



HUI LIMA KOKUA NEWSLETTER - 'Okakopa & Nowemapa 2024

Hawaii Club of Ventura County - October & November 2024

Calendar & Upcoming Events

Nowemapa | November

- 3 - Daylight Savings Time Ends
- 5 - Election Day
- 9 - Hui Lima Club Meeting & Hawaiian Music & Hula Show
- 28 - Thanksgiving

[Hui Lima Meeting Location](#)

Club House at the Bonaventure
10949 Telegraph Road
Ventura, CA 93004

[Next Meeting: Saturday November 9th, 12p - 2p](#)

Our next Hui meeting is Saturday November 9, but ***please note the time difference: 12p-2p***. This will be our Thanksgiving celebration, and **Lynette Inouye** has generously offered to cook the turkey & make the gravy. The rest of us can bring accompanying sides and desserts. We will be in the Club House for this potluck.

At 2p in the main building, the Hui is invited to enjoy music by Lorien Sanders & Da Band and at 2:30p, a hula show presented by Kumu Rona Koe & her Hālau Hula O Pualanina'auali'ioha, featuring kahiko (traditional) and 'auana (modern) hula. Around 3:15p, the show will close with the song, "Hawai'i Aloha". Bring your 'ukulele to play along in the audience!

Board Members for the 2024-2025 Year

Last meeting, our Board Members were installed for the 2024-2025 year.

President - Bill Pendergrass
Treasurer - Amy Cherot
1st Vice President - Mike Nakamura
2nd Vice President - Leandra & Mario Castroni

Recording Secretary - Maxwell Hannum
Corresponding Secretary - Leah Kammeyer
Advisor - Arlene Fraser (*appointed*)
Aloha Chair - Lynette Inouye (*appointed*)



Long-time Hui member, Ron Wong shared the history and memories of our Hawaiian Club throughout the years.

Special guest, former club president Darrin Ching was there as well!

A very special plaque was dedicated to honor him for his years of service in our Hui. I know it meant a lot to be able to present this to him in person.



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A Hero Among the Hōkūle'a Crew



On the evening of October 16th, 17 year old Kamehameha Schools athlete Kahiau Kawai went missing after his kayaking team attempted to go out for practice, but turned around due to rough seas and strong, windy conditions. They had departed from Ala Wai Boat Harbor around 4pm and intended to go toward Diamond Head. When they had turned back, they realized Kawai was not with them and called 911 around 6:30pm.

Search efforts by Honolulu Fire Department, EMS, State Airports Division, and the U.S. Coast Guard were deployed in a three mile area off shore from Diamond Head to Nanakuli.

Noland Keaulana (pictured, center), an off-duty lifeguard and member of the Polynesian Voyaging Society (PVS), received a text about the missing teenager, the son of a family friend, and felt compelled to join the search efforts. He asked permission of Nainoa Thompson, president of the PVS, if he could take a

small boat out for the search.

Keaulana searched in a zig-zag pattern spanning 100 miles from Sand Island to Nanakuli to Diamond Head. Around 4am, a Coast Guard airplane spotted Kahiau Kawai and made contact with Keaulana, the nearest boat. The Coast Guard dropped a flare to mark Kawai's location and directed Keaulana to him. Keaulana describes the emotional moment when he came up on Kawai, who was clinging to his kayak and treading water. Keaulana called out his name, and when Kawai responded, Keaulana broke down crying in amazement.

Keaulana brought Kawai aboard his boat, wrapping him in blankets to keep him warm. Kawai's kayak had capsized and he lost his paddle in the rough waters. He had been stranded at sea for nearly 12 hours. The Coast Guard indicated that Kawai had capsized in a treacherous area where all the currents were colliding back and forth.

Kawai (pictured right, with his mom) was taken to the hospital in serious but stable condition, and received treatment for his injuries and hypothermia. He was released on that Saturday, October 19th.

It goes without saying that everyone was relieved and overjoyed for Kawai's safe return. The family expressed their deepest gratitude for all of the search efforts, and especially to Noland Keaulana, for bringing back Kawai.

Keaulana was impressed with Kawai's fortitude. Keaulana has been a lifeguard with the Honolulu Ocean Safety Department for 16 years, and also comes from a family of watermen. He noted even those who train for these perilous water conditions struggle, but somehow Kawai managed to make it through the whole night.



Keaulana is pictured above, celebrating the rescue with others from the search teams at a news conference. As mentioned before, Keaulana is a member of the Polynesian Voyaging Society, and - fun fact - he was one of the crew members on board the Central Coast leg of the journey when Hōkūle'a visited Ventura! It's clear his passion for the ocean, connecting with and helping people is strong.

Maika'i ka hana (well done), Noland Keaulana!



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Koda Farms, Known for their Kokuho Rose Rice and Mochiko Rice Flour, is Closing Down

Though not directly Hawaiian-related, this may be of some interest with the Japanese ties and the use of these products to make rice and Hawaiian goodies like spam musubi, mochi, mochiko chicken, etc.

After nearly 100 years in business, the oldest rice family farm in California, Koda Farms, is shutting down. Koda Farms, located in Dos Palos, Merced County, is known for their heirloom Kokuho Rose rice, Sho-Chiku-Bai sweet rice, Blue Star Mochiko sweet rice flour, and Diamond K rice flour. Their rice and flours have received numerous accolades from chefs and food experts over the years, and the Kokuho Rice was credited with the increasing popularity of sushi in 1960's Los Angeles.



Keisaburo Koda emigrated from Japan to the U.S. in 1908 and started up the family farm in 1927. During WWII, he and his family were shipped off to an internment camp in Colorado. When they returned in 1945, he found much of the land, equipment, worker homes, and livestock had been sold off. With his two sons, he restarted the business from scratch. Not only did Keisaburo prove to be successful with the farm, he spent much of his time advocating for the rights of Asian and other non-white immigrants. He founded the People's Rights Protection Association and lobbied against the Alien Land Law, which prevented non-citizens from owning agricultural land but was largely racially discriminatory. He also played a key role in getting access to insurance and banking services for Japanese Americans.

The current owners of Koda Farms are brother and sister Ross and Robin Koda, the grandchildren of Keisaburo. They made the difficult decision to close their business as its sustainability became more and more challenging. Increasing costs of water, insurance, and the retiring workers and diminishing labor pool in the area were some of the reasons cited.

However, the Koda family did decide to partner with family-owned Western Foods, who is licensed to carry on the Koda Farms brand. They are based in Woodland, Northern California and also have a plant in Arkansas. They will continue to make the Koda Farms products available in stores. In fact, the actual Koda Farm will remain and is leased to another farmer contracted by Western Foods. The heirloom Kokuho Rose rice is most likely going to be grown at the Koda Farm for the next few years, and then in Northern California. The processing of the rice, however, will be moved to the Western Foods location.

The end of this era is bittersweet for the Kodas, with the emotional and familial attachment to their grandfather's legacy. However, they seem content with their decision and happy to pass on the torch to Miguel Reyna, president and co-owner of Western Foods. They appreciate the fellow family-owned business and also recognize that Reyna has the ability to produce on a larger scale than Koda Farms could. The buildings on the Koda Farm are decades old and some of the equipment dates back to the 1950s, which also makes it difficult to find replacement parts. Western Foods has state-of-the-art plants and machinery. The Kodas aren't going anywhere, though, and still plan to be brand ambassadors.

Thankfully, we will still be able to enjoy the Koda Farms brand products!



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HAU'OLI LĀ HĀNAU

to our 'Okakopa birthday:
Leah Kammeyer

and our Nowemapa birthdays:
Darrin Ching & Joyce Matias



And a belated birthday mention to
Barbara Moore
who celebrated hers in September.

Hope you had/ have a beautiful day and
enjoy your celebrations!

Looking for some
fun, Polynesian-
themed holiday
shopping?

Kumu Piliāloha
Christensen is
hosting a Holiday
Boutique at her
hālau on Saturday,
November 23rd
from 10a-5p.

The address is 267
Village Commons
Blvd., Ste 17, in
Camarillo.

Enjoy! 👍

Nā Lei Kāko'o 'o Piliālohaokalani

Holiday Boutique

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2024
10AM - 5PM

KA HALE HULA 'O PILIALOHAOKALANI O HILO
267 VILLAGE COMMONS BLVD. STE. 17
CAMARILLO, CA 93013

~ Island Artists ~ Holiday Items ~ Baked Goods ~

Hope to see you at our November Meeting, Saturday, 11/9 12p-2p!

Comments, Corrections, Questions, Suggestions? Feel free to reach out and let me know if you have suggestions for future newsletters, or corrections / comments on previous ones. Leah Kammeyer, LKammeyer@gmail.com, (805) 469-9230