

Nā Leo O Nā Koa

(Voices of Warriors)



2004 Chapter Rating



Aloha Chapter

Newsletter of Chartered January 27, 2000

*the Aloha Chapter,
An Affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America*

Volume No. 7, Issue No. 2

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February 2006

ALOHA CHAPTER OFFICERS FOR 2006 INSTALLED

Colonel Howard J. Killian, Commander, U.S. Army Garrison, Hawaii, was the installing officer at our installation luncheon on Thursday, January 26, 2006, at the Hale Ikena, Fort Shafter. The Executive Committee officers for 2006 are Vernon Von, President; Harold Kuwahara, Vice President; Gordon Cho, Secretary; and Art Yamamoto, Treasurer. Additionally, two members of the Board of Directors, Jack Bohman and Jerry Lesperance, were installed for another two-year term. Also recognized were the committee chairs for the coming year. They were Herbert Nakagawa, Fund Raising; Kelley Roberson, Govt/Legislative Affairs (unable to attend due to work commitments); Nari Hamlin, Historical Activities; Bob Kozuki, Personal Affairs; Harold Kuwahara, Programs; Mark Webster, Publications/Public Affairs (unable to attend due to work commitments); and Wes Fong, ROTC/Veteran Affairs. Congratulations to all for their willingness to serve.

Following this brief service, Col. Killian gave a very informative talk on the future of approximately 81,000 U.S. Army personnel in Hawaii. He spoke briefly on the arrival of a Stryker Brigade in February, the expenditure of 700-million dollars in construction projects on Oahu and the Pohakuloa Training Facility, the difficulty and ongoing controversy on the use of Makua Valley for live-action training, future troop deployment to the Middle East, the addition of 1,000 new homes for base housing by the end of 2007, and the scheduled opening of the new, improved Schofield Base Exchange on April 1, 2006. Col. Killian is a nuts-and-bolts, no-nonsense commander who holds many well earned ribbons and medals. He is a command pilot and maintenance test pilot for the UH-60 Black Hawk. We appreciate him taking time from his busy schedule to conduct our installation service and update us on the U.S. Army in the Pacific.



Col. Howard J. Killian, Commander, U. S. Army Garrison, Hawaii, Guest Speaker and Installation Officer



Installation of the Aloha Chapter Committee Officers at the Luncheon on January 26, 2006, at Hale Ikena, Ft. Shafter.

President's Message

By Vernon Von

February is the month to remember our country's presidents and our valentines. It is also the month I want to publicly express my personal THANKS to those members who will serve again on the ExComm. Last month we had their installation service and it was a great time for me to reflect on their past service and look forward to another year together. Harold Kuwahara is always faithful to insure that our chapter activities and programs run smoothly. Gordon Cho wore two hats, secretary and membership committee chair, and he worked overtime to serve in these two important areas.

Art Yamamoto is an expert when it comes to keeping our financial records and is a valuable member to have on the ExComm. The committee chairs are equally well qualified for their jobs. We will certainly miss Dell and Jan who kept our newsletter in first place. But a willing and able replacement was found in another one of our members, Mark Webster. Mark was the chair of our Community Services Committee.

Herbert Nakagawa continues to serve as our Fundraising chair, Kelley Roberson as our Govt/Legislative Affairs chair, Bob Kozuki as our Personal Affairs chair and Wes Fong as our ROTC/Veteran Affairs chair. I appreciate all of their efforts in serving our chapter and applaud their professionalism and diligence in carrying out their respective responsibilities. **HOWEVER**, we still need your help in filling two committee chairs, specifically, Community Services and Membership. Please let me know if you are willing to help.

On another matter, DID YOU KNOW that the DoD is going to propose to Congress drastic increases in the cost of health care for military beneficiaries, with military retirees as the prime target? MOAA is joining with other veterans groups to oppose this change. We all need to do our part by informing our congressmen that we oppose this unfair increase in the cost of health care. (See MOAA Legislative Update on Page 5.)

Finally, I again appeal to you increase your participation in our programs and activities and to volunteer your time in serving on one of our committees. We are especially looking for Community Services and Membership Committee Chairs.

May the Force be with the Seahawks!

Vern



Aloha Chapter Ladies Valentine Tea By Marion Von

We are excited to begin the new year with a special event for the ladies of the MOAA Aloha Chapter. Following is updated information about this activity and we look forward to seeing many of you at our February Valentine Tea.

WHAT: MOAA Aloha Chapter "Ladies Only Tea"
 WHEN: Monday, February 13, 2006
 10:30 am - 1:30 pm
 WHERE: Waoli Tea Room
 2950 Manoa Road
 COST: \$22.50 (includes gratuity and tax)
 MENU: Scones and tea cakes
 Finger sandwiches
 Desserts
 Special teas
 RSVP: No later than February 8, 2006
 CALL: Nari Hamlin - 486-7150
 Mary Cho - 484-2400
 Shirley Ihara - 239-7947
 Marion Von - 732-3908

Marion

Tax Tip

The **Survivor Benefit Plan annuity received by the survivor of a military retiree is taxable income on the Federal tax return.** The Hawaii State tax rules don't specifically address the taxability of a SBP annuity; however it does provide that a "military pension" is not taxed. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the **State of Hawaii does not tax SBP annuities.**

Jerry Lesperance, Personal Affairs Committee

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(There is no member meeting scheduled in February)

February 13, 2006 — Ladies' Group gathering at Wai'oli
(Monday) Tea Room in Manoa; 1030 to 1230

February 19, 2006 — Bridge Group meets at Anna Black-
(Sunday) well's home.

February 27, 2005 — Golf Outing, Leilehua Golf Course
(Monday)

Notice

This Newsletter is published monthly as an official publication of Aloha Chapter, MOAA, P.O. Box 19267, Honolulu, Hawaii, 96817-8267. Views expressed herein are not necessarily chapter policy.

The Perfect Valentine's awaits at the Hale Koa Hotel

Treat your sweetheart to an elegant dinner in our signature restaurant, *The Hale Koa Room*. An exquisite menu, fine wines, specialty martinis and a Valentine's Special just for two.



Or spice up your evening with magic and comedy at our Valentine's *Magic in Paradise Dinner Show*. One of Hawaii's most innovative magicians, *Mark Allen Mauricio*, will mystify your mind and treat you to an evening of fun.

Top off your evening with a nightcap as you gaze at the stars from our *Barefoot Bar*, or dance the night away with *Gonzales* at our *Warriors Lounge*.

For more information or to make reservations, please call The Activities Desk at (808)955-0555 ext. 546. Valentine's Day Reservations begin January 11, 2006



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SCHOLARSHIP FUND DRIVE TOPS \$6,000

By Allen Ono, Scholarship Fund Board Chairman

Servco Pacific, the giant kama'aina company known for its auto dealership, insurance services and other business activities, has contributed \$1,000 to the Aloha Chapter Scholarship Fund.

In his letter that accompanied the donation, Mark Fukunaga, president and CEO of Servco, saluted the Aloha Chapter for our scholarship program that "improves the quality of life for all parts of society."

Servco's contribution puts the total collected in the 2005 fundraising campaign to more than \$6,000. The amount exceeds the board's expectations when we began the fund drive. Thanks for your generous and rousing support!

Several changes have occurred to the Scholarship Fund Board of Trustees. Tak Yoshihara resigned as a board member to turn his efforts toward his church's projects. We thank Tak for his leadership, graciousness and perseverance.



Aloha Chapter life members Nari Hamlin and Harold Takenaka have joined the board as trustees and Howard Okada has been elected as vice chairman.

Contributions continue to be accepted

Please make your checks payable to Aloha Chapter (MOAA) Scholarship Fund and mail them to Aloha Chapter (MOAA) Scholarship Fund, PO Box 1927, Aiea HI 96701.

Aloha Chapter Party Bridge Program

The first bridge session of 2006 was held on Sunday, January 15th at Fahrni Realty in Aiea, courtesy of bridge players Len and Helen Fahrni. Three tables for bridge were hosted by Vernon and Marion Von.

Participants were: **Mitzi Austin, Anna Blackwell, Bob and Mimi Deibler, Bill and Trudy Ernst, Len and Helen Fahrni, Helen Hubbell, Les and Shirley Ihara, and Edy Kuwamoto.**

Top 4 scorers for January were, 1st to 4th: **Anna Blackwell, Mimi Deibler, Helen Hubbell, and Edy Kuwamoto.**

The next party bridge session will be held on Sunday, February 19th at Anna Blackwell's home. Those interested in playing need to contact Anna by telephone at 739-9164 or e-mail to: annagram2@aol.com not later than a week prior to our gathering. Shirley



Seated right to left are: Mitzi Austin, Trudy Ernst, Bill Ernst and Helen Hubbell

Add these Websites to your "Favorites"
<http://www.aloha-moaa.org>



Pictured above left to right are: Shirley Ihara, Mimi Deibler, Edy Kuwamoto, and Vernon Von

Leaving the Military?

Continue to Make a Difference

Become a Teacher

- Go to "doe-jobs.k12.hi.us"
- Click on: Troops to Teachers icon
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* Pending availability of funds

Contact: Hawaii Troops to Teachers at 587-5580 ext 409
Neighbor Islands: call 1-800-420-3688 email: hawaiiitt@notes.k12.hi.us
Or go to: www.proudtoserveagain.com



Troops to Teachers



Another Non-Sport Event By Norm Fujiwara

The scheduled golf outing for Friday the 27th at the Barber's Point GC was cancelled the previous day at the luncheon meeting at the Hale Ikena. When we saw the shape of the golf course and the persistent rain, the consensus of the six players present was to cancel and take a rain check.

Thus, there was no golf activity in January for the Aloha Chapter.

Our next golf outing will be on Monday, February 27th at Leilehua Golf Course. Let's hope that the rain gods will look more favorably down on us next month.

Aloha and good golfing!

Norm

Pentagon Health Chief Defends Retiree Fee Increases

To their credit, Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) Dr. William Winkenwerder and his principal deputy, Dr. Steve Jones, went out of their way to talk to military association representatives about why the Defense Department wants to double or triple TRICARE fees for retired beneficiaries. They came to Alexandria, Virginia to spend an hour with more than 50 representatives of The Military Coalition, including several from MOAA.

But it was a frustrating meeting on both sides, as Coalition members had lots of questions about the specifics of the new proposals that Winkenwerder said he couldn't yet answer. While MOAA and others have published summaries of the DoD plan received from multiple reliable sources, the official plan may not be released until the President submits his budget for FY07 later this month or in early February.

Pressed about whether published reports have been accurate, Winkenwerder chose his words carefully, saying, "I wouldn't want you to think that what you've seen is what will be done." While that might mean the Administration is doing some rethinking, it might also mean there is more to the plan. In that vein, MOAA has learned that the initiative also is likely to include a proposal to increase the "third tier" \$22 pharmacy co-payment and establish a new "fourth tier" of drugs for which the beneficiary would have to pay the full cost.

Barred from discussing details, Dr. Winkenwerder briefed the Coalition on why the Department feels the need to shift more costs to retirees. His principal points were:

*Health costs are rising faster than the rest of the Defense budget, mainly because of legislated benefit expansions, increasing retiree use of care, and general health inflation

*Retirees will consume 65% of defense health spending by 2011, vs. 43% in 2000 (mainly because of the enactment of TRICARE For Life in 2001).

*There has been no change in retiree health fees since the military health benefit is "extremely rich," with military retirees averaging \$680 in out-of-pocket health costs a year, vs. \$3700 for retirees from civilian employers.

*As private sector employers have cut back on health benefits, the percentage of retirees actually using TRICARE has risen from 66% in FY2002 to 78% for FY2006, and is expected to rise to 87% by 2011.



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*Limiting DoD health costs to the current 8% of the DoD budget would save \$20 billion a year by FY2015.

*Pharmacy costs tripled from FY2001 to FY2006, due to enactment of pharmacy coverage for Medicare-eligible retirees in 2001.

When Dr. Winkenwerder solicited TMC comments, MOAA's Steve Strobridge said comparison of military vs. civilian health costs fails to consider some critical points. Military retirement benefits are the only offset provided for the unique and extraordinary demands inherent in a 20-30 year military career. Military retirees have paid far greater premiums than civilians; they just paid most of them in service and sacrifice rather than in cash. Further, he said the Pentagon should be asking Congress for a bigger defense budget to pay for the needed benefit improvements Congress has enacted rather than seeking to fund those other defense needs out of retirees' pockets.

Please urge your legislators to oppose these misguided fee increases. To send a MOAA-suggested message, visit <http://capwiz.com/moaa/home/> and click on the "Oppose Military Health Fee Hikes" link..

Also, see MOAA's plea on page 7 of this newsletter!

Annual Golf Report

By Norm Fujiwara

The Aloha Chapter Golf Program for the 2005 season started off with a bang. It appeared to be the beginning of a banner year for the group. During the first two outings, we had a total of 21 players with 3 wahine in January and 25 players with 5 wahine in February. However, the numbers waned to an average of 18 players with 2 wahine for the remainder of the year, with an all time low of 12 players with 2 wahine in December. We did encounter a first this year. In November, after participating in the program for a year and a half, we had our first rain check at Klipper Golf Course.

During the year we played several different formats of golf game for the mega-jackpot;

however, because of the difficulty in having four player units for the formats, a majority of the formats were played as blind partners. When we were able to have an equal number of players to form 4 player teams, the format we played were the "T's" and "F's", the 1-2-3-game, the regular scramble and, for the first time, California Scramble.

If we were to present an award for the best attendance during the year, the winners would be both Bob Kozuki and Jack Bohman with honorable mentions going to Gordon Cho, Ken Munechika, and Allen Ono.

Mahalo all the players who supported the Aloha Chapter Golf Program.

I hope that our 2006 golf season will be a more productive one with greater participation by our Chapter members.

So, all of you "once in the blue moon" players, brush off the cobwebs of your golf clubs and start practicing your swing in the back yard. Remember, with this group it is a social event, not a PGA/LPGA type of outing; you need not be a Michelle Wie to be competitive with this group.

Mahalo and see you on the course in 2006.

Norm

Recruit A New Member in 2006!

Your Aloha Chapter is always looking for new members—active duty, retirees, and auxiliary members, all are welcome and will enjoy the camaraderie of the Aloha Chapter. Make it your goal to recruit one new member in 2006. For more info, contact Gordon Cho, Vernon Von or any chapter officer.



It takes
a friend
to lead
the way.

Your leadership and commitment to help secure the world will make a difference in the lives of other people. No matter who those people are, that difference is their freedom.



www.PenFed.org
1-800-247-5626

MOAA's Council & Chapter Affairs Department Needs Your HELP!

For the last several years our MOAA has had an ongoing argument with some factions in the Pentagon about retirees being a 'drain on the DoD budget.' To a large extent military retirees of all pay grades have been maligned as being 'used up' and 'useless' and a drain on a defense budget that should be focused on currently serving military personnel. MOAA HQ has a general idea about how much volunteer time you spend in helping our troops--at military hospitals, in recreation centers, deployment centers, etc. What they need is some more specific numbers. They would like us to poll our membership and determine an approximate number of hours, if any, our members volunteer at DoD facilities. Please note that many of you volunteer at VA facilities as well but their main thrust is on time volunteered at DoD facilities.

In response to this article, our chapter president, Vernon Von is asking that all members phone him at 732-3908 or send him an e-mail (vvon777@earthlink.net) or phone Harold Kuwahara at 373-4400 or send him an e-mail (harold@hele.net). Please send this info by Feb 15, 2006. Vern

MOAA NATIONAL'S "GIVE ME 10" RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN WRAP-UP

By Gordon Cho, Membership Chair

December 31, 2005 marked the final date for anyone desiring to participate in the MOAA National Headquarters "Give Me 10" recruitment campaign. The campaign was designed to increase membership with the national organization. Local chapter participation ensured opportunities for incentives that included: \$10 for each new paying member; \$100 bonus (one time) for first ten new paying members signed up; \$1000 prize for chapters that re-cruit the most new members--prizes awarded in categories based on chapter size. Individuals signing up during the campaign period received reduced annual dues rates and were also eligible for entry to an end-of-contest sweepstakes (\$1000 grand prize for the chapter) and the new member receives a life membership and \$500.

The Aloha Chapter efforts resulted in the recruitment of 17 national memberships. We now await the final results of the campaign and any incentive bonuses that may be due the chapter. A big **Mahalo Nui Loa** to the following officers/auxiliary members who took advantage of the campaign period to either sign up for the first time or renewed their lapsed national membership: LTC Alfred M. Abe, COL Wesley F. Fong, Ms. Janet Hee, COL Joseph T. Kuroda, COL John Y. Ching, BG Joseph Chaves, CWO Ronald K. Todd, MAJ Frederick M. Usui, COL Melvin K. Soong, LTC Donald K. Birdseye, COL Robert Ishimoto, LTC Gido S. Soriano, MG Albert P. Richards, COL Ralph C. Hook Jr., LCDR Raymond M. deHay, CWO Tony Bamer, and COL Shojiro Arakawa.

Gordon

Membership Application

Name _____

Branch of Service _____

Rank _____

Retired Active Former

Reserve National Guard Auxiliary*

Ad-
dress _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____

Date of
Birth _____

Phone Number _____

E-Mail Address _____

Chapter Name Aloha Chapter, HI

Chapter Recruiter _____

*Surviving spouse of eligible officer.

Dues to MOAA are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal tax purposes. Annual membership dues include a \$12 subscription to MILITARY OFFICER magazine.

Aloha Chapter
 Military Officers Association
 Of America
 P.O. Box 19267
 Honolulu HI 96817-8267



MOAA Seal

Aloha Chapter



Awards

- 2000 Outstanding Chapter Runner-Up
- 2000 3-Membership Recruiting Awards
- 2001 Outstanding Chapter
- 2001 Membership Recruiting Award
- 2002 5-Star Chapter
- 2002 Excellence in Recruiting Award
- 2003 Honorable Mention Newsletter
- 2003 4-Star Chapter
- **2004 Winner Best Website**
- **2004 2nd Runner-Up Electronic Newsletter**

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2006 Aloha Chapter Leadership

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Edward Hirata, USA, Chair	247-3138	edhrata@hawaii.rr.com
Jerry Lesperance, USCG, Vice	488-5205	jlesperance@hawaii.rr.com
Clarence Agena, USA	677-4103	cmagenal@verizon.net
Anna Blackwell, AUX	739-9164	annagram2@aol.com
Jack Bohman, USA	235-8078	jbohman59@hawaii.rr.com
Dell Epperson, USN	484-2057	dellnjan@hawaii.rr.com
Joseph Magaldi, Jr., USMC	222-2013	magaldij001@hawaii.rr.com
Charles Ota, USAF	486-9640	charleso@cochawaii.org

Officers/Executive Committee

President-Vernon Von, USAF	732-3908	vvon777@earthlink.net
Vice Pres.-Harold Kuwahara	373-4400	harold@hele.net
Secretary-Gordon Cho	484-2400	gcho440443@aol.com
Treasurer-Art Yamamoto	833-3111	aty@verizon.net

Committee Chairs

Community Services: Mark Webster, 734-5994, markster@hawaii.rr.com

Fundraising: Herbert Nakagawa Jr., 271-1172, shibikoherb@hotmail.com

Govt/Legislative Affairs: Kelley Roberson, 732-2988, kelleYROberson@hawaii.rr.com

Historical Activities: Nari Hamlin, 486-7150, narivee@aol.com

Membership: Gordon Cho, 484-2400, gcho440443@aol.com

Personal Affairs: Bob Kozuki, 693-8965, kozukir001@hawaii.rr.com

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