

Imua Polenisia

A Bimonthly Newsletter
from the Polynesian
Cultural Center



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Employees Honored at 1998 Recognition Banquet

See article on page 2.



Sereima Damuni was honored by friends and co-workers for thirty-two years of service at the PCC.

35th Anniversary Celebration To Begin April First

Mark your calendars and tell your friends!

Beginning April 1, the Center will kick off a year-long celebration of its 35th anniversary. The next 12 months will be jammed with fun-filled activities and joyous special events on a weekly basis.

We want everyone to join in the spirit of this celebration. In 35 years, the Center has generated incredible awareness worldwide about the cultures and people of Polynesia.

That is a benefit of our good work that cannot be overstated.

When the Center opened in 1963, it was greeted with widespread skepticism and predictions of failure. Almost no one, except a faithful few, expected the Center to survive, much less thrive.

Thirty-five years later, we're ready to mark another historic milestone in what has become one of the world's great success stories in cultural preservation.

Congratulations, everyone!

See page 2 for a schedule of anniversary activities

Message from the President

Faith

I express my gratitude to the PCC Team for the extraordinary results we have achieved these past six years amidst a very difficult economy. The Hawaii economy is in an eighth year of stagnation which has thus far resulted in: 20,000 lost jobs, a record number of business failures, and declining real wages and salaries. These are extremely complex and difficult times and there is little optimism for a recovery in the next two years.

Because of your dedication and the blessings of the Lord, we have had steady increases in revenues and excess revenues these past six years. We have bucked the industry trends, and in the process the PCC has earned over 20 awards of excellence. Ted Jacobsen, PCC Chairman of the Board, has expressed his gratitude for everyone's contribution and praised our results as an example of fantastic achievement within the troubled Hawaii attractions business.

However, as I indicated to you on February 3, 1998, this year will require the faith and prayers of all of us to achieve our plans. The Oahu visitor industry continues to erode, creating even greater challenges for the PCC. We are faced with difficult and complex decisions. At that meeting we introduced to you for the first time a theme for the PCC. The theme is Faith. In the scriptures we read that "...if ye have faith nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Matthew 17:20); and "with God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37). Several scriptures in the Book of Mormon promise us "...if ye keep the commandments, ye shall prosper." (1 Nephi 2:20) In addition, there are many instances in the scriptures where the Lord delivers His people from bondage or gives them strength to carry their burdens.

Elder Harold G. Hillam gave me this inspired idea. He talked about the miraculous results they achieved through the theme of Faith when he was a mission president.

Please refer to the Topical Guide in the LDS King James Version of the Bible on the subject of Faith. We ask you to read these scriptures. As we read and ponder these scriptures, the Holy Ghost will open our minds. We will become a people of sound understanding. From our fasting and prayers will come forth the gift of faith so that we can accomplish miracles. We can also demonstrate our desires to our Lord through righteousness.

President Hinckley once said, "Grant us faith to look beyond the problems of the moment to the miracles of the future. Give us faith to pay our tithes and offerings and put our trust in Thee, the Almighty to open the windows of heaven as Thou has promised." (Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley, p. 195)

I believe the greatest thing we can do for the safety, strength and well being of Hawaii and PCC is to cultivate within our team even greater faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We must walk in righteousness and become an example to all as a light on the hill and as leaven for the bread. Coupled with walking in faith and virtue, we must apply correct business principles to our endeavors. I know that as we do our part, God will open the way. When there is no way, He will open the way. I know this is true.

We also indicated in the February 3 meeting that we would need to (1) replace the lost revenue from the Asian market meltdown, (2) become even more efficient and productive, and (3) restructure and eliminate some positions. We recognize that this necessary restructuring will result in personal difficulties for those affected. We will work very hard to minimize the impact of the restructuring.

Thank you for your untiring dedication to the mission of PCC.

-President Moore



**35th Anniversary
Special Events
Scheduled in April:**

- 1 35th Anniversary Kick-off Celebration
Kahali'i Art Gallery Opening
5:30-6:00 p.m. "WAIHI" Musical Group
6:00-6:45 p.m. BYU Jazz Band
7:00-7:15 p.m. "TOA" Musical Group
- 1-4 Weaving Demonstrations
- 6-8 Handicrafts Display
- 7 Prairie High School Band
(5:30-6:00 p.m., "Treasures")
- 9 Glendora High School Band
- 11 Jan Shima Poetry Reading
- 13-18 Polynesian Dance Lessons
(IMAX Plaza; 3:00-5:00 p.m.)
- 13 Island Blend Musical Group
(6:00-6:45 p.m., "Treasures")
- 15 Pacifica High School Band Concert
(4:00-4:40 p.m., Front Plaza)
Encino High School Band Concert
(6:00-7:00 p.m., "Treasures")
- 16 Jam Pack Studio Performance
- 18 Sterling Scholars Semi-Finals
- 20-25 Weaving Demonstrations
- 22 Oak Bay Secondary School
(6:00-7:00 p.m., "Treasures")
- 25 Jan Shima - Poetry Reading
- 27-30 Handicrafts Display

We will keep everyone updated about the 35th Anniversary events scheduled for each month.

Guest Letter

On January 22 1998 we visited the Polynesian Cultural Center. It was our 40th anniversary and we bought VIP tickets. Our guide was a very nice girl. Her name was Noa-Noa. She was guiding a group of six people. One couple was on their honeymoon, one was celebrating their 20th anniversary, and we were celebrating our 40th anniversary. Noa-Noa was such a pleasant guide and so good in getting us everywhere in time. In the meantime she did little extra things for us, like getting us a new roll of film when we ran out. At the end she taught us a dance. All together we enjoyed the whole day very much, thank to her guidance. I just want to thank her for making our visit there so pleasant... Please thank her from us, she is such a nice girl.

Aloha and Mahalo,

-Alida and Aart Rackwitz
Dutch people from California

Special Employees Earn Special Recognition



Our thirty year award recipients for 1998. (Fia Mau, Sophia Turaga, Samuela Langi, Mahana Pulotu and Sereima Damuni)

"Our employees are what makes the PCC so special in Hawaii."

Essentially, those are the words President Lester Moore cites whenever people ask him why the Center has been so successful as a visitor attraction.

And after observing the Employee Recognition Banquet on January 30, it's easy to see why. What a terrific workforce!

The Center congratulated its diverse and talented staff for their contributions to its ongoing success, but reserved special recognition for an elite group of longtime employees whose dedication has helped bring joy to millions of people around the world.

So many factors are important to a winning organization. Quality people, teamwork, enthusiasm, professionalism, commitment, creativity, attention to detail, and continuity are just a few of the attributes needed to succeed.

The Center is fortunate to have all of these, especially quality, top-notch people. We thank each and every one of our employees for their devotion and hard work.

But we offer an especially heartfelt mahalo to that special collection of people who have stood with us for over a quarter-century and—during that time—helped make the Center Hawaii's #1 paid visitor attraction.

Aloha to the following 14 employees who have logged 25 years or more of service at the Polynesian Cultural Center. ■

Twenty-five Years

Lloyd Chandler - *Entertainment*
Ellen Gay Dela Rosa - *Special Events*
Vai Faamalingi - *Entertainment*
Fetuu Falevai - *Motor Pool*
Alanieta Sigavata - *Hawaii Sales*
Alii Toelupe - *Reservations*

Twenty-six Years

Jay Akoi - *Purchasing*
Sione Latu - *Islands*
Rorii McCulluch - *Custodian*
Fakasiieiki Tovo - *Entertainment*

Twenty-seven Years

Leslie Steward - *Operations*
Melenaite Tovo - *Mission Complex*

Twenty-eight Years

Apimeleki Turaga - *Islands*

Twenty-nine Years

Cy Bridges - *Islands*

Thirty Years

Mahana Pulotu - *Cultural Presentations*
Sophia Turaga - *Cultural Presentations*

Thirty-one Years

Asofiafia Mau - *Sales*
Samuela Langi - *Human Resources*

Thirty-two Years

Sereima Damuni - *Cultural Presentations*

Center Increases Worldwide Exposure

A byproduct of the recent Board of Directors meeting was discovering the Center more than tripled its media exposure in 1997 compared to the year before.

Unbeknownst to many employees, the Center is constantly working to generate publicity in the local, domestic, and international media. We regularly issue press releases and media announcements about the Center's activities and notable achievements.

And we frequently host travel writers and journalists from around the world, which results in feature articles and coverage in a wide variety of publications and television shows throughout the year.

The benefit, of course, is increased global awareness about the Center, which helps increase reservations and inspire more visitors to spend a day on the North Shore.

Since the day it opened, the Center has had to work harder than other tourist attractions in Hawaii. We're not in Waikiki and we don't have a collection of lavish resort hotels surrounding us like Maui's Kaanapali Coast and the Big Island's Kona District.

Tourists don't always associate a trip to Hawaii with a visit to the Center. But once they get here, it's almost always the highlight of their vacation.

It's nice to know the Center is working just as hard at publicity as everything else. ■

Business Interests

Headline: "Cultural Center to let neighbors in free"
Publication: Honolulu Advertiser; Honolulu, HI
Date: November 11, 1997

"The Polynesian Cultural Center will provide free admission to residents from Kahaluu to Haleiwa as part of its 'Community Mahalo Week,' Nov. 17 to 29."

RELATED ARTICLES

Headline: "Polynesian Cultural Center visits the Nehelani for Family Night"
Publication: Discovery; Fort Shafter, HI
Date: November/December 1997

"Entertainers from the Polynesian Cultural Center will be performing at the Nehelani Family Night on 15 Nov. 1997."

'Oihana Maika'i Award

Headline: "Polynesian Center still successful"
Publication: Davis County Clipper; Bountiful, UT
Date: November 14, 1997

"On October 22 the PCC was honored by Governor Ben Cayetano and Hawaii's business community with the presentation of the prestigious Hawaii State Award of Excellence. Called 'Oihana Maika'i (Endeavors in Excellence), the annual award is sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii, and supported by the State of Hawaii, to recognize organizations excelling in productivity and service quality."

RELATED ARTICLES

Headline: "A Jewel in the Hands of the Lord"
Publication: Deseret News; Salt Lake City, UT
Date: October 4, 1997

Headline: "PCC Honored with Award of Excellence"
Publication: Koream Journal, 41
Date: December 1997

Headline: "PCC wins 'Oihana Maika'i award for its endeavors of excellence'"
Publication: Kaleo 'o Ko'olauloa
Date: November 6, 1997

Television Exposure

The Center recently entered the "SportsZone" of national TV coverage, courtesy of ESPN.

In the throes of another dark, shivering winter on the mainland, millions of homes were treated to sunlit, happy visitors being entertained at the Center during the NFL Pro Bowl's Pre-Game Show on February 1.

Then, just a few days later, ESPN2 broadcast over eight minutes of coverage from the 1997 World Fire Knife Championship on "Hawaiian Sports Adventure." Better yet, the show is being repeated.

A double dose of national exposure from the "global sports leader," a perfect start to 1998.

Meetings and Conventions

Headline: "Oahu's PCC is Open for Business"
Publication: Travelage West; San Francisco, CA
Date: November 17, 1997

"If your Oahu-bound group is looking for an alternative to Waikiki, tell them about the newest player on the island's meetings, conventions and incentives scene: the Polynesian Cultural Center in Laie, Oahu."

Les Steward Leaving for Mission Presidency

Laie's loss is Arcadia's gain. It comes with mixed emotions to announce that Les Steward has been called to serve as a Mission President in Arcadia, California.

We're saddened to lose a person who has been such a key fixture at the Center for 27 years. But, at the same time, we're delighted to see Les receive this high honor. He will be one of only 313 mission presidents in the world.

Les will report to Salt Lake City in June for one week of training before starting his three-year mission. He will oversee 200 missionaries and an area with over 2.6 million people.

There is good news, however. Les is taking a three-year leave of absence after which he will return to the Center. Congratulations, Les and Nanette!

Maintenance Department Employees of the Month

January:

Part Time: Jared Walters
Full Time: McKay Ernestburg & Mamalooa Latu
Lead: Peter Tailele

February:

Part Time: Jared Walters
Full Time: Pele Leiataua
Lead: John Nauahi

Winners chose from the following awards: Dinner for two at the Luau or Ambassador, five movie tickets, or \$25 cash.

LDS Service Missionaries Help Improvement Projects

Two couples are using their respective talents as LDS service missionaries to assist the Center with some major improvement projects. We're fortunate to have them join us.

Elder Victor and Sister Patsy Shill hail from Mesa, Arizona and have five children and 15 grandchildren. Elder Shill retired last year as an architect from his planning and design firm but, thankfully, he and his wife are using their expertise to help plan and develop improvement projects for the Center,

including the remodeling of the Gateway Restaurant. The Shills' mission is for a year.

Elder Woody and Sister Gwen Sandberg are residents of St. George, Utah and have five children and seven grandchildren. Elder Sandberg is a retired civil engineer, specializing in hydrology, and designed the recirculation system being installed in the freshwater lagoon. Elder Sandberg is also designing irrigation systems for each of the villages that will reuse water and cut back on overflow.

The Center is blessed to have such experts on hand. Let's make our new service missionaries feel welcome.

Utah Resident Meets Maui Pen Pal—Sixty Years Later at PCC

Laie, HI: It was a perfect story for Unsolved Mysteries.

Sixty years ago, two pen pals, one from Circleville, Utah, the other from Puunene, Maui, began exchanging letters on subjects only nine-year old girls could understand about small-town lifestyles that were an ocean apart.

For Guenavere Allen and her Maui pen pal, Blanche Masayo Ono, the contrasts in their existence and similarities in outlook could not have been more apparent. With a three-cent stamp, two cultures were drawn together.

Each was fascinated by the other one's world. Gwen wrote about life in the vast outdoors; Blanche about sugar plantation life in paradise. One had majestic mountains and hip-deep snow, the other a sparkling ocean and year-round sunshine.

"Today, kids can communicate anywhere in the world using the Internet and chat rooms, but when we were young having a pen pal was the only way to find out what life was like in another part of the country from someone your own age. It was a fun and interesting way to communicate," said Gwen.

The little girls spoke with pen and paper. Their dreams, goals, family life, even Christmas lists, criss-crossed the Pacific.

Then came Pearl Harbor and the Great War, and the letters stopped. Until now.

The two pen pals are again writing each other following a remarkable series of events that led to their first-ever meeting on January 31.

In September, Gwen Sandberg and her husband, Woody, came to the Oahu community of Laie to begin an eight-month LDS service mission for the Polynesian Cultural Center.

The couple left behind a small farm in New Harmony, Utah, along with five children and seven grandchildren, but embraced the chance to lend their talents on the Center's behalf.

In six decades time, Gwen had often wondered what became of the little Japanese girl on Maui she knew as Blanche Ono.

Three years ago, she tried to find out. It



Blanche Masayo Ono and Sister Gwen Sandberg greet each other at the entrance of the PCC.

"Meeting Masayo was such a thrill. She was just as neat and beautiful as I had imagined," beamed Gwen. "Hearing her voice for the first time reminded me of all the wonderful memories I had as a child reading her letters about life on these beautiful islands in the middle of the Pacific."

— SISTER GWEN SANDBERG

occurred during the couple's first service mission to Laie for Hawaii Reserves, Inc.

One weekend, Gwen and Woody flew to Maui and drove to the tiny blip in the road known as Puunene. They found a sugar mill, plantation museum, post office, and sugar cane fields everywhere. But no Blanche, and no one who knew of her. One person speculated she may have died.

Discouraged, but unbowed, Gwen and Woody returned to Laie, and eventually home to New Harmony.

Last fall, shortly after arriving for their second service mission, Gwen decided to share her thoughts of Blanche with the public. A gifted writer, she composed an article for a column in a Honolulu daily newspaper called "Hawaii Ways, Hawaii Days," which asked readers for their memories of bygone times.

Gwen wrote fondly about her Puunene pen pal of so long ago. Interestingly, the article appeared in the Sunday, December 7 edi-

tion—56 years to the day after Pearl Harbor was bombed. The reaction was immediate.

Masayo Matsui was enjoying a quiet Sunday morning at home in Wailuku, Maui, with Izumi, her husband of over 40 years. The retired schoolteacher had long ago dropped the name Blanche, given to her by a fourth-grade teacher for school.

Thoughts of her Utah pen pal were no longer with her. But then, the phone started ringing. One call, then another, and another, and another. Friends all calling with the same excitable message, "Masayo! You're in the newspaper!"

A series of phone calls ensued to try and connect the former pen pals. "I was so surprised by the article and that she remembered me," recalled Masayo. "It brought back such fond memories of my childhood."

Calls were placed to Honolulu, Brigham Young University - Hawaii, the Polynesian Cultural Center, and as far away as Los Angeles. The newspaper notified Gwen that Masayo was living on Maui and trying to reach her. This new development stunned her.

A couple days later, Gwen received a phone call from an acquaintance of Masayo's on Oahu, who passed on her address. Gwen immediately sent a letter to Maui. A few days later, the mailbox contained Masayo's response. The pen pals were at it again!

Like dear old friends, they wrote about the different routes their lives had taken in the past six decades. There were important similarities as well. Both were college educated, had devoted husbands, loving children, and enjoyed their careers immensely.

They also discovered their paths had nearly crossed while attending college in Utah. Both graduated in 1951, Masayo from Brigham Young University in Provo, and Gwen from Utah State University in Logan.

The newfound correspondents also set a date for lunch: Saturday, January 31, at the Polynesian Cultural Center.

When that morning finally arrived, Gwen nervously anticipated a meeting 60 years in the making. What will she look like? What will she think of me?

Brilliant sunshine filled the day and a slight trade wind blew in from the north. Typical Hawaii weather in January. Gwen sat with Woody on a bench in the shade of the Center's entrance, anxiously wringing her hands. The day's visitors were starting to filter inside.

At the exact moment of their scheduled meeting, 12:15 p.m., a petite Japanese woman suddenly appeared, her husband alongside. Gwen caught herself, then quickly rose.

"Masayo?" she inquired with a touch of

hesitation. Their eyes widened in sudden recognition.

Hugs, smiles, and tears of joy followed. Words of mutual admiration spilled out on top of each other. At one point, Gwen turned to her husband, "She's just as gorgeous looking and smart as I pictured she would be."

As Woody and Izumi chatted nearby, the two old friends exchanged beautifully fragrant, flowered leis, signifying love and aloha in Hawaii.

Masayo brought gifts made on Maui, including caramel-flavored popcorn, sweet bean-filled buns called manju, and a sticky,

sweet rice cake called mochi.

Made with sugar, water, and sweet rice flower, mochi was the perfect gift for the occasion. Traditional Japanese culture calls for pounding the ingredients in a stone bowl with a mallet. It symbolizes togetherness, as the individual rice grains are molded into one.

Lunch followed inside the Center. After several hours of non-stop conversation, laughter, and sharing family photos, it was time for Masayo and Izumi to leave. But the two old friends promised to write and meet again. Gwen hinted at a return trip to Maui.

"Meeting Masayo was such a thrill. She was just as neat and beautiful as I had imag-

ined," beamed Gwen. "Hearing her voice for the first time reminded me of all the wonderful memories I had as a child reading her letters about life on these beautiful islands in the middle of the Pacific."

They first wrote one another in the spring of childhood. Now, in the autumn of life, the former pen pals are exchanging letters once again. The subjects are different now, but the spirit of youthful discovery and wonderment remains unchanged.

And after nearly 60 years of silence, they have a lot to catch up on. ■

Young Gives MVP Performance

He was gracious, charming, entertaining, and left everybody with a smile. He even completed a pass.

In other words, San Francisco 49ers Quarterback Steve Young gave an All-Star performance at the Center on January 31. The 1992 and 1994 NFL MVP and 1995 Super Bowl MVP took time out from his busy Pro Bowl schedule to speak and answer questions at the Aloha Theater for 45 minutes.

And he didn't disappoint. Young regaled the audience with anecdotal reflections about his football career, funny observations, and candid answers on a variety of topics. Stories ranged from his embarrassment at eight years old when his mother scolded an opponent for knocking the wind out of her son when making a tackle, to commenting how everyone began treating him differently after he led the 49ers to victory in the 1995 Super Bowl.

"I love the idea of the Polynesian Culture Center, because culture is something we all need to hold on to,"

— STEVE YOUNG

The former BYU star also praised the work of the Center. "I love the idea of the Polynesian Culture Center, because culture is something we all need to hold on to," said Young. But with tongue in cheek and to much laughter, Young said he'd like to see a center built specifically to "develop more culture in defensive lineman."



Steve Young shared football stories as well as his feelings for the PCC to guests in the Aloha Theater on Jan. 31.

No matter what questions the crowd threw at him, Young handled them with humor, candor, and class, scoring points even with those fans of rival teams, like the Green Bay Packers, Dallas Cowboys, Pittsburgh Steelers, and Denver Broncos, in the audience.

His best moment, though, came when he called a youngster from the audience, autographed his football and had him run a pass pattern. Just like he's done countless times with Jerry Rice, Young threw a perfect spiral and completed the pass. What a thrill for that fan!

The following day, Pro Bowl Sunday, Young started for the NFC and threw two first-half touchdowns, making him the early favorite to add another MVP trophy to his mantelpiece. But, the AFC rallied in the fourth quarter and beat the NFC, 29-24. Nevertheless, despite the Pro Bowl loss, Steve Young showed at the Center why he's such a great winner—in football and in life. Way to go, Steve! ■

McExtra Program a Big Success



The Center really put the "extra" in McDonald's McExtra Program during January and the payoff will continue throughout 1998.

Statewide, customers of McDonald's Restaurants received thousands of free and discounted annual passes to the Center. Also, certificates were distributed for the Polynesian Odyssey video, Ancient Legends video, Horizons cassette, and Horizons CD.

And five lucky residents received free round-trip airfare for two to one of five Pacific Island nations, Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, Tahiti, and New Zealand.

Wow! Let's hope all of the 1998 McExtra sponsors are this generous.

Thus far, over 1,000 Hawaii residents have redeemed the annual passes to the Center. This will continue as more residents take advantage of the savings offered by the annual passes and plan family trips to the Center.

Finally, the exposure created by this program was awesome. Throughout January, the Center was prominently featured every day in McDonald's ads on TV and radio.

Congratulations on a great start to the New Year!

Ali'i Luau Garden Wins National Landscaping Award

With its immaculate landscaping and natural Polynesian beauty, the Ali'i Luau Garden draws oohs and ahhs from guests every night. And now, it's earned national acclaim as well.

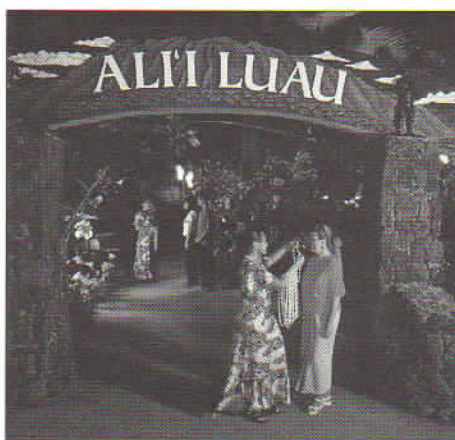
On February 7, the National Landscape Association honored the Ali'i Luau Garden with its 1997 National Superior Award for Best Commercial Garden Space.

"It's a great honor to receive national recognition for a showcase venue that's a favorite of our guests," said Les Steward, vice president of operations.

The Ali'i Luau Garden was designed by the planning and consulting firm of Belt Collins Hawaii. But Steward said credit for the award goes to Landscaping Manager Ron Ahina and the in-house crew of employees who performed all the planting and landscaping work.

"The care and dedication of Ron Ahina and his team is the reason we earned this award," said Steward. "Our guests absolutely love the garden area. They're always taking photos and complementing the Center about the beauty and variety of plants and flowers."

Ahina proudly noted that most of the garden's plants, which includes breadfruit, torch ginger, traveler's palm, royal palm, area palm,



The entrance to our award winning Ali'i Luau area.

laue fern and croton, were grown by the Center's employees. He cited, in particular, the work of Landscaping Supervisor Victor Daguio, and Stella Keil from the nursery.

The garden scored high in all areas of the award criteria, including overall design, plant materials, site elements, ornamentation, appropriateness of detail, environmental issues, and maintenance. The judges commented the "nice blend of culture and landscape makes the space special," and noted there was an "excellent integration of landscape materials."

A natural feel of Polynesia was created to highlight the setting of the imu and a traditional Hawaiian luau. Ti leaves and banana plants from the garden are used to help cook the pig in the imu.

"To enhance the Garden's natural beauty, we installed a canopy effect of variegated hau to give the people the feeling of walking through a rain forest," said Ahina. ■

Kudos everyone for a job well done!

McKinnon is New Host Marriott GM



When you see Mike McKinnon walking the grounds, give him a hearty aloha and enthusiastic shaka for the great job he's doing with the Treasures of Polynesia.

Mike has been merchandise general manager for Host Marriott Services since October. Since coming aboard he's enhanced the ambiance, improved the product mix, added a stage area, and increased sales. All this in just 4 short months!

Mike came to the Center with impressive merchandise management credentials on a world-wide level. He's worked for Walt Disney on Ice, Siegfried & Roy, Ice Capades, and the International Circus Festival of Monte Carlo.

Most recently, he was associated with Marriott International in Irvine, CA. But, he's no stranger to Hawaii, having once lived and worked on Kauai as a resort marketing director.

Lucky for us, he's putting all of that experience to good use for the Center.

Most importantly, he's happy to be in Laie. And we're happy to have him. Aloha, Mike!

Major Upgrade Projects In Progress

Everything needs to be polished up a little every now and then-and the Center is no different. Amid the construction, dust, and detours produced by our ongoing maintenance program are a couple of key improvement projects that will give the Center a shiny new look.

As evident to anyone driving on Kam Highway, the south parking lot is a flurry of activity. It is being completely refurbished for the first time in 20 years, with new landscaping, new lighting, and improved bus and limousine areas. The entire lot will be sealed.

Though not visible to the public, the Center is also upgrading its technological capabilities by installing new communication lines underneath

the parking lot and other areas as construction work is done.

Maintenance Project Coordinator Tony Haiku is overseeing the parking lot improvements

Moving inside the Center, the dredging of the entire lagoon is nearly complete. Furthermore, a recirculation system has been installed, with new pipes and valves strategically placed throughout the lagoon to regulate the flow and freshness of the water.

This environmentally friendly irrigation system will also be installed in the other villages.

This is a big year for making improvements at the Center. Some of the other upcoming projects of note are as follows:

- The women's restroom near the front entrance will be expanded by 10 stalls. Lockers are also being added. Work should be completed by the end of March.
- The Tahitian village is currently undergoing a major

renovation that will be completed in 1999. Everyone will be very impressed with the planned improvements, which includes the construction of a traditional marae structure.

➤ The Gateway Restaurant will be remodeled to improve the delivery of food service and freshen the look and feel of the entire setting. This work should be completed by the end of the year.

➤ The concession and retail areas at each island village are being consolidated in a culturally sensitive way. For example, a traditional fale is being constructed in the Samoan village that will house all of the concession and retail items. Once all the islands are complete, the Center will have one concession area for each island.

What all this work means is we'll have a new and better Center for 1998 and beyond!



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