

## 20090930 Retiree News

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

## 2. **Business.**

- **Editor's Comments:** After I sent out the last two issues of **Retiree News**, all AOL addresses returned with a failure message. When I resent the issues out a few days later, the e-mail did go through. Don't know what happened but just wanted to let you know in case your **Retiree News** arrived a few days after others got their issues.
- **The New 154<sup>th</sup> Wing Commander.** As this issue of **Retiree News** is sent out, the command has not named the new 154<sup>th</sup> Wing commander. **Col Joseph Kim** continues doing an outstanding job leading the wing until the commander announcement is made. I will get announcement news out to you as soon as it is made by the command.
- **Secretary Shinseki Orders Emergency Checks to Students Awaiting Education Benefits.** The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) issued the following press release about emergency GI Bill payments on September 27, 2009. However, there are procedures for outer island veterans to pick up their checks. More to come.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 27, 2009

WASHINGTON – Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki announced the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has authorized checks for up to \$3,000 to be given to students who have applied for educational benefits and who have not yet received their government payment. The checks will be distributed to eligible students at VA regional benefits offices across the country starting Oct. 2, 2009.

"Students should be focusing on their studies, not worrying about financial difficulties," Secretary Shinseki said. "Education creates life-expanding opportunities for our Veterans."

Starting Friday, Oct. 2, 2009, students can go to one of VA's 57 regional benefit offices with a photo ID, a course schedule and an eligibility certificate to request advance payment of their housing and book allowance. Because not all these offices are located near students, VA expects to send representatives to schools with large Veteran-student bodies and work with Veteran Service Organizations to help students with transportation needs.

A list of those VA regional offices is available at [www.vba.va.gov/VBA/benefits/offices.asp](http://www.vba.va.gov/VBA/benefits/offices.asp).

"I'm asking our people to get out their road maps and determine how we can reach the largest number of college students who can't reach us," VA's Under Secretary for Benefits Patrick Dunne said. "Not everyone has a car. Not everyone can walk to a VA benefits office."

Although VA does not know how many students will request emergency funds, it has approximately 25,000 claims pending that may result in payments to students.

The funds VA will give to students now are advance payments of the earned benefits for housing and books. This money will be deducted from future education payments.

VA officials said students should know that after this special payment, they can expect to receive education payments on the normal schedule -- the beginning of the month following the period for which they are reimbursed.

"This is an extraordinary action we're taking," said Shinseki. "But it's necessary because we recognize the hardships some of our Veterans face."

More than 27,500 students have already received benefits for housing or books under the new Post-9/11 GI Bill, or their schools received their tuition payments.

- Government Pension Offset (GPO)/Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). Significant changes to Social Security in 1977 and 1983 cut Social Security benefits of many federal (Civil Service Retirement System) retirees and state/local government retirees who did not participate in Social Security during their state/federal government work years, but who qualify for Social Security based on other periods of employment.

In 1977, Congress passed a law change to prevent retirees who had been employed but didn't participate in Social Security from collecting both a government annuity based on their own work and social security benefits based on their spouse's work record. The so-called Government Pension Offset (GPO) rule applies to Civil Service Retirement system workers, many state education employees and others who were first eligible to retire in December 1982 and later, and whose employment wasn't covered by Social Security. The law makes such workers forfeit part or all of any social security benefits otherwise payable to the retired worker as the spouse or survivor of someone entitled to Social Security benefits. Lost Social Security benefits can amount to two-thirds of the person's government retired pay. For example, a surviving spouse who receives a civil service retirement of \$900 a month in his/her own right might become eligible for a Social Security survivor's benefit based on the spouse's Social Security-covered earnings. Two-thirds of his/her retirement annuity (\$600) exceeds the Social Security benefit, so the person would lose the entire Social Security survivor annuity.

The GPO currently affects over 401,000 beneficiaries.

Similarly, the Social Security Amendments of 1983 greatly reduced the Social Security benefit for similar groups of retirees who didn't participate in Social Security while working for the government, but who also worked in another Social-Security covered job at some point. The Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) applies to anyone in this category attaining age 62 after 1985 and becoming eligible for his/her government annuity after 1985 (both must occur after 1985). Congress provided for a five-year phase-in so that the maximum reduction would not occur until 1990. Those who became 62 in 1990 or reached that age after 1990 (and were not eligible for a federal annuity until after 1985) may face Social Security benefit reductions equaling up to 60% of their non-Social-Security-covered retired pay.

Legislation to repeal the WEP and GPO penalties has been introduced in every Congress since these provisions were enacted. Despite having gained large cosponsor lists, leadership resistance to the estimated \$60 billion cost of repeal has inhibited passage of the legislation.

The WEP affects approximately 970,000 beneficiaries.

Several organizations like Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), the National Association of Retired Federal Employees (NARFE) and the Coalition to Assure Retirement Equity (CARE) to seek passage of remedial legislation. These organizations believe that both GPO and WEP provisions impose undue financial penalties

Representative Howard Berman has reintroduced repeal legislation as [H.R. 235](#), and Senator Dianne Feinstein has introduced [S. 484](#), in the 111th Congress.

- **New Address? Make Sure to Update DEERS.** FALLS CHURCH, Va. – Important life events like moving or having a child go off to college are milestones in military families' lives. No matter where their journeys take them, it's important for families to keep their DEERS records up to date whenever they hit these and many other milestones.

For TRICARE beneficiaries, keeping Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) records up-to-date means uninterrupted access to TRICARE's world-class health care. DEERS is the worldwide computer database of uniformed services members (sponsors), their family members and others eligible for military benefits, including TRICARE.

Mistakes or outdated information in DEERS can cause problems with a TRICARE beneficiary's claims. For example, retail network pharmacies check TRICARE eligibility through DEERS, and prescriptions are filled only for beneficiaries listed in DEERS as eligible. Outdated addresses can also mean important direct mail is misdirected.

Along with changes of address, other life events that can affect DEERS records include additions to the family, either through births or adoptions; changes in a sponsor's status such as retirement; marriage or divorce; becoming entitled to Medicare; or the death of a sponsor or family member.

Sponsors are automatically registered in DEERS, but it is critical they register their eligible family members as well. To register family members in DEERS and receive an ID card, the family member and sponsor must bring documentation, such as a marriage or birth certificate, to a military ID card issuing facility. Locate ID card offices by ZIP code, city or state using the ID card office locator at <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsi>. Sponsors should call the ID card office first to confirm what documentation is needed and the hours of operation.

Contact information on DEERS can be updated in several different ways including in person at a military ID card issuing facility, online, and by phone, fax or mail. There are two online options via either the new myDODbenefits Web site at <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/mydodbenefits>, or the Beneficiary Web Enrollment Web site at <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/bwe>.

Beneficiaries can call the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) Support Office at 1-800-538-9552 (1-866-363-2883 TTY/TDD) to update addresses, e-mail addresses and phone numbers. Changes can also be faxed to 1-831-655-8317, or mailed to:

DMDC Support Office  
400 Gigling Road  
Seaside, CA 93955-6771

For more information regarding DEERS and how and when to update DEERS records, go to <http://www.tricare.mil/DEERS>

- Federal Benefits for Veterans. The 2009 Edition of VA's Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors booklet is available online. The booklet provides the rates for certain federal payments and outlines many programs and services provided by VA and other federal agencies. It also includes toll-free phone numbers, Internet addresses and a directory of VA facilities throughout the country. <http://www1.va.gov/opa/vadocs/fedben.pdf>. If the link does not work, copy it to your internet browser.

- Seeking Photos of Those Listed on The Wall. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund has teamed with FedEx Office to collect and provide photos of the more than 58,000 service members whose names are listed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. The photos will become a centerpiece in The Education Center at The Wall, a new facility to be built underground near the Vietnam and Lincoln memorials. FedEx Office centers around the country will collect and scan the photos. Jan Scruggs, founder and president of the memorial fund, said in a statement (<http://www.vvmf.org/index.cfm?SectionID=808>) announcing the National Call for Photos, "It is vital we remember the individuals who made the ultimate sacrifice in Vietnam. ... The education center will allow us to put faces with the names on The Wall and learn some of their stories."

- 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.

- Disclaimer. The views and opinions expressed in **Retiree News** are those of the editor and do not represent official policy of The Adjutant General or the State Department of Defense.

3. The Wanted List. Help! **Retiree News** is looking for these Hawai'i National Guard members e-mail addresses or their addresses on file for them no longer works. E-mail their addresses to [retireenews@hawaiiantel.net](mailto:retireenews@hawaiiantel.net) if you can share them.

Norman Chang  
Chris Wilson  
Randy Solomon  
Tom Gresch  
Wayne Z. Higa

Russell Woodward  
Byron Kim  
Steve Ware  
Katherine Asato  
Edward Uyeda

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.

Michael Arnold (update)  
Wes Tanaka

Gildo Soriano  
Lawrence Sagaysay

The address total just passed **1150+** members. Be sure to ask your fellow retirees that you meet if they receive **Retiree News**. If not, send their e-mail address to [retireenews@hawaiiantel.net](mailto:retireenews@hawaiiantel.net). Mahalo for your support!

4. Condolences. These Hawai'i 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....

**James M. Yamada**, 73, of Honolulu, died Sept. 18, 2009. Born in Honolulu. Retired Hawai'i Air National Guard radio maintenance man; retired from U.S. Air Force. Survived by wife, Jean; son, Stacy; daughter, Lynn Quiban; grandchildren, Trent and Kristen Yamada.

**Walter M. Yahiku**, 62, of Honolulu, died Sept. 21, 2009. Born in Honolulu. Retired from the U.S. Army National Guard. Survived by children, Kristy, Dena and Darrin; brothers, Kenneth and Robert; sisters, Kay, and Amy Loo.

## **5. Retiree Update.**

- Last of the F-15 "A" Models Depart. **Col Ronald Han**, the 154<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Group commander, hosted a departure ceremony for the last two F-15 "A" models in the HIANG inventory. The 154<sup>th</sup> Wing received aircraft 6032 and 7074 in 1986 when the wing converted from the F-4 Phantoms to the F-15 Eagles.

The ceremony included observing the final aircraft launch, an up close look at two F-22 Raptors, and a great breakfast. There was a mix of current maintainers and a group of retirees who came out for the departure ceremony. Among the HIANG retirees attending this departure ceremony were – (and hope I didn't miss any one....)

**Billy Chang**  
**Harold DeMello**

**Moises Felipe**

**Greg Ng**

**Edward Richardson**

**Wayne "Wildman" Wakeman**

**Vic Ioli**

**Rex Koga**

**Randy Lum**

**Stan Lum**

**Clint Churchill**

**Jim "Bat" Drake**

**Gerald Gapol**

**Leroy "Stringer" Perry**

**Gary Soma**

**Cal Yoshimoto**

**Norm Kaleo**

**Stan Heu**

**Peter Kwok**

**Bruce Minato**

Flying the last mission to the "bone yard" Davis-Monthan AFB in Arizona were **Lt Col Mark "Odie" Ladtkow** and **Maj Kris "Jag" Sills** of the 199<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron. **Gary "Pork" Peters**, a former 199<sup>th</sup> FS commander, greeted them when they arrived in Arizona. Pork coordinated with **MSgt Fred Higa** on the specifics to surprise the pilots. Understand they all headed out to dinner to reminisce and talk story.

Heading up this great ceremony were **CMSgt Geof Stiteler**, [geoffrey.stiteler@hihick.ang.af.mil](mailto:geoffrey.stiteler@hihick.ang.af.mil) and **MSgt Fred Higa**, [fred.higa@hihick.ang.af.mil](mailto:fred.higa@hihick.ang.af.mil). A fitting ceremony to send off a huge part of the 154<sup>th</sup> Wing's history - Outstanding job!

- Short Fuse: Volunteers needed for this weekend. **Kyle Kamikawa** sent the following e-mail about **Gerald Oshiro's** request for some volunteers this weekend. Contact Gerald if you can provide some support!

-----Original Message-----

From: Kyle

Date: Sun, Sep 20, 2009 at 1:14 AM

Subject: Special Olympics

To: [retireenews@hawaiiintel.net](mailto:retireenews@hawaiiintel.net)

Gerald Oshiro asked me to help him find at least 20 people to help register and keep score for the Special Olympics Bowling Tournament at Schofield Alley on 3 Oct. 09. Well I don't know how to keep score with the automated machine and the guys he was counting on for help all has drill on that weekend. The only person has a wide contact list was you. I suggested to him have all the HANG retired bowlers do it as a Community Service Project. So please contact Gerald at 368-1419 or e-mail him at [sohipirates@hotmail.com](mailto:sohipirates@hotmail.com)

Thanks

- The Recruiting and Retention Battalion Change of Command ceremony was on Saturday, September 19, 2009. Ceremonies were at the 298<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Multifunctional Training Unit, Regional Training Institute in Waimanalo. **MAJ Loren Penney** is the new commander and he will do a super job. The outgoing commander, **LTC(P) Douglas Kurt Jackson** is the new HIARNG G1, Personnel. Congratulations to both on their new positions!

Send congratulatory e-mail:

[loren.penney@us.army.mil](mailto:loren.penney@us.army.mil)

[douglas.kurt.jackson@us.army.mil](mailto:douglas.kurt.jackson@us.army.mil)

- The Change of Command ceremony for the Ordnance Training Company, Regional Training Site Maintenance is scheduled for twelve o'clock noon, Saturday, October 4, 2009 in Waiawa. **MAJ Kukunaokala Mendonca**, takes command from **MAJ Paul M. Takata**. The commander of the 298<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Multifunctional Training Unit, **COL Keith Y. Tamashiro**, will host the ceremony. Congratulations to both the incoming and outgoing commanders!

Send congratulatory e-mail:

[keith.tamashiro@us.army.mil](mailto:keith.tamashiro@us.army.mil)

[k.mendonca@us.army.mil](mailto:k.mendonca@us.army.mil)

[paul.takata@us.army.mil](mailto:paul.takata@us.army.mil)

- Congratulations and Best Wishes go to **MSgt Mike Matsuura** and **TSgt Terry Iwamasa**, who got married in September. Both work in the aircraft maintenance and are two great people that I have known for quite a while. Again congratulations and best wishes!

Send congratulatory e-mail:

[michael.matuura@hihick.ang.af.mil](mailto:michael.matuura@hihick.ang.af.mil)

[terry.iwamasa@hihick.ang.af.mil](mailto:terry.iwamasa@hihick.ang.af.mil)

- A Big Mahalo goes to Brooks Akana for providing a lot of the Hawai'i Army National Guard inputs for Retiree News. After Brooks retired from the HIARNG a year or two ago, he returned to work as civilian. He now serves as the Command Program Support Specialist and continues to do a super job. [brooks.akana@us.army.mil](mailto:brooks.akana@us.army.mil)

- More Community Support by Hawai'i Army National Guard Aviation. The HIARNG Aviation completed a four ship CH-47 flyover at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific. The flyover was part of the Oahu Americans of Japanese Ancestry (AJA) Veterans Council Fourth Joint Memorial Service on Sunday, September 27, 2009.

- The New Hawai'i Air National Guard First Sergeants' Council Leadership. **MSgt LeeAnn Uehara**, the current president of the HIANG First Sergeants' Council sent out this e-mail to announce the new leadership for the coming year. Congratulations to all!

-----Original Message-----

From: Uehara LeeAnn MSgt 297 ATCS/CCF

Sent: Saturday, September 26, 2009 9:26 PM

To: ALL HIANG

Subject: HIANG First Sergeants' Council - Leadership Announcement

Aloha HIANG Ohana,

It gives me great pleasure to announce the new "HIANG First Sergeants' Council" leadership team effective 1 Oct 2009. We look to your leadership in ensuring a ready and reliable enlisted force; taking care of Airmen has never been more important. Congratulations again and thank you for your commitment to the team!

President: **MSgt Jason Seales**, HQ 154 WG

Vice President: **SMSgt Scot Fujioka**, 199 WF

Recorder: **MSgt Stephanie Durham**, 109 AOG

Treasurer: **MSgt Yolanda Valiente**, HQ 201 CCG

LEEANN S. UEHARA, MSgt, HIANG  
President, HIANG First Sergeant Council  
First Sergeant  
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Kalaeloa Airport, Bldg. 1922  
91-1367 Saratoga Avenue  
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COMM: (808) 448-8484  
[LeeAnn.Uehara@hihick.ang.af.mil](mailto:LeeAnn.Uehara@hihick.ang.af.mil)

Send congratulatory e-mail:

[jason.seales@hihick.ang.af.mil](mailto:jason.seales@hihick.ang.af.mil)

[scot.fujioka@hihick.ang.af.mil](mailto:scot.fujioka@hihick.ang.af.mil)

[stephanie.durham@hickam.af.mil](mailto:stephanie.durham@hickam.af.mil)

[yolanda.valiente@hihick.ang.af.mil](mailto:yolanda.valiente@hihick.ang.af.mil)

- Static Display Movement. The two F-86 static displays on the side of the F-15 hanger will move to the Pacific Aviation Museum. The two static displays will join the F-15 Eagle which moved to Ford Island earlier. I understand that eventually all the HIANG static display aircraft will move to the museum.

- Hq 201<sup>st</sup> Combat Communications Group Mini Reunion. Several retired members of the HQ 201 CCG got together at Sam Snead's for another mini reunion. They get together about twice a year and it has turned into, as one attendee mentioned, a retiree support group. I got to see a group picture and everyone looks younger than I remember – as with all retirees. Retirees attending included:

**Roy Iwamoto**  
**Cliff Kobashigawa**

**Fred Hyun**  
**Gary Hirata**



**“BJ” Juarez**  
**Roy Chee**  
**Cal Chow**  
**Gerry Iseri**  
**Richard Yasunaga**

**Galen Nakahara**  
**George Okuma**  
**Leo Nakano**  
**Jason Uota**

**6. Upcoming Events.** Events listed are by the event date.

- Enlisted & Non-Commissioned Officer Dining-In. The Senior Enlisted Leader, Hawai'i National Guard, **Command Chief Master Sergeant Denise Jelinski-Hall**, and Command Sergeant Major, Hawai'i Army National Guard, **CSM Elizabeth Kenui**, invites all enlisted and non-commissioned officers to a Dining-In celebrating the Year of the NCO. It will be a formal event honoring those who proudly serve as the backbone of “Hawaii’s Own.”

- When: Saturday, October 17, 2009, starting at 1800

- Where: Hickam AFB Officer’s Club lanai

- Menu: choice of one below

- Sliced London Broil

- Roasted Stuffed Chicken Breast

- Vegetable Lasagna

- Costs:

- E6 & below: \$15.00

- E7 & E8”: \$20.00

- E9: \$25.00

- Uniform of the Day:

- Male: Army Blue or Green dress (bow tie)

- Female: Army Blue or Green dress

- Other services: equivalent uniform

- Retirees: coat and tie

- POC for retirees:

- **SGM Charles Pieters**, 672-1319 or 630-0139, [charles.l.pieters@us.army.mil](mailto:charles.l.pieters@us.army.mil)

- Save the Date – the Hawai'i National Guard Birthday Ball. This year’s birthday ball is on Saturday, December 12, 2009 at the J.W. Marriott Ihilani Resort and Spa in Kapolei. This joint event celebrates the 373<sup>rd</sup> Birthday of our National Guard’s beginnings. The specifics about the ball are forthcoming! The event chairs is **BG Gary Hara** and **Brig Gen Stanley Osserman**. Division OPRS are:

HIARNG POC: **LTC Laura Soares**, 672-1321, [laura.soares@us.army.mil](mailto:laura.soares@us.army.mil)

HIANG POC: **Lt Col Peter Ching**, 448-8331, [peter.ching@hihick.ang.af.mil](mailto:peter.ching@hihick.ang.af.mil)

**7. Website Links.**

- The Current Issue of **Soldiers** Magazine is Online. To view the current issue of **Soldiers**, the official U.S. Army magazine, just log on to: <http://www.army.mil/soldiers/>. You can view back issues (electronic issues only) by clicking on “back issues” on the scroll bar when you get to the website referenced. If the link does not work, copy it to your internet browser.

- The Current Issue of **Airman Magazine** is Online. To view the September-October 2009 issue, just log on to: <http://www.airmanonline.af.mil/>. If the link does not work, copy it to your



internet browser. You can view back issues (electronic issues only) by clicking on "back issues" on the scroll bar when you get to the website referenced.

- The State Department of Defense's newspaper, the **pupukahi**, is online. The **pupukahi** has gone totally electronic. The link to the current issue is [www.hawaii.gov/dod](http://www.hawaii.gov/dod) - the **pupukahi** link is listed under the "What's New?" section.

Issues from 1997 through 2008 are posted on the website. The link is <http://hawaii.gov/dod/staff-offices/public-affairs/pupukahi>. If the link does not work, copy it to your internet browser.