



Mālama Mānoa

N E W S L E T T E R

Volume 34, No. 2 / Fall / Winter 2026



One of our youngest volunteers hauls a bin along Mānoa Stream.

More Than 130 Neighbors Joined the Mānoa Park & Stream Cleanup

By Tyler Dang

More than 130 neighbors turned out at Mānoa Valley District Park on Saturday, June 13, for Mālama Mānoa's stream and park cleanup.

Volunteers spread out around the park and in the stream from the Kahaloa Drive bridge down to the Woodlawn Bridge, where they pulled out tires, bag after bag of trash, pieces of scrap metal, and an entire fence that had ended up in the water. Keiki worked alongside kūpuna; Boy Scout

troops turned out in numbers and took on much of the heaviest hauling; and families who have been coming for years found themselves working beside new-found neighbors.

The event has been on our calendar long enough that it now feels less like an event Mālama Mānoa puts on than something the valley does together, and after the flooding earlier this year, many neighbors wanted to assist with the stream cleaning. Mahalo to everyone who joined in.

For our next cleanup event, watch our website under the Stream Cleaning tab, along with our Facebook and Instagram pages. Volunteers of all ages are welcome and no experience is necessary, though closed-toe shoes, water, and a willingness to get a little muddy are all recommended.

Please visit our Mālama Mānoa page at malamamanoa.org



facebook.com/malamamanoa



MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission is to promote community; celebrate our cultural diversity and heritage; and preserve, protect and enhance the special qualities of historic Mānoa Valley.

President's Corner, Fall 2026

By Thom Benedict

Mānoa Stream runs through the heart of this valley, past our homes, schools, and parks, and most days it is easy to take for granted. On March 23, that changed.



In June, many of you came out to care for it at our park and stream cleanup. A lot of the people in the water that morning had watched it rise a few months earlier and wanted to do something about it. Showing up when it counts, without a lot of fuss, is how Mānoa has always worked, and it is a big part of why

Mālama Mānoa is still going after more than thirty years.

Mālama Mānoa's mission is to promote community, celebrate our cultural diversity and heritage, and preserve, protect, and enhance the special qualities of historic Mānoa Valley. Some years that work is quiet, but this year it has meant a great deal of attention on our stream, both in the streambed itself and in meeting rooms.

You will find more in this issue on the March flooding, the community meeting that followed at Noelani Elementary, and the State and City maintenance work now underway along Mānoa Stream. I encourage you to read it, because

decisions about this valley are being made right now, and they turn out better when residents are in the room.

There are two events ahead that I hope you will come to. The Mānoa Valley Fall Festival returns to Mānoa Marketplace on Saturday, October 24, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., so please stop by our booth, bring the keiki, and say hello. Then on Friday, November 27, we will hold our Plant Giveaway at Mānoa District Park from noon to three, with free native Hawaiian trees, shrubs and groundcovers, canoe plants including kī and kalo, and vegetables and herbs. Our star plant this year is the 'ōhi'a, so bring a box.

A tree planted in Mānoa is not a symbolic gesture. Roots hold soil and canopy slows rain. A valley with more of both comes through a storm better than one with less. Caring for our watershed and giving away plants are really the same work.

Mahalo for everything you do for this valley.

With aloha,



Thom Benedict

President, Mālama Mānoa



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Laulima at College Hill

Welcoming UH President Wendy Hensel, and a conversation about Mānoa's future

By Tyler Dang

On May 27, over sixty Mānoa Valley stakeholders gathered at College Hill for a welcome reception honoring Wendy Hensel, the 16th president of the University of Hawai'i system. Planned as a welcome, it became a working conversation among the valley's schools, arts groups, and community organizations about where Mānoa goes from here.

Education and the arts were well represented. Punahou School president Dr. Mike Latham and Shana Tong of Maryknoll School joined leaders from a dozen valley organizations working in education, the arts, preservation, and emergency preparedness. Former Governor Neil Abercrombie and Nancie Caraway, Ann and Dale Kobayashi, and clergy from several Mānoa congregations rounded out the room.

Linda Legrande opened the reception with a short history of Mālama Mānoa, which was founded in January 1992 by Mary Cooke and Helen Nakano and now counts roughly 4,000 members. Mālama Mānoa has spent more than three decades documenting the valley's historic homes, leading stream cleanings, and building the working relationships with the university that brought President Hensel to the porch that afternoon.

College Hill itself was built in 1902 by Frank C. Atherton and his wife Eleanor, and designed by the architect Walter E. Pinkham. The 16-room residence sits on 2.6 acres of land that was once part of Punahou School's holdings. After 60 years as the Atherton family home, the heirs donated it to the University in 1963. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2002 and to the Hawai'i State Register.

President Hensel was candid that the building's future remains unsettled: "Honestly, we're in the pure idea generation phase and haven't gone much beyond that." She also spoke directly to something many in the room already knew: she does not live at College Hill, and living there was



UH President Wendy Hensel with Mānoa community leaders at Mālama Mānoa's welcome reception at College Hill.

not part of her contract when she took the job. She noted that the house needs a major electrical upgrade, a practical question for any future use. She committed to neither of the two directions that have surfaced, an event venue or a working president's residence, but set two limits: the building stays part of the University, and any change must respect the surrounding neighborhood. "We are sitting right in the middle of many of your backyards, and it cannot be a destructive thing," she said.

For Mālama Mānoa, the priority is preservation; whether College Hill serves as a residence or a venue is the University's call. Just as valuable was the room: school leaders, arts and preservation groups, and longtime residents trading ideas and contacts. The valley does better when its organizations work together. President Hensel closed by inviting residents to send ideas while the conversation is still open. "I read every email that you send me," she said.

Reporting and quotations drawn from Sofia Oumoussa, "Hensel weighs options for College Hill, a historic Mānoa residence," *The Mānoa Mirror*, June 19, 2026.

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Learning Through Play

Impactful workshop underwritten by Mālama Mānoa Educational Endowment Grant

By Daniel Dinell

What happens when teachers become students for a morning? Lots of learning, laughter, and new ideas for bringing Hawai'i's plants, culture and environment into the classroom.

On July 9, 20 educators from Mānoa-area schools gathered at Mānoa Heritage Center for a hands-on professional development workshop featuring Kumulā'au, the educational card game created by Trees for Honolulu's Future (TFHF), and Hanafuda Pilina, developed by Hanafuda Hawai'i.

The games provided a fun way to explore native and invasive plants, natural resources, climate challenges, and Hawaiian vocabulary. Teachers also had an opportunity to explore Mānoa Heritage Center's remarkable garden and learn about the cultural and practical uses of plants.

"The games are beautiful, fun, educational, and relevant to Hawai'i and my content area. I can't wait to teach these games to my students," one participating teacher shared.



Teachers and young students learn about our natural environment.

For TFHF President Daniel Dinell, the goal goes beyond playing a game: "Games create an opportunity for students to learn together, have fun, and then start conversations about the trees and natural world around them."

Helen Nakano of Hanafuda Hawai'i brought another important dimension: "Our goal is to use play to connect people with one another and with Hawai'i's unique plants and culture."

Mahalo to Mānoa Heritage Center for hosting and providing teacher stipends. This is a great example of the Mālama Mānoa Educational Endowment Program underwriting a wonderful experience for our teachers in Mānoa Valley and, ultimately, their students.

MĀNOA WALKABOUT: THE MĀNOA CEMETERY AT HALLOWEEN



Join Mālama Mānoa for a Halloween walkabout through the Mānoa Chinese Cemetery on Saturday, October 24. Two tours of 15 people each: 4:30 to 5:30 PM and 5:45 to 6:45 PM. Meet at the Lion Gate, the bottom entrance.

Guides will share the cemetery's history and why it sits on the slope above the valley, with a stop at the Tomb of the Grand Ancestor. Stories, not scares.

Rain or shine. Wear closed-toe shoes. Sunset is around 6 PM, so the later group should bring a flashlight.

Space is limited. Scan the QR code to register, or visit eventbrite.com/e/2002354061901.

Questions? Contact Veneeta Acson (acson99@gmail.com) or Brenda Lam (brendaglam@gmail.com).



In the Wake of the Flood

Mānoa Stream, six months since the March flood

By Tyler Dang

On Monday, March 23, water crossed Woodlawn Drive and East Mānoa Road, flooded Noelani Elementary School, and ran past Dole Street. Soon after, neighbors on Ānuenue Street opened their homes to collect donations for the families hit worst. Six months on, the valley is still working through what happened and what to do about it.

What actually caused it

March was already an extraordinary month before the valley flooded. Two Kona lows crossed the islands in the first three

weeks, and by March 23, the state had taken more than two and a half times its normal March rainfall. Then that Monday afternoon, a narrow band of rain parked over Nu'uanu and Mānoa and dropped 3.5 to 6.5 inches, most of it within three hours at the rate of two to four inches an hour. Mānoa Stream rose from about three to twelve feet.

Less obvious is that the stream was not the whole story. The flooding at Noelani and in the surrounding neighborhood also came from the storm drains that empty into Mānoa Stream and had nowhere to send the water once the stream

was running that high.

No public engineering finding has identified a single choke point, whether a bridge, a culvert or a debris jam. Answering that would require hydraulic modeling above and below each constriction. Mālama Mānoa board members have requested those records, as well as detailed plans for the current stream maintenance.

The meeting at Noelani

The community meeting that followed drew residents with flooding affecting their homes on Lowrey Road and the surrounding streets, as well as much of the rest of the valley. The evening was less a briefing and more of a call for action. That turnout mattered and was a large part of why the Legislature moved money toward Mānoa Stream and why crews are working in the streambed today.

Work in the streambed

On August 3, the State Department of Transportation and the City Department of Facility Maintenance began the Joint Mānoa Stream Flood Mitigation Project. Crews are removing trees, rocks, and brush along the streambed and existing walls; regrading the slopes beside the stream; and dredging the channel to reestablish the stream bottom. The work runs weekdays into early December.

No capital project addresses the stretches of Mānoa Stream that run through private property, where many owners do not know how to maintain a bank or recognize a hazard. Board member Scott Snider, who has led an annual albizia sweep that has pulled more than 3,000 saplings from the corridor, put it plainly in testimony this August: “This is fundamentally an enforcement issue, not an engineering issue.”

What you can do

If the stream runs through your property, walk it, and clear cut material well back from the bank rather than leaving it where the next high water can take it. If you spot a hazard such as a fallen log, loose concrete blocks, or piled-up debris, report it, even if you think someone else already has.

Come to a cleanup as well. More than 130 neighbors turned out in June, and the next date will be announced on our website and social media.



An excavator reshapes the bank of Mānoa Stream in August as crews begin the joint State and City flood mitigation work.

And keep showing up to the meetings. The evening at Noelani is the reason there is equipment in the stream today. The Mānoa Neighborhood Board meets the first Wednesday of every month at Noelani Elementary, where much of this is discussed.

Direct questions to the Department of Facility Maintenance at 808-766-3343.



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 HAWAI'I LIFE

Getting to Know Your Board Members

Aloha! My name is Lindsay Sagarang, and I was born and raised on O‘ahu. My family moved around the island, from Hālawā to Makiki and many places in between, but



New board director Lindsay Sagarang with her dog, Nugget.

my constant has always been my grandparents’ home in Mānoa Valley. I have fond memories of riding bikes with my sister and cousin to Mānoa Marketplace for snacks at Kay’s Crackseed.

I graduated from Punahou School in 2012 and earned my degree from NYU’s Gallatin School of Individualized Study. Back home, I worked as a skills trainer

and in special education classrooms around the island. I am now a Kindergarten Assistant Teacher at Punahou and am pursuing my master’s degree at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, with a focus on ‘āina-based learning.

That graduate work is what brought me to Mālama Mānoa. While researching the community where I teach, Punahou’s archivist introduced me to Linda Legrande, and after our interview she invited me to a meeting. I was hooked. I hope to help strengthen the connections between Punahou and the Mānoa community.

Outside of school I enjoy yoga, exploring local restaurants with my boyfriend, Ellis, and spending time with my chihuahua/Maltese, Nugget. I recently moved back into my grandparents’ home and am loving the short commute!

In Fond Memory of Duane Preble ~ 1936-2026

Beloved by thousands of University of Hawai‘i art and photography students from 1963 through his retirement as



Duane Preble, 1936-2026

professor emeritus in 1991, Duane conveyed his passion for art and teaching while serving as an enduring influence in the Hawai‘i art community.

He joined the UH art department in 1963 and founded its photography program. His introductory art course became so popular it filled the Varsity

Theater. With his wife Sarah, he co-authored *Artforms*, a nationally recognized introduction to the visual arts that has

taught the subject to students across the country for decades. His reach extended well beyond campus. Duane joined the Honolulu Museum of Art’s Board of Trustees in 1973 and served until 2017, when he became an emeritus trustee, and he remained deeply involved until his passing in June. His work in arts education earned him the nickname “Mr. Art Education.” He was also a musician and an early advocate for sustainable living in Honolulu, building a solar-powered home long before it was common.

Mālama Mānoa was honored to have Duane as a board director from 2004 to 2006, and he was an active contributor to other local nonprofit boards.

He is greatly missed.



Plant Giveaway

Friday, November 27
12:00 – 3:00 pm

Native Hawaiian trees, shrubs and groundcovers. Canoe plants, including kī and kalo. Vegetables and herbs. All free to take home.

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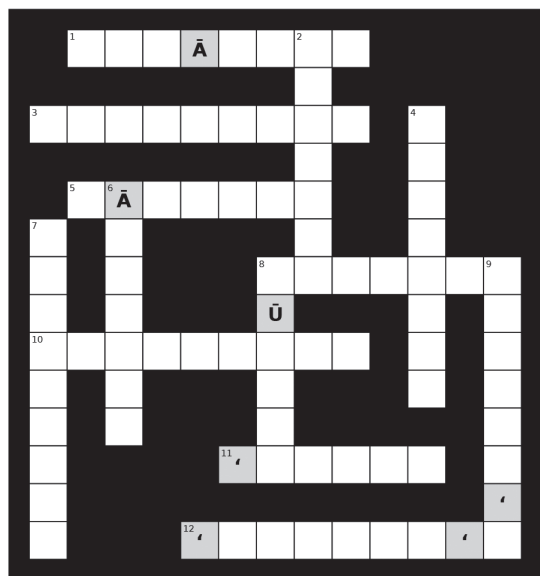
GUESS WHERE

Mānoa in 1953. Do you know this corner?

These shops stood along East Mānoa Road more than seventy years ago. The businesses are gone, but the spot is one you have almost certainly driven past recently.

Think you know it? The answer is on the back page.

Mālama Mānoa Community Crossword



Shaded squares are already filled in. They mark the kahakō and 'okina in each answer.

ACROSS

1. Mānoa park given to the city by Punahou School.
3. Harold L. Lyon _____, 124 acres at the head of the valley.
5. One of the historic springs of Mānoa.
8. Drive with the District Park entrance where stream cleanups muster.
10. Broad shade tree; walkabouts turn around at a large one on East Mānoa Road.
11. Irrigation channel that carries water to a lo'i.
12. Place name meaning "rolling sweet potato."

DOWN

2. Many hands working together; the name of this fall's volunteer reception.
4. Drive named for the Dillingham home and dairy; Noelani Elementary sits on it.
6. Rainbow, and the street where the old Mānoa trolley line ended.
7. "Gardeners' Gold," the compost produced at the Magoon Wormery.
8. Elders, at the heart of the aging-in-place Village proposed for the valley.
9. Traditional land division running from the mountains to the sea.

Answers on bottom of back page



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They make beautiful gifts as well!

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Founding President: Mary M. Cooke, 1936 - 2022

Calendar of Events 2026

Mānoa Valley Fall Festival: Saturday, October 24, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

- At Mānoa Marketplace. Stop by the Mālama Mānoa booth for keiki activities.

Mānoa Walkabout: Saturday, October 24, 4:30 – 5:30 PM or 5:45 – 6:45 PM

- A Halloween walk through the Mānoa Chinese Cemetery with guides sharing its history, including the Tomb of the Grand Ancestor. Two groups of 15; register on Eventbrite. Meet at the Lion Gate, the bottom entrance. Bring a flashlight for the later group. Contact Veneeta Acson, acson99@gmail.com

Mālama Mānoa Plant Giveaway: Friday, November 27, 12:00 – 3:00 PM

- Mānoa District Park, upper parking lot off Mānoa Road. Free native Hawaiian trees, shrubs and groundcovers, canoe plants, vegetables and herbs. More than 250 ‘ōhi’a. Rain or shine.

Community Calendar

Mānoa Neighborhood Board No. 7: 6:30-8:30 PM, first Wednesday monthly, Noelani Elementary School Cafeteria, 2655 Woodlawn Drive

Bluegrass Hawai’i “Mānoa Jam”: 1-5 PM, third Sunday monthly, Mānoa Valley District Park, Kahaloa Dr. side. Family and pet friendly.

Mānoa Lions Club Christmas Parade: Sunday, December 6, 4:00 PM from Noelani Elementary to Mānoa Valley District Park. Mālama Mānoa participates in the parade each year

Christmas Lane: Sunday, December 6, right after the parade, gym at Mānoa Valley District Park.

Community Crossword Answers:

Across: 1 KAMĀNELE, 3 ARBORETUM, 5 KĀNEWAI, 8 KAHALOA, 10 MONKEYPOD, 11 ‘AUWAI, 12 ‘UALAKA’A

Down: 2 LAULIMA, 4 WOODLAWN, 6 ĀNUENUE, 7 VERMICAST, 8 KŪPUNA, 9 AHUPUA’A

Guess Where Answer: East Mānoa Road, mauka of Huapala St. Photo circa 1953.