

ROKSA Rocks the 1st Half of 2005

Members of the Republic of Korea Samoa Association (ROKSA) have been steadily keeping busy with community events, fundraising events, and sporting events in a continuing effort to satisfy ROKSA set goals. Originating from ROKSA mission statements, these goals serve as a road map to guide and direct how the organization will operate during the year.

The month of February catapulted ROKSA into 2005 by hosting two fundraising events and a farewell luncheon for Dean Fuimaono and family as they recently departed for their new duty assignment, Ft. Irwin, California.

The Valentine's Day Candy Lei Campaign and ROKSA's 1st Annual Membership Drive were successful fundraising events. The Valentine's Day Candy Lei Campaign proved to be a success because of the colorful, eye-catching candy leis strung together by ROKSA ladies. Keeping in line with the holiday theme, chocolates and heart-shaped candies were used to make these leis of "love." Selling at \$3.00 a piece, approximately 100 leis were quickly sold by early afternoon.

ROKSA's Membership Chairman, MAJ Tauapai Laupola, decided to plan a family bowling fun theme for the 1st membership drive. The purpose of the membership drive was two-fold: (1) Increase ROKSA membership and (2) fellowship with new Samoan service members recently assigned to the ROK. To ensure a successful event, ROKSA along with the assistance of three other sponsors were able to cover all related costs to include food and drinks as well as provide raffle prizes.

The fun and excitement did not stop at Yongsan Lanes. The group moved to CSM Nua's home for an evening of continued comradeship. ROKSA's belief in providing a "home away from home" rang true as ROKSA members sprung into action to provide lodging and meals for service members residing outside of the Seoul area. A previous email from Laupola to ROKSA members reinforces our collective belief: *I can't sign-off without saying thanks to the Nua's for the use of your house as a "patrol base" for our brothers and sisters from out-of-town. Again, the pouring of hospitality shown through out this weekend has reaffirmed my belief in our "Samoan culture"; "Family is our insurance" Fa'afetai Tui and Luse for cooking and providing the food and drinks for Saturday night; the Amosa's for the "puligi and pagi popo, Mr. Tuli for housing some of our soldiers and the Bruce's for Sunday breakfast. Thanks to you, it has worked for all of us. "One heart, one soul"*

ROKSA wishes to extend its heartfelt appreciation to Mr. Tony Hall, AAFES Car Sales; Mr. Dan Melton, Area II Business Manager; and Mr. Robert Victorine, Yongsan Lanes Manager for their contributions to the event. At the conclusion of the event, ROKSA successfully signed up over 40 new members.

ROKSA didn't stop in February, they continued with more activities in March. The month of March welcomed in another order of ROKSA T-shirts, a newly designed ROKSA coin, participation in the Walk of Fallen Heroes, the Easter Program and continued planning discussions for April and May events.

Tumau Alefosio and Iakopo Samuelu, Jr manages ROKSA's T-shirt inventory. Ms. Alefosio is the creator of ROKSA's unique logo which is proudly being displayed on the recently designed ROKSA coin. The coin is a rounded-corner rectangle slightly larger than dog tags with designs on both sides. On one side, a tapa design lays the backdrop for the outline of the Korean peninsula which encases the South Korean flag. Just below it, the following text reads "Ia tafe toto ou ala, ia pouliuli lou tino ma ia malamalama ou mata." The other side of the coin contains the ROKSA logo. Credits go to CSM Nua, MAJ Laupola and Ms. Easter Vaueli for the final coin design. According to Nua and Laupola, the coins will be presented to ROKSA members departing Korea.

ROKSA members participated in the Walk of Fallen Heroes sponsored by Seoul American High School. The purpose of this event was to raise scholarship money for children of U.S. casualties from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. Because Samoa lost 4 sons and 1 daughter to the war, ROKSA chose to pledge money and participate in the 5 mile walk routed through out Main and South Post of Yongsan Army Garrison. According to SSG Florence S. Amosa (Tomasi) of Fagasa, *"We came out to support this walk because of our good friend SGT Tina S. Time, killed 13 December 05 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom."*

ROKSA is blessed to have as part of our Samoan community in Korea, strong spiritual leaders SFC and SSG Amosa, otherwise known as Leafe and Florence, respectively. Originally intended to be in Germany, the Amosa's orders were rerouted to Korea. In a previous email, Florence shares "We knew that God was going to use us mightily in Korea to move but I didn't think it would be to the Samoan community."

The Amosa's jumped in with both feet in March by planning an Easter program for the month of April. The Easter program consisted of skits, singing and basically having good old-fashion church. Following the service, attendees enjoyed a smorgasbord of Samoan dishes. During the to'ona'i departing ROKSA members were recognized and presented certificates of

appreciation and a ROKSA coin. The Amosa's bring a vital aspect to the ROKSA community – a reminder of God's role in our daily lives. As Samoans, we are reminded of a familiar one-liner "Samoa Muamua Le Atua."

Also during the month of April, ROKSA held its first golf tournament of which MAJ Laupola has recently published an article. Planning and discussions will continue to take place in April for the annual Aganu'u Samoa celebration in support of Asia-Pacific month of May.

The upcoming summer months will be a major rotation period. As soldiers rotate out of Korea, we hope to receive and welcome new Samoan service members. ROKSA's primary mission statement states *to provide Samoan service members transition support to ease relocation anxieties*; translated another way ROKSA is humbled and proud to provide Samoan service members and their families a *home away from home*.

Photo: Walk of Fallen Heroes



Pictured from left to right (kneeling): Poasa Masaniai, Jr., Siaipili Pousoo, Jr., Florence Amosa with son Lincoln and daughter Leata. (standing): Alo Tau Hugo, Ruta Yandall, Fatima Sua, Anita Nua, CSM Nua, Fatu Hugo, Jr., Iakopo Samuelu, Leafe Amosa, Safune Gibbons and sister Sheriah Taua.