

HAWAII VETERAN

Lawelawe i nā koa kahiko me ka ha'aheo: "Serving veterans with pride"

Vol. 2 No. 3

State of Hawaii Office of Veterans Services

Fall 1993

veteran news

Training act helps discharged service members

The Service Members Occupation Conversion and Training Act of 1992 provides training programs for service members who are forced to leave military service because of the military drawdown.

Those eligible for the program include: unemployed service members discharged from active duty military service on or after Aug. 2, 1990, who have been unemployed for eight weeks prior to applying for the program; personnel whose primary or secondary occupational specialty in the armed forces is not readily transferable to the civilian work force; and those with a service-connected disability rated at 30 percent or more.

The program will pay businesses to train discharged service members for a period of up to 18 months and employ them in stable and permanent positions. An approved job training program will be required for a training period of less than six months.

Employer payment will equal 50 percent of the starting wages paid to the participant, up to a maximum of \$10,000 or \$12,000 for participants with a service-connected disability rated at 30 percent or more.

(continued on page 6)



Stephen M. Lum

Gov. John Waihee, veterans representatives, and others involved in the planning, design and construction of memorials for veterans of the Korean and Vietnam wars line up to break ground at the State Capitol, July 27.

Ground broken for Korean and Vietnam memorials

By Nancy S. Chappell

A light rain let up just in time for a ground breaking ceremony beginning construction of the State Memorials for Veterans of the Korean and Vietnam Conflicts, July 27.

As the sun broke through the clouds, more than 150 veterans, families and friends gathered on the Ewa lawn of the State Capitol for the long anticipated ceremony.

Master of ceremonies was Larry Lee, director, Office of Veterans Services. Gov. John Waihee provided the keynote address, expressing the hope that the memorials would provide a sanctuary for veterans and "a place where we can come to know the real meaning of patriotism and courage."

The crowd also heard from Maj. Gen.

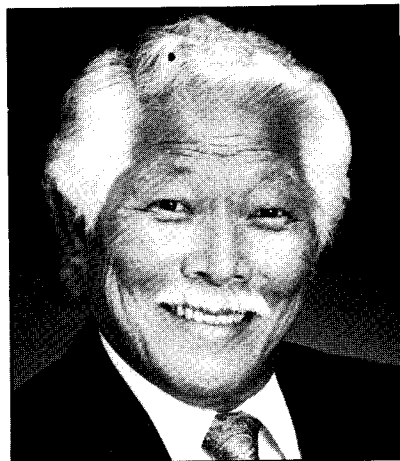
Edward V. Richardson, state adjutant general; Robert P. Takushi, director, Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS); and Kenneth Kupchak, chairman of the Commission on Memorials for Veterans of the Korean and Vietnam Conflicts which was charged with selecting the design for the memorials.

That design was selected in October of 1992 after months of public debate. Created by architect Paul Medley, it consists of two winding walls -- one for each war -- of terraced granite blocks inscribed with the names of those missing or killed in action.

The State Department of Defense, under Richardson, was charged with assisting the Memorials Commission in its design selection process. DAGS, under Takushi, is now responsible for construction of the memorials. *(cont'd on page 5)*

Office of Veterans Services

State of Hawaii Department of Defense



Support increased pensions for medal of honor winners

From the Director

Larry Lee

At the mid-winter conference of the National Association of the State Directors of Veterans Affairs, a resolution was introduced and unanimously approved to ask Congress to increase the pension for Congressional Medal of Honor winners from \$200 to \$500 per month. The directors took this action after it was reported that of the 204 living recipients of our nation's highest award for bravery, 40 were living at or near the poverty level.

These are our comrades, who distinguished themselves conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of their lives above and beyond

the call of duty while members of the Armed Forces. They made a sacrifice to ensure our freedom and independence.

In 1958, the law provided that each Medal of Honor recipient be paid the sum of \$100 per month as a special pension for their services and sacrifices. On Jan. 1, 1978 this amount was increased to \$200, where it has remained since. Congressman Floyd D. Spence of South Carolina and Congressman Michael McNulty of New York introduced H.R. 1796 to raise the pension of these deserving veterans.

I have written to U.S. Representa-

tives Neil Abercrombie and Patsy Mink to ask them to support this legislation and to add their names as co-sponsors of this well-earned and well-deserved token of our nation's appreciation to our heroic comrades.

The President's budget has been passed by both houses of Congress and now the positioning begins. I think that we, as veterans, know full well the meaning of sacrifice and are willing to accept our "fair share" of deficit reduction. We realize that, in order for our nation to regain its place among the world's economic leaders, we must first set our own house in order. We are in a period of relative peace throughout the world; and it appears that there is unity among our citizens to improve our economy. We must work with our nation's leaders to make America the America we fought and sacrificed for; however, we must also work to ensure that veterans' rights and benefits are neither compromised nor diminished in favor of special interests.

It is our duty, as citizens and veterans, to involve ourselves in our government and in everything for which our government stands.

Statewide Skills Conference for Military Families

Saturday, Oct. 2

University of Hawaii at Manoa

Conference Schedule

- 8:00 - 8:30 a.m. Registration/ Check-in
- 9:15 - 10:30 a.m. Workshops
- 12:00 - 1:30 p.m. Lunch Keynote Speaker
Larry Lee
- 1:45 - 4:30 p.m. Afternoon Workshops

Co-sponsoring the conference are the:

- Vietnam Veterans Family Assistance Program (VVFAP)
- Assisting With Appropriate Rights in Education (AWARE)
- University Affiliated Program (UAP)

For more information:

Call the Learning Disabilities Association of Hawaii at:
536-9684

Clerk typists give OVS strength

Although the Office of Veterans Services (OVS) is headquartered in Honolulu, it also has branches on three other Hawaiian islands: Kauai, Maui and the Big Island. Aside from the Veteran Services counselors, three clerk-typists help keep things going.

Terri L. Garcia

is a clerk-typist with the Maui OVS. She is a graduate of St. Anthony High School, in Wailuku. She received her secretarial degree from Maui Community College. Garcia lives in Makawao, Maui, with husband, Bernard, and sons, Eric, 20, and Ryan, 18.

Her hobbies are sewing and reading. She is a member of the Vietnam Veterans of Maui County.

One of Garcia's major accomplishments was organizing a support and educational group for family and friends of Vietnam Vets on Maui, working with the Pacific Center for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.



Garcia

Garcia's boss, Bill Staton, says, "As a counselor, I'm out of the office a lot and Terri has to take care of the people who come into the office."

"She addresses their immediate needs and concerns, gets paperwork started, outlines what I will do for them and reassures them that their decision to come into the office was a good one."

Lyndie T. Michioka is a clerk-typist with the Hawaii OVS. She is married to Robert Michioka. They reside in Hilo, Hawaii.

Michioka is a graduate of Kapiolani Community College, where she received her associate's degree in secretarial science.

She was born and raised in Honokaa and is a graduate of Honokaa High School. She enjoys cooking, fishing, bowling and listening to music.

Michioka has worked at the Hilo OVS for over three years.



Michioka

According to her boss Patrick Pavao, Michioka is a most valuable asset with excellent skills and understanding of OVS's mission.

He says she is very mature, with great sensitivity and a deep sense of dedication to her work and veterans' concerns.

Once she is assigned and accepts responsibility, she is known to strive for excellence in getting the job done, Pavao added.

Jocelyn S. Miyake is a clerk typist with the Lihue, Kauai OVS. Miyake, a native of Kauai, is a graduate of Kauai High School. She is studying to become a paralegal through the School of Paralegal Studies in Atlanta, Ga.



Miyake

Her boss, Manuel Corregedore, says, "Jocelyn has compassion for others, a great sense of humor, and a good rapport with Kauai's veterans and family members."

Miyake enjoys painting and resides in Lihue with her two children, Tiffany, 19, and Tyra, 14.

Trust lands available for VA home loans

Story and photo by Deborah M. S. Murray

The State Office of Hawaiian Home Lands and Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) signed an agreement to allow native Hawaiian veterans to build homes on trust lands using VA home loans, Sept. 1.

The signing of the memorandum of understanding at the State Office of Hawaiian Home Lands officially kicked off the Native American Veterans' Direct Home Loan Program in Hawaii.

"We are ready to go to work," said Hoaliku L. Drake, chairman of the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

By participating in the program, Hawaiian Home Lands is the first organization in the nation to allow veterans to build VA-funded homes on trust lands, according to Keith Pedigo, director of DVA's loan guaranty service.

Over 500 native American organiza-



tions are eligible to participate in the program, stressed Pedigo, who represented DVA Secretary Jesse Brown in the ceremony.

U.S. Sen. Daniel Akaka introduced the legislation passed by Congress in October. Akaka said he sponsored the bill after learning that a native American had never received a VA loan to build a home on trust lands or on a reservation.

"It was to me a clear injustice,"

Keith Pedigo, DVA, and Hoaliku L. Drake, Hawaiian Homes Commission (HHC) chairman, sign an agreement kicking off the new loan program. Looking on are U.S. Sen. Daniel Akaka, U.S. Rep. Patsy Mink, and HHC members.

Akaka said.

During the 49 years that the VA loan program has been in existence, 13 million other veterans have received loans totalling \$350 billion.

Currently, the program is generating "tremendous response," according to Drake. The DVA estimated that 2,000 native Hawaiian veterans are qualified to participate in the program.

Anyone interested in participating should call the DVA at 541-1000.

WW II "secret weapon" looks back 50 years

Story and photos by Gaye Sakamoto

Few people know of the secret elite group of World War II soldiers who helped our country win the war against Japan two years earlier than expected.

These soldiers, mostly nisei (second generation Japanese-Americans), perfected the Japanese learned from their childhood days in Hawaii or on the mainland to become part of the Military Intelligence Service (MIS).

The "secret weapon" of the World War II Allies, MIS soldiers served in key roles as Japanese interpreters, translators, and intelligence specialists.

Fifty years later, on July 10, 1993, these soldiers gathered at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl) to commemorate their service during World War II.

The ceremony concluded the MIS 50th Anniversary Reunion, July 7-10.



(From left) Edna Fujiwara and Gladys Miyamoto present a wreath during the M.I.S. Veterans 50th Reunion Memorial Service. The ceremony was held July 10 at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl.)



(From left) Robert Honke, James Saito, George Takabayashi, Hakobu Kumagai, Iwao Yokooji, Kiyoshi Sasaki and Satoru Ochi of the MIS Veterans of Hawaii receive, on behalf of all MIS veterans, a congratulatory proclamation from Mayor Frank Fasi at the Honolulu Hale, July 2.

More than 600 veterans from Hawaii and the mainland attended the reunion, which included banquet dinners, golf and tea house parties.

Kenichi Watanabe, master of ceremonies at the Punchbowl ceremony, said, "They may not be as glamorous as the 442nd, but they were just as important to winning the war."

The first class of 40 soldiers graduated from the Military Intelligence Service Language School (MISLS) at the Presidio in San Francisco in May of 1942. These graduates were the first nisei to enter combat during World War II, preceding the Japanese-American soldiers of the 100th Battalion by almost a year.

By 1945, more than 6,000 graduates (about half from Hawaii) had graduated from the MISLS. Proving themselves indispensable in the war against Japan, MIS soldiers were eventually assigned to all branches of the U.S. armed forces as well as to combat units from Britain, Australia, Canada, China, India and New Zealand.

MIS soldiers performed countless heroic deeds in battles throughout the Pacific, but because of the secrecy of

their missions, few were recorded.

One great feat was the translation of the Japanese "Z" Plan which fell into Allied hands, March 31, 1944. This document contained Japan's strategy for an all-out counterattack in the Central Pacific and became the most significant enemy document seized during the Pacific War. With this information, American forces scored an overwhelming victory dubbed "The Great Marianas Turkey Shoot." In October 1944, U.S. troops also won the Battle of Leyte Gulf aided by the knowledge gained from the "Z" Plan.

When U.S. forces invaded Saipan, more than 30,000 Japanese hid in mountain caves. MIS veteran Hoichi Kubo entered one such cave, laid down his .45 pistol, shared his K-rations with hungry Japanese soldiers and talked them into surrendering. In the process, he also saved 100 civilian women and children and earned the Distinguished Service Cross.

General Douglas MacArthur praised the MIS by saying, "Never in military history did an Army know so much about the enemy prior to active engagement."

Medal presentation will honor WWI vets

Story and photos by Deborah M. S. Murray

Many who fought with honor and valor in World War I are gone. However, a handful, like Russell W. Voorhees, 95, Leoncio Balan, 94, and Joseph I. Bishop, 93, are still around to tell their stories.

In honor of these men and between 30,000 and 40,000 other living WWI veterans, the Chicago-based McCormick Tribune Company is gearing up to present the veterans with a special medal.

The medal was designed by the U.S. Army Institute of Heraldry. The first medals were presented at a ceremony in Chicago, in August, during the annual convention of the Veterans of World War I. Locally, medals will be presented Nov. 11, in conjunction with the 75th anniversary of the armistice that ended World War I.

"I think it's great to be recognized," says Voorhees, who lives in Hawaii with his wife of 70 years, Amy. Voorhees served in the U.S. Army from 1917 to 1923, completing stints with the medical corps, cavalry and as a quartermaster.

When Balan enlisted in the Army in 1918, he was a grunt in the 1st Infantry. He got out in 1919 and, later, re-enlisted in the Navy partly because he was guaranteed hot meals and a warm bed.

"In the Army you sleep on the ground, and in the Navy you sleep in the bunk. You get a place to sleep and you do not eat the rations. You eat hot food."

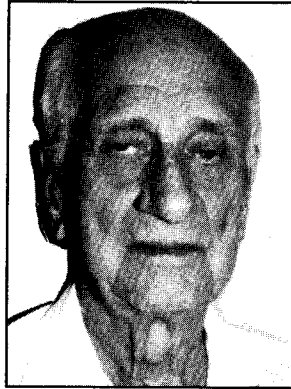
Balan's statement prompted laughter from Voorhees, who added, "At Fort Shafter one of the soldiers was complaining that there were ants in the sugar. The mess sergeant said, that's your meat ration."

Reminiscing, Voorhees said that back in the early 1900s, life in the military was difficult.

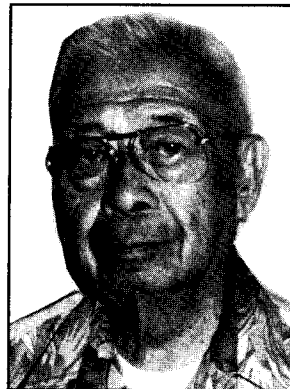
"I was lucky I got two meals a day. I worked all the time I was in the service. Even when I was over here (Hawaii), I worked seven days a week. I never got a pass, never got a furlough."

But he took the hard times in stride. "I just figured it was life, that's all."

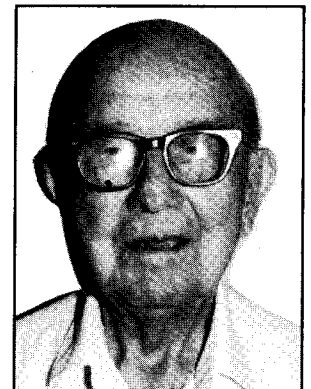
Bishop enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in 1918. He served dur-



Voorhees



Balan



Bishop

ing the war as a member of the 13th Regiment.

Despite having never been in combat, he did survive an attack of the infamous Spanish Influenza, an epidemic that broke out while he was on a three-day float from New York to France.

Some of the infected men died. Bishop was taken off the ship on a stretcher to

recuperate and recovered fully.

In reference to the medal he is expected to receive in November, Bishop, who also served in the Army as an officer from 1941 to 1946 says, "I received a good conduct medal when I got out of the Marine Corps in 1919. I think that would have been sufficient. This is something to feel good about!"

Memorials -- continued from page 1

Before the ground breaking took place, Rev. William Kaina, pastor of Kawaiahao Church, blessed the memorial site.

Using gold-painted shovels provided by contractor Ralph Inouye Co. Ltd., ground-breakers included Lee; Waihee; Richardson; Takushi; Kupchak; Medley; Lester Higa, former chairman of the Memorials Commission; Michael J. Leineweber, chairman, Memorials Review Board; Judith Worobe, member, Advisory Board on Veterans Services; Elynore Hambleton, mother of Staff Sgt. Mark Hambleton who was killed in Vietnam; and Ralph Inouye.

The Memorials Commission is now seeking memorabilia such as letters, photographs, journal entries and news articles for inclusion in a time capsule that will be placed between the memorials in the near future. To offer suggestions or for more information, contact the Office of Veterans Services, 587-3000.



Stephen M. Lum

Vietnam veteran Larry "Joe" Burress salutes the flag during ground breaking for the State Memorials to Veterans of the Korean and Vietnam Conflicts, at the State Capitol, July 27.

Q&A :**Department of Veterans Affairs**

Q - My father was exposed to radiation while on active duty in the early 1950s and later died of leukemia. Is my mother entitled to any DVA benefits?

A - Possibly. If your father developed the disease within 40 years from his discharge, exposure to radiation during military service is confirmed, and the disease is determined to be service-connected by the DVA, your mother would be entitled to dependency and indemnity compensation.

Q - Is the DVA claim number the same as a veteran's social security number?

A - A veteran who filed an initial benefit claim before 1974 will have a DVA claim number. A veteran who filed after 1974 generally will be identified by his or her social security number.

Q - When may a military veteran draw a pension from the Department of Veterans Affairs?

A - Only veterans with at least 90 days active duty, at least one day which was during a period of war, and who were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable may be considered for a DVA pension. Eligible veterans must be permanently and totally disabled and meet established income requirements. Disabilities do not have to be service-related.

For more information, contact any DVA office. In Honolulu, call 541-1000 or 1 (800) 827-1000 or write: VA Medical and Regional Office, P.O. Box 50188, Honolulu, HI 96850.

vet news -- continued from page 1

For details, applications and assistance, contact the State Employment Service (Job Service) office nearest you. DVA assistance may be obtained on Oahu by calling (808) 541-1000.

DVA to survey veterans

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) plans to conduct a national veterans survey to obtain data on the veteran population and their use of DVA benefits.

The information will assist the DVA in planning for veterans' health care needs and changes in the medical system. The data will also allow DVA to follow changing trends in the veteran population, make comparisons between veterans who use DVA programs and those who do not, and provide a current data resource for continuing analysis.

The survey will involve a random telephone and DVA file sample of 10,600 veterans. Participation is voluntary, and confidentiality will be strictly maintained.

Association seeks underage veterans

Veterans of Underage Military Service, a national veterans association, is seeking veterans who falsified their age and served in the U.S. military at the age of 16 or younger.

The association prints a national newsletter and keeps track of underage veterans. The association is planning a reunion for April 1994 in Nashville, Tenn.

A free handbook on government policy on underage veterans will be sent on request. For more information, write Allan Stover, commander, Veterans of Underage Military Service, 3444 Walker Dr., Ellicott City, Md. 21042.

Akaka bill would extend veterans burial benefits to career Guard and Reserve personnel

U.S. Senator Daniel K. Akaka has introduced legislation to extend eligibility for burial in national cemeteries to career members of the National Guard and Reserves who have served at least 20 years and qualify for retirement pay.

Under current law, any honorably discharged active duty member of the armed services who serves at least 24 months of continuous active duty service is eligible for

veteran status. Most Guard and Reserve members have never met the two-year continuous duty requirement. However, after twenty or more years of service, the average reservist has over 4-1/2 years of accumulated active duty.

"I do believe that providing for our career Guard and Reserve veterans to be laid to rest with honor, dignity and the recognition of the country they served is worth at least as much," said Akaka.

President Clinton provides anniversary and birthday greetings for elderly veterans

Veterans aged 80 and older can receive a presidential birthday greeting from President Bill Clinton. Greetings are also available for veterans and their spouses who are celebrating 50 or more years of marriage.

Requests for birthday greetings should be sent to the Office of Veterans Services, 733 Bishop Street, Suite 1270, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813, ATTN: Presidential Greeting.

The letter should have the veteran's name and address, where the greeting should be sent, date of birth, and age on that birthday. For anniversaries, include the name of the veteran and spouse, anniversary date and the number of years the couple will be married on that date.

Send requests to the OVS at least three months in advance.

WWII committee seeks historical items from 298th, 299th

If you were a part of the 298th or 299th Infantry, Hawaii National Guard, activated during WWII, the Hawaii National Guard WWII Commemorative Committee is seeking information and memorabilia for an educational display. If you have any uniform articles, photographs, letters or any other items of interest, please contact the State Department of Defense Public Affairs Office at 732-1711.

Vietnam Veterans 'moving' memorial displayed on Maui and Molokai

Story and photos by Gaye S. Sakamoto

In an emotional dedication ceremony, the "moving wall," a replica of the Vietnam Veterans memorial in Washington, D.C., was opened to the public for a week's display at the Wailuku War Memorial Complex in Maui, July 31. Sponsored by the Vietnam Veterans of Maui County, the memorial brought veterans, families and friends throughout the state together to remember the American men and women who went to Vietnam and never came back.

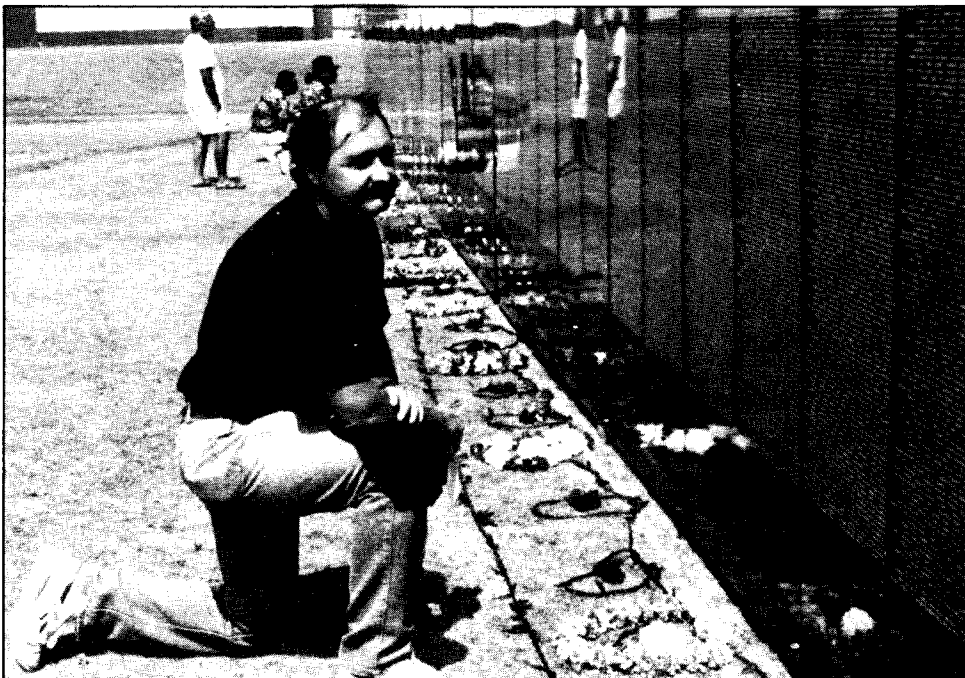
People approaching the memorial were struck by the thousands of names etched on black granite stretched across a seemingly endless wall. They drew closer to the wall to search for a name from the past, to touch it and remember the person behind the name who gave the greatest sacrifice a person can give to his or her country.

Although a small copy of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C., the wall loses none of its meaning and still brings forth the emotion and tears buried in people's souls. More than 58,100 names are listed on the memorial, and 1,300 crosses are etched next to the names of those who are still missing in action.

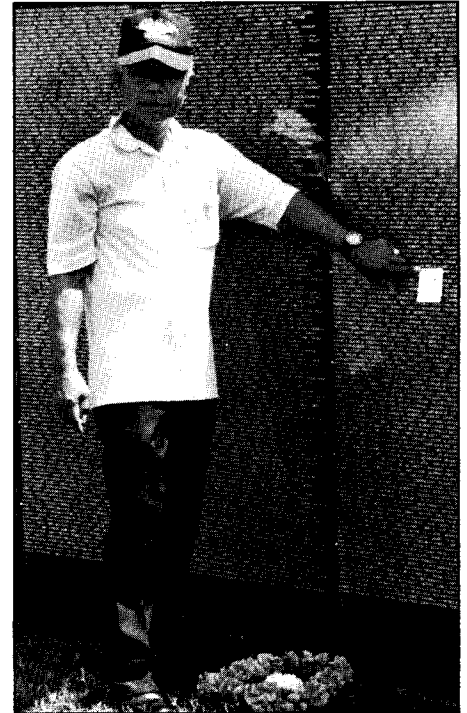
Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Sammy Davis, who was the keynote speaker, summed up the importance of the memorial best by saying, "This is the wall to break down all walls, a wall of healing. It is a bridge from those who came back to those who died or were left behind. This is as close as we can come to saying thank you face to face. Here tears fall finally and bitterness begins to wash away."

The wall reached Molokai, Aug. 9th. Approximately 100 people attended an opening ceremony, Aug. 12th, according to Bill Staton, Maui's Veterans Services Counselor.

"We had a very good showing here," he said.



Steve Chandler looks for familiar names of friends and relatives who were lost in the war.



Rick Tumacder, a Kauai OVS volunteer, identifies one of Kauai's lost veterans. Tumacder is a veteran of both the Korean and Vietnam wars.



(Left to right) Antonia Paresa, Gary Koga and Charles Arakaki salute before placing a floral tribute at the wall during the opening ceremony on Maui, July 31.

calendar/notices

September 17-18

4th annual Old Soldiers reunion -- Kilauea Military Camp, Hawaii. Contact: Noble Kila, (Hilo) 967-8333 or Manuel P. Cabral, (Oahu) 488-7126.

September 22-26

VPB-117 (WWII) reunion--New Orleans, La. Contact: William A. Swink, 87128 Golf Club Dr., Diamondhead, Miss. 39525, (601) 255-3738.

USS John W. Weeks reunion, Baton Rouge, La. Contact: Hal Gross, 14220 Isla Flores Ave., Fort Pierce, Fla. 34951-4344, (407) 467-0130.

USS McDougal reunion--Hyannis, Mass. Contact: Harold M. Chace, 108 Huckleberry Ln., Marstons Mills, Mass. 02648, (508) 428-6586.

September 29- October 3

PB4Y All Squadron reunion--San Diego, Calif. Contact: Ron R. Sathre CPP, 31262 San Andreas Dr., Union City, Calif., (415) 471-7727.

October 5-10

USS Concord (1923-45) reunion--San Diego, Calif., Contact: Joseph Wiedower, 9250 Sinsonte Ln., Lakeside, Calif. 92040, (619)390-9046.

October 11

Discoverers Day -- federal holiday only.

October 19

China-Burma-India Veterans Association Aloha Basha luncheon meeting, China House Restaurant, at 11:45 a.m. Contact: Ernest Hourigan, 734-0964.

October 22

Military Retiree Golf Tournament--Leilehua Army Golf Course. For more information, call 449-9896.

October 28-29

1993 annual conference of the Alzheimer's Association Honolulu Chapter, at the Kakaako Room, Ward Warehouse. For more information call (808) 521-3771.

November 11

Veterans Day -- state and federal holiday.

November 25

Thanksgiving -- state and federal holiday.

If you want to list an event for veterans or veterans organizations in the *Hawaii Veteran*, please forward the information to the State Department of Defense Public Affairs Office, 734-8527 (fax), or call 732-1711. The submission deadline for the Winter (Dec. 15) issue is Nov. 23.



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