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To: George Balazs <itsahonuworldinhawaii@hotmail.com>

Subject: Balazs Statement- 47 Years of Captive Breeding Hawaiian Green Turtles

Additional Information and background composed by George Balazs-- "About a month ago I woke up with the realization that ...47 years... have now gone by since I witnessed and, in small ways, was a part of that 1976 first summer of captive nesting at Sea Life Park. **47** is a lot of years! I lived through them all, working with the Park and ever-changing staff on a regular productive basis to achieve an array of things that all add up to a Big Bundle of meaningful accomplishments. Science-wise and Conservation-wise. PIT tagging hatchlings, working with Jeff Palowski and Dr. Bob Morris, is one such example. I dare to say that no one, overall, knows the 47-year history better than I do. In many cases the history to others has been lost, forgotten, never known, and/or no longer focused up. As I've said often, for years now, Sea Life Parks's captive breeding program, and the offshoot partners, are an integral part of my life with turtles in Hawaii. Yes, my own legacy in partnership with scores of great folks over the decades- both within and outside Sea Life Park.

All of these above thoughts caused me to feel that something needed to be done to recognize, praise, and congratulate the Park for the turtle things done during the past 47 years. Maybe I'll be around to see the big 50th anniversary of that first captive breeding/nesting. But, to me, for now, 47 will suffice because it's the 'here and now' and no one can ensure the future.

So, the overriding objective of the December 1st meeting, as reflected in the invitation is:
To create greater awareness, both locally and globally, of Sea Life Park's 47 years of contributing to the conservation of the Hawaiian green turtle."

Dr. Thierry Work and I are the organizers- I took the idea to him first- as per the above- and he thought it reasonable and appropriate- worth doing. We did not take the idea to Sea Life Park to be an organizer- that is, join in the planning with us,- because normally the guest of honor doesn't plan their own 'recognition, praise, and congratulation'.

What the meeting **will not be** is a 'program review'. What it **will be** is a focus on the first 47 years- from 1976 until Jeff Palowski was no longer here to be the caretaker of the program.

There will only be a few stand-up formal science style PP/video presentations. The majority of the time will be what we plan to call commentaries or testimonials. After the Hawaiian Blessing and Self-Introductions each participant will be asked to 'tell their story' (talk story) about what the program was or is and means to them, and their personal or professional history linked to the program. I (George Balazs) will start this off with my own story. I won't be using PPs, but others can, if they wish. The discussions (meaning questions and conversation), after and within each testimonial, will be free flowing, and only lightly structured."
