



HAMAKUA JODO MISSION OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2024 - OBON EDITION



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“Honoring Tradition, Embracing Community”

CELEBRATING THE SPIRIT OF TOGETHERNESS & REFLECTION



Photo © 2024 Sarah Anderson

What an unforgettable night we had! Our Obon festival was a hit on every front, filled with excitement and joy. And let's not forget the cherry on top - gorgeous, sunny weather that made the entire evening sparkle with extra magic!

The celebration welcoming the spirits of our ancestors back to Earth started at 5pm where a gravesite service was officiated by Rev. John Hara of Wailuku and Kahului Jodo Missions.

Our young volunteers, Dylan Matsui, Danielle Matsui, Kiara Oyer, and Liam Molina distributed *mizunoko*, a food offering consisting of a mixture of washed rice and chopped vegetables, around the cemetery during the service.

One thing noticeable during the service was the larger than usual gathering of attendees that came together for the service. It was truly heartwarming to see!

Our Hatsubon and Toba services continued indoors, where Rev. Hara delivered an inspiring sermon and provided insightful explanations of Buddhist traditions to the attendees. At 7pm, HJM came to life with a large crowd awaiting the start of the bon dance outside.

This year, we debuted new lighting and extra strands that transformed the property into a vibrant site to see! We also had an array of exciting activities to keep everyone entertained.

From the lighted lantern hanging and hands-on friendship bracelet making, to the intricate art of origami folding, there was something for everyone.



The educational displays and the *kingyo sukui* fish scooping game added extra fun and learning. To top it off, Wilson's Snack Shack, Thai Nong Khai Express, Lowline Cattle Company, and Takoyatea served up delicious treats throughout the night.

Taishoji Taiko gave a rousing performance along with the traditional and new *bon odori* tunes courtesy of Steve & Clara Toma.

One of the highlights was the door prize giveaway. Six-year-old Khloe Tarpley won the grand prize: a brand new 10" Amazon Fire Tablet!



Khloe with her grand prize!

Khloe attends Na Wai Ola Public Charter School located in Mountain View and is in the first grade. Way to go, Khloe!

STANFORD UNIVERSITY & Foothill COLLEGE HAWAII INDIGENOUS ARCHAEOLOGY FIELD SCHOOL VISIT



Photo © 2024 Sarah Anderson

On August 9th, our temple had the pleasure of hosting a group of dedicated students from Stanford University and Foothill College's Hawaii Indigenous Archaeology Field School.

Their visit began at 9 a.m. with a comprehensive tour led by Kyodan President Sandy Takahashi, who also presented a PowerPoint overview in the dining hall. The students showed enthusiasm and curiosity, engaging deeply with questions about our historic temple, its Buddhist traditions, and our vision for the future.

Under the guidance of HJM member Pickens Kehrer, the students rolled up their sleeves for a productive workday. Despite the hot, scorching sun, they rose to the occasion and worked for countless hours outdoors. Their hard work was invaluable as they helped prepare for our upcoming Obon festivities.

The students tackled a wide range of tasks, to include sweeping the headstones, pulling weeds, removing overgrown plants and digging out banana trees, moving rocks, taking benches out of storage and cleaning them. Their efforts significantly contributed to the beautification of our temple grounds.

Their commitment didn't end there. The following evening, the students joined us for the Obon festivities, immersing themselves in the celebration. Many took part in dancing around the yagura, eager to embrace and respect our traditions.

We are deeply grateful for their support and enthusiasm. If you appreciate their hard work as much as we did, please consider sending letters of appreciation to these remarkable students. Their dedication embodies the spirit of community and demonstrates how working together can achieve fantastic results!

Foothill College Anthropology Department
Hawaii Field School Program
Attn: Dr. Samuel Connell, Project Director
Dr. Mike Wilcox, Project Director
12345 El Monte Road
Los Altos Hills, CA 94022

Thank you to these fine young men and women for making a difference and for honoring our traditions with such respect and enthusiasm!

SENBAZURU FROM JAPAN



During our Obon celebration, we were thrilled and honored to be presented with a *senbazuru* (1,000 cranes) donation from Yukari Yokoyama, an instructor at the Tokiwagi Gakuen High School in Sendai, Japan!

Ms. Yokoyama and a group of her students visited HJM last year with Masafumi “Masa” Honda, a University of Hawaii at Hilo professor, who coordinated the visit. Ms. Yokoyama mentioned that her students at the all girls school folded and assembled the colorful origami crane. They wanted us to have it to display in our dining hall.



Yukari Yokoyama at our bon dance!

We gladly accepted this beautiful gift and will be hanging it near the Katsu Goto educational display we have, as a sign of peace, goodwill, and friendship with our many friends in Japan.

OTHER NOTEWORTHY HAPPENINGS

- Given that we’ve already held two clean-up days in August to prepare for Obon, we’ll be taking a break from our regular Beautification Work Day this month. **There will be no work day on August 25, 2024.** Our monthly work day will resume as usual in September.

In the meantime, volunteers are welcome to work on the property any day of the week. Just let us know in advance so we can guide you on the essential tasks that need attention. Mahalo!

- The documentary “*Okagesama de - Hawaii Nikkei Women’s Trajectory*,” is now part of the in-flight entertainment on Hawaiian Airlines! Some of you may recall, the late Mrs. Tomoe “Violet” Oketani, who was a devoted HJM member for many years, is featured in this film.
- If you miss reading the Hawaii Herald, we have good news to share with you! Three of their former writers, along with the Zentoku Foundation, have started a new, online publication called “*San Times*.”

This publication continues where the Hawaii Herald left off, reporting Japanese American stories that we have grown to love reading over the years.

- Congratulations to HJM member Austin Kehrer and his fiance, Jill, on the arrival of their newborn son, Zeke!
- We are happy to extend a warm welcome to our newest HJM members Earl, Jennifer, and Nic Tanaka; Dr. Tawn Keeney, Phaethon Keeney, and Kanoa Withington.

- Thank you to Travis of Hawaiian Telcom for troubleshooting the connectivity issues we were experiencing with our fiber optic internet services. He replaced our outdated modem and routers, so we are hopeful that it will resolve our issues!
- A list containing the names of our Keiro members (those who are 80 and older) was submitted to the Hawaii Council of Jodo Missions for their upcoming 850th Anniversary of the Founding of Jodo Shu in Hawaii ceremony on October 20, 2024.

During the ceremony at the Betsuin in Honolulu, these elders will be honored for being devoted members and their invaluable service to the Jodo Shu community.

- Deep gratitude to the Honokaa People’s Theatre for featuring our bon dance on their marquee!



HJM EXECUTIVE TEAM

When our Executive Team, also known as your Board of Directors, took office in April 2023, we shattered a historic barrier - it was the first time in 127 years that a female Kyodan President and an all-women Board were elected.

This groundbreaking development, featuring a group of younger women in a traditionally male-dominated institution, has sparked considerable interest. One of the most frequent requests we receive for media features on HJM is for a group photo of our Executive Team.

Despite the challenge of coordinating a photo with several members living off-island, we're thrilled to share that we finally captured this moment at Obon!



Front row (L-R): Lani Matsumoto (Director), Sandy Takahashi (President), Jan Kamiya (Vice President). Middle Row: Nicole Garcia (Director). Back row (L-R): Dawn Matsui (Treasurer), Kihana Moon (Former Secretary), and Dr. Crystal Moon (Director).

UPCOMING EVENTS & SERVICES SCHEDULE

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>TIME</u>
9/22/24	Grounds Beautification Work Day	8:00am - 10:30am
10/26/24	Private Service	11:00am

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.

DID YOU KNOW?



Tenugui (bon dance towels) are a staple at every bon dance you go to. They are used during several dance numbers and used as headbands.

The versatility of *tenugui* extends far beyond the bon dance arena. They are used to make *hapi* coats, bento carriers, slings, tote bags, face masks, and quilts, too. People also like to collect them as souvenirs or use them as decorations.

Traditional *tenugui* are made using thin, light white cotton fabric and having designs dyed on to them. They have evolved over time, with many featuring colored fabric with modern designs and undertones. Some are now made out of terry cloth, making them suitable for use as dish or washcloth around the house.

The earliest *tenugui* that is part of HJM's collection was donated to us by Yoshiko Dacanay, who is the daughter of Rev. Kogan Ekuan. They hand printed *tenugui* using different shapes, stamps, and dyes, making each *tenugui* unique from each other. The vintage *tenugui* is currently on display in our dining hall for all to see!

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

This month's question relates to one of the services that is observed during Obon.

Question: "What is a Hatsubon service?" - A.W.

Hatsubon is the first Obon service for a person who passed away within the last year. According to Buddhist tradition, Hatsubon is observed at least 49 days after a loved one's passing.

It is believed that the deceased person is on a journey for 49 days after their death before they are reborn. Since Obon is to celebrate the welcoming of the spirits *back* to Earth, those who have not been reborn yet are honored during the following year's Hatsubon service.

SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES



How many of you enjoyed the delicious hamburgers from the Hawaii Lowline Cattle Co. food truck at Obon?

Their food truck is just one facet of their thriving cattle business, which was established in 2008 by Rick and Haleakala Sakata. They are familiar faces in Honokaa, where Rick runs a successful insurance business and Haleakala operates her hula halau school and are dedicated to service and quality.

The burgers they serve are made from 100% grass-fed Lowline Aberdeen Angus beef, raised on their pastures in Kawela and Maluhia on the Big Island. Hawaii Lowline Cattle Co. proudly boasts the only registered Lowline cattle herd in the State of Hawaii.

You can also find their fresh meat products at their mobile store on Sundays at the Hamakua Harvest Farmers Market from 9am to 2pm, where they continue to satisfy appetites with their signature burgers!

For more information on Hawaii Lowline Cattle Co. and their products, please give them a call at (808) 896-0883.



**SEPTEMBER 2024
NENKI MEMORIAL SERVICES**

<u>DATE</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>YEAR</u>
9/02	Mitsuru Wachi	37th

Please contact the HJM Executive Team at hamakuajodoexecteam@gmail.com or call (808) 775-0965 if you would like to schedule a memorial service.

IN SEARCH OF VOLUNTEERS



Photo © 2024 Nic Tanaka

If you like working in an outdoor setting and don't mind breaking a sweat, we have a great opportunity for you to lend a hand with various property projects!

We're seeking enthusiastic volunteers to assist with tasks such as weed whacking, power washing, tree trimming, maintaining clean walkways, and light repairs among other responsibilities.

While we were fortunate to have the Stanford University and Foothill College Hawaii Indigenous Archaeology Field School students assisting us this month, such support isn't always available. Whether you can spare just a few hours occasionally or are interested in becoming a regular volunteer, we would greatly appreciate your help!

Organizations looking to contribute their time and effort are also welcome to join us. Interested parties can reach out to us by leaving a voicemail message at (808) 775-0965 or via email: 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.

IN APPRECIATION

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

Ross & Carol Stephenson, Thelma Ryusaki, Sueichi Kawashima, Lembi James, Roger T. Kaku, Mr. & Mrs. Roy Saito, Sandy Takahashi, James Nakata, Kevin Higaki, Kimiko Takamine, Yoshiko Dacanay, Eugene Okamoto, Sr. & Family, Allison Aganus, Mr. & Mrs. George Higaki, Ron Takata, Gail Caberto, Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Forbes, Dr. Crystal Moon, Gaylyn Nobriga, and Norene Yamamoto.

We also received generous monetary donations from Obon night. We will acknowledge and provide details of these contributions in next month's newsletter.

Thank you for your continued support and generosity!

Membership dues received:

Earl Tanaka & Family, Dr. Tawn Keeney,
Phaethon Keeney & Kanoa Withington.



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SPECIAL THANKS

HJM would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to everyone who volunteered their time to support our Obon festivities, including organizing, publicizing, cleaning, set-up and tear-down, managing activity stations, photographing (mahalo Sarah and Nic!), and post-event clean-up.

We would especially like to acknowledge Pedro Sanches, Hailey Catherman, Renee Kinchla, Ian McMillan, and Bonnie Chock Burke, who generously volunteered many hours of their time on Obon night. Though they have no prior affiliation with our temple, their willingness to step up and help us ensured that our event was a success.

Let's give them a round of applause....they are truly a shining example of community spirit at its best!

CONTRIBUTIONS & SUBMISSIONS

If you would like to submit an article, photo, question, or Letters to the Editor, submissions are due before the 15th of each month in either Word, PDF, JPEG, or PNG file formats. They can be sent to us via email at:

contact@hamakuajodominion.org

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



Photo © 2024 Nic Tanaka

For those of you who missed our Obon, photos will be posted on our official website soon. Our regular columns & features will resume next month.

Mahalo for reading & your continued support!

*- The Hamakua Jodo Mission
Newsletter Committee*

"You define your own life. Don't let other people write your script." - Oprah Winfrey

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

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Hamakua Jodo Mission

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

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