



Keaukaha Pana'ewa Farmers Association

A Newsletter produced by and for farmers

Volume 3, Issue 5

July 2012

President's Message



KPFA President
Mele Spencer

We can never say mahalo enough to the homesteaders who have stepped forward to help organize and carry out programs and projects. Many of these homesteaders are board members or from the Farm Lots, with some coming from Keaukaha and others from Pana'ewa House Lots. How great is that!

But, as we expand programs and projects, it adds involvement from the community. So, when someone calls or visits you to kokua, please say yes. A community engaged can do wondrous things.

Maile Luuwai and I attended a DHHL & HACBED Symposium on June 27-28, 2012. We were able to meet and talk to our new Chair-Designee, Jobie Masagatani, as well as others in the department. We learned ways to improve our association and experienced community facilities and agricultural projects on Oahu. Mmmmm—such possibilities! What was the most exciting was to see so many associations working together to acquire new community facilities in their homesteads...we can follow suit.

We attended the grand opening of the Covered Play Courts and the re-opening of the Pana'ewa Family Center. You should stop by. The courts are state-of-the-art. I understand that a full-time Parks & Recreation person will be assigned there, so I can see more activities for our children.

KPFA elections are slated for November 2012. If you are interested in serving on the board, please contact me. Remember, you must be a paid member to vote. Annual dues are only \$10/person.

Keaukaha Pana'ewa Farmers Association Opposes School in Pana'ewa Farm Lots Area

The board of directors for KPFA voted unanimously to object to a school on lands adjacent to the Pana'ewa Farm Lots. Recently the Kama'aha Education Initiative organization requested DHHL give them 20 acres of land to establish the Ka Umeke Ka'eo Hawai'i Charter School; the same land that Kamehameha Schools was seeking for their East Hawaii School. Kama'aha Education Initiative is seeking a 40-year license for free or rental of less than market value.

After much consideration and community response, the board voted on July 2, 2012, NOT TO SUPPORT this initiative. The board's decision was based on a variety of factors, but the most compelling was that there are limited lands available for agricultural homesteading here in East Hawai'i. Considering this, and the fact that there are 6,873 applicants on the waitlist for agricultural lands on Hawai'i Island, the Department **should not** allow outside organizations, agencies, or businesses to take trust lands suitable for homesteading.

Because the department has failed to provide agricultural lands for homesteading over the past 15 years or more, this does not mean that Hawaiian Homes lands are unusable for agricultural homesteading, nor is it a valid reason for using those lands for other purposes. Diversion of Hawaiian Homes lands is not acceptable when so many are on the waitlist.

Hawaiian Farmers Market—Pana'ewa

Congratulations to Dave Yamamoto of The Barbecue Pit!

At the Hilo Bay BBQ Cook-Off on July 4th, Dave took **1st Place for BBQ Chicken** and **3rd Place in Overall Standings**.

Dave is a regular at our farmers market. Ono barbecue ribs, chicken and pull-pork. Try it!



Your Vote CAN Make a Difference

OK. So it's your right to vote or not to vote. Consider, now more than ever before, it is easy to do. Vote at home and mail in your ballots. Why? Every vote makes KPFA's voice louder with the politicians. We shouldn't pass up an opportunity to be loudly and clearly heard. Will you help? Primary election—August 11; general election—November 6.

2012 Milestones

- 2012 paid membership: 63.
- We continue to provide about 80 homesteaders with updates and resources by email.
- Quarterly newsletters.
- We now have KPFA t-shirts—more information to come

**Contact Police Officer
Frank Mohica to report
suspicious vehicles:
961-8121 or
frankmohica@yahoo.com**

Burglaries in Pana'ewa Farm Lots

In the past 2 1/2 months, Pana'ewa Farm Lots experienced seven burglaries. Our Community Policing Officer, Frank Mohica, said, "Suspects drive in the area and then walk around the subdivision. The suspect(s) have been **removing jalousies** to gain entry and remove **mostly jewelry** and **prescription medication**."

■ April 2012	1
■ May 2012	4
■ June 2012 (1st half)	<u>2</u>
TOTAL	7

A white, older model Chevy Blazer has been seen in the area, however, the police cannot connect it to the burglaries at this time. The police advise us to call in any suspicious vehicles so the police can make contact and document the incident.

Issue Updates

- County is conducting a study on the feasibility of extending the county landfill southward and adjacent to the Pana'ewa Farm Lots. The board is monitoring the impact it will have on our homesteads.
- "No Vending" signs for Railroad Avenue are still pending.
- County is planning to install a 4-Way Stop at Puainako and Ohuohu. Still pending.
- Councilman Fresh Onishi is working to divert heavy trucks from using Railroad (from Puainako southward) as a bypass road. This would be accomplished with signs.
- Still pending. Puna-Makai Bypass—still pending. Patrick Kahawaiolaa is monitoring the situation for us.

KPFA Programs and Grants

- Our **\$30,000 DHHL grant** for homestead projects, agricultural classes and agricultural tech support **has been received**, but to move this grant forward we are negotiating for DHHL to contract for these services due to the cancellation of the CTAHR contract.
- Our **\$26,000 DHHL grant** for a marketing study on what we farmers should grow and tech support for the farmers market **has been received**. KPFA is now seeking contractors to provide the services.
- Our **\$5,000 DHHL grant** to establish our 501(c)3 non-profit **has been received**, and a non-profit attorney will begin work with KPFA soon. This non-profit status will help us obtain grants without paying for a fiscal sponsor.
- We have applied for a **\$50,000 DHHL grant** to expand our homestead projects. Status depends on our ability to obtain agricultural classes and agricultural tech support services and DHHL approval.

Resources

- Although the **CTAHR** contract has been cancelled, CTAHR still provides technical support to the public. If you need information, contact CTAHR at 969.8252.
- For **DHHL-related questions**, contact the DHHL East Hawaii Office. Madalyn Kaeo at 974.4252 or Louis Hao at 974.4253.
- Saving for a house? **Save up to \$1,600** of your own money, and you can **get matching funds of \$6,400** for a total of \$8,000. That is 4:1 odds. For Hawaiian Homes beneficiaries only. Contact Hawaii First Federal Credit Union at 885.6600.
- If you are a homeowner facing **lease cancellation** or need **help in foreclosure prevention**, Hawaii Community Assets provides counseling. This is worth trying! Get help! Call Kelly Lincoln at 934.0801.
- **Financial education and credit repair services** are available at CNHA 596.8155 or 1.800.709.2642.
- The fastest way to have **flooding and potholes** repaired is to call County Public Works, South Hilo District at 961.8636. They have been very good at repairs.

Mahalos

- Margaret Pahio of Business Services Hawaii for the rubbish service at the Hawaiian Farmers Market (correction).
- All the homesteaders and friends that help man the market.
- Mahalo to Deena DeMello for helping with the newsletter every quarter.
- And mahalo always to Uncle **Sam Kamoku**, who cares for the plants and trees on the Puainako medial strip between Ohuohu and Railroad. HE CAN ALWAYS USE A LITTLE HELP — CALL HIM at 896-2919.

KPFA & Committee Contact Information

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Quote

You have to recognize when the right place and the right time fuse and take advantage of that opportunity. There are plenty of opportunities out there. You can't sit back and wait.

Ellen Metcalf



A Newsletter by and for farmers

Keaukaha Pana'ewa Farmers Association

The Keaukaha Pana'ewa Farmers Association (KPFA) represents over 250 Department of Hawaiian Homeland lessees in the Pana'ewa Farm Lots. The Farm Lots are located south of the Hilo International Airport. Railroad Avenue bisects the Farm Lots from North to South. With a total of 285 parcels encompassing 1,615 acres, these lots are zoned for agricultural usage. The average lot size is 5.66 acres.

KPFA's primary mission is to support lessees to develop sustainable farms to grow food for their own consumption and/or for commercial sale. The KPFA Board of Directors identified and its membership approved seven priorities to focus on. The priorities are as follows:

1. Build administrative capability through Board Training & Development, Membership Development and communications enhancement.
2. Opened the "Hawaiian Farmers Market, Pana'ewa," on Railroad Avenue in September, 2011. Establish a successful farmers market in Pana'ewa and Hilo.
3. Create a Working Group to assess how to improve farming in Pana'ewa.
4. Solidify opposition to the Kea'au-Hilo Bypass through Railroad Avenue.
5. Lift the DHHL Moratorium on agricultural leases.
6. Clarify the DHHL Commercial Lease Policy in Pana'ewa.
7. Establish a 501(c)3.

