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BI weekly

Letters to the Editor

In support for Kūlana Huli . . .

This is to affirm strongly my own as well as community support for the continued presence of Kūlana Huli Honua at the Kamehameha Kona Beach Hotel.

The Kūlana Room is not only a cultural treasure house (a repository of sacred artifacts, archival material, and historical resources), it also provides unique activities that benefit both the community and the hotel itself. Examples: the restoration of the Ahu`ena Heiau by its late founder Kahu David K. Roy Jr., its daily maintenance, cultural events and additional security continuing under the present Kahu Mikahala Roy with others; plus free educational tours and informative programs serving over 2000 annual school groups as well as hotel personnel and residents. The E Ola E Hawai`i lecture series about the life-styles, legends and wisdom of the kūpuna, is a stunning case in point.

Hotel guests have often told me they so appreciate this opportunity to gain on-the-spot knowledge of the area's heritage that they recommend the venue (which includes the hotel!) to friends visiting the Big Island. Given such unique services, to say the Kūlana Room has "free" space is inaccurate. Kūlana Huli Honua remains an inestimable asset. Above all, this planned eviction, ignoring state law requirements, would be an act of flagrant disrespect to the living culture of the land.

Padma Hejmadi
Kailua-Kona

and again.

During the time that I have lived on the island of Hawai`i, mainly in the Kailua-Kona area, Ahu`ena Heiau has been administered by members of the Roy family. In fact, this heiau was restored by Bishop Estate in 1975, with David Roy as supervisor, and has been periodically renewed under his guardianship since then. When he allowed me to help with one of the renewal efforts during the 1990's, I observed the cooperation he was accorded by our community in this work. I feel that my appreciation of our host culture was and still is greatly enhanced by the Roy family, who have continued his guardianship of Ahu`ena Heiau and his educational objectives.

I am not comfortable with Ahu`ena Heiau, Inc. assuming stewardship of the heiau because I have yet to see any individual, recognizable to the community, publicly associated with this entity. It doesn't make sense to trust an unproven group with such a serious mission when Kūlana Huli Honua foundation is already operating transparently and successfully.

Please join me in advising the new ownership conglomerate of King Kamehameha's Kona Beach Hotel to continue previous owners' nurturing attitude toward the host culture. Surely this unfortunate situation can be made pono, if we all work together.

Beth Robards
Kailua