

HPD Names Ka'ū's Top Cops, First Time in 80 Yrs

Ka'ū Officer of the Year and Ka'ū Top Enforcer are the titles recently given to Rodney Kekaulua, Jr. and Jenna Kosinski-Santos by the Hawai'i Police Department. The awards are the first in the department's 80-year history to be specifically bestowed on Ka'ū police officers and are similar to Officer of the Month and Officer of the Quarter awards issued by various organizations in other parts of the island.

"On behalf of the entire department, I am proud of the work Officers Kekaulua Jr. and Kosinski-Santos are doing," said



Jenna Kosinski-Santos receives Top Enforcer award. Photo from HPD

HPD Chief Benjamin Moszkowicz. "Their joint commitment to serving and protecting the Nā'ālehu community in the spirit of aloha is a model for officers island-wide."

The Ka'ū Officer of the Year award is determined



Rodney Kekaulua, Jr. (right) receives Ka'ū Officer of the Year award, with praise from Ka'ū District Commander Perrell Hanoa. Photo from HPD

THE KA'Ū CALENDAR

Volume 22, Number 2

The Good News of Ka'ū, Hawai'i

February 2024

Vacation Rental Legislation Bill Input Is Sought

County Council legislation on vacation rentals is "One of the most far-reaching pieces of legislation, in process at this



Michelle Galimba

time," says County Council member Michelle Galimba in her newsletter released at the end of January. Bill 121 "seeks to provide a consistent framework to regulate the Transient Accommodation Rental (TAR) business in Hawai'i County. You can learn more about this bill at <https://www.hawaii-county.com/>. The Planning,



www.hawaiicountytar.com/. The Planning, Land Use, and Economic Development Committee of the County Council recently heard Bill 121 and moved to pass it on to the Leeward and Windward Planning Commissions, as well as the Planning Director, for review and recommendation. Bill 121 will receive another hearing in Committee, as well as 2 hearings at the full Council, so there are numerous opportunities to provide feedback on this Bill.”

Galimba writes that to “help address the lack of housing and the affordability crisis in our County, District 2, County Councilmember Jenn Kagiwada and I are currently working on Bill 107, which will create a new Long-Term Rental tax class that will provide a preferential real property tax rate for property owners to rent their houses long-term (more than 180 days).”

Kanaka'ole Named First Deputy of Land & Natural Resources

Ryan Kanaka'ole who has deep roots in Ka'u has been named first deputy of state Department of Land & Natural Resources. Kanaka'ole has family in Wai'ohinu, connected with the Wong Yuen Store, and has been involved in the stewardship of the lands at Kāwā that were pur-



Ryan Kanaka'ole
Photo from DLNR

chased for preservation - owned by the county, and managed locally. He was director and interim chair for Nā Mamo o Kāwā.

Gov. Josh Green, M.D. nominated the veteran government attorney to take the post of Department of Land & Natural Resources first

deputy, effective Tuesday, Jan. 16. The appointment was subject to confirmation by the Hawai'i State Senate.

Kanaka'ole was a Deputy Attorney General with the Dept. of the Attorney General, most recently serving as an attorney for Hawai'i Housing Finance & Development Corp. (HHFDC) and Mauna Kea



SITE PLAN

25' 100' 250'

Punalu'u Village accommodations would be set back about a quarter mile from the coast. Some commercial areas would be just mauka of Black Sand Beach pond and across the street from Black Sand Beach. The proposal is before the Windward Planning Commission for a Special Management Area permit.

SMA Permit Sought for Punalu'u Accommodations, Commerce

Development plans for lands near Punalu'u Black Sand Beach are submitted to the county Planning Department and will go before the Windward Planning Commission to consider approval of a Special Management Area permit. The major SMA permit would be required for the Black Sand Beach, LLC

Called Punalu'u Village, the project would include far fewer accommodations than proposed by earlier developers who planned for more than 1,500 units at

applicants to take the next steps. A public hearing is expected sometime in March. A sign has been placed along Hwy 11 at the Ni'iole Loop intersection.

Two condos would be mauka of Colony One. Another concentration of accommodations would be around the old ten-

Punalu'u Village, pg. 2

Stewardship Oversight Authority. From 2017-2023, he served as deputy AG for Department of Hawaiian Homelands. He was appointed to the Public Land Trust Working Group due to his expertise on issues related to public land trust.

“We are so fortunate to have someone Kanaka'ole, pg. 10

Mitch Roth Launches Campaign for Reelection

Mayor Mitch Roth will run for reelection. He declared his candidacy during an event at Nani Mau Gardens in Hilo in January. He asked the community “to continue dreaming together” and talked about his vision for a Sustainable Hawai'i Island that builds on the achievements he made during his first term in office.



Mayor Mitch Roth
Photo by Tim Wright

ing and permitting achievements, investments made in infrastructure and parks, environmental stewardship initiatives, clean energy transition and transportation, and health and safety commitments as the focus of his administration.

Roth said he is committed to ensuring that “the next generation can call Hawai'i home without facing the need to leave.” He talked about taking care of people, the āina and “our vibrant

The mayor said that in its first three years, the Roth administration has been successful in making Hawai'i County a better place for housing. In 2020, there were about 1,200 houses in the pipeline to

Roth Mayor Campaign, pg. 15

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- 18 ADA ACCESSIBLE RAMP
- 19 ADA PAVEMENT AREA
- 20 EXISTING LOCALLY PAULI GROVE & ROCK OUTCROP TO REMAIN
- 21 PERFORMANCE GRASS STAGE
- 22 EXISTING SPECIFIC TREES TO REMAIN
- 23 EXISTING VEGETATION TO REMAIN
- 24 TRAIL & BIKES/COOL OPEN MARKET, FISH MARKET AND SIMOOD RESTAURANT



The old museum and restaurant area would have a Tour Bus Drop-Off/Pick Up Area, Lū'au and Wedding venues.

Punalu'u Village, from pg. 1

That section would include a Market Seafood Restaurant & Information Center, public restrooms and open Market, with parking access from both Ninole Loop and Punalu'u Road. The recently reopened parking lot near the beach and former museum and restaurant area are shown on the plan with a Main Entry & Tour Bus Drop-Off/Pick-Up Area, Visitor Welcome Center in renovated former restaurant hale, Artisan Garden Hale for Art Displays and/or relaxation, a renovated Art & Wellness Center with 80 rooms and another associated 50 condos, all surrounding shallow ponds that would be created there. The units would be 2.5 stories high. Another 30 cabins would be built around the old Aspen Center with its meeting and performance spaces that are being restored.

During a Zoom call meeting with *The Ka'ū Calendar* newspaper, landowner Eva



Old Aspen Institute area would have 30 cabins and restored meeting and event spaces.

Illustrations from Black Sand Beach, LLC

for glamping (high-end camping) near the ponds at Ninole but those plans have been abandoned. The development team said that land along the coast at Ninole will remain in its natural state. It is zoned conservation, and they said that a past developer had planned to extend the golf course to the coast at Ninole with an oceanside green - golf courses are allowed on conservation land.

The new plan leaves areas along Ninole coast for wildlife, cultural practices, and open space. There has been some consideration of selling it to the county through its PONC Public Access, Open Space &

nalized, said the Black Sand Beach, LLC planning team.

They also said that the nearby Golf Clubhouse would be restored.

A summary of the proposal submitted to the Planning Department reviews the history of the place: "The original Sea Mountain at Punalu'u Resort was developed by C. Brewer in the early 1970's on 434 acres of land both below and above

Punalu'u Village, pg. 3



meeting with *The Ka'u Calendar* newspaper, landowner owner Eva Liu, architect Norman Quon, and planning consultant Daryn Arai noted that these units would be set well back from the coast behind the golf fairway and stone church on the bluff above Punalu'u Beach Park.

Development closest to the coast would be across from the Pond by the Black Sand Beach. It would be on the mauka side, near the place where Punalu'u Road and Ninole Loop join along the curve. Plans for that area include a Fish

san Garden Hale for Art Displays and/or relaxation, a renovated Art & Cultural Museum, a Multi-Purpose Event, Lawri/Lua'u area for special private and community events and a Wedding Ceremony Area. The owner, planner, and architect also noted that many of the lands in the project area that are zoned commercial, multifamily, and retail have been left open in the plan. An earlier proposal called

of selling it to the county through its PONC Public Access, Open Space & Natural Resources Preservation Fund, but any transfer of land or conservation easement has yet to be fi-

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KA PEPA PĀHALA

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Punalu'u Village, from pg. 2

the Hawai'i Belt Road. Since that time, the resort was sold to various owners and has fallen into disrepair. In early 2020, Black Sand Beach LLC acquired the property and is focusing on establishing a recreational and wellness community on 325 acres of makai (oceanside) portion of the property." It also describes the proposed Punalu'u Village "as a residential and commercial community."

More details on the seven sites in the proposal include:

SITE ONE is for Old Punalu'u Village Restoration on the old restaurant and museum site by the Black Sand Beach pond. Plans include restoration of former Punalu'u Restaurant complex covering about 3.5 acres. The proposal summary says it will "accommodate more passive, but educational and recreational types of uses," such as a Garden cultivating various types of native plants. A Welcome Center with possible restoration of portions of former restaurant buildings would "allow for a space where information about the project and the protocols of being proper stewards of these lands can be shared with visitors."

Ka'ū Center of History & Culture, with possible restoration of portions of former restaurant buildings, would "create a space where the history and culture of Punalu'u can be shared with both visitors and residents through exhibits, information pamphlets, presentations and simple 'talk-story.'"

Lawn areas would be "for private



New entities closest to the beach would include a Fish Market & Seafood Restaurant, along with an Open Market on the mauka side of the street where Ninole Loop and Punalu'u Road meet.

Fish Market, Restaurant, and Information Center. The Open Market would be on approximately 0.5 acre, "currently under development." The Fish Market and Seafood Restaurant, along with other retail would be within a 2.5-story complex about 8,000 square feet in gross floor area on approxi-

Sewers Meeting Set for Feb. 29

A meeting on wastewater projects for Pāhala and Nā'ālehu will be held on Thursday, Feb. 29 at 6 p.m. at Pāhala Community Center, 96-1149 Kamani Street.

The County of Hawai'i Department of Environmental Management will hold

Provide an update for the large capacity

Discuss the County's tentative identification of the preferred option of a wastewater treatment for Pāhala and new collection system (Option 1) and will encourage public input.

Provide an update for the large capacity

Lawn areas would be "for private and community open-air events, sharing of wedding vows, open-air dining." The renovations would "Clean-up and maintain a 62-stall parking lot, which includes bus parking and visitor drop-off area."

SITE TWO, across the road from Black Sand Beach and around the curve where Ninole Loop and Punalu'u Road adjoin, would include an Open Market,

square feet in gross floor area on approximately 0.5 acre. The restaurant would be on the second level "due to base flood elevation of about 22 feet." There would be on-site parking for about 28 vehicles.

SITE THREE would be Colony 2 with 63 condominiums, consisting of 1- and 2-bedroom units on about 4.9 acres. Buildings would be in duplex and 4-plex configurations. Gross floor area of units would range from approximately 760 to 1,500 square feet. The maximum heights of the condos would be 2.5 stories, "due to topography and proximity of Colony I." There would be a 95-stall vehicle parking area.

SITE FOUR would be a Village & Wellness Center on about 37.35 acres.

Punalu'u Village, pg. 4

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PACIFIC BLUE CATCHMENT

The Ka'i Calendar

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Environmental Management will hold its semi-annual community informational meeting to give its update regarding the closures of the large capacity cesspools in Pāhala and Nā'ālehu. The meeting is also available on zoom at <https://www.zoomgov.com/j/16031058165>.

At this meeting, Department of Environmental Management will:

Provide an update for the large capacity cesspool closure project in Nā'ālehu; Present the contents of its Semiannual Report to EPA covering activities completed in the second half of 2023; and Discuss next steps and deadlines.

An updated website to track progress of this project is at <https://www.dem.hawaii-county.gov/projects>.



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* Seasonal * \$14.30 *
(Ka'u Location)

Specific Duties: * Stoops, squats, or kneels to harvest nuts by hand * Hand harvest nuts by putting nuts into a bucket * Empties filled bucket into bags or other large receptacles * Rake/clean nuts/debris from harvest row. * Removes rocks, branches, in field preparation for mechanical ground harvesting operations. * Assist in loading hand harvesting macadamia nuts bags into pick-up or trailers. * Sorting in the husking plant * Complies with all safety rules and regulations * Responsible for keeping company property clean, trash disposal in all areas of the operation. * Obeys Company House Rules * Performs other related duties as assigned *

Benefits: * Per Collective Bargaining Agreement *

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Sign up at the Ka'u District Gym or Pāhala Community Center.
Vivawell is a Hawaii Island-based nonprofit organization that provides chronic health conditions in East Hawaii. All donations go to your choice.

Vivawell will hold an information session on the Walkstars program Tuesday, Feb. 6 at 10 a.m. at Pāhala Community Center.

Walkstars Walking for Fitness Program will be held Fridays 9:15-10:15 a.m. at Herkes Ka'u District Gym beginning March 1.

According to Vivawell, the program

Ka'u Top Cops, from pg. 1

veteran of the department was nominated by his peers as the district's inaugural Officer of the Year. He has worked in the Ka'u district since graduating the police academy in 2020. "Officer Kekaulua is a humble person with a positive attitude and outstanding dedication," said Hanoa.

The Ka'u Top Enforcer award is presented to the officer who has shown the greatest initiative in enforcing traffic and criminal laws throughout the year based on statistical data. Kosinski-Santos was recognized as the district's first Top Enforcer. A five-year veteran of the department, she has served the Ka'u community since 2021.

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and intensity to their walks as well as set goals, monitor progress, and have fun with different walking tools and equipment. The program consists of ten, one-hour sessions with a warm up, walking workout, and weekly health education topics led by a board certified health coach and personal trainer.

Each session will build on previous information and skills. A statement from Vivawell encourages participants to attend as many classes as possible. Walking for Fitness is a free program open to adults with donations accepted. Participants can register for the program at Ka'u District Gym, Pāhala Community Center or online at vivawell.org.

Vivawell launched the Walkstars Program in 2023 in partnership with the Ka'u Senior Center in Hilo and Hawai'i County Elderly Recreation Services. With grant funding from the Hawai'i Community Foundation, the program is expanding to Ka'u and Puna in 2024. Vivawell is a 501c3 nonprofit organization offering community based programs to prevent chronic health conditions through diet, exercise, stress reduction, social connections, and health-supporting environments.

"She's a pro-active officer who has a gift of motivating those around her," said the Acting Captain, noting that this is not Kosinski-Santos' first time being recognized. She received the Kona Crime Prevention Committee Officer of the Month award in December 2020 for responding to a fatal traffic collision while off duty, and the Hawai'i County Council Haweeo award in May 2022 for rescuing an elderly man trapped in a vehicle.

"In addition to recognizing our officers, I'd like to convey our appreciation to the Ka'u community," said Hanoa. "The support we've received and continue to be blessed with from our residents and local businesses is incredible."



Colony Two would be mauika of Colony One and would have 63 condominiums.

Illustration from Black Sand Beach, LLC

Aspen Center." It would include 30 retreat units constructed as individual cabins for Aspen Center attendees. Each unit would be approximately 1,500 square feet in size. The 2.5-story structures would cover about 2.73 acres.

SITE SIX would be the 18-hole Golf Course and related facilities. The project would include restoration and minor realignment of existing course, restoration of existing 2,200 square-foot golf clubhouse complex and driving range, restoration of 6,400 square-foot pro shop, office and cart barn facility, and restoration of existing 50-stall parking area.

SITE SEVEN would be the Punalu'u **Punalu'u Village, pg. 15**

Punalu'u Village, from pg. 3
Its Village Center would have a bakery/restaurant, marine eco-center, Ka'u coffee showroom within a complex of one-story structures with a combined gross indoor floor area of about 30,000 square feet with an additional 11,000 square feet of covered outdoor space.

SITE FOUR: THE VILLAGE & WELLNESS CENTER WITH 130 UNITS
The Wellness Center itself would be about 15,000 square-feet with a 2.5 story spa and fitness facility, including 130 rental units for overnight stay. These would consist of 80 cottages containing 1, 2 or 3 bedrooms ranging in size from approximately 650 to 1,400 square feet. It would also include 50 bungalows containing 3, 4 or 5 bedrooms ranging in size from approximately 2,500 to 3,500 square feet. There would be 250 parking stalls for all units.

The Sports Center project would restore existing 4 tennis courts and develop 4 pickleball courts, 2 sand volleyball courts, pro-shop facilities, gym and swimming pool. There would be an Amphitheater for outdoor performances and movies, about 1,000 square feet in size.

SITE FIVE: THE ASPEN CENTER



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SITE FIVE: THE ASPEN CENTER WITH 30 RETREAT UNITS
 The project would include restoration of the former 4,650 square-foot Aspen Institute building to its previous use as a conference and educational center, "to be referred to as

Illustration from Black Sand Beach, LLC

Aspen Center." It would include 30 retreat units constructed as individual cabins for Aspen Center attendees. Each unit would be approximately 1,500 square feet in size. The 2.5-story structures would cover about 2.73 acres.

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Punalu'u Sea Mountain Golf Course Hosts 25th Big Island Open

Punalu'u Sea Mountain Golf Course hosted the 25th Big Island Open over the weekend of Jan. 20, this one for Disc Golf, an emerging sport with much online and some ESPN television coverage across the country. The ProAm C-Tier tournament at Sea Mountain Golf Course at Punalu'u was endorsed by the Professional Disc Golf Association and presented by Innova Disc Golf. It drew 102 competitors. The Pro Purse was \$2,895.



Janet Nishiki with her first hole in one. She achieved it at Volcano Golf Course.

Photo from VGC

Hole In One at Volcano

Volcano Golf Course has announced a hole in one as a start to the New Year. Alyss Tsukayama, of Volcano Golf Course, reports that on Jan. 17, Janet Nishiki accomplished her first hole in one on Volcano's 125-yard Hole No. 3. See more on activities at Volcano Golf Course at www.volcanogc.com.

The Ka'u Calendar



A third place wooden disc trophy from Big Island Open at Punalu'u.

Photo by Julia Neal
The tournament info described the layout at Punalu'u for 27 holes - actually, baskets to catch the discs - as a "Unique course with some long holes and lots of challenges set up on Sea Mountain Golf Course, which has been closed for years."

It noted that the players would have the course to themselves the entire weekend and that camping places and other accommodations were available in the area. Cost to compete was \$20 per entry with \$15 going to green fees. Men and women competed.

Disc Golf features nets as holes and frisbee-like discs thrown along links into baskets to receive a score, with pars for each hole, just like golf. Specialized discs are thrown for different distances and heights.

Player Jacee Lucero from Kaua'i said he and competitors from afar are in awe of the beauty of the Sea Mountain course at Punalu'u and hoped that more tournaments would be held there, even the state Disc Golf tournament in coming years.

Tournament Director was Robert Nasworthy, of Hilo. Assistant Tournament

Director was Alan Koons. Tournament staff members were Diego Alvarado and Jim Toews.

The winner of the Male Pro Tournament was Kacy Schend of Makawao on O'ahu, with a par minus 25. He was followed by Eric Reppun of Honolulu with a par minus 23 and Jason Kozlik of Hale'iwa

on O'ahu with a par minus 21 and Nicolas Chaudron of Honolulu who also came in with a par minus 21.

The winner of the Female Pro Tournament was five-time Professional Disc Association world champion Juliana Korver of Orange City, Iowa, with par minus 5.

Big Island Open, pg. 10

Head & Assistant Coaches Sought for Trojan Football

Ka'u High School Athletics has opened applications seeking for Head & Assistant Coaches for the 2024 football season.

Athletic Director Jaime Guerro said that anyone who is interested can pick up applications at Ka'u High School main office.

The football team is comprised



of students from Ka'u High and Volcano School of the Arts & Sciences.

Any candidates with questions, call (808) 313-4161. Deadline for completed applications is Feb. 29 at noon. Applications can be dropped off at the main office.

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The Ka'u Calendar

marine sanctuaries recently released the latest sanctuary poster featuring the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary. The artwork by Matthew McIntosh features the iconic Humpback Whale (koholā) for which the sanctuary is named.

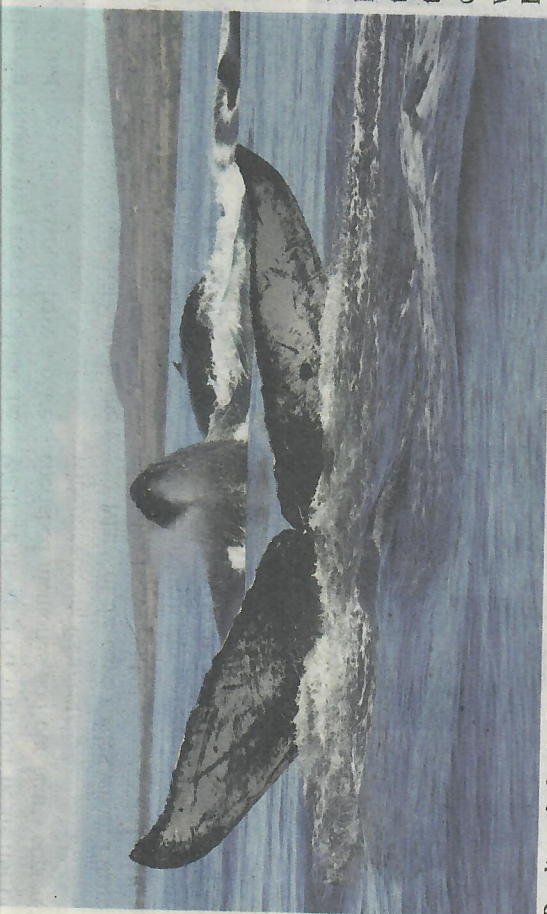
Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary was designated in 1992 to protect humpback whales (koholā) and their habitat in Hawai'i. The sanctuary safeguards koholā breeding, calving and nursing grounds in waters around the main Hawaiian Islands.

Encompassing 1,370 square miles (3,548 square kilometers) of federal and state waters, the sanctuary extends from the shoreline to the 600-foot/183-meter depth contour and is composed of five separate marine protected areas, accessible from six of the main Hawaiian Islands.

to the west of the County-operated Punalu'u Black Sand Beach Park complex. The Applicant has not yet determine the best method towards committing these lands towards preservation, but at the very least, it could be accomplished as a conservation easement, with proper resource management that also takes into account coastal recreational and cultural practices," says the summary of the application for the Special Management Area permit.

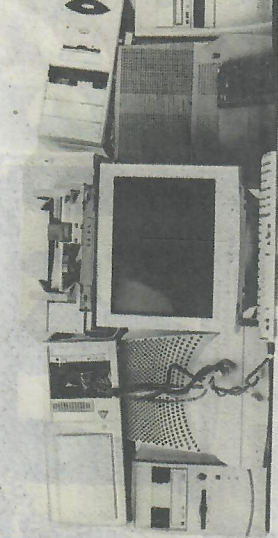
had site leaders count whales from shore as part of a long-term survey of humpback whales in Hawai'i, with 12 survey sites along the shoreline of Maui and a new site on the shoreline of Lāna'i. This event provides a snapshot of trends in the relative abundance of whales and is one of the world's

Punalu'u Village, from pg. 4
Coastline Management Area of approximately 29.52 acres "to be dedicated towards conservation and coastal management activities, and set aside in public trust for coastal recreational opportunities, protection of historic resources and cultural practices, protection of sensitive natural resources and coastal processes. This proposed management area will be established upon the coastal lands situated



Results are in for the first of three volunteer humpback whale counts in 2024. Photo by Ed Lyman

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

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

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Kula Kai Ownerships Transitions to New Cave Enthusiasts

Kula Kai Caverns ownership has transitioned from Ric Elhard and Rose Herrera, who first created their Ocean View show cave tours in 2002 and further developed their program throughout the years.

The history of Kula Kai Caverns has been shaped by Elhard and Herrera. In 1990, the couple left California. Upon learning that Ocean View is rich in lava tubes, they decided to make it their new home. It was the sight of a large and inviting cave entrance that was the deciding factor in choosing the three-acre site in the Kula Kai community of Ocean View. Today the entrance is artfully adorned with trees, shrubs and signage.

When they first arrived there were only a few homes in the Kula Kai community. For the first three years their own home was a large army tent that flapped incessantly in the prevailing tradewinds. There was no power and no phone service. They had to drive over unpaved roads to the single store to use a payphone.

Elhard is an accomplished woodworker, home builder and craftsman, while Herrera is a sought-after house painter and color consultant. By combining their crafts and design sense, they built their home in stages – first a studio, then an ‘Ohana, and finally the main house which included a circular bedroom made from a salvaged redwood water tank. In 2014, their beautiful home was featured in the At Home supplement of *West Hawaii Today*.

Developing the huge cave for tours was

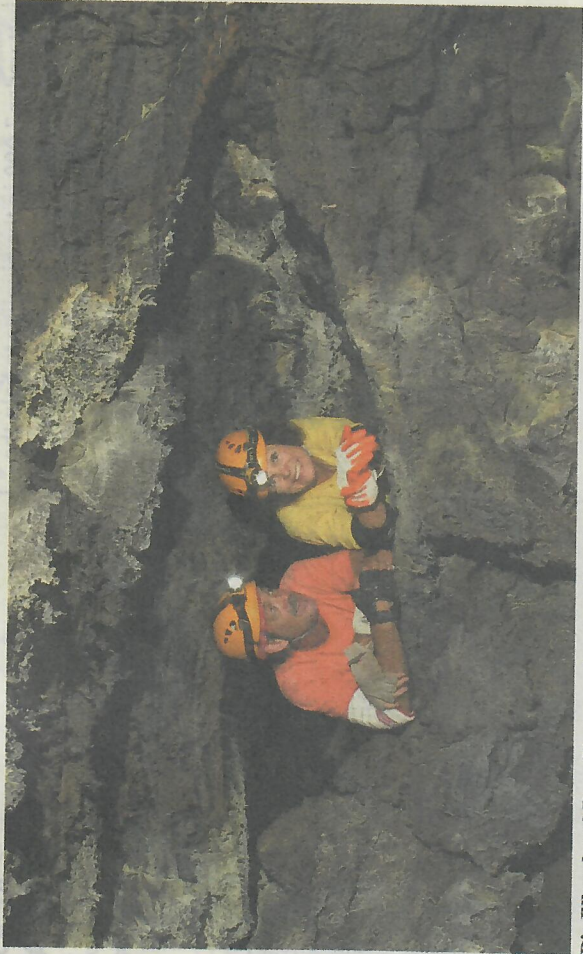
a massive undertaking. With no prior experience it was a case of learning on the job. Stairs were needed to get down into the cave. They built trails and brought in countless buckets of cinder in to smooth over the gaps in the rocky floor. They built a seating area in the cave. A thatched hut for visitors to congregate prior to the tours was erected. Ocean View residents were hired and trained as cave guides, and over time the tours became more informative.

In response to demand, they introduced a Wild Tour. It allows visitors to don helmets and lights, leave the trails and go spelunking to experience the cave in its wild state, including belly crawling through a low section of passage. The rave reviews attest to the cave's huge popularity. Tripadvisor gives the cave 5 stars, and Yelp gives it a rating of 4.9 out of five.

Elhard and Herrera have welcomed cavers, filmmakers, and cave scientists from all over the country – and the world – to their home and cave property.

In the early 2000's enthusiastic cave surveyors came in large groups – particularly in the winter months – and surveyed what was found to be one of the largest cave systems on the island – the Kanohina system. The 750-year-old lava flow hosts a cave system with about 66 miles of known passages underlying the community, from high in HOVE to well below the Kula Kai subdivision. Many of these explorers built or bought homes in Ocean View, while others return year after year for caving vacations.

With Elhard and Herrera's encourage-



Ric Elhard and Rose Herrera who recently sold Kula Kai Caverns, a show cave in Ocean View.

Photo by Peter and Annie Bosted



Reservations to explore Kula Kai Caverns can be made at www.kulakaicaverns.com

ment, scientists have made pilgrimages to Kula Kai Caverns to further their studies of mineralogy, microbiology, etymology, geology, archeology, and wind flow patterns, to name a few of the topics.

In 2016, Kula Kai was the hub for the International Symposium of Volcanospeleology. Eighty lava tube cave enthusiasts from all over the world converged on Ocean View for a week-long event that included talks and presentations, field trips, an After Dark in the Park presentation and social gatherings. The army tent that was once Elhard's

home as far afield as Iceland and the Galapagos in Ecuador and met a variety of interesting people from all walks of life. Elhard has taken leadership roles as varied as drafting legislation to conserve caves to heading a local caving club, editing a caving newsletter and co-founding the Cave Conservancy of Hawaii.

"It's been a wild ride," Elhard told *The Kai Calendar*, "and a terrific journey. We've been committed to looking after this amazing cave for over 30 years. Now it's somebody else's turn. We've done our bit

Developing the huge cave for tours was

With Elhard and Herrera's encourage-

ings. The army tent that was once Elhard's and Herrera's home was erected outside the cave so that the visitors would have a place to congregate.

Elhard and Herrera see their role as the owners of a show cave business as an entrée into a world of opportunities that they may never have known, but for being stewards of Kula Kai Caverns. They have traveled to

somebody else's turn. We've done our bit. We'll be moving on with our heads full of cherished memories and our hearts content with our accomplishments." Many of the cave guides whom Elhard has trained have guided visitors for close to a decade and will stay in their jobs for a seamless transition to the next generation of stewards of Kula Kai Caverns.



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