



# UCHINANCHU

THE VOICE OF THE HAWAII UNITED OKINAWA ASSOCIATION

www.huoa.org

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## 40th Okinawan Festival

By Clarisse Kobashigawa, 2022 Okinawan Festival Chair

“If we are to preserve culture, we must continue to create it.” – Johan Huizinga

How do you capture the heartbeat of an island... the pulse of a community... the spirit of a culture? Put on the largest ethnic festival in the state and fill the 1st and 3rd floors of the Hawaii Convention Center with Okinawan song, dance, games and activities, education, shopping and of course...food for two full days. That’s how!

Thanks to our 50 member clubs and thousands of volunteers, approximately 45,000 members of our Uchinanchu & Uchinanchu at heart community came out over Labor Day weekend and joined us in bringing back to life the largest in-person ethnic festival in the state since 2019.

Although it felt like a long time coming, the months leading up to the Festival flew by very quickly. Just ask any one of our +30 Booth Captains or Club Presidents. But with the help of several media partners and especially KHON2, we managed to turn their airwaves purple and dominated KHON’s televised programming with Okinawan culture, food and interviews as part of Okinawan Week in the days leading up to Labor Day Weekend. The media saturation proved worthwhile as droves of people, locals and visitors alike filled the refreshingly cool



and handicap accessible grounds of the Hawaii Convention Center. Both floors of the Convention Center were bustling with activity as people and families bounced from room to room, traversed the escalators and filled the elevators.

Loyal festival goers navigated hours of traffic complicated by a nearby water main break on Saturday, or found their way to the newly metered stalls at Ala Moana Shopping Center and to the Alapai Transit station where they were able to ride state of the art, electric tour buses provided by Travel Plaza Transportation. (We promise to improve that for next year!)

Those who took advantage of the one-hour early admission on Saturday and Sunday had the first floor all to themselves from 9 am, offering a unique one-of-a-kind shopping experience and first dibs at the T-shirt sales, food sales, games, activities and seating for the long-awaited main stage performances.

The blowing of the *bora* (conch), beating of the Okinawan *dora* (gong), and comical antics of the *Chondara* (clowns), protected by several of our *shishi* (lion dog) heralded our opening procession, marking the grand opening to our two-day, performance packed festival, featuring all 50 clubs and their colorful banners. The paranku ladies of the Paranku Club of Hawaii, in their signature green, white and purple costumes, energetically beat their hand-held drums during the walking procession and sparked nostalgia for many as we remembered how long it’s been since our last in person Okinawan Festival.

[MORE OKINAWAN FESTIVAL – PAGE 3](#)



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

40th Okinawan Festival.....	Page 1
President’s Message .....	Page 2
40th Okinawan Festival (cont. from pg. 1)/Karii! .....	Page 3
Preserving Our Legacy/Hawaii Okinawa Plaza Donations.....	Page 4
FEASTival/Okinawa Emigrants’ Descendant and Asian Scholarship .....	Page 5
40th Okinawan Festival Photo Contest Winners .....	Page 6
Club News: Nago Study Abroad/Kin Chojin Kai/Ginowan Shijin Kai .....	Page 7
Club News: Hui Okinawa and Hui Okinawa Kobudo Taiko Picnic/ 2022 Autumn Dance Matsuri .....	Page 8
Aloha, Toshiko Taira/The History of the Ozato Chichigane Bell/ UJSH Nenchosha.....	Page 9
“Edu-tainment” in Uta-Sanshin/Patrick Miyashiro, Kenjin Kai Outstanding Member .....	Page 10
HUOA Schedule of Events/HOT Schedule .....	Page 11

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## President's Message *By David Jones*

**H**aisai! *Ippee Niffee Deebiru* for supporting and attending our 40th Okinawan Festival. After the pandemic finally released its grip on public events, dedicated volunteers ran the Okinawan Festival like clockwork, geino performances were superb, and the Okinawan food spurred wonderful memories from two years ago. On Saturday, the food lines were very long so I especially appreciate everyone's patience. Another amazing visual was seeing hundreds of dancers maintaining HUOA's reputation for having the largest in-door bon odori. I would not be surprised to learn that the 40th Okinawan Festival is currently the largest in-person event in the State of Hawaii for 2022.

In a few days, many of you will be joining me in Okinawa for the 7th World Uchinanchu Festival (Taikai), October 30 to November 3. This event was postponed from 2021. Fortunately, Japan has opened its doors to foreign visitors just in time. So much excitement has built up awaiting the celebration of our identity and the worldwide Uchinanchu network. I have had weekly meetings with the Taikai committee in Okinawa, and the live Taikai event is definitely a GO! The Taikai committee will also be offering a virtual presentation online so please check with the HUOA office and Purple Blast for more information on participating and observing the Taikai on the internet!

*Ippee niffee deebiru* for all your support of the HUOA! Stay safe, and I look forward to joining all of you at the Hawaii Okinawa Center for our Winter Craft Fair (November 26th and 27th) and the Evening In Waipio Craft Fair (December 7th) to start our Christmas shopping! *Yutasurugutu Unigee Sabira!*

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# UCHINANCHU

*Ippee Niffee Deebiru... Mahalo!*

*Uchinanchu* is our voice — the voice of the Hawaii United Okinawa Association, its members, and the “home” we all built together, the Hawaii Okinawa Center. By sharing information and experiences, *Uchinanchu* keeps us connected as a family, dedicated to preserving, sharing, and perpetuating our Okinawan cultural heritage.

Every dollar donated — along with the valuable income from advertising - helps offset the cost of publishing *Uchinanchu*. HUOA sends a sincere *Ippee Niffee Deebiru* to the following donors. Mahalo for keeping *Uchinanchu* alive and thriving.

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## 2022 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The year at a glance!

- Oct 30-Nov 2 Worldwide Uchinanchu Taikai & Study Tour in Okinawa
- Nov 26 & 27 Winter Craft Fair, HOC
- Dec 7 "An Evening in Waipio" Craft Fair, HOC
- Jan 21 Uchinanchu of the Year & Installation Banquet, HOC

Check HUOA website – [www.huoa.org](http://www.huoa.org) for more information.

### HUOA Social Media



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*Uchinanchu* is the newsletter of the Hawaii United Okinawa Association. Although subject to change, issues will be published bi-monthly. Volunteer writers are welcome. Send your name, address, and telephone number to Uchinanchu Newsletter, Hawaii United Okinawa Association, 94-587 Ukee St., Waipahu, Hawaii 96797. E-mail articles to [info@huoa.org](mailto:info@huoa.org). Uchinanchu reserves the right to edit all material for clarity and accuracy.

HUOA President ..... David Ryo Jones  
Executive Director ..... Jon Itomura  
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### ADVERTISING INFORMATION

*Uchinanchu* reaches over 8,000 households. For advertising rates and more information visit [www.huoa.org](http://www.huoa.org), contact us at [info@huoa.org](mailto:info@huoa.org), or 676-5400.

continued from page 1

Some families took advantage of the open floor format on the third floor and held mini family reunions, taking the time to chat and catch up on the comfortable turquoise chairs and sofas placed throughout the breezeways of the Convention Center. Others chose to reconnect to their roots similarly but in a different way by filling the seats in front of the main stage, wanting to catch every minute of the talented performances on our main stage.

Our lively emcees kept the show flowing smoothly as they introduced performance after performance with the iconic Shuri Castle serving as the backdrop. A total of 29 *geino* (music and dance) groups graced our stage and lit up Saturday evening's bon dance. The Bon Dance had to have been the largest ever as the Convention Center floor filled with bodies and bodies, waiting for their chance to take a turn in the bon dance circle.

This year, we also welcomed performers from the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA) – Halau Hi`iakainamakalehua on both days. Their hula performances in addition to our many talented local Okinawan dance, koto, sanshin, ichigo ichi e, shishimai, eisa, karate and music schools kept the crowd absolutely captured. We were also lucky enough to have additional hula and ukulele performances by Halau O Na Pua Kukui, the Ukulele Hale, Honoka and a special visiting Okinawan dance group from Southern California – Tamagusuku Ryu Kansen Atae No Kai. The main stage program is still available online for those that want to research their favorite group! [www.okinawanfestival.com/program](http://www.okinawanfestival.com/program)

It was great to see all of our festival favorites and FOOD back in action! The Heiwa Dori room and Craft gallery on the third floor and Country Store on the first floor provided countless shopping options to choose from. Whether looking for unique, handmade gifts, your favorite local treats or dry goods imported directly from Japan, shoppers had full access to the larger spaces and revised layouts which also included some new vendors: Majun Okinawa, Hawaii, 58 Designs and SumoFish from California.

Knowledge seekers also got their fill in the OGSB room and Nissei Veterans Room. The familiar sight of Fred Shinsato seated on a stool and playing sanshin in front of the Genealogy Room sparked its own Instagram handle. Our OGSB research team handled inquiry upon inquiry for Uchinanchu family roots and the Okinawan last name bookmarks were a huge hit.

Culture enthusiasts were welcomed by the ladies of Hui O Lailima, in a room filled with beautiful flora and hand-crafted bamboo displays in the Bunkwa Nu Shima Room. Their decision to feature the *shiiisaa* also proved to be wildly popular as throngs of people, young and old hustled upstairs and filled the third floor stage to watch and learn about the fascinating guardian lion, and its playful dancing. Rumor has it that a flashmob of dancers took over the 3rd floor!

The We Are HUOA Room also took its online inventory and HUOA swag offline for the weekend and benefitted from booming in person sales on the third floor. Our guests were also invited to learn more about the Hawaii Okinawa Student Exchange Program (HOSEP) which is one of the main activities that Festival proceeds go to funding.

On the first floor, the Bonsai exhibit was back in action along with the Plant Booth, and Health and Wellness sections. The beauty of the various tropical plants offered its own version of therapy and proved to be a good fit with the various health booths focused on longevity as festival guests took a moment to appreciate their beauty and reconnect with nature.

Just as music nourishes the soul, so does food and we also had a lot of it!

Every room and booth including the Children's section was bustling with activity on BOTH days. Our attendees were genuinely curious and



interested in learning more about our Uchinanchu culture, history and community. And the endless fascinated smiles on so many of our keiki who have missed out on live events for the last three years was truly a sight to behold.

**“MUSIC – It has the power to make us smile, and bring us to all types of tears. It can carry us back in time, and inspire us to dance in the moment. For all our happiest days, and our saddest, there is music.” – Anonymous**

However, despite the great success of our Festival, there was the unmistakable sense of bitter sweetness in the air. For, in that week alone we received word that two of our most esteemed sensei in the *geino* community had passed. My thoughts and prayers go out to Nakasone sensei's daughters – Lisa and Julia.

By chance, I found myself at the garage of Masanduu sensei on the evening that Terukina sensei passed. In an impromptu gathering of Afuso Ryu sanshin senseis and their students, they played song after song in his memory. I was reminded that as much as those sanshin strings have the power to make a heart soar, in those moments of sadness and tribute, they carried the weight of 10,000 tears and an unspeakable sorrow. I have no doubt that the pain of such an important passing hits the dance community just as hard and in the same way with Nakasone sensei's passing.

**“Family is like MUSIC, some high notes, some low notes, but always a beautiful song.” - Anonymous**

When we started the year, our goal was to reconnect our members – all 50 clubs and their thousands of members and to reconnect to our larger community. Based on what we've seen and feedback received, it was an overall booming success. I am positively overflowing with gratitude. Thank you to every member of our community who attended and immersed themselves in our food, culture, activities, and entertainment. Thank you to our 4,000 volunteers - our 50 HUOA member clubs, their club members, families, and friends who worked tirelessly over the last several months to make this event a reality. Thank you to our sister organizations, community partners, and outside organizations that generously offered their resources and manpower to supplement our various needs. Most importantly, thank you to our talented *geino* (performing arts) community, for dedicating themselves to perfecting their craft and always reminding us that our lives are that much richer when we take the time to sing, laugh and dance! We must always strive to preserve, promote and perpetuate our uniquely vibrant and beautiful culture and share it with the world. Finally, thank you to our sponsors for providing us with the means to come together and celebrate at such a beautiful venue.

**“Makutu sookee nankuru naisa” (If you are sincere and make an effort to get what you want, something will happen) 🙏**

## Karii! By Jessica Yamamoto

With a crowd of over 450 attendees, 15+ local vendors, and 5 incredible entertainers, Shinka brought together the Uchinanchu community for 1 memorable night at Hawaii Okinawa Center (HOC).

The night started with doors opening at 5:00pm. Guests were guided through the Legacy Hall of HOC where over 15 local vendors—ranging from small local restaurants and eateries, drink sponsors like Lotus Spirits, Beer Lab HI, and Waiakea Water, and local event companies—made the space come alive. Beer Lab HI debuted a limited release of their Karii beer, and The Cigar Bar Hawaii, was in attendance in the Takakura Garden where it was transformed into a beer garden and cigar lounge for the night.

Made to Order, Tamagusuku Ryu Senju Kai Frances Nakachi Ryubu Dojo, Chinagu Eisa, Hawaii Okinawa Creative Arts, and Urizun Minyo Group wowed the crowd with their performances that lasted through the night.

“This year's Karii event was a truly unique experience that incorporated the Legacy Hall and the Takakura Garden. The food and beverage tastings were amazing! Top notch entertainment and fabulous emcees created



Shinka's Karii committee

a fun and lively evening for Uchinanchu and Uchinanchu at heart. Bravo to HUOA and Shinka!” —Wes Yonamine

To see pictures and relive the magical night, check out @shinka\_hawaii on Instagram. Save the date, Karii is set for April 2023 at Hawaii Okinawa Center. 🙏

# Preserving Our Legacy

2021 TO 2022  
ANNUAL GIVING PROGRAM



We are in the final haul of our 2021-2022 Annual Giving Campaign. Members embracing the theme “Chuishijii - Reaching New Heights Together,” have generously come forth and contributed towards the success of our organization. Your tax-deductible donation allows us to continue to educate and share our Okinawan culture with the people of Hawaii.

The following list combines contributions made to the Annual Giving Campaign and all other non-specified monetary donations. We truly appreciate your support and the confidence you have shown in us. *Ippee Niffee Deebiru!*

## Contributions from July 1 to August 31, 2022

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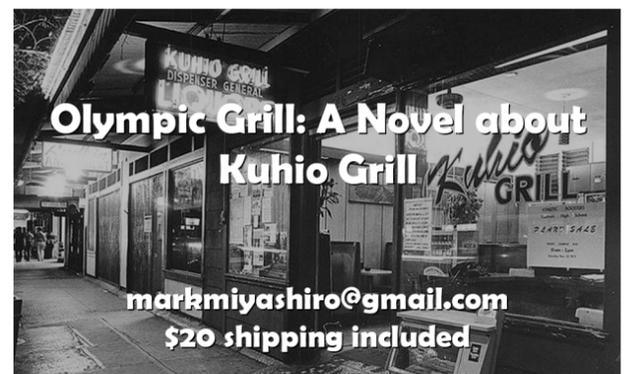
The Hawaii Okinawa Plaza opened its doors in late 2019 and is now the home to five tenants. Rental income from the Plaza will go to the Hawaii United Okinawa Association to support its many cultural programs as well as the upkeep and capital improvements of the Hawaii Okinawa Center. This accomplishment took years in the making and would not have been possible without the help and support of the over 1,200 donors in Hawaii and Okinawa.

In honor of our previous generations and in promise to those to come, “Shikinoo Chui Shijii Shiru Kurasuru,” we will greatly enhance our shared way of life, now and for future generations.

To all of our donors, we say Magukuru Kara *Ippee Niffee Deebiru.* – from our hearts, thank you very much.

### Contributions from July 1 to August 31, 2022

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# Let's Keep Eating to Support our Okinawan Owned Restaurants!

By Shari Tamashiro

**THE 3RD OKINAWAN FESTIVAL** (Sept. 5 to 19, 2022) was a celebration of Okinawan cuisine and Oahu's Okinawan owned restaurants and food related businesses. *Mahalo nui loa* and *ippee nifee deebiru* to everyone who went out to eat and support these local businesses.

**EXTENDED SPECIALS:** Now that FEASTival is pau, what's next? **ZIGU** in Waikiki had such great response to their specials, they are adding their Pork Belly Rafute, sizzling Goya Champuru, and Mozuku & Okinawan Sweet Potato Tempura (with snow salt from Miyakojima) to their regular menu! Tip: Book dinner at 5:30 pm for Happy Hour prices. They offer a Kama'aina discount on regular food items and 4 hour validated parking at Hyatt Centric. **The Voyage** by Chef Amin food truck will continue to offer Kaffir Lime Andagi and Baklava Andagi on a rotation.

**OKINAWAN EATS:** Please keep eating Okinawan dishes. If we don't keep buying these dishes regularly, then we are making a clear statement that it is not worth it for restaurants to have Okinawan cuisine on their regular menu and it will be removed from the menu! **Utage, Sunrise, Sakana Grill,** and **Izakaya Naru** have the most Okinawa dishes, with a handful that feature 1-2 dishes. There is a list of Okinawan dishes regularly available here: [www.hawaiiokinawans.com/okinawan-dishes](http://www.hawaiiokinawans.com/okinawan-dishes)

**OKINAWAN OWNED RESTAURANTS & FOOD RELATED BUSINESSES:** Eighteen restaurants and businesses created neat specials to celebrate FEASTival. Please consider checking out their regular offerings and supporting them throughout the year. Here's some tips:

**Aloha Tofu Factory** sells a host of fresh made items like yudofu (only available at factory), fried tofu, natto, aburage, and a host of other items at the factory door. You can also purchase their Ohana soy sauce (to pair with their tofu) and branded merchandise.

In addition to his stellar hot dog creations, **Hank's Haute Dogs** also makes a lovely Pineapple Ice drink that is refreshing and not too sweet. They also have Nashville Hot Chicken Sandwiches and a Hank Burger.

**Okuhara Foods** has a long list of items they sell at the factory, like frozen Miso Butterfish and Dungeness Crab! Call in your order for Gobo and Veggie Tempura on Mondays for pick up on Tuesday. I have my fingers crossed that they will bring back the Popcorn Tempura for the holidays and surprise us with more Bakudan (rice bomb) creations!

**Sunrise Restaurant** has an off menu item that I always order: Chokatsu's Mama's Champuru. It's a veggie stir fry with bacon and corned beef. So good with rice! They also have a great lunch deal of 9 piece Sushi + Okinawan Soup. In addition to a variety of champuru dishes, Sakana Grill has amazing fried chicken.

If you have a special celebration, **Roy's Hawaii Kai** and **Kapa Hale** are great options. If you want something more casual, then head over to **Beer Lab** (Pearlridge location) and **Hibachi Honolulu**.

After eating too much rafute and andagi, head over to **Olena Cafe** for their freshly made, cold pressed juices! Then head over to **Scoop Scoops** for their ono sherbert. And when you need bento for small or large gatherings, check out **Teruya Andagi's** offering. They have a delightful vegetarian bento that looks like a jewel box.

And here's a question I want to ask all of you: Have you eaten at all of the Okinawan owned restaurants and food related businesses on Oahu? If you are able to visit all of them, I will confer on you the title of "UchinanCHEW!" For a complete list, go to [www.hawaiiokinawans.com/restaurant-list](http://www.hawaiiokinawans.com/restaurant-list)

# Wreyn Seiji Waniya, recipient of 2022 Okinawa Emigrants' Descendant and Asian Scholarship Program

Program By Chikako Nago

Wreyn received the scholarship in 2022 for attending the Geidai (Okinawa Prefectural University of Arts) and left for Okinawa last month. While his duration of the school year was shortened to 6 months due to the pandemic, he was excited to attend school there.

Wreyn graduated from Punahou School in 2018. He and his father Wesley, started to learn Sanshin together under Grant Murata with Afuso Ryu and received the first certificate (Shinjinsho) in 2018. Besides Sanshin, he plays piano, trumpet, and Shakuhachi.

For more information about the Scholarship Program, please contact HUOA at [info@huoa.org](mailto:info@huoa.org)



Wreyn Seiji Waniya



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# 40th Okinawan Festival Photo Contest Winners

The Hawaii United Okinawa Association encourages documentation of the Okinawan Festival by sponsoring a photo contest. Our goal is to gather and archive photos from the Festival to preserve the rich history of Okinawan culture in Hawaii. A total of three prizes were awarded – one winner for each category: this year, we added “Digitally Enhanced” category to the traditional Ohana, and Culture. A big *nifée deebiru* to all of the participants who submitted entries and we encourage everyone to participate next year!



Fun Cultural Education. Okinawan local Keiki learning about their history through play.

## “CULTURE” CATEGORY WINNER: REYN NAKAMOTO

My father was born in Okinawa and he moved here during highschool. Me and my family are part of the Goeku & Shinka Club. During the Festival weekend, our family helped out at the Okidog booth, Country Store, and the check-in booth. We enjoyed all the food that you can eat during the okinawan festival, too many favorites to choose from!

Keep up the good work! Maybe in the future, we can have a mobile app where you can see upcoming events, line queue wait times, possible mobile order, where you can buy virtual scripts to purchase food and have a special pick up line. You can also have the ability to use virtual scripts to skip the line/eliminate to wait and purchase scripts.

## “OHANA” CATEGORY WINNER: KOYOMI KAWASUMI

My children are 1/4 Okinawan, 5th generation. We are not currently a member of any club yet, but hope to join as a family when the kids are a little older.

While we didn't volunteer at the festival this year, we really enjoyed all of the food, games, and performances held. We are so grateful to all of the volunteers who really make the festival shine each year. We really enjoyed the food, experiences, and games were really the best for our family.



Taiko Boy. Rylan as a Taiko Boy.

The kids especially loved the fishing game where they could get prizes as well as stamps each time they played. For children under 5 who aren't quite ready for the other games yet, we would highly recommend this one. The volunteers were also so bright and cheerful which made this year's festival even more wonderful!

Of course, with each year that passes, the festival gains even more exciting things. It would be great to see more contests - maybe a recipe contest or eating contest, or maybe even some lessons for traditional Okinawan dances or crafts which can really engage the community.”



High five. My favorite bonsai. You get a high five in my book.

## DIGITALLY ENHANCED” CATEGORY WINNER: JOHN YOKOYAMA

Thank you for choosing my photo. ❤️ I'm really happy to have participated in the photo contest and to support the Hawaii Okinawan-American community.

I'm a photographer living in Japan and was visiting family for a few weeks. I literally just got off the plane and didn't expect to see anything from the country I just departed from. So it's kinda funny that my first food in Hawaii was soba and andagi.

I'm a 4th Generation. My father's side is from Kumamoto and mother's side is from Okinawa. Both my parents were born and raised in Hawaii. I grew up in Michigan, though. I didn't really know anything about Japanese or Okinawan culture growing up. However, now that I live in Japan I can clearly see the differences. Okinawan pride is strong over here, too. The festivals are some of the largest in the country.

My grandfather was an active participant in HUOA long ago. I have his yukata stored safely with me. I heard my aunt was volunteering that day, but I couldn't find her. I was busy enjoying the performances, anyway.

I was deeply moved by the bonsai exhibition. Even though my only knowledge of anything bonsai is from watching “Karate Kid”, I could really see that creating one of the pieces takes a lot of skill, patience and discipline. These are qualities I both admire and aspire to in my life.

In the future, I would love to see more direct cultural exchange between Hawaii and Okinawa. I hope any Okinawan-American can visit their homeland once in their life. I can honestly say I feel more complete and confident moving forward. Grandparents buy a plane ticket for your grandkids, already! 🙏 P.S. If I can help the Hawaii Nikkei community in anyway please let me know. My instagram and YouTube is Johnnyonwheels. 🇺🇸



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# CLUB NEWS

*Our Clubs, Our Future*



Photo op in front of the Haari Boats

## Nago Study Abroad Program

Twelve Nago City junior high school students and two chaperones visited Hawaii Island from August 19 to 28, continuing the Nago's study abroad program that began in 2012 before being interrupted in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic. The students were greeted by Hui Okinawa board members at the airport, then had a Welcome Dinner along with their homestay families hosted by Hui Okinawa. The students then spent the weekend with their host families. A special thank you goes out to Troy & Kody Sakihara, Darin & Christine Gumbs, Grant & Alise Fukunaga, Ronald & Lisa Keith, Mitchell & Karen Dodo, and David & Michele Yamamoto for opening their homes to the students.

Hui Okinawa also arranged for English class teachers while in Hilo. Although the class time was short due to the tight schedule, the students got an opportunity to have conversations rather than typical classes. Thank you to Alma Yogi, Aileen Kaneshiro, Maile Aina, Muncie Pe'a, and Pearl Kailimai for their time preparing for and holding the classes.

The students spent half their time in Hilo, and the other half in Kona. They visited Hawaii County Mayor's Office, Hilo High School, 'Imiloa Astronomy Center, Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, Parker Ranch Visitor Center, West Hawaii Civic Center, Kona Sea Salt Farm, West Hawaii Explorations Academy, Amy Greenwell Botanical Garden, UCC Coffee Farms, and Hulihee Palace. They also had dinner with the Kona Okinawa Kenjinkai members, and the Japanese Community Center of Kona members. They also had an opportunity to paddle canoes while in Kona. Mahalo goes out to Mayor Mitch Roth and his staff, to everyone that made the visits possible, and to the hosting organizations.

Hui Okinawa has been involved with this program since its inception, primarily for finding host families for the student homestay during the weekend. This year, Hui Okinawa's involvement expanded to include planning and logistics for the program along with the County of Hawaii. The first two years of the program was coordinated by the Hawaii Community College, then from 2014 through 2019 it was coordinated by Tours by Charlie (Akemi Kanoho, and later her son Kaweo Kanoho). With the passing of Akemi and Kaweo, Nago City was at a loss for how to continue the program. Fortunately, the County of Hawaii Sister City Reaffirmation Ceremony in 2021 provided the resources. The County of Hawaii did the coordination, making the arrangements for hotel, transportation, and scheduling cultural and educational tours. Hui Okinawa's members had the historical knowledge of the program, resources for getting the host families and teachers, and the volunteers to coordinate the meals, snacks, refreshments, supplies, distribution of funds, and following the group everywhere to allow the students and chaperones to focus on learning English and about Hawaii.



## Kin Chojin Kai Picnic

A fun time was enjoyed by everyone at the Kin Chojin Kai picnic on July 24, 2022 at Ala Moana Beach Park.

After missing the picnic for two years, members were happy to return to the races, prizes, good food and gathering with family and friends.

## Ginowan Shijin Kai Picnic

Ginowan Shijin Kai's picnic was a perfect day for a post covid annual event with clear skies, colorful tents, and friends getting together with relatives. It was a very well planned day of friendship with fun games for all ages and great prizes.

A picnic cannot be called so without shaved ice, and the Ginowan club always makes sure there is plenty of it! This year, as we've seen on the news, there was a shortage of ice, that is why the committee and volunteers stepped up and made it with specific instructions to fit the machine. We may have been the only group enjoying shaved ice that day.

Games such as fishing and toro nagashi, played in groups according to ages, from toddlers to 90 plus, kept everyone involved. There were also guessing games and lucky numbers with great prizes. The final Balloon Toss with 40 to 50 pairs, was won by Marie Masutani and Blade Kaululaau, seconded by Travis Masutani and Bradley Masutani.

The picnic was enjoyed by all. Thank you to the aza's Nodake, Kakazu and Uchidomari for planning and executing activities.



## 2022 OKINAWAN FESTIVAL

The Ginowan Club volunteer coordinator has the enormous task of recruiting help for all manners of tasks and accompanying needs. Our coordinator, Sandra Nishimoto, Ginowan's co-president, is active recruiting all year round for various activities such as the Festival, and craft fairs, among others. For those who don't know, cooking andagi usually requires 2 teams: batter mixing and cooking. This year, the cooking was done outside the Convention Center, under tents by the Ala Wai canal, and it required over 100 volunteers, divided in three shifts, on Saturday and Sunday. With a shortage of volunteers, many worked multiple shifts. In the past, Dr. Shigehiko Shiramizu brought college students from Japan who volunteered in this event. He has retired but is still involved in teaching and brought Takafumi Okinage, Joe Hanaoka and two other Tokyoites who worked in the tent.

Andagi batter mixing was done on Thursday from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Our own Pat Miyashiro and Dexter Teruya of Oroku Aza Jin led the intermingled clubs with different tasks, working together to prepare batter from scratch, measuring and mixing the dough without machinery.

We also want to mention the very attractive and informative exhibit board of the Ginowan Shijin Club, produced by Morris Umeno, that was on display in the "We are HUOA" room, on the third floor. Thank you Morris!

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# CLUB NEWS

*Our Clubs, Our Future*

## Hui Okinawa and Hui Okinawa

### Kobudo Taiko Picnic *By Robert Kaneshiro*

On Sunday, September 11, Hui Okinawa and Hui Okinawa Kobudo Taiko (HOKT) had a joint picnic, celebrating grandparents' day, a belated Hui Okinawa 75th anniversary, and HOKT's 20th anniversary. It was held at the University of Hawaii at Hilo Campus Center Plaza, and was the first completely in person activity for Hui Okinawa after 2-years of minimal contact with members.

A special *nifee debiru* goes to UHH Japanese Study Program and Dr. Masafumi Honda for allowing use of this wonderful facility and allowing us to share and celebrate our culture.

Entertainment began with club member Jack Musik playing a few numbers on the sanshin, followed by the So-Shin Kai Koto group lead by sensei Darin Miyashiro. Then the Ukwanshin Kabudan Uta Sanshin Hilo group played a few numbers. Hui Okinawa Kobudo Taiko group then ended the entertainment with several numbers.

A picnic wouldn't be complete without games, and thanks to HOKT's Lee Watanabe, everyone had a great time with some creative games like cheese ball toss where each group selected a "leader" that wore a shower cap covered with shaving cream and group members had to throw and have cheese balls stick.



*So-Shin Kai Koto group*



*Cheese Ball Toss*

## 2022 Autumn Dance Matsuri

*By Clarisse Kobashigawa*

**ON THE EVENING OF** September 17, our Bon Dance friends, old and new, converged in the Legacy Ballroom and parking lot of the Hawaii Okinawa Center in Waipio. Although smaller than the crowd we had just experienced at the 40th Okinawan Festival Bon Dance, there was no lack in spirit and energy as Bon Dance enthusiasts readied themselves for another night of dancing for hours in the bon dance circle.

Looking out into a sea of multicolored hapi coats, it was another fun filled night of dancing as we watched different groups of dancers bring with them their own unique style and flair. As fun as it was to dance, it was equally fascinating to watch the many dancers move to the steady lineup of songs.

On stage, we welcomed the following performing groups:

Hawaii Shin Kobukai, Iwakuni Odori Aiko Kai, Oahu District Hongwanji, Oahu Soto Mission Bon Dance Assn., Aiea Taiheiji Yagura Gumi, and Hawaii Eisa Shinyuu Kai. With a nice mix of modern and traditional songs it was hard to stop once you got started!

For reasons I can't explain, Aiea Taiheiji Yaguri Gumi had me yelling Yo! Yo! Yo! Into the mic. Hawaii Eisa Shinyuu Kai also delivered another electric performance and every single one of the talented groups brought with them their own group of dancers to lead the way.

Inside the Legacy Hall, guests were able to purchase this year's 40th Okinawan Festival Bon Dance Towels and bon dance flags. Our HUOA online merchandise was also a huge hit.

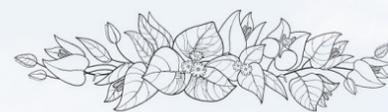
Outside, the parking lot was filled with various food booths. Hawaii Okinawa Creative Arts sold fresh andagi, andadog and cold brew iced coffee. For anyone that missed out on the Okinawan Festival they were able to catch up there. The iced brewed coffee was also a cool, refreshing delight with whipped cream and chocolate sauce drizzled up top, it looked more like a vanilla hit fudge sundae.

Chinagu Eisa sold spam musubi, *dabboki* (spicy Korean rice cake) and melon pan. While the Young Okinawans of Hawaii sold bento, cookies and pickled gooyaa.

In typical fashion, there was something for everyone to enjoy!



Save the date  
January 21, 2023



*Uchinanchu of the Year*  
&  
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2016 visit to Taira-sensei

## Aloha, Toshiko Taira *By Norman Kaneshiro*

The world lost a true living treasure on September 13, 2022 with the passing of Toshiko Taira at the age of 101. For more than five decades, her name has been synonymous with the art of making banana fiber cloth known in Okinawan as *basā* but more commonly referred to now by its Japanese name, *bashōfu*. The painstaking process of creating enough cloth to make a single kimono includes felling as many as 300 banana trees to extract the tiny fibers near the core of the stalks to tie them end to end to make miles of fine thread that can then be dyed and eventually arranged on a loom. While *basā* was once the choice fabric for all classes of Ryukyans from farmers to kings, and was even produced as tribute to China and tax to Japan, the twentieth century brought a steep decline in its production and, in many places, the extinction of traditional ways of making it.

Born and raised in Kijoka in Ōgimi Village (northern Okinawa), Taira-sensei spent her early adult years working in the textile industry in Okayama Prefecture. In the aftermath of World War II, she returned home to find all of the banana patches in her village burned to the ground.

Taira-sensei rallied her community to revitalize the banana patches and the local style of weaving she learned as a child. To help kick-start the local economy, she began using *basā* to create household goods such as place mats and lamp shades to sell to U.S. service personnel.

After receiving harsh criticism from traditional weavers, however, she refocused her attention on producing fine-weave cloth for kimono. She would go on to become the heart and soul of the Kijoka Bashōfu Association where she worked continuously even past her 100th birthday, ensuring the highest standards of dyeing and weaving by new generations of artisans to carry on the labor-intensive tradition that was at the brink of extinction in Kijoka. For her efforts, Taira-sensei was designated a national living treasure in 2000. Today, Kijoka *bashōfu* is the gold standard for banana fiber weaving in Okinawa and is regarded among some of the finest textiles in the world. However, Taira-sensei's true legacy remains in the association which continues to not only provide a commercial outlet for local weavers, but also education and training in the complete process of weaving and dyeing *basā* from cultivating and harvesting all of the plants and producing dyes, to the actual dyeing of the threads and weaving of the cloth.

Although Taira-sensei has become an international name in the world of textile arts, she has a special connection to Hawai'i. Over the years she has hosted hundreds of visitors from Hawai'i and even gifted a full-scale loom to the Hawaii Okinawa Center for its opening in 1990. While her warm smile will be missed, her memory will carry on through the tradition she helped to rebuild and the lives she has touched through her works.

## The History of the Ozato Chichigane Bell...A Memory Shared... *By Kathy (Atta) Zaha*

### OSATO DOSHI KAI

The Ozato Chichigane is a smaller replica of the Shuri Castle Bell. The name "Chichigane" is from the Okinawan language; *chichi* means "to strike or hit" with an object like a log and *-gane* refers to a "bell." My recollection of the Ozato Chichigane is the story passed on to me by my mother, Otome Atta, before she passed away in January 2015. She believed that it was important I knew of this as history, not just as "family talk." Had the Ozato Chichigane's homecoming not made the news in 1998, I would not have seen my mother's joy nor heard the story of our family connection. Thanks to Mom, my heart embraces a humbling pride for the knowledge.

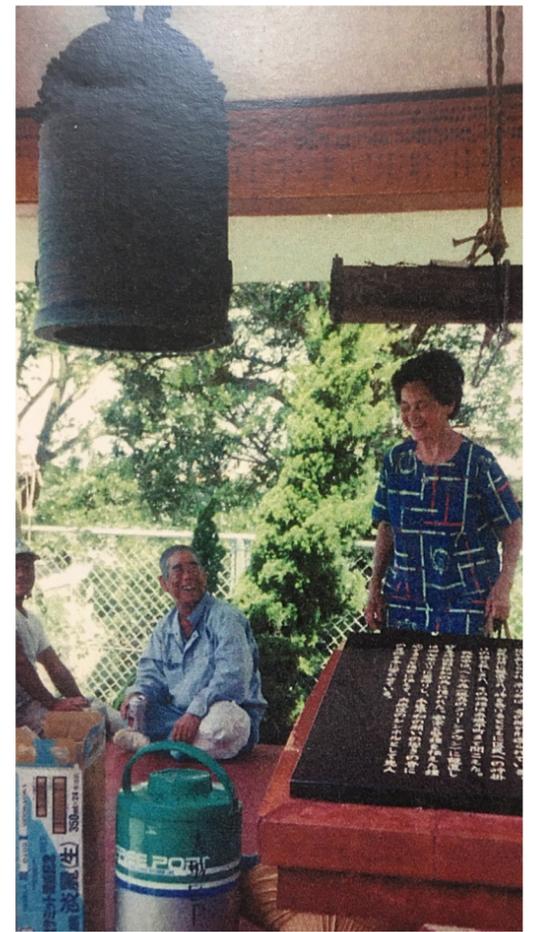
In the 1930's, Ozato Village recognized the need for a means to relay messages of community events and emergency alerts like a fire, for example. Money was scarce, but my father, Seiei Atta who was President of the Seinen Kai (Oshiro District Youth Group - Ozato Village) during this period, together with his brother Seiji, managed a workable financial plan for replicating Shuri Castle's bell. In 1935, creation of the Ozato Chichigane became a reality. Upon its completion, the Seinen Kai initiated sounding the bell daily at 6 am as a wake-up call to get everyone's day started with morning exercises, then at noon a lunch time notification, and again at 5pm for dinner time. I was also reminded by my cousin, Shosei Atta, of its religious use, when rung to pray for prosperity and good luck for the rice fields for which Ozato was known, and notifying community of deaths and funerals of residents. Seinen Kai members took turns ringing the bell.

When WWII hit Okinawa, the bell mysteriously disappeared, being loaned out to another village for an unknown reason. Thereafter, no one had any clues as to its whereabouts until, by luck, it was spotted in the 1990's by Eitoku Zanami, a teacher who was touring a California museum at the time. The inscription on the bell caught his eye and he realized the importance of his discovery. Zanami contacted Okinawan officials and an agreement for its return to Ozato was negotiated. Three delegates from Ozato flew to Los Angeles to escort the bell home; upon its arrival, the bell was welcomed by 3 survivors of the generation that created it: Saburo Oshiro, Fukuhachi Arakaki, and Toshiharu Arakaki.

Today, the bell hangs in a new housing building next to the community center. The story of the bell is engraved on a slate of marble below the bell. This story was written by our eldest cousin, Seisho Futenma, who despite losing his entire family during WWII remained very close to our father Seiei Atta after the war ended.

Seinen Kai members continue sounding the bell daily at 6AM. My mother, my brothers George, Glenn, Morris and I had the privilege of ringing the bell after its homecoming.

Article about this event in the LA Times: [www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1992-11-16-mn-479-story.html](http://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1992-11-16-mn-479-story.html)



## UJSH Nenchosha

**SEPTEMBER WAS A MONTH** for another amazing event sponsored by the United Japanese Society of Hawaii (UJSH). UJSH held its 48th Anniversary Senior Citizen Festival - also called Nenchosha Ian Engei Taikai, at the Hawaii Okinawa Center on September 24. Nenchosha is an annual event for the UJSH where we honor and celebrate members who have turned 80 years young. The event treated honorees to lunch and a day of Okinawan and Japanese performances. This year, UJSH honored seven honorees from HUOA. Big mahalo, and congratulations to Linda Teruya, Mable Hirata, Alan Uesato, George Takamiya, Virginia Tully, Carol Liu, and Rene Nakama.

The event also had an impressive mix of entertainers performed by Chinagu Eisa Hawaii, Nishikawa Minokimi, Anju Madoka, Tamagusuku Ryu Senjukai Hawaii, Kilauea Okinawa Dance Club, and Aolani Silva. Congratulations to the honorees, and big mahalo to UJSH and Event Chair Karen Kub-Hori, for putting on this fantastic event!



The talented Odo Family (L-R): Kayla (daughter), Kolby (son), Kenton Odo Sensei, Kris (wife), and Kassie (daughter). Photo Credit: Jessica Nakasone

## “Edu-tainment” in Uta-Sanshin

By Courtney Takara

On Saturday, July 9, 2022, uta-sanshin master Kenton Odo was finally able to share his heart through song at the Michael D. Nakasone Performing Arts Center in Pearl City, Hawaii. “Although my dokuenkai was postponed twice due to COVID-19, I believe the timing was perfect for the performers and audience. Although Terukina Sensei couldn’t be there in person, he was there in spirit and was able to see a video,” said Odo Sensei.

The solo concert entitled “Wachimugukuru Utati Katayabira - Sharing My Heart Through Song” took the audience on a musical journey of Odo Sensei’s passion for uta-sanshin. Additionally, the concert was an opportunity to share “edu-tainment”, a concept of Odo Sensei’s that blended both education and entertainment. The audience learned about the meaning of each song through the detailed program booklet and having words projected above the stage during the performance. Additionally, Odo Sensei shared his own personal stories about the significance of each song and how it played a role in his journey, ultimately, hoping the audience would take with them a deeper appreciation for Okinawan music.

“I would like to thank Masanduu sensei for all he taught me; my wife Kris for always having my back; Kassie, Kayla, and Kolby for being awesome children; my parents, my in-laws, my students and my friends for all of your support. I couldn’t have done this or come this far without you in my life.” —Kenton Odo.



Kenton Odo sensei with Ryūkyū buyō dancers (clockwise from top right), Joseph Nishijo, Lisa Nakandakari, Frances Nakachi and Julia Okamura. (Photo courtesy of Hawaii Hochi)

## Patrick Miyashiro, Kenjin Kai Outstanding Member

*By Courtney Takara*

The United Japanese Society of Hawaii (UJSH) held its 64th Annual Installation and Recognition banquet on Saturday, June 25, 2022, at the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii. During this event, UJSH recognizes the Kenjin Kai Outstanding Members, among other awards, of whom are selected by the kenjin kai. HUOA was proud to select Patrick Miyashiro, 2021 HUOA President, as its 2022 Kenjin Kai Outstanding Member. Other Kenjin Kai Outstanding Member honorees included: Marilyn Higashide of Honolulu Yamaguchi Kenjin Kai, Sandra Ishihara-Shibata of Honolulu Fukushima Kenjin Kai, Barbara Koga of Central Oahu Kumamoto Kenjin Kai, Donna Masudakam of Honolulu Hiroshima Kenjin Kai, Sotaro Misawa of Hawaii Miyagi Kenjin Kai, Chikako Nagayasu of Hawaii Ehime Kenjinkai, Joichi Saito of Hawaii Yamagata Kenjinkai (posthumously), and Kendrick Settsu of Wahiawa-Waiialua Hiroshima Kenjin Kai. Omedetou to Pat and all the 2022 Kenjin Kai Outstanding Members!



Kenjin Kai Outstanding Member honoree Patrick Miyashiro with wife Nona Miyashiro.



Kenjin Kai Outstanding Member honorees with Governor David Ige, Consul General Yutaka Aoki, UJSH outgoing president Wendy Abe and incoming president Kanzo Nara.



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# HUOA SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

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# HOT

## "HAWAII OKINAWA TODAY" SCHEDULE

**Important notes for our Nov-Dec-Jan calendar entries:**

- All EC and BOD meetings will be conducted on hybrid mode (ZOOM and in-person at HOC) until further notice
- Subject to Change (entries as of 9/27/22)

**November 2022**

- 8 General Election Day-HOC Office Closed
- 9 HUOA Executive Council meeting, 7pm
- 11 Veterans Day-HOC Office Closed
- 16 HUOA Board of Directors mtg, 7pm
- 24 Thanksgiving-HOC Office Closed
- 25 HUOA Winter Craft Fair set-up
- 26-27 HUOA Winter Craft Fair, HOC, 9am-2pm

**December 2022**

- 5-6 HUOA Evening in Waipio Craft Fair set-up
- 7 HUOA Evening in Waipio Craft Fair, HOC, 5:30-9pm
- 14 Executive Council meeting, 7pm
- 26 Christmas Day Observed-HOC Office Closed

**January 2023**

- 2 HAPPY NEW YEAR! New Year's Day Observed-HOC Office Closed
- 11 HUOA Executive Council meeting, 7pm
- 18 HUOA Board of Directors mtg, 7pm
- 21 HUOA Installation Ceremony and Uchinanchu of the Year Banquet, HOC
- 25 HUOA Okinawan Festival General mtg, Legacy I, 7pm

Classes • Other Meetings at Hawaii Okinawa Center:

- HUOA Sanshin: every Thursday, 7pm\*
- Ichi Go Ichi E: 1st & 3rd Tuesday, 7pm\*
- Ikebana: 2nd Tuesday, 7pm\*
- HUOA Karaoke: 3rd Thursday, 10am\*
- Monday Crafters: every Monday, 9am\*
- Okinawan Genealogical Society mtg: 3rd Saturday, 9am\*

\*For more information, please call 808-676-5400

Our new episodes premiere on the first and third Saturday of the month at 7 pm and repeat the following Thursdays at 5 pm on 'Olelo Community Media Channel NATV 53.

All 'Olelo shows are concurrently streamed on the Internet at [www.olelo.org](http://www.olelo.org). Our latest shows are available on-demand on the 'Olelo website: select Tune In, then 'OleloNet On Demand, then type in "Okinawa" in the Search Archives box.

November 5 Sat 7 pm and November 10 & 17 Thurs 5 pm - Part Three of Day Two (Sunday, September 5) of the 2021 Virtual Okinawan Festival streamed live on the Internet. This episode features Jimpu Kai USA Kin Ryosho Ryukyu Geino Kenkyusho Hawaii Shibu, Chijuyaa, Ryusei Honryu Ryuko Kai, Okinawa Americana from Okinawa, Nidaime Teishinkai Hawaii Shibu & HUOA Sanshin Class, and Hawaii Okinawa Creative Arts group.

November 19 Sat 7 pm and November 24 & December 1 Thurs 5 pm - HOT Thanksgiving Special Show

December 3 Sat 7 pm and December 8 & 15 Thurs 5 pm - Part One of Uchinamun Family Variety Show held at the Hawaii Okinawa Center on November 24, 2019, presented by Nomura Ryu Dento Ongaku Kyokai Hawaii Shibu and Azama Honryu Hawaii Shibu, with special guests from Ishigaki Island, Okinawa, the Hatoma family. Also, Grandmaster Akemi Azama performed.

December 17 Sat 7 pm and December 22 Thurs 5 pm - HOT Christmas Special Show featuring highlights of the 2022 Oahu Children's Day Camp at the Hawaii Okinawa Center in June. [Note: no show on the fifth Thurs of a month]



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Eco bag bundle 5 x \$20

HUOA logo eco bag

**KUMU KAHUA**  
THEATRE

Join us for our 52<sup>nd</sup> Season!

Works from prominent playwrights in Hawai'i's Okinawan Community among the season-long celebration of audience favorites.

**Lucky Come Hawai'i**  
BY JON SHIROTA

NOV 3 - DEC 4, 2022

Adapted from Jon Shirota's best-selling 1965 novel, this comedy is set in 1941 when a precarious balance exists between American GIs, local Japanese, and West Maui Okinawans.

46 Merchant Street in downtown Honolulu  
For tickets and showtimes, visit [KumuKahua.org](http://KumuKahua.org) or call (808) 536-4441  
Use promo code UCHINANCHU and save 10%!

# 2022 HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIRS

- Great shopping - Great Food - Andagi -
- Silent Auction - Monday Crafters -
- Museum - HUOA Store -

*Winter Craft Fair*

Saturday & Sunday  
November 26 and 27, 9am to 2pm  
Early entry (8:30 am) \$5



*An Evening in Waipio*

Wednesday  
December 7, 5:30pm to 9pm  
Early entry (5 pm) \$5

Hawaii Food Bank drive: bring non-perishable food items and get one free andagi!!!  
(one andagi per person, per day)



LIMITED PARKING AT THE CENTER AND ACROSS THE STREET

94-587 UKEE STREET - WAIPAHO - MORE INFO AT [WWW.HUOA.ORG](http://WWW.HUOA.ORG)