

kukailimoku



154TH WING
HISTORY OFFICE
FILE # 29889

154TH FIGHTER GROUP (AD)-HAWAII AIR NATIONAL GUARD-HICKAM AFB 21 AUG 66

GUARDSMEN DONATE BLOOD

Scores of Hawaii Air Guardsmen stoically rolled up their sleeves; and in a symbolic gesture of support to their fellow Americans in Viet Nam, gave their blood in generous quantities on Friday and Saturday.

It was the local chapter to a story being told around the United States this month in a drive called "Blood for Defense". The project, jointly sponsored by the National Guard Association and the American Red Cross, is to collect 250,000 pints of blood in support of the war effort in the Republic of Viet Nam. It is the single largest drive for blood in U.S. history--a country involved in its third major conflict since the early 1940s.

Judging by the local turnout the national drive may indeed be a success.

Airmen started lining up early after the morning formation, and were still crowded in the halls next to the field maintenance office when the closing formation began at 4 PM. COL Ashford set the pace. He was the first to donate; but, as he jokingly declared, "I get out of the formation a little before everyone else."

The Colonel was quickly followed by men from headquarters, PO, and other units. In the afternoon heavy numbers of men came in from CAMRON shops, and CSS Organizations, and Supply.

By the end of the day 154 men

had registered to donate, though a high rejection rate both inside the makeshift hospital room and in the waiting line, reduced the final day's total to 85 pints--still a tremendous offering. Thirty seven men were turned away outside for lack of sleep, tatoos, colds, sore throats or high temperatures, while inside rapid pulse or falling blood pressure knocked out another 27 prospective givers.

A staff of six registered nurses and three assistants, and one doctor moved quickly through the pool room which had been converted to an eight bed receiving room by volunteers from CBPO, administering to the prone airmen.

Some men, like ALC Roy Tamashiro, fortified themselves with coffee and doughnuts served by Nurse, Mrs. Olivia Park, before facing the needle. Others waited until it was all over and relaxed with a beer or coffee in the field maintenance office.

Friday, ninety nine air technicians volunteered to give their blood and only seven were rejected because of health reasons, bringing the two day total to 177 pints.

MAJ James Lots, chairman of the HANG drive, gave his sincerest Aloha and Mahalo to Guardsmen, and technicians who donated and to the staff of the Hawaii Blood Bank. He was very pleased and noted that everyone involved had "done an excellent job."

A skeleton crew at the regular office did business as usual, while the majority of the medical technicians worked strenuously to handle the influx at the hangar.