



OV Family Tradition: Gifts & A Christmas Display Extravaganza

For almost two decades Kaida Houvener continues to build his Christmas wonderland, presents Ocean View keiki with gifts from Santa and keeps the lights on the displays night after night at the corner of Lehua and Palm. His creation is lit up every eve as long as it's not raining. Houvener's daytime work is managing South Point U-Cart, and he saves all year to buy gifts for the children.

On Dec. 24, Christmas Eve, Houvener and his family will offer gifts from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. This is his 19th year

OV Display, pg. 11

THE KA'Ū CALENDAR

Volume 21, Number 12

The Good News of Ka'ū, Hawai'i

December 2023

Ocean View Cell Tower: Community Benefit or Risk?

Locating a 150-foot cell tower among Ocean View homes has drawn strong opposition from nearby residents and a petition signed by more than 70 community members.

However, Lou Daniele, who represents Ocean View to Honoka'a on the Windward Planning Commission, said he plans to vote yes and supports the proposed cell tower because "it will fill in the gaps where there is no cell service to homes and other facilities in some parts of Ocean View and along Hwy 11. It's also important for emergencies, he said. He is one of the homeowners in Ocean View without cell service.

Daniele said he views the cell tower as a betterment for the community and that it is far enough from Kahuku County Parks not to be a worry for the health of children and other community members. He said he read that any emissions would only be from the top of the cell tower and go out a very short distance. He also said he didn't believe the cell tower would reduce property values, given some of the homelessness and conditions in the surrounding neighborhood that, in his view, are already impacting values.

The proposal will be considered by County of Hawai'i Planning Commission at its Thursday, Dec. 7 meeting in Hilo. Renegade Towers, LLC, based in Oakland, is applying for a Special Permit or Use Permit to construct the tower on a one-acre lot at 92-8627 Paradise Circle, close to the county-owned Kahuku Park, St. Jude's Church and many homes.

According to County records, Renegade Towers purchased the one-acre lot in 2021. The community petition states that the tower "will be a commercial use that is inappropriate for a rural neighborhood, and will have a negative impact on our community, culture, roadway, property values and quality of life.

"The proposed location for this facility is within 500 feet of a newly updated community park and proposed skate park. A neighborhood church is also within sight.

Cell Tower, pg. 11



This nēnē family has drawn protection through closing areas where they are nesting at Uēkahuna in Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park.

NPA Photo by Janice Wei

Holiday Nēnē Geese Protected at Uēkahuna

Once a delicacy at Volcano House restaurant, nēnē geese are rare and Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park is giving them added protection by closing off areas where they are nesting. In late November, HVNP blocked part of the parking lot at Uēkahuna and a short stretch of Crater Rim Trail east to protect a pair of breeding nēnē – the state bird and endemic Hawaiian goose. Uēkahuna overlook remains open but should biologists determine the nēnē pair requires more protection, additional areas could close

with little notice.

"The temporary closure prevents human activity from disrupting the nēnē family and is an important action we take to help them survive and raise their young," said Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park Wildlife Biologist, Dr. Kristina Paxton. "Nēnē face many challenges, including predation by feral cats and mongoose and deadly contact with vehicles."

Nēnē typically mate for life. Female nēnē lay between two and five eggs and will incubate them while the male guards

the family. Incubation takes about 30 days, but re-nesting could occur if eggs are destroyed or abandoned.

Nēnē nesting season is October through May, and many geese are seen on or near roadways throughout the park, making them especially vulnerable to deadly vehicle strikes this time of year. Visitors can help protect nēnē by slowing down, watching for nēnē near roads, and never, ever feeding nēnē.

Keep wildlife wild and give nēnē space

Holiday Nēnē, pg. 11

Dr. Kimo Alameda Launches Campaign for Mayor

Dr. Kimo Alameda's run for Mayor of Hawai'i County brings him to Ka'ū on Saturday, Dec. 30, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Nā'ālehu Community Center & Park. He said it will be a fun day that will allow him to be up close with Ka'ū people to see deeper into their dreams and listen to their issues.

Alameda is known in Ka'ū for his leadership of the Bay Clinic, which merged with Hawai'i Community Health Center last year, and for his



Dr. Kimo Alameda

time with the County Office of Aging, where he ran many of the services for seniors. More recently, he led anti-fentanyl campaigns, including distributing the antidote Narcan. Alameda said his visits around the island for the anti-addiction cause solidified his decision to run for mayor on the Democratic ticket. Alameda also served as late

Mayor Billy Kenoi's Campaign Manager but said he didn't think he would ever run till he "saw the need."

As he was going around the island, he said, he often heard about the crisis in affordable housing, the workforce crisis and geographic inequality, which he described as people in rural areas receiving less service from the county than in Hilo and Kona. He said he left employment with Hawai'i Community Health Center to campaign full-time. Alameda noted that he has been working for community service organizations for over 30 years.

Alameda said he is very happy with his role in the merger between Bay Clinic

Alameda Candidacy, pg. 7

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P2 Business * P3 Pāhala * P5 Sports Report * P6-7 School & Youth * P8-9 Community Calendar * P10 Nā'ālehu * P11 Kahuku to Miloli'i * P12 Energy & Sustainability * P13 Health * P14 Volcano

Ka'ū Coffee Growers to Launch First Live Fest Since Pandemic

The live Ka'ū Coffee Festival is coming back. It's been virtual only, since the pandemic began but Ka'ū Coffee Growers Cooperative has named the dates June 1-8 and its chair Gloria Camba. Ka'ū Coffee Growers are building a week-long schedule of activities leading up to the full-day Ho'olaule'a on the grounds of Pāhala Community Center. The Festival was first launched in 2009. Here are the committee leaders who welcome more volunteers to work on the festival.

FESTIVAL CHAIR: Gloria Camba is an award-winning R&G Farms Ka'ū Coffee grower and long time President of Ka'ū Coffee Growers Cooperative. She played an instrumental role in Ka'ū Coffee growers becoming owners of their lands, working with state Department of Agriculture and other federal and state agencies. Camba served as Cooperative Treasurer from 2003-2011 and became President

in 2011. She was pageant Chair for Miss Ka'ū Coffee from 2011-2015, providing many scholarships for young Ka'ū women.

She co-chaired the Ka'ū Coffee Recipe Contest in 2012. She is a liaison with the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture & Human Resources to help farmers manage and mitigate pests and diseases affecting coffee production.

SECRETARY: Miles Mayne owns Silver Cloud Coffee Farm in Wood Valley. With a background in business, he volunteered to bring programs to Ka'ū Coffee Growers Cooperative and to help farmers secure the purchase of their coffee lands and to expand their markets. Mayne comes from a tradition of family coffee farming in India and returned to his love of agriculture and rural economic development when he moved to Ka'ū. He is retired from an International Oil Service Company where he worked as an economist in business evaluation on projects in Asia, the Middle East, Africa and North America.

TREASURER:

Ray Kudo returned to his roots in Ka'ū when he became a Ka'ū Coffee grower at his Cloud Rest Farm. His parents Kazuo and Tori Kudo arrived in Pāhala in 1930 as contracted sugarcane workers from Japan and settled in Higurashi camp in Moa'ula. Kudo began his long career in ABC Stores, initially as a stock clerk and progressed to Night Manager, Assistant Manager, Store Manager, Area Supervisor and finally retired as District manager in charge of sales, profits,

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A classic poster design by Tanya Ibarra for the 2013 Ka'ū Coffee Festival. operations and merchandizing for Kona and Kaua'i.

LOGISTICS & VENDOR CHAIR: Brenda Iokepa Moses volunteered in this capacity since the first Ka'ū Coffee Festival. She worked with coffee farmers in land management roles with the Ka'ū Sugar Company and succeeding owners and helped mentor coffee growers toward purchasing their farms. Iokepa Moses is the former USDA Hawai'i & Western Pacific Rural Development Director. She is current Deputy Director of County

of Hawai'i Department of Environmental Management and President of Hawai'i Association of Conservation Districts. She helps cover Ka'ū cultural events with photography for local news outlets.

ENTERTAINMENT CHAIR: Debbie Ryder is Kumu foHālau Hula 'O Leionānani, numbering more than 60, taking students to Neighbor Islands and international destinations. She has served as Hawaiian cultural mentor at Ka'ū High & Pāhala Elementary and produced student performances focused on Hawaiian culture. She and Kawehi Ryder created and steward Ke Ola Pu'uhonua in Nā'ālehu with performances, native gardens and classes in cultural practices for visitors and locals. They produce Ho'okupu Hula No Ka'ū festival with hula and ethnic dancers from mainland, Hawai'i, Mexico and Japan.

MARKETING & MEDIA CHAIR: Alla Kostenko is a manager of Ka'ū Coffee farms and Secretary of Hawai'i Coffee Association, the state-wide organization that represents coffee growers, processors, retailers, and service providers with a shared interest in Hawaiian coffee. She has served as Event Coordinator for HCA's state convention since 2019 and its participation in Specialty Coffee Association Expo in 2022 and 2023. She was Assistant Organizer for the virtual 2020 and 2021 Ka'ū Coffee Festivals. She worked on the production of a film about the history of Ka'ū Coffee.

SPECIAL EVENTS CHAIR: Lou Daniele is General Manager of Ka'ū Coffee Mill & Visitor Center. Since 2013, he has led his team to represent Ka'ū Coffee at Specialty Coffee Association Expos, North America's largest coffee trade shows. He organizes events for Ka'ū Coffee Festival, including Ka'ū Coffee Recipe

Ka'ū Coffee Festival, pg. 15

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Pāhala Town Lighted Christmas Parade Launches with Santa Claus

Pāhala Town Lighted Christmas Parade on Saturday, Dec. 9 is drawing folks to walk and ride starting at 6 p.m. with the route along Pikake and Kamani Streets.

Mayor Mitch Roth and Hawai'i County Council member Michelle Galimba are on board, along with Santa Claus, the American Red Cross, local sports clubs, local church groups, community groups and Pāhala Senior Center members.

The parade honors Eddie Andrade, who has retired from hosting the renowned Pāhala Christmas Parade with his family for over 40 years.

The new evening version of the parade will conclude with picture-taking with Santa and his Buddies, some arts and crafts and light refreshments until 8:30 p.m. at

Pāhala Community Center.

Pāhala Town Lighted Christmas Parade is co-hosted by County Department of Parks & Recreation.

Parade Committee Chair Shai Lopez-Castaneda said that more parade participants are welcome. "We are calling all businesses, farmers, agencies, clubs and individuals to join the parade."

Parade participants will be entered in a drawing for a Two-Guest Deluxe Snorkel & Dolphin Watch, sponsored by Body Glove in Kailua-Kona.

Those who would like to enter the parade can call Lopez-Castaneda at (808) 345-0649 or email him at pahalalightedchristmasparade@gmail.com.

Ka'ū Eucalyptus: Hū Honua Files in Fed Court for Biofuel Plant

Hū Honua, which planned to make electricity by burning eucalyptus trees grown around Pāhala, filed a suit in federal



Eucalyptus that was piled up years ago above Pāhala to haul and burn in Hū Honua's biofuel plant, which hasn't opened north of Hilo. Hū Honua is suing Hawaiian Electric, claiming the utility is responsible for the biofuel plant remaining idle.

direct harm to Hū Honua and Hawai'i Island residents, who have been plagued by increasingly higher rates and grid reliability

issues. It accuses Hawaiian Electric "with shameless arrogance and disregard not just for competition, but for the people, economy, and environment of Hawai'i Island."

Hū Honua asks U.S. District Court to "end to all monopolistic conduct and requests the Court award it more than \$1 billion in antitrust

damages." Hū Honua also requests that "Hawaiian Electric be ordered to transfer its Hāmākua power plant, a facility Hawaiian Electric acquired via a 'straw purchase' scheme, to an independent owner to restore competition for the benefit of Hawai'i Island ratepayers. This 'straw purchase' was designed to obscure Hawaiian Electric's controlling interest after state regulators had denied its previous bid to acquire Hamakua," says the statement from Hū Honua.

Eucalyptus, pg. 4

court in October. Hū Honua's attempt is to open its new but unused power plant on the coast north of Hilo. Hū Honua, which would haul eucalyptus logs from tree farms in Pāhala and up the Hāmākua Coast, claims "Hawaiian Electric's termination of Hū Honua's power purchase agreement in January 2016 delayed Hawai'i's transition to renewable energy mandated by state law."

Hū Honua also states that feedstock for its biomass power plant would include woody invasive species. It contends that its "productive use of such overgrown and invasive species would benefit the environment and mitigate well-documented wildfire risks presented by such overgrowth."

Hū Honua's plans were earlier rejected by the Hawai'i Supreme Court and opposed by Life of the Land. Arguments included the cost of electricity from cutting trees, hauling and burning them being more expensive than solar, wind, geothermal and hydroelectric. Other arguments included the environmental impact of hauling the logs long distance, and pollution from burning it at the factory on the coast.

Hū Honua argued that its method of energy production is "firm" and needed in the island's energy portfolio and that burning trees is not subject to sun, wind, river flow and geothermal variables to make electricity.

In its latest filing, Hū Honua contends that Hawaiian Electric violates antitrust laws with a monopoly that has caused

The Pahala Town Lighted Christmas Parade Committee

1st Annual

PAHALA TOWN LIGHTED CHRISTMAS Parade

SATURDAY DECEMBER 09, 2023
Parade Starts at 6:00 pm
(Kamani Street & Part of Pikake)

We invite the community to join us after the Parade at the Pahala Community Center along with The Department of Parks & Recreation Pahala for Light Refreshments, Picture Taking with Santa & Friends, and some Arts & Crafts. Santa and Buddies will take off back to the north pole at 8:30pm so come with your ohana after the parade!

If you would like to be a participant contact Shai at (808)345-0649
 All Parade Entries will be enter into a drawing giveaway

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Scan the QR code for a schedule of upcoming holiday events

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Ka'ū Rural Health Community Association Celebrates Health & Culture

Ka'ū Rural Health Community Association celebrated its 25th Anniversary in November with a program on the heritage of Ka'ū communities. Held at Pāhala Community Center, it included dance, music, and food of people who migrated here, from Polynesians who became Hawaiians to Chinese, Japanese, Okinawan, Filipino, Korean, and Portuguese to Latin American immigrants who came here to work in agriculture.

National anthems from the homelands were played before short histories and presentations of traditional dress, dance, and music were given. Decorations featured



Keiki wore the traditional dress of the many peoples who make up Ka'ū, including the Portuguese.

the checkered palaka table cloths in red, white and blue and centerpieces with flags of homeland countries pinned into peeled banana stalks. The cultural presentation was produced by Sophia Hanoa and Ka'ū Advisory Council, led by Kupuna Jessie Ke.



Kehau Ke in a line of Hawaiian dancers.



Hawaiian was the first cultural component of Ka'ū presented at the Rural Health Community Association's 25th anniversary.

Photos by Julia Neal

The celebration also honored founder and Executive Director of Ka'ū Rural Health Community Association Jessie Marques, who is instrumental in numerous health initiatives, from Ka'ū Hospital being federally designated as a critical care facility to organizing Certified Nursing



Mayor Mitch Roth and Ka'ū Rural Health Community Association founder and Executive Director Jessie Marques at the 25th Anniversary celebration.

Assistant education and research on lung health during times of volcanic activity. The organization has also actively promoted and cosponsored vaccination drives during the COVID pandemic and into the future. Many of its youth members have developed careers in health.

Mayor Mitch Roth honored Marques with a certificate of appreciation. He recalled being involved with the organization at the time of its founding and praised Marques for the many years of hard work to build Ka'ū Rural Health Community Association to provide its services to the community. Numerous current and former board members and other supporters were acknowledged, including CU Hawai'i Federal Credit Union, which gave Ka'ū Rural Health Community Association \$3,000 earlier this year.

The November celebration wrapped up with food sampling from the cultures that make up Ka'ū and with a Taiko drumming group that invited the audience to participate.



Costumes represent immigrants from Asia to Europe.



Eucalyptus, from pg. 3

Daniel G. Swanson of Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP, attorney for Hū Honua, said, "Hū Honua's newly constructed facility would bring reliable, renewable energy to Hawai'i Island at a competitive price, but sits idle today solely due to Hawaiian Electric's predatory and anticompetitive conduct, which it has ruthlessly wielded to entrench and expand its monopoly over Hawai'i's power sector."

The statement says Hawai'i residents "already face the highest average electricity prices by far in the Hū Honua lost in the Hawai'i Supreme Court and seek relief in federal court. United States—nearly three times the U.S. average price—due to costly imported petroleum products being burned in Hawaiian Electric's aging and increasingly unreliable power generation facilities, whose costly operation continues to be extended and protected by Hawaiian Electric's monopoly."

Hū Honua contends that by keeping Hū Honua out of the market and acquiring the largest independent power plant on Hawai'i

Island in 2017, "Hawaiian Electric has cornered more than 90 percent and at times nearly 100 percent of all firm power generation capacity on the Island. Since 2017, ratepayers have seen their electric rates skyrocket by 50-100 percent or more while energy reserve margins have deteriorated, and the risk of power outages has increased.

Hawai'i Island residents have been instructed at least nine times between August 2022 and March 2023 to reduce power consumption during peak hours."

Hawaiian Electric and Life of the Land have not yet responded or commented on Hū Honua's latest federal court filing.



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KA'Ū SPORTS REPORT

Volume 21, Number 12

The Good News of Ka'ū, Hawai'i

December 2023

Pig Hunt Raises Funds for Hokulele Basketball Travel

A community pig hunt in October raised money for Hokulele Basketball Club, which sends boys and girls of all ages to tournaments around the island and state and hosts tournaments here.

The hunt began at midnight on a Friday with the weighing in at Pāhala Hongwanji grounds on Saturday. The hunt, called You FEED 'em, we EAT 'em, organized by the Kaupu family and friends, raised money for Hokulele members to travel for competition.

For Heaviest Overall, with weigh-in at 151 lbs., the winner is Team JB Cowboys with Jere Benevides and crew.

For Heaviest Boar, with weigh-in at 128 lbs., winner is Team Mauka Ready with Tyrell Mason and crew.

For Heaviest Sow, with weigh in at 117.8 lbs., winner is Team Quincy, with



With the big trophy and prizes, above, JB Cowboys with Jere Benevides and crew hunted down Heaviest Overall, weighing in at 151 lbs., below. Photos from the pig hunt tournament.

Click Clack Boom with Mana Joe Jamal and Darren; Team Malosi with Sage Santiago and crew; Team Try EM with Kama Medeiros and RJ Kahele; Team Big Mike; and Team Bloody Backs with Travis Pama and crew.

The organizers said they thank all hunters and sponsors, including Pono's Used Cars, Pearls, Tokunaga, Natin2Krazy, Rusty Boar, Pork Fat (Bulla Kaleo), Papa Bull and Mama Donna, Uncle Ots, Auntie Kaeza and Kylie Rae, Darren Kai and family, and Uncle Jojo and family. They



Team Watusi with Cy Lopez, Jr. and crew.



Team Rumbalah with Kalani Vierra and crew.



Heaviest Sow weighed in at 117.8 lbs, hunted down by Team Quincy with Quincy Kaawa and crew.



The Heaviest Boar came in at 128 lbs., nailed by Team Mauka Ready with Tyrell Mason and crew. The tournament raises money for Ka'ū keiki to travel to play in Hokulele Basketball Club competition, including, in yellow shirts, Kainui and Kalea Kaupu-Manini and Lawai'ia Kaupu. The islandwide tournament was called You FEED em, we EAT em.

Quincy Kaawa and crew.

The other teams that weighed in were Team Sub D Boyz, with Chisum and Cameron Silva, Jaron Garcia and crew; Team No Fck Around with Kawika Santiago and Trieson Pascubillio; Team Rumbalah with Kalana Vierra and Crew; and Team Watusi with Cy Lopez, Jr. and crew.

Other entries were Team Mauka Mafia with Kalei Fernandez and crew; Team Fatson, with Kekoa Ching and crew; Team Sub D BoyZ with Wrangler Silva and Davedon Cabrerros; Team Give 'Em Hell with Clinton Navas-Torres and crew; Team

Hokulele Hosts 1st Vets Day Tourney

Hokulele Basketball Club's first Veterans Day weekend tournament drew 23 teams from around the island in November.

The event at the Herkes Ka'ū District Gym raised money for eighth and ninth



Hokulele took second in the 12 & Under and 14& Under at its first Veterans Day weekend tournament. Photo by Jan Kaeza Penera

grade teams to travel to O'ahu for competition in 2024. Winners of the Veterans Day: In the 14 & Under, Alaka'i took first and Hokulele took second. In the 12 & Under Kona Stingrays took first and Hokulele second.

Hokulele is a Ka'ū-based basketball training organization for youth that trains keiki to teens in basketball skills, sportsmanship and teamwork. It is led by Hokulele Club & Organization President & Head Coach Ravel Kaupu Jr., Vice President Jan Kaeza Penera and Coaches Chrysa Dacalio and Jaron Garcia. To join the club, register for a tournament, volunteer, and sponsor, contact Jan Kaeza Penera by email at kaeza.hokulele@gmail.com.

also thank Glenn Okumura and Wayne Kawachi for Pāhala Hongwanji for the weigh-in venue.

One of the organizers, Sasha Kaupu, said, "This tournament will help relieve any costs for our parents in sending young members of Hokulele Basketball Club of Ka'ū to travel during the season. Each year, we have the privilege and opportunity to travel to other

islands to compete with teams worldwide. Our parents try their best to help us excel in the opportunities we are given and to not take them for granted.

"Coming from a small town, Pāhala, our dreams are big, and often we are told, 'It's just a dream.' As parents, we and our peers want to strive to believe that no dream is ever too big!"

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KA'Ū SCHOOL & YOUTH

Ka'ū Little League New Officers, Register in January

Ka'ū Little League, for youth 6 to 15, recently elected the following officers for 2024: President Josh Crook, Vice President Elizabeth Crook, Secretary Jodie Rosam, Treasurer Brenda deRu, Player Agent Elizabeth Crook, Coaching Coordinator

Jeremy VanArkel, Safety Officer Diana Jensen, Sponsor Fundraising LeAnn Bosell and Concession Manager Deseray Seaver.

Youth registration for the 2024 Little League season begins in January, and T-Mobile Little League Call Up grants will

be available to offset Little League fees for qualified families. See more at <https://clubs.bluesombrero.com/kaulittleleaguehi>.

While it is not required, adults wanting to learn about Little League training for coaching, umpiring, baseball parenting and

Baseball Athlete Safety Education, can go to USA Baseball at <https://usabdevelops.com/page/5082/certification-pathways/18582/certification-pathways>.

Coach Pitch for Keiki Starts Dec. 5

Ka'ū Youth Baseball kicks off its Coach Pitch on Dec. 5, running through March 2 in preparation for Little League season next Spring. Ka'ū Youth Baseball's Coach Pitch is for keiki between six and nine.

The cost per player is \$40, which will go towards jerseys and equipment.

Beginning Dec. 5, Ocean View prac-

tice is Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Nā'ālehu practice is Mondays and Wednesdays 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Coaches are sought to form a team for Pāhala. Additional coaches and other volunteers are needed for Nā'ālehu.

To sign up youth for Coach Pitch or to volunteer, call Elizabeth Crook at 808-345-0511.



COACH PITCH
Baseball

**DEC 5-
MAR 2**

OV Parctice Tues/Thur
Naalehu Practice
Mon/Wed

Cost \$40

Looking for coaches for Pāhala and Naalehu

Ocean View
4:00-5:30
Naalehu:
3:00-4:30

Ages 6-9
6 by March 1
9 by March 1

More Information Elizabeth @ 808-345-0511 Follow us Ka'ū Youth Baseball



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KauNewsBriefs.blogspot.com

Soriano at Hawai'i Film Festival: *My Partner* at the Palace Theater

Niyori Noelle Soriano, journalism student at Ka'ū High School, writes about visiting the historic Palace Theater in Hilo and seeing a film:

Members of Ka'ū High School Drama Club traveled to the Hawai'i Film Festival screenings at the historic Palace Theater on Nov. 3 in Hilo. The 43rd annual Hawai'i International Film Festival presented 11 films over four days at The Palace, with additional screenings around the state.

The Drama Club viewed *My Partner*, directed by Keli'i Grace. He wrote the play about the value of learning to understand one another's feelings



Niyori Soriano (front left) writes about a screening during the Hawai'i International Film Festival at The Palace Theater. Photo from Ka'ū High School

and varying points of view among Native and Immigrant families; involving race, culture, poverty, privilege and well-being.

The *My Partner* story focuses on a fishpond. A young Native Hawaiian man, known as a top athlete at high school, also shows his deep involvement with his culture. He sees the fishpond as a place for Native Hawaiian aquaculture to perpetuate Hawaiian history. His Filipino schoolmate, a first-generation immigrant and high achiever, sees the fishpond as a place to go fish for as many fish as he can catch to feed his family.

The film shows how the young men

from two cultures learn that both views of the fishpond are valid. They get together to understand the importance of seeing the world from different perspectives. The Hawaiian takes the time to introduce the Filipino to the importance of natural resources, wai wai - water and values, taking him to kalo farms and up mountain to streams and forest. They eventually become close to one another.

My Partner is expected to be shown at future festivals. The trailer can be seen at https://www.imdb.com/title/tt21329176/?ref_=tt_mv_close.

OKK Holidays: Gift Cards, Hope for Dialysis Center

'O Ka'ū Kākou is celebrating the holiday season by giving out \$2,000 in gift cards to needy residents in Ka'ū. "The gifts were distributed for Thanksgiving, thanks to funding from Carol Elwell, of Discovery Harbour," said OKK President Wayne Kawachi.

Kawachi said mahalo to Wally Andrade, who recently donated a bulldozer and crew to help clean up the



Hunnay DeMelo dances hula at Veterans Day celebration at Nā'ālehu Hongwanji backed up by musician Keoki Sereno. Photo by June Domondon

land next to Hawai'i Community Health Center's Ka'ū Family Health & Dental in Nā'ālehu. He said he hopes someday the land will become the site of a dialysis center for Ka'ū residents who often have to travel hours to and from Hilo and Kona up to three times a week for their diabetes treatments.

Kawachi also noted that on Veterans Day, OKK celebrated at Nā'ālehu Hongwanji with food,



Wally Andrade recently donated crew and dozer to clear land along Hwy 11 next to Hawai'i Island Community Health Center's Ka'ū Family Health & Dental in Nā'ālehu. OKK hopes to put in a dialysis center. Photo from OKK

music Keoki Sereno, hula by Hunnay DeMelo, and Pāhala Hongwanji Taiko Drummers to honor veterans. See more on OKK

at <https://www.facebook.com/okaukakou/> or call Kawachi at 808-937-4733.

Alameda Candidacy, from pg. 1

and Hawai'i Community Health Center. He called the merger historic, bringing both organization's strengths together. "Separately, we served about 22,000 patients in East Hawaii and 23,000 in West Hawai'i." He said the combined 45,000 patients to serve helps everyone, including Ka'ū with a larger pool of healthcare workers, and better recruitment and retention. Together the organizations "can apply for bigger grants and have a stronger footing with our payers as a bigger fish. We're a pretty good fish now, can negotiate stronger, and pay our doctors more. Allow employees to live where they want to live, share resources, share doctors and dentists and best practices," said Alameda. He noted that Bay Clinic brought to the table the operation of

a pharmacy. West Hawai'i Health Center didn't have one. West Hawai'i has great outreach with Micronesians and other Pacific Islanders, which is very important in Ka'ū, said Alameda. He said he initiated the merger, but didn't need to be CEO. "I just knew it should happen."

Alameda said he wants to use his business acumen in the operation of the county. "I want to see results from every tax, state, county, federal and donation dollar going to the county."

Regarding affordable housing, he said he wants to empower local people to build houses they can afford on land they already have, and with infrastructure that can be improved by the county, state and federal government. "Build better, smarter and in locations that make sense."

He said he also wants to protect the Ka'ū way of life, the fishing, hunt-

ing, farming and ranching. "These are activities that are important to people."

He said he wants to push for more transparency and public access to county government.

Alameda graduated from St. Joseph High School and earned his doctorate in psychological, educational, and cultural studies from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He is a licensed psychologist.

Born in Hilo, he grew up in the hills of Wai'ākea Uka, working with his siblings to make ends meet with his parent's plumbing business and the family ranch. "This work ethic translated easily to other areas as Dr. Kimo gained many athletic and academic accolades and quickly became a state and county government leader,"

says the campaign website.

He lives in Hilo with his wife of 29 years, Star Alameda. They are both 54 years of age. They have seven children, the eldest is 26, and the youngest is a freshman at Hilo High School. He said he and his family have always been involved in sports. Alameda hosts a show on Nā Leo TV entitled *Health is Everywhere*.



Dr. Kimo Alameda during an anti-addiction campaign and Narcan giveaway earlier this year in Nā'ālehu. Photo by Julia Neal

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

HOLIDAYS AT KAHUKU FESTIVAL on Saturday, Dec. 2 at 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Fourth annual celebration at Kahuku Unit, located on Highway 11 at the 70.5 mile-marker. Free event includes food, music and crafts, as well as an appearance by Santa Claus. For more information, call 808-929-8075.

JAZZ IN THE FOREST SATURDAY, DEC. 2 at 5:30 p.m. at Volcano Art Center Nialani Campus in Volcano Village. The evening features Jean Pierre Thoma and the Jazztones. Tickets are \$25 for VAC members (\$30 non-members) at the door, if not sold out.

STEWARDSHIP AT THE SUMMIT RAINFOREST RESTORATION, Saturday, Dec. 2, Friday, Dec. 8, Saturday, Dec. 16, and Friday, Dec. 22, at 8:45 a.m. Volunteer to help remove invasive, non-native plant species that prevent native plants from growing in Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park. Wear sturdy hiking shoes and long pants. Bring a hat, rain gear, day pack, snacks and water. Gloves and tools are provided. Under 18? Parental or guardian accompaniment with written consent is required. Visit the park website for details.

SOUNDS OF NIAULANI Musical Forest Tour, Monday, Dec. 4, at 9:30 a.m. with Dina Kageler at Volcano Art Center Nialani Campus in Volcano Village.

SANTA CLAUS STORY TIME, Thursday, Dec. 7, at 10:30 a.m. at Nā'ālehu Public Library. Celebrate the holiday season with Santa Claus storytime and photo session. Use your own camera to capture the special moment with Santa. Recommended for children ages 3 to 6, but all ages are welcome. For more information, call (808) 939-2442.

SANTA CLAUS STORY TIME, Thursday, Dec. 7, at 12:00 p.m. at Pāhala Public Library. Celebrate the holiday season with Santa Claus storytime and photo session. Use your own camera to capture the special moment with Santa. Recommended for children ages 3 to 6, but all ages are welcome. For more information, call (808) 928-2015.

BIRTH OF KAHUKU on Saturday, Dec. 9 at 9:30 a.m. Explore the rich geologic history of Kahuku. Traverse the vast 1868 lava flow, see different volcanic formations, including the Southwest Rift Zone of Mauna Loa. Learn about the Kānāwai o Pele, the natural laws of land building that govern Pele's realm. A moderate 1.5-mile, 1.5-hour hike. Meet at the Visitor Contact Station at HVNP Kahuku Unit.

PĀHALA TOWN LIGHTED CHRISTMAS PARADE, Saturday, Dec. 9, Parade starts at 6:00 p.m. Kamani Street & Part of Pikake. For more information, call Shai at (808) 345-0649.

PEOPLE & LAND OF KAHUKU on Sunday, Dec. 10 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. This is a moderate two-mile, three-hour guided hike that loops through varied landscapes and explores the human history of Kahuku. Native forests, pastures, lava fields and other sites hold clues about the ways people lived and worked on the vast Kahuku lands—from the earliest Hawaiians, through generations of ranching families, to the current staff and volunteers of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, Kahuku Unit. Meet at the Visitor Contact Station at HVNP Kahuku Unit.

AFTER DARK IN THE PARK: HOLIDAY CONCERT WITH THE CAROLERS QUARTET, Tuesday, Dec. 12, at 7 p.m. at Kīlauea Visitor Center Auditorium. Join us for a special evening welcoming the holiday season to the town of Volcano. Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park is hosting a FREE holiday concert featuring the vocal stylings of The Carolers Quartet. Join Joanne Pocsidio (sop), Teresa Monday (alto), Ian McMillan (tenor) & Doug Albertson (bass) of the BIG ISLAND SINGERS as they present a selection of holiday favorites, sure to warm the coolest of Volcano nights.

COFFEE TALK AT KAHUKU: THE KOA AND SANDALWOOD FORESTS OF HAWAII NEI, Saturday, Dec. 16, at 9:30 a.m. at Kahuku Visitor Contact Station. Join Dr. J.B. Friday and learn about the sustainable management of the majestic acacia koa and the almost-harvested-to-extinction 'ili'ahi (sandalwood), two very important trees in the Hawaiian forest. For more information, call 808-929-8075.

REALMS AND DIVISIONS OF KAHUKU on Sunday, Dec. 17 at Kahuku Unit of HVNP. Experience the intersection of nature and culture on this moderately difficult two-mile, two-hour guided hike on Pu'u Kahuku Trail. Explore the realms and divisions of the traditional Hawaiian classification system at Kahuku. Bring a snack for the "talk story" segment of this hike. Attendees should be prepared for sun, rain, hot & cold conditions. Wear sturdy footwear and bring water. For more information, call 808-929-8075.

NĀ LEO MANU - HEAVENLY VOICES concert featuring Lito Arkangel,

Wednesday, Dec. 20, 7 p.m. at Kīlauea Visitor Center Auditorium. Arkangel, a native of Hilo and Puna, has spent over 20 years as an entertainer and educator on Hawai'i island, renowned for setting entertainment standards rooted in Hawaiian culture. His first album "Me Ke Aloha" released in 2014 was nominated as a finalist for "Most Promising New Artist" for the Nā Hōkū Hanohano awards. His second album "Ku'upau" released in 2017 was also nominated as a finalist for "Album of the year", "Engineering", and "Best male vocalist." Free, but park entrance fees apply. Visit fvnp.org for more information.

A JAZZY CHRISTMAS at Hana Hou restaurant in Nā'ālehu on Friday, Dec. 22, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Just the Two of Us features Farley Sangel and Cheryl Cuevas.

PALM TRAIL HIKE on Saturday, Dec. 23 at 9:30 a.m. at Kahuku is along a 2.6-mile loop along an old ranch road that leads to amazing volcanic features from the 1868 eruption. Discover relics of the ranching era and learn about huluhia (catastrophic change) and kūlia (restoration). Enjoy panoramic views of Kahuku and the Ka'ū coast. This is a 2-hour program. Meet at the Visitor Contact Station at HVNP Kahuku Unit.

DAILY, WEEKLY, MONTHLY

EXPLORE THE SUMMIT DAILY at Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park for an easy one-hour, ranger-led walk from Kīlauea Visitor Center through the rainforest out to Kūpina'i Pali on the crater's edge. Walks are 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Meet at Kīlauea Visitor Center lānai. Visit Kīlauea Visitor Center for other ranger-led programs.

PICKLEBALL at Kahuku Park in Ocean View on Sundays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. To learn more and register, contact Jaquie Woodmansee at (808) 929-7092.

YOGA at Kahuku Park in Ocean View on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9 - 10 a.m. To learn more and register, contact Trisha Meyer at +1 (208) 353-3594.

NET RECOVERY PATROL on Mondays with Hawai'i Wildlife Fund. The team and core volunteers conduct marine debris recovery efforts targeting large debris items, including derelict fishing net and line bundles, that are especially hazardous to marine wildlife. Contact kahakai.cleanups@gmail.com for more info. Check <https://www.wildhawaii.org/with-its-hwf-calendar> for more opportunities to get involved with its bi-weekly net recovery patrols.

KUPUNA YOGA: Gather for 77-minute group class 1 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays at Nā'ālehu Hongwongji Mission's garden. Engage your mana'o, kino & akua for stress relief, increased breath/blood flow & regenerative energy. Limited mats. Money donation or heart-based trade for teacher & temple appreciated. *December Calendar, pg. 9*

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Lā'au Letters: Native Plants of Ka'ū

Welcome to *Lā'au Letters: Native Plants of Ka'ū*. Read about Ka'ū's native plants and their mo'olelo (stories), uses, preferred habitats, and opportunities to adopt them for stewardship. This column seeks to encourage making new plant friends and to reunite with others.



Koa (*Acacia koa*)

Art by Joan Yoshioka

Koa (*Acacia koa*)

For the last Lā'au Letters of 2023, I wanted to share a familiar friend, Koa (meaning brave, bold, fearless, courage, and warrior) to bring you strength in the upcoming year. E ola Koa!

Description: Koa is another one of our endemic Fabulous Fabaceae, and is the second most common tree species in Hawai'i (second to 'ōhi'a). In rich volcanic ash soils, koa can grow to impressive heights of 100 feet or more. In fact, a koa tree in Kapu'a Ahupua'a was measured at 115 feet tall with a crown spread of 93 feet! Did you know that mature koa trees do not have true leaves? When they are young, koa produces compound leaves composed of many small leaflets, but as they mature, they form the flat sickle-shaped leaf-like structures we are all familiar with seeing. Those are actually phyllodes, which are a modified petiole (the stalk that attaches the leaf blade to the stem). This is a unique adaptation, because petioles are able to twist the leaves in order to face the sun. In the case of koa, the vertically-flattened arrangement of the phyllodes optimizes their exposure to sunlight (and photosynthesis) throughout the canopy. The bark of koa is typically light gray, and is sometimes covered on one side by a bright orange lichen. The white flowers form in small, round heads and give way to seed pods containing many dark brown hard seeds. If you look closely at seeds in a pod, you can even notice the piko where it is attached to the pod. Have you ever walked through a koa forest and smelled a garlicky smell? That is the smell of the busy rhizobia or soil bacteria that live in root nodules fixing nitrogen! These rhizobia have the power to convert atmospheric nitrogen (N₂), which is difficult for plants to uptake, into a usable form of ammonia (NH₃). Cool symbiotic relationship, right?

Uses: Commercially, koa is one of the most valued (and most expensive) woods in the world, which is why a sustainable harvesting method is crucial to perpetuating koa's survival. Historically, one of the most well-known uses for koa was in canoe making. However, the process of selecting and harvesting the koa tree for this purpose was intricate and ceremonial (please read about it). I kū mau mau! In addition to canoes, the fine red wood was once used for hale (houses), hoe (paddles), papa he'e nalu (surfboards), and 'umeke lā'au (calabashes) to name a few, and is now used in woodworking to make exquisite furniture and ukuleles. The bark can be used to make a red dye for kapa and the leaves can be strung into lei. Koa's medicinal uses are plenty, including reducing fever, pūhō (abscesses), 'eha māui (bruises), and haki (bone breaks).

Habitat: Generally speaking, koa can be found on all of the main Hawaiian Islands except Kaho'olawe and Ni'ihau. It is able to grow at elevations between 150 - 7,000 feet in dry and mesic environments, though the greatest concentrations of koa are between 3,000 - 6,000 feet. In Ka'ū, you can find koa growing in every ahupua'a mauka of about 1,000 feet elevation.

Growing and Purchasing: Koa keiki are often available at local plant sales, however, it should be noted that koa does vary greatly from one location to another. For this reason, as well as when you purchase any native species, please try and be aware of the source of your plant and keep them planted on your property and do not plant purchased trees out into the wild, as the genetic variation of our wild plant populations is critical to their survival. Koa are happiest when planted in full sun, and once they are established, they can handle periods of drought and high winds. Plant them 30-40 feet apart to accommodate their future crown spans in an area with plenty of sunshine. Do your best to keep the base of the tree weed-free, as koa does not like being weed whipped or bumped with a mower, and keep pruning to a minimum. Consider companion planting with a friend like 'a'ali'i, māmakī, or 'iliahi. Kūlia!



Joan Yoshioka

About the artist: Joan Yoshioka says she is a conservationist at heart and has dedicated her life to preserving the native plants and animals of Hawai'i through her work with federal, state, and private organizations over the past 30+ years. She describes herself as an outdoor-lovin' optimist, biologist/botanist, and habitual creator of art-stuff. She says the key to our most fundamental and truest part of ourselves is found in nature and she constantly draws on it for inspiration.

About the author: Jodie Rosam says she has a deep love for native plants and a passion for exploration, with over 15 years of experience in working in the restoration of Hawai'i's forests. As a mother and an educator, she says the next generation has the power to lead the world to a sustainable future, and is committed to teaching her children (and others) from a place-based perspective.



Jodie Rosam

DECEMBER '23

December Calendar, from pg. 8

Sign up 11 minutes before start time.

ST. JUDE'S SHOWER MINISTRY open to the public on Saturdays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to noon with last Check-in at 11:30 a.m. Offered are hot water, soap, shampoo, conditioner, and clean towels. Masks and social distancing are required before and after showering. The public shower service is supported by the Episcopal Diocese of Hawai'i's Commission on Mission Beyond Church and St. Jude's own outreach fund. Location is 92-8606 Paradise Circle Drive in Ocean View. Members of the congregation built the facility.

WAI'OHINU YOGA at the Wai'ohinu Park every Wednesday from 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m., weather permitting. Laurie Boyle offers the practice of yoga of all levels. Donations appreciated. No reservations needed. For more information, contact Boyle at ezmerelda5@gmail.com.

FREE HELP WITH FAMILY HISTORY in Ka'u is available 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. every Wednesday. All are welcome to the Family History Center. The aim is to "Come Discover Your Past," says the statement from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which hosts the weekly sessions at 95-5682 Hawai'i Belt Road in Nā'ālehu. The drop-in assistance includes free Ancestry.com, Familysearch.org, and other online resources.

STEWARDSHIP OF KĪPUKAPUAULU on Thursdays at 9:30 a.m. Help remove troublesome plants at Kīpukapuau, home to diverse native forest and understory plants. Bring clippers or pruners, sturdy gloves, a hat, and water. Wear closed-toe shoes and clothing that you don't mind getting permanently stained from morning glory sap. Be prepared for cool and wet or hot and sunny weather. New volunteer? Contact Marilyn Nicholson for more info: nickem@hawaii.rr.com. Meet at the Kīpukapuau parking lot, Mauna Loa Road, off Highway 11 in Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park.

ST. JUDE'S COMPUTER LAB open Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Work-Station Laptops will be provided. Printing and shredding is available. Training sessions on Microsoft Word, Excel, and Power-Point and assistance with setting up email accounts, Facebook, Zoom, and more are provided. Assigned times are available for individual help. Game playing is limited and no streaming is allowed. Privileges can be suspended by Administrator or Lab Coordinator.

OUTDOOR MARKETS

VOLCANO FARMERS MARKET, Cooper Center, Volcano Village on Sundays, 6 a.m. to 10 a.m., with local produce, baked goods, food to go, island beef and Ka'u Coffee. EBT is used for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly Food Stamps. Call 808-967-7800.

'O KA'Ū KĀKOU MARKET, in Nā'ālehu, Wednesdays, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Contact Nadine Ebert at 808-938-5124 or June Domondon 808-938-4875. See facebook.com/OKauKakouMarket.

THE BOOK SHACK is open every Wednesday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the Kauaha'ao Congregational Church grounds at 95-1642 Pinao St. in Wai'ohinu.

VOLCANO EVENING MARKET, Cooper Center, Volcano Village, Thursdays, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., with live music, artisan crafts, ono grinds, and fresh produce. See facebook.com/Volcano-Evening-Market-105888795330870.

FIRST FRIDAY NIGHT OCEAN VIEW MARKET &

DANCE PARTY with Ka'u Radio from 3 p.m. until pau. \$10 booth fees, no reservations required. Kona St. and Mamālahoa Highway. Contact HOVEMarket@gmail.com.

OCEAN VIEW COMMUNITY MARKET, Saturdays 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Kona St. and Mamālahoa Highway, \$10 booth fees, no reservations needed. Contact HOVEMarket@gmail.com with any questions.

VOLCANO SWAP MEET, 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Large variety of vendors with numerous products. Tools, clothes, books, toys, local-made healing extract and creams, antiques, jewelry, gemstones, crystals, food, music, plants, fruits, and vegetables. Also offered are cakes, coffee, and shave ice.

OCEAN VIEW SWAP MEET at Ocean View makai shopping center, near Mālama Market. Hours for patrons are 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday and Sunday. Vendor set-up time is 5 a.m. Masks required.

FOOD

FREE MEALS IN NĀ'ĀLEHU are served Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Nā'ālehu Hongwanji. Volunteers prepare the food provided by 'O Ka'ū Kākou with fresh produce from its gardens on the farm of Eva Liu. Other community members also make donations and approximately 150 meals are served each day. A donation of \$1 is suggested per meal.

KA'Ū FOOD PANTRY FOOD DISTRIBUTION, Tuesday, Dec. 26, 9:30 a.m. - Pau. St. Jude's Episcopal Church above Kahuku Park in Ocean View. Sponsored by Hawai'i Island Food Basket.

'O KA'Ū KĀKOU PANTRY FOOD DISTRIBUTION, Tuesday, Dec. 26, 10 a.m. - Pau. Ka'ū District Gym in Pāhala. Sponsored by Hawai'i Island Food Basket.

COOPER CENTER COMMUNITY PANTRY FOOD DISTRIBUTION, Wednesday, Dec. 27, 9:30 a.m. - 11 a.m. Located at 19- 4030 Wright Road in Volcano. Sponsored by Hawai'i Island Food Basket.

ST JUDE'S HOT MEALS are free to those in need on Saturdays from 9 a.m. until food runs out, no later than noon. Volunteers from the community are welcome to help and can contact Karen at pooch53@gmail.com. Location is 96-8606 Paradise Circle Drive in Ocean View.



Holidays in Kahuku Set for Saturday, Dec. 2.

Holidays in Kahuku is Saturday, Dec. 2, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Kahuku Unit of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park on Hwy 11 at the 70.5 mile-marker. The free family event features food, a craft fair and music, along with Santa bringing 200 gifts for keiki.

"It's Friends of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park's own festival to highlight the Kahuku Unit of the National Park and to thank the community for all of their support," said Friends CEO Elizabeth Fien.

Emcee will be Makana Kamahele. Performers will be the Kipapa Sisters, Kumu Debbie Ryder and Hālau Hula 'O Leionālanī, South Hawai'i Symphony with holiday music, The Jazz Gardeners and the rock band Hot Potaytahs. John Replogle will perform the skit *Little Lei Puahi & The Wild Pua'a*.

Friends of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park will present its new logo and first line of clothing, long and short sleeve shirt, for sale for the first time, with colors from a wild dark brown to Kelly green to heather, white, royal blue and slate. Traditional wear with the retired logo on jackets, youth shirts and women's tees will also be on sale. Buy a new logo shirt and receive a 2018 Hawai'i Volcano National Park Cultural Festival Shirt for free. The 2018 shirts were made, but the Cultural Festival was cancelled due to the COVID pandemic.

Those selling gifts include makers of Christmas ornaments, clothing, art made from marine debris, park-inspired paintings, pottery, jewelry, and locally produced packaged foods like Ka'ū Coffee and honey.

Food and drink will be available from The Hawaiian Civic Club of Ka'ū, 4 Scoops of Aloha and Flynn' Hawaiian Coffee Truck.

There will be free shave ice minis and free face painting for keiki donated by Friends of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park.

Friends of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park financially supports numerous activities and project in the Hawai'i Volcanoes, including the Park's own annual Cultural Festival. Friends also raises money to support the Tuesday night After Dark in the Park presentations and cultural practitioners in the 'Ike Hana No'eau and Nā Leo Manu Concert Series at Kīlauea Visitors Center. It financially

supports the Youth Rangers Program that provides work training for young people



and can lead to long-term employment with the National Park Service. Friends helps fund the Hawksbill Turtle Project, Nēnē conservation efforts, the Park's native plants nursery, and volunteers to collect seeds, outplant and help with forest restoration, including removal of endangered species.

Friends financially supported remodeling of the 'Ōhia Wing at Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park and the building of the grass hale next to the Volcano Art Gallery.

It also operates its own programs, including Hawai'i Volcanoes Institute, with educational experience in the National Park for school, college, non-profit and private groups. It produces and funds the upcoming Holidays in Kahuku.

Friends also financially supports the new Kahuku-Pōhue Bay unit of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park.

Friends of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park has been featured in numerous media, including the upcoming hour-long Nick News Special on Nickelodeon, to be released in December. The show features Guardians of the Trails and Youth Rangers programs.

The mission of Friends of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park is to support the National Park Service in the protection, preservation, and interpretation of the natural and cultural resources at Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

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Nexamp Makes Its Case for Solar Farm Near Nā'ālehu

A Nā'ālehu Solar meeting drew a small group to Nā'ālehu Community Center in November, with the gathering also accessible through Zoom. Nexamp representatives, who plan a solar farm near Wai'ōhinu in ahupua'a of Kahilipali, stressed the importance of solar to help prevent wildfires by displacing flammable invasive grasses and pointed to solar's global purpose as clean energy.



Nexamp proposes to use some 20 acres on a 180-acre parcel near Wai'ōhinu in Ahupua'a of Kahilipali. Map from Nexamp

The 180 acres makai of Hwy 11 in Wai'ōhinu has a quarry and was described as otherwise scrubland. The solar farm is planned for about ten percent of the acreage. A condition of doing the project is the land would be returned to its current state at the end of its use for solar, which could be for 20 years, with a possible short extension.

The Nexamp representative mentioned the project is not building a golf course or

a resort, and that local people are not going to be displaced by people who buy land and come here to live. He said solar has a very low impact. It doesn't make noise. "It is only really an upside to your community." He also noted the solar installation "will not stay forever," like "smokestacks built of concrete."

After the Nexamp man referred to Maui with its wildfire and managing land here to prevent a wildfire, a man who identified his own Wai'ōhinu family as Hawaiian said, "We are talking about Ka'ū not Maui," and that people care very specifically about what happens to the land here.

A community member said, "This land is precious," and that the community wants to make sure that

the project is good. She suggested inviting community members to the land to better understand what the construction would look like on the land. She said to clear a path and show people.

The Nexamp man said that he would have to get permission from the owner of the land, who is planning to lease it to Nexamp.

Nexamp provides solar to those who sign up for it to save on electric bills. It is designed for those who would not install their own solar panels. Roof-top solar generates tax credits and dumps or reduces the electric bill while raising the property's value, but it requires a cash investment or a loan to pay for it.

Nexamp solar has no upfront costs, no long-term contracts, and brings instant savings with no work required of the property owner. The savings with Nexamp have been calculated at around ten to 15 percent.

Nexamp representatives said they will return for another community meeting in the first quarter of next year, in February or March, and that anyone who wants to be no-

tified by email can send their email address. They also said they are available to answer questions and listen to community concerns. See www.nexamp.com.

Nexamp is based in Boston and is led by CEO Zaid Ashai, who earned an MBA from Harvard University and Masters of Public Administration from Kennedy School of Government. He is a General Partner at Point Judith Capital and worked at Good Energies, a global Clean Tech venture capital firm; HarbourVest Partners, a global private equity firm; and as a banking analyst in Credit Suisse's Technology Group.



Gov. Green Encourages to Buy Local for Holidays

Support Local This Holiday Season. That is the slogan from Gov. Josh Green. "Support Local this Holiday Season with Hawai'i-Made Gifts. This holiday season, embrace the spirit of giving by choosing Hawai'i-made products. Our local businesses are the cornerstone of our communities, offering unique, handcrafted items and specialty foods.

"As we continue to recover from recent challenges, supporting local businesses is crucial for Hawai'i's economic resilience.

"Every Hawai'i-made purchase helps our local artisans, farmers, and entrepreneurs, contributing significantly to the well-being of our island community."

County Provides Sewage Options in Public & Online

A public meeting on the Nā'ālehu sewer plan was held in mid-November at Nā'ālehu Community Center.

The county Department of Environmental Management updated the status of its large-capacity cesspool closure projects on its website: <https://www.hawaiicounty.gov/departments/environmental-management/pahala-naalehu/>.

The county encourages those affected to bookmark this site and view updates posted at least once a month. It notes that the Nā'ālehu and Pāhala "projects have similar milestones but are on separate timelines, so it's important not to get mixed up on which meeting is for what purpose." says the county statement.

For Nā'ālehu, those who own a property in the affected

area have received meeting notices along with wastewater treatment preference survey forms on green paper. During the Nā'ālehu meeting, which is posted online, the County reviewed the Preliminary Engineering Report and also collected input for the Nā'ālehu Draft Environmental Impact Document, which is still under development.

Write comments to cohdem@hawaiicounty.gov with the subject line Nā'ālehu EID."

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Volume 21, Number 12

The Good News of Ka'ū, Hawai'i

December 2023

Cell Tower, from pg. 1

"The proposed development includes a 150-foot-tall monopole tower, which includes equipment cabinets, utility H-frame and 2 diesel emergency generators. The tower will include 21 eight-foot antennas and 27 RRU's (remote radio units) stacked behind the antennas for AT&T and proposed T-Mobile equipment. Future carriers could be added to this structure.



Donna Durgin, owner of Solarworks! in Ocean View, opposes the 150-ft. cell tower next to her property and near Kahuku County Park.

Photo by Annie Bosted

"The facility will be enclosed by a six-foot fence. Work lights will be installed. Natural vegetation will be modified in the construction of this tower. All of this is located 30 feet from the rear of the lot and within 70 feet of a neighbor's home.

OV Display, from pg. 1

as Santa and his third giving gifts.



Details of the extravagant display at Lehua and Palm in Ocean View, with Santa giving gifts on Christmas Eve.

Photos from the Houvener family

Holiday Nēnē, from pg. 1 by staying at least 60 feet from them.

Last year, a different nēnē pair nested near the western end of Uēkahuna which prompted a five-week closure of the entire parking lot, restrooms and overlook to protect the family. To learn more about nēnē, visit the <https://www.nps.gov/havo/learn/nature/nene.htm> website for history, a video, and a podcast about these rare and magnificent native geese.

"We urge decision-makers to reconsider their plans for a cell tower and communications facility in our community. The height of the current cell tower has just been raised from 100 feet to 150 feet, which should bring better coverage to the area."

The petition says the signers are "not against cell towers" but request a less intrusive plot of land be investigated for the project.

The county published a list of ten items for Renegade Towers to address. It requires "a statement from the applicant that diligent, but unsuccessful efforts to install or co-locate the applicant's telecommunications antennas on existing towers or feasible antenna support structures have been made". Applicants are instructed to "identify those sites that you have investigated and explain how those sites are inadequate and how the site selected is the least obtrusive."

The county also asks if the applicant has "met with adjacent landowners and/or community regarding the development?"

Donna Durgin, a resident of Ocean View for 27 years and owner of Solarcut out. There is a now rocket blowup and a number of smaller Christmas items that regulars will notice. There is a little Elf on the Shelf for kids to find each year.

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Two cell towers on Reef Blvd, as seen in 2021. Initially, the lower, 100-foot cell tower was constructed. After a 150-foot tower was erected, the lower one was dismantled. Photo by Donna Durgin works!, owns a property near the site of the proposed tower. She told *The Ka'ū Calendar* that the first she knew of the cell tower proposal was a sign on the lot.

"Renegade Towers put the sign on the

wrong lot," she explained, "so that caused confusion. They have never held community meetings or met with me or any of my neighbors.

"If built, the tower will significantly reduce the value of our properties. According to the federal agency, HUD, a tower will drop the value of homes by five to 20 percent. They take these things into account when they appraise the value of a home.

"This tower should be away from homes and on a larger plot of land.

"We already have a 150-foot-tower on the corner of Reef Boulevard and Palm Parkway. There used to be a 100' one on that land, but they built a new 150-foot one and then demolished the 100-foot one," she added.

Durgin and her neighbor Al Sherman have been collecting signatures at the Ocean View swap meet, held each Saturday morning and said that those who would like to sign the petition can contact Durgin at 808-937-8260.

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Nexamp: Pasture Pigs to Manage Solar Farm Lands

Calling the approach Agrivoltaics: A Sustainable Synergy, Nexamp, the company planning a solar farm in ahupua'a of Kahilipali near Wai'ōhinu, suggests that raising free-ranging pigs between the solar panels could become a successful venture to feed people, provide electricity and take care of the land.

Its website says, "solar farms, consisting of rows upon rows of photovoltaic panels, can generate a substantial amount of electricity. Still, the land occupied by these solar arrays typically goes unused, leading to questions about its potential... Agrivoltaics involves the dual use of land

for both solar energy production and agricultural purposes, allowing for a harmonious coexistence that maximizes the utility of the land.

"At the heart of Nexamp's agrivoltaic approach lies the introduction of pasture pigs. These animals are not your ordinary farm animals; they play a crucial role in maintaining the solar farm's functionality and ecological balance." Nexamp contends that pigs are good in numerous ways.

Natural Land Management: Pasture pigs are expert foragers. They graze on the vegetation beneath and around the solar panels, keeping the vegetation in check

and preventing it from shading the panels. This natural form of land management reduces the need for heavy machinery and herbicides, making the solar farm more eco-friendly.

Fertilization: As they graze and root around, pasture pigs also contribute to fertilizing the soil. Their natural behaviors improve soil health, creating a more conducive environment for the growth of cover crops and other vegetation.

Reducing Maintenance Costs: By enlisting the help of these natural grazers, Nexamp significantly reduces the maintenance costs associated with solar farms.

This not only benefits the environment but also makes solar energy more economically viable.



Pasturing pigs to manage land at solar farms is suggested by Nexamp, which is planning a solar project near Wai'ōhinu. Photo from Nexamp

Hawai'i Faces a Threat to Avocado Trees

A threat to avocado trees has been announced by University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture & Human Resources. It's the Laurel Wilt spread by redbay ambrosia beetles and movement of infected avocado wood products.



The redbay ambrosia beetle that kills avocado trees. U.H. says be aware.

Photo from University of Florida

avocado tree owners and commercial producers to participate in a survey "to provide feedback on objectives that are important to you" and to help shape the U.H. and University of Florida team effort for funding to control Laurel Wilt and its vector. See more about Laurel Wilt at <https://trec.ifas.ufl.edu/people/jonathan-crane/lw-ab-website/>. Questions and completed surveys

The beetle bores into avocado trees, leaving sawdust exit tubes hanging off the trunks. Green leaves wilt and turn brown, stems and limbs die back, and avocado trees die.

The infestation was first detected in Savannah, Georgia and moved across southern states to Texas but is not yet detected in California, where there is fear it might arrive through importing firewood from infected states.


U.H. warns that it could come here. More than 140,000 commercial avocado trees have been lost in Florida, valued at about \$46.2 million.

The U.H. statement says Laurel Wilt "is not yet found in Hawai'i, but we must be aware of this problem and learn how to identify LW and its vector, prevent its introduction, and manage LW should it arrive in Hawai'i."

U.H. asks avo-

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Water Disinfection

Whether your water comes from municipal, well, or catchment, it must be free of pathogens. After all, the quality of your water is a direct link to the quality of your health. So let's compare the top three water disinfection methods.


Most municipal water supplies are treated by chlorination. This method is cost effective for high volume systems, has been safely used for more than 100 years, but does come with some challenges when presented with surface water contaminants.

UV lights, aka ultraviolet germicidal irradiation units, are widely used in Hawaii. These systems come in a wide range of sizes, always require a continuous supply of electricity, and only have the potential to damage the DNA of pathogens passing through the system, meaning it **does not kill** or remove microorganisms from your water. The industry calls this out as the "inactivation" of pathogens. These systems also require regular maintenance, dirty water or quartz sleeves holding the UV bulbs can reduce effectiveness, and don't forget those light bulbs all contain mercury which need to be collected at a Household Hazardous Waste Recycling Event.

Our third option for clean water is the Quantum Disinfection™ technology that has been available for over 10 years now. Quantum Disinfection™ is a catalyst media that disinfects the water with its activated surfaces and requires no power, no chemicals, and no maintenance over the unit's lifespan to instantly kill pathogens. The process collapses the cellular structures and eliminates the microorganisms from the water supply. This method of water disinfection is by far the most effective, and is also very economical and environmentally friendly.


To evaluate how clean your home water supply is, we recommend testing for the presence of e coli bacteria at least once per year. Uncle Tilo carries the at-home water testing units that test for Escherichia coli (E. coli) and coliform.

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East Hawai'i Million Dollar Grant to Help Ka'ū Hospital

A million-dollar grant from the Hoveida Family Foundation will not only help Ka'ū Hospital and Rural Health Clinic's mothership, Hilo Medical Center, but also help improve access to training for those living in Ka'ū who are seeking health careers. It will help to provide housing for doctors and other healthcare providers working here and around the island. It will expand mental health services. A statement from the Hilo Medical Center Foundation, which received the gift, called the grant "a major milestone in our mission to enhance healthcare services and improve the well-being of the East Hawai'i community."

The statement says, "The Hoveida Family Foundation, known for its commitment to philanthropy and fostering positive change, has recognized the vital role played by Hilo Medical Center Foundation in providing exceptional healthcare service opportunities to the people of East Hawai'i and the surrounding areas."

Plans for the funding are to further advance ongoing initiatives aimed at enhancing patient care, expanding medical services, and improving the overall patient experience especially in the behavior/mental health medical services area. The Foundation has already renovated a home

in Hilo where students from Ka'ū and elsewhere can stay during training and to provide housing for traveling health care providers.

The Hoveida funding will be directed towards several critical areas, including -

Healthcare Workforce Pipeline: The grant will be used to strengthen recruitment and retention efforts, support outreach/awareness program activities that support students from under-resourced areas to enter a health career, thereby earning a living wage. Scholarships will be awarded to those seeking

to advance in their careers as well as physician subsidies to bring in new providers to increase access to healthcare services for community members in East Hawai'i.

Mental Health Services Expansion:

The grant will assist with the expansion of mental health services in East Hawai'i through the creation of a steering committee to bring together mental health providers, healthcare organizations, and the County of Hawai'i to strategize on mental health care delivery, identify gaps in care, and leverage resources to increase

access to critical mental health services across the region. The mental health services expansion monies will also include subsidies to mental health providers to increase access to mental health services in the East Hawai'i Region.

"We are immensely grateful to the Hoveida Family Foundation for their generous grant," said Lisa Rantz, Executive Director of the Hilo Medical Center Foundation. "This transformative investment will enable us to make significant strides towards advancing mental health care in our community. With their support, we will continue to improve patient outcomes, enhance medical services, and touch the lives of countless individuals and families."

Rebecca and Bahman Hoveida, Co-Chairs of Hoveida Family Foundation, said, "Hawai'i is a special place for all of us, and as residents we want to make a positive contribution to the Island's health care system. We are pleased to have had the opportunity to contribute to the Hilo Medical Center Foundation and hope other

Grant to Improve Health Care, pg. 15



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Annual Wreath Exhibit at VAC Inspired by A Walk in the Park

The annual Wreath Exhibit and competition runs through the end of the year at Volcano Art Center Gallery, the 1877 Volcano House Hotel historic building within Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park.

The Wreath Exhibit is part of the 24th Annual Christmas in the Country, which continues through Dec. 31. "This year's Christmas in the Country promises an abundance of creativity and cheer to welcome the holiday season," says the statement from Volcano Art Center Gallery. It is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (closed on Christmas Day).

The exhibition presents one-of-a-kind wreaths in a variety of media, techniques, and styles. This year, artists engaged with the theme *A Walk in the Park*. "Those looking for truly original

wreaths as well as one-of-a-kind, handmade gift items will not be disappointed by the selection created by the local artistic community," says the Volcano Art Center statement. The exhibit is free, however, park entrance fees apply.

The 34 wreaths in the exhibit can be seen at the gallery and most of them online and for sale at <https://volcanoartcenter.org/product-category/featured-exhibit/>.

Christmas in the Country also features holiday offerings of island-inspired gifts, ornaments, and decorations made by Hawai'i Island artists.

Christmas in the Country has expanded this year to Volcano Art Center's Niaulani Campus on Old Volcano Road, with additional handmade art and gifts by Hawai'i's local artists.



Kapapala Wreath by Jennifer Gomez



Anchiote wreath by Roy Kaneko



Created by artist Makanani, this wreath is named Alice Returns to Volcano Park. It was created from green/blue jewel beetle wings, pūkiawe berries, bromeliad leaves, 'a'ali'i flowers, job's tears seeds, red wiliwili seeds, kalanchoe beharensis leaves, brown monkey pod seeds, araucaria needles, waewae'iole, red ti leaves, juniper pine, dried bamboo leaves, agave, podocarpus, autograph tree, uki grass, orchid root, coconut branches, succulents, rabbit foot fern and bay leaves. This and other wreaths in the competition can be purchased at Volcano Art Center or online at <https://volcanoartcenter.org/product-category/featured-exhibit/>.

VOLCANO ART CENTER
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DECEMBER EVENTS


Annual Wreath Exhibit continues through Dec 31 at VAC gallery in HVNP

12/2 - Jazz in the Forest: Holiday Spirit with JP Thoma and the Jazztones
12/4- Sounds of Niaulani Musical Forest Tour with Dina Kageler
12/7 - Thursday Night at the Center: After the Attack: Hawai'i under Martial Law with Ben Hayes
12/14 - Archival Movie Night
12/17 - Sculpture Garden opening & artist reception

VAC gallery in HVNP will be OPEN on Christmas Eve, New Years Eve & New Years Day.
Closed on Christmas Day

VAC Niaulani Campus Office/Gallery closed on Christmas Day & New Years Day

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Niaulani Gallery in Volcano Village & VAC Gallery in Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park are OPEN! Visit our website for current hours

Office in Volcano Village:
(808) 967-8222
Gallery in HVNP:
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volcanoartcenter.org/shop

Nā Leo Manu Hosts Singer Lito Arkangel

Lito Arkangel, a native of Hilo and Puna, with more than 20 years as an entertainer and educator on Hawai'i island, will perform on Wednesday, Dec. 20 at 7 p.m. at Kīlauea Visitor Center auditorium. He is renowned for setting entertainment standards rooted in Hawaiian culture. He is also an instructor at the University of Hawai'i Hilo and works on a cultural botanical garden project. Arkangel is working on his upcoming music project. His first album *Me Ke Aloha* released in 2014 was nominated as a finalist for Most Promising New Artist for Nā Hōkū Hanohano awards. His second album *Ku'upau* re-

leased in 2017 was also nominated as a finalist for Album of the year, Engineering, and Best male vocalist.

The concert is part of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park's ongoing Nā Leo Manu Hawaiian cultural programs, and co-sponsored by Hawai'i Pacific Parks Association. Free, but park entrance fees apply.



Lito Arkangel plays Volcano Dec. 20.

Photo from HVNP

Holiday Concert with The Carolers Quartet

Welcoming the holiday season to the town of Volcano, Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park hosts a free holiday concert featuring the vocal stylings of The Carol-

ers Quartet on Tuesday, Dec. 12 at 7 p.m. in Kīlauea Visitor Center auditorium. Join Joanne Pocsidio (sop), Teresa Mondoy (alto), Ian McMillan (tenor) & Doug Albertson (bass) of the Big Island Singers as they present a selection of holiday favor-

ites to warm the coolest of Volcano nights.

The concert is part of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park's ongoing After Dark in the Park series of programs. Program co-sponsored by Friends of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park. Concert is free but park entrance fees apply.

KMC Lights up the Cottages KMC Brings Christmas Music

Kīlauea Military Camp is lighting up its historic stone and wooden cottages and putting up decorations to attract folks to take an evening Christmas stroll.

KMC will also host a Volcano Christmas Chorus, presentation by Kīlauea Drama & Entertainment Network on Saturday, Dec. 2 at 7 p.m. The venue is KMC's Lehua Room.

Director is Roch Jones, accompanied by Walter Greenwood, featuring Cheryl Shine on flute. Admission is free, donations accepted and Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park entrance fees may apply.



KMC staff decorates the cottages each year. Photo by Dave Berry



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Young Monk Seal Frequents the Ka'ū Coast, Call in Sightings

A young monk seal has been seen along the Ka'ū Coast, most recently at Honu'apo. Bob Martin took the photo from about 80 yards away from the endangered seal as it rested on the rocky shore. Other recent monk seal sightings along the Ka'ū Coast have been reported, including at Punalu'u with Facebook posting.

Martin said he reported the Honu'apo sighting and sent the photo to The Marine Mammal Center, which described the monk

seal as juvenile or sub-adult. The young seal is apparently not banded and its sex cannot be determined in the photograph.

It is recommended to be no closer than 50 yards to any monk seal on land and in the water. The Marine Mammal Center urges people with any monk seal sightings to call 808-987-0765. While observing, "Give Seals Space" is the headline for The Marine Mammal Center guidance. "If the monk seal is looking at you or has changed

its behavior, you're too close." Before making the call, "Determine the monk seal's exact location for accurate reporting. Note physical characteristics such as size and coloring. Does the seal appear weak or skinny? Does it have any open wounds, entanglements or markings?"

According to The Marine Mammal Center, "These animals



This young monk seal was seen recently at Honu'apo, with a photo taken 80 yards from the animal.

Photo by Bob Martin



The Marine Mammal Center takes in sickly and injured monk seals and is supported by volunteers. Photo from Marine Mammal Center

are endangered, so every sighting provides valuable information to our researchers, and seals in distress may require emergency care."

The Marine Mammal Center hotline is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Trained teams respond to Hawaiian monk seals in need 365 days a year.

Grant to Improve Health Care, from pg. 13

organizations and individuals follow suit in supporting the medical system on Hawai'i Island. As a part of the community, we have witnessed the lack of available medical and mental healthcare services on our island. Families should not have to suffer the expense and time it takes to travel off island to receive the medical care they so greatly

need and deserve. Individuals dealing with a mental health crisis should be given the opportunity to seek out psychological help instead of being forced through the criminal system. We can provide better long-term solutions by encouraging our intelligent and motivated students to seek out degrees in the medical and mental health fields so that they can return here to serve their 'ohana. With the support

and involvement of the local community, we can find the best long-term solution to recruit for otherwise unavailable medical services and retain our current medical professionals in order to grow our healthcare options on Hawai'i Island." Earlier this year the Hoveida Foundation gave \$10 million to Mayo Clinic. See <https://hoveidafoundation.org/>

Ka'ū Coffee Festival, from pg. 2

Contest, farm and nature tours and stargazing. Daniele is a board member of Hawai'i Coffee Association and Windward Planning Commissioner for County of Hawai'i. His background includes nursery managing, landscaping, diversion of green waste from landfill to rich soil production, marketing and advertising.



A classic opening of Ka'ū Coffee Festival's week of events, years before the pandemic with Hālau Hula 'O Leonālanī dancers.



Ka'ū Coffee Mountain Hike. Photo by Jesse Tunison

Munnerlyn lives in Pāhala and performs with the Pāhala Hongwanji Taiko organization, which also hosts music, dance and other cultural groups from Japan. Before and after moving to Ka'ū she worked with the Japanese company, The Contact Inc., promoting Japanese visitors to international destinations. Clients included Jamaica, Orlando, New York and European destinations. Eva Liu and her company are owners of the Sea Mountain Punalu'u lands and 1,200 acres of farm and pasture in Ka'ū. She is working on carefully focused segments of the Chinese market to attract ecologically and agriculturally interested visitors to come in small groups to learn and to volunteer. She recently hosted a group of travel entities from China, led by Hawai'i Tourism Authority.



A hayride during Coffee & Cattle Day at Aikane Plantation Coffee Co.

PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIR: Julia Neal has published *The Ka'ū Calendar* newspaper for more than 20 years. It covers community transition from sugar to coffee, marketing and growers' campaign to purchase of their Ka'ū Coffee farms. Neal has promoted Ka'ū Coffee at U.S. Specialty Coffee Association confabs and secured Ka'ū as official coffee of U.S. Presidential Inaugural Ball. She helped to bring the Ka'ū Coffee story to cover of Japan Air magazine and in *National Geographic Traveler*. She volunteered at Ka'ū Coffee Festivals to coordinate entertainment and raise scholarship money. She hosts the Ka'ū Coffee Festival kickoff at Pāhala Plantation Manager's House.

INTERNATIONAL MARKETING CO-CHAIRS: Kayo Yamazaki Munnerlyn and Eva Liu. Kayo Yamazaki *The Ka'ū Calendar*

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Hawaiian Santa from Wai'ōhinu Traveled for the Love of Children

A quiet man who transformed into Santa for thousands of children at Christmastime lived in Pāhala for 15 years while being a star Santa at such places as Ala Moana and in Hilo. Stanley Brooks passed away this year. His wife, Madelyne Maluhia "Babs" Brooks, remains in Pāhala and parents their grandson Kekui.



Stanley Brooks, AKA the Hawaiian Santa Claus.

"You're not the real Santa, you're Hawaiian," was the kidding from many children who sat on his lap at Ala Moana and in Hilo. Hawaiian Santa would reply that he was helping "Santa who was at the North Pole, but this Santa is from South Point," revealing his Ka'ū roots. He was born and raised in Wai'ōhinu to Ema Kealiki Holokahiki, the youngest of seven. His grandfather was Kuku Pa Martinson, who ran Kahuku Ranch for 31 years.

When children told this Hawaiian Santa they went to Nā'ālehu Elementary,

he would sometimes slip that he did too, to the astonishment of the keiki.

Stanley Brooks had many Santa names, from the Hawaiian Santa to Santa Stan. His wife said, "He loved children and could see the warmth of a child's heart through only a Santa's eyes." She said he was particularly drawn to children on this island who tended to ask for simple and inexpensive gifts. Many would ask for Santa to help others, like "Can grandma have a tree?" "Can mommy and daddy be happy?" "Can you find my daddy a job?" "Can you cure grandma's cancer?" The comments revealed children's understanding of hard times and their deep involvement with their families, said Babs Brooks. When Hawaiian Santa heard families pulling back from photos with Santa, he often called them over for the photos manuahi - no cost.

She said that her Santa's "love for Ka'ū ran deep, and he could never move too far away as he commuted from Ka'ū to Hilo and O'ahu" to be the Hawaiian Santa. Another practice for a decade was on each Christmas morning, he traveled to Hilo to Under His Wings Ministry to be with homeless children. He gave them gifts and encouragement. "That was one of his most cherished memories with children who were less fortunate," said his wife.

"His philosophy as Santa was that the children need to have hope in something, in this troubled world." Many were without religion, and "Santa was the only thing they could believe in. So he delivered that

hope and expressed his love for them." While most people saw Stanley Brooks as loving and compassionate with a quietness about him, Babb Brooks said, when Christmas came around, "it completely transformed him."

Babs Brooks will give a talk at Wailoa State Park on Wednesday, Dec. 13, for Hospice. She said she will focus on lessons from her husband on loving your family, giving children hope and serving others.

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