

Vol. 22, No. 12

About Kohala, For Kohala

December 22, 2023

Māhukona Land Preserved!

Story and photo by Toni Withington

The lands at Māhukona are saved forever from private development. On December 13, Hawaii Land Trust (HILT) announced its completion of the purchase of 642 acres with the aid of the people of Kohala and Na Kawai Wa'a.

The land stretches along more than two miles of the coast from Lapakahi State Historical Park to Kapa'a Park and spans six ahupua'a.

The former resort-zoned land is home to over 175 historic sites, including the famous Ko'a Heiau Holomoana navigational site. It is home to 13 endangered, threatened, or rare species of native plants, animals, and insects.

HILT staff, coordinated by Shae Kamakaala, spent four years in arranging the sale through a mainland holding company, then raising almost \$20 million to make the purchase possible.

"It was a huge undertaking,

See, Māhukona Page 2



Māhukona at sunset. With the recent Hawaii Land Trust purchase of 642 acres, the lands at Māhukona are now forever protected from private development.

Controversy Swirls Around Hāwī Nani



Image courtesy of Jessica Andrews

The proposed 45-lot Hāwī Nani subdivision is shown at the corner of Akoni Pule Highway and Ho'ea Road, adjacent to the first self-help housing development.

By Toni Withington

Nothing like a hot issue to bring out Kohala residents out to express their views about a proposed 45-lot subdivision in central Hāwī. Kohala Intergenerational Center was packed with more than 140 people on December 11 to hear about an affordable housing project called Hāwī Nani on 15 acres of land sand-

wiched between 31 existing house lots makai of Akoni Pule Highway.

Mark Lester, owner of the land listed as Hāwī Nani LLC on tax records, established early in the meeting by a show of hands that some people attending were interested in purchasing affordable housing and some were there to

See, Hāwī Nani Page 2

Nakahara Store Closes, End Of An Era



The Nakahara Store.

Story and photos by Tom Morse

There has been at least one Nakahara Store on the Big Island since 1908. The Hāwī store was a plantation store, purchased by the Nakahara's in 1951. It was run by

various family members until 1980, when Richard Nakahara became the store manager.

Richard passed away at this time last year. Mary has decided to

See, Nakahara Page 2

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Hāwī Nani, from Page 1

oppose the project or its location.

He spelled out the project as selling forty-five 10,000 square foot lots as "affordable," which qualifies each of them for a county water meter, despite the moratorium on new meters in North Kohala.

The 15 acres specified are a portion of a 33.6-acre parcel that Hāwī Nani owns. An earlier plan for the land showed the other 18.6 acres to be subdivided into larger lots and sold at the prevailing market price. When asked, Lester said the 18.6 acres would remain vacant while he developed the 100 percent affordable portion.

John Pipan, planning administrator for Land Planning Hawaii LLC, representing Hāwī Nani, described the process Hāwī Nani would have to go through to get subdivision approval. It would require a boundary change by the State Land Use Commission and zoning and subdivision approvals by the Leeward Planning Commission and the County Council. All these steps would allow for public input, Pipan said. He anticipated the planning process to be completed by May or June. Lester admitted that the reason for the meeting was "to ensure that the community has heard the proposal in a public presentation," which is one of the requirements of the permitting agencies.

Opening the audience to questions, Lester was met with a volley of sometimes-emotional concerns about the affordability of the lots, the traffic issues, whether the lots would be bought by Kohala residents or outsiders, as well as water and wastewater problems.

Lester said the State's ceiling price for an affordable lot is \$220,000. He suggested that the price per lot would come in below that figure. Nonetheless, the price mentioned brought gasps from the audience. One woman pointed out that a 20 percent downpayment on the lot alone would be more than most people looking for housing could afford. "But then we got to build the house?" she added.

Lester said the houses could be built by contractors or by the buyer. He suggested self-help housing construction like one adjoining neighborhood, but that would be left up to the new lot buyers, not

Hāwī Nani. "How are you going to keep mainlanders from getting all the lots?" another woman asked. Pipan explained that the County is in the process of changing Rule 11 of the code to prioritize purchase by Hawaii residents but admitted that the government can't make developers discriminate where the buyers come from.

Residents surrounding the proposed subdivision expressed concerns about buffers and the loss of views. Lester said there would be a buffer between the houses and the existing neighbors of 15 feet. The buffer was not shown on the map provided. More widespread concerns targeted the traffic problems that would be created by exits through the adjoining self-help housing area onto Akoni Pule Highway and a 50-foot-wide roadway easement onto the narrow Hāwī Road.

"Peak traffic when all those people are coming and going would create an impossible jam," one testifier said. Lester said he did "an elaborate traffic study of peak hour projections." Getting new water meters for the lots bothered one man who said, "It's not fair to give out 45 water meters one time when people here have been waiting 30 years to get one meter."

Wastewater proved another concern. Lester said each lot would require a septic tank and leach field. "Where can it go on a 10,000 square-foot-lot, with a house too," one man asked. Lester said he considered but rejected a community wastewater system.

Pipan said a regulation septic system would work within the required building setbacks for a house. "Even if we all say 'no' are you going ahead with the project?" one man asked. "Even if the County Council says 'yes' and we all say 'no,' will you still go ahead?"

Lester said he expected push-back from the community but was trying to meet the needs for more affordable housing.

In his introduction Lester said he bought 6,000 acres of land on the island, including this piece, in 2000. He said he has been working for ten years on the project. Hāwī Nani LLC, the listed owner, is identified on tax records as being from Burlingame, California. Hawaii business registration of the corporation has lapsed, according to State records.

Māhukona, from Page 1

quite daunting at times, but it was the strength and optimism of Kohala that kept us going," Kamakaala said. HILT will hold title to the land for the people of Kohala and Na Kalai Wā'a, a nonprofit that stewards the heiau and drydocks its canoe Makali'i on the land.

The purchase is the culmination of three decades of effort by many groups and individuals in Kohala to conserve the land.

The purchase was aided by an \$8 million conservation easement from the County of Hawaii, a \$4 million grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and over \$1 million from the State's Legacy Land Fund. Major foundations and conservationists were joined by residents from Kohala to Kona in raising the rest to save Māhukona.

HILT still needs to raise just over \$1.1 million to reach its total campaign goal to continue the stewardship role it has already undertaken, but the purchase price was met, and HILT managed to close the transaction by its contract deadline.

"Stewardship is so important. We look forward to stability for the place and learning how to be the

best stewards," Kamakaala said. Kohala native Keone Emiliano heads the stewardship of the land for HILT. Contributions can still be made at www.mahukona.org.

The acquisition project was referred to as the Māhukona Navigation and Ecological Complex. Remnants of history abound on the land, from ancient times, the period of the monarchy, international harbor, railroad central station, plantation era, plus centuries of fishing, gathering, and ocean recreation. In the 1990s a portion of the land was rezoned to allow for construction of a hotel, 18-hole golf course, tennis center and residences. When conditions of the rezoning could not be met, the then-owner Surety Kohala scaled back the plans. In 2012 the company lost ownership during a foreclosure.

The creditor that took over the land tried for years to sell it, but in early 2019 HILT approached the creditor about a conservation sale.

The land is now protected in perpetuity as the conservation restricts subdivision, limits development, and requires a living management plan and process that is informed by Hawaiian indigenous knowledge.

Nakahara, from Page 1



Mary Nakahara.

retire after running the store for the last year. She lives in Hāwī with her mother. She plans to spend more time with her sons, Ron and Lee.

Richard grew up in Hāwī. He lived with his parents in a house on Akoni Pule Highway. When he was four years old, his grandfather,

Minezo, told him that he would be expected to work in the family store.

He was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1968. Discharged after completing his two years of service, he returned to the University of Hawaii to earn his degree in Finance. He lived in the Philippines for five years. While in Manila, he met Mary Rose Ramos, who was studying to be a nurse at The University of the City of Manila. The courtship lasted four years. When they married in 1980, Mary joined him at the Hāwī Store.

For years the Hāwī Store operated from two separate buildings, one for groceries, and one for dry goods. For many years the U.S. Post Office's Hāwī Branch operated in a very small space next to the entrance to the store. The dry goods business closed in 2016. The Post Office relocated to that building.

The Hāwī Store lease has been purchased by Jake Chilton, owner of Sunshine Hardware in Hāwī. He plans to continue at the site, renaming it the Plantation Store.

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JANUARY 2024 LINE UP

1/4 THU TOMI ISOBE	1/18 THU TRENT BEAVER
1/5 FRI PRANKSTARS	1/19 FRI OFF DA CUFF
1/6 SAT JOHNNIE NESS	1/20 SAT FUEGO
1/7 SUN JOHN KEAWE	1/21 SUN FAIRIES & BRUISED BANANAS
1/11 THU SALT	1/24 WED DJ JENESIS
1/12 FRI HAMAJANG	1/25 THU UNCLE CHARLIE
1/13 SAT GREEN MACHINE	1/26 FRI BIG SWING
1/14 SUN CASTAWAYS	1/27 SAT JOHNNY SHOT
1/17 WED VAN PAEPEGHEM & WEATHER PERMITTING	1/28 SUN BROTHER NOLAND

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Peace On Earth



Community Photo by Karen Martinez

Hospitals Welcome Amy Feeley-Austin as Chief Operating Officer



Photo courtesy of Hawaii Health Systems Corporation
Amy Feeley-Austin, MS, MPH

within the Hawaii Health Network, directing the Quality Department at AlohaCare, and serving as the Executive Director for the First Accountable Care Organization with The Queen's Health System.

Feeley-Austin is also a staunch advocate for women's and children's health, particularly around issues related to perinatal health equity and integrated behavioral health and social services. Currently serving as the board president of Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition of Hawaii, Amy has been actively working to expand access to perinatal and keiki care across the islands for many years.

The Hawaii Health System Corporation's West Hawaii Region is excited to announce that Amy Feeley-Austin, MS MPH, has accepted the position of Chief Operating Officer. As of December 12, she is managing daily operations at Kona Community Hospital and Kohala Hospital. She will also be vital in managing current projects and future growth opportunities.

Feeley-Austin, a seasoned healthcare administrator and public health practitioner, has over 20 years of experience in healthcare and community-based public health sector. Her extensive background covers a series of executive roles, including leading an independent Clinically Integrated Network

"We welcome Amy as the Chief Operating Officer and the latest addition to our senior leadership team," said Clayton McGhan, CEO. "She is a valued member of our healthcare community with extensive healthcare expertise. As a longtime community member, Amy understands the challenges of rural healthcare and the unique nature of our public hospital system. We're very pleased that she is stepping into this leadership role."

Feeley-Austin resides in Kona with her husband, three children, and several spoiled cats. In her spare time, Amy enjoys baking for friends and is a triathlete. Her personal motto is to live boldly, with compassion and great love.

Join a team that cares about you — in and out of the office.

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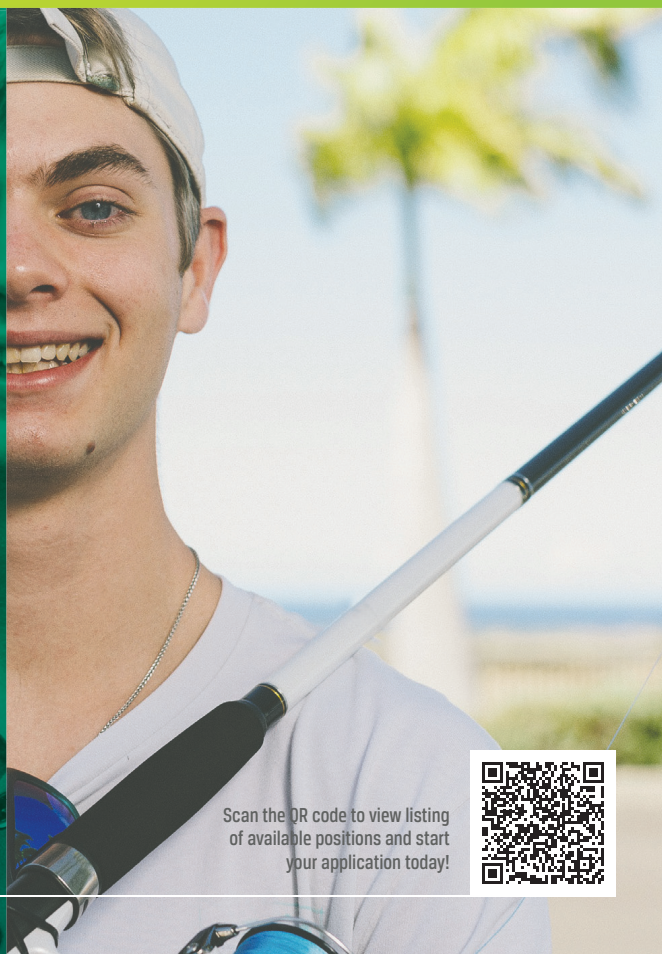
— Connor Moss

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Friends of Māhukona Cultural Presentation



Courtesy of Keone Emeliano

Friends of Māhukona met to hear guest speaker Kahuna Kuhikuhipu'uone Keone Kalawe (front row with ti leaf lei) share some of his vast knowledge on topics such as the building of heiau and papa holua (sleds).

By Jeffrey Coakley

The Friends of Māhukona invited Kahuna Kuhikuhipu'uone (professional architect) Keone Kalawe of Puna to be a guest speaker at a gathering at the Māhukona Railway House. Keone Kalawe, having been trained and mentored as a heiau and papa holua (sled) builder, shared his ike, or knowledge, to a gathering of approximately 40 people at the potluck event.

Noelani Rasmussen, chair of the Friends of Māhukona, started off the event by sharing the purpose of the Friends committee and the current status of having the Māhukona pavilion rebuilt. Afterward, MC Jeff Coakley introduced the guest speaker Keone Kalawe, a Kahuna Kuhikuhipu'uone and builder of heiau and holua sled runways.

Keone shared that Hawaiians built many heiau as a place of worship where mana or (divine energy) is transferred through ritual and prayer. Besides the Luakini or sacrificial heiau that most are familiar with of Mo'okini or Pu'ukohola, Hawaiians built other heiau. Those heiau were dedicated to agriculture, fishing and the hula. He noted that from Keauhou to Kona to Ka'u, 57 various heiau have been identified.

He also pointed out that they had discovered a he'e holua (the sport of lava sledding) slide nearby. The slide was used by the Hawaiians usually doing the Makahiki season as a competitive sport. Contestants would slide down on runways constructed of lava rocks and covered with ti leaves to provide a slippery surface. Then a competitor on his sled, or papa holua, that

was approximately 12 feet in length and six inches wide would hurtle down the slide. It was said the sled would reach speeds in excess of 40 miles per hour. For those who had the misfortune to crash, it would usually result in death from their injuries.

After the presentation and answering of questions, the participants then enjoyed a wide array of delicious food dishes and desserts. Many commented on the ulu cooked in coconut milk. The Friends are looking to sponsoring other native Hawaiian speakers to bring about a cultural awareness of Māhukona and the indigenous people who once lived there.

We want to thank Keone Emeliano and the Hawaii Land Trust for providing the venue for the event and to Lucas Stokes for providing

the sound system. The committee will be meeting at the Gym conference room on January 4, 2024, at 10 a.m. The public is welcome to attend.



Source: <https://healthandfitnesshistory.com/ancient-sports/hawaiian-holua-lava-sledding>
A man on a papa holua, or sled.

Tacos

Two pack: 16 Three Pack: 21
Served with housemade chips and organic black beans
- Sub in fries or salad for +2
- Sub tortilla for cheese shell +2

****Fish Tacos:** Fresh catch lightly seasoned and pan seared with cabbage slaw, cilantro-lime aioli and mango salsa ******

Kalua Pork Tacos: Local kalua style pulled-pork oozing with cheese, pickle-relish aioli, cabbage slaw and pineapple-salsa

Carne Asada Tacos: Carne asada smothered in love with cheddar cheese, cabbage slaw, lime crema and salsa fresca.

Tofu Tacos: Marinated Tofu lightly seasoned and pan seared with cabbage slaw, cilantro-lime aioli and mango salsa and a side of Vegan sweet potato salad. **VEGETARIAN**

Hot Dogs

Nuthin but the Dog in me: An all-beef classic hot dog wrapped up and ready to go. \$4

Hot Diggity Gill's Dog: An all-beef classic hot dog with pickle relish, onions, mustard & pepperoncinis. Served with fries. \$11

LA Charger Dog: An all-beef classic hot dog with applewood smoked thick cut bacon, jalapeños, caramelized onion and mustard. Served with fries. \$13

VEGAN Poodle: An all-plant based vegan dog served plain with a side Comes with a side of purple sweet potato salad. **VEGAN** \$13

Keiki Dog: An all-beef classic hot dog with nada on it so you can do it all yourself! Served with fries. \$8

Burgers

burgers served with fries unless vegan!

****Maui Venison Burger:** ½ pound Maui Nui venison, cooked in Ghee with cheddar cheese, homemade burger sauce and local lettuce, tomato and onion. Served on an organic sundog brioche. \$25

- Add bacon, caramelized onions or whatever you like for a few dallaz more.

****Auntie K's Fish Burger:** Our fresh catch, battered and fried in avocado oil on sundog brioche with tartar sauce, cabbage and slice of cheddahhh. \$19

VEGAN ULU burger: Our homemade ulu patty & macnut cheese with local lettuce, tomato and onion on a Sundog vegan bun with chipotle aioli and a side of our sweet potato salad. **VEGAN** \$20

Stacks and Wraps

Served stacked on fries or wrapped in a giant tortilla with our housemade chips and black beans.

****Hawaiian Superman:** Fresh Catch, furikake tallow fries, the most ono pineapple salsa, a blast of our irresistible tree-braddahs aioli and some fresh cilantro. \$21

Cali Vibes Carne Asada: Carne Asada, tallow fries, shredded cheeses and black beans with a drizzle of lime crema and some yummy salsa-fresca. \$21

****Also, DUh we have to say that; Consuming raw or uncooked seafood may increase your risk of foodborne illness**
Whisper your New Year's resolution to unlock January's awesome deals and of course nothing rude, vulgar and offensive

Ono Grindz

****Bahn Mi:** Fresh catch, pulled pork or tofu, seasoned in a delicious lemongrass marinade on top of a SunDog Sourdough Baguette with shredded cabbage, pickled carrot, aina-culture turmeric onion and cucumber topped with lemongrass aioli, fresh cilantro and sriracha. Comes with a side of purple sweet potato salad. ****** \$21

Fresh Catch Bowl:** Today's fresh catch topped with a yummy chipotle-aioli, cabbage slaw, mango salsa and black beans. Comes with some fries to brighten your day! *** \$21

Pulled Pork & Goat Quesadilla: Local Kalua Pork, Goat Cheese, Caramelized Onions, Classic Quesadilla Cheese blend, and some cilantro. Served with housemade chips, pineapple salsa and Lime-Crema. \$19

***Fish n' Chips:** Today's fresh catch in chilled beer batter fried in avocado oil with a mound of our tallow fries, homemade tartar sauce and a lemon wedge to kick it up a notch. \$21

SIDES

Chips and Salsa.....4
Standard Fries.....6
Animal Fries.....8
Kanaka Fries.....8
Side Taco.....7
Extra Aioli.....1
Avo Mayo.....1

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Letters

Shout Out to Karen Miller!

Every other Monday at Kohala High School during fall semester 2023, the music room has been transformed into the Kohala High School "Stitching Post."

"Resource" classes are non-credit, just-for-fun courses scheduled twice a month on Mondays. I wanted to offer something a little different, fun, and "crafty" this semester so I asked Karen Miller if she would be willing to volunteer to teach students to sew.

Not only did Karen agree, but she replaced the school's older, rusty machines with two brand new ones. Then she provided each student with a beautiful pair of sewing shears and a smorgasbord of sewing and quilting notions. As if this wasn't enough, Karen also made each student a fabric sewing case to organize their tools, much like a chef's knife roll.

Students learned to use the



Photo by Adrienne Cherry

Karen Miller teaching Kohala High School students how to sew.

machines, work with rotary cutters, and quilt a pot holder with bias fabric binding.

One windy day last month the power went out, so Karen taught students how to hand embroider. We spent an afternoon reminiscent of a bygone era: sitting around the

table near the windows so we could see, chatting and stitching, the hum of fluorescent lights replaced by the whistles of Kohala wind. A special and lovely way to end the day.

Adrienne Cherry
Music Educator

Hawai'i State House of Representatives Update

From the Desk of District 7 Representative David Tarnas

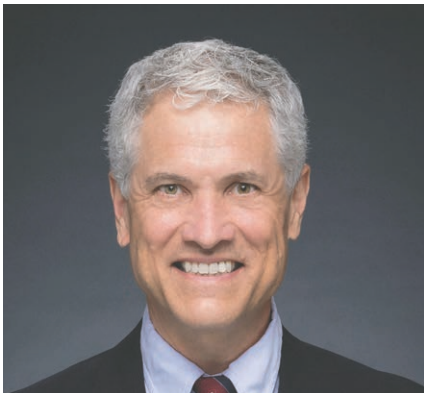


Photo courtesy of David Tarnas
Representative David Tarnas speaks for North Kohala as a member of the Hawai'i State House of Representatives.

Aloha. For years, wildfires have been an unfortunate fact of life for many residents of West Hawaii, especially in the South and North Kohala districts. That's why there are so many "Firewise" communities in this region in which residents have taken specific actions to reduce the risk of wildfires in their neighborhoods and individual homes. That's also why this district is home to the nonprofit Hawaii Wildfire Management Organization, which was formed by concerned residents and professionals involved in wildfire management and first response organizations. Then came August 8 and the days that followed when major wildfires burned on Hawai'i Island and Maui, resulting in the destruction of Lahaina town. This brought statewide attention to this long-standing risk to life and the property of many residents throughout the State.

In response to this tragedy, the State House of Representatives quickly responded by establishing six legislative working groups to focus on major topics related to these August wildfires, conduct research, have public hearings to listen to experts and residents, and develop reports with recommendations for legislative action. These working groups include:

- Environmental Remediation Working Group
- Food, Water and other Supplies Working Group
- Jobs and Business Working Group
- Schools Working Group
- Shelter Working Group
- Wildfire Prevention Working Group

Because of my professional work as an environmental planner and as former Chair of the House Water and Land Committee, I was asked to serve as a member of the Wildfire Prevention Working Group. This article provides a summary of the findings and lists the main categories of the recommendations of this working group. For more details, I urge readers to go to the Wildfire Prevention Working Group website on the Hawaii legislative website www.capitol.hawaii.gov. In the Legislature tab at the leftmost upper corner, choose House from the dropdown menu. There, under the State House special committee section, you will see the Wildfire Prevention Working Group.

Click on the text to access the documents related to the work of this group, including the Draft Report. The Working Group is currently working to produce a final report with recommendations, which I will describe in more detail in next month's article.

Findings:
Wildfires are a growing threat in Hawaii. The annual area burned by wildfires in Hawaii has increased 300 percent between 1904 to 2022. In the decade following 2006, almost 1,000 wildfires burned an average of 20,000 acres a year statewide, with some years reaching closer to 45,000 acres. Large fires, consuming greater than 1,000 acres, have occurred on all islands and happen multiple times each year across the State. Every year, about 0.50 percent of Hawaii's total land area burns, which is greater than the proportion of land area burned across the entire U.S. mainland (0.30 percent).

People are the primary causes of wildfires in Hawaii. Ninety-nine percent of wildfires are caused by human ignitions. Natural causes of ignition are exceptionally rare. Accidental ignitions (75 percent) are a common cause of wildfires, including campfires, equipment, vehicles, downed power lines, and fireworks. Twenty-six percent (about 1,000,000 acres) of Hawaii's total land area has been invaded by non-native, fire-prone grasses and shrubs. Guinea grass, fountain grass, molasses grass, and buffel-grass can form continuous fuel beds, ignite easily, attain extremely high fine fuel loads, and are capable of growing back more vigorously in the post-fire environment than the majority of native vegetation. The grass-fire cycle perpetuates the problem.

There are numerous current challenges to wildfire prevention and response in Hawaii. There is a significant lack of funding for wildfire prevention and response, with Hawaii spending less than other states, budgeting only \$3.2 million per year on average over the last decade. Declines in active agriculture land use have reduced maintenance and access to roads, water sources, equipment, and assistance to support firefighting. Wildfires are a threat to more homes due to the increase in residential development on former agricultural land with fire hazard issues. Hawaii has not adopted building standards that would better protect structures against wildfires. And most of Hawaii's communities do not yet have well-developed and comprehensive emergency preparedness and disaster response plans.

Hawaii has some strengths to build on for wildfire prevention and response. Good working relationships have been established across agencies, engaged communities, educational resources, and community-driven plans. Hawaii has local and indigenous knowledge

See HI Rep Update , Page 6

Future KMN Deadlines

It's important for the Kohala Mountain News to receive ads and news submissions by the following deadlines. Otherwise, submissions may not be accommodated.

January Deadlines
Ads and News: 1/12/24
Calendar: 1/19/24
Distribution: 1/26/24

February Deadlines
Ads and News: 2/9/24
Calendar: 2/16/24
Distribution: 2/23/24

Our purpose is to enhance and strengthen the community by fostering continuous communication and understanding among the various cultures, residents and constituents.

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Letters to the Editor and Viewpoint articles must address issues affecting North Kohala and be accompanied by the author's name, address and telephone number. Letters and Viewpoints are subject to editing, and shorter submissions will receive preference for publication.

For a twelve month subscription, please send your check for \$36, made out to the Kohala Mountain News, P.O. Box 639, Kapa'au HI 96755. Be sure to include a note stating the name and mailing address of the recipient.

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Kohala Mountain News
P.O. Box 639,
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County Council Update

From the Desk of District 9 Councilmember Cindy Evans



Councilmember Cindy Evans represents North Kohala as part of Hawai'i County Council District 9. (Courtesy Cindy Evans)

Happy New Year! May your year be prosperous and joyful.

I'm writing this message thinking about the connections we have in our community and across our island and the state. We have been touched by the loss of life and property in Lahaina in so many ways, and in 2024 we will continue to respond, evaluate and recover.

As your Councilmember I continue to look for better ways to address your concerns, learn from you, and weigh in on changes being proposed by the County Administration or by other Councilmembers. What I have worked on the past two months is now ready to bring forth to the community. Mahalo in advance to those in the community who will participate in these two upcoming events. Please mark your calendars.

January 23, Tuesday, 9:00 a.m.

What: Committee Hearing on proposed bill prohibiting commercial bicycle tours from using Kohala Mountain Road and the Akoni Pule Highway.

How: You can testify remotely or submit written testimony. Please call our District office (808-889-6512) for instructions.

January 29, Monday, 5:00 p.m.

What: Meeting with Director Steve Pause at Kapa'au, Former Judiciary Building (location of Dis-

trict 9 Council office).

Purpose: Discuss speed limits on Akoni Pule Highway, which is now under County control. The State and County swapped roads.

There is a huge need for County to start the Animal Shelter back up in Waimea. Parker Ranch and the new Animal Control and Protection Agency are working together to get the County back on property to rebuild and renovate the facility that was recently used as a shelter.

Knowing the need, the County Administration is responding as quickly as possible.

Mahalo to everyone for adopting pets and donating time and resources to help families struggling with rising costs of veterinarian care or for your assistance with sheltering of stray/unwanted domestic animals.

Mark Lester recently held a community meeting on proposed affordable housing project near downtown Hāwī (see story on page 1.) I look forward to exploring the concerns of the neighborhood and the reception of the community as a whole to this proposed new housing development. It is important to have community engagement now and at every step along the process.

Jacob, Jessica and I are grateful for your support and engagement with us during our first year of office.

We moved the District office from Waimea to Kapa'au and have office hours there on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, along with office hours in Waimea on Thursday and Waikoloa one afternoon a month. This arrangement is working and meeting my goal of learning the challenges of delivering County services and programs to rural communities.

As we all know, Kona, Hilo and Puna are the key communities on the island due to population, growth and natural hazards. However, I believe we are successfully bringing attention and resources to District 9 and the needs of Waimea, Waikoloa, the Kohala Coast and North Kohala.

Take care. Blessings to you and your 'ohana.

HI Rep Update, from Page 5

to apply to fuels management. The State also has strong science and technology fundamentals, including high-resolution fire history data, current and future fire probability maps, fuels maps, climate data, post-fire best practices, and fuels mitigation. Hawaii also has a unique and evolving law regarding water usage, which holds that water remains in the public trust.

The report offered numerous recommendations in seven main topic areas: (1) Reducing Ignitions, (2) Reducing Fuel Loads, (3) Community Engagement, (4) Protecting Communities, (5) Wildfire Suppression, (6) Post-Fire Response, and (7) Wildfire Research. The Wildfire Prevention Working Group is currently working to finalize our report's recommendations and legislative proposals to incorporate input obtained

in public testimony and comments. In next month's article, I will provide more details about the Wildfire Prevention Working Group's final recommendations and legislative proposals.

All the State House committees will prioritize hearing the bills to implement recommendations from all six working groups. Reducing the risk of wildfires in Hawaii is one of my top priorities. I look forward to hearing from you about any of these bills or any other community concerns. Contact my office at 808-586-8510 or email me at reptarnas@capitol.hawaii.gov. You can also subscribe to my regular e-newsletter by going to bit.ly/reptarnas-signup.

Mahalo for allowing me to continue serving as your State Representative. Please have a safe and happy holiday season!

SAVE THE DATE!

Community Meeting on Pololū Trailhead



The State Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife, and their consultant, Townscape, is developing a Draft Plan for the Pololū Trailhead based on extensive consultations with individuals from the North Kohala community. The Draft Plan will include background information on Pololū, a detailed summary of the issues and concerns in the valley and at the Trailhead, and alternative scenarios for the Trailhead that aim to mitigate the issues raised by the community.

Townscape will be hosting a community meeting to present the Draft Plan to the community and to gather feedback. The Draft Plan will be available for review on the project website in January. Please see website info and QR code below.

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU AT THE MEETING!

Tuesday January 30, 2024
from 5:00 - 7:00 PM

Kohala Intergenerational Center
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For more information please contact:



Jackson Bauer
DLNR DOFAW
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jackson.m.bauer@hawaii.gov



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Kohala Oral History Project Launches Afterschool Program



Filming for the Kohala Oral History Project.

Story and photo by Jocelyn Manuel
Kohala Oral History Project (KOHP) launches "Kohala Voices: Youth Documentary Film Program" in January, in collaboration with Kohala Unupa'a, a youth program that connects students to cultural, historical and environmental resources in North Kohala.

KOHP is dedicated to preserving and sharing the rich cultural heritage of Kohala, and this new program is just one of many exciting initiatives they have in the works.

The program will train Kohala students on oral history and filmmaking, to capture stories of kupauna in our community. Students working in groups will be able to choose a kupuna to interview to record their stories. We encourage

families to nominate students and kupauna to be part of this rich cultural program.

Amoo Ching Kainoa, director of Kohala Unupa'a, will be managing Kohala Voices, working with instructors from UH Mānoa's Center for Oral History and local filmmaker Bryan Campbell. The program runs from January to May and is made possible in part by the Oscar L. & Ernestine H. Armstrong Advised Fund of the Hawai'i Community Foundation. Kohala Resilience Hub, Kohala Reunion 2025, and North Kohala Community Resource Center have also been wonderful supporters of the project. Email kohalaoralhistoryproject@gmail.com to nominate a student or kupuna for the program.

November 29 NKCDP Advisory Group Meeting Minutes

By Lynda Wallach

John Winter, chair of the North Kohala Community Development Plan (NKCDP) Advisory Group called November 29 meeting to order and, after thanking the public for their attendance and welcoming Councilperson Cindy Evans, proceeded to the reports of the sub-groups.

Jack Hoyt, reporting for the Affordable Housing Group, said that the developer of Hāwī Nani now hopes to get approval for 40-45 affordable lots on 15 acres of his 33-acre property on the Hilo side of Hāwī Hill Road and makai of Akoni Pule Highway.

They have also been looking at the County General Plan and how it relates to the North Kohala CDP and to Kohala's affordable housing needs. The housing section of the Plan describes affordable housing in terms of the needs of Hilo and Kona, not rural areas such as Kohala.

It also does not address senior or workforce housing, nor does it say how "affordable housing" will be defined.

The group agreed to go online individually with comments on the Plan's housing section and to decide on comments from the group. The group meets the second Wednesday of the month at 9:00 a.m. at the Pomaika'i Cafe.

Maya Parish said that the Agriculture Group met with Councilmember Cindy Evans about the priorities and plans that have come out of the visioning event. Evans suggested the possibility of the group meeting with Senator Gabbard, the chair of the State Agriculture Committee, Representative Kahaloa, a member of the State Agriculture Committee, and Senator Richards, who represents Kohala in the Senate, to discuss statewide agricultural priorities. The group meets the first Thursday of the month at 4:30 p.m. at the Kohala Food Hub.

Joe Carvalho of the Community Access Group said that funds have been approved to go to Kohala Lihikai for the stewardship of Hapu'u, Kapania and Kaiholena but that they still have not received any money.

Four new stewards are being sought for four-hour shifts on weekends and weekdays at Pololū. The group has been working with Growth Management in support of a County takeover of the Old Coast Guard Road from the U.S. Department of Interior.

A detailed article on the Old Coast Road can be found in the November issue of this paper. The group meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 4:30 p.m. at the

See NKCDP Page 8

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NKCDP, from Page 7

Senior Center.

Boyd Bond reported from the **Cultural and History Advisory Group**. They have agreed that their ultimate goal is to protect the culture and history of Kohala for Kohala. They have begun updating the list of historic sites from 1984. Some of the sites on the list have already been lost.

They intend to act as the point of contact for any kind of development or land-use questions that may arise in North Kohala.

Government entities and others with inquiries should communicate with the group before any action is taken. A member has offered to apply for the open Kohala position on the County Land Commission.

They encourage all cultural groups to add their important sites to the group's historic site list. Their immediate work also includes finding a suitable candidate for the Kohala position on the Burial Council and creating a statement of policy and practice for when burial sites are discovered.

The next meeting will be on January 8 at 10:00 a.m. at the Hawaii Island Retreat.

Withington said that the **Growth Management** group has also been working with Public Access on the issue of the proposed Hawi Nani subdivision.

The group agreed to talk to Councilperson Evans about the subdivision and their concerns regarding water, wastewater and roadway access and about conservation easements for greenspace buffers and community parks. They also expressed the need for an assessment of the effects on the view planes of the surrounding homeowners.

The developer expressed the desire to hold a public meeting with the community on December 11. Councilperson Evans and the Growth Management, Affordable Housing and Public Access groups all objected to this date because of the short notice.

Evans stressed to the developer the need to work with the community, which means giving adequate time for the meeting to be publicized in this paper and on the various bulletin boards.

The developer chose to move ahead with the December 11 meeting so plans were made to publicize

it by all means possible. The group meets the second Wednesday of the month at 5:00 p.m. at the Senior Center.

Allen Brown of the **Health and Wellness group** said that Vibrant Hawaii will have two First Aid/CPR trainers in Kohala and has made supplies available for the training. John Winter encouraged everyone to take the training. The group meets the first Friday of the month at the Hub.

John Winter, reporting for **Parks, Roads, Erosion Control and View-planes** said that the State Historic Preservation Division is still holding up approval for the demolition of the pavilion at Māhukona. The group meets the third Wednesday of the month at 5:00 p.m. at the Senior Center.

The **Utilities group** held another informational meeting with Ramzi Mansour, the Director of the County Department of Environmental Management, regarding the State's mandate to have all cesspools converted to septic systems by 2050. Details on the conversion mandate can be found in the October issue of this paper.

The County is developing a Master Plan to aid people with conversion and options on a community-by-community basis. The plan should be on the County website in six to eight months. The State Department of Health already has some information at <https://health.Hawaii.gov/wastewater/home/ccwg>.

Mansour suggested that people wait until the County Master Plan is completed before taking action. The group meets the second Wednesday of the month at 3:30 p.m. at the Senior Center.

The **Advisory Group** as a whole will be preparing and prioritizing a list of capital improvement project recommendations for Kohala and submitting it to the County.

The Advisory Group voted to change its meeting date to the first Tuesday of the month.

Information on the work of the Advisory Group and the various subgroups can be found on their website: kohalacommunityplan.org.

Community members are urged to attend the monthly Advisory Group meeting. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 2, at 4:30 p.m. at the Senior Center.

NKCDP AGENDA

MEETING TIME: Tuesday, January 2, 2024, at 4:30 p.m.
PLACE: Senior Center (behind the statue), Kapa'au

AGENDA ANNOUNCEMENTS

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS
Kohala residents are encouraged to attend and voice their opinion on issues. They may even recommend actions and suggest subjects not presently addressed.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS (Please see accompanying article on issues being addressed.)
Affordable Housing - Addresses the housing needs for families in Kohala.
Agriculture - The future of agriculture in our area.
Community Access - Exploring ways for Kohala residents to have more mauka and makai access.
Growth Management - Addresses zoning, permits and variance requests and how they affect us.
Health and Wellness - Addresses Kohala health care infrastructure and emergency response.
Parks, Roads, View Planes and Erosion Control - Addresses many infrastructure problems and projects.
Utilities - Addresses all utility and waste stream issues.
Investigatory Subcommittee on Re-zoning and Agricultural Property Tax Rates - Works on Kohala input to the ongoing County reassessment of zoning and agricultural tax rate reduction criteria.

NEW BUSINESS PUBLIC INPUT AND AGENDA SUGGESTIONS FOR THE NEXT MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

County Council Approves Old Coast Guard Road Acquisition

By Toni Withington

The County Council voted unanimously to call on the County Administration to enter negotiations with the U.S. Department of the Interior to acquire Old Coast Guard Road. The resolution, introduced by Councilmember Cindy Evans, would resolve a decades-long question regarding maintenance of the road that once serviced a Coast Guard Loran Station at 'Upolu, which closed in the 1990s. Drivers have continued to use the road to access the ocean and historic sites, though it has deteriorated to an alarming condition. The resolution calls for the road to be transferred "in fair condition."

Five community members, including four who live along the road, testified in favor of the resolution at the December 6 meeting, as did 19 others in written testimony. Also supporting was the Council's Committee on Legislative Appro-

priations and Acquisitions, which voted to send it to the Council at a meeting last month.

Councilmember Evans thanked those who offered community support and said the testifiers "really articulated themselves well."

Copies of the resolution will be sent to Mayor Mitch Roth; the heads of the County Departments of Planning, Parks and Public Works; and the Corporation Counsel. Other departments to be involved within the Department of the Interior are the Federal Lands Division and the National Parks Service.

The transfer would involve the roadway easement from Akoni Pule Highway to the red cinder road servicing Mo'okini heiau and the Kamehameha Birthsite. The remaining road and the parking lot by the ocean are privately owned. Transfer of those are contingent on the County's acceptance of the mauka portion.



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Partnership Promotes a More Vibrant Local Food Economy in Kohala

By Fern Gavelek

A new collaboration between the Mauna Kea Resort and the Kohala Food Hub (KFH) is stepping up the use of food grown by Kohala farmers.

The Hawai-based KFH aggregates and markets food for small and mid-scale farmers who use regenerative and organic management practices. The fresh food is sold to island resorts, restaurants and residents who purchase a weekly Multi-Farm CSA subscription or buy food through KFH's Online Marketplace.

"I think there's a special bond between Mauna Kea Resort and the Kohala community due to our proximity and that a large number of Kohala residents work at the resort, says Maya Parish, director of KFH.

And while the Mauna Kea Resort—with its Mauna Kea Beach Hotel and Westin Hāpuna Beach Resort—is already a leader in local food procurement, the push to buy more from KFH came about during a March 2023 gathering of the North Kohala Community Development Plan's Agricultural Subcommittee meeting.

During the meeting, Parish first discussed a shared vision of stimulating more local food production with Mauna Kea Resort VP of Operations Craig Anderson and Executive Chef Peter Abarcar Jr. With the idea to increase the resort's Kohala-based food purchasing, subsequent meetings detailed the specifics of local purchasing, including the resort's needs, products it currently sources from the Continental U.S. and those the resort would like to replace with local ones.

"On the food hub's end, our goals are to create consistent standing resort orders that our farmers can count on and plant out for," details Parish. "This will stimulate



Photo courtesy Kohala Food Hub

Cassidy Thornton (left) and Maya Parish of Kohala Food Hub pack an order for delivering to the Mauna Kea Resort. Parish says the goal of KFH is to create consistent standing resort orders that Kohala farmers can count on and plant for.

more regional food production, increasing revenue for our farmers and providing consistent quality and volume that the resort can depend on."

In addition, another identified goal includes providing an example to other resorts in the Kona and Kohala Districts to also "join more deeply" in supporting locally based farmers with their significant collective purchasing power.

"We were always heavy into purchasing local but it seemed after COVID, we had to do everything in our power to strengthen food security and the way we can do that is through our dollars," notes Todd Oldham, Mauna Kea Resort food and beverage director. "When we buy local products, the money stays here and helps someone keep their land and expand to grow more food."

Oldham, a former chef who grew up with an agricultural background in Pennsylvania, shares a resort mission is to increase the use

of local food. "It's not just a verbal think; we do strategy sessions on how to increase local food usage, what steps we need to take and the initiatives needed."

With the collaboration starting in August, Mauna Kea Resort is currently purchasing around 450 pounds of produce weekly from KFH, initially using what farmers already had growing—grapefruit, dragon fruit, navel oranges, starfruit, bananas, and green leaf and romaine lettuces.

Now KFH is asking its farmer network to plant out crops specifically to supply the resort's stated needs—carrots, eggplant, broccoli, cabbage and green beans— while negotiating price points that work for all.

"Challenges include meeting price points for fresh produce that is offered by distributors and farmers based in the continental U.S. that operate at a larger scale," details Parish. "They aren't having to pay the high prices here for energy,

water, inputs, labor and fuel."

KFH is also tasked with building up enough redundancy and reliability within its island-wide producer network to fulfill resort orders as farmers can experience crop loss due to weather, pests, the high cost of housing and lack of workforce.

Chef Peter Abarcar Jr. says a challenge of buying local is educating his culinary staff on the benefits of using new products. "Sometimes the cookie cutter tomato or unblemished banana is necessary, but fresh, local food tastes better and is better for you," he emphasizes, pointing out food traveling from the Mainland can be chemically altered to increase its longevity. "Local food has a better shelf life, better carbon footprint and helps our local economy."

Chef Abarcar, who hails from Hawai'i Island, claims using local products is a learning curve for his international chefs, but once they are open to it, they find there's something special in using products grown within our host community. He recalls well-known Hawai'i Chef Alan Wong saying, "I love to bring in ammunition to the kitchen, in the form of local products, to challenge the mind."

Citing the example of introducing locally grown pipinola to staff, Chef Abarcar relays how he tells staff all the ways the squash can be cooked and used, and while it excites them, he admits "sometimes using something new can be daunting."

"I encourage them to use local tree tomatoes, Surinam cherries, 'ulu (breadfruit), hōi'o (fern shoots) and local proteins," continues Abarcar. "My personal goal, and that of the resort, is to replace food shipped in from outside of the Hawaiian Islands, as much as possible, with

See Food Hub, Page 10

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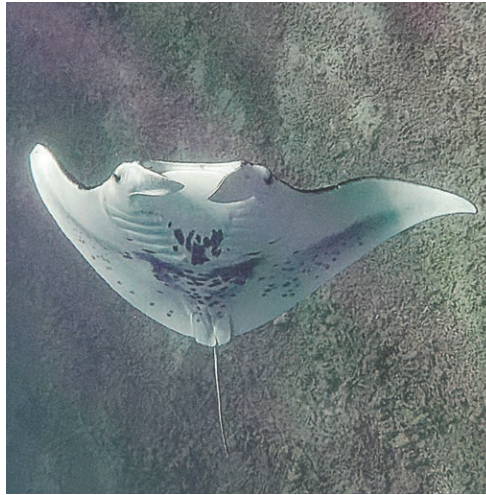
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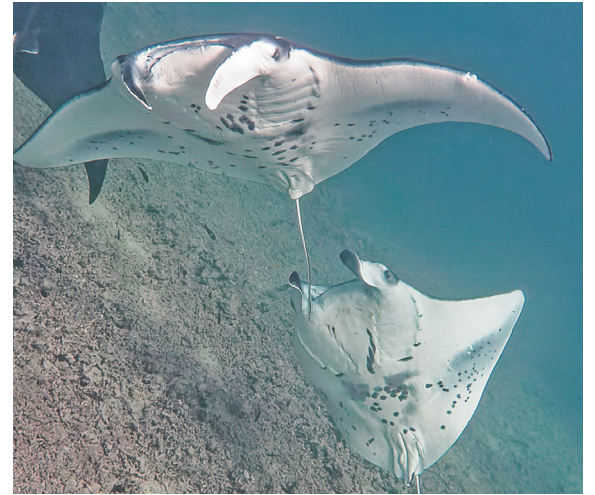
The Devil Rays of Māhukona



The courtship at Keauhou.



The manta named Lightening.



The mantas named Big Birtha and Vallaray.

Part 2 of 2
Story and photos by Wendy Noritake

Have you ever done the manta ray night dives in Kona or the Mauna Kea Beach Hotel? The first time I tried was in the late 1990s with Jack's Diving Locker, a favorite dive operator in Kona. There were probably twelve or fourteen of us divers who formed a circle on the

bottom and shone our lights toward the surface. Two mantas showed up to eat the krill that were drawn to our lights. A large moray eel, who wasn't welcomed, swam across our legs, forcing us to stop and make sure it wasn't going to bite. Recently, I've learned that there's an undulated moray eel who has been showing up at the Kona manta

night dives for the last ten years. His name is Frank. He uses the lights to catch fish and can be seen swimming among the divers as he searches for fish food. Frank's video can be watched at: mantarayadvocates.com/frank-the-cherished-moray-eel.

The manta ray night dives and snorkels have become a huge commercial enterprise for Hawai'i Island. A few years ago at another birthday celebration, Val and I attended the manta ray night dive in Kona, which had become a Cirque du Soleil-type of theatrical production with crates of lights pointing to the surface and a huge circle of scuba divers ringing the bottom. The mantas came in for the krill, swooping close to the lights and sometimes brushing our heads as they swam past. The snorkelers at the surface hung onto surfboards that had built-in lights pointing downward. I counted thirteen boats that night, so there must have been 250 people or more in the water. More than ten mantas may show

up because the lights bring in the food they eat, but the activity may soon be regulated in the number of dive/snorkeler operators and the numbers of people, the times they can be there, and safety protocols on board.

I've taken my daughter and granddaughter on the manta ray night swim at the Mauna Kea Beach Hotel. Years ago, the resort had placed bright lights above the small cove to bring in the mantas for customer viewing. But more recently, on that night with my family, three mantas came into the cove to feed. Snorkelers from the beach as well as those from a tourist boat invaded the small space. Too many people were screaming and yelling with excitement as they hung onto their surf boards or madly splashed about. They were also kicking the mantas with their feet. I watched until I couldn't take it any longer, so I screamed, "Stop kicking the mantas! They're only trying to feed!"

Food Hub, from Page 9

locally grown."

And while Chef acknowledges some products, like large quantities of russet potatoes, will need to be shipped in, he wants to keep encouraging chefs to use local products so farmers can grow them.

"We have got to be able to survive on what we can grow here and diversification of crops is how we do it," Abarcar concludes.

Douglass Adams, director of Hawai'i County's Department of Research and Development, says the strengthened partnerships between local agricultural produc-

ers and the visitor industry is one of the many positive outcomes of county-wide and regional food system planning processes.

"We commend the commitment and dedication of the farmers, chefs and resort leadership that enables these collaborations to flourish," notes Adams. "We recognize the unique and important role that food hubs on our island play in streamlining marketing and distribution for farmers, providing local products for resorts and restaurants, and increasing food access in our communities."

To reach Kohala's food hub, go to www.kohalafoodhub.com.

See Mantas on Page 11

SUNSHINE

"HAPPINESS"

STORY BY KALA CORP
ILLUSTRATED BY KRISTI KRANZ



EH, LA...YOU KNOW HOW US MENEHUNE LIVE FOREVER?

YA, WE WAS HERE BEFORE HERE WAS HERE!

SO, WE'VE SEEN PLENTY HUMANS TRY FOR FIND HAPPINESS AND CONTENTMENT IN THEIR LIVES

YA, BUT MOST PEOPLE DON'T LEAVE THIS WORLD VERY HAPPY

THEY SPEND THEIR LIVES CHASING WEALTH AND POWER ONLY TO FIND THESE THINGS DON'T "BRING" CONTENTMENT. I KEEP HOPING THEY'LL FIGURE OUT THAT "KINDNESS IS THE ROAD TO HAPPINESS">

YA, KA...I HOPE SO TOO

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DAI'S HAU



Mantas, from Page 9

Lie on the surface as flat as you can, but don't kick them!" It was obvious, no snorkel etiquette instructions were given by the hotel or tour operators about encountering mantas.

Mantas are related to sharks—Elasmobranchs (flat, plate-like gills), and both have cartilaginous skeletons. The eagle rays and occasional sting ray we see at Māhukona have their mouths on the underside of their bodies. The mantas' mouths are at the front of the body. Eagle rays and stingrays have a barb or "stinger" at the base of their tails, but mantas do not. For defense, manta rays rely on size, speed and agility. Their predators are sharks and humans.

I've yet to see this at Māhukona, but on a freediving outing at Keauhou with Matt, I encountered a courtship train of three manta males following a female. Females mature around ten to twelve years of age, and males mature around six to nine years. Usually, the male that can outlast the others when following the female wins her over. The foursome looked like they were dancing, one behind the other, swooping and diving as she moved forward. The female manta keeps a fertilized egg within her body. After a year, she gives birth to a live, fully-developed baby manta who comes out folded up like a burrito and is then on its own with no parental guidance. She only gives birth once every two or three years.

Keller Laros, founder of Manta Pacific Research Foundation, who has helped to get Federal regulation to protect our mantas, has said that around our island, there are only about 300 mantas total, with about 100 females to populate the species. The island of Maui has about 500 mantas, with only about 135 females. Slow growth, a long gestation period, and only producing one pup every two or three years means that they need our protection.

The coastal manta rays have unique black and white markings on their undersides, much like the "tiles" on the face of the honu or the dorsal fin of an orca. Divers can take photos of the manta's belly showing these markings and submit them to www.mprf.net/identification/report-a-sighting.html for identification. If it's a new manta, you get to name it! I sent three manta photos from the Keauhou dive to the link and got an immediate reply: Lightning, Big Bertha, and Vallaray. All the mantas were known to the Manta Ray Identification Project. Next time, I'll look more closely at the Māhukona mantas for their markings.

The manta sightings give us the opportunity to show our care and concern for these remarkable creatures who live in our island waters. I am blessed to be able to see mantas as often as I do. It's a treat to see these magnificent beauties in the wild, and knowing how few there are, it makes this encounter even more extraordinary.

Green Gold: The Environmental and Economic Benefits of Growing Guadua Bamboo

By DeeAnn Dominick

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in sustainable and eco-friendly alternatives to traditional construction materials. One such solution that has gained prominence is Guadua bamboo, the largest neotropical bamboo, a versatile and fast-growing plant that holds the key to both environmental conservation and economic prosperity.

Environmental Impact

Guadua bamboo, native to South America, stands out for its exceptional environmental benefits. Unlike traditional timber, bamboo can be harvested in just three to five years, compared to the decades it takes for trees to mature. This rapid growth makes bamboo an excellent renewable resource, reducing pressure on natural forests and contributing to carbon sequestration.

Bamboo is a champion in absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen, making it a crucial player in the fight against climate change. Additionally, its root system helps prevent soil erosion, promoting environmental stability in regions prone to degradation.

Guadua bamboo's positive environmental impact extends beyond carbon sequestration. It acts as a significant carbon sink, storing carbon dioxide in its fibers even

after harvesting. Furthermore, its unique properties make it suitable for wastewater treatment, improving soil properties, and stabilizing slopes, riverbanks, and areas prone to erosion.

Versatility in Construction

The versatility of Guadua bamboo extends to its applications in construction. Builders and architects are increasingly turning to this remarkable material for its strength, flexibility, and aesthetic appeal. Guadua bamboo boasts a tensile strength comparable to steel, making it an ideal candidate for various structural elements in buildings.

From houses to bridges and even furniture, Guadua bamboo offers a lightweight yet robust alternative to conventional materials. Its flexibility allows for innovative and earthquake-resistant designs, particularly relevant in areas such as ours that are prone to seismic activity.

Economic Opportunities

The cultivation of Guadua bamboo presents a myriad of economic opportunities. The plant requires minimal maintenance, making it a low-cost and high-yield investment for farmers and entrepreneurs. The short growth cycle

See Bamboo, Page 12



With wonder and joy we reflect on all the awesome work that the Resource Center and our projects have done in Kohala, our cup is full. We hope yours is as well.

May your holiday be filled with ono food, good friends and the love of 'ohana.

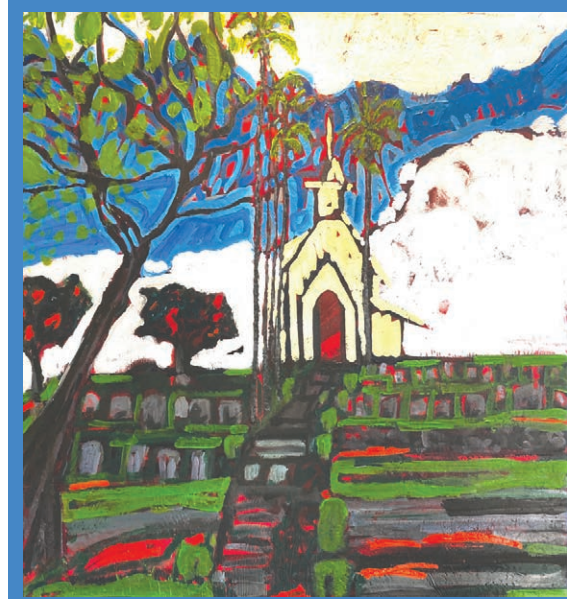


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808.889.5523



HAMAKUA-KOHALA HEALTH

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**Art Show
Kohala Art
Cooperative
Jan 6th
6-8PM**

**Faces &
Places
Featuring
The Hart's.
Music, pupus
and
local artists!**

Bamboo, from Page 11

allows for frequent harvests, creating a sustainable income stream for those involved in bamboo cultivation. As demand for sustainable building materials continues to rise, the bamboo industry has the potential to generate employment and stimulate local economies. Furthermore, the export of Guadua bamboo products can contribute to international trade, showcasing the economic viability of environmentally conscious practices.

Windbreaking Benefits

One often overlooked advantage of Guadua bamboo is its effectiveness as a natural windbreak. The dense and sturdy bamboo groves act as a barrier, helping to mitigate the impact of strong winds and protect vulnerable ecosystems. This makes Guadua bamboo an invaluable resource for our area, and regions prone to hurricanes, typhoons, or other adverse weather conditions, contributing to the overall resilience of the environment.

Local Availability in Hāwi

For those interested in incorpo-

rating Guadua bamboo into their sustainable initiatives, look no further than Lapa'au Botanical Sanctuary in Hāwi. Home to Hawaii state's largest Guadua bamboo nursery, Lapa'au Botanical Sanctuary provides a local source for this environmentally friendly resource. By supporting the sanctuary, individuals and businesses can contribute to both the local economy and the global movement towards sustainable practices.

Guadua bamboo stands as a beacon of hope for a greener and more sustainable future. As the world grapples with environmental challenges, the cultivation and utilization of bamboo offer a viable solution that benefits both the planet and its inhabitants. From carbon sequestration to economic prosperity, acting as a natural windbreak, and now conveniently available at Lapa'au Botanical Sanctuary, (808) 987-7008, the advantages of growing Guadua bamboo are undeniable, marking it as a green goldmine in the quest for a more sustainable world.

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<p>EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY AND UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE, A WATER CONSERVATION NOTICE HAS BEEN ISSUED FOR ALL NORTH KOHALA WATER CUSTOMERS SERVED BY THE NORTH KOHALA WATER SYSTEM. A WATER CONSERVATION NOTICE REQUESTS AFFECTED CUSTOMERS REDUCE WATER USE BY AT LEAST 10 PERCENT. WATER CONSERVATION IS NECESSARY BECAUSE</p>	<p>ONLY ONE OF THREE WATER WELLS SERVING THE REGION IS CURRENTLY OPERATIONAL. THE DEPARTMENT OF WATER SERVICE IS WORKING TO EXPEDITE REPAIRS AND BRING THE INOPERABLE WELLS BACK ON-LINE. STATUS UPDATES WILL BE ISSUED AS NECESSARY AND MADE AVAILABLE ON THE DWS' WEBSITE, WWW.HAWAII DWS.ORG.</p>
---	--

KOHALA NIGHT MARKET

JAN 3, 2024 | 4PM - 7PM

RESILIENCE HUB

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THE KOHALA NIGHT MARKET IS A PROGRAM OF THE RESILIENCE HUB & NORTH KOHALA COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER

WEEKLY EVENTS IN JANUARY 2024					
DAY	START	END	EVENT	VENUE	CONTACT (808)
M-S	8:30AM		NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS	RAINBOW CAFE	
MON	8:30AM	10AM	TOOL LIBRARY	54-3842 AKONI PULE HWY	213-7779
	9AM		SENIOR CLUB @ CIVIC CENTER	KOHALASENIORS@GMAIL.COM	
	11:30AM		SENIOR DANCE CLASSES	KIC	238-6111
	4:30PM		RMD TAIKO CLASSES	HUB HALE	895-2025
	5:30PM		DEFIANT BRATS (WOMENS' AA)	AINAKEA HOME	747 9627
TUE	8AM	9AM	NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS	NEAR SKATE PARK	805-452-9501
	8AM	9AM	TAI CHI WITH PETER BEEMER	OUTSIDE HISAOKA GYM	895-0737
	8AM		YOGA/PILATES BEGINNER CLASS	OUTSIDE HISAOKA GYM	333-8275
	4:30PM	6PM	BELLY DANCE FITNESS	CALL FOR LOCATION	238-6111
	4:30PM		KOHALA CARES FOOD DRIVE	ST AUGUSTINE'S	ALOHPETER@YAHOO.COM
	5PM	6PM	CHOIR PRACTICE	ST AUGUSTINE'S	889-5390
	5:30PM	7PM	PICKLE BALL	HISAOKA GYM	333-8712
	6PM	8PM	TABLE TENNIS/PING PONG	OLD COURT HOUSE	889-1099
WED	10AM	11AM	STORY TIME	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	889-6655
	12PM	6PM	THRIFT SHOP	ST AUGUSTINE'S	889-5390
	2PM	4PM	OPEN GUIDED ART STUDIO	ARTISTS' CO-OP	960-3597
	2PM	3PM	LEGO CLUB 1/3, 1/17, BOARD GAMES: 1/10, 1/24, KEIKI CRAFT: 1/31	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	889-6655
	3:30 PM	4:30PM	RMD TAIKO CLASSES (NOT 1ST WED)	HUB BARN	895-2025
	6PM	8PM	FREE MEAL AND BIBLE STUDY	KALAHIKIOLA CHURCH	218-4872
	6PM	7:30PM	SEIBUKAN KARATE ACADEMY	HISAOKA GYM	889-1828
	7PM		SPIRITUAL HEALING SERVICE	54-3876 AKONI PULE STE 4	989-5995
	7PM		ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS	AINAKEA HOME	747 9627
THU	9AM	10:15PM	HEALING CIRCLE FOR ADDICTS	NANI'S GARDEN	805-452-9501
	4PM	5PM	TOOL LIBRARY	54-3842 AKONI PULE HWY	213-7779
	5PM		OPEN CIRCLE MEDITATION (NOT 2ND)	KEOKEA BEACH PARK	889-5390
	5:30PM	7PM	PICKLE BALL	HISAOKA GYM	333-8712
	6PM	8PM	TABLE TENNIS/PING PONG	OLD COURT HOUSE	889-1099
FRI	8AM		NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS MEETING	WILEY HALL ON IOLE	805-452-9501
	8AM	9AM	TAI CHI WITH PETER BEEMER	OUTSIDE HISAOKA GYM	895-0737
SAT	8AM	1PM	COMMUNITY FARMERS MARKET	KAMEHAMEHA PARK	225-3666
	8AM	12PM	FARMERS MARKET	THE HUB	313-338-7090
	8AM	10AM	TOOL LIBRARY	54-3842 AKONI PULE HWY	213-7779
SUN	6PM	7PM	SEIBUKAN KARATE ACADEMY	HISAOKA GYM	889-1828
	7PM	8PM	RECOVERY DHARMA MEETING	HUB BARN	805-452-9501



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Wāhine Skate Club Brings Togetherness to Roots Skatepark



The Wāhine Skate Club poses during one of their Wednesday sessions.

Story and photo by Libby Leonard
Over the summer, Kanani Alpis had an idea that it would be cool to start an all-girls skate club at Roots

Skate Park. What came next is the Wāhine Skate Club, which has not just become a club for girls to get better at skating but has served as

a place for them to grow as people. The club kicked off on June first for a six-month cohort that meets every Wednesday. It currently serves 12 youth girls from ages five to 16 with Alpis, Jessica Goodoni, Aubrey Christensen and Kim Bennett serving as adult mentors.

"I love this so much," said Chyenne Kinzer, who has skated since the second grade and is now in fifth. "The mentors here are really cool. They teach life skills and skating and stuff."

Though Kinzer is more advanced, a lot of girls are new to the sport.

Sisters Kaia and Ella Harvey just started skating in August with the club. As they continue to learn and get better, they said that doing this has given them way more confidence.

When asked what they'd learned from their mentors so far, Kaia said, "Never give up and keep practicing," while Ella said she was taught, "You are going to get it wrong, but you are also going to get it right a lot of the time."

Alpis, 45, had only started skating herself a little over a year ago as part of a healing journey. Looking like a natural now, she attributes it

See Roots, Page 14

Gospel of Salvation Kohala

55-146 Kokoiki Road

Service: Sunday 9:00 AM

Adult Bible Study: Monday 7 PM

Prayer Meeting: Friday 7 PM

Pastor Kawika Kihara

www.gos-kohala.org

Kohala Baptist Church

Across from Makapala Retreat

'Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'
(Matthew 11:28)

Please join us Sundays for Bible study at 9 AM in the chapel and

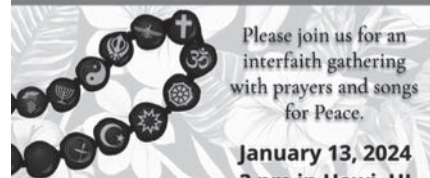
Worship at 10:30 AM outside under the Royal Poinciana tree

Pastor Steven E. Hedlund (808)889-5416

Follow us on **Kohala Baptist Church**

The Bahá'í Faith

"May we unite as the waves of one sea"



Please join us for an interfaith gathering with prayers and songs for Peace.

**January 13, 2024
3 pm in Hawi, HI**

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KOHALA HONGWANJI SHIN BUDDHISM

Happy New Year!

January Service

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Divine Service: 10:45 AM

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Keiki Sunday School 9 am

Facebook Livestream 9 am

www.staugustineskohala.com

Sacred Heart Catholic Church

Hawi, Hawai'i • The Welcoming Church

Masses: Saturday 5 pm

Sunday 7 a.m. • 9:30 am

Weekday Mass: Monday - Friday at 7 am

Adoration: 1st Friday 6:30 - 7:30 pm

Rev Elias Escanilla 808-889-6436

Kalahikiola Church

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Sunday Worship and

Children's Program 9:30 am

Tuesday Prayer 11:30 am

Wednesday Bible Study 7 pm

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North Hawaii Hospice is looking for volunteers to help with our Bereavement Program. The program provides support for family members, partners and caregivers for 13 months after the passing of a loved one. Areas where volunteer help is needed include monthly mailings and regular phone calls to check in on the bereaved to see how they are doing and offer support based on the need.

This work can be done from your home and on your own time. Complete training will be provided. The time commitment is flexible depending on your availability and schedule.

For more information and to volunteer please email volunteer.manager@northhawaiihospice.org or call **885-7547**

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HAIR SPECTRUM
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889-5077

Sunday Worship Service 10 AM
Wednesday Spiritual Healing Service 7 PM

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Roots, from Page 13

to daily dedication. "It was pushing me to be something better, something different. It was out of my comfort zone."

She said that skateboarding teaches you that everything is self-awareness. "If you get hurt, it's on you, but if you succeed that's on you too, and when you are out there and you're actually shining because you feel happy with what you are doing, it affects everyone else who is witnessing that shine," she said.

"Now you see kids at the Skate Park and they are smiling, because it feels good and because they know they made something for them, they created it, they worked for it," she added.

Mentor Jessica Goodoni said that skateboarding has developed as a youth subculture that emphasized creativity and individual-

ity. Goodoni skated when she was young but picked it back up during Covid. "This experience is going to affect the whole course of their lives; these girls are exercising the practice of freedom."

She added that one of the things that has been really special is seeing girls she felt wouldn't normally speak to each other outside of the skatepark getting close and supporting one another.

"You see girls high fiving each other when they are coming down the hills."

Alpis said when the girls initially showed up, many were also shy and feeling insecure. She didn't push them into anything they didn't want to do but gave them the space to engage if they wanted and to learn at their own pace. Now, she said the girls are super confident, and have even entered competi-

tions.

"I just want to hype them up and be their biggest cheerleader," she says.

The Wāhine Skate Club also recently held a pop-up fundraiser for the skatepark where the girls sold their own products. Some made baked goods, others made their own handmade jewelry and sold potted plants in cement pots of their own artistic creation.

Alpis hopes to also introduce more events like hikes during the next cohort which is set to start in January to educate on how to live pono in a culturally rooted way.

Many of the girls from the current cohort have signed up to be mentors for the next session.

Kinzer, who has already enjoyed teaching the novices, looks forward to continuing to help others and wants prospective members to

know, "It's fun, you get to learn a lot and make friends."

Goodoni also says that girls thinking of joining can have the advantage of a good support system when trying something new. She advises to get comfortable with learning, and if there is something someone can do that they can't yet, to reflect the other person's joy instead of thinking they'll never be able to do it themselves.

"For the rest of their lives, these girls are going to remember Skate Club. They are going to remember the cool stuff we did. It's mainly about skateboarding, but it's a sisterhood," Alpis said. Open registration for the next cohort is December 27-January 7. Interested youth can sign up in person at the skate park on Wednesdays from 3-5 p.m. or email roots4youthskateclub@gmail.com to receive more info.

ClimbHI Hosts First Career Exposure Event for 600 West Hawai'i Students

By Jennifer Sudick

On December 11, Hawai'i workforce development nonprofit ClimbHI partnered with West Hawai'i high schools and businesses to host the first-ever West Hawai'i Exposure Fair on Hawai'i Island at The Westin Hāpuna Beach Resort, reimagining and transforming the hiring process.

Over 600 students attended from schools across West Hawai'i,

including Kohala High School.

"Exposure Fairs are more effective than typical career fairs due in part to the 'speed-dating' style that leads to participants uncovering more opportunities.

Businesses also benefit from dedicated time with participants by sharing career paths that lead to economic self-sufficiency here in our islands," said Julie Morikawa, President of ClimbHI. "By expos-

ing students to high-quality careers with a clear progression plan well before graduation, we are helping them understand the requirements and experience needed to begin their path to success."

Exposure Fairs are a public-private effort designed by ClimbHI to provide students with information and connections. They are followed throughout the year with additional relationship-building

opportunities such as ClimbHI Leadership Exploration Inspiration (LEI) and the ClimbHI Service Excellence Certificate, as well as events through ClimbHI's Bridge portal and a ClimbHI Hiring Blitz closer to graduation.

More than 60 businesses and organizations participated in the West Hawai'i event, which allowed students to rotate in five-minute sessions.



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and there is a limit of one pallet load per these customers.
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For more info visit
www.mrksrecyclehawaii.com/electronic-waste.html

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- Stereo components (no speakers)
- Items NOT on this list will NOT be accepted for recycling.

State of Hawai'i Electronic Device Recycling & Recovery Law <https://health.hawaii.gov/ewaste/>

MONTHLY CALENDAR JANUARY 2024

DATE	DAY	START	END	EVENT	DESCRIPTION	VENUE	PHONE
1/2	TUE	4:30PM		ADVISORY GROUP MEETING	NKCDP	OLD COURTHOUSE	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
1/3	WED	4:00PM	7:00PM	KOHALA NIGHT MARKET	VENDORS & ENTERTAINMENT	HUB BARN	808-889-0404 EXT. 104
1/3	WED	4:30PM		KOHALA COMMUNITY ACCESS GROUP	NKCDP	OLD COURTHOUSE	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
1/3	WED	7:00PM		TEMPLE OF SPIRITUAL HEALING	GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP	54-3876 AKONI PULE STE 4	808-989-5995
1/5	FRI	4:00PM		HEALTH & WELLNESS GROUP	NKCDP	OLD COURTHOUSE	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
1/6	SAT	8:00AM	11:00AM	THRIFT SHOP		ST AUGUSTINE'S	808-889-5390
1/6	SAT	6:00PM	8:00PM	FACES & PLACES	OPENING RECEPTION	ARTISTS' COOPERATIVE	808-854-1058
1/8	MON	5:00 PM	6:30 PM	CHESS CLUB	ALL AGES WELCOME!	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
1/9	TUE	11:00 AM	12:00 PM	BOOK CLUB	POVERTY, BY AMERICA BY MATTHEW DESMOND	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
1/10	WED	9:00AM		AFFORDABLE HOUSING GROUP	NKCDP	POMAIIKA'I CAFE	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
1/10	WED	5:00PM		GROWTH MANAGEMENT GROUP	NKCDP	OLD COURTHOUSE	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
1/16	TUE	3:00 PM	4:00 PM	KEIKI SCIENCE	SCIENCE WITH HAWAII WILDLIFE CENTER	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
1/17	WED	3:30PM		UTILITIES GROUP	NKCDP	OLD COURTHOUSE	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
1/17	WED	5:00PM		PARKS, ROADS VIEW PLANES GROUP	NKCDP	OLD COURTHOUSE	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
1/18	THU	9:00AM	11:00AM	SACRED HEART FOOD BASKET		SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH	808-889-5115
1/22	WED	5:30 PM	7:00 PM	HAWAIIAN HISTORY TALK	HOW HAWAII BECAME A STATE	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
1/25	TUE	6:00PM		HAWAII FARMERS UNION UNITED	FACEBOOK.COM/KOHALACHAPTERHFUU/	HUB BARN	KOHALA.HFUU@GMAIL.COM
1/26	FRI	3:00 PM	4:00 PM	ADULT SCIENCE	SCIENCE WITH HAWAII WILDLIFE CENTER	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
1/29	MON	5:30 PM	7:00 PM	POETRY WORKSHOP	SHARE AND WORK ON YOUR ORIGINAL POETRY	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
1/30	TUE	5:00PM	7:00PM	COMMUNITY MEETING ON POLOLU TRAILHEAD	TO PRESENT THE DRAFT PLAN TO THE COMMUNITY AND TO GATHER FEEDBACK. https://linktr.ee/pololu.trailhead	KOHALA INTERGENERATIONAL CENTER	
1/31	WED	4:00PM		RESTORATIVE YOGA THERAPY CLASS	WITH CARLA ORELLANA - BY REQUEST	CALL FOR LOCATION	808-238-6111

Email calendar listings to: kohalacalendar@gmail.com
 Subscribe to our montly calendar on <https://kohalamountainnews.com/events/month/>



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Santa's Workshop at the Kohala Resilience Hub Barn Held December 9



At Santa's Workshop, Santa's elves Debbie Manantan, Shirley Nakamura, Peggy Wills and Kathy Matsuda help children pick a toy.



Aloha Santa greets the children while his elf gathers a goody bag.

Kohala Ecumenical Christmas Gathering

Story and photos by Kathy Matsuda

The 2023 Kohala Ecumenical Christmas Gathering was held on Sunday, December 10, at St. Damien Hall. Churches participating were Kalahikiola Congregational, Kohala Baptist, Overflow Church, Seventh Day Adventist, Gospel of Salvation,

Sacred Heart Catholic Church, and St. Augustine's Episcopal Church. The gathering brought a diversity of Christian churches together for celebration, lifting our voices in song, savoring a delicious dinner, and enjoying entertainment.



Members of Kalahikiola Church added drama to their singing.



The Gospel of Salvation church put on a show only showing silhouettes.

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