

Westside Stories

"The Pride of the Westside"

A community newspaper by and for residents of the Leeward Coast of O'ahu, Hawai'i
Direct mailed to over 15,400 residences in the areas of Nānākuli, Mā'ili, Wai'anae, Mākaha and Mākua

AUGUST 2026
Volume 29, Number 8

Award-Winning Artist Shaped by Community

Submitted by Lei'a Haff

For six-time Nā Hākū Hanohano Award winner Punahale, every lyric is rooted in the people, places, and values that raised him. His music is more than entertainment. It is an expression of aloha for his community, a commitment to justice, and a reminder that where you

come from can become your greatest strength.

Raised on Orange Street across from Lahilahi in Mākaha, Punahale grew up in a community that taught him resilience, integrity, and the importance of caring for one another. Those lessons continue to shape every aspect of his life and artistry.

"My music reflects the people, struggles, morals, and aloha that I was raised with," he says. "I am nothing without my community."

Today, while he owns property in both Mākaha and Waiakahi'ula in the district of Puna on Moku o Keawe, those places continue to ground and inspire his work. That connection to home has carried him through an extraordinary career. As Hawai'i's first-ever Iron MC Champion and a six-time Nā Hākū Hanohano Award winner, Punahale has earned some of the state's highest musical honors. Yet, he views every award through a different lens.

"Receiving recognition for my work is always an honor, and I'm grateful for it," he says. "But I give all honor and glory to the 'āina, especially Mākaha and the entire 96792, the Wai'anae



Nā Hākū Hanohano Award winner Punahale posing with many of his awards.

Coast. These awards are bigger than me. I want the world to know that my community continues to produce incredible artists, leaders, and people."

For Punahale, success is meaningful because it shines a light on the place that shaped him. Music, however, was never simply a profession. His ancestors carried the traditions of oli, pahu, and

'uli'uli for generations, and he comes from a lineage of Hawaiian musicians and haku mele. Looking back, he believes music chose him long before he chose it. "I could have easily become another statistic from my community," he reflects. "But music gave me purpose. It saved my life."

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Public Schools back in session - Monday, August 3, 2026

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Wai'anae Moku Nonprofit Leadership Summit Builds Momentum for Collective Action

Submitted by Lei'a Haff

Across the Wai'anae Moku, nonprofit organizations are often among the first to respond when families need support, communities face uncertainty, or new opportunities begin to emerge. Their work touches nearly every part of community life, from health and education to culture, economic development, social services and youth support. Yet the people leading this work are also navigating increasing demands, limited resources, shifting funding priorities and complex community needs.

The Wai'anae Moku Nonprofit Leadership Summit created space for nonprofit leaders and community partners to step away from the urgency of daily operations, strengthen relationships and consider what could be possible when organizations move forward together. The summit which took place on July 16 centered on the theme "Thriving in



Nonprofit leaders and community members attended the "Thriving in the Midst of Chaos and Adversity" summit presented by the Wai'anae Moku Navigators.

the Midst of Chaos and Adversity" and was presented by the Wai'anae Moku Navigators and sponsored by Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center, Kamehameha Schools, Wai'anae Economic Development Council and Naki'i Ku LLC.

The gathering was designed to be more than a day of presentations. It offered participants an opportunity to build pilina (relationships), exchange information, identify shared concerns and explore solutions rooted in collaboration.

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From the Publisher

By Steve Olbrich

Please visit our Facebook page for updated events that are happening throughout the month here on our Westside



Hard to believe that public school is scheduled to start on August 3. Make sure you check with your child's individual school for their starting schedules as many have staggered opening days/dates for various grades as well as new programs and starting/dismissal dates. There is a new policy regarding cell phones so make sure you double check with your child's school on their new policy.

In addition, there are a few new changes in some of the school's administration coming up this school year. Nānākuli High & Intermediate School's principal Dr. Christine Udarbe has retired, and Assistant Principal Nicole Manninen has begun a new chapter at another school. NHIS' new principal (temporary assignment) is Moani Nalulu-Mahelona, a proud NHIS alumna who returns home with a deep sense of humility, gratitude and kuleana. Jeffrey Fernandez is the new NHIS Middle School Assistant Principal. Wai'anae

High's new principal (temporary assignment) is Brandy Yagi, who comes from Waipahu High. We wish them all the best in their new roles!

Election season is here, and primary election day is August 8. Since 2020, Hawaii has a Vote By Mail election system and you should have received your ballot in the mail by July 21. If you haven't received your ballot yet, call the Office of Elections at (808) 453-VOTE (8683), e-mail them at elections@hawaii.gov or visit the Voter Service Center at Kapolei Hale which opened on July 27.

Please remember that this is a primary election, and you can only vote for one political party. If you "crossover" and vote for different people in different parties, you vote will not count. If you make a mistake or want to change your vote, visit the Voter Service Center at Kapolei Hale for a new ballot (take your "spoiled one" to expedite matters).

If you choose not to mail in your ballot through the post office, there is a drop

Meet the Chief

The Honolulu Police Department presents the first "Meet the Chief" Community Talk-Story series. Come and meet Honolulu Police Chief David Lazar as he shares his vision for HPD and listens to the community.

Wednesday, August 26, 2026

6 – 8 p.m.

6 – 7: Meet and greet Chief David Lazar

7 – 8: Formal program

Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center's Dining Pavilion

Note — Golf cart shuttles will be available to pavilion from main and overflow parking lots.



Honolulu Police Chief David Lazar

off box at Wai'anae District Park and Nānākuli Public Library as well as Voter Service Centers at Kapolei Hale. You can also go to Kapolei Hale or Honolulu Hale where you can register and vote on the same day, drop off your ballot, vote with an accessible voting machine and/or get help and voting information in multiple languages. Their hours are Mondays through Saturdays – 8 am to 4:30 pm (excluding Sundays) and August 8, Election Day from 7am to 7pm.

Once you have dropped off or mailed in your ballot, you can track it by visiting hawaii.ballottrax.net/voter to make sure your ballot is received. Remember — every vote counts so get yours in today!

The "Ready, Set, Go Nā Wai'anae: Take Action Before the Next Wildfire" community workshop is set for August 25, from 5:30–7:30 p.m. at the Kamehameha Schools Community Learning Center at Mā'ili for an evening focused on practical, local solutions that help protect homes, families, and neighborhoods. This free workshop will bring together local organizations and wildfire experts to share simple, effective steps residents can take to reduce wildfire risk and strengthen community resilience. Participants will learn how to make their homes and properties more fire-resistant, organize with neighbors to create a Firewise Hui, and develop an

action plan before an emergency occurs.

Highlights of the workshop include: learn how to protect your home and community from wildfire; discover practical ways to create defensible space around your property; learn how to organize a neighborhood Firewise Hui; how to develop a preparedness plan for your family and community.

House Speaker Nadine K. Nakamura has appointed Representative Darius K. Kila to serve on the City & County of Honolulu's Ends Landfills Task Force pursuant to the Honolulu City Council Resolution 26-7. The task force was established in May 2026 to evaluate the feasibility, costs and implementation strategies for ending Honolulu's reliance on landfills while ensuring the protection of public health, the environment, fiscal responsibility and workforce stability. This is especially important to us on our Westside as we continue the important conversation surrounding the planned closure of the Waimanalo Gulch Sanitary Landfill in 2028 and to provide the opportunity to advocate for the needs and concerns to identify long-term solutions.

As we were going to press, Fausto remained a Category 2 hurricane but is still expected to be a "weakening, sheared tropical storm." It is hoped that

Continued on page 4

Schools are going back in session, please drive with extra care keeping our students safety in mind.



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Email: lawyers@regonakoalaw.com | Web: regonakoalaw.com
APPOINTMENTS BY TELEPHONE, ZOOM OR IN PERSON



F.O.W.L.

Friends Of Wai'anae Library

SCHOOL DAYS AHEAD!

BACK TO SCHOOL BOOKS & RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS & TEACHERS.

25 cent / Yellow Cart In a Bag of Books Sale 20 for \$5.00!

SEE PAGE 12 FOR BOTH PUBLIC LIBRARY PROGRAMS & SCHEDULES FOR AUGUST

Contributors to this Month's Issue:

Parker Bode, Kelsey Domingo, Danielle Dowers, Sally Ford, Lei'a Haff, Catherine Kealiinohomoku, Nohea Stevens, Kelly Stinefelt.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who contributed to their community newspaper and we invite everyone to do the same.

Next issue: September 2026 • Story & Advertising Deadline: August 10, 2026



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Aloha, Mary Lou Doehring



August 10, 1930 - March 22, 2026

Submitted by Danielle Dowers

Mary Lou Doehring was born on August 10, 1930, and passed away on March 22 at the age of 95. She taught piano and voice in Wai'anae from 1991 to 2005 and was a talented singer, performer, piano accompanist, choir director and trainer. She was a loving daughter, wife, mother and friend. Above all, Mary Lou was a gifted music teacher.

Raised in Los Angeles, Mary Lou developed her love of music at an early age. She studied classical piano and voice, and sang in the Roger Wagner Chorale, performing with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. After graduating from UCLA in 1952, Mary Lou married Milton Dowers. She began her teaching career directing school choirs in Southern California before moving to Hawai'i.

Mary Lou performed with Emma Veary and Donald Yap in many Honolulu Community Theatre (now Diamond Head Theatre) productions, including "Carousel", "Music Man", and "Sound of Music". After children Danielle and Marton were born, they returned to California, where she sang with the San Francisco Civic Light Opera, taught public school, and worked as a training manager for ATT. After her marriage ended, Mary Lou transferred to Chicago, IL, beginning a new chapter. She married Jim Doehring, and they travelled to Colorado, California, Hawai'i and Arizona.

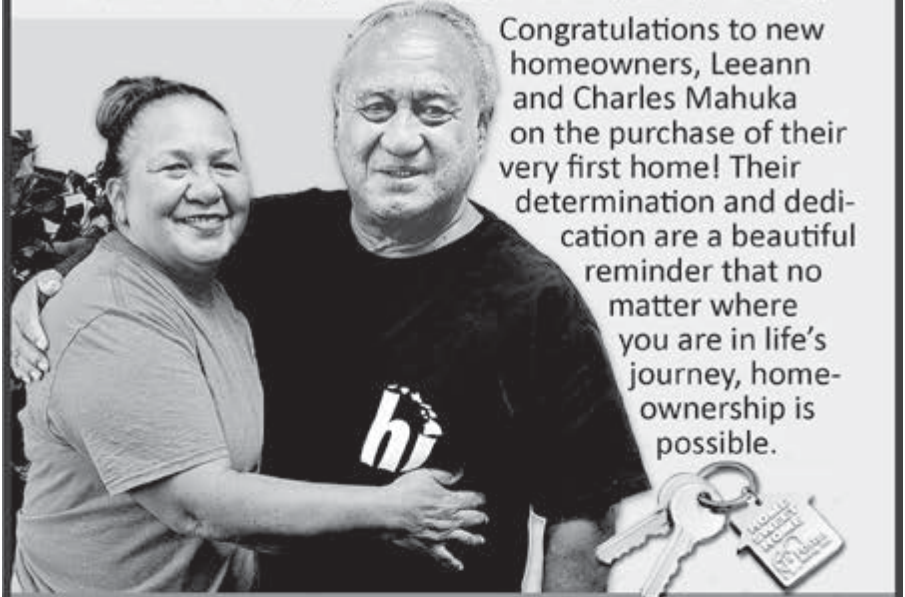
In 1987 Mary Lou returned to Hawai'i, teaching at Punahou School, St. Andrew's Priory, Kaimuki High School and at her home in Wai'anae. Voice student Jordan Segundo competed in the finals on "American Idol". Many keiki hands learned to play on her little white baby grand piano. She returned to the mainland in 2005.

Mary Lou dedicated her life to inspiring thousands of young musicians over 70 years of teaching piano and voice. Her joy for music always shone through. She was still singing beautifully, despite dementia, at age 95.

She is survived by her husband Jim Doehring, daughter Danielle Dowers, son Marton Dowers (Sharon Jones), extended family, many friends, and countless students.

Please visit Mary Lou's memorial webpage at www.forevermissed.com/marylou-doehring/

FOSTER REALTY IS PROUD TO FEATURE LEEANN & CHARLES MAHUKA, TWO OF OUR NEWEST HOMEOWNERS



Congratulations to new homeowners, Leeann and Charles Mahuka on the purchase of their very first home! Their determination and dedication are a beautiful reminder that no matter where you are in life's journey, homeownership is possible.

We invite you to join us for a

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August 16, 2026
4pm - 6pm at our
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OCTOBER 3, 2026
5:00pm - 9:00pm

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Legislatively Speaking



**Representative
CHRISTOPHER
Muraoka**

House District 45
Wai'anae, Mākaha
Mākuā

At the heart of our work is a simple commitment — listening to our community and working together to make the Westside a safer, stronger place for everyone. Every conversation, community meeting, and neighborhood event reminds us that the best solutions come from working together.

Our office would like to extend a sincere mahalo to everyone who joined us for our Fentanyl Town Hall in June. We were encouraged to see so many resi-

dents, families, educators, and community partners come together to learn, ask questions, and have honest conversations about the impact fentanyl is having on our communities. Protecting our keiki and supporting our families requires all of us, and we are grateful to everyone who took the time to be part of this important discussion.

We are also pleased to share a traffic safety update for our Westside community. Speed humps have now been installed on Lahaina Street and Wai'anae Valley Road, including areas near Pili-la'au Park and Pā'akea. These improvements were made possible through the partnership of City and State agencies, along with the continued advocacy of community members who spoke up for safer streets. Mahalo to everyone who helped make these improvements a re-



Chelsea Gomez, MSCP, CSAC, care coordinator, Ho'okuola Hale; Nohealani Wescott, MSW, CSAC, vocational rehabilitation specialist, Malama Recovery Services; Dr. Niki Wright, PsyD, Director of Malama Recovery Services; Michael Hartsock; Detective Mark Tom; Rep Kila and Rep Muraoka at the recent Town Hall Meeting on the Fentanyl Crisis

ality. Every step we take toward safer neighborhoods helps protect our children, families, and kūpuna.

As always, our office is here to serve you. If you have questions, concerns, or ideas on how we can better support our community, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Contact Us Email: repmuraoka@capitol.hawaii.gov Phone: (808) 586-8460; on social media: @RepMuraoka Website: www.repmuraoka.com

Mahalo for your continued trust, support, and partnership as we work together to strengthen our Westside community!

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FRI - SAT NOON - 10PM

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT NIGHTLY!

Punahele

Continued from front page

Today, he works to ensure music can become that same source of hope for others.

Holding a bachelor's degree in Ethnic Studies and a master's degree in Educational Administration, Punahele has spent more than a decade teaching songwriting and poetry workshops for at-risk and incarcerated youth, using music as a tool for self-expression, healing, and empowerment.

More than a decade into his recording career, Punahele continues to create with the same passion that first saved his own life. Having released more than

ten albums, he continues to produce new music while mentoring the next generation. One of his proudest current projects is helping his students mix and master their first-class album.

Looking ahead, he plans to continue recording, performing, hosting free community events and leading songwriting workshops that empower future artists to tell their own stories.

Fans can follow @Punahele695 on Instagram, where he shares more than 100 videos each year featuring new music, performances, and community work. His music is available on all major streaming platforms and at punahele695.bandcamp.com

In every performance, every classroom, and every song, Punahele continues to prove that greatness is not measured by awards alone, but by the lives you uplift, the community you represent, and the legacy you leave behind. For Punahele, no matter how far the music travels, it will always begin and always return home to Mākaha.

From the Publisher

Continued from page 2

Fausto will begin its weakening trend and will likely degrade into a tropical storm as it approaches the Hawaiian Islands. However, we could see impacts including damaging winds and heavy rainfall. This is a good time to check your family emergency plan including how to communicate, where you can shelter and what supplies to have ready and to sign up for local emergency alerts at ready.hawaii.gov/alerts. In addition, you can visit ready.hawaii.gov/hurricane for more information on preparing for hurricanes. Fausto forecast updates from the Central Pacific Hurricane Center are available every six hours – 5 am, 11 am, 5 pm and 11 pm by visiting: www.nhc.noaa.gov/.../graphics_ep1.../242035.shtml

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Ark of Safety Christian Fellowship
AOS Media

Kuleana grows leaders

K-12 APPLICATION WINDOW

August 15 to September 30, 2026

PRESCHOOL APPLICATION WINDOW

August 15 to October 31, 2026



Kamehameha Schools' admissions policy is to give preference to applicants of Hawaiian ancestry to the extent permitted by law.



Ke Kula 'o Kamehameha



WAIANAE COAST
COMPREHENSIVE
HEALTH CENTER



SERVING WEST OAHU SINCE 1972 | AUGUST 2026

NEWSLETTER

RICHARD BETTINI, PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER | DR. DONALD SIMPSON, CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER | GINGER FUATA, CHAIRPERSON

Celebrating NATIONAL Health Center Week

Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center (WCCHC) is proud to celebrate National Health Center Week (NHCW), an annual nationwide celebration led by the National Association of Community Health Centers. This year's theme, "Building Innovative Care Where It Matters Most," highlights the essential role community health centers play in providing high-quality, accessible healthcare.

From Sunday, August 2, 2026, through Saturday, August 8, 2026, health centers across the country will celebrate their impact on the communities they serve. For more than 61 years, community health centers have expanded access to affordable, quality care and now serve 1 in 7 people nationwide.

To celebrate National Health Center Week, WCCHC is celebrating each day of the week with themed activities and hosting three FREE community events. We invite our patients, partners, and the West O'ahu community to join us.

Register for the events today at wcchc.com/events.



Sunday, August 2

HONORING OUR LEGACY

Celebrating WCCHC's history and impact on our community.



Monday, August 3

PATIENT APPRECIATION DAY: FREE EVENT

Honoring our patients and families with a free community celebration.



Tuesday, August 4

OLA PONO: HEALTH & WELLNESS DAY

Promoting healthy lifestyles through preventive care, health screenings, community resources & farmer's market.

Ola Pono:
Health & Wellness Day
FEATURING A HEALTH RESOURCE FAIR

9 AM - 12 PM | WCCHC Makai Lawn



Wednesday, August 5

CELEBRATING OUR COMMUNITY

Honoring the diverse people, cultures, and communities we serve. Featuring Lauhala weaving, Lei Hulu, and other cultural activities.

Kupuna & Mo'opuna
Cultural Event

9:30 AM - 11:30 AM | WCCHC Makai Lawn



Thursday, August 6

BOARD APPRECIATION DAY

Recognizing our board members whose guidance, advocacy, & collaboration strengthen our mission.



Friday, August 7

STAFF APPRECIATION DAY

Honoring our health center staff who provide comprehensive, compassionate healthcare services to our community.



Saturday, August 8

LOOKING AHEAD: A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Reflecting on our journey and our vision for healthier communities.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
Community Health Centers



REGISTER AT [WCCHC.COM/EVENTS](https://wcchc.com/events)

FOLLOW ALONG DURING NHCW 2026

[f](https://www.facebook.com/waianaecomp) [i](https://www.instagram.com/waianaecomp) [in](https://www.linkedin.com/company/waianaecomp) WAIANAECOMP



AUGUST 2026 | RICHARD BETTINI, PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER | DR. DONALD SIMPSON, CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER | GINGER FUATA, CHAIRPERSON

WCCHC GOES LIVE WITH EPIC AND MYCHART



WCCHC Staff & OCHIN Transition team members

On **July 14, 2026**, WCCHC transitioned to a **new electronic health record system** called **EPIC** & a new patient portal called **MyChart**.

This important transition has strengthened care coordination, improved access to health information, and enhanced the patient experience across our health center. Mahalo to our patients & community for your patience & support throughout this transition. We appreciate your understanding as our staff continues to learn new workflows in EPIC and MyChart. We mahalo our WCCHC staff members for months of planning and the dedication to make this milestone possible.

Now is the perfect time to sign up for MyChart—WCCHC's secure online patient portal. With MyChart, patients can:

- View portions of their medical record
- Communicate with their care team
- View upcoming appointments
- Access test results
- Manage their healthcare information online, and more.

Learn more and sign up at wcchc.com/epic



WELCOME WCCHC'S SECOND FAMILY MEDICINE RESIDENTS

Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center (WCCHC) is proud to welcome the second class of physicians into the Ho'okahua I Ke Ola Family Medicine Residency Program.

The program, launched last year as Hawai'i's first accredited family medicine residency program based at a health center, continues to grow as part of WCCHC's long-term commitment to training physicians here in the communities that need them most.

This year, WCCHC welcomes three new family medicine residents:

- Dr. Kevin Pilapil
- Dr. Kimberly Kanemitsu
- Dr. Verna Brooks

They join WCCHC's inaugural residents, Dr. Leane Jennypher Escosia, Dr. Bong Jik Kim, and Dr. Pauline Ton, who are now entering their second year of the three-year residency program.

All three new residents have schedules open to accept new patients at the James and Abigail Campbell Clinic in Nānākuli. Drs. Escosia, Kim and Ton are continuing to accept new patients.

Through the Ho'okahua I Ke Ola Family Medicine Residency Program, residents train under WCCHC's faculty while caring for patients across our health center and with partner organizations. The program emphasizes community-based care, behavioral health integration, and a strong focus on the health needs of the Wai'anae Coast and Native Hawaiian communities.

WCCHC is excited to continue to grow this program with our newest residents and continue building a stronger healthcare workforce for West O'ahu and rural areas in Hawai'i.



Mahalo 2026 Summer Interns!



WAIANAЕ COAST
COMPREHENSIVE
HEALTH CENTER



Nānākuli and Wai'anae Complex Area Summer Internship

Lela Ambrocio - Ka Ike Ola Education Program Associate Director, Jamie Soonju Chun - WHS Junior, Pumehana Edaya Sarol-Silva - NHS Junior, Precious Jewelle Salas - WHS Sophomore, Bobbie Elisala - WCCHC Education Program Director



Chamber of Commerce
HAWAII



Ho'oulu Na Mamo Summer Internship

Back row: Charyssa Asinsin, Jaysha Self, Moevao Amaral, Kira Kotrys Taguchi, Kalena Cueto, Kayli Manlapit, Christopher Tuipulotu, Jaxson Bailor, Brystie-Lee Jaentsch, Hy-Nel Lin-Kee, Karielle Leedy

Front row: Kaoluokamahina Akiona Ferriman, Saigelynn Combis, Gavin Ortiz, Raighclyne Kaaihue Play, Sharaiah Gouveia-Tua, Raiden Sakamoto, Brayden Keleb

Not pictured: Andres Combis, LaShaun Stark, Legacy Matautia



Talk Story Tuesdays

GUEST SPEAKERS:
GLENN ARAKAWA & MICHELE "CHRISSY" KUAHINE

FEATURED TOPIC:
TytoCare and MyChart
Chrissy and Tech Savvy Teens will introduce TytoCare and how to sign up for MyChart. Our Tech Savvy Teens will be there to assist with any other technology questions you may have. Bring your devices and let our Tech Savvy Teens show you how to use your devices.

TOPICS:

- MED-QUEST, SNAP, SLIDING FEE SCALE
- WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MEDICARE
- MEDICARE ANNUAL WELLNESS VISITS

Register Today! Call Patient Assistance Services at (808) 697-3405 or email: PAS@WCCHC.COM

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August 11 | 9 AM - 11 AM
WCCHC DINING PAVILION

August 18 | 9 AM - 11 AM
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TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT, PLEASE EMAIL YOUR NAME, BIRTH DATE, PHONE NUMBER, AND TIME TO EGALARIADA-ROSA@WCCHC.COM

Thursday, August 27
6 AM - 1 PM

WCCHC MAIN CAMPUS
BOTTOM OF HILL
86-260 Farrington Hwy,
Waiānae, HI 96792

AUGUST 27
DONOR DAY



Out and About with Lei'a

The Heart Behind the Mauka to Makai Mākaha Foundation

By Lei'a Haff
Lei'a.vhaff@gmail.com



Mel Pu'u instructing keiki on CPR best practices.

For "Uncle" Mel Pu'u, caring for Mākaha's keiki is not a new responsibility. It is a continuation of the way he was raised.

Growing up at Mākaha Beach throughout the 1960s, 70s and 80s taught him the true meaning of 'ohana. Life at the beach was built around helping one another, sharing what you had and learning together. Everyone played a role in caring for the community, and every child was treated as part of the larger 'ohana. The lessons Uncle Mel learned did not always come from books or formal classrooms, they came

from listening to kūpuna tell stories and learning to understand the deeper meanings within them. They came from watching the ocean, recognizing its ever-present dangers, and learning how to reduce or eliminate risks before an emergency occurred.

Those lessons shaped the person he became and eventually inspired the creation of the Mauka to Makai Mākaha Foundation and today, when Uncle Mel watches the keiki who come to Mākaha, he often sees parts of himself in them. He hears young people sharing surfing and diving stories, comparing experiences and learning from one another in the same way generations before them once did. For him, those moments represent more than childhood memories. They are part of a living tradition that must be protected and passed forward.

At Mākaha, caring for keiki has always been part of the lifestyle. A cooler filled with drinks for the children after surfing, a few snacks shared on the beach, or an aunty or uncle quietly watching the shoreline may seem like small gestures. Together, they represent the deep sense of responsibility that has long defined the Wai'anae Coast.

The uncles and aunts are always watching. They make sure the keiki are safe, check that 'ohana have what they need and look out for the well-being of the entire community.

Uncle Mel believes that sharing stories while watching the surf is one of the best ways to educate people about ocean safety. The ocean itself becomes the classroom. Changing currents, waves, weather conditions, and human behavior create opportunities to teach people how to recognize danger and make responsible decisions.

For thirty-five years, Uncle Mel served as a City and County of Honolulu Ocean Safety Rescue Operator and trainer. During his career, he trained lifeguards and ocean safety personnel around the world, from Mākaha to Hilo, California to Florida and Japan to France. Although he has retired from his formal position, he remains active in ocean safety and rescue training. His kuleana did not end when his career did. Retirement gave him another opportunity to bring his knowledge back home and share it directly with his community.

Uncle Mel understands that lifesaving information must be reached beyond professional lifeguards and rescue personnel. 'Ohana, surfers, divers, visitors, and community members all benefit from understanding the ocean, recognizing risks, and knowing how to respond when someone is in danger.

Through the Mauka to Makai Mākaha Foundation, he is working to make that knowledge more accessible, and the foundation reflects his desire to continue teaching the keiki and 'ohana

Continued on page 12



Mahato

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WAI'ANAE MALL



“What's Up” on the Westside

**** Please visit our Facebook page for updated events that are happening throughout the month here on our Westside****

August 2026 Calendar of Events

August 1

8 am to 4 pm — Lā Ho'ihō'i Ea at Pōka'i Bay Beach Park

August 3

First Day of public school for Westside students

4 to 9 pm — Mele Mahalo event at WCCHC

August 7

5 to 9 pm — Searider Grub & Market at Wai'anae High School's front parking lot

August 8

Primary Election Day

August 15

10 am — Kids Movie Matinee **“GOAT”** at Wai'anae Public Library (See page 12)

August 21

Statehood/Admissions Day Holiday

August 22

5 to 9 pm — Ka'ala Farm “Mau No Ke Aloha 'Āina Anniversary Celebration at Lanikuhonua

August 25

5:30 to 7:30 pm — “Ready, Set, Go Nā Wai'anae: Take Action Before the Next Wildfire” community workshop at the Kamehameha Schools Community Learning Center at Mā'ili

August 26

6 to 8 pm — “Meet the Chief” Community Talk-Story at WCCHC's Dining Pavilion

August 27

6 am to 1 pm — Blood Drive at WCCHC

One person CAN make a difference, so be sure your voice is heard and vote. No vote? No Grumble!



CLUBS, COMMUNITY GROUPS AND CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS

AARP Chapter 4936 of Wai'anae

9:30 am on the first Friday of each month at the Wai'anae Community Center (Satellite City Hall). Contact Tim Thornton (404) 272-4225.

Aerobics (Low Impact)

4 to 5 pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at Wai'anae District Park. For more information, contact Flo Pell at 808-696-2776.

Aikido

Daily classes, morning, afternoon and evening for children, teens and adults. Call 808.202.6171 or 808.462-1118.

La Kōkua Ka'ala Farm

9 am to 12 noon on the 2nd Saturday of each month to mālama 'āina, lo'i and weeding. All are welcomed! Call 808.696.4954 or check our website www.kaalafarm.org

Lualualei Hawaiian Civic Club

3rd Thursday of every month at 6 pm and held both in-person and virtually via zoom at KS Learning Center in Mā'ili. For more information, Email: lualualeihcc808@gmail.com or visit our Instagram: [@lualualeihcc808](https://www.instagram.com/lualualeihcc808) or Facebook: Lualualei Hawaiian Civic Club.

Mākaha Bridge Club

10 am on Wednesdays and Saturdays at Lilikoi Lounge (Mākaha Valley Country Club). Call Kay Smith at 808-695-7844 for more information.

Mākaha Hatters

2nd Monday of each month at various restaurants along the Westside. If you would like to join this club, call “Queen” Karen Forsythe at 808-761-1955.

Maj Jongg (American style)

Tuesdays at 11 am at various locations. Call Coco at 808-330-4765 for more information. *Beginners welcomed!*

Nānākuli-Mā'ili Neighborhood Board #36

7 pm on the third Tuesday of the month at Nānākuli Public Library's meeting room. Call Neighborhood Commission Office at 808-768-3710 for more information or visit honolulu.gov/nco

St John the Baptist Church Thrift Shop

Wednesdays. from 9am-1pm
Thursday 1pm-5pm Stop by for great bargains! To volunteer, please email revjazybostock@gmail.com

Wai'anae Coast Neighborhood Board #24

6:30 pm on the 1st Tuesday of each month at Wai'anae Public Library. For more information, contact Neighborhood Commission Office at 808-768-3710 or visit honolulu.gov/nco

Waianae Coast Rotary Club

12 noon on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month at “Beach House by 604” (PARC) Piliāau Army Rec. Center (Rest Camp). For more information, contact: waianae coastrotary.org or Glenn Arakawa - glenn@planbenefitshawaii.com

Wai'anae Farmer's Market

Mākeke 'Iki 9am to 12 Noon every Tuesday at WCCHC Main Campus.

Mākeke Wai'anae 8 am to 12 noon every Saturday at Wai'anae Mall. For more information call 808-697-3709.

Wai'anae Hawaiian Civic Club

5:30 to 7:30 pm on the 2nd Monday of each month at the KS Learning Center in Mā'ili. Contact waianae hawaiiancivicclub.org for more information.

Women of Wai'anae

For more information visit womenofwaianae.org or call Karen Young at 808-388-8828. *Focus is on fundraisers for non-traditional college scholarships.*

WAI'ANAE COAST YMCA Kupuna Classes

MONDAY - WEDNESDAY- FRIDAY

9:30 am Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention
10:30 a.m. Cardio and Strength class
12:15-12:45 pm Hula with Kumu 'Aukai

TUESDAY & THURSDAY

9:00 am - 12:00 pm Pickleball

SATURDAY

8 am - 9 am Yoga Flow
9:15 am - 12 noon Pickleball

Everyone is invited to TRY the "Y" for FREE!

For more information, contact Deborah Thierbach at 808-541-5255 or just stop by the Wai'anae YMCA located at 86-71 Leihoku Street!

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Wai'anae Moku

Continued from front page

oration and collective action.

For many nonprofit leaders, the chance to gather with peers was valuable. Community-serving organizations often work alongside one another, but the pace of the work can leave little time for deeper conversation, shared planning or reflection. The summit created space for leaders to learn from one another, recognize common challenges and strengthen the relationships that

make long-term collaboration possible.

The event featured four leaders whose work spans philanthropy, culture, health, education, and social services. Featured speakers included Michelle Ka'uhane, Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President of the Hawai'i Community Foundation; Dr. Jon Kuahiwi Moniz-Tran, Native Hawaiian Cultural Educator and Assistant Professor at National University; Rich Bettini, President and CEO of Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center; and Alicia Higa, Executive Director of 'Ele-

paio Social Services.

Together, their experiences helped frame conversations about leadership, resilience, service and the responsibility of guiding organizations through periods of change. Participants gained practical insights, engaged in honest discussion, and considered how nonprofit leaders can remain grounded in purpose while responding to emerging community priorities.

Just as important as the summit itself is what will happen afterward as a summit report will be shared with participants through the Wai'anae Moku Navigators' monthly newsletter. The report will capture key discussions, priorities, and ideas raised during the gathering. Future newsletters will also provide updates, funding opportunities, resources, and announcements intended to keep nonprofit leaders informed and connected. Organizers also plan to convene quarterly summits focused on nonprofit and community development issues identified by participants.

Another important next step will be exploring the development of a nonprofit hub on the Wai'anae Coast. Wai'

anae Moku Navigators will work with 'Elepaio Social Services and other community organizations to consider how a shared hub could strengthen the local nonprofit ecosystem. It is hoped that the exploration may help identify opportunities for shared resources, organizational support, leadership development, coordination and greater access to information.

The July summit marked the beginning of a larger effort. Its success will not be measured only by what happened in the room, but by strengthened relationships, priorities identified and actions that continue after participants leave. Strong communities are rarely built by one organization acting alone. They are built through trust, shared responsibility, and the willingness to work across programs, sectors, and experiences. The Wai'anae Moku Nonprofit Leadership Summit reflected that understanding and created an opportunity to turn connection into sustained community action. More information about future convenings, resources and upcoming opportunities is available at www.wmnavigators.org



Please join us in celebrating our
Class Reunion from 1972 to 2025
Orleans Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, NV.
4500 W. Tropicana Avenue, Las Vegas, NV 89103
Saturday, October 24, 2026
6:00p.m. to 10:00 pm.
\$75.15 per person
Please RSVP to Vanessa (Labaya) Lewi
808-630-0305 by 9/24/26

Aloha,

As we mentioned in our last month's issue, we are still working with Spectrum, our internet provider, to try and figure out why they are blocking Gmail accounts to our original road runner e-mail (wss@hawaii.rr.com).

If you've been reaching out to us through gmail and haven't had a response back from us, that's why.

Although we are still working with them on this issue, we have set up a temporary gmail for those of you who utilize gmail only.

Our temporary account for those of you with gmail is wssgail@gmail.com

Thanks for your understanding. We'll keep you posted!



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A fast finish for the LTC summer season

This summer, 71 Wai'anae Coast youths ages 4 to 18 competed in Leeward Track Club's 2026 USA Track & Field Junior Olympics season, coached by Nānākuli's own Coach Anthony "Tony" Jones. To help fuel their performance, PVT supplied pre-meet snacks for competitors for five weeks during the season.



The Leeward Track Club (LTC) is a premier track and field development program for youth athletes on the west side of Oahu. Operating out of Nānākuli High and Intermediate School, the club focuses on coaching sprints, distance, hurdles, jumps, and throws.



Footloose—PVT supplied pre-meet snacks for 71 LTC competitors for five weeks during their recent summer track season. Nānākuli High School's Tony Jones is the club's head coach.

Is it time for you to step into the spotlight?



Register for NPAC's 36th season by August 9. Then come meet us at Opening Night on August 7-8.

If you like to sing, dance, and act, now is the time to register to join other talented students like yourself as a member of Nānākuli Performing Arts Center. NPAC is open to students in grades 1-12 from any public school. Classes are held after school from 4-6 p.m. in the Nānākuli High and Intermediate School multi-purpose building.

NPAC has produced more than 100 different productions and performances, ranging from Broadway musicals and dramatic plays to musical revues. To learn more about NPAC and register for the 2026-27 season, visit www.nhispac.com.

It's Showtime — Register by August 9 to be part of Nānākuli Performing Arts Center's 36th season.



Are you ready for some football?

The Nānākuli Golden Hawks will kick off the team's 2026 OIA football campaign on Friday, August 14, with a non-conference game against California's Newport Harbor High School. Speaking for ourselves, the season can't start soon enough. Good luck to coach Kili Watson and all the players.

Gametime Decisions — The Golden Hawks have an ambitious 10-game schedule in 2026, which includes seven home games. All the game times haven't been released, but varsity typically starts at 7 p.m.



Golden Hawks Football 2026 Schedule

VS. NEWPORT HARBOR (CA)
Fri. August 14 | 7 p.m.

@KEALAKEHE
Fri. August 21

VS AIEA
Sat. August 29

VS GRANITE FALLS (WA)
Fri. Sept. 4

VS WAIPAHU
Fri. Sept. 11

@ ROOSEVELT
Fri. Sept. 18

What members of the Nānākuli judo team will be wearing

Judo, which means *gentle way*, is a dynamic Japanese martial art founded by Dr. Jigoro Kano in 1882. It focuses on using an opponent's momentum against them, primarily using throws to take an opponent down and grappling through pins, chokes, and joint locks to subdue them on the mat.

The Nānākuli High and Intermediate School Judo Club is now wearing new uniforms with the support of PVT.



The Gentle Way — The NHIS Judo Club is now wearing new uniforms with the support of PVT.



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Out & About

Continued from page 8

who gather at Mākaha Surfing Beach. Its work is grounded in ocean safety, community education, environmental responsibility and the values instilled in Uncle Mel from a young age. At the heart of the foundation is a commitment to passing on what previous generations taught him which includes practical knowledge about ocean conditions, life-saving, risk prevention, and rescue. It also includes the values that make those

skills meaningful: generosity, humility, respect, responsibility, and aloha.

Uncle Mel often returns to a simple message, “Be aloha. Give aloha. Treat everyone the way you would want to be treated”.

The Mauka to Makai Mākaha Foundation was created to carry that commitment forward.

It ensures that the knowledge Uncle Mel gained through decades of ocean rescue work does not remain with him alone. It allows him to prepare keiki to better understand the ocean, protect



Mel Pu'u and his son Bubba Pu'u discussing next steps for the keiki.

themselves, care for one another, and eventually become the aunties, uncles, lifeguards, mentors, and community leaders who will watch over future generations. His work is ultimately about preservation. It protects not only Mākaha's ocean and shoreline, but also a community lifestyle rooted in collective care.

Through the Mauka to Makai Mākaha Foundation, Uncle Mel Pu'u is continuing the work that generations of Mākaha 'ohana began long before him: sharing what they have, teaching what they know, watching over the keiki, and carrying aloha from one generation to the next.



Ready - Set - Go!

NĀ WAI'ANAE

Join us to learn how homes can survive the threat of heat and wildfires

August 25th, 5:30-7:30PM

The Community Learning Center @ Mā'ili

✓ **Protect your home and community**

Learn how to make your home and community firewise

✓ **Team up for wildfire readiness**

Build a Firewise Hui

✓ **Get Involved**

Create a plan of action



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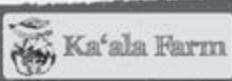
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Mālama
Learning Center



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NĀNĀKULI PUBLIC LIBRARY

AUGUST 2026 PROGRAMS

FRI 7, 14, 28 **KEIKI STORYTIME EVERY FRIDAY 11:30AM**

FRI 21 **LIBRARY CLOSED: STATEHOOD DAY**

MON 3 **HUI LEI 5:30PM-7PM**

TUE 25 **PERLER PARTY 2:30PM-3:30PM**

SAT 8 **MESSY PLAYTIME 10AM-11AM**

SAT 29 **DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 11:30AM-3:30PM**

TUE 11 **LEGO TIME 2:30PM-3:30PM**

THUR 20 **SLIME TIME 2:30PM-3:30PM**



For more info visit librarieshawaii.org/events



Wai'anāe Public Library

Hawai'i State Public Library System

August 2026

The library will be closed Friday, August 21 for Admissions Day.

Book Club

3rd Wednesdays, August 19 @ 6:00

Join us for our **in-person** book club on the 3rd Wednesday of each month! The book that we will be discussing in this meeting is **When The Cranes Fly South** by Lisa Ridzen.

Writing Group

Monday, August 10 and 24 @ 1:00

Join us for a self-guided writing circle that is a small safe place to practice your writing skills, learn from others, and share your own work, thoughts, and dreams.

Kid's Movie Matinee

Saturday, August 15 @ 10:00

We're going to be having a new matinee for kids on the 3rd Saturday of every month! Feel free to bring pillows and blankets. We'll also be serving light refreshments while supplies last.

This month, we will be watching **GOAT**, a movie about a young goat who wants to fulfil his dream of being a famous roarball player.

Family Storytime

Saturdays @ 10:00

August 1, 8, 22, 29

Toddler Time

Tuesdays @ 9:30

August 4, 11, 18, 25

Get 1-On-1 Tech Help with a **Digital Navigator**. Book your appointment for Monday morning or Saturday afternoon. Call the library for more information.

Wai'anāe Public Library is located at 85-625 Farrington Hwy. 96792 808-697-7868
Email: owncirc@librarieshawaii.org