



Pau Hana Koa

Retired Warriors

Hawaii Chapter Military Officers Association of America

Vol. 20 No. 1

WEBSITE <http://www.moaa-hawaii.org>

January 2005



Hawaii Chapter Supports USMC Community Service Program

Colonel Michael O'Neal, Chief of Staff for Marine Forces Pacific accepts the 2004 Uniformed Services \$1000 Award, presented by Kathy DeLong, Chair Community Affairs and Incoming President COL John Harms. Additional pictures from Christmas Party can be found on Page 5. Picture courtesy of George Sullivan.

JANUARY

- 15 Jan (Sat) The Users Group (TUG) (1000)
Computer Training, Bishop Museum, Paki Bldg.
- 10 Jan (Mon) PAC Mtg, Hickam W&O (1200)
- 21 Jan (Fri) Excom Mtg, MCBH O'Club (1130)
- 22 Jan (Sat) Chapter Luncheon (1130)
Waikiki Yacht Club
Speaker: COL Jess Ramirez, MOAA National
"Our Guard and Reserves on the Front Lines"
- 29 Jan (Sat) MOAA Party Bridge (1900)
For reservations call Robbie Gee at 255-4558

FEBRUARY

- 5 Feb (Sat) The Users Group (TUG) (1000)
Computer Training, Bishop Museum, Paki Bldg.
- 18 Feb (Fri) Excom Mtg, MCBH O'Club (1130)
- 26 Feb (Sat) Chapter Social
Activity, Time and Location TBA
- 26 Feb (Sat) MOAA Party Bridge (1900)
For reservations call Robbie Gee at 255-4558



YOUR PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Colonel John Harms, USMC (Retired)

The "changing of the guard" is now complete with Jack Miller able now to relax (?) and I've got the helm. Jack and his staff have done an exceptional job over the past two years guiding our Chapter in growth, community activities, and varied programs for our members. A solid base line to continue the progress of our Chapter. First, a round of thanks and appreciation for those appointed officers and committee chairs that have stayed on to assist me in this effort. New faces and ideas are the lifeblood of any organization so I would like to welcome aboard; Dr. Bill Quirk, LTC USA as 2d Vice President/Programs, Sam Tate, CDR USN as 3d Vice President – Active duty, Reserve and Guard affairs, Helen Baker, as Secretary, Lani (Upu, her preferred name) Vasper, Chair of the Auxiliary, and as Surgeon, Dr. John Boyer, former LCDR USN. In addition to Jack Miller who is leaving as our President, special thanks to Judith Breitwieser, former 2d Vice President for Programs who has done such an exceptional job in this position over many years, and of course Admiral Bruce Smith, our Board Chairman, who keeps watch on me to insure I do not steer the Chapter onto the "rocks".

A very quick thumbnail sketch of my background for those I have not the privilege yet to meet. I completed 28 years in the Marine Corps in Assault Amphibian Vehicles (LVT's), Tanks, and Logistics. Last job was as the G4 for FMF Pac at Camp Smith. Then to the civilian business world as General Manger South Pacific of the old PRI petroleum production, distribution and marketing company, then Regional Manager of Pacific Islands for BHP which bought out PRI. Worked in exotic locations from the Cook Islands, the Samoa's, Republic of Kiribati to Guam and the Marianna Islands. Retired after 11 years and became an Educational Counselor/Dept. Chair at Kahuku High and Intermediate School. Had earned Masters and Professional degrees in Counselor Education in the Marine Corps and wanted to see "can I really counsel young folks"? Great experience, truly enjoyed our youth (parents sometimes a "challenge"), and retired from here to full retirement after graduating my 9th grade class in 1999. I have been blessed with a great family and fulfilling careers. That is I in a nutshell.



Aloha, John

UPDATE from EYES OF THUNDER - - - - - 22 December 2004

Merry Christmas! Not the holiday we are all used to, but the camaraderie and brotherhood that exists between the men in our unit is incredible. There is no real change to our status. Our redeployment date is not set, but rumors lead us to believe that we will be home by St. Patrick's Day. Although calendars continue to change, our team remains motivated and ready and incredibly focused. The men who will eventually assume responsibility of our mission arrived at FOB Warrior in Kirkuk this week. They are excited to be here and anxious to take over the operation. We will maximize this opportunity for interaction between our sections and the new sections and teach these men the countless lessons and techniques that our men have mastered this year. Ultimately this effort now will guarantee that there is no lapse in the essential radar coverage that the 25th FAC provides to this region of Iraq. We want to come home more than anything. We are very close to successfully completing this mission

As we dig for positives in the news of our extension, some pleasure can be drawn from the news that we will receive a \$1000 bonus for every month (or partial month) that we remain in country after 20 January 2005. But nothing can take the place of knowing we are all safely home with our loved ones on American soil.

I am extremely proud of this team. I could brag about our men all night long. Do not let the uninformed population at home question the positive impact of these soldiers and the incredible professionalism and spirit they pour into every task. Keep praying for us. Mosul is proof that there are no safe bases.

Respectfully, Captain Adam Wojcik, Commander, 25th Field Artillery Detachment

Board of Directors

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CAPT George Sullivan USN

THINNING OF THE RANKS

MAJ JOHN M. WILLIAMS, USAF (Ret) died 30 November at Tripler Army Medical Center. He is survived by his wife, Phyllis. Inurnment at National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific at Punchbowl.

Auxiliary Member, **HARRIET THOMAS**, widow of COL Ernest Thomas, USA (Ret), died on 29 November.

WELCOME CHANGES TO SBP

The reduction of the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuity at age 62 from 55% to 35% will be terminated. The FY 2005 Defense Authorization Act which was signed into law 28 October contains the legislation that eliminates the reduction (often referred to as the "widow's tax") over a three and one half year period in 5% increments. The restoration schedule is as follows:

- 1 October 2005 from 35% to 40%
- 1 April 2006 from 40% to 45%
- 1 April 2007 from 45% to 50%
- 1 April 2008 from 50% to 55%

Recipients of annuities (annuitants) do not have to take any action. All required action will be taken by Defense Finance and Accounting System (DFAS) Cleveland. If you have computer access, DFAS Cleveland's web site www.dfas.mil offers a wealth of information on the Survivor Benefit Plan.

Volume 20, No. 1 Pau Hana Koa

Published monthly by: Hawaii Chapter, MOAA
PO Box 1185
Kailua, Hawaii 96734-1185

Subscription included in annual chapter dues.
Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily Hawaii Chapter policy.

THE BRIDGE CORNER by Robbie Gee



Back row, Left to Right: Ginny Fine, Alice Mather, Len Jaffe. Center row: Beverly Willms, Robbie Gee, Les Ihara, and Wally Barker. Front row, Shirley Ihara.

Santa's Workshop could have been the setting for the 18 December MOAA Party Bridge Group's Christmas Potluck Dinner and Annual Awards held at the festively decorated Kaneohe home of Les and Shirley Ihara. This group activity is sponsored by MOAA, Hawaii Chapter, with a \$100 cash prize to encourage regular attendance throughout the year, rewarding the top three players with the seven highest scores out of twelve months, allowing for travel and/or illness, etc. This year's winner was Les Ihara, followed in 2nd place by Yours Truly, and in 3rd place by Marian Davis.

At this regular monthly meeting, two guests filled in on short notice due to the illness of some regular members, and as luck would have it they were the two top scorers! Taking 1st place was guest Len Jaffe; 2nd place went to guest Alice Mather, and 3rd place went to Les Ihara. Also partaking of some Christmas cheer were Robbie Gee, Ginny Fine, Wally Barker, Beverly Willms, and hostess Shirley Ihara.

Remember to call me at 255-4558 not later than the weekend beforehand to reserve your seat at the bridge table. Nonsmoking players of all abilities are welcome, with or without a partner. This is a FUN bunch who enjoy another opportunity to socialize with their TROA/MOAA friends and who don't take their bridge too seriously! The group usually meets on the last Saturday of the month at 1900 at various locations around the island on a rotation basis, but watch your Pau Hana Koa each month for the dates, as exceptions do occur.

RAO AT HICKAM AFB REACTIVATED

The Retired Activities Office (RAO) at Hickam AFB has been reactivated. It will be staffed from 0830 to 1100 on Thursdays. The office is located within the personnel customer service area (ID Cards, etc.) in C Wing of Bldg 1102 (the PACAF HQ Bldg). It is best to enter the building from the makai (south) entrance. The office telephone is 449-0674. When the RAO goes on-line, we'll publish their e-mail address. More retired AF volunteers are urgently needed.

Legislative Affairs Veterans Affairs (LAVA) Captain George E. Sullivan, USN (Retired)



Selected MOAA Legislative Goals for 2005

Health Care

- Fully fund the Defense Health Program.
- Upgrade TRICARE to attract more providers (increase payments, expedite claims, reduce administrative problems for providers and beneficiaries) and improve TRICARE Standard.
- Ensure broad pharmacy formulary.
- Provide seamless health coverage options for National Guard and Reserve members.
- Provide full funding for veterans enrolled in VA and allow Medicare use in VA.
- Authorize relief from Medicare Part B premiums for retirees who entered service before 12/7/56.
- Provide a government subsidy for the TRICARE Retiree Dental Plan.
- Authorize Federal Employee Health Benefit Program (FEHBP) option for retired beneficiaries.

Retirement/Survivor Issues

- Preserve full-inflation Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs).
- Eliminate the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) offset to SBP.
- Authorize full concurrent receipt of military retired pay and VA disability compensation.
- Accelerate effective date (currently 10/1/08) for 30-year paid-up SBP coverage.
- Accelerate 10-year concurrent receipt phase-in schedule for 50%-90% disabled retirees.
- Authorize Combat-Related Special Compensation for medical retirees with less than 20 years.
- Resume DIC payments for qualifying widows who remarry after age 55.
- Reform the Uniformed Services Former Spouse Protection Act (USFSPA).

Active/Reserve/Force Issues

- Increase active duty, Guard and Reserve force sizes (end strength) to match mission.
- Restore full pay comparability with private sector.
- Upgrade Guard/Reserve personnel, pay and retirement programs to reflect today's missions.
- Protect commissary, dependent schools and other military benefits.
- Authorize payment of BAH-II for Guard and Reserve members activated for 30 days or more.
- Authorize pre-tax payment of childcare expenses.
- Raise relocation reimbursements to cover members' costs for government-directed moves.
- Protect members against travel credit card interest/credit risks for late government payments.
- Tie Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) benefit rates to growth in 4-year public college costs.
- Allow MGIB enrollment for '70s-early '80s entrants who declined VEAP.
- Allow MGIB transferability to family for members who serve full career.
- Provide first \$100,000 SGLI coverage without charge.
- Authorize special additional death gratuity for operations-related deaths.

Other Issues

- Authorize pre-tax payment of health, dental and long-term care premiums.
- Win Congressional approval of Flag anti-desecration amendment.
- Repeal taxability of up to 85% of Social Security annuity.
- Reduce Social Security penalties for certain civil service retirees/survivors.

Happy New Year
from the
LAVA Committee

TUG by Col Lou Torraca, USAF (Retired)



As you no doubt realize, I am writing this in early December for the January 2005 edition. Because of that, I'm still in the "what should I get for Christmas" mindset; so, I started to look at some of the hundreds of "best of" lists and decided I'd do a 10 best list of my own. I'm partly influenced by the fact I will be attending the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas the first week in January (http://www.cesweb.org/about_ces/) so you can expect that I will look at some of these items "in the flesh". Keep in mind, I am not picking based on what I need, or more importantly, what I can afford...just what I think is really neat and would perhaps be nice to have, all other things considered. So, with that introduction, here's my list:

Best luxury LCD-HP L2335

While the Apple Cinema Display is tempting, the HP L2335 is really the luxury LCD of choice. If you're going to go big with an LCD, why not go really big, and not just in size. This 23-inch monster has a bunch of audio and video inputs that will let you hook up a DVD player and watch movies...while working! Its excellent image quality means the movies will even look good. And unlike many large LCDs, this one is highly adjustable.

Best smart phone with keyboard-Handspring Treo 600

It's no wonder that Handspring's Treo 600 was on everyone's lips last year. This jack-of-all-trades smart phone has it all: a QWERTY keyboard, a built-in camera, an expansion slot, a color display, and world-roaming functionality. Globe-trotting execs will quickly see how easy it is to conduct business on the road with just one fairly compact mobile device. Before Handspring was bought by Palm, I had a close-up look at this one's "Momma" during the 2003 APCUG meeting in LV and was totally amazed!

Best flat-panel LCD HDTV-Sharp LC-32GD4U

The year 2004 is the year of the CableCard, and this LCD has it and still manages to be only four inches thin. The LC-32GD4U is a big-bucks set that represents the cutting edge of flat-panel LCD technology and image quality, not to mention a boatload of features and an eye-catching look. All it takes is bucks folks, lots of bucks. {-}

Best USB flash drive-SanDisk Cruzer Titanium

It's the best of the year. The titanium-coated metal casing of the SanDisk Cruzer Titanium not only looks slick, it's exceptionally durable. SanDisk claims this USB flash drive is "virtually indestructible...capable of surviving a force of up to 2,000 pounds." The Cruzer syncs with Outlook, comes preloaded with password protection and backup utilities, and is even competitively priced. For anyone who needs a dependable and secure way to transport data, this is it. I have to admit, because of its sturdy construction, it's better than the one I have.

Best ultraportable hard drive player-Apple iPod Mini

This one is the ONLY one according to my 14 year old Grandson...Apple is known for making top-notch MP3 players, and the iPod Mini continues the company's tradition of fine portable-audio products. Though it can't hold as many tunes as its older siblings, the 4GB iPod Mini boasts notable improvements, including a smaller size, a better scroll wheel, and a cheaper price. (That's the biggest reason Storm likes it!!) And if you're a colorful person, you'll be happy to know that the Mini comes in five different ones.

Best anti-spyware software-Spybot- Search and Destroy

This was a no-brainer for me as I have been a user ever since Jim told us all about it. Spybot - Search & Destroy can detect and remove spyware of different kinds from your computer. Spyware is a relatively new kind of threat that common anti-virus applications are just beginning to cover. If you see new toolbars in your Internet Explorer that you didn't intentionally install, if your browser crashes, or if your browser start page has changed without your knowing, you most probably have spyware. But even if you don't see anything, you may be infected, because more and more spyware is emerging that is silently tracking your surfing behavior to create a marketing profile of you that will be sold. Best of all, Spybot is free.

Best PC line-Falcon Northwest Mach V 3.4 Extreme Edition

This is a pie in the sky one, a 3.4GHz Intel Pentium 4 Extreme Edition CPU that digital media enthusiasts might say needs more inputs, but those are about the only perks absent from Falcon Northwest's Mach V 3.4 Extreme Edition. This monster PC will set you back almost \$5,000, but like I said up top, might not need it and definitely can't afford it, but it's worth it if you can. {-}

Best ultraportable-IBM ThinkPad X40

My Averatec weighs 4 pounds, but it was a present! This one weighs a mere 2.7 pounds in its base configuration, but IBM's new ThinkPad X40 is really well equipped. The X40 is the smallest of any ThinkPad to date, but despite its sleek style, IBM's new ultraportable packs the features and performance of a full-fledged work station. It will, of course, set you back a grand or so, but what the heck.

Best smart phone-PalmOne Treo 650

Another pretty easy pick since I already chose the 600 for best PDA. After all the buzz, PalmOne finally released the long-awaited successor to its Treo 600 the Treo 650. It now boasts Bluetooth, a high-resolution screen, and more multimedia capabilities. And while it's not perfect (no Wi-Fi and low memory), the Treo 650 offers solid performance and is one of best smart phones out there IMHO.

Best semipro digital SLR-Canon EOS 20D

Finally, if I were to go back to a SLR instead of the tiny 3.2 Minolta Dimage Xt I keep in my pocket, this class-leading 8-megapixel, which is really made for serious photographers, would be the one I'd lust after. According to the write-ups, "its sturdy, well-designed body and intuitive control layout make it a pleasure to shoot with, and it's compatible with a broad range of Canon lenses and accessories."

Well that's it for my first of 05. Depending on when you read this, have a super New Years Eve and/or have a fabulous 2005. Come see us at one of our 2 monthly meetings (the first in January is the 15th this month only.) Visit our web page www.the_tug.homestead.com for schedules and driving directions.

Happy Computing, *Lou*

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Membership in Hawaii Chapter

“One Powerful Voice” is the motto of not only National MOAA but with us in the State of Hawaii as well. There is strength in numbers. We would appreciate your joining the Hawaii Chapter for the annual fee of \$15.00. We are active with state legislative and veterans’ affairs, support the college and high school ROTC programs throughout the state, send a monthly newsletter to all members on matters of interest, offer a social program, and have adopted a platoon serving in Iraq. Contact George Montague by phone at 239-4222 or by e-mail at montagueg001@hawaii.rr.com for an application to join the Chapter.

2005 MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

The 2005 Chapter Membership Directory is in preparation. The Advertising rates are the same as last year, ranging from \$125 for an inside ¼ page to \$500 for inside two facing pages. Please e-mail Jack Miller, carita@pixi.com, if you know of anyone that may be interested in placing an Ad. It is good value with a one year shelf life. 15 January 2005 is the due date for ad submission. We plan to do the mail out by 1 February. Please thank last years advertisers for supporting the 2004 Directory as it helps in soliciting new ads.

Last Call for Mardi Gras 11 March 2005

Judith Breitwieser has reserved 50 tickets for the evening dinner performance starting at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, 11 March, at the Pearl Harbor Banyans Club. The tickets are \$50.00 for the front row and \$45.00 for tables in the second thru fourth row. The tickets are going fast so please contact Judith by phone at 262-7953 or e-mail: Hawaiijudith@webtv.net to reserve a seat. Send your checks made out to Hawaii Chapter, MOAA to P.O. Box 1185, Kailua, HI 96734. This is scheduled to be the last Mardi Gras Show directed by Jack Cione, who has directed this Las Vegas style revue for over twenty years.

Hawaii Chapter, MOAA
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Kailua, Hawaii 96734-1185



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ATTENTION:

Chapter Lunch Meeting, Waikiki Yacht Club
Saturday, 22 January, 1130
RESERVATION DEADLINE: 17 January

E-MAIL :
info@moaa-hawaii.org

HAWAII CHAPTER of the MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
New Membership Application and/or Current Member Dues Payment

Name: _____ Male Female
 Last First MI

New Member Application **Currently a Regular Member** **Currently an Auxiliary Member**

New members: Complete next items and Regular or Auxiliary Member section. Enter remittance at bottom.

Current members: Complete any items that have changed and enter your remittance amount at bottom of form.

Address: _____ Email: _____

Date of birth: _____ National MOAA membership No. _____ SSN ____/____/____

Home Phone: _____ Office Phone: _____ Fax _____

Regular Members: Active duty, retired, or former military officers are eligible for regular membership.
Service _____ Rank _____ Active Duty Retired Reserve National Guard Former Officer
Dues: \$15 per year; 5 years for \$60. Life membership: Age 50 and under, \$300; 51-60 \$250; 61-70 \$200;
71-89 \$100; 90 and older is free.

Auxiliary Members: Widows or widowers are eligible for membership whose spouses were regular members or were eligible for regular membership. Rank of spouse: _____ Service of spouse: _____
Dues: \$10 per year; 5 years for \$40; Life membership: Age 50 and under, \$150; 51-60 \$125; 61-70 \$100;
71-89 \$50; 90 and older is free.

If married, spouse's first name: _____ Last name, if different than yours: _____

Indicate interest in any of the following Chapter activities or Committees:

Personal Affairs Legislative Affairs/Veterans Affairs Public Affairs Program/Social Newsletter Membership Finance
ROTC Scholarship & Awards Fund Raising Community Service TUG(Computers) Party Bridge Golf Tennis

Dues Enclosed \$ _____ Optional Donation \$ _____ for Ben Porter Leadership Award, scholarships, USO, etc.

Total Remittance: \$ _____ Make check to Hawaii Chapter MOAA, PO Box 1185, Kailua HI 96734-1185