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WWII VETS IN ISLANDS ARE PRAISED FOR SERVICE

Two from the 442nd and one from the 492nd will receive France's Legion of Honor medal

By Gregg K. Kakesako
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Three World War II veterans, two of whom served with the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, say they are honored that the French government is giving them its highest medal for helping to liberate the country but add that the decoration also belongs to all soldiers who fought and died there.

"It's an honor, but this medal belongs to all the soldiers," said John Anusewicz, 91, who was a sergeant when he arrived in France with the 492nd Fighter Squadron five days after the Normandy invasion to assist in setting up one of the first airfields for the P-47 Thunderbolt fighter.

"I got goosebumps," said Anusewicz, who moved to Hawaii three years ago and lives in Kaimuki. Anusewicz was discharged after fighting in Europe for nearly three years,

Please see MEDAL, A9



BRUCE ASATO / BASATO@STARADVERTISER.COM

Above, Henry Ishida, 94, a veteran of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, displays the Congressional Gold Medal awarded to members of his unit, along with patches from a variety of military units. At left, John Anusewicz, a P-47 crew chief in World War II, holds a model of a P-47 Thunderbolt. Both Ishida and Anusewicz will receive the French Legion of Honor medal Saturday from the French government.



CRAIG T. KOJIMA / CKOJIMA@STARADVERTISER.COM

U.S. wants to extend preclearance to Narita

The move would allow for direct flights to neighbor islands

Star-Advertiser staff

The Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Customs and Border Protection unit said Friday it wants to expand its preclearance program to Japan's Narita International Airport, which would allow visitors from Japan to clear customs and immigration before getting on the plane.

Preclearance would allow

visitors arriving from Tokyo's Narita airport to spend less time in Honolulu Airport upon arrival, and airlines would be able to fly direct from Narita to neighbor islands. This would help tourism officials in their bid to restore a direct flight from Japan to the Kona airport on Hawaii island, which has no nonstop flights to Japan.

"Preclearance would allow for direct travel from Narita to the neighbor islands without having to

Please see NARITA, A8



Easing access will encourage travel to the neighbor islands and repeat visits to our beautiful state."

David Ige
Governor,
on Homeland Security's decision to expand preclearance program to the Narita airport

NARITA PRECLEARANCE

- >> Travelers can clear U.S. customs and immigration at the Narita airport
- >> Saves time upon arrival and allows for direct flights to neighbor islands
- >> Japanese visitors to Hawaii in 2014: 1.5 million
- >> Percentage of all visitors to the state: 18
- >> Spent in Hawaii: \$2.5 billion

Source: Hawaii Tourism Authority

MONEY



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LOCAL

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MEDAL: Honored veterans remember old friends

Continued from A1

including supporting ground operations during the Battle of the Bulge.

Attorney Pat Lee, honorary French consul in Honolulu, said three soldiers — Anusewicz and the 442nd RCT's Henry Ishida of Aina Haina and Sueo "Sam" Fujii of Nuuanu — will be presented with France's Legion of Honor medal and bestowed with the rank of knight Saturday morning at a ceremony at 15 Craigside retirement home.

Lee said the medal also was approved for another 442nd RCT veteran, Fusetsu Miyazaki, of Elelee, Kauai, who died in February at the age of 100. The French government has been unable to reach Miyazaki's family.

Lee said guest speakers at Saturday's ceremony will be Lt. Col. Dan Austin, the former commander of the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry Regiment — the Army Reserve unit at Fort Shafter that still maintains the colors of the World War II unit; French author, historian and resident of Bruyeres Pierre Moulin; and attorney Steven Edlestein, who has helped other veterans receive the award.

The medals will be presented to the soldiers by Guillaume Maman, who is replacing Lee, the honorary counsel during the past 18 years.

The two other veterans took no credit for themselves during interviews Fri-

76 soldiers from 2 WWII units have earned Legion of Honor

Star-Advertiser staff

The Legion of Honor was created in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte. The award is France's highest honor and consists of five classes.

In descending order of distinction, they are grand cross, grand officer, commander, officer and chevalier. The order is conferred upon men and women, either French citizens or foreigners, for outstanding achievements in military or civilian life.

Since 2004, when 442nd veteran and Medal of Honor recipient Barney Hajiro was bestowed the rank of chevalier, or knight, 76 members of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the 100th Infantry Battalion have received the medal and rank for participating in the liberation of France.

Among the Hawaii veterans to receive the award was the late U.S. Sen. Daniel Inouye, who also was a recipient of the Medal of Honor for his service with the 442nd in France and Italy, where he lost his right arm in combat. Inouye received the Legion of Honor from French President Nicolas Sarkozy in 2011.

To qualify to be decorated as knights of the Legion of Honor, American veterans must have fought in one of the four main campaigns of the liberation of France: Normandy, Provence, Ardennes or Northern France.

day at the Nuuanu condo.

Ishida, a member of the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion of the 442nd RCT from 1941 to 1945, said he doesn't think he did anything to deserve it. But he's touched that someone would remember what happened so long ago.

Ishida, 94, said he's accepting the medal in memory of his friends.

His family said Ishida was especially close to another member of the 522nd, Minoru Hirozawa, who introduced Ishida to his sister, Doris. The couple were married for 65 years. Doris Ishida died in 2014.

Ishida, who graduated from Waiialua High School in 1939, was among the soldiers who were given the title of "honorary Texan" for being a member of the 442nd RCT, which rescued Texas' 36th Infantry Division, also known as the "Lost Battalion," following

the liberation of Biffontaine.

Ishida's unit also freed Jewish prisoners at the Dachau concentration camp.

Fujii, a combat medic with the 442nd's 3rd Battalion, said he is thankful to the French government, which initiated the award.

"The medal is not only for me you know; it's for all the people who backed us even during the war, after the war, and even today," said Fujii, 90, who served in the 442nd RCT from 1943 to 1946.

Fujii was captured by the Germans in 1944 after the battle to liberate the town of Bruyeres and spent six months as a prisoner of war. He volunteered to fight in 1943 after graduating from Kauai High School.

He still recalls that even today, "People in Bruyeres don't forget all the good things the 442nd did for them."

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