

HUI LIMA KOKUA HAWAII CLUB NEWSLETTER

JULY 2009

Website: www.huilimakokua.com.

Next Meeting. (a) Our next potluck meeting will be held on Saturday, July 11, starting at 2 pm at Our Lady of Assumption Church (Hurley Hall) located at 3175 Telegraph, Ventura. For the program **Kristen Stilles, Juanita Pendergrass'** hula sister, will teach us how to quilt. This should be very interesting, even for the kanes (men). (b) We are planning to have a picnic for August's meeting. Check next month's newsletter for more details.

Past Meeting. At our potluck meeting held on Saturday, June 13, **Dirk Boon** did an outstanding presentation of the kalo (taro) plant. We learned so much facts and legends from this speech. He even brought his laptop and showed us pictures. Quite a few guests were at the meeting. As usual the potluck was great. Thanks, **Dirk**.

Membership News. (a) On June 17, **Juanita's** Hawaiian musical group (Ukulele Club of Ventura County) performed for a church function held at Our Lady of Assumption Church on behalf of the Hawaii Club as a means to pay back to the church for allowing us to hold monthly meetings at this facility. Nine performers took part including the following club members: **Juanita, Laurie & Emily Gregory, Dirk Boon, Kay & Mike Nakamura**. Mahalo, guys! By the way, the Ukulele Club of Ventura County will be performing at the Ventura County Fair on Senior Day (August 11) at 12:30 pm. Seniors will be admitted free on that day. (b) **Kyle Eckhart** was the sole graduating high school student from our Hui. **Kyle** graduated from Oxnard High School and will attend California Lutheran University (Thousand Oaks) in the fall. Good luck, **Kyle**. CLU is a great school (I graduated from there). (c) **Wally & Vi Peterson** have submitted an application to join the club. They live in Newbury Park. Welcome to the club **Wally & Vi**. (d) We will be holding election of officers soon so think about running for an office. The club's fiscal year runs from October through September. (e) A group of us who played ukulele with **Betty Day** gathered at her house in Ventura on June 6 as a final tribute to her. We played music, sang, shared stories and experiences, and had a great potluck. **Betty** died on March 9 and her ashes will be scattered in Hawaii later this year. Although **Betty** just recently joined the Hui, she always read our newsletters with great interest for almost 15 years. She had asked me to put her on permanent distribution. (d) In case you didn't know, Hui Lima Kokua, our club's name, means Helping Hand.

Hawaii Tidbits. (a) The 2009 Alondra Park (Lawndale, California) Hoolaulea will be held on July 18 and 19. Enjoy entertainment, food, games and boutiques. This is the biggest Hoolaulea in Southern California but be prepared for warm weather. Free admission. (b) The 39th Annual Ukulele Festival will be held at the Kapiolani Park Bandstand in Waikiki, Hawaii, on July 19. This is a **Roy Sakuma** production so if you are in Honolulu.... Free admission. (c) The 15th Annual E Hula Mau Hula & Chant Competition will be held at the Terrace Theater, Long Beach Performing Arts Center from September 4 -6. Besides hula (solo, group, kahiko, auana, and oli) and chanting, there will be Hawaiian arts and crafts, workshops, island food court, entertainment, lei making contest, mahalo bash, etc. Paid admission.

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Hawaii Blues

By **LAWRENCE DOWNES**

The state of Hawaii turns 50 this year (it joined the union on Aug. 21, 1959). People there should be happy. But it's hard.

The economy is really bad. The housing market and construction industry are in deep slumps. Tourism has been hammered by the recession and swine flu. Unemployment is double what it was a year ago. To close a \$688 million budget gap, the governor announced the most drastic furlough program in the country. She's closing state offices three days a month, for two years. Aloha Friday, where people go to work in aloha shirts and muumuus, is going to be Furlough Friday, where they stay home in pajamas and look for jobs on the Internet.

And now, to top everything off, a communist dictator supposedly wants to blow up Hawaii. A Japanese newspaper, The Yomiuri Shimbun, reported this week that North Korea planned to launch a ballistic missile in Hawaii's direction around the Fourth of July.

You can take the threat for what it's worth. Hawaii isn't panicking. But then, while no one wants to think of extinction, the word is far less of an abstraction in Hawaii than in other places. The islands have seen the disappearance of the Hawaiian kingdom, the decimation of its people and language. Today, Hawaii is the world's hottest hot spot for threatened and endangered species. As the only island state, it's the only one that faces an existential threat from global warming and rising oceans.

For years, financially squeezed Hawaii residents have been leaving in droves, setting up colonies in places they can afford, like the moonscapes of the Las Vegas suburbs. They're exiles from paradise. Many people assume Hawaiian music is sweet and happy. Actually, much of it is solemn and melancholy. To hear Bla Pahinui sing his version of "Waimanalo Blues" — "the beaches they sell, to build their hotels," is to glimpse the depths of the Hawaiian sense of loss.

Visitors go to Hawaii to get happy and tan, and they carry home with them vast measures of good will, serenity and memories of joy and peace. Maybe it's time to give some of that back to the suffering 50th state. How? Maybe by telling your representatives in Congress to support the Akaka bill, to give Native Hawaiians a measure of lost sovereignty, and right some old injustices.

There's a great July Fourth parade in Kailua, on Oahu's windward side. It's normally followed by fireworks, but they were canceled this year: too expensive. Some residents are trying to raise money to keep the tradition alive. Since 1948, people have sat on the warm sands of Kailua Beach, oohing and aahing as fireworks burst over black water. Now they can't, in their state's golden anniversary year. Could anything be sadder than that?

(Mahalo **Gerry Delgado** for sharing this)