

# Na'ope and Balazs Honored

Hawai'i's treasured kumu hula and composer of many songs including mele about Ka'u and Punalu'u, George Na'ope, and reknowned world turtle authority George Balazs were both honored at the Malama Punalu'u Festival held during Labor Day Weekend. Both were presented with awards from Ka'u Preservation, the Hawai'i Governor's office, Office of Hawaiian Affairs and the Common Council of Hawai'i, said Event Chairman Jim Spielman. Kumu hula Iwalani Kalima accepted the awards on behalf of Na'ope, who was gravely ill.

The free two-day event, held at Na'alehu Park included performances by Grammy winner Ledward Ka'apana, Darren Benitez and multi Nā Hoku Hanohano award winner Amy Hanali'i Gilliom.

Over 100 Hawaiian artists, musicians and cultural practitioners were fea-

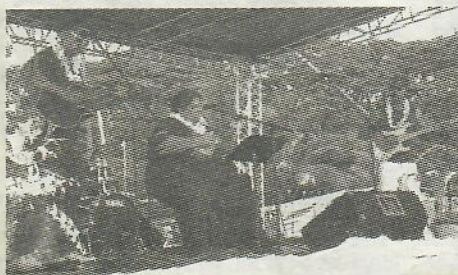
tured and hundreds of families from Ka'u and across the island came "to celebrate the sacredness of Punalu'u Black Sand Beach, a thriving cultural treasure on the Ka'u Coast -- the longest undeveloped shoreline in Hawai'i," wrote Danny Miller, Ka'u Preservation's Director of Media. He said that 8,500 people attended.

Pele Hanoa, president of Ka'u Preservation, the organization behind the festival, spoke to the throngs who gathered for the event to say mahalo for everyone's contribution to making the festival a great success.

According to Spielman, "The festival would not have been possible without the support of Hawai'i County Councilman, Bob Jacobson and demonstrates that we can create a sustainable economic future for Ka'u while protecting our cultural and natural resources."



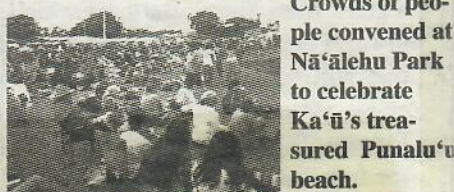
Kane Hula Hālau I Ka Wekiu, which won Best Overall Hālau winner at the Merrie Monarch Festival in 2007.



The band Ka'u, featuring Demetrius Oliveira, performed their song Punalu'u.



Amy Hanali'i Gilliom credited time spent at Punalu'u as an inspiration for many of her songs. Photo by Peter Anderson

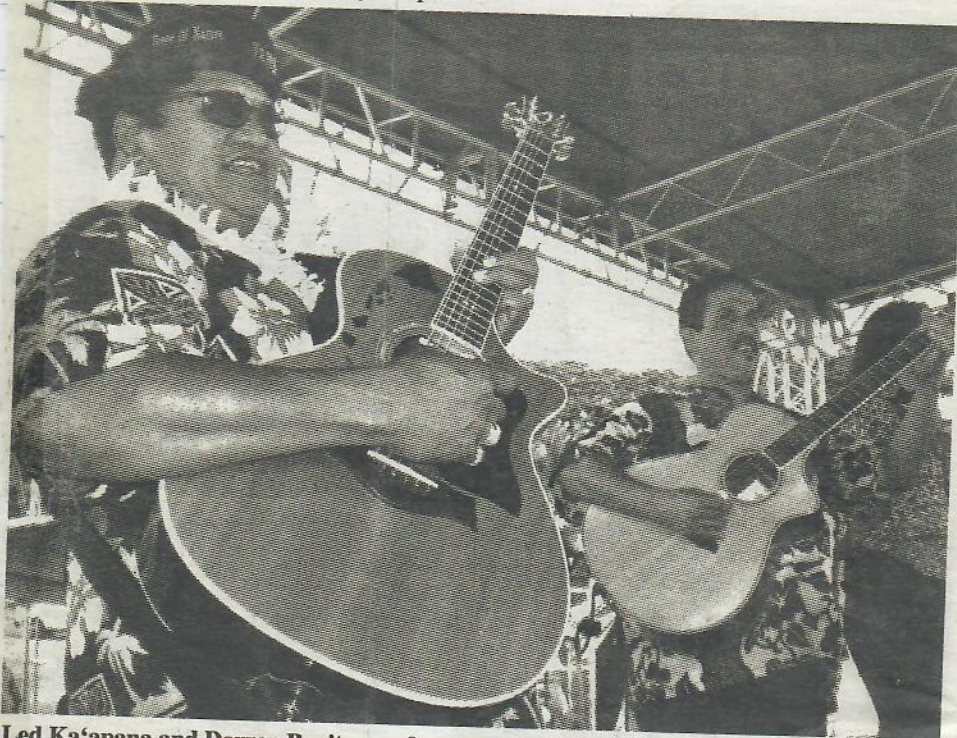


Crowds of people convened at Na'alehu Park to celebrate Ka'u's treasured Punalu'u beach.

## at Malama Punalu'u Festival

Event sponsors included The Big Island Weekly, KAPA Radio, KHBC and KONA FM Radio, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Hilo Bay Printing, Healing Our Island Grant, Hawai'i County Dept. of

Resource and Development, Councilman Bob Jacobson, Island Naturals, Ka'ū Preservation, Go Airlines and Sheraton Keahou Bay Resort and Spa.



Led Ka'apana and Darren Benitez perform at the festival.

*Photos by Danny Miller*



Festival Chaiman Jim Spielman, Punalu'u Preservation President Pele Hanoa and radio personality and emcee Kahikina. *Photo by Peter Anderson*