportation or information are asked to call the CBOC.

News sources

Veterans on Kauai have several resources in obtaining veteran news and information. Besides the information in this Hawaii Veteran newspaper, there is a veteran's column published on the last Sunday of the month in the Garden Island newspaper. The Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) publishes a column "For Your Benefit" every Sunday in the Star Bulletin. At the Kauai Office of Veterans Services on Kapule Highway, Tony Elliott has a table with many free brochures available for all veterans and their families. Tony also maintains an Email listing and information can be sent to you if you provide him with your address. Call Tony at 241-3348.

Fourth of July Round-Up

The annual Fourth of July Kauai Veterans Round up will be held at the Veterans Center. An individual does not have to be affiliated with a veteran's organization. All veterans and their families are invited to this celebration. Counselors will be available starting at 9 AM. Opening ceremonies will start at 11 AM and the festivities will commence shortly thereafter. Lunch will be served.

Memorial Day Services

The Memorial Day services will start at 10 AM, Monday, May 28th at the Veterans Cemetery in Hanapepe. For more information, call Ed Kawamura at 245-3524.

Vietnam Era Veterans Stand Down

The Vietnam Era Veterans stand down will be held starting at 11 AM on Sunday, May 27th at the Veterans Center. This event has gradually elevated to become an annual event commemorating the end of the Vietnam conflict and also to memorialize the Kauai service members who gave the supreme sacrifice during this war. Lunch will be served. For more information, call Bill Honjiyo at 332-3273.



A Tribute to a Distinguished Army Veteran

Frank A. "Cruzin" Cruz, Sr.
Sept. 25, 1948 – Feb. 23, 2007

Frank Cruz (pictured right) with Ed Cruickshank at the Sea Breeze on Hickam Air Force Base.

Frank served in the United States Army and was assigned to the 9th Infantry Division on the Mekong Delta, Republic of Vietnam (RVN). He was a member of an elite unit that fought and patrolled the Mekong River on a Landing Ship Tank. As a Rifleman and Tunnel Rat, he had to crawl in a hole no bigger than 3 ft. by 3 ft. in order to engage the enemy. In a second tour of duty to RVN with the 1st Calvary Division (Airmobile), he distinguished himself as a platoon sergeant and saved several of his men during combat. Being a very modest person that he was, rarely spoke of the war.

Though he was awarded the Purple Heart Medal, Army Commendation, Good Conduct and Vietnam Service Medal he was very proud of being awarded the Combat Infantry Badge (CIB).

After leaving the Army at Schofield Barracks in 1976, he applied for work at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and was able to move up the ranks as a journeyman Pipe Fitter. Twenty-one years later he retired from Pearl Harbor and moved to the Island of Kauai.

With memberships with several veterans' organization to include his leadership as the President of the Kauai Veterans Council, he also served as Commander for the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3855; Adjutant for the Military Order of the Purple Heart; and a member of the finance committee for the Disabled American Veterans.

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