KŌKE'E NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

Kōke'e Connections

Hui o Laka Membership Newsletter

MARCH 2019

Kōke'e State Park Road Paving

If all goes well, paving of the driveway and parking lots for Kōke'e Lodge and Kōke'e Museum will begin in May. The project contractor will be Earthworks Pacific. The project should last about 45 working days. The contractor will attempt to provide access throughout the project to the museum and lodge. The CCC Camp will be impacted the most due to the long, one-way driveway to the camp. The contractor will be providing signage and way finding to temporary parking areas for visitors. It is hoped that the Museum and Lodge will have very little downtime during most of the work. The actual paving days may affect the entrances to both operations.

At this time, we don't have firm schedule but once the project begins, we should be getting weekly updated schedules. Kōke'e weather of course is a major variable on the timeline. We will post what we know on our Facebook page KokeeMuseumNew and in our next newsletter at the beginning of May. State Parks and the contractor are aware of Banana Poka's dates during the Memorial Day weekend. It is possible when the actual paving takes place that the museum and lodge may close if it becomes too difficult to access the front entrance. The CCC Camp's parking and vehicle access may be compromised and at this point we aren't taking reservations for June unless the users are willing to walk to the camp from whatever temporary parking will be available at that time.

Good news for the facilities is, when we get a clearer idea of a closure date, we can get some work projects done like interior painting and even some exhibit installations that are impossible to do when open to the public.

Special Work Day in Marsha Erickson's Honor

As we reported in our last newsletter, our former long-time director Marsha Erickson passed away in November. Many of you, as well as her family, wanted to acknowledge her great contributions to not just Hui o Laka, but also to Kōke'e State Park. What better way than to have a work day in her honor and towards a lasting, living memorial. We have worked on a garden concept based on a tiny garden made in memory of her granddaughter Darci at the entrance to the CCC Camp. Two donated memorial park benches have been purchased and are slowly on their way from the mainland. The family has been hard hit with not only Marsha's passing but also that of her daughter-in-law PJ Isoshima, son Mark's wife. Many of our volunteers remember PJ's great cooking after a hard day's work in the forest or around the camp. The garden will feature the benches and an ornate garden seat for Marsha, P.J., and Darci. At this time, we have some native plants donated by Kōke'e Resource Conservation Program and hopefully some others as we go forward.

The big work day is planned for Saturday, March 23 from 9am until pau. A pot luck lunch will be served at the Mess Hall. The two cabins will be reserved for Marsha's family, but we will provide beds in the bunkhouse for volunteers. There are only 30 beds, so reserve them early by calling 335-9975.

If you can't make the work day and want to participate in some way, we do need some TLC maintaining the garden area until plants mature. There will also be some additional work finishing up the planting areas and installing the benches when they arrive in a couple of months as well as some invasive tree removal next to the area. Any money earmarked towards the project will be used only for the project area.

CALENDAR

Saturday, March 23, 2019

Garden Workday

9am - pau.
Creation of a memorial garden for former director Marsha Erickson, PJ Isoshima, and Darci Isoshima at the CCC Camp. Pot luck lunch.
(see related article)

Sunday, May 26, 2019

BANANA POKA ROUNDUP

10am to 4pm. Environmental Fair with a family twist. Meet agencies and people working to preserve our precious environment. Funded in part by Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

Saturday, October 12, 2019

Eō e Emalani i Alaka'i

9am to 4pm. Queen enters the Meadow at 11am. No Admission. Limited parking. Funded in part by Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

Saturday, December 9, 2019

Wreath Making Workshop

10am to 2pm.
Put on your winter clothes and celebrate an annual tradition using fragrant pines and evergreens planted at Kōke'e decades before. Meet at Museum to check-in. $10 for materials. (Non-members $25) Bring decorations to personalize your wreath plus clippers, and any other tools you prefer to use. Bring your own bag lunch.

Freak Storm Damages Kōkeʻe

During February 9 and 10, a rare Northwest windstorm brought gusts of winds to Kauaʻi. The winds were gusty on Saturday. The power went out at Kōkeʻe and overnight trees began to fall. Soon the phones were out as well. Winds increased substantially overnight to gusts up to 65 mph and didnʻt cease until late Sunday night. At the height of the storm, for employee safety, Kōkeʻe Museum did close on Sunday.

Trees had fallen on the highway where stands of eucalyptus line the road at the 6-mile marker before the Hunter Check-in Station and at the 11-mile marker at Puʻu Hina Hina area. It was surprising that tourists were still winding up the mountain in large numbers including tour buses and vans, despite the buffeting winds. They were weaving in and out of tree branches, cut trees, and plowing through leaf piles littering the roads.

The museum opened again on Monday with no electricity and counted over 400 visitors. That is more than we saw any day the previous month. For the next few days, still with no power, the visitors came in droves. The telecommunications took a lot longer. It was a week and a half later when we received the good news that our telephone and internet was again in service.

It seemed that no one realized how bad the utility damages were at Kōkeʻe and the visitors were surprised that we didn't have power or operations at full capacity. The real concern was the water level in the State Park's water supply tank. Electricity is needed to pump water uphill into the tank and it wasnʻt restored for nearly a week. Hui o Laka had to cancel weekend group use of the CCC Camp because there was only a foot of water left in the tank for all the park users.

For Hui o Laka, it was a chance to practice some of our emergency procedures. Some we did well with Kōkeʻe, others we could have done better with and will improve on. What was disconcerting was that communications were poor regarding the danger in the area for the visitors. People coming to hike after a natural disaster expected everything to be cleaned up. Trees on trails are not a priority in this type of situation.

We do want to thank the emergency crews that were phenomenal! Kauaʻi Island Utility Cooperative (KIUC) was out in force prior to, during, and after the storm trying to restore power and then trimming trees. Crews from State Parks, County of Kauaʻi, and Hawaiʻi State Highways cleared the paved roads and individual heroes rescued people trapped in cabins off the paved roads. Hawaiian Telcom followed KIUC and had to cut their way into areas that their poles diverge from KIUC's. Remember these same crews were also busy everywhere else on the island as well. Kōkeʻe was not forgotten. Iʻm sure there were more working on getting us back online.

Above: Kōkeʻe Road at the height of the storm on Sunday. Kōkeʻe Museum and the CCC Camp sustained little or no damage. We lost a Kokio keokeo planted by John Plews. The old Hanner house, used by the director, at Puʻu ka Pele was hit by falling eucalyptus branches. The cottage sustained the worst of it, with the roof broken is a couple of places. the trees in that area were planted too close together and too close to the cabins.

Come Stay with Us!

The CCC Camp is beginning to hold its own as an operation. The camp has a way to go to complete the punch list of needed repairs to the 8-building compound. We made some tweaks to its business model about 3 years ago. We continue to make sure we can keep the camp accessible to our members. The two cabins were refurnished and set aside for higher end use to subsidize bunkhouse use for group stays. We've continued to attract educational groups from across the state, the mainland, and Kauaʻi. Some have become regular users which has really helped the bottom line.

We continue to reinvest in the property where it counts the most to improve visitor expectations. The three semi-private rooms are receiving new interior paint and freshening up of furnishings. These are popular with our couples that come to do some serious hiking or researchers staying for more than a couple of nights. Barracks C is on our radar for continuing cosmetic upgrades this year.

The last big change will be a security deposit for use of our mess hall. Some of the ongoing damage, although seemingly minor, are quite costly such as broken knobs on the gas stoves. They are special order items that take weeks to replace and cost up to $65 each. We went through five last year. New porcelain handles in the bathroom had to be replaced twice the summer before. The supplier had never had them reported broken before; ever! It looked like someone deliberately smashed them. Again, $200 later, we replaced them with metal. Then there was a group that let their kids play with the fire extinguishers. More than one emptied out. It didnʻt seem fair to raise the room rates just because of a few bad users, hence the refundable security deposit. We may also be charging other fees for group stays to recover costs for our utilities, especially if the group is bringing in extra people that arenʻt spending the night. Again, we want to continue to charge low prices for the beds but have to we recover the costs associated with the more complicated stays.

The cleaning up after each use is the other big way we can keep the prices down. We appreciate all the elbow grease our recent and regular users put into the camp.

For more information, online calendar and more visit ttp://www.kokee.org/index.php?ccc-camp-staying-at

The Dreaded Rapid ʻŌhiʻa Death is now on Kauaʻi

We've been asked to share information regarding this deadly threat to one of the pillars of the native forest, the ʻōhiʻa tree. Rapid ʻōhiʻa death [ROD] is caused by a fungus and to protect its threat, basic sanitation needs to occur with those moving between forested areas.

This applies especially to hikers, hunters, and forest plant collectors. If you don't take it seriously, not only will the ʻōhiʻa trees die, but also the understory plants that depend on these trees including maile and mokihana. It isn't a "them" situation where we expect experts to fix the problem. The disease has wiped out substantial forests very quickly and it will take all of us to do our part to prevent spreading the disease further, giving researchers time for solutions to be found.

From the Kauaʻi Invasive Species Council's website here are things we all must do.

1. Prevention! Clean Your Gear

Prevent the spread of invasive species by cleaning mud and dirt from your footwear, bikes, vehicles, and gear before AND after travelling. Many invasive plants and animals are detected along trails and disturbed areas (such as new construction.)They are excellent hitchhikers and can spread easily-both between islands AND across an island. Always enter an area with clear gear!

2. Follow Decontamination Procedures

ROD is a disease that has been spreading on Hawai'i Island and rapidly killing ʻōhiʻa trees. It is caused by a fungus that attacks the trees vascular system. The fungus can be spread through the movement of contaminated soil, ʻōhiʻa wood and/or ʻōhiʻa plant parts. If you are in the forests on Hawaiʻi or Kauaʻi, please avoid the known contaminated areas and follow decontamination protocols after every visit to any forest on Hawai'i Island. Clean your gear, clothing and shoes, pets, and hunting animals when hunting, hiking, or gathering.

3. Use Alcohol to Kill Fungus

Dip your soles of shoes or spray them with 70% rubbing alcohol and wash clothes in hot water and detergent. Wash your vehicle with detergent if you've traveled off-road.

4. Travel Responsibly

Declare ALL produce, plants, seeds, soil, sand, and animals when entering the state and traveling between islands. This applies to shipping packages too. To hopefully contain the fungus causing the disease killing ʻōhiʻa trees, permits are required to move any ʻōhiʻa products from infected islands.

5. Plant native or non-invasive species

Native plants provide habitat for Hawaiʻi's unique native birds and insects, promoting a healthy ecosystem and maintaining important environmental services, such as clean water. Learn how to "plant pono" by checking the potential weediness of plants using the Hawaiʻi Weed Risk Assessment Tool at https://plantpono.org/

6. Buy Local

Alien fungi, insect pests, and agricultural diseases can hide in imported produce. Buying local helps boost the economy and protects Hawaiʻi's farmers. Do not bring plant materials from other islands!

7. Educate Yourself

For more information: www.RapidOhia-Death.org

What's New at the Museum

Kōkeʻe Visitors Numbers Are Up

In April 2018, the Island of Kauaʻi experienced unprecedented rainfall, topping 50" in two days in some locations. The North Shore region, from Hanalei to Nāpali, was particularly hard hit. Multiple landslides along the shoreline Kuhiō Highway damaged the main artery and forced closure of the route accessing the rural community and parks beyond Hanalei. The highway is being repaired and is not expected to reopen until sometime in 2019. Thousands of people and their vehicles have inundated other spots on the island including Kōkeʻe.

In February 2019, Kōkeʻe Museum hit an all-time high of 8,427 museum visitors. In February of 2018 we had 6,039 visitors. 2018 had 84,007 total visitors which was nearly a thousand more than 2017 at 70,303. At the end of February 2019 had 16,795 visitors. This is just a fraction of the people coming to Kōkeʻe. For those that drive up in the middle of the day, the congestion and illegal parking along the side the road near each lookout and the parking areas at trailheads is unbelievable.

New Multimedia Exhibit

Kōkeʻe Museum is hosting a touch screen exhibit from Hamline University's Center for Global Environmental Education. The topics that can be learned about include Kauaʻi Forest Birds, Waiʻaleʻale, and Rapid ʻŌhiʻa Death. It works for our museum because it is a computer hard drive program rather than wifi from an internet or cellular source. Both are not currently available at Kōkeʻe. Electronics are always a concern and we do get a lot of power outages and glitches, but the exhibit is working most times and adds an interactive element to the static traditional exhibits.

Hamline University has been working with Ke Kula Niʻihau, Kauaʻi Museum, the National Tropical Botanical Garden, Kauaʻi Forest Bird Recovery Project (KFBRP), Kauaʻi Marriott, and other partners on Kauaʻi to create educational multimedia resources for public and K-12 audiences about the Island's natural and cultural heritage.

New Book Out

A highly recommended read: **Robinson Family Governess** by Judith Burtner. In 1911, 22 year old Hettie Belle Matthew takes a daring leap into the unknown as she sails away from her cosmopolitan life in the bustling Bay Area for the remote Hawaiian Islands to work as a Governess for the prominent and wealthy Robinson Family. Letters discovered by her grand-daughter over a century later are painstakingly woven together to bring this true story to life with rare insight and authenticity. Burtner is currently on a book tour around Kauaʻi.

Hui o Laka is Financially Sound

We give thanks to you, our members, donors, and patrons. It's your financial support that pushes us forward and keeps Hui o Laka strong. We rely heavily on the earnings of our museum shop, which sustains the basic operations and staffing but it is finite.

In the past 4 years, the two distinct operations under Hui o Laka: the museum and CCC Camp have had climbing revenues. The museum has seen about 30% increase in visitors and revenue there is up 7%. The CCC Camp revenue is up 20.5% and supporting the employees associated with its operation. It's occupancy is seasonal and weather dependent which makes it a challenge

Due to several benefactors, Hui o Laka has been growing its endowment fund. We continue to reinvest the interest dividends to maximize its growth. We now have about $150,000 in the fund as of December 2018. Keep in mind, besides being tax deductible, a donation to Hui o Laka can be earmarked towards a favorite project, festival or the endowment fund.

One of the areas of concern has been the tremendous cost of holding festivals. We are fortunate to have support from Hawai'i Tourism Authority and the County of Kaua'i. There are strings to this money which means that a certain amount of cash must be raised to match the funds, not just in volunteer/in-kind services (not cash). The matching cash comes from Hui o Laka's bank account, festival earnings, and/or community sponsors.

Eō e Emalani i Alaka'i costs about $145,000 to put on (cash and value of services.) In 2018, we were able to achieve a near break-even balance sheet through sponsorship. It was heartening to see how much support poured in to keep the Emalani Festival alive. We have to acknowledge the training assistance from the staff at the Hawai'i Tourism Authority and support from Nalani Brun, Tourism Specialist with the County of Kaua'i Office of Economic Development for increasing our festival know-how.

Every nonprofit organization files a Federal IRS Tax Form 990. These are searchable on the Guidestar.org to see how well Hui o Laka or any other organization is doing. Most of our earnings go towards f orwarding our mission and the people it takes to do that on a day to day basis. We actively seek additional money to run our festivals and improve our facilities.

Membership

Membership is very important to our organization. Here Memberships at the patron level or higher from November 1, 2018 to January 31, 2019

Patron Members ($100 and above)

Michael Bill
Joan Pratt
Charles & Jeanne Wichman
Wendy Wichman
Chipper & Hau'oli Wichman
Wayne & Katherine Richardson
Gaylord & Carol Wilcox
Karen Ambrosi
Koke'e Lodge
Jonathan Wichman
Sandy Howatt
Jill Marie Landis
Laraine Tylor
Kenneth Ogilvie
Marina Drummer
Tim Cashdollar
Judy Oliver
Melinda Walker
Laura Nishek
Karen Gally & Frank O. Hay
Elvrine Chow
Mike & Diana Shaw
Ka Waikahe Lani Malie
Kay S. Koike
Richard & Louise Steenblik
Oahu Nature, Inc.
Earl Hunter
L. Scher & S. Farese
Pam Dohrman

DONATIONS

Donations made from November 1, 2018 to January 31, 2019

In Honor of Joan Pratt
Sarah Pratt Quinn
Charles & Deborah Pratt
Tim & Jill Pratt
Melinda Walker
Sam & Robin Pratt
William Pratt
David & Carol Pratt
Cory Pratt & Family
Ashley & Austin Quinn
Jesse Pratt & Family
Charles & Ana Cecilia Pratt
Sean Quinn & Chelsey Faust
K. Pratt & T. Griffin
James Pratt
Bradley Pratt

In Honor of David & Carol Pratt
Tim & Jill Pratt

In Honor of Granddaughters
David & Martha Elpern

In memory of Marsha Erickson
J.B. & Katie Friday
Joan Pratt

In Memory of Dottie Ann Hance
Patricia Weber
Harold & Esther Hughes
Cecilia & Greg Williams

In Memory of Gale Carswell
Nena Norton

In memory of Kaiopua Fyfe
James & Sylvia Thacker

Unrestricted Donations
Glen Moragne
Joan Pratt
Tom & Melvine Mendes
Richard Motycka
Broadbent Foundation

For Endowment Fund
Joan Pratt
David Pratt

For Museum Exhibits
Waimakua Mary Rice
Waimakua Foundation

For CCC Camp
Earl Hunter

If you don't see you name here or find it misspelled, let us know. The cut off date was January 31 for this newsletter.

How to Find Us!

By Phone:
Hui o Laka business office and CCC Camp Reservations 808-335-9975
Kōke'e Museum (direct) 808-335-3353
Email: info@kokee.org
Web: www.kokee.org
Facebook: KokeeMuseumNew!

In the Chinese zodiac, 2019 is the Year of the Boar. To acknowlege the pigs in our forests, we celebrated in style.