

# Kohala Mountain News

FREE

About Kohala, For Kohala - Since 2007

March 27, 2026

## Fern White Receives Hawai'i ACTE Annual Award

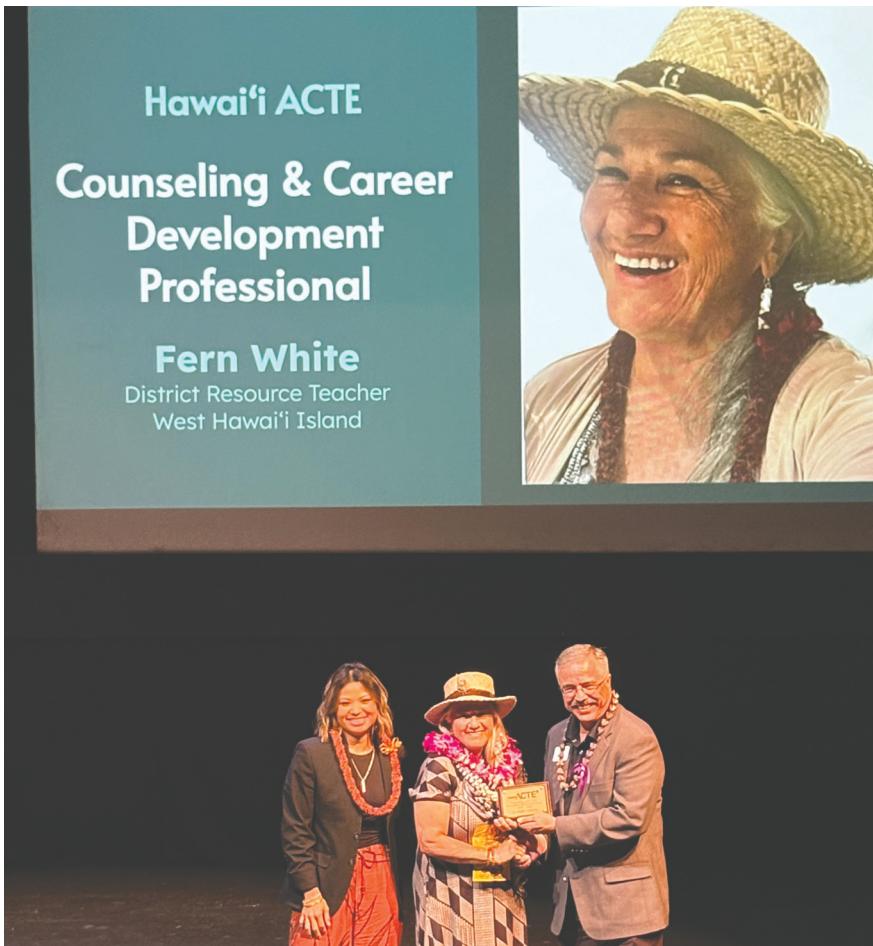


Photo courtesy of Hawaii Association for Career and Technical Education  
 Fern White is honored to receive the Hawaii Association for Career and Technical Education's 2026 Award for Counseling and Career Development Professional of the Year.

District Resource Teacher Fern White recently accepted the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) 2026 Counseling & Career Development Professional

of the Year award. This award recognizes school counselors and career development professionals who have demonstrated commit-

**See ACTE, Page 2**

## Creative Vibes Invites KMS Students, Families and Community Creatives to Collaborate

Story by Joël Tan

A new after-school program at Kohala Middle School is inviting students – and the broader Kohala community – to come together around creativity, culture and community projects.

Creative Vibes – held after school on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays – is a student-centered program that uses art, storytelling, photography and community exploration to connect imagination with real projects happening across Kohala.

While students who already

identify as artists are certainly welcome, the program is designed for all young people – especially those who enjoy asking questions, trying new ideas, and working with others to bring creative community projects to life.

“Creative Vibes is really about imagination,” said program facilitator Joël Tan. “It’s about helping students explore the place we live and contribute something meaningful back to the community.”

Several partnerships are already underway. Students will collaborate

**See Creative, Page 2**

## 31st Annual Malama Makali'i Ocean Fest Held February 28



Photo by Kapulei Flores

A memorial display for Milton "Shorty" Bertelmann honored his life and accomplishments.



Photo by Kuliamaï Aviero-Kalaniopio

Festival attendees tour the Makali'i.

By Rande Golden

It was a beautiful Saturday morning at the harbor, and the Kawaihae Canoe Club was artfully poised to receive the public for the 31st Malama Makali'i Ocean Festival. This annual celebration honors Makali'i, the double hulled voyaging canoe built and housed in

North Hawai'i to teach and sustain Hawaiian ocean culture and sailing for generations.

At 9:00 a.m., over a dozen educational presenters were patiently waiting in their booths to begin sharing knowledge in support of Hawaii's environment and culture.

**See Makali'i, Page 2**

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**Makali'i, from Page 1**



Photo by Lehua Ahsam

Left to right: Deedee Bertelmann (Clay Bertelmann's wife), Sue Bertelmann (Shorty Bertelmann's wife), Pelika Andrade (Nā Maka Onaona Organization, Makali'i Crew Member and Mālama Makali'i Committee Member), and Jan Espere (Tiger Espere's wife) enjoy the festivities. Clay, Shorty and Tiger have all passed on.

These organizational representatives came with lots of information as well as hands-on activities and items to give away. People could compare a whale vertebra to backbones of other creatures, make inamona from kukui nuts, learn about native birds, and talk to representatives of groups who care for and protect many special places around the island.

The electricity of anticipation was palpable as people greeted each other during the pause before the festival began. Canoes sat ready to take folks out to Makali'i anchored across the harbor to learn more about her, upfront and personal. The kitchen crew was finishing cooking and set up, ready to serve kalua and poke tacos and bowls made with locally sourced foods. A wide assortment of Makali'i tee shirts, hats, and other logo items hung on display in a front booth next to the registration where attendees signed up for a canoe ride and bought meal tickets.

Protocol began at 9:30 a.m. with Kumu Hula Pua Case and members of Hālau Hula Ke'alaonamaupua, who shared familiar chants and dance that set the tone for the day. An impressive hula noho was also done by students of Kumu Hula Kuwalu Anakalea.

Kumu Pua's halau, along with Nā Kalai Wa'a, Na Koa o Pu'ukoholā, Pūnana Leo o Waimea, and Nā Kūpuna Program from with the Department of Education were the five original organizations that worked together to birth Makali'i. It took Nā Kalai Wa'a nine months to build the canoe, which was launched on February 4, 1995.

This year's festival was dedicated to the late Milton "Shorty" Bertelmann, one of the original people who initiated this journey of creating Makali'i.

His brother Clay Bertelmann was encouraged to build this canoe for Shorty, who spent much of his lifetime dedicated to sailing and becoming a pwo (celestial navigator). He was fortunate to learn directly from Papa Mau Piailug, the master navigator who came from Satawal, Micronesia in the 1970s to help revive celestial navigation in Hawai'i and around the Pacific. An amazing man of the ocean and educator, Shorty's quiet dedication to Papa Mau and Makali'i will remain legendary.

From 10:00 a.m. till 4:00 p.m., various groups shared all kinds of Hawaiian music, from traditional to reggae. The crowd grew to a comfortable size, filled with people from around the island involved in sailing and paddling as well as supporters of Makali'i and the lucky visitors who landed in Kawaihae on a special day.

Captain Pomai Bertelmann presented a powerful thought about gathering together. She stated, "The moments we share together, big or small, are where the magic lives." The magic created by the 31st Malama Makali'i Festival will live in the hearts of those who experienced the connectedness.

Mahalo to the many people who helped create this event as well as to the Nā Kalai Wa'a 'ohana who have cared for "Mama Makali'i" for 31 years. You are creating the future. For further information, visit their website at nakalaiwaa.org.

**ACTE, from Page 1**

ment to connecting students with opportunities for success, shown innovation in career exploration and development, and have advocated for career and technical education as a viable option for all students.

Recipients of these awards are exceptional individuals who have contributed to the success of career and technical education (CTE) through the quality of their work and their involvement in the CTE community. From visionary leaders and dedicated educators to com-

munity champions and innovators in student support, honorees represent the excellence and impact of career and technical education nationwide.

*Hawai'i ACTE is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to advancing high-quality career and technical education. The organization unites educators, industry, and community partners to provide educational leadership that nurtures the unique voices and talents of Hawai'i's people, developing a skilled, innovative, and competitive workforce for our islands.*

**Creative, from Page 1**

with the Kohala Heritage Center on a youth-informed exhibit exploring places that matter to Kohala students. They will also work with KNKR, Kohala's community radio station, on youth storytelling projects and connect with the Kohala Food Hub to learn how local food systems support the community.

Projects may include photography walks, culinary adventures, mapping meaningful places in Kohala, radio storytelling, nature drawing, and collaborative art and writing.

The program is also a call to Kohala artists, cultural practitioners, creative professionals, and community builders who may want to share their skills or volunteer with students. In a rural community where arts and culture opportunities can be limited, Creative Vibes hopes to bring together people across Kohala who care about cre-

ativity, mentorship and youth leadership.

Rather than following a fixed curriculum, the program grows from student interests and community collaboration.

Creative Vibes is offered by Mālama 'Aina Foundation in collaboration with Kohala Middle School and funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

Kohala Middle School students are welcome to drop in after school (Room P3). Families and community members interested in supporting the program are encouraged to connect.

In a place known for strong roots and shared kuleana, Creative Vibes hopes to give Kohala's next generation – and the community around them – new ways to imagine, create and work together.

For more information, please contact Joël Tan at [jt看an@malamaaina.org](mailto:jt看an@malamaaina.org).

**NKCDP Advisory Group Agenda**

**Date:** Monday, April 6, 2026, **Time:** 4:30 p.m. **Place:** Senior Center (behind the statue)

**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 adjacent NKCDP Meeting Notes for information on issues currently being addressed.)

**Affordable Housing** - Housing needs for families in Kohala.

**Agriculture** - The future of agriculture in

our area.

**Community Access** - Ways for Kohala residents to have more mauka and makai access.

**Growth Management** - Zoning, permits, and variance requests and how they affect us.

**Health and Wellness** - Kohala health care infrastructure and emergency response.

**Parks, Roads, View Planes and Erosion Control** - Infrastructure problems and projects.

**Utilities** - Utility and waste stream issues.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**PUBLIC INPUT AND AGENDA SUGGESTIONS FOR THE NEXT MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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### March 2026 NKCDP AG Meeting Notes

By Lynda Wallach

The March 2 meeting of the North Kohala Community Development Plan Advisory Group (NKCDP AG) opened with the report from the **Affordable Housing** group. Jack Hoyt has confirmed with the Hawaii Island Community Development Corporation (HICDC) that Phase 3 of the North Kohala Self Help project will consist of 32 units rather than 18, as first reported. The start of the North Kohala project will be set back because the Waimea project has suffered some delays. There are two bills before the legislature that would allow manufactured housing on residential lots. Currently only site-built homes are allowed. This would open the way for more affordable housing options such as modular homes and container homes.

Annalene Williams of the **Agriculture Group** reported on the Hawaii County 5-Year Agri-Food Systems Plan. It is the County's first comprehensive agriculture and food systems plan since 2010 and is funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). It aims to bolster local food production, enhance food security, and ensure economic viability for producers. The County will hold six regional summits from April through June to gather community feedback, including a confirmed event in North Kohala. This process will culminate in an island-wide summit in Waimea August 14-15, 2026, with the final publication of the plan targeted for the end

of that month.

The Hawaii County AgriPolicy Summit in December focused on several goals. These include establishing a \$5 million annual fund for agricultural infrastructure, securing the necessary funding for water infrastructure, protecting local ecosystems by preventing the introduction of invasive species, fostering school-to-farm partnerships, expanding farm-to-school programs, enhancing community food security by developing a comprehensive emergency food plan and providing support for gleaning programs like Kokua Harvest

Senator Richards has introduced two bills aimed at securing land in Kohala for the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC). SB2407 proposes the purchase of the Halaula Industrial parcel currently owned by Surety for, among other things, the value-added production of agricultural products. SB2170 would acquire 96 acres of agricultural land near the Kinnerley subdivision for farmer leasing. Since testimony in support of SB2407 was due the day after the meeting, there was some discussion as to the best way to submit written testimony to the legislature. Tony Withington explained that, in her experience, committee members rarely read written testimony so the most important thing is to first state whether you are for or against a bill and that you are a resident of the area affected with specific concerns, because that is what they

will be counting. The County will be testifying in support of bills that will streamline housing for farm workers, increase access to capital, improve data collection, offset the rising costs for local agricultural transport and ensure that incarcerated individuals have SNAP food assistance immediately upon release.

Toni Withington, reporting for **Community Access and Growth Management**, said that the police and fire departments had been called because two groups of squatters at Hapu'u-Kapanaia had left a lot of garbage and two abandoned cars. The group is waiting to hear whether the County will provide resources to clean it up or if they will leave it up to the local community. Many Kohala land purchases have benefitted from funding from the State Legacy Land Conservation Commission but now several bills have been introduced in the State legislature that would cut that funding in half. The State has offered to repave the Old Coast Guard Road before turning it over to the County, but Mayor Alameda is still refusing to accept it.

Boyd Bond said that the front porch talk story presented by the **Cultural and History Advisory Group** at last year's Kohala Reunion is available on YouTube. It can be found under the group's name.

The **Health and Wellness** group is focusing on emergency awareness and preparedness, and improving

health services and wellness in our community. The Kohala Resilience Hub has developed a guide to community services in North Kohala and beyond, a valuable resource for residents seeking information on a range of health and wellness related services.

John Winter provided the reports for both the **Utilities and Parks, Roads, Erosion Control and Viewplanes (PREV)** groups. He said that HECO is still in the process of re-evaluating the design of a large battery backup microgrid system to provide much needed electrical redundancy for North Kohala. Work on our single aging electrical power line will soon require several scheduled power outages. The mayor has again stated that Hawaii County cannot meet the 2050 deadline for cesspool conversion and added that new technologies and new approaches are needed to make that goal achievable. The boat winch at Māhukona is now going through the proper permitting procedures. When that is completed, it will be time to have a meeting to address the issues between the swimmers and the boaters.

The times and locations of subgroup meetings can be found in the calendar section of this paper. The subgroups are all looking for new members so please consider becoming involved. It is a great way to support our community.

The next meeting of the NKCDP AG will be on Monday, April 6, at 4:30 p.m. at the Senior Center.

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Viewpoint

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Keep Kohala, Kohala — Why?

By Jeffrey Coakley

“You can’t save something you don’t understand.”

— Charles Lacy Veach, Hawai’i astronaut

During Mayor Roth’s Sustainability Forum a few years ago, Nainoa Thompson of Hōkūle’a fame shared a story about his close friend, astronaut Charles Lacy Veach, a graduate of Punahou High School.

Dying of cancer, Lacy asked Nainoa to take him outside, despite the protests of those who had come to visit. As they stood together, looking up into the heavens, Nainoa recalled Lacy’s words: “You can’t save something you don’t understand.”

Astronaut Veach navigated among the stars, while Nainoa navigated by them.

That truth resonates deeply today. Many people don’t really understand what it means to “Keep Kohala, Kohala.” They can’t — because they never lived the true essence of the Kohala lifestyle during the plantation era, when people were free, when access was open, and when the values of humility, sustainability, interdependence, and self-reliance

allowed the community to endure even the devastating closure of the Kohala Sugar plantation and the erosion of the cultural lifestyle of our Hawaiian ancestors.

When Kohala Sugar Company closed, so too did that freedom. Suddenly, the only way out from your home was a black ribbon of highway. The backroads leading mauka and makai were gone — roads that once allowed people to live close to nature.

No more leaping from waterfalls, swimming in cold mountain ponds, netting ‘opae kuahiwi [freshwater shrimp], or gathering ho’io [ferns] and pepeiau [tree fungus] after a good rain. Fishing along the Kohala coastline, in total isolation with no one in sight for miles, became only a memory.

As someone once said, “We thought the fences and gates were to keep the cattle in. Little did we know they were meant to keep the people out.”

In the 1980s, Hui Mamalahoa understood that access to mauka and makai was essential to the cultural lifestyle of the Kohala people. Looking back nearly fifty years, we didn’t fully realize just how important that access was to the physical,

mental and spiritual well-being of the people. It’s what kept the people balanced and healthy. Today, that way of life is rapidly disappearing — along with the natural resources that once sustained it. We should have fought harder. We should have made agreements to conserve our resources based on our ancient kapu system, because modern laws have proven ineffective.

Since then, values have changed — and with them, attitudes. Where we were once a community of “we,” we have become more of a community of “me.” Selfish.

Where Kohala once prided itself on sustainability, interdependence, and self-reliance, we now see long food lines. Yet buzzwords like “food integrity” and “food sustainability” echo constantly, a false dogma that lures us away from what was once a true Community of We. A community grounded in kuleana — the responsibility of caring for one another — something once reflected in something as simple as a wave of the hand as we passed each other on the road.

Some say you can’t go back in time. Others ask, “Why would you?” Is the Kohala lifestyle of the plantation era really that important

to preserve?

Once, while I was sitting on top of the painted bench at Keokea pavilion, listening to the sound of the waves crashing against the boulders, George Helm came up to me.

At the time, he was deeply involved in stopping the bombing of Kaho’olawe. He had come to Kohala to help share with us what they were doing. Looking at me intently, very softly said, “Brah, you got to strip away.” What he was telling me was that I was too Western, too haole in dealing with access, and to get back to my Hawaiian roots because there was the answer. Soon afterward, while attempting to cross the channel between Kaho’olawe and Maui, George went missing.

I think of that moment in time with George Helm, Hawaiian activist, falsetto singer. Strip away was his message to all of us.

But then, in a few short years, it may not matter. Those who lived the plantation era — those who truly understood the kou inoa of Kohala, the Sweet Breath of the Sun — named by Hawaii Loa and like him, their mo’olelo will be gone, forgotten like the access at Kapa’a.

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## Learning to Breathe Again in Kohala Waters



Photo courtesy of Fasil Bizuneh  
Fresh uku and tako from a morning dive.

By Fasil Bizuneh

For ten years, I've stood in front of classrooms at Kohala High School in Kapa'au. My students know I was a runner once, but few know that at 37, well past any athletic prime, I became a beginner again in the waters just down the

hill.

I couldn't hold my breath. I couldn't read the currents. Local fishermen who'd grown up in these waters would return with coolers full while I surfaced empty-handed, gasping. It was humbling. It was also exactly what I needed.

Running had been about control: precise splits, measurable outcomes, the body obeying the mind. The ocean obeys nothing. You can't force a fish to appear. You can't negotiate with a current. You can only prepare, wait, and learn to be still.

That stillness was tested a few years back off a familiar Kohala landmark. I was diving alone when a tiger shark passed close enough that I could see individual scars on its flank. My instinct, carved from years of Type-A striving, was to move. Do something. React. But the water demanded the opposite. I stayed motionless, controlled my breath, and watched it glide past. The shark wasn't a threat so much as a reminder: the ocean doesn't reward panic. It rewards presence.

That lesson followed me home, and into the water again. It followed me to Ocean Seafood in Kona, where I started bringing my catch. The arrangement is simple: for each fish given, one is cooked;

within an hour, my family is enjoying fish that we're swimming in the morning, and the restaurant's family will simultaneously share a meal at closing prepared from the same harvest—honey walnut uhu, Chinese steamed munu, garlic bok choy. It's not a transaction. It's a practice. My children, Mary and Moges, now know that the fish on their plate came from a morning dive and a shared kitchen. They know the names: mu, uku, tako.

Last Sunday Mary and Moges opened my cooler to find a three-pound moana kali that I had caught that morning at Māhukona. They wanted to hold it, feel its weight, understand that dinner doesn't have to come from a grocery store freezer. I watched them and thought about what the ocean asks of you: patience first, then skill, then gratitude.

I'm not the best diver on this coast. I likely never will be. But I'm teaching at the high school, raising my kids here, and showing up in the water willing to learn. For a 45-year-old former athlete, that's enough.

The tiger shark taught me stillness. Ocean Seafood taught me reciprocity. My children are teaching me legacy. And Kohala—this coast, these waters—holds it all.

## Letters

### Mahalo for Heartfelt Celebration

Aloha, Our and my compliments to all of the people of North Kohala for the wonderful party held at the Village Inn, a.k.a. The Hub, on March 8, 2026. To the leaders, farmers, and people that prepared the unbe-

lievable array of pupu, and delicious mea 'ai [food] and mea ono [dessert] all done in love and health! It was the BEST party ever! We ALL had smiles, workers as well as our community, who attended the most fabulous gathering that

was set up like an old-fashioned Kohala lu'au – in my days with my parents (John M. Spencer, off Kynnersley Road).

Me Ke Aloha,  
Aunty Maile Spencer Napoleon

### Illegal Stripping of Koa Bark Can Kill Trees

North Kohala Residents,  
There are people going into forested areas of North Kohala where Formosan koa trees grow to cut bark off of the trees to make a highly illegal drug. Someone was caught by a neighbor on March 11

and she shared this is the third time chasing folks out of this area. The trees can die. And these people are trespassing. Conscious people would not be going onto private property and damaging trees. Land that looks "wild" belongs to

someone and dying trees become their problem. Please have more respect for this 'aina. And Kohala folks... pay attention to cars parked by the side of the road where they do not belong.  
– Rande Golden

### Mahalo for a Successful Project Grad Fundraiser

The Kohala High School senior class parents and students would like to give huge thanks to Jake at Sunshine Hardware for his generous support of \$150 worth of miscellaneous cleaning supplies for the recent car wash and bake sale at the L&L parking lot in Kapa'au. The continuous rain we've been experiencing for weeks in Kohala seemed to stop just for us. The sun peeked out from the clouds and our crew had the pleasure of servicing many residents who left with a clean vehicle, some tasty home-made treats and a smile on their face.



Photos by Jaime Belmarez

Through combined efforts, we successfully raised more than \$2,000 towards Project Grad, a post-graduation ceremony celebration for seniors only that includes supervised overnight activities at

Hisoaka Gym and a sunrise visit to the lookout at Pololū Valley. Thanks again Jake, and all the community members who came out to support our fundraiser.  
– Jaime Belmarez



### 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.

**April Deadlines**  
Ads and News: 4/10/26  
Calendar: 4/17/26  
Distribution: 4/24/26

**May Deadlines**  
Ads and News: 5/8/26  
Calendar: 5/15/26  
Distribution: 5/22/26

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

[www.kohalamountainnews.com](http://www.kohalamountainnews.com)

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**Kohala Mountain News**  
P.O. Box 639,  
Kapa'au, Hawai'i 96755

# Hawai'i State House of Representatives Update

From the Desk of District 8 Representative David Tarnas

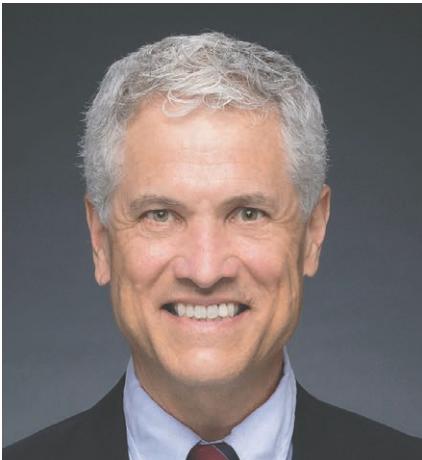


Photo courtesy of David Tarnas Representative David Tarnas speaks for North Kohala as a member of the Hawai'i State House of Representatives.

The legislative session has reached the milestone called "First Crossover" when the bills approved by one chamber cross over to the other chamber for their consideration. I am grateful that the State House has approved a comprehensive package of good government bills produced by the Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs Committee. These bills strengthen our state statutes that prevent public corruption, expand the number of government employees subject to financial disclosure requirements, ensure safe and secure elections, improve efficiency of filing campaign finance disclosure documents, and increase restrictions on campaign fundraising solicitation during legislative sessions.

The bills have now crossed over to the State Senate for their consideration. I look forward to working with the Senate to advance these important measures.

Four measures (HB772 HD1, HB1519 HD1, HB1520 HD1, and HB2050 HD1) are based on legislative proposals by the Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct ("CISC"). The CISC convened pursuant to HR 9 (2022) after two members of the Hawai'i State Legislature plead guilty to corruption charges related to taking bribes to influence policy matters. Prior to the 2026 Session, eighteen of the Commission's 31 legislative proposals were fully addressed and three were partially addressed by the legislature. Of the ten legislative proposals that were not addressed, three are being considered this session, three proposals were considered by the House but not adopted, one was determined to be the responsibility of the counties, and one was addressed through administrative rules.

The following bills were adopted by the House and crossed over to the Senate. Each bill description includes the name of the organization or legislator who proposed the bill including the Campaign Spending Commission (CSC), State Ethics Commission (SEC), or the State Representative who was the first primary introducer. It also notes that the proposed reform was initially recommended by the Commission to Improve Standards of Conduct (CISC).

### HB322 HD2 – Relating to Voter Registration (Rep. Kapela)

Authorizes state agencies to implement automatic voter registration if designated by the Office of Elections. Requires eligible applicants for instruction permits, provisional licenses, driver's licenses, and identification cards to be automatically registered or preregistered to vote unless the applicant opts out.

### HB772 HD1 – Relating to Campaign Finance (Rep. Belatti and CISC)

Disallows the use of campaign funds to purchase up to two tickets for an event or fundraiser held by another candidate or committee.

### HB1519 HD1 – Relating to Campaign Contributions (Rep. Tarnas and CISC)

Requires disclosure of the names of compensated officers, and their immediate family members, of state contractors with contracts exceeding the small purchase threshold established under the Hawaii Public Procurement Code and grantees with grants exceeding \$250,000. Prohibits the compensated officers of state contractors, and their immediate family members, from making, promising, or soliciting certain campaign contributions for the duration of the contract exceeding the small purchase threshold. Prohibits state grantees, including compensated officers and their immediate family members, from making, promising, or soliciting certain contributions for the duration of the grant exceeding \$250,000. Requires unlawful contributions to be returned to the contributor or escheat to the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund.

### HB1520 HD1 – Relating to Campaign Finance (Rep. Tarnas and CISC)

Clarifies that the five-year statute of limitations for criminal prosecutions of campaign finance violations begins upon discovery of the offense by the Campaign Spending Commission.

### HB1525 HD1 – Relating to Elections (Rep. Tarnas)

Appropriates funds to (1) the counties for more voter service centers for in-person voting; (2) the Office of Elections to print and

mail the digital voter information guide to all registered voters; and (3) the Office of Elections to support a public outreach and engagement campaign to encourage greater voter participation.

### HB2050 HD1 – Relating to Partial Public Financing of Elections (CSC and CISC)

Increases the expenditure limit and the amount of partial public campaign financing available for all elective offices. Adjusts the minimum amount of qualifying contributions certain candidates must receive to participate in the program. Increases the matching fund payments for excess qualifying contributions.

### HB2054 HD2 – Relating to the Campaign Spending Commission's Electronic Filing System (CSC)

Requires designated campaign finance documents to be submitted electronically through the Campaign Spending Commission's upgraded electronic filing system.

### HB2106 HD1 – Relating to Financial Disclosures (SEC)

Expands the scope of persons who are subject to public financial disclosure requirements.

### HB2107 HD1 – Relating to Political Fundraising by Executive Branch Employees (SEC)

Prohibits any Executive Branch employee with procurement authority who is nominated or appointed by the Governor to a compensated position subject to confirmation by the Senate from engaging in certain campaign fundraising activities.

Mahalo for allowing me to serve as the State Representative for North Kohala. I always welcome your input as we consider various bills this session. You can contact me anytime at reptarnas@capitol.hawaii.gov or at (808) 586-8510.

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# County Council Update

From the Desk of District 9 Councilmember James Hustace



Photo courtesy of James Hustace Councilmember James Hustace represents North Kohala as part of Hawai'i County Council District 9.

Aloha Kohala!

Congratulations on the outstanding achievement of the Kohala Boys Basketball team! The Cowboys once again demonstrated teamwork and determination that defines their community by bringing home a championship title. Their Division II State Championship marks their third state title in four years. And a special recognition of Layden Kauka, honored as the HHSAA State Tournament Most Outstanding Player. The team's victory is more than a trophy—it

reflects the mentors, coaches, teachers and families who support them every step of the way. Youth sports play a vital role in shaping leadership, discipline and community pride, and this North Kohala team continues to inspire us all.

In legislative news, the Council recently approved Bill 127 and Bill 128, two measures that address important issues affecting our island's future. Bill 127 establishes a Construction Code Commission for Hawai'i County. This commission will advise the Mayor, the County Council, and the Department of Public Works on adopting and updating the County's building and construction codes. Construction standards are constantly evolving as technology, safety practices, and environmental considerations improve. By creating this advisory body, the County can ensure our building codes stay current with national standards while also reflecting the unique conditions of Hawai'i Island. The goal is to help streamline the permitting process, improve coordination between agencies, and ensure that homes, infrastructure and commercial projects are built safely and efficiently.

Bill 128 updates the County's real property tax structure by creating a new Residential Tier Three classification. This tier applies to residential properties with a tax-

able value above \$4 million. The purpose of this change is to add an additional tax bracket for very high-value residential properties while helping protect most homeowners from broader tax increases. By adjusting the structure in this way, the County can generate additional revenue for essential public services—such as roads, parks, police, and fire protection—while maintaining fairness in the property tax system.

Earlier this month we resumed our work on the County's General Plan, the long-range policy document that guides land use, housing, infrastructure, environmental stewardship, and economic development across Hawai'i Island. This planning process relies heavily on community input, and I encourage North Kohala residents to stay engaged and share their mana'o as these discussions move forward. Your voice matters.

Finally, I want to thank everyone who joined our recent Community Conversation with the Hawai'i County Department of Parks & Recreation at the Kohala Intergenerational Center. This was a valuable opportunity to hear directly from county leadership, and I appreciate the interest and engagement. Mahalo to Deputy Director Melissa Samura for providing updates from Parks & Recreation and connect-

ing with community partners. It is important to meet needs at our parks, and I will continue to advocate for community-led efforts around our pools, playgrounds, skateparks and ocean access.

I am honored to serve as your Council Member. You are welcome to email me at james.hustace@hawaiicounty.gov, call our Waimea office at (808) 887-6077, or our Hilo office at (808) 961-8564.

Wishing you good health and aloha!

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## Kohala Artists Coop

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April 4<sup>th</sup> 2026 6 to 8pm

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Art, stories, laughter, music & pupus AND the wonder of Pele, at the Kohala Artist's Coop, from 6-8pm, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026, across from the Kapauu post office

# \$1 Million Included in State Budget for Pololū Trailhead and Historic Trail Improvements

Representative David Tarnas announced that \$1 million in Capital Improvement Project funding has been included in the house draft of the state budget bill (HB1800 HD1) to support the Pololū Trailhead and Historic Trail Improvements Project. The budget bill now goes to the Senate for consideration.

The proposed funding will support planning, design, and improvements to the Pololū Valley trailhead and the historic trail that descends into the valley. The project aims to improve safety and accessibility for residents and visitors, while protecting the cultural and natural resources of this iconic North Kohala location.

Representative Tarnas said, "The number of visitors at the

Pololū Valley lookout overwhelms the available parking space causing serious traffic & pedestrian safety concerns. The lack of bathroom facilities results in unsanitary conditions and environmental degradation. This funding will allow the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to improve the parcel to accommodate parking, build and install interpretive panels, and provide bathrooms and safe pedestrian access to the trailhead. These are much-needed improvements!"

Pololū Valley is one of the most visited scenic and cultural sites on Hawai'i Island, serving as the gateway to the historic coastal trail that connects Pololū Valley to Honokāne Nui Valley. In recent years, increas-

ing visitation has placed added strain on the trailhead and surrounding resources, highlighting the need for improved infrastructure and management.

A key goal of the project is to engage with community members and lineal descendants connected to Pololū to develop a management plan for the lookout, parking area, and trail that reflects their input and represents the cultural significance of the area.

Proposed improvements include trail stabilization, erosion control, visitor safety measures, and enhancements to the trailhead area to better manage access while preserving the site's cultural importance. The proposed funding also reflects longstanding collaboration

between state and county agencies, community organizations, and North Kohala residents who have consistently advocated for improvements and better management of the Pololū Trailhead.

On March 18, House Bill 1800 HD1, the state budget bill, crossed over to the Senate for consideration. "I urge all Kohala residents to work with our State Senator Tim Richards to make sure the \$1 million appropriation remains in the final budget," said Representative Tarnas.

More information and fact sheets about the Pololū Trailhead and Historic Trail Improvements Project can be accessed on the DLNR website at [dlnr.hawaii.gov/recreation/nah/hawaii/pololu-planning-project](http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/recreation/nah/hawaii/pololu-planning-project).

## North Kohala Community Meeting

District 9 Council Member James Hustace recently hosted a community "talk story" session to provide legislative updates and address pressing local issues, ranging from public safety and tax relief to the state of community parks. Accompanying Hustace were Captain William Durr, the newly appointed commander of the North Kohala police district, and Melissa Samora, Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation. The meeting introduced Captain Bill Durr, who recently transitioned to North Kohala after a career centered in Hilo. Durr encouraged residents to stop by the station to discuss concerns.

Council Member Hustace detailed several legislative efforts designed to ensure longtime residents can afford to stay in their homes, including a "Kupuna Farmer Tax Abatement" that caps real property taxes for aging farmers, helping them age in place.

He also proposed the "Āina Kūpuna" bill, which aims to provide relief for generational families who have held their property for 80 to 100 years. To fund these and other community needs, Hustace introduced a tiered property tax system that establishes a new third tier for residential properties valued



County Councilmember James Hustace addresses the community in "talk story" event. Photo by Alexa Hustace

over \$4 million, specifically targeting high-end investment homes rather than local residents.

A significant portion of the meeting focused on the heavy demand for the Kohala gym and athletic fields. Residents expressed frustration over scheduling conflicts between keiki sports, school use, and adult leagues. Deputy Director Samora

suggested a "fair use" meeting in which all local coaches would pull names from a hat for time slots. She also clarified that the \$200 security deposit is for facility protection and does not guarantee priority scheduling. The future of the boat crane at Māhukona sparked a "spirited" discussion. While boaters and fishermen requested that the crane be

reinstalled to continue a 60-year tradition, others raised safety concerns about swimmers' proximity. Hustace and Samora confirmed they are working with structural engineers and the DLNR to find a compromise, including potential signage. A community member suggested designated "channel lines" to separate boat traffic from swimmers.

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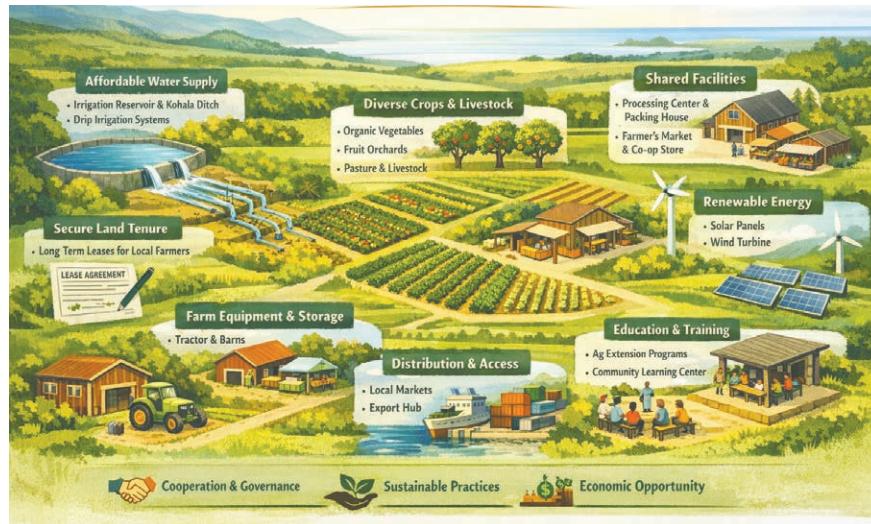
## Have We Lost the Kohala Ditch? Part 2: Agricultural Parks

By David Barclay

High land costs in Hawaii make agricultural parks an attractive option for encouraging agricultural development by small-scale farmers and other entrepreneurs. Agricultural parks provide small and/or entry level farmers access to affordable agricultural land. Affordable, long-term leases at these parks also create opportunities for farmers to secure necessary start-up financing either through government loan programs or through private lending institutions.

The State Department of Agriculture operates the State's agricultural park program through its Agricultural Resource Management Division. The primary objective of this program is to assist people who are interested in farming ventures by providing reasonably priced land leases, irrigation water and appropriate infrastructure where they can establish economically viable crop production practices.

The four state Agricultural Parks presently on the Big Island include Pahoia with 553 acres subdivided into 56 lots, Panaewa with 460 acres subdivided into 28 lots, Keahole with 179 acres subdivided into 34 lots, and Hāmākua with 509 acres subdivided into 11 lots. There are presently no agricultural parks in North Kohala, either State or privately owned. The privately owned Kahei Agricultural Subdivision in North Kohala was created



This image illustrates what a Kohala Agricultural Park might look like. *Image created by David Barclay*

during the early 1990s by Castle & Cook and consisted of 10 lots with approximately seven acres per lot. These lots were later sold by Chalon to the lessees, with many lots subsequently re-sold for residences at much higher prices during the real estate boom of 2004–2007.

There are trends both in the U.S. and abroad not only to provide affordable agricultural land for prospective farmers, but at the same time establish high technology incubator centers that bring together entrepreneurial start-ups with more mature, experienced companies. These incubator centers have facilities that include small field plots,

green houses, and laboratory space for evaluating a variety of agricultural and aquacultural innovations. A good example of this type of facility is located at Cornell University in Geneva, New York. It contains variable-sized land plots suitable for research and small-scale start-ups. This facility has attracted both start-up businesses as well as more experienced companies. Field and greenhouse trials are conducted in collaboration Cornell University.

I have personally visited successful agricultural parks in Thailand that produce many products including flowers, fruit, fish and rice, to name a few. These parks are

an important contributor to Thailand's agricultural independence.

### Hawai'i-Based Examples

Agricultural parks such as Waimanalo, Kahuku, and Ho'olehua on Moloka'i demonstrate that long-term leases, public investment, and shared infrastructure can support generations of farmers.

These parks:

- Have government support.
- Sustain active agricultural production.
- Enable diversified crops and livestock operations.
- Support local employment and locally produced produce.
- Provide a pathway for farmers to scale up operations.
- Reward innovation and efficiency, particularly in water use, which are critical in variable climates.

These models confirm that agricultural parks are not experimental concepts, but established tools for regional economic development. Notably, parks with secure, reasonably priced water and longer-term leases have shown the highest rates of long-term occupancy and productivity.

### Key Components of a Successful Agricultural Park

Based on comparative analysis, successful agricultural parks share the following characteristics:

- Long-term leases (20–35 years or more)

**See Ditch, on Page 10**

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Ditch, from Page 9

- Clear use conditions that mandate active agriculture and prevent land speculation.
- Transferability mechanisms that support farm continuity.
- Reliable water access at reasonable cost.
- Shared infrastructure.
- Internal road networks.
- Access to cold storage, wash-down areas and processing facilities.
- Equipment sharing and/or cooperative services.
- Proximity to population centers or export routes.
- Support for aggregation, branding and distribution.
- Alignment with institutional buyers and local markets.

Economic Benefits

- Job creation and retention in agricultural lands and locally produced ag products.
- Increased agricultural output and diversification.
- Reduced dependence on imported food.

Food production is one of the defining challenges of our time—especially in Hawai'i, where nearly 90 percent of what we consume arrives from more than 2,500 miles away. In an era of climate uncertainty and global disruption, that dependence carries real risk. Building a resilient local food system will require three essential elements: water, land and innovation.

The Kohala Ditch represents all three. It is inherited infrastructure that still holds future promise.

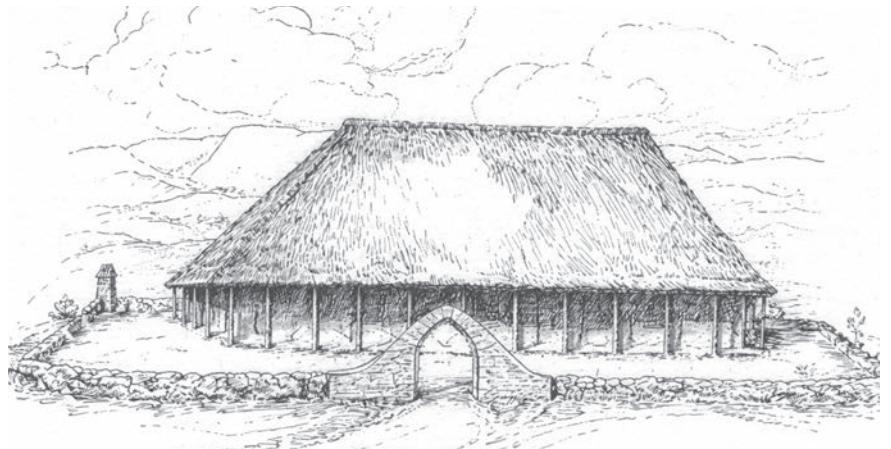
It can be saved, but only if we are willing to look beyond short-term returns and engage in a thoughtful, informed discussion about its purpose, water distribution, and long-term stewardship.

Agricultural parks offer a proven and scalable path forward—particularly for regions transitioning from plantation-era land use toward diversified, community-based agriculture. With secure land tenure, affordable and reliable water, shared infrastructure, and strong governance, an agricultural park can become a foundation for regional food security, economic opportunity, and environmental resilience.

Kohala is still positioned to play a meaningful role in shaping Hawai'i's agricultural future. Realizing that potential will require commitment, coordination, and partnership across the private sector and state and county governments. Investing in and maintaining this irrigation system is an act of foresight. Even if we cannot yet measure every return, future generations will measure the decisions we make today.

David Barclay, a Zoologist and a Construction Project Manager, operated a successful aquaculture operation in Kohala for over 20 years. He was also board member of the United States Department of Agriculture Center for Tropical and Subtropical Aquaculture for nearly a decade and was a member of the original OTEC Aquaculture research team in 1981.

# Walawala: Kohala's Forgotten Chiefess Part 2 of 2



Source: "Father Bond of Kohala" by E. Damon

Drawing of Kalahikiola Church built at 'Iole in 1843. The church at Nunulu would have been similar in appearance.

By Susie Davis

In Part I we read how, as a young chiefess, Walawala aided King Kamehameha in his war against O'ahu, by bringing over the wives of his warriors in her fleet of canoes. After the war she was richly rewarded for her service with prized ahupua'a and the governance of Kohala. At the behest of Governor Kuakini, Walawala's people built the first church in Kohala at Nunulu in 1832.

In June 1833, missionaries Bishop and Lyons wrote about the recently constructed church. "At Nunulu, a central village, is a

large native meeting house holding 4000 souls and upward — and the head woman who is a member of the church is anxious to have permanent teachers."

That same year missionary Dwight Baldwin and his wife visited Nunulu. "While we were at Kohala, the head woman of the district gave order for all the people to come together, wishing, as I suppose, to show their number, that we might learn not to neglect them in our ministrations. There are 8,000 in number and

See Walawala, on Page 11

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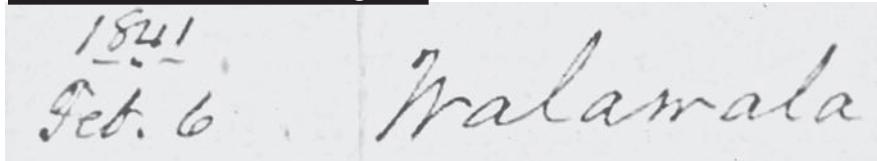
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Walawala, from Page 10



Source: Kalāhikiola Church Record Book 1838-1922  
Chiefess Walawala's entry into the Kalāhikiola Church records on Feb. 6, 1841.

about 5,000 came. As these were more than could be accommodated in the meeting house, they were seated out on the grass in front, where I preached to them."

In 1837, two missionary families, Bliss and Bailey and their wives, moved to Nunulu full time. They complained of the harsh conditions. "Clothing, books, everything in the house is mouldy, and we are chilled." But the location of the station was dependent on the will of the chief, who in this case had insisted that the mission families be stationed at Nunulu.

It was not until the church blew down in 1839 that the mission station was given permission to relocate and was granted land at 'Iole for that purpose. Walawala followed the Mission and took up residence at 'Iole. Her name was entered into the Kalāhikiola Church records on Feb. 6, 1841.

When Elias Bond arrived at 'Iole later that year, he described what it looked like at the time; "...and running up on the West side of the lois lived the old chiefess, Walawala, and her people."

In 1844, Walawala, now in her 70s, wrote her will and stated that she still had "charge of the lands which belong to Kuakini who treated me as a favorite." (At that time, Kuakini's lands in Kohala included Māhukona, 'Upolu, Honoipu, 'Iole, Halaula, and Pololū). She also wrote that her son, Chief Kamakahonu, was to "be the heir to all the lands belonging to the Chiefs" and bequeathed all of her "cattle, livestock, pens, canoes, nets and personal possessions" to him.

In the Mahele of 1848 she made local land claims for the ahupua'a of Kaiholena, Kalala, Nunulu and sections of Ainakea, stating that she had occupied them since the time of Kamehameha I "and had the care of" them.

She also claimed Maulili as hers, as it "was paid by me with a pig and the claim was transferred to me." By the time of the Mahele her son, Kamakahonu, controlled 22 ahupua'a and 'ili spread throughout the islands — lands that had most likely passed to him from Walawala. In the Mahele he was forced to relinquish 18 of those lands back to King Kamehameha III and was left with only four.

In 1848 a devastating epidemic swept through Kohala. On October 21, "Hana" Walawala died at Hihii after an illness of three months." Her obituary, published in Ka Elele Hawaii, tells of a woman devoted to the spiritual well-being of her people. "She went about Kohala and even though she was an elderly woman and blind, she still traveled on horseback with others leading her horse.

Twice she fell from her horse. She would go at night to the houses of fellow believers and enter their homes to admonish and encourage them. She would remain there until morning. This was a regular practice of Walawala. Her good works were many and cannot all be recounted.

At a probate hearing of her will after her death, one of the persons present was Lot Kamehameha (the future King Kamehameha V), yet another indicator of Walawala's importance.

Chiefess Walawala's story reminds us that Kohala was shaped not only by its famous king and male chiefs, but also by a powerful ali'i wahine who led her people through a time of enormous change. She was deeply respected and important to the people of Kohala in her lifetime, and by remembering her, we give Walawala the place she deserves in Kohala's history.

## In Loving Memory of Peter Pomeranze



their next chapter. He quietly helped launch many careers by giving them their first jobs and supported countless dreams.

When COVID changed everything and Sushi Rock closed its doors, Peter did what he had always done in times of need: he showed up. He founded Kohala Cares, a weekly food drive that provided up to 100 bags of groceries every Tuesday to families in our small town.

To many in this town Peter was a restaurateur, businessman, mentor, and friend. To us, he was family. To my kids, he was Baba. Nearly 28 years ago, when we first moved to Kohala, Peter welcomed us into his life and onto the land that would shape so much of our story. We shared meals and milestones. He was our advisor, our steady presence, our friend through decades of life's changes and a steady force of unconditional love in our boys' lives. Our children are among the many who grew up under his guidance and care. We were his family, and he was ours. Peter is survived by his beloved sister, Susan, and her husband, Jeff, his remaining immediate family — whom we hold in our hearts with deep love and compassion during this time.

Peter lived with a generous heart and a deep commitment to Aloha. His impact cannot be measured simply by businesses opened but by the countless lives he touched whether through a meal, a conversation, a job opportunity, or a simple act of kindness. In his final chapter, Peter was surrounded by something truly extraordinary, a circle of devoted family and friends who showed up for him with unwavering presence, tenderness and love. It was one of the most beautiful expressions of love I have ever witnessed, a gift in a world that often moves too fast. It was love in its most active form during this sacred passage of life.

We will be holding a Celebration of Life on April 25th at 4PM at Keokea Beach Park pavilion. This beloved beach park, near where we lived and where Peter spent some of his final moments by the ocean, feels like the perfect place to gather. The entire community is welcome — anyone whose life was touched by Peter is invited to join us in honoring and celebrating his remarkable life. Bring a potluck dish to share and BYOB. In a small town, one person truly can make a difference. Peter made a lasting one.

With love and gratitude,  
Adrienne and Michael Van Berg

It is with profound sorrow and immense gratitude that we share the passing of our dear friend and beloved North Kohala community member, Peter Pomeranze. He passed peacefully at home with his close friends and loved ones by his side on February 2nd.

For more than 35 years, Peter was woven into the fabric of Kohala. Many will remember his early days in Waimea as a travel agent at All World Travel, where he opened doors to the wider world for so many. I had the privilege of working beside him as his bookkeeper during those years, and even then, his gift for connection and generosity was unmistakable.

Later, Peter and Michael opened Without Boundaries in Waimea, a travel agency combined with a thoughtfully curated retail space filled with treasures gathered from their journeys around the globe. It was a reflection of Peter himself: adventurous, creative, and deeply relational.

Eventually, Peter brought his vision home to Hawi. After taking over the Hawi Bakery, he went on to create, along with his then business partner Rio Miceli, what would become one of the most beloved gathering places on the island, Sushi Rock, which for 17 years served not only exceptional food but something far greater — community.

Sushi Rock was repeatedly voted among the best sushi restaurants on the island, drawing both devoted locals and visitors who returned year after year. But for Peter, it was never just about the food. Every staff member became family. Every regular customer became a friend. The restaurant was a gathering place, a place of laughter, long conversations, mentorship, and belonging. Peter had a gift for seeing people — especially young people starting out in the world — and encouraging them toward

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## Frances Woollard Remembered February 20, 1939 – February 22, 2026



Photo by Christine Richardson  
Frances Woollard.

By Christine Richardson

A dear and beloved friend of Kohala, Fran Woollard, has passed away. Fran was born in New Jersey in 1939 and right out of nursing school she began a global journey that included Korea, India, Africa, Oregon and Hawaii.

Fran moved to Beers Road in Kohala in 1974 with her husband Monroe and five children: Tim, Stephanie, Vicki, Todd and Ellen. Fran and Monroe additionally fostered almost 50 children throughout their marriage. She spent close to forty years serving

the community, first as a nurse at Kohala Hospital and then Kohala Health Center. She then went on to pioneer North Hawaii Hospice and the Kohala Home Health Care agency, firmly believing in the need for people to receive care at home.

Fran believed that “to care for someone is a gift” and felt blessed to care for so many people in her lifetime. She mentored countless nurses and nurse’s aides along with being certified in Healing Touch, Edu-K, Touch for Health and Sand Play therapy. She co-created and served as a guide for three years in the Hawaii Nature-Fast program. Fran was also married to Elmer McCurdy, lovingly known as “Mac,” from June 1998 until his untimely death in January 1999. Many folks in Kohala will remember a time when Fran touched their lives with kindness, compassion, generosity and that loving smile.

She moved to Talent, Oregon to be closer to her children and spent her last few years in Canada with her daughter, Stephanie. Fran had five grandchildren and numerous great grandchildren. For all who knew Fran Woollard, she was the gift we all received.



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WEEKLY EVENTS IN APRIL 2026					
DAY	START	END	EVENT	VENUE	CONTACT (808)
M-S	8:30AM		NARCOTICS TALK STORY	RAINBOW CAFE	
MON	9AM		SENIOR CLUB @ CIVIC CENTER	KOHALASENIORS@GMAIL.COM	
	12:00PM		SENIOR BALANCE, STRENGTH & FITNESS	KIC	238-6111
	4PM	6PM	TOOL LIBRARY	54-3842 AKONI PULE HWY	213-7779
	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
	4PM	6PM	TOOL LIBRARY	54-3842 AKONI PULE HWY	213-7779
	4:30PM	6PM	LOVE YOUR BELLY DANCE CLASSES	CALL FOR LOCATION	238-6111
	4:00PM		FOOD PANTRY	ST AUGUSTINE'S	889-5390
	6PM	8PM	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	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	889-6655
	3:30 PM	4:30PM	RMD TAIKO CLASSES (NOT 1ST WED)	JODO MISSION	895-2025
	5PM	6PM	CHOIR PRACTICE	ST AUGUSTINE'S	889-5390
	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	ZOOM	989-5995
	7PM	8PM	ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS	ST. AUGUSTINE'S	895-5843
THU	8:30AM	1PM	TOOL LIBRARY	54-3842 AKONI PULE HWY	213-7779
	9:30AM	10:45PM	HEALING CIRCLE FOR ADDICTS	NANI'S GARDEN	805-452-9501
	5PM		OPEN CIRCLE MEDITATION (NOT 2ND)	KEOKEA BEACH PARK	889-5390
	6PM	8PM	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	12PM	HAWI FARMERS MARKET	KOHALA VILLAGE INN	895-7870
	8AM	5PM	TOOL LIBRARY	54-3842 AKONI PULE HWY	213-7779
SUN	10AM	12PM	EGSTATIC DANCE	HUB BARN	
	6PM	7PM	SEIBUKAN KARATE ACADEMY	HISAOKA GYM	889-1828
	7PM	8PM	RECOVERY DHARMA MEETING	RED COTTAGE VILLAGE HUB	(907) 888-8166



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 55-146 Kokoiki Road  
**Service:** Sunday 9:00 AM  
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 www.gos-kohala.org

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 POZOLE (MEXICAN SOUP)  
**REGULAR MENU - 2-5 PM**  
**DOWNTOWN HAWI**  
**808-289-1465**

MONTHLY CALENDAR APRIL 2026							
	DAY	START	END	EVENT	DESCRIPTION	VENUE	PHONE
4/1	WED	4:30 PM		KOHALA COMMUNITY ACCESS GROUP	NKCDP	OLD COURTHOUSE	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
4/1	WED	7:00 PM		TEMPLE OF SPIRITUAL HEALING	GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP - CALL FOR ZOOM LINK	ZOOM	808-989-5995
4/2	THU	11:00 AM	12:00 PM	HOMESCHOOL GROUP	LEARN AND SOCIALIZE WITH A STORY AND ACTIVIY.	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
4/4	SAT	8:00 AM	11:00AM	THRIFT SHOP		ST AUGUSTINE'S	808-889-5390
4/4	SAT	5:30 PM	8:00PM	FEATURED ARTIST RECEPTION	MAHALO TUTU PELE	ARTISTS' COOPERATIVE	808-854-1058
4/6	MON	4:30 PM		ADVISORY GROUP MEETING	NKCDP	OLD COURTHOUSE	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
4/6	MON	3:00 PM	4:00 PM	CHINESE MEDICINE TOOLS TALK W/ ILA JHAVERI	ACUPRESSURE, AND OTHER LIFESTYLE TOOLS.	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
4/6	MON	5:00 PM	6:30 PM	CHESS CLUB	ALL AGES WELCOME!	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
4/6	MON	5:30 PM	6:30 PM	AUTHOR BOOK TALK- BY RUSSELL FIELDING	BREADFRUIT: THREE GLOBAL JOURNEYS OF A BOUNTIFUL TREE	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
4/8	WED	9:00 AM		AFFORDABLE HOUSING GROUP	NKCDP	POMAIIKA I CAFE	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
4/8	WED	5:00 PM		GROWTH MANAGEMENT GROUP	NKCDP	OLD COURTHOUSE	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
4/11	SAT	3:00 PM	5:00 PM	FEATURED ARTIST RECEPTION	HELEN WHITE	OLENA GALLERY	808-345-1779
4/13	MON	5:30 PM	6:30 PM	SOUND BATH	WITH LEILANI SILVER	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
4/14	TUE	11:00 AM	12:00 PM	BOOK CLUB - WOMAN OF TROUBLESOME CREEK	BY KIM MICHELE RICHARDSON	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
4/15	WED	3:30 PM		UTILITIES GROUP	NKCDP	OLD COURTHOUSE	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
4/15	WED	5:00 PM		PARKS, ROADS VIEW PLANES GROUP	NKCDP	OLD COURTHOUSE	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
4/16	THU	9:00 AM	11:00AM	SACRED HEART FOOD BASKET	FOOD DISTRIBUTION	SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH	808-889-6436
4/17	SAT	11:00 AM	1:00PM	TOOL LIBRARY WORKSHOPS	USEFUL AND BEGINNER-FRIENDLY TOPICS	TOOL LIBRARY	808-213-7779
4/17	FRI	4:00 PM		HEALTH & WELLNESS GROUP	NKCDP	NKCRC	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
4/18	SAT	7:30 AM		9TH ANNUAL	NKCRC GOLF TOURNAMENT	HAPUNA GOLF COURSE	808-889-5523
4/20	MON	5:30 PM	6:45 PM	HAWAIIAN HISTORY TALK	LOCAL HISTORIAN BOYD BOND TALK STORY.	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
4/24	FRI	2:30 PM	4:30 PM	TEEN BOOK VS. MOVIE CLUB	THE MAZE RUNNER BY JAMES DASNER	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
4/27	MON	2PM & 5:30PM	3PM & 6:30PM	JEWELRY CLASS	ALL MATERIALS PROVIDED, RSVP REQUIRED	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
4/29	WED	04:00 PM		RESTORATIVE YOGA THERAPY CLASS	WITH CARLA ORELLANA - BY REQUEST	CALL FOR LOCATION	808-238-6111
4/30	THU	2:30 PM	4:30 PM	CHILDREN'S BOOK VS. MOVIE CLUB	MR. POPPER'S PENGUINS BY RICHARD ATWATER.	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
4/30	THU	5:00 PM		AGRICULTURE GROUP	NKCDP	NKCRC	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM

# Kohala Water Summit Update

By Boyd Bond

Back in August of 2024, the Agriculture subcommittee of the North Kohala Community Development Plan's Advisory Group sponsored a Water Summit, inviting department heads, landowners and the public. Following the panel presentations, those in attendance separated into several focus groups where moderators collected their questions and feedback. Committee members later separated the questions into categories that paired with the agency, entity or individual that would be best prepared to answer each group of questions, ranging from availability to regulation and delivery. Some questions were asked more than once, and since then the Agriculture Sub-Committee has been working to find answers to these questions.

In 2025, Kohala hosted the State's Committee for Water Resource Management (CWRM) and several committee members attended a Department of Water Supply (DWS) presentation in Waimea. Late in the year, several committee members toured the Meadow Gold facilities along Airport Road, which had been the largest of the ditch customers when it was still running. The owners currently hold title to the ditch easement. They have recently reopened an old plantation era well to irrigate feed crops for the cattle.

In February of 2026, the Agri-

culture subcommittee invited John Richards of Waimea Water Services to come speak with us. He is the principal author of the North Kohala Agricultural Water Study (NKAWS), commissioned by the Hawai'i State Legislature and published in 2019.

This study was in response to the realization that Kohala's massive, century-old ditch infrastructure – originally designed for large scale plantations – has reached the end of its lifespan and no longer matches the needs of today's smaller, diversified farms. Conducted to address the transition of water management in North Kohala from the plantation era to a modern, community-based agricultural model, the NKAWS outlines resources and possible strategies and solutions, offering a broad range of ideas without presenting a specific plan. The study does not attempt to answer the problem before us, but rather to provide all the tools necessary for us to build solutions ourselves.

Among the findings of this study was that the supply of water in North Kohala is quite good, whereas moving the water to where it's needed, referred to as transmission, is what presents the challenge. If we are looking past the ditch era and towards smaller, localized water systems, then farmers and landowners would gather to identify the areas of need and create

their own system in each ahupua'a, or perhaps for an 'āpana, a grouping of several related ahupua'a. More lands could be opened to agriculture when water becomes available, but current systems cannot identify demand where it does not presently exist, and so planning such systems will be an ongoing discussion.

The NKAWS includes many useful maps, including those showing plantation systems during the peak and what remains today. Mr. Richards emphasized that one resource not to overlook is the need for power to run the pumps that bring water up to the surface. This is a cost consideration as well. Many hurdles will need to be overcome to establish administration and maintenance funding for each system as it is created, and the NKAWS also outlines how such entities can be established.

Richards also points out that while the ditch itself may no longer be efficient to transport surface water, the easement could be used to carry perhaps several smaller pipes. These could not only deliver water locally to a system but, with pumping, could move water in either direction, uphill or downhill, to meet new demands and systems develop. If that turns out to be workable, it would be grand to be able to keep that part of our history in the ongoing story of water and farming in Kohala.

To become better informed and be a strong part of the ongoing water discussion, please find and become familiar with this study. It's got lots of maps and other visuals, and you can skip over some of the technical parts if that's not your thing. Simply go to the Hawaii.gov website and type NKAWS into the search bar. The top two links are what you're looking for.



The condensed presentation is at [dlnreng.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/NKAWS-Report-and-Action-Items-Final.pdf](http://dlnreng.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/NKAWS-Report-and-Action-Items-Final.pdf).



The full report is at [dlnreng.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/NKAWS-Report-Final-Draft.pdf](http://dlnreng.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/NKAWS-Report-Final-Draft.pdf).



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## Hawaii Writers Guild President Elected to Second Term



Photo courtesy of Hawaii Writers Guild  
Carol Prescott is serving her second term as president of the Hawaii Writers Guild.

By Joy Fisher

Carol Prescott from Hawi was installed for a second term as presi-

dent of the Hawaii Writers Guild at its Special Annual Meeting in February.

In seeking a second year as president of the guild, Prescott said she would like to serve for another year to continue working on the board's many ongoing projects. During her first year, Prescott worked with other members of the guild and a professional web designer to complete a new website, [www.hawaiiwritersguild.org](http://www.hawaiiwritersguild.org).

Despite a busy first year, Prescott managed to publish two books in 2025. "Out of the Blue: Words and Images" is a collection of poems by Prescott and guild member Michael Foley, also of Hawi. In addition, Prescott co-edited and published her late father's memoir, "How It Was, Or So It Seems: Spring Valley Stories, 1934-1953" with her sister, Deanna Jane Prescott Forgette.

Prescott joined the Hawaii Writers Guild in 2019. Retired from an academic career in science, Prescott welcomed the opportunity to expand her writing into creative nonfiction and poetry in the guild's annual journal, "Latitudes," and elsewhere. "I have greatly enjoyed and benefitted from my association with guild members and the opportunities it has provided to develop my writing skills," Prescott said.

The Hawaii Writers Guild is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation dedicated to cultural enrichment through use of the written and spoken word. Its mission is to support writers connected to the Hawaiian Islands in honing their craft and engaging with the public to heighten community appreciation for literature, creativity, and the written and spoken arts.

## New FREE Community Strength & Flexibility Class Offered in Kohala

By Stephen Hoffman

A new weekly movement class is inviting Kohala community members of all ages and abilities to explore gentle strength, flexibility and mindful movement together.

Stephen Hoffmann offers free Strength & Flexibility classes every Thursday at 4:30 p.m. in Walker Hall at St. Augustine's Church in Kapa'au. The class introduces participants to Meridian Flexibility, a movement approach inspired by the principles of Chinese meridian theory—the same energetic pathways referenced in traditional acupuncture. Through simple stretches and guided movements, participants learn to open areas of the body associated with these pathways.

Hoffmann brings decades of experience in bodywork and movement education. He is a Certified Rolfer™ in Structural Integration and a longtime student of somatic healing practices. His work integrates structural alignment, breath awareness, and gentle stretching techniques designed to help people reconnect with their bodies in a supportive and welcoming environment.

The class is designed to be accessible to everyone, whether you are very active or simply looking for a comfortable way to move again. Many people who attend are curious about improving flexibility, easing everyday stiffness, or exploring practices that may support mobility, mood and overall well-being. Don't forget to bring a yoga mat! Call 808-430-5765 with any questions.

## Public Invited to North Kohala 3-on-3 Tournery

The Hawaii Police Department invites the public to attend the Hawaii Police Activities League (HI-PAL) 3-on-3 Invitational Basketball Tournament on March 28 in North Kohala.

The tournament will be held at Ikuo Hisaoka Gym, with tip-off scheduled for 8:30 a.m.

Youth teams from across North Hawaii will participate in a day of friendly competition and community engagement. Ten teams representing Pa'auilo, Honoka'a, Waimea, Waikoloa and North Kohala will compete in a double-elimination format.

The tournament will feature mixed teams of boys and girls across five age divisions: 6U, 8U, 10U, 12U and 14U. The event highlights HI-PAL's mission to strengthen relationships between law enforcement and the community by promoting positive youth activities, sportsmanship and healthy lifestyles.

The public is encouraged to attend this free, family-friendly, drug-and-alcohol-free event and support Hawaii Island's youth athletes. Concessions, including food and drinks, will be available for purchase through-out the day.

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SCAN ME

# North Kohala Public Library April News and Programs

By Leilani Silver

Did you know? The Hawaii State Public Library System offers access to Scholastic Teachables, a huge online database providing over 30,000 printable and ready-to-use educational resources. Developed by teachers for Pre-K through Grade 6, it offers high-quality lesson plans, worksheets, mini-books, and games covering all subjects. This is a very useful resource for extra skills practice and homeschooling families. Visit the library's website to access the database with your library card.

Chinese Medicine Talk with Ila Jhaveri: April 6 at 3:00 p.m. All participants will walk away with useful and highly effective tips on using food-as-therapy, acupressure, and other lifestyle tools as well as info on acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine.

Chess Club: April 6 at 5:00 p.m. Both beginners and veteran players are welcome to challenge others in this classic game of strategy. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Author Talk/Meet & Greet: April 6 at 5:30 p.m. Join us for a discussion of "Breadfruit: Three Global Journeys of a Bountiful Tree" with author Russell Fielding. In the book, Fielding explores breadfruit's fascinating global history and varied present-day uses. Questions will be taken after the talk, as well as a chance to meet the author and get your book signed.



Courtesy of Tom Morse

Preschool Storytime: April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 at 10:00 a.m. We gather to sing songs, read a few simple stories, then make a craft or do an activity every Wednesday. Great fun for children ages 2-5 and their parents or caregivers.

Lego Club April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 at 2:00 p.m. Join us every Wednesday for some imaginative fun as we build cool creations out of Legos. Creations will be displayed at the library.

Crafting Club April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 at 2:00 p.m. Join us every Wednesday for some crafting fun. We will cut, paste and make cool craft creations. All supplies are provided.

Homeschool Thursday: April 2 at 11:00 a.m. Join us for an informa-

tional story followed by a related activity or craft. This program is best suited for kids 6-11.

Crystal Alchemy Singing Bowl Soundbath: April 13 from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Join Leilani Silver for a unique immersive experience of being "bathed" in the vibrations of eight 432 Hz Crystal Alchemy Singing Bowls made from 99.9 percent clear quartz. The tremendously powerful high frequencies instantly reduce stress and tension and create a relaxed and meditative state that supports healing and regeneration.

Adult Book Club: April 14 at 11:00 a.m. Join us for a discussion of the book "The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek" by Kim Michele Richardson. A historical fiction novel inspired by the real-

life Kentucky Pack Horse Library Project and the blue-skinned Fugate family of Appalachia. The book is available to pick up at the library.

Hawaiian History Talk Story with Local Historian Boyd Bond: April 20 at 5:30 p.m. This month's topic is King Kalakaua's trip around the world.

Teen Book Club: April 24 from 2:40-4:40 p.m. This month's selection is "The Maze Runner" by James Dashner. Read the book and/or come watch the movie. Short discussion will follow. Popcorn provided! Program is for ages 13 and up. The book is available to pick up at the library or for digital download from [www.librarieshawaii.org](http://www.librarieshawaii.org).

Children's Book vs. Movie Club: April 30 from 2:40-4:40 p.m. This month's selection is "Mr. Popper's Penguins" by Richard and Florence Atwater. Read the book and/or come watch the movie. Short discussion will follow. Popcorn provided! Program is for ages 7-12. The book is available to pick up at the library or for digital download from [www.librarieshawaii.org](http://www.librarieshawaii.org).

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TUES-THURS: 9 A.M.-12 P.M., 1-4 P.M.  
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