



HAMAKUA JODO MISSION OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER JUNE 2024



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“Honoring Tradition, Embracing Community”

EXPERIENCE THE SPIRIT OF OBON 2024: CELEBRATING TRADITION, UNITY, & REMEMBRANCE



Obon season officially started on the Big Island on May 26, 2024, at Reeds Bay in Hilo. Hawaii Care Choices, formerly known as the Hospice for Hilo, hosted their 20th annual Celebration of Life event, where *tooro nagashi* (lantern floating) and a bon dance were held.

As the season unfolds this summer with many bon dances around the island, our very own temple will be having our Obon festivities on ***Saturday, August 10, 2024!***

HJM proudly continues the legacy of honoring ancestors and celebrating life with our annual Obon services and bon dance.

We are honored to welcome back Rev. John Hara, of Wailuku and Kahului Jodo Missions, who will be officiating our gravesite and indoor services this year.

The gravesite service will commence at 5pm, followed by the indoor service at 6pm, and the bon dance to start at 7pm sharp.

We are scheduled to have food trucks, educational displays, origami folding, lighted lantern hanging, door prizes, *tenugui*, and more this year!

Our festivities are open to the public, so we kindly invite you to join us in commemorating this sacred occasion, as we honor and welcome the spirits of our ancestors back to Earth.

We have attached a Toba Donation Form for those of you who are interested in having an *Otoba* made and a prayer given for your departed loved ones during the indoor service. The deadline to submit your order is ***July 15, 2024.***

Our *tenugui* (bon dance towel) pre-sale will be happening in July. Stay tuned for more details on how you can order a *tenugui* prior to our bon dance! This year's theme combines the popular koi yin-yang and eternity knot symbols, both of which have profound Buddhist meanings and are representative of HJM's endurance.

We are looking for volunteers to help us at different booths and perform various tasks during the evening of the bon dance. If you are interested in helping, please send an email to: contact@hamakuajodomission.org or leave a voicemail message at (808) 775-0965.

Helpful hint: For those of you who plan on staying overnight in Honokaa during Obon weekend, the Hotel Honokaa Club will be closing their operations in July. If you were planning to book a room there, you will need to look into alternate accommodations around town.

2024 OBON SCHEDULE

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>TIME</u>
8/04/24	General Clean Up, Yagura & Lighting Set Up Work Day	8:00am
8/10/24	Gravesite Service Indoor Service Bon Dance	5:00pm 6:00pm 7:00pm
8/11/24	Post-Obon Clean Up Work Day	9:00am

*The Obon clean up work day will consist of cleaning both inside and outside of the temple, dining hall, weed pulling, and weed whacking of the cemetery and grounds. We will also be setting up the lighting and yagura.

Please confirm if you are volunteering on these clean up days so we can purchase enough food and beverages for after pau hana time. Email us at: contact@hamakuajodominion.org or leave a message at (808) 775-0965.

Ohaka mairi, known as the cleaning up of the gravesite and praying for the departed, is performed. Next, families will invite a Buddhist minister into their homes or at the cemetery to perform a *tanagyo* memorial service and prayer for their departed loved ones.

A festival known as *bon odori*, or better known as the bon dance to us, is held. This dance originated back in the time when Mokuren, a disciple of Buddha, discovered that his deceased mother was in the company of hungry ghosts and was suffering. Mokuren was able to bring his mother out the depths of hell with much prayer and offerings to Buddhist monks.

During this time, Mokuren realized the sacrifices and selfless acts that his mother made during her lifetime and was thankful for what she did. He was so happy that he began to dance with joy, which is today signified by the *bon odori*.

Obon is a time where we reflect and honor our departed loved ones. It is the celebration of their lives and to help these spirits find their way to the light and give us courage and strength in our daily life to keep us going.

Obon season is observed once a year, but we all should make it a point to celebrate our ancestors in our hearts every day of the year.

DID YOU KNOW?



Obon season is held during the summer months of the year as it is believed that the spirits of our ancestors return to visit family and friends during this occasion.

Traditions such as *mukaebi*, which is a small bonfire that is lit outside of one's residence to guide spirits home and the placing of offerings consisting of vegetables, fruits, or sweets on altars, is observed.

OTHER NOTEWORTHY HAPPENINGS

- This month's edition of Hamakua Times features a fantastic article on Tome Oda (Rev. Kogan Ekuan's mother-in-law), who kept HJM afloat during World War II.

HJM will be submitting articles from time to time to this great community newspaper, so be on the lookout for more features relating to HJM in the future! Copies are available at the Honokaa Heritage Center.

- Due to the proximity of July's Beautification Work Day to our Obon General Clean Up and Set Up Day, which is scheduled just a

week apart, we've decided to forgo our usual monthly work day in **July**.

Instead, we request our dedicated volunteers who are accustomed to joining us on the 4th Sunday of each month, to mark **August 4, 2024**, on their calendars in lieu of July 28, 2024.

By consolidating the two work dates, we hope to maximize the number of volunteers available to assist us with our Obon preparations.

- Thank you to our Beautification Work Day volunteers who folded and packaged 300 *tenugui* (bon dance towels) last month.

We also want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Mae, a remarkable senior in her 90s from Laupahoehoe, who graciously volunteered alongside us on that day.

Despite not being a member of HJM, Mae's hard work, consistently folding the *tenugui* one after another, outshone all others. She is an inspiring example of the strong work ethic embodied by the older generation. Mahalo, Mae!

CELEBRATING A COMMUNITY TREASURE!



Dr. Tawn Keeney and Sueichi Kawashima at the Katsu Goto Legacy Week Memorial Service, September 2023

Congratulations are in order to Sueichi Kawashima! He was selected as one of six distinguished alumni of Honokaa High School to serve as a grand marshal at the upcoming

Honokaa High School 135th Anniversary Parade.

The parade will be held in Honokaa Town on July 20, 2024, starting at 9am. It is truly heartwarming that Mr. Kawashima is being bestowed this honor and recognized for his contributions to our community. He is truly a wonderful human and we are proud to have him as a member of our temple, too!

SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES



Long Limbs Tree Service trimming an overgrown ironwood pine tree at HJM in 2022

We became a client of Long Limbs Tree Service in 2022 when we needed to have many overgrown trees trimmed, pruned, or cut down as part of the grant projects we needed to complete.

After contacting several companies and receiving estimates, it became clear who to use. Owner Lucas Brower, a certified arborist, took the time to give a free estimate, gave his expert opinion on what trees on the property needed the most attention, and explained the methods his company would use.

The Long Limbs Tree Service crew were prompt and took on challenging situations. They collaborated with Hawaiian Electric and worked around their busy schedule, to ensure that power lines were safely de-energized and brought down, clearing the way for the trimming of ironwood pines that hovered over them.

Their expertise showcased their commitment to safety and efficiency.

Not only did the crew exceed expectations with their service, but they also provided a cost-effective solution to HJM by offering competitive pricing that stood out among their peers.

If you need tree trimming, pruning, cutting, removal, chipping, stump removal, or mulch sales, give them a call at (808) 854-4766 for a free estimate! www.hilotreeservice.com



YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

This month's question comes from someone who asked why repairs were not taken care of when they occurred, some of them decades long in the making.

Question: "I appreciate the newsletter reporting things that need to be fixed. Had no idea they were that bad. Not sure why they weren't taken care of years ago." - S.N.

Unfortunately, the reality is that numerous repairs were frequently deferred due to the lack of funds. Decades of not fundraising and many "band-aid repairs" were implemented to address issues as a way around the pricey estimates to fix it properly.

As a result of the delays and temporary fixes, the repairs escalated in size and complexity over time, resulting in a Catch-22 situation where the cost of repairs soared.

We are fortunate that HJM was able to receive two Historic Hawaii Foundation preservation grants over the last few years to address some of the major repairs. There are many other

repairs and improvements that need to be done, which did not manifest overnight. They simply accumulated over the **years** and are sorely in need of attention.

The Executive Team is aware of these repairs and improvements. They will be having them addressed one by one as money permits, hence one of the reasons why they have been fundraising and looking into grant funding opportunities.

Upcoming next month: A new column taking a closer look at some of the repairs and improvements that need to be accomplished. The column will also feature what has been completed, too!

UPCOMING EVENTS & SERVICES CALENDAR

<u>DATE</u>	<u>SERVICE / EVENT</u>	<u>TIME</u>
6/23/24	Grounds Beautification Work Day	8:00am - 10:30am

These are events and services that have been confirmed by HJM's Executive Team. If you have made arrangements for a service or event and do not see it listed, please leave a message at (808) 775-0965 or send an email to: hamakuajodoexecteam@gmail.com

For the booking of future events, services, and facilities, please feel free to reach out to the Executive Team at the contact info listed above.

***This calendar is being provided to avoid visitors from stopping by during private functions/services, and to prevent double bookings.

JULY 2024 NENKI MEMORIAL SERVICES

<u>DATE</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>YEAR</u>
7/28	Shizue Tamura	50th
7/29	Fusami Yano	13th

Please contact the HJM Executive Team at hamakuajodoexecteam@gmail.com or call

(808) 775-0965 if you would like to schedule a memorial service.

One could say Mr. Honda's friendship mirrored the bamboo flower - rare and precious.

FLASHBACK PHOTO OF THE MONTH



This month's flashback photo isn't of HJM members or influential people of the temple's past. Instead, it represents a moment in time and the special person behind it.

For our 2019 Obon festivities, we were given this beautiful bamboo flower arrangement from Nadao Honda, who was a good friend of HJM.

What makes this arrangement so special? Mr. Honda shared an interesting fact with us that this particular bamboo variety blooms once every hundred years, so it was a once-in-a-lifetime sight to witness.

Mr. Honda hand picked the flowers from his bamboo grove on his multi-acre property in Kapaahu Homesteads. Many attendees were in awe of the uniqueness of the flowers and its beauty.

For those of you who did not know Mr. Honda, he frequented HJM on a regular basis, loved talking about local history, and shared his wisdom and ideas with us.



IN APPRECIATION

We want to acknowledge those who generously gifted us with monetary donations:

Damien & Deanna DeMello, Gayle Swanick, Cole & Grace Salera, Big Island Candies, Gene & Judy Page, Shareen Aranaydo, Gail Minami-Judd, Iris Nakagawa, Carole Kuba, Mr. & Mrs. Warren Osako, Curtis & Doreen Canario, Norene Yamamoto, Elmer Lau, Mr. & Mrs. James Burton, Mr. & Mrs. Walter Poha, Jason Higaki, Alec & Trina Lebel, Ted & Joan Alip, Blane Takamine, Joni Rapozo, George & Toshiko Ito, Janet & Ron Okimoto, Kazue Kimura, Kenneth & Amy Kaneshiro, Big Island Delights, Lester Okunami, Yoshiko Dacanay, Glen Chow, Steven Nishikawa, Toshiyuki Nakagawa, and Gorden Ekuon.

We also received several monetary donations from people who wish to remain anonymous. We want to thank them for their contribution and support!

Membership dues received:

Iris Nakagawa

IN SEARCH OF VOLUNTEERS

We are still in need of more volunteers to help us as we transition into an active, thriving community oriented temple.

Volunteers are essential because they help us fill in the gaps where our resources fall short.

As Obon approaches, we, more than ever, humbly ask all island residents, particularly those with ancestors laid to rest at HJM, to help us in maintaining and preserving our sacred grounds.

Your kokua in tending to the *hondo* and gravesites of your departed loved ones is invaluable and appreciated.



If you or someone you know are interested in volunteering at HJM, please reach out to us by calling (808) 775-0965 or via email at: contact@hamakuajodominion.org

TRACTOR ATTACHMENTS WANTED

If you or anyone knows of someone who would like to donate their used tractor attachments, specifically a box scraper and a mower deck, please contact us by sending an email to: contact@hamakuajodominion.org or by phone at (808) 775-0965.



CONTRIBUTIONS & SUBMISSIONS

We are always accepting ideas, questions, articles, suggestions, and photo submissions for our publication. Letters to the Editor are welcomed, too!

Submissions are due before the 15th of each month in either Word, PDF, JPEG, or PNG file formats. They can be emailed to: contact@hamakuajodominion.org

Mahalo for reading & your continued support!

*- The Hamakua Jodo Mission
Newsletter Committee*

*"80 percent of success is showing up."
-Woody Allen*

2024 MEMBERSHIP DUES

If you missed the deadline to pay your membership dues, you can still reinstate your membership to an active status by remitting your 2024 dues along with any outstanding dues you may owe for previous years.

Dues are \$60 for the year. They are to be sent in the form of a check or money order made payable to Hamakua Jodo Mission to:

**Hamakua Jodo Mission
Attn: Membership
P.O. Box 7
Honokaa, HI 96727**

We also welcome individuals who are interested in becoming members of HJM. For more information on how to join, or if you are unsure of your membership status, feel free to contact us at (808) 775-0965 or via email at: contact@hamakuajodominion.org

For those of you that have email addresses but receive our newsletters via USPS, please consider saving a tree and a stamp by receiving them electronically! Sign up by sending an email to: contact@hamakuajodominion.org

Summer 2024 Hawai'i Island BON DANCE & Tooro Nagashi Schedule

All bon dances are on Saturday, unless indicated otherwise (e.g., Celeb. Of Life, Life Care Center). Daijingu is on Sat. this year. Some dances are not on their usual weekend. Tooro Nagashi is the floating lantern ceremony (not a dance). Bon service is usually held before the dance, check with the temple's phone or website. Check the dance's date/time, in case of last minute changes.

Some temples are not planning a bon dance this year. (Marked with ~~strikethrough~~.) -- Kona's Obon Fest moved from Keauhou to Old Kona Airport. Daytime dances: Celeb. Of Life, Kona Daifukuji, and Honohina/Papaaloa. New/returning dances: Hawi Jodo and Naalehu Hongwanji.

Feel free to copy this schedule and share with temple members, friends, relatives, general public, tourist industry, and news media. --- Search on YouTube to learn how to dance, to get ideas to improve your Bon events, and to see bon dances on different islands and around the world.

EVENT DATE & time		LOCATION	PHONE
May 26	Sun., 3:45 pm dance	Bon Dance (1 hr) & Tooro Nagashi @ Celebration of Life @ Reed's Bay in Hilo	808-969-1733
-- ? --	- ? -	<i>Lili'uokalani Gardens in Hilo</i>	808-936-6186
	- ? - (undecided)		
June 15	5 pm dance	Obon Fest @ Old Kona Airport (Makaeo) main pavilion	808-323-2993
June 15	6 pm dance	Papaikou Hongwanji Mission	808-964-1640
June 22	7 pm dance	Honomu Henjoji (Odaishisan)	808-963-6308
June	--	<i>Honomu Hongwanji Mission</i>	808-963-6032
June 29	5:30 pm dance	Kohala Hongwanji Mission	808-798-2075
July 6	6 pm dance	Puna Hongwanji Mission	808-966-9981
July	--	<i>Kohala Jodo Mission</i>	808-987-8495
July 13	3 pm dance	Kona Daifukuji Soto Mission	808-322-3524
July 13	7 pm dance	Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin	808-961-6677
July 13	7 pm dance	Paauilo Hongwanji Mission	808-885-4481
July 20	6 pm dance	Keei Buddhist Church	808-896-4988
July 20	7 pm dance	Honokaa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple	808-798-2075
July 20	7 pm dance	Hilo Meishoin	808-935-6996
July	--	<i>Papaaloa Hongwanji Mission</i> (temple shut down, see Honohina, Aug. 24)	808-962-6340
July 27	6:30 pm dance	Hilo Hooganji Mission (Odaishisan)	808-935-8331
July 28	Sun., 7 pm	Tooro Nagashi @ Wailoa Harbor in Hilo (<u>not a dance</u>)	808-935-8331
July 27	6 pm dance	Kona Hongwanji Mission	808-323-2993
Aug 3	? pm dance	Taishoji Soto Mission in Hilo	808-935-8407
Aug 4	Sun., 5 pm	Tooro Nagashi @ Wailoa Harbor in Hilo (<u>not a dance</u>)	808-935-8407
Aug 3	7 pm dance	Kurtistown Jodo Mission	808-936-7828
Aug 3	6 pm dance	Hawi Jodo Mission	808-987-8495
Aug 4	Sun., 12 noon	Fune Nagashi @ Mahukona Beach Pk: for Hawi Jodo Mission (<u>not a dance</u>)	808-987-8495
Aug	--	<i>Paauilo Kengeji Mission</i>	808-963-6308
Aug 10	7 pm dance	Hilo Higashi Hongwanji Mission	808-935-8968
Aug 10	7 pm dance	Hamakua Jodo Mission	808-775-0965
Aug 10	6:30 pm dance	Kona Koyasan Daishiji	808-324-1741
Aug 16	Fri., 6 pm dance	Life Care Center in Hilo	808-959-9151
Aug 17	7 pm dance	Hakalau Jodo Mission	808-936-7828
Aug 17	7 pm dance	Kamuela Hongwanji Mission	808-885-4481
Aug	--	<i>Pahoa Kaikan</i>	808-966-9981
Aug 24	2 pm dance	Honohina-Papaaloa Hongwanji (at Honohina)	808-963-6451
Aug 25	Sun., 5 pm	Tooro Nagashi by N.Hawaii Hospice @Fairmont Orchid Hotel (<u>not a dance</u>)	808-885-7547
Aug 31	Sat., 7 pm	Hilo Daijingu, 10 Anela St.	808-959-8611
Sep 14	Sat., 5:30 pm	<u>combined</u> Pahala & Naalehu Hongwanji @ Naalehu	808-966-9981

This schedule is provided by Big Island Buddhist Federation (BIBF). Updated on 5/25/54
(Hongwanji is pronounced with a silent w and no accented syllable: hon-gun-jee.)

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Hamakua Jodo Mission

*The First Sanctioned Buddhist Temple Built in
Hawai'i*

www.hamakuajodominion.org

<http://Bit.ly/HamakuaJodoMission>