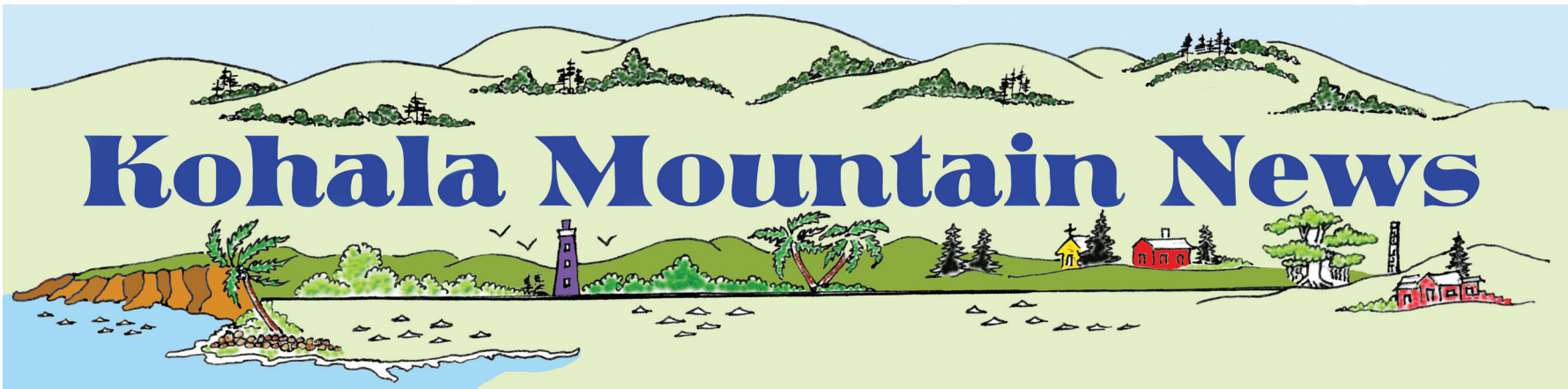




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August 21, 2026

Community Conversation with Legislators Held



See Legislators, Page 2

James Hustace, District 9 Representative, hosted a Community Meeting, which provided a venue for presentations and questions between local legislators and community members.

Story and photo by Lynda Wallach

On Monday, July 20, the Inter-generational Center was filled with community members who had come to participate in the North Kohala Community Conversation hosted by James Hustace, District 9 Representative on the Hawaii Island County Council. Also in

attendance were State Representative David Tarnas and State Senator Tim Richards. Hustace began by explaining the legislative process, which begins with the introduction of a bill, proceeds through multiple steps and, if successful, ends with the signing by the mayor. He highlighted some bills that he spon-

Roots Skatepark Phase 3 In Process



See Roots, Page 2

Volunteers smooth concrete into steel-reinforced forms they'd previously built during the first day of pouring concrete for Phase 3 of Kamehameha Park's Roots Skatepark.

Photos by Andrew Perez

By Psalms Lutz

With great effort and hard work by many people, Roots Skatepark phase 3 is becoming a reality. Threatening weather passed right by, allowing smooth work and a wonderfully successful day of pouring concrete.

Brian Sandlin and Richey Riggs

brought together the crew to make great progress on just the beginning of Phase 3. The muscle of the crew includes Brian Sandlin, Richey Riggs, Andrew Perez, Tony Russel, Junyah, Dixie Normus, Ryan Welzer and Brandon. Switchvation. Plenty help is provided by Skate Wahine Kimberly, Kanani and Jess.

Why We Should Report Outages to HECO

By Toni Withington

One chilly morning last month, a bunch of us from Kohala drove to Waimea to meet up with Hawaiian Electric Company's employee Darren, who drove us by van over Saddle Road to the Operations Center in Hilo, a place that controls all the power flow on Hawaii Island.

We were members of the monthly Utilities Group of the Community Development Plan wanting to see where the company's proposed battery storage mini grid would fit into HECO's plans to increase reliability and cut down on power outages in Kohala. Our host was Candice Lucas, one of our regular members, who also works for HECO, which was formerly called HELCO.

In an unremarkable, bunker-style building, Kevin Waltjen,

HECO's director for Hawaii County, led us into the communications center where operators receive reported outages, send out crews, and coordinate occasional scheduled outages. In recent years the whole system has gone through software and hardware updates.

Surprisingly one element that has yet to be installed is software that can detect outages on its own. Until that is added, Waltjen said the company relies on users to call in or report online outages at their location.

"For this reason, we ask users to call in to say where there is an outage. Don't rely on your neighbors to report," Waltjen said. "When several users call in, we can begin to see the range of the outage." One of the telephone operators told us that, once located, she can notify inspec-

tors and crews to be sent. Once reported, everyone with an outage can get recorded upgrades on the phone or on HECO's website or mobile app to find out estimates on when power will return.

The number to call if you experience an outage is (885) 304-9191.

You can also report an outage on the HECO website. Probably the best way to get updates is to create an account on HECO's mobile app. There's a lot of other information on both sites as well.

Waltjen then led us into the dimly lit control room where giant

floor-to-ceiling computer monitors kept track of the flow of energy island-wide. Space-age impressive. Thousands of numbers tell the operator on duty massive details about where power is coming from and where it is needed. Both power supply and demand fluctuate continuously. Contracted energy producers like solar providers, wind farms and geothermal wells produce what they can. The rest is filled in with diesel and fuel-grade oil power generators around the island.

See HECO, Page 3

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Much mahalo and for all the support of this grassroots project, including Melissa and Brian Kaiawe for support and cheer!



Volunteers work under time pressure to smooth the concrete perfectly before it sets up.

The meeting ended with Hustace reminding people to attend the Kohala Resilience Fair on August 29.

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NKCDP from Page 3

The time and date will be posted as soon as it is scheduled. Winter expressed frustration, which was seconded by others in attendance, at the universal lack of response from the Planning Department and other members of this administration concerning any issue brought before it that is of importance to the citizens of Kohala.

Karl Toubman said that the

Utilities group has been trying to determine how much green waste is going into the transfer station every day. The estimate has been between 40 and 50 percent. Brandon Belmarez of Aikane Nursery is willing to expand his composting operation to create a local facility for Kohala's green waste, but he would need support from the County. The group wishes to draft a proposal asking the County to

divert savings to this project based on the volume and costs associated with presently trucking green waste from our transfer station to the landfill. The information has been previously requested from the County but again there has been no response.

The Office of Sustainability, Climate Equity and Resilience (OSCER) and Hawaii public health is sponsoring a county-wide work-

shop to focus on the climate crisis and heat resilience on September 17 from 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. at the Kohala Intergenerational Center.

The subgroup meeting dates and times can be found in the calendar section of this paper.

The next meeting of the NKCDP AG will be held on Monday, September 7, at 4:30 at the Senior Center. Members of the community are urged to attend.

NKCDP Advisory Group Agenda

Date: Monday, September 7, 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.

Investigatory Subcommittee on Re-zoning and Agricultural Property Tax Rates - Kohala input to the ongoing County reassessment of zoning and agricultural tax rate reduction criteria.

- COUNTY COUNCIL UPDATE** - Councilman, District 9
- NEW BUSINESS**
- PUBLIC INPUT AND AGENDA SUGGESTIONS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**
- ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Corrections

On page 8 of the June 2026 issue, photo credit given was inaccurate. Anna Pacheco took all four photos. On page 9, the caption under the hula hālau should have read Hālau o Kekuhi. We apologize for the errors.

Hamakua-Kohala Health to Provide Free Transportation for Prescriptions

By Tom Morse

Prescription Transportation Details:

- Call to schedule your prescription transportation appointment: (808) 785-4951.
- We will provide YOU transportation to and from Waimea pharmacies: KTA Waimea and Longs Waimea.
- This service will make two roundtrip runs each Thursday.
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- This is a FREE service to the community.



Care That Focuses on Living Well:

MEET DR. MELANIE PAYANAL

When someone is living with a serious illness, life can quickly become overwhelming - not only for patients, but for the family members caring for them. That is why Hawai'i Care Choices is honored to welcome Dr. Melanie Payanal to serve patients and families across North Hawai'i through palliative care. Born and raised on O'ahu, and a graduate of Kamehameha and University of Hawai'i, Dr. Payanal's path into medicine was anything but traditional. Before becoming a physician, she worked as an archaeologist and physical anthropologist, including time at the Smithsonian Institution helping repatriate Native American and Native Hawaiian remains. Today, as a Family Medicine physician, her passion is helping people living with serious illness feel more comfortable, supported, informed, and in control of their quality of life. Palliative care is about helping people continue to live as fully and meaningfully as possible."



For Dr. Payanal, palliative medicine is far more than a profession. "It's not just a job," she says. "It gives meaning to my life."

Dr. Payanal explains. "It's about dignity, independence, educating people on their choices, while supporting the people who love and care for them." For many families, palliative care may still feel unfamiliar or even intimidating. Dr. Payanal hopes to change that understanding by helping patients realize they do not have to struggle alone.

Come see us!

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Letters

Mahalo to Our Legislators

Dear Editor:

Hawai'i has once again shown that democracy works best when people—not corporations—have the strongest voice. By becoming the first state to prohibit corporate campaign contributions, our legislature has taken a bold step toward restoring public trust in elections.

Corporate money can drown out the voices of ordinary citizens and create the appearance that policy is for sale. This reform helps ensure that elected officials are accountable to voters rather than corporate interests.

Hawai'i should be proud to lead the nation in protecting the integrity

of our democratic process. Other states legislatures should follow our example and put voters first.

Congratulations and gratitude to our State Rep. David Tarnas, who supported this bill, and to Governor Josh Green, who signed it.

Deborah Du Nann Winter

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.

Aloha. As the 2026 legislative session began, the House Majority Caucus identified key priorities for the session, which focused our work. Last month, I described the bills that addressed affordable housing, supporting Native Hawaiians, and protecting essential services. This month, I'll provide a summary of the bills that address workforce shortages, the state's revenues, and diversifying our economy.

Expanding Workforce Development and Retention Programs

HB1890 CD1 provides annual salary step increases for public school teachers and public charter schoolteachers who have completed one year's satisfactory service and comply with specified requirements, if negotiated into a collective bargaining agreement and subject to legislative appropriations.

HB1661 CD1 specifies that the maximum contribution and carry-over amounts for a public service flexible spending account plan are set in accordance with the annual limits prescribed by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Given the rising cost of living in Hawaii, aligning employer-sponsored benefit arrangements with IRS-prescribed annual limits helps public employees offset costly out-of-pocket health and dependent care expenses.

Responsibly Enhancing Tax Revenue

SB3125 CD1 provides additional tax relief for Hawaii working families by preserving all the tax cuts in Act 46 (2022) for families making less than \$350,000, including increases to the standard deduc-

tion, and by further cutting income tax rates for low-income families. The bill funds the projected revenue shortfall by shifting the tax burden to high-income taxpayers and responsibly scaling back certain tax credits.

Diversifying and Strengthening Hawaii's Economy

SB2580 CD1 amends the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit (tax credit) by, beginning for costs incurred after 12/31/2025, providing an additional credit to qualified productions with a workforce of at least eighty percent local hires; requiring each taxpayer claiming the tax credit to submit an independent third-party certification verifying certain information to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT); increasing the per-production cap amount to \$20,000,000 and excluding qualified productions that incur at least \$60,000,000 of qualified costs from the per-production cap amount; changing the aggregate cap amount to \$60,000,000; providing that, beginning for costs incurred after 12/31/2023, if the total amount of tax credits claimed in a year is less than the aggregate cap amount, the cap for the subsequent year shall be increased by the unclaimed amount; defining "streaming platform" and amending the definition of "qualified production" to include certain streaming productions; and extending the sunset date of the tax credit to 1/1/2038.

SB2360 CD1 amends the definition of "eligible business activity" for the purposes of the Enterprise Zone Program to include certain retail sales of tangible personal property; processing of certain value-added agricultural products; research, development, sale, or production of all types of medical products and medical and health care services; activities of the Hawaii Food and Product Innovation Network; the provision of certain professional services by health care professionals; aerospace research and development activities; and information technology design and production services.

SB2907 CD1 declares that the State is an ocean cluster. Establishes the Office of Marine Affairs and Marine Affairs Governing Board within the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation. Establishes the Marine Affairs Coordinator position. Repeals the powers and duties of DBEDT over marine

affairs. Transfers the employees and functions of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Marine Affairs to the Office of Marine Affairs.

HB2474 CD1 authorizes the State to enter into nonbinding international cooperative agreements with national governments; national ministries, departments, or agencies; provincial or regional governments; or international intergovernmental bodies relevant to the interests of the State or an international partner. Expands the definition of sister-state or province partnerships to include a partnership between the State and a prefecture or foreign nation. Requires the Hawaii Sister-State and International Partnerships Commission to evaluate how a sister-state or province partnership or international cooperative agreement will enhance certain key state initiatives.

HB1810 CD1 establishes prompt payment and financial reporting requirements for professional solicitors that sell donated or collected non-perishable tangible property on behalf of charitable organizations and requires them to prominently disclose certain information on any collection bin, container, or receptacle used to receive donated or collected non-perishable tangible property.

HB1576 CD1 requires DBEDT to provide public notice of certain information whenever a production obtains a permit or enters into a memorandum of agreement or understanding with DBEDT to film a visually recorded production at certain locations. Requires DBEDT to provide public notice of certain information whenever a production registers for pre-qualification or is determined to qualify for the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit and simultaneously post notice on a publicly accessible part of its website. Allows individuals to sign up to receive the public notice by electronic mail or postal mail. Provides an exemption for dispositions of lands set aside for filming and film studio operations from prior approval of the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

HB2583 CD1 establishes the Hawaii Micro-Lending Credit Enhancement Program and Special Fund within DBEDT to expand micro-lending capacity by providing state-funded loan loss reserves or other credit enhancement that absorbs first losses on qualified micro-loans made by participating

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.

September Deadlines

Ads and News: 9/11/26

Calendar: 9/18/26

Distribution: 9/25/26

October Deadlines

Ads and News: 10/9/26

Calendar: 10/16/26

Distribution: 10/23/26

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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We no longer offer a subscription service. The current and past issues can be found at kohalamountainnews.com.



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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.

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

See HI-Rep update on Page 6

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!

As Hawai'i Island continues to face the growing threat of wildfires and other natural disasters, community preparedness will take center stage at the end of this month at the Kohala Community Resilience Fair.

Join us on Saturday, August 29, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Hisaoka Gym in Kamehameha Park for this

free community event, presented through a partnership between my County Council office, Hawaiian Electric, Hawai'i County Civil Defense Agency and the Kohala Resilience Hub.

The fair will bring together more than 25 participating organizations, including County departments, emergency responders, nonprofits and community partners. Residents will have an opportunity to learn about practical steps to better prepare their families, homes and neighborhoods before emergencies occur.

From noon to 1 p.m. we will host a Community Conversation featuring a presentation by Hawaiian Electric on its Wildfire Safety Strategy. A moderated panel discussion on wildfire prevention, emergency preparedness, and the importance of partnerships before, during and after disasters will follow. Keiki activities will be available, food and beverages will be offered for purchase, and we will have some great prize drawings throughout the day. I hope to see you there!

At Council, I am also grateful that Bill 163, establishing the 'Aina Kūpuna Dedication Program, received final approval from the County Council. I introduced this measure to help preserve generational family lands by providing

property tax relief for qualifying descendants of longtime Hawai'i Island landowners. Thank you to my Council colleagues, County staff, community members, and everyone who provided testimony and helped strengthen this important legislation throughout the process.

We are also continuing work on Bill 169, which I co-sponsored with Council Member Michelle Galimba. The measure establishes timelines for the County to make reasonable efforts to acquire properties already selected by the Council for preservation through the Public Access, Open Space, and Natural Resources Preservation (PONC) process. Properties not acquired within those timeframes would return to the Commission for reassessment and possible inclusion on a future prioritized list. The goal is to improve accountability and keep the acquisition process moving while ensuring preservation priorities are periodically revisited.

The Council also recently approved Resolution 603-26, introduced by Council Chair Holeka Inaba and me. The resolution urges the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to fully implement and enforce quarantine measures aimed at limiting the spread of the coconut rhinoceros

beetle on Hawai'i Island. Protecting our agricultural lands, native ecosystems and iconic palms will require continued vigilance and collaboration at every level.

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

Wishing you good health and aloha!

HI-Rep Update, from Page 5

lenders to Hawaii small businesses. Allows borrower fees and state matching contributions to capitalize lender-held loan loss reserve accounts.

HB2475 CD1 establishes labeling requirements for 'ōkolehao products (distilled spirits from fermented ti plant) to ensure that products using the name 'ōkolehao meet certain criteria, including production in the State.

I am grateful to serve as your State Representative and appreciate your advice and suggestions. Please contact me at reptarnas@capitol.hawaii.gov or 808-586-8510. You can also subscribe to my e-newsletter at linktre.ee/rep.tarnas for more updates. Mahalo!

Mahalo nui loa

to all the hands that made this event so memorable.

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Halau O Kekuhi	Makani U'a Ranch	Travis Ching
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Kekai Nakamura	Nino Ka'ai & Comapny	Amoo Ching
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Kris Ellazar	'Ohana Hawkins	Wehilei Ryder

Mahalo nui to Hui Lā Kamehameha Ma Kohala for your dedication in making this year's celebration a success. From the earliest planning to the final moments of the event, your commitment to honoring Kamehameha's legacy in Kohala was felt in every detail. Your time, hard work, and aloha brought our community together to celebrate our ali'i, and that gift will not be forgotten. We are truly grateful for all that you do. — Lokelani Hooton & Ekela Kahuanui

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When Is Enough, Enough? Kohala Community Continues Fight for Traditional Land and Ocean Access

Story and photos by Jeffrey Conkley

For generations, families in Kohala moved freely between the mountains and the shoreline, gathering what they needed from the land and ocean and passing down a way of life rooted in responsibility to the 'āina.

Today, community members say that way of life is increasingly threatened by barriers to traditional access.

For Hui Mamalahoa, a Kohala community organization formed in response to access restrictions in the 1970s, the issue is about more than roads, gates and fences. It is about the rights of people to maintain a cultural relationship with the land and ocean—rights that members say have deep roots in Hawaiian history.

The Kuleana Act of 1840, Section 7, recognized certain rights of the people, including access to firewood, house timber, thatching materials, drinking and running water, and rights of way. The law stated that springs, running water and roads were to be free to all. The act was approved during the reign of King Kamehameha III.

The Highways Act of 1892, approved by Queen Lili'uokalani, further addressed public access to roads and highways in the Hawaiian Kingdom. For Kohala residents, however, the question of access



A boulder is blocking the public access road to a traditional fishing area known as Number 5's.

became especially urgent following the closure of Kohala Sugar Company in 1975.

A Way of Life Changes

Before the plantation closed, residents recall a Kohala where families could travel through the mountains and reach the shoreline

without the barriers that exist today.

After the sugar operation ended, approximately 20,000 acres were leased for cattle grazing. Fences and gates were installed.

According to community members, the gates were initially left unlocked, but over time they were

chained and locked. Access to areas that generations of residents had traditionally used was restricted.

Some community members were arrested for trespassing on lands they considered part of their customary access routes.

What began as a series of individual disputes eventually became a larger community question: Who has the right to reach the mountains, streams and ocean that have sustained Kohala families for generations?

The Community Organizes

One of the people who helped bring the issue into public discussion was Kohala resident Lani Eugenio, a 1966 graduate of Kamehameha Schools who studied biology and later attended the University of Hawai'i at Hilo.

Working with University of Hawai'i professors as facilitators, Eugenio helped develop a grant and organize public forums where residents could discuss the growing access problem.

The forums brought together community members, landowners, ranchers and County representatives. Speakers also shared experiences from other parts of Hawai'i.

Among them were Walter Ritte, associated with the movement to protect Kaho'olawe; Kaua'i attorney and later mayor Jo Ann Yukimura;

See Access, on Page 8



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**52-236 KEOKEA PARK RD.,
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Access from Page 7

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Attorneys for Defendant
State of Hawaii

THIRD CIRCUIT COURT
STATE OF HAWAII
FILED

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H. TSUMI
CLERK

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRD CIRCUIT

STATE OF HAWAII

KOHALA CORPORATION,	)	CIVIL NO. 5464
Plaintiff,	)	STIPULATED AGREEMENT
vs.	)	BETWEEN PLAINTIFF AND
ABOI (aka) ABOI AHOY),	)	DEFENDANT STATE OF HAWAII AND
et al.,	)	DEFENDANTS HUI MAMALAHOA,
Defendants.	)	BENJAMIN K. RAYMOND, SAMSON
	)	CAZIMERO, SR., AND COUNTY OF
	)	HAWAII, REGARDING PUBLIC
	)	ACCESS AND MINERAL RIGHTS;
	)	ORDER

STIPULATED AGREEMENT BETWEEN PLAINTIFF AND
DEFENDANT STATE OF HAWAII AND DEFENDANTS HUI
MAMALAHOA, BENJAMIN K. RAYMOND, SAMSON
CAZIMERO, SR., AND COUNTY OF HAWAII, REGARDING
PUBLIC ACCESS AND MINERAL RIGHTS

This Stipulated Settlement is made and entered into
this 1st day of March, 1982, by and between
the Plaintiff, KOHALA CORPORATION (hereinafter "Plaintiff"),
and Defendants, HUI MAMALAHOA, BENJAMIN K. RAYMOND and
SAMSON CAZIMERO, SR. (hereinafter collectively "Public
Access Defendants"), Defendant, COUNTY OF HAWAII (hereinafter
"County"), and Defendant, STATE OF HAWAII (hereinafter
"State"), by and through their respective undersigned
attorneys.

EXHIBIT "A"

97

Page 1 of the March 1, 1982 Stipulated Agreement between Kohala Corporation, Public Access Defendants, and the State of Hawaii. The Agreement established historical limited public access and vehicular rights-of-way across specific historic government roads in North Kohala. The key and access system tied to this ruling is managed alongside community organizations like Hui Mamalahoa and Surety Kohala Corp.

attorney Kali Watson, who would later become director of the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands; and Hawaiian cultural practitioner and Hōkūle'a voyager Sam Ka'ai.

The late George Helm, a prominent Kaho'olawe activist, was also remembered in discussions about the risks people took in defending access and Native Hawaiian rights.

Eugenio also produced the documentary O Ka Kōu Ka Poe—We The People, documenting the Kohala community's efforts to maintain access and preserve its cultural way of life. But the forums also made something clear: Community discussion alone was not enough to restore access.

The Birth of Hui Mamalahoa

Former plantation workers and other community members eventually organized into Hui Mamalahoa, an unincorporated community organization whose name reflects its mission of "Peace Through Access."

The group secured pro bono legal assistance from attorney Tim Lui-Kwan, a Kamehameha Schools graduate who worked on behalf of the Hui and, according to members, gave hope to former plantation workers who felt they had nowhere else to turn.

The struggle soon moved beyond meetings and public forums. Community members began removing locks and cutting through stretches of barbed-wire fencing and gates that they believed were improperly blocking traditional access routes from Pololū to Hawi.

For those involved, it was a confrontation over a fundamental question: Could generations of community use simply disappear because ownership of the surrounding land had changed?

Access and Stewardship

The struggle did not end in the 1970s. Today, Kohala residents have access to places including Hapu'u and Kapanāia Bay, and community members say they have taken

responsibility for caring for those areas. That stewardship includes cleaning up rubbish and maintaining the places they use.

When squatters occupied land at Kapa'a Beach, community members organized to clean the area after the squatters were removed.

For Hui Mamalahoa, such efforts demonstrate that access and responsibility go together.

The organization argues that people who have longstanding relationships with the land should not simply be viewed as trespassers or users. They can also be stewards of the places they depend upon.

A Boulder, and an Old Argument

Now, another access dispute has brought the issue back into focus. A large boulder currently blocks an access road leading to a traditional fishing area known as Number 5's. Hui Mamalahoa says the landowners have refused to remove the boulder despite a court ruling in the community's favor regarding access.

To members of the Hui, the situation represents a modern version of an old problem: control over access to resources that the community has traditionally relied upon.

Some members describe this as another form of what they call "plantation mentality"—the idea that those who control the land can also control the movement and activities of the people who live around it.

The landowners' position, and the full legal circumstances surrounding the current access dispute, remain important parts of the story. But for Hui Mamalahoa, the larger question extends beyond one road or one boulder.

It is about whether traditional access can survive from one generation to the next.

The Fight Continues

Nearly five decades after Kohala Sugar Company closed its doors,

See Access, on Page 8

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Upcoming First Time Buyer and Homeowner Resource Workshops

By Beth Robinson

Kohala Community Land Trust (KCLT) is pleased to announce details for their upcoming homeownership and home buyer workshops. The workshops are offered free of charge to members of the Kohala community, thanks to grant support from the Atherton Foundation. All workshops will be held on Saturdays, 10 a.m. to noon, at the Kohala Senior Center.

September 12: First Time Home Buyer Readiness

- Updates on the next phase of Self Help Housing
- Renter and buyer programs offered by Hawai'i County
- How KCLT can offer permanently affordable housing
- Hawaiian Community Assets - introduction to their certified credit and homeownership counseling process to qualify for these opportunities.

September 19: Property Tax and Home Insurance Issues for Kohala Homeowners

- Hawaii County Property Tax Division on the new 'āina kupuna program for properties owned over 100 years; agricultural dedication; and long term rental programs.
- Tad Nottage of Aloha Insurance Services on different types of homeowner insurance and current issues in getting and keeping your property insured.
- KCLT wants to hear from

Kohala homeowners on how they need help keeping their properties so we can work on providing solutions

September 26: Title And Estate Planning

- Shauna Kahiapo of Aloha Legacy Law will provide basic information on how to plan for keeping your property and providing for your future generations.
- Shae Kamaka'ala will be available to speak with 'ohana about title issues so we can plan for future informational sessions and providing title research and clearing resources once we know what the need is in our community.

October 10: How 'Ohana Approach Decisionmaking for Homes and 'Āina

- Auntie Lahela Kruse will talk about ho'oponopono as a process for families to have needed conversations around their homes and 'āina
- West Hawai'i Mediation Center will present the mediation process as an option.

How do we Keep Kohala, Kohala? Number one is keeping Kohala people in Kohala!

That is why Kohala Community Land Trust (KCLT) was formed in 2024. KCLT is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to preserve the availability and affordability of Kohala's housing for future generations of local residents.

Because KCLT is a membership organization open to all adult residents of Kohala, it provides a way for the Kohala community to collectively buy back land for housing and other purposes.

If the time comes for a local Kohalan to transfer their property outside of the family, they might sell or donate to KCLT, to help keep Kohala, Kohala. KCLT keeps land in community hands permanently, breaking the endless cycle of rising prices. When a home transfers to KCLT rather than to a newcomer to Kohala, the Kohala Community Land Trust holds title to the land

while selling or renting the home to another community member at an affordable price.

For more information contact KCLT at info@kohalacommunitylandtrust.org.

Or check out our website, kohalacommunitylandtrust.org, or social media for updates.

Kohala Community Land Trust – keeping Kohala lands and homes in Kohala hands!

2026 Board of Directors: Ashton Dircks, Beldon Kealoha, Beth Robinson, Cat Givarz, Denni Keyes, Jared Terpak, Keli'i Kapali, Terra Sutton and Whitney Harvey.



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current and future
homeowners!

Sep 12, 2026

Buyer Readiness

- Hawai'i Island Community Development Corporation
- Office of Housing and Community Development
- Hawaiian Community Assets

Sep 19, 2026

Property Tax & Home Insurance

- Property Tax Division, County of Hawai'i
- Tad Nottage, Aloha Insurance Services

Sep 26, 2026

Title Issues and Estate Planning

- Shauna Kahiapo, Aloha Legacy Law

Oct 10, 2026

'Ohana Decisionmaking

- Ho'oponopono with Auntie Lahela Kruse
- Conflict Resolution with West Hawai'i Mediation Center

Mālama i ka 'āina o Kohala - Mālama i ke kaiāulu o Kohala
Keeping Kohala land, homes, and businesses in Kohala hands forever

www.kohalacommunitylandtrust.org — info@kohalacommunitylandtrust.org

Access from Page 7

members of Hui Mamalahoa say they remain committed to the same principle that brought the organization together: access is essential to community life.

The mountains and ocean are not simply recreational destinations, they say. Access to these traditional areas is essential to the emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being of the people. Maintaining that access allows them to sustain their connection to the 'āina, their culture, and a healthy way of life passed down through generations.

The Hui's history reflects a broader chapter in Hawai'i's modern history, when communities increasingly challenged restrictions

on access to lands and resources they considered essential to their cultural identity. For Kohala residents who lived through those struggles, the question remains as direct as ever: When is enough, enough?

Hui Mamalahoa says it will continue the fight to preserve access — not simply for those who remember the old paths, but for the generations that will come after them.

The name Hui Mamalahoa means Peace to Access fashioned after the "Kanawai Mamalahoe," the Law of the Splintered Paddle.

Imua Kamehameha `Ekahi ["Forward Kamehameha" is a war cry for graduates of Kamehameha Kapalama campus to do their best and make a difference.]

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Theater, from Page 10

*Hemolele in 2023.*

between their eyes where a green turtle has two. Honu'ea have two claws on each of their front flippers while a green turtle has one on each flipper. Their shell or carapace is formed in layers called scutes, like shingles, and the edges of the shell are serrated, not smooth.

A fourth hawksbill that I saw and named was U'i 'Ea Kamano, #HI-094; the name means beautiful hawksbill of Kamano (Nishimura Bay). I saw this gorgeous subadult creature in February, 2024.

The shells of these turtles have been prized over the centuries, and tortoiseshell jewelry and art have been found in the graves of pre-dynastic rulers of Egypt from 3,000 BC. The hawksbill's shell was considered a luxury material next to jade, bronze and silk during China's Han Dynasty, 206 BCE to 220 CE. The Mayan and Aztec civilizations also prized the tortoiseshell for its rarity and beauty, and used them to adorn the nobility and elite members of society.

*U'i 'Ea Kamano in 2024.*

Hawaii is the endangered species capital of the world. We have more endangered species existing here than anywhere else on earth. Besides our sea turtles, here are a few others on the list: monk seals, nēnē, pueo, Hawaiian hoary bat, more than 100 plants, insects like the Hawaiian bee, and many of our fish. The hawksbill turtle has been protected since the 1970s under the U.S. Endangered Species Act and CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species), so

any tortoiseshell product cannot be legally bought, sold, transported, or traded in Hawaii or anywhere else in the U.S. This is enforced through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Hawaii has some of the strongest conservation awareness programs. These include NOAA's Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center. If you want to report turtle sightings or get involved in the conservation efforts, reach out to them. The hawksbills are protected under

See Honu'ea, on Page 12

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Mariah Saxon in 2026.

Hawaii State Law. There’s much information on the hihawksbills.org site, including viewing the photos of the turtles in the database.

A few weeks ago, I happened to see a young turtle at Mahukona that caught my eye, so I watched and took photos. I was sure it was a hawksbill. It was. I named this fifth honu’ea Mahukona Mariah Saxon, #HI-116. It was a juvenile, just as

sweet and delightful as my granddaughter, so it carries her name.

With so few hawksbill turtles in Hawaiian waters, it’s a gift to be in their presence. They need our protection and intervention if they are to survive. I hope that the five honu’ea I’ve been privileged to have encountered all live in peace to a ripe old age.



Photo by Donna Maltz

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Construction Delays Expected on Kohala Highways

By Toni Withington

Traffic delays on both Akoni Pule Highway and Kohala Mountain Road are expected to begin in September, according to the State Department of Transportation (SDOT).

Repaving of Akoni Pule Highway between miles 13.3 and 19.3, which is from approximately Lapakahi State Park to Hawi town, will begin next month. Drivers should expect delays because traffic will be limited to one lane around the work area. Because of unpredictable weather conditions, SDOT Highways Division would not say when the paving would be finished.

On the Kohala Mountain Road, workers will be painting permanent median and shoulder stripes as well as installing colored reflective markers between miles 9 to 15, which is approximately the roadway from the summit to Pono Holo Ranch. Work on repaving that section of the road began in early 2023, but breakdowns, weather conditions, and legal issues meant the painting and reflectors installed then were expected to be temporary. Many of the markings and reflectors have worn off. Work is expected

to start in late September.

Two other Highways Division projects affecting Kohala drivers are still in process with construction within view.

In Waimea at the intersection of Kohala Mountain Road and Kawaihae Road near HPA school, Highways Division will be replacing the 94-year-old Waiaka Bridge and installing a roundabout at the dangerous intersection. A temporary road and bridge will be built to handle traffic during construction. A contract is being finalized with the construction firm and work is expected to start in November. The estimated construction completion is November 2028.

At Kawaihae Harbor SDOT is completing the permitting process and expecting in November to put out to bid a contract for the \$34 million project to widen Kawaihae Road to accommodate a left turn lane into the main port gate, concrete paving on 10 acres of the cargo yard, and other harbor improvements. The turn lane is expected to improve traffic flow along the highway. Construction is projected to start in the spring of 2027 and take approximately two years.

At KHS, Hands-On Learning Means Getting Your Hands Dirty



Photo courtesy Department of Education
Keith Hayashi (left) and Dean Snelling were both recognized for implementing model academies.

Sometimes success shows up in unexpected ways—like 45 chickens. That's what Kohala High School career and technical education lead teacher Dean Snelling discovered one school day when he stopped by the natural resources program.

His students had already finished the job. Forty-five chickens raised on the school farm had been plucked, cleaned and packaged. The processing area was sanitized and spotless, and the chickens were cooling in the freezer.

What impressed Snelling wasn't just what they accomplished, but how little help they needed.

"It's a really big deal," Snelling said. Processing chickens requires careful attention to temperature, sanitation and handling. "It showed me the level of competency of the candidates in the pathway. It showed me their grit."

That hands-on learning is helping the small Kapaau school punch well above its weight.

With about 260 students, Kohala High became in 2025 the first small school in the nation to earn the National Career Academy Coalition's Model Academy designation. Snelling also received the John Thompson Exemplary Educator

Award.

But he'd rather credit the students.

"I'd rather celebrate the school and the students," he said. "They're the ones who really bought into the program."

Kohala offers four career academies: natural resources and food systems, construction, culinary arts, and health and nursing. Students begin choosing pathways as freshmen and learn through hands-on projects, internships, job shadowing and community partnerships.

The approach grew from Snelling's experience at Waipahu High School, where he worked under then-principal Keith Hayashi, now state Department of Education superintendent. Six years after bringing the model to Kohala, Snelling is seeing the payoff.

Students are learning more than job skills. They're learning to solve problems, meet high standards and stick with difficult work.

"When you give students the opportunity, they always make the most of it," Snelling said. "They almost always exceed your expectations."

At Kohala High, that may be the most important lesson of all.



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WEEKLY EVENTS IN 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
	4:45PM	6PM	THE JOY OF BELLY DANCING	CALL FOR LOCATION	238-6111
	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	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	8AM	4PM	TOOL LIBRARY	54-3842 AKONI PULE HWY	213-7779
	9:30AM	10:45PM	HEALING CIRCLE FOR ADDICTS	NANI'S GARDEN	805-452 9501
	1PM	4PM	THRILLING THURSDAYS FOR KEIKI	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	889-6655
	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
	4PM		FOOD PANTRY	ST AUGUSTINE'S	889-5390
SAT	8AM	12PM	HAWI FARMERS MARKET	HUB MURAL	895-7870
	8AM	4PM	TOOL LIBRARY	54-3842 AKONI PULE HWY	213-7779
	10AM	12PM	KOHALA COMMUNITY LAND TRUST WORKSHOPS 9/12: FIRST TIME HOME BUYER 9/19: PROPERTY TAX 9/26: TITLE AND ESTATE PLANNING 10/10: DECISIONMAKING	SENIOR CENTER	CONTACT: INFO@KOHALACOMMUNITYLANDTRUST.ORG
SUN	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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MONTHLY CALENDAR 2026							
	DAY	START	END	EVENT	DESCRIPTION	VENUE	PHONE
9/2	WED	4:00 PM	6:00 PM	KOHALA NIGHT MARKET	FOOD TRUCKS, CRAFT VENDORS, MUSIC	HUB MURAL	808-895-2025
9/2	WED	4:30 PM		KOHALA COMMUNITY ACCESS GROUP	NKCDP	OLD COURTHOUSE	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
9/2	WED	7:00 PM		TEMPLE OF SPIRITUAL HEALING	GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP - CALL FOR ZOOM LINK	ZOOM	808-989-5995
9/3	THU	3:00 PM	4:30 PM	FAMILY BOARD GAMES	AFTER-SCHOOL BOARD GAMES	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
9/5	SAT	5:30 PM	8:00PM	OPEN HOUSE PARTY	ART, STORIES, MUSIC & PUPU'S	ARTISTS' COOPERATIVE	808-854-1058
9/5	SAT	8:00 AM	11:00AM	THRIFT SHOP		ST AUGUSTINE'S	808-889-5390
9/7	MON	4:30 PM		ADVISORY GROUP MEETING	NKCDP	OLD COURTHOUSE	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
9/9	WED	9:00 AM		AFFORDABLE HOUSING GROUP	NKCDP	LIBRARY	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
9/9	WED	5:00 PM		GROWTH MANAGEMENT GROUP	NKCDP	OLD COURTHOUSE	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
9/10	THU	3:00 PM	4:30 PM	KOHALA KENDOMA CLUB	SHOW US YOUR TRICKS OR LEARN NEW ONES!	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
9/11	FRI	3:00 PM	4:30 PM	HELUHELU QUIZ BOWL TEAM MEETING	MEET TO DISCUSS BOOKS AND TRIVIA!	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
9/14	MON	3:00 PM	4:00 PM	ILA JHAVERI TALK: SLOW AGING	FOOD-AS-THERAPY, ACUPRESSURE, AND OTHER LIFESTYLE TOOLS.	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
9/14	MON	5:00 PM	6:30 PM	CHESS CLUB	ALL AGES WELCOME!	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
9/15	TUE	11:00 AM	12:00 PM	BOOK CLUB	DISCUSS MY FRIENDS BY FREDRIK BACKMAN WITH US!	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
9/16	WED	03:30 PM		UTILITIES GROUP	NKCDP	OLD COURTHOUSE	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
9/16	WED	05:00 PM		PARKS, ROADS VIEW PLANES GROUP	NKCDP	OLD COURTHOUSE	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
9/17	THU	9:00 AM	11:00AM	SACRED HEART FOOD BASKET	FOOD DISTRIBUTION	SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH	808-889-6436
9/18	FRI	4:00 PM		HEALTH & WELLNESS GROUP	NKCDP	OLD COURTHOUSE	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
9/19	SAT	11:00 AM	1:00PM	TOOL LIBRARY WORKSHOPS	USEFUL AND BEGINNER-FRIENDLY TOPICS	TOOL LIBRARY	808-213-7779
9/21	MON	2:00 PM	4:00 PM	JEWELRY MAKING CLASS (X2 5:30PM)	ALL MATERIALS PROVIDED, RSVP REQUIRED	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
9/24	THU	3:00 PM	5:00 PM	CHILDREN'S BOOK VS. MOVIE CLUB	UPSIDE-DOWN MAGIC BY SARAH MLYNOWSKI.	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
9/24	THU	5:00 PM		AGRICULTURE GROUP	NKCDP	NKCRC	IMUAKOHALA@GMAIL.COM
9/24	THU	5:30 PM		COMMUNITY MEAL	SIT DOWN	ST AUGUSTINE'S	808-889-5390
9/25	FRI	3:00 PM	5:00 PM	TEEN BOOK VS. MOVIE CLUB	SISTERHOOD OF THE TRAVELING PANTS BY ANN BRASHARES	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
9/28	MON	5:30 PM	7:00 PM	HAWAIIAN HISTORY TALK	LOCAL HISTORIAN BOYD BOND TALK STORY.	NK PUBLIC LIBRARY	808-889-6655
9/30	WED	4:00 PM		RESTORATIVE YOGA THERAPY CLASS	WITH CARLA ORELLANA - BY REQUEST	CALL FOR LOCATION	808-238-6111



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North Kohala Public Library September 2026 News and Programs

By Leilani Silver

Did you know? The Hawaii State Public Library System offers Mango Languages, a learning tool that provides instruction in more than 70 languages, including ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi. Lessons are built around real conversational situations. Visit our website and use the quick link for Mango Languages to sign up and get started.

Preschool Storytime: September 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 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 2–5-year-olds and their parents or caregivers.

Lego Club: September 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 at 2:00–3:30 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: September 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 at 2:00–3:30 p.m. Join us every Wednesday for some crafting fun. We will cut, paste and make cool craft creations. All supplies are provided.

After-school Board Games: September 3 at 3:00 p.m. Join us on the first Thursday of every month for an afternoon of board games. Play one of the games provided by the library or feel free to bring your

own to share.

Adult Book Club: September 8 at 11:00 a.m. Join us for a discussion of the #1 New York Times bestseller “My Friends” by Fredrik Backman. The book is available to pick up at the library.

Kohala Kendama Club: September 10 at 3:00 p.m. Join us on the second Thursday of every month for some Kendama fun. Show us your tricks or learn some new ones. All levels welcome. Complete a trick card and get a prize. Bring your own Kendama or use one provided by the library.

Heluhelu Quiz Bowl Team Meeting: September 11 at 3:00 p.m. Let’s meet and discuss books and trivia. Snacks provided. Program is for fourth to seventh graders of any school: public, private or homeschooled.

Chinese Medicine Tools with Ila Jhaveri–Nutrition for Longevity: September 14 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: September 14 at 5:00 p.m. Both beginners and veteran players are welcome to challenge others in this classic strategy

game. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Miss Cursive: September 22 from 2:00–4:00 p.m. Join us for a free handwriting workshop with Stepahanie Schouten, founder of Miss Cursive. Suitable for children, teens and adults. All supplies are provided.

Children’s Book vs. Movie Club: September 24 from 3–5 p.m. This month’s selection is “Upside Down Magic” by Sarah Mlynowski. 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 our website.

Teen Book Club: September 25 from 3–5 p.m. This month’s selection is “The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants” by Ann Brashares. 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 our site.

Hawaiian History Talk with Boyd Bond: September 28 5:30 p.m. Join us for an informative talk story about Hawaiian History with local historian Boyd Bond.

Teen/Adult Board Games:

September 28 at 5:00 p.m. Calling teens and adults! Come for a fun night of board games! Play one of the games provided or feel free to bring your own to share!

Pokémon Trading Card Game: September 29 at 3:00 p.m. Interested in the Pokémon Trading Card Game, but don’t know how to play? Join us to play your first Pokémon card game and learn all about using the Battle Academy board game, generously provided by the Friends of the North Kohala Library. Already know how to play? Bring your deck and challenge other experienced players or come talk about deck building and card collecting.

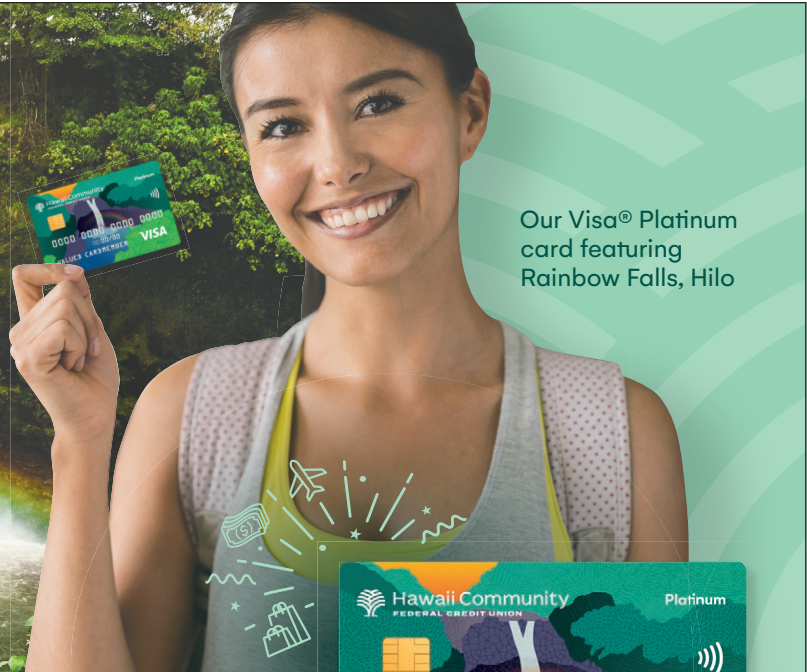
All programs are subject to change. If you require an auxiliary aid or accommodation due to a disability, please contact the library at least seven days before the program date.

North Kohala Public Library Hours:

Mon: 12–4 p.m., 5–7 p.m.
Tues–Thurs: 9 a.m.–12 p.m., 1–4 p.m.
Fri: 12–4 p.m.
Closed Saturday, Sunday and State Holidays
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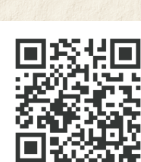
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