

1. Business.

- I am still alive, but I took a little vacation from Retiree News. Thanks to all those who called or sent e-mail inquiring about the situation. I also took a real vacation to Wisconsin and Minnesota in early January. I attend the retirement party for an old friend in Wisconsin. The Chief had a general serving as his MC and all the officers who spoke mentioned, "working for the Chief." In Minnesota, I visited another good friend, the retired maintenance group commander. The weather was nice to me. The temperatures were in the high 30s and 40s, with no snow on the ground. But after I left...

- You will start seeing some Army Guard items in Retiree News. I have a few Army Guard members who are now part of the listing.

- I have gotten quite a few questions about **TRICARE**. I am not the expert but let me give you two referrals. First is the website for the TRICARE representatives in the Western United States, **Triwest Healthcare Alliance**. Their website - www.triwest.com – is a good source of information. Sign up for their newsletter on their website. Their Hawaii office has a Beneficiary Education Representative and her name is Lynn N. Cuthrell. You can reach her at 808-838-7226 or lcuthrell@triwest.com.

- In the fall, The Air Force dedicated the **Air Force Memorial** in Washington D.C. From what I saw in the press releases and the TV coverage, it looks like a good-looking building design with three spires that depict flight. The full article is at this website; if the link does not work, copy it to your internet browser. <http://www.military.com/features/0,15240,117058,00.html>

- In October, **Air Reserve Personnel Center (ARPC)** began digitizing personnel records. There are some obvious concerns about the status of the paper records. "The destruction of the paper records will only happen after the electronic copy has undergone a quality review and backups are stored at separate locations." (Taken from an ARPC press release) Note: This applies to only "Gray Area" retirees – those retired but have not reached age 60 and receiving their retirement pay. This is where your records are stored after you retire from the Guard. After "Gray Area" retirees reach age 60, your records are moved to the St Louis storage facility.

2. **Wanted List.** I want to thank those who called or e-mail me with new retiree addresses. The Retiree News list has passed 400. I am still looking for these HIANG members e-mail addresses.

Clarence Jim
Gaylen Benanua
Richard Furuno
Gary Fujii
David Gilbert
Donald O'Day

3. Retiree Update.

- Since the last Retiree News, several HIANG members have passed. Aloha Pumehana to all...

- **SMSgt Lawrence Sugihara** on October 18, 2006. He was a technician with the **150th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron** for many years. He later served as Kauai Police Department police commissioner and A+ Program island coordinator. His services were private.

- **Lt Col Ro Johnson** finally lost his long battle with cancer in early November. Ro was a second-generation guard member who served in the **199th Fighter Squadron** like his dad **Col Kurt Johnson**.

- **SMSgt Maximo Valenzuela** passed on in late November. After serving in the Air Force, Max served with the **201st Combat Communications Group** until his retirement several years ago. His services were in December.

- **Col Raymond Moriguchi** passes on in December. He was in poor health for a while. Ray was the long-time commander of the **150th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron** – when it was a 200+ member squadron. His last assignment was as the Executive Support Staff Officer at **HQ HIANG**.

- **MSgt Jose Rivera** passed away in early December. “Riva” served for many years in our maintenance squadron, mainly on the fighter flightline. His services were on Christmas Eve.

- **MSgt Clyde Yasuhara** passes away last week. He served with the **291st Combat Communications Squadron** in Hilo. I believe he was one of the original members of the squadron.

- Very happy to report that **Chaplain Mark Chong Lee** returned from Iraq after a year long deployment. Chaplain Lee served as an Air Guard Chaplain assigned to the **154th Wing** and later the **201st Combat Communications Group**. About two years ago, he had a calling and joined the active Army. After completing his initial training, the Army assigned him to Ft. Lewis in Washington State. His deployment came within his few months stationed there.

- Just returning from Iraq, Afghanistan and other desert locations are about 70 members of the **201st Combat Communications Group**. They were gone about four months. I heard some interesting stories about downtown Baghdad. **SMSgt Nolan Kanekuni** was the senior person on the deployment. He also served as the First Sergeant for the communications squadron they were assigned to during the deployment. Welcome back and thank you for your service!

- **Col Robert Maglasang** retired in early November as the commander of the **201st Combat Communications Group**. After serving in the Air Force as a weather officer, he joined the HIANG and served with the communications squadron in Hilo and on Maui. HQ HIANG has not announced his successor. Happy Retirement Bob!

- Still serving in Afghanistan is **Lt Col Dave Snakenberg**. Snake is serving at a police academy and should be back in several weeks. If I didn't mention it earlier, Snake has served as the **154th Wing's** vice commander. I'll be glad when he returns - safely!

- **Brig Gen Peter "Skipper" Pawling**, **154th Wing** Commander, recently selected **Lt Col Stanley Sato** as the new **154th Medical Group** Commander. Stan is an optometrist who has his practice in the Kunia Walmart store. Stan takes command from **Col Brett "Dugie" Wyrick**, who is leaving to become the State Air Surgeon of the Texas Air National Guard. He will run the medical field-training site that the Air National Guard will start up in Texas.

- I received an e-mail from one of my former commanders, **Lt Col Alan Fujita**. Several years ago, Al moved to California to take a higher position with the IRS. He retired from IRA last July

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and is also collecting his Guard retirement check. He mentioned he was relocating to the Sacramento area. Happy Retirement Al!

- Someone outside the HIANG forwarded this photo to [Col Joseph Kim](#), the [154th Operations Group](#) commander. This photo brings back some memories. Note that the berm is still there in this photo.



- Belated Congratulations to [Lt Love Williamson](#) who was a distinguished graduate of the Academy of Military Science – the ANG’s officer school. If you don’t recognize the name, it’s the former [SSgt Hina Williamson](#), who served in the [154th Security Forces Squadron](#) and the [154th Mission Support Flight](#). Hina will serve as the 154th Wing’s social action officer. I understand Hina had her name legally changed. Sorry, I have known Hina as Hina for so long that it will be Hina for a long time to come. Hina is another second-generation Guard member – her mother is [MSgt Rocky Bruhn](#), who serves in maintenance.

- Joining the retired ranks this month is [SMSgt Gary “Rocket” Kodani](#). After serving in the air force, Gary joined the Guard and served in our maintenance complex. Happy retirement!

- Another retiree is [CSM Vernon Nakasone](#). He served as the State Command Sergeant Major for several years. He will return to his civil service job at Kaneohe MCAS. For those interested there is a golf tournament planned for Friday, April 20, 2007. More info to come. Happy Retirement Sergeant Major!

- The Hawaii Army National Guard dedicated their **Operation Iraqi Freedom Memorial** in November. The memorial honors the 18 soldiers killed in combat during the **29th Brigade Combat Team** yearlong deployment to Iraq. The memorial is located at the brigade headquarters building at Kalaeloa. It was an emotional ceremony for many.

- The **United States Property and Fiscal Office** (USPFO) moved from Diamond Head crater to Kalaeloa. **COL Richard Young**, the Property and Fiscal Officer, and his staff planned and completed a smooth transition. The expanding State Civil Defense will move into the Diamond facilities as they roll into 24/7 operations in the tunnel.

- The Hawaii Army National Guard (HIARNG) has new officers at the senior level.

- **COL Bruce Jahnke**, the HIARNG G3, Plans, Operations & Training retired. The new G3 is **LTC Robert "Rob" Kauhane**. Rob was a part of the 29th Brigade Combat Team's Iraqi deployment. Happy Retirement and Congratulations are in order!

- **LTC Bryan Suntheimer** became the HIARNG G4, Directorate of Logistics. He replaces **COL Blane Ogata**, another retiree. Congratulations to both!

- The **29th Infantry Brigade** is transitioning to a modular brigade to mirror their active duty counterparts. The brigade will now have smaller components that can stand alone – like Air Force UTC packages.

4. Upcoming Events. No report.



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The Promise. Retiree News will contain information about benefits, National Guard events, and news about retired or former members. There will be no chain e-mail, cute pictures, or sales pitches. Retiree News e-mail is published on a random schedule – as topics come up and time permits.

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