



# Mālama Mānoa

N E W S L E T T E R

Volume 29, No. 2 / Fall / Winter 2021

## Albizia Assassins are Tackling One of the Fastest Growing Trees in the World

By JC Watson and Frankie Koethe with Dale Moana Gilmartin

Concerned about flooding in Mānoa and other nearby streams? Look no further than invasive trees causing massive debris pile-ups leading to streams overflowing their banks, destroying property, and endangering lives. A prime culprit in these floods is the dreaded Albizia (*Falcataria moluccana*).

Native to Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and the Solomon Islands, Albizia is a tropical tree introduced to Hawai'i in 1917 by Joseph Rock for ornamental and reforestation purposes. Roughly 140,000 Albizia were planted in forestry areas throughout the state during what are now considered misguided efforts in forestry planting during the early 20th century.

Albizia truly is one of the fastest growing trees on Earth. Growing up to 15 feet per year and easily reaching heights of over 100 feet, these trees produce a massive number of structurally brittle trunks and limbs. Live branches can suddenly plummet to the ground with no sign of physical weakness or apparent cause. A mature Albizia is a dangerous, brittle, breakage-prone structure posing a serious threat to watersheds, roads, structures, power lines, and human health.

The Hawai'i-Pacific Weed Risk Assessment scores Albizia as highly invasive. Albizia can thrive in a variety

of soil conditions and can become established in intact native ecosystems. The tree's massive quantities of seeds are encased in light, papery pods and are easily dispersed by the wind.



Fortunately, with early action, Albizia can be controlled. Chemical and non-chemical control methods, including hand-pulling, ring-barking and incision point application with low-doses of herbicide, are used to control both seedlings and mature trees.

The fastest and easiest way to combat Albizia infestation is to control the seedlings, but time is of the essence! There is a mere one-year window when seedlings can be manually pulled up and removed. After that, trees will need to be cut down or treated in place. Any Albizia tree over 15 feet tall must be assessed to see if it poses a hazard to infrastructure or property. Trees posing a hazard to structures,

*continued on page 5*



### 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.*

# The President's Corner



Linda Legrande

**Listening to Our Community.** Back in 2007, during a Mālama Mānoa planning workshop, our hard-working Board of Directors, Mālama Mānoa members, and concerned valley citizens participated in a stimulating conversation regarding the future of our valley. We concluded then, as I feel now, that our top priority is building a sense of community.

Following the momentum established over the following 14 years, Mālama Mānoa's new "Mānoa Community Connections" directory is the first of its kind, the work of Helen Nakano's committee members consisting of Andrea Wagner, editor; Vanessa Distajo, designer; and committee members Gail Baron, Harry Spiegelberg, Lowell Angell, Mamie Gallagher, and Veneeta Acson. It provides a valuable resource for valley-related businesses, schools, churches, and other community organizations to connect and engage with one another. Our website has a link to this resource, and plans are to update it annually. <http://malamaomanoa.org/manoa-community-connections>.

To this same end, Mālama Mānoa funded and supported the Mānoa Community Needs Survey, conducted by Mānoa Valley Church, SMS Consulting, and a coalition of 10 other nonprofit organizations during 2020-2021. A community summit of valley stakeholders, co-sponsored by valley organizations, including Mālama Mānoa, will be held virtually to facilitate ways we can collaborate in addressing the community needs and concerns identified in the survey.

The conservation of Mānoa's natural environment including stream protection, trail maintenance and invasive species control, was determined to be our second priority at that long-ago meeting. With the combined work of our dedicated Stream Cleaning and Kamānele Park Committees, their super volunteers, and Mālama Mānoa Board member JC Watson and his work with the Ko'olau Mountains Watershed Partnership, our efforts to keep our Mānoa stream clean and free-flowing are ongoing. Invasive Albizia tree management will be a battle now and for the future.

Enhancing Mānoa's aesthetic beauty and historic architecture rounded out priorities established by this planning group. Be assured I haven't lost sight of a vision for the Lower Mānoa Historic District promoted by past Mālama Mānoa President Scott Wilson. The ever-popular Historic Mānoa Walking Tours repeatedly confirm widespread interest in the preservation of our architectural resources. I'd like to give a shout-out to the homeowners at 2759 Kahawai Street who recently completed an outstanding renovation of an older, classic bungalow home. Maika'i!

To see these objectives continuing to be fulfilled re-affirms my belief in the strength and resiliency of our community, even during these challenging, ever-changing times.

With gratitude and my warmest aloha,

Linda

## GO GREEN!

In an effort to "Go Green," we are encouraging Mālama Mānoa members to begin receiving their newsletters through email rather than printed copy. If you are currently receiving this newsletter in printed copy and would like to switch to email, please contact us at (808) 988-6181, or email us at [malamamanoa12@gmail.com](mailto:malamamanoa12@gmail.com) and provide your current email address. Mahalo!

## ► Mānoa Community Needs Survey Update

The data collection period for the Mānoa Community Needs Survey ended on April 12, 2021. The level of participation exceeded the goal of the eleven Mānoa Stakeholder organizations with 1,301 completed surveys and 1,385 that were left in progress. Our Mālama Mānoa members provided 246 of the responses. The Board of Directors will be using the insightful results to inform our strategic planning.

The Mālama Mānoa newsletter is published two times per year.

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# Hawai'i Shearwaters

by Thalya DeMott

In Mānoa Valley and many other areas of O'ahu, residents are familiar with the night-flying shearwaters and their distinctive calls, often described as the sound of a baby's cry. The wedge-tailed shearwater, recognized by its grey-brown coloring, is one of the most common seabirds of the Pacific and Indian Oceans. In contrast, the endemic and rarely seen 'a'o, or Newell's shearwater (*Puffinus newelli*) is smaller and more striking in its black and white plumage, and its call has been described as a donkey's braying.

Over 100 years ago the 'a'o was believed to be extinct, but in 1947 a sighting occurred offshore of Kaua'i. In 1967, a breeding colony was observed in the steep cliffs of northwest Kaua'i where an estimated 90% of the 'a'o breeding population is still based. 'A'o mate

for life, nesting in dug-out burrows on remote and near-vertical slopes, safe from predators. A breeding pair raises one chick per season, from April through November, with the parents feeding at sea all day and returning to the



Artwork Courtesy of [www.PatrickChing.com](http://www.PatrickChing.com)

nest only at night. Pelagic from December through March, the 'a'o skillfully dive to depths of over 150 feet in pursuit of squid and fish, "flying" underwater by propelling themselves with strong wings and webbed feet, before shooting to the surface to gracefully take flight. Shearwaters drink seawater and remove the salt using desalinization glands, releasing the salt through their nostrils.

State and federally listed as threatened, they are often disoriented by artificial lights and injured by power lines and poles. On O'ahu, if you find a downed seabird in need of help, please call the Hawaiian Humane Society.

## Calling All Kūpuna, 30th ANNIVERSARY KŪPUNA LUNCHEON

Mālama Mānoa is having a luncheon to celebrate our 30th Anniversary and will honor our valley's Kūpuna at this event to be held in October 2022.

Our Kūpuna luncheons have always been fun and informative events. You qualify as a Mānoa Kūpuna if you have lived in Mānoa for 40 or more years and are 65 years of age or older.

We take great pleasure in honoring you with a lunch, entertainment, door prizes and a nice program. As a Kūpuna, you are treated to lunch, and family and friends are also welcome at a reasonable charge.

If you know of any Kūpuna who are not members of Mālama Mānoa and are not currently receiving our Newsletter, please call us at 988-6181, or email us at [malamamanoa12@gmail.com](mailto:malamamanoa12@gmail.com) to provide their name, phone number and address so that we may send them an invitation.

Our Spring/Summer '22 newsletter will give the exact date along with the details. We look forward to seeing you there!



Former Mālama Mānoa Board Members Laurie Choy, Karen Kimura and Jeremy Lam sharing fellowship at the 2015 Kūpuna Supper.

# New Trees Beautify Triangle Park

by Lowell Angell

The often-ignored slice of land leading into Mānoa Valley, known as Triangle Park, has been beautified with twelve new trees, now growing nicely. In a few years, they'll provide lush canopies of shade and color to the otherwise largely open area.

Several interested Mālama members, Linda Legrande, Joe and Nadine Ferraro, Gail Baron and Lowell Angell, met (pre-Covid) to discuss potential park upgrades and felt a few more trees would be a nice addition. Joe presented the idea to then-Mayor Kirk Caldwell, who agreed and arranged it through his 100,000 Trees program. The Department of Parks and Recreation department planted nine rainbow shower and three kukui trees. We sincerely appreciate their kōkua!

Triangle Park has a long and interesting history. Previously part of the large estate of A.A. and Mary Jane Montano, the property, flanked by Upper and Lower Mānoa Roads (now Mānoa and East Mānoa), was acquired in 1907 for use as a park. On the mauka side, the short Gore Way links these roads. A "gore" is "a small, usually triangular piece of land" and referred to this Montano property. A fire station was once proposed for the site, but residents strongly objected.

First called simply "Mānoa Park," it once featured a bougainvillea-covered pergola with stone columns where the Royal Hawaiian Band gave neighborhood concerts, and an "Italian" fountain, both paid for by contributions from Mānoa residents and \$100 from Princess Kawānanakoa.



Next time you drive past Triangle Park, slow down, admire the new trees, and reflect on another bit of historic Mānoa.



**Mānoa Laundry**

Open 24/7

manoalaundry.com  
(808) 285-2752

Conveniently located at Mānoa Marketplace!  
2752 Woodlawn Drive



Dedicated Kamānele Park volunteers removed invasive vegetation at the heiau on July 24, 2021 (Bryce Yamamoto, Seth Tuia, Kimie Hirabayashi, Colin Sato, Vanessa Distajo, Jeren Nishimoto, Jackie Osumi, Noah Lum and Veneeta Acson).



Lending helping hands at Kamānele Park, Councilmember Calvin Say in between DPR Adopt-a-Park Coordinators Clint Jamile and Scott Ka'eo

## Albizia Assassins *continued from page 1*

roads and streams should never be treated and left standing. It is strongly recommended that a certified arborist be consulted regarding removal of large Albizia trees.

Large-scale infestations across the state may indicate that control of the Albizia population is near-impossible, but a dedicated group of organizations and individuals have not shied away from taking on the fastest growing tree in the world. In 2018, the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council developed a strategic plan to address Albizia infestations statewide with a holistic plan to combat this notorious invasive species across the state.

On O'ahu and Hawai'i Island, programs have been created by the Ko'olau Mountains Watershed Partnership (KMWP) and Big Island Invasive Species Committee (BIISC) to combat Albizia across the landscape by working hand-in-hand within communities.

Through education and empowerment initiatives, KMWP and BIISC are spreading the word to interested neighborhoods and stakeholders. Aptly named community control teams, such as the Rapid Albizia Death Hui (RAD) on O'ahu and Albizia Assassins on Hawai'i Island, coordinate and train volunteers to identify, treat, and track removal efforts to reduce Albizia populations.

For more information on Albizia control, visit the Ko'olau Mountains Watershed Partnership web page at: <http://koolau-watershed.org/albizia/>.

Portions of this article were previously published in *Hawai'i Landscape* magazine.

# Welcome, New Members of the Mālama Mānoa Board of Directors

## Veneeta Acson

After almost 40 years, Veneeta Acson has returned to Mānoa! Born and raised in New York City, Veneeta first came to Hawai'i in 1974, where she earned her doctorate in linguistics from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and became enamored with the history and culture of the islands. Having lived in a variety of places around the world, including Athens, Greece; Tripoli, Libya; Paris, France; and most recently, the Washington, D.C. area,



Veneeta has found her true paradise here in Mānoa Valley, the home of her heart.

She lives in Lower Mānoa, with a fabulous view of Kōnāhuanui, with her husband who is teleworking from Washington, D.C. Her home is a block away from her daughter, son-in-law and their children, Alice (8) and Ezra (4 ½).

Veneeta is the author of *Waikīkī: Nine Walks Through Time*, which she is expanding from walks about the beach of Waikīkī to include more of the ahupua'a of Waikīkī, incorporating historic walks through Kaimukī, Mō'ili'ili, and, of course, Mānoa. She expects the new edition to be available at the end of 2022.

Veneeta is interested in historic aspects of Mānoa, including Kamānele Park and residences of the monarchy, and she is thrilled to be a part of Mālama Mānoa!

## Kyle Tokuda

Kyle was born and raised in Kāne'ōhe. After finishing high school at Aiea, he joined the Army National Guard as a Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Weapons Specialist and served nine years and two deployments with a field artillery unit out of Wheeler Air Force Base. He received an AA at Windward Community College, and graduated with a BA from UH-West O'ahu in Public Administration. For the past five years, Kyle has been working for the City and County of Honolulu as a Community Relations Specialist under the Storm Water Quality Division. He also facilitates the Adopt-a-Block/Stream program.

Kyle moved to Mānoa with his wife about seven years ago. They have two children, one of whom is now at Noelani Elementary and recently began playing soccer in the Valley. Kyle says, "I'm just starting to establish my roots here

in Mānoa. My family has always emphasized giving back to our Windward community in some form, whether it's volunteering with the Rotary Club, Meals on Wheels, or just gathering people to make plates and care packages to share with those in need."



Kyle continues, "I was very fortunate to be raised in a great community that maintains a 'family approach'. Everyone is 'aunty' and 'uncle' and everybody helps each other out. I find Mānoa to be very similar. I honestly thought I would be ignored or looked down on since I have a bunch of tattoos and look like trouble. But everyone in the Valley has been very kind and welcoming."

"My work with the City and County of Honolulu focuses on connecting and empowering communities to take care of their environment, while also understanding the importance of our natural world and our human impacts on it. I think Mālama Mānoa follows a very similar model, which is why I'm looking forward to being a part of your organization!"

\* \* \*

Our 2021 annual general membership meeting will, once again, not be held in the usual in-person manner due to the ongoing pandemic. Our two new Director nominees for the upcoming year would normally be introduced at this meeting for your approval. We present them to you, our general membership, here now. Comments on either of these candidates may be sent to [malamamanoa12@gmail.com](mailto:malamamanoa12@gmail.com) by December 1, 2021. If you wish to join us via Zoom, please send us your email and state you would like to join the meeting. We will notify you of the date and time.

# Spotlight on a Mānoa Business

By Gail Baron

Mānoa Gallery, tucked away and set back from East Mānoa Road, is hardly noticeable near the corner of Lowrey. It houses revolving shows of contemporary art and artists, some of them emerging and some icons of the valley where they are shown. Owner, Cathy Cooke, has a long tradition of fine art, having grown up at Kūali'i, the ancestral home of her parents, Sam and Mary Cooke, founders of the Mānoa Heritage Center. Mary also co-founded Malāma Mānoa. Cathy's childhood residence is home to a collection of astounding art. Her good friend is Russell Lowrey, whose paintings grace many a home in the islands and across several continents. The Honolulu Museum of Art houses pieces by her uncle, Lloyd Sexton, whose landscapes will take your breath away. Cathy's grounding in such an environment nudged her into opening Mānoa Gallery, a tiny little gem hidden away in the valley, where she has continued that legacy. [WWW.MANOAGALLERY.COM](http://WWW.MANOAGALLERY.COM) for dates and times.



For the first time since the start of the pandemic, several dedicated volunteers helped clean Mānoa Stream in a socially distanced manner on Saturday, April 24th. Robin Otagaki led the charge!



Mālama Mānoa  
P.O. Box 283046  
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**Mānoa Merchandise**

We have lovely Mālama Mānoa tote bags, hats, and shirts. We also have a new shipment of short sleeve, cotton T shirts! Call or email to check on inventory. All funds directly support Mālama Mānoa's community activities. Email [malamamanoa12@gmail.com](mailto:malamamanoa12@gmail.com) or call 988-6181.

### Mālama Mānoa Officers

President – Linda Legrande  
1st Vice President – Andrew Garrett  
2nd Vice President – Vanessa Distajo  
Secretary – Arleen Garcia-Herbst  
Treasurer – James Hasselman

### Directors

Veneeta Acson	Kimie Hirabayashi
Gail Baron	Kama Hopkins
Tai Crouch	Jess Braden Cruz
Harry Spiegelberg	Kyle Tokuda
Thalya DeMott	Mark Tom
Dale Moana Gilmartin	JC Watson

### Advisors

Lowell Angell	Helen Nakano
Joyce Arizumi	Audrey Tanaka
Kim Ku'ulei Birnie	Helen Taufaaasau
Beryl Blaich	Jean Trapido-Rosenthal
Mary Cooke	Leslie Uptain
Joseph Ferraro	John Whalen
Tom Heinrich	Scott Wilson
Barbara Lowe	

### *Don't Miss These Upcoming Events!*

#### **Mānoa Stream Cleaning**

- Saturday, October 23
- 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.
- Woodlawn Drive Bridge across from Longs Drugs

#### **Kamānele Park Cleaning**

- Saturday, November 6
- 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

*Due to the current environment, the above events are tentatively scheduled. Please check our website for further information as the date approaches.*

**Mālama Mānoa Board meetings and The Mānoa Neighborhood Board No. 7** are not holding in-person meetings until further notice.