

20081231 Retiree News: Happy New Year

I am still having some challenges with Hawaiiintel.net. The last issue apparently did not get to everyone, and some of you many have received the issue twice. Sorry for the inconvenience.

The Hawaiiintel.net system has an outbound restriction of 400 e-mails daily per account. The tech staff at HawaiianTel.net briefed me that this is to prevent spam generation. Readers now receive **Retiree News** from one of three Hawaiiintel.net accounts I use. But, it still has some problems.... I am also having problems with inbound e-mails.

1. **The Promise.** **Retiree News** will contain information about benefits, National Guard events, and news about current, retired, or former members. There will be no chain e-mail, cute pictures, or sales pitches. I publish **Retiree News** on a random schedule – as topics come up and time permits. If you change your mind about receiving issues of **Retiree News**, send me an e-mail at retireenews@hawaiiintel.net and I will remove you from the **Retiree News** mailing list.

2. **Business.**

● **Policy Change for Replacing ID Cards.** This was in the October 10, 2008 issue of Retiree News. Because the implementation has started at most ID card issuing facilities, I decided to put out the information again.

Homeland Security Directive 12 now requires retirees and family members seeking to renew or replace a military identification card to provide two types of ID. Retirees and family members needing identification cards must have two of the following types of current identification -- one of which must include a photo:

- Driver's license or ID issued by a state or outlying U.S. commonwealth or possession
- ID card issued by federal, state, or local government agencies or entities
- School ID card with a photograph
- Voter's registration card
- U.S. military ID card
- U.S. passport
- Certificate of U.S. citizenship
- Certificate of naturalization

For persons younger than 18, who are unable to present a document previously listed, they may bring:

- School record or report card
- Clinic, doctor, or hospital record
- Day-care or nursery school record

The listing above is not all-inclusive. A list of acceptable documents can be found at www.uscis.gov/files/form/I-9.pdf, page 4.

Before visiting a military ID card issuing facility, people may want to call first to determine what specific documents may be required, and to verify the process to renew or replace an ID card. For contact information and the location of the nearest ID card issuing facility, visit

<http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/owa/home>. On this website, people can search by city, state, or ZIP code.

- New Director of the Air National Guard. **General Craig R. McKinley**, the Chief, National Guard Bureau is pleased to announce that the Senate has confirmed the President's nomination of **Major General Harry M. Wyatt III** to serve as the Director of the Air National Guard in the grade of Lieutenant General.

Prior to assuming the Director's position, General Wyatt served as the Adjutant General of Oklahoma since January 2003. He previously served as the Chief of Staff, Joint Force Headquarters Oklahoma Air National Guard; and the Commander, 138th Fighter Wing, in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

General Wyatt entered the United States Air Force on June 24, 1971 and received his commission as a second lieutenant on November 24, 1971. He entered undergraduate pilot training at Laredo Air Force Base, Texas and graduated on January 26, 1973. He is a command pilot with over 3,000 hours in the A-7, C-26, F-16, F-100, F-106, T-33, T-37, and T-38 aircraft.

General Wyatt graduated from Southern Methodist University in 1971 with a Bachelor of Arts, Business Administration degree. He received his Juris Doctor from the University of Tulsa in 1980.

- Supporting our State Mission. The **29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Rear)** mobilized over 40 soldiers after Oahu's heavy rains and flooding. These soldiers operated Disaster Assistance Centers and support debris clearing in Waianae. Another great job by the Hawaii Army National Guard supporting our State Mission!

- A Big Mahalo to Emme Tomimbang. She included greetings from our deployed soldiers on her Emme's Christmas Island Moments television program. It was a great Christmas gift for the soldiers and families!

- Road Work at Schofield Barracks. Road work from A Road to Flagler Road (the area from the gas station to the post office) will begin 10 December 2008 and is expected to be completed on or around 15 February 2009. Contra traffic flow will be managed throughout project. For more information, please call the Directorate of Public Works at 656-2435.

- VA document shredding no shock to veterans. Doubts were raised about whether the Bush administration can do anything to restore confidence in the Veterans Affairs Department following the discovery last month of almost 500 key benefits claims documents in shredding bins at regional offices.

But the problem, initially discovered by teams of auditors from the VA inspector general's office, didn't exactly shock the veterans' community. Veterans have complained for decades about VA losing or destroying claims documents, making an already complicated process even more difficult to deal with.

Veterans' advocates attending a roundtable discussion arranged by the House Veterans Affairs Committee said VA's admission of mishandling documents is a sign of the fundamental problems that veterans have seen for years.

Rick Weidman, executive director for government affairs of Vietnam Veterans of America, said the only real news is that VA now acknowledged the problem. "Shredding is not the issue," he said, calling instead for focus on "the integrity of the process."

Rep. Harry Mitchell, D-Ariz., said he is worried that leaving key documents to be shredded is a sign of a larger workload problem and pressure to meet production quotas. Mitchell said it has led him to wonder whether VA officials have been completely honest when they said they had all of the resources they needed to handle claims.

Retired Vice Adm. Patrick Dunne, VA's undersecretary for benefits, said the problem reflects poor document handling procedures, not an effort to prevent veterans from getting what is due them.

The ultimate answer, he said, is a completely electronic filing system in which key records are scanned into a computer — although a paperless claims processing system won't be available before 2010.

A short-term solution, which might not be fully in place before President-elect Barack Obama takes office in January, sets new document management procedures for every VA regional office — including establishing records management officers and requiring two people to review any document before shredding.

Rep. Bob Filner, D-Calif., the House Veterans' Affairs Committee chairman, said the fact that a review found 41 of the 57 VA regional offices had crucial documents in shredding bins is an "intolerable situation."

"These actions completely shatter confidence in the whole VA system," Filner said. "This episode has further strengthened my belief that we need to have accountability in [VA] and leadership that demands accountability. These incidents and mistakes, all occurring to the detriment of our veterans and never to their benefit, remind me more of the Keystone Cops than a supportive organization dedicated to taking care of our veterans."

The VA has announced [special procedures](#) for veterans who believe lost records have led to the denial or delay of a benefits claim. (Taken from a Military Times article - Wednesday November 19, 2008)

- When a retiree passes away, the surviving spouse, or children are often unsure about what they should do in regard to the military retiree's pay and benefits. A retiree should create a list of names and phone numbers that need to be contacted when he or she dies and inform the spouse and family members as to what is on the list and where to find it. This list should include the:

- DFAS, Retired and Annuity Pay Center 1-800-321-1080 to stop retired pay, apply for Survivor Benefits, and obtain information about insurance and other allotments

- Veterans Administration 1-800-827-1000 for Disability Pay and burial assistance and/or applying for Dependency Indemnity Compensation (DICE) for the surviving spouse

- Social Security Administration 1-800-772-1213 to discuss Social Security Survivor benefits

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- Office of Personnel Management 1-888-767-6738 for retirees who are receiving civil service pensions in addition to military retired pay

- Did you know that the first two or three digits of a barcode in the county of origin code? For example, in the photo below, the first three digits - 471 – show a product manufactured in Taiwan.



Some other country codes include:

- 00 thru 13: United States and Canada
- 30 thru 37: France
- 40 thru 44: Germany
- 49: Japan
- 50: United Kingdom
- 57: Denmark
- 64: Finland
- 76: Switzerland and Liechtenstein
- 471: Taiwan
- 480: Philippines
- 628: Saudi-Arabia
- 629: United Arab Emirates
- 740 thru 745: Central America
- 690 thru 695: China

(Thanks to [Eli Ichishita](#), from our State personnel office, for passing this information)

- Rules of Engagement (ROE). Periodically, someone e-mails me requesting the e-mail address of another retiree. I forward the e-mail with the address request to the retiree for their action. This preserves the privacy of the retiree and their e-mail address.

3. The Wanted List. Help! I am still looking for these Hawaii National Guard members e-mail addresses or their addresses I have for them no longer works. E-mail me their addresses if you can share them.

Chris Wilson
Terry Ganiko
George Egloria
Tom Gresch

Herman Lau
Haruo Shigezawa
Randy Solomon
Russell Woodward

Edward Uyeda
Loni Mahi
Ron Biho
Wayne Z. Higa
Eugene Imai

Byron Kim
Steve Ware
James “Mike” Doolin
Katherine Asato
Jeffrey Okazaki

Following are the new or updated e-mail addresses sent in by the individuals or **Retiree News** readers – Mahalo for adding or updating your e-mail address.

Lewis Kono
Scott Kimsey
Mike Reed (update)
Vernon Palomares (update)
David Chapman
Richard Kudo (update)
Dennis Hui (update)
Woody Batula (update)

James Carpenter
Byron Lau
Allan Fujimoto
Melvyn Muraoka
Roy Kudo (update)
Dennis Kamimura
Gladys “Rosie” Lucas
Robert Yokono

AND – I am still looking for more Hawaii National Guard members. Since I started my State job working at Ft Ruger, the **Retiree News** distribution list has increased dynamically. The address total just passed **825+** members. A majority of the increase is from the Hawaii Army National Guard members who added their e-mail address to the list. Be sure to ask your fellow retirees that you meet if they receive **Retiree News**. If not, send their e-mail address to me. Mahalo!

4. Condolences. These Hawaii National Guard retirees passed away recently. They all served honorably and added something to our unique culture here in the Guard. Aloha Pumehana to all....

As announced in the last issue of **Retiree News**, **Col Ritchie Kunichika**, passed away on December 13, 2008. I got an e-mail from **Heidi Kunichika** thanking all of you who sent e-mail to her account, hideem22@gmail.com expressing your condolences and words of support. “It has been nice receiving the emails from my dad’s friends and colleagues. It’ll be really good for my mom to see what kind of impact dad had on the people he knew. My mom, sister, and I appreciate it.”

5. Retiree Update.

● Hawaii National Guard Birthday Ball. **LTC Laura Soares** and her committee staged an outstanding National Guard Birthday Ball on Saturday, December 13, 2008. It was the day Oahu received record setting rainfall. Some guests arrived a little late because of the rain, but it was another ball with outstanding food, and entertainment. Military members looked great all dressed up in their formal uniforms with the retirees in their coat and ties. It was another suburb event!

Among the guests were some Hawaii National Guard retirees:

Brig Gen Robert McGuire was there. For you younger readers, General McGuire was the commander of the Hawaii Air National Guard in the early 1970s. Great to see him at the ball!

Sharing the table I was on were more retirees. **1SG Benny Villaverde** and his wife **Nancy** were there. Benny retired in 1986 or as he says, the Retiree Class of 1986. Benny flew in from

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the continent earlier in the afternoon and came directly from the airport, "changing in the car." Benny received a special challenge coin from the Adjutant General, **MG Robert G. F. Lee**. The coin commemorated the HIARNG's 1968 Callup and the HIANG's Palace Alert service. It was an honor getting to know the First Sergeant!

Lt Col Frederick "Trifox" Fogel and his guest **Kathryn** flew in from the island of Hawaii for the ball. Although sporting a long beard, Trifox was the same Fred we all have known for all these years. It was good catching up with Trifox!

LTC Leslie Bise and his wife **Marcia** were also on the table. After he retired, Les served as the Junior ROTC instructor at Leilehua High School for a few years. He now serves at the office that oversees all JROTC instruction in Hawaii. Les is another smiling retiree!

The HIARNG JAG staffs were on the next table over – something **LTC Dave Lopina** arranged. **COL Ken Takayama**, who headed the JAG section until he retired, was present. Ken serves as the head of the Legislative Reference Bureau at the State Capital. All the JAGs and their staff of one table – now that must have been an interesting discussion!

Again congratulations to **LTC Laura Soares** and her committee for planning an outstanding event. Already looking forward to next year's ball.

- Mahalo the 154th Security Forces Squadron for spearheading the annual Toys for Tots drive for the Hawaii Air National Guard. **SMSgt Ray Duropan** reported that HIANG members were again very generous as the squadron collected over 500 toys. These toys stay in Hawaii for local children who otherwise might not receive a toy for Christmas. Thanks to everyone who donated toys and to the squadron members who did the pickups!

- **Col William "Bill" Spillane**, send me another update on **Lt Col Michael Chow**'s medical challenges. This update is as of December 28, 2008. Thanks to Bill for the update!

HIANG Ohana and Friends of Mike Chow,

Not good. While the experimental cancer program to arrest the tumor in Mike's pancreas was apparently indicating signs of success, Mike has been diagnosed with metastatic cancer in his liver. Thus, the effort to make him like new is ended.

This development explained his continued loss of strength and energy. He was put into the hospital due to an infection, which was controlled, but further tests showed that the cancer had spread before the benefits of his treatment could work.

Mike will soon be leaving the UCI (Univ. of California, Irvine) Medical Center Hospital and will reside in a specialized nursing facility for some weeks. He and Iris will then return to Hawaii. That should heal him, if nothing else will. He is hoping for a miracle.

Mike is looking forward to having cataract surgery on both eyes; I told him that I know a number of people who have had the procedure and are very happy with it.

I spent some time with Mike and Iris in the hospital this past Sunday. I took an old HIANG "Deuce" helmet, a football helmet, an F-15 model, and a "piddle pack" and we had a few laughs. He asked me to promise to visit him again; of course, I agreed. This, after telling me that I was "wearing him out" and to exit the fight!

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He's a great warrior; please say some prayers for him and for his angel of a wife, Iris.

Emailing Iris - chow.iris1@gmail.com - with a request to tell Mike of your support is probably best under the circumstances. If Iris replies with a message to call Mike, that might be rare.

They are both very happy with all the Aloha from friends and family.

God bless, and Aloha,
Bill Spillane
HIANG retired

6. Upcoming Events. Listed by event date, the events remain posted until they occur.

None Reported