Waimea Middle celebrates May Day Friday with royal court and more

Waimea Middle School families and community friends are invited to what is one of Waimea’s oldest traditions — celebrating May Day together Friday in Thelma Parker Gym.

This year’s theme, “He Wauii Kou Leo — Your Voice Is a Treasure,” will recognize the heroes, teachers, role models and mentors in people’s lives. A traditional Hawaiian proverb, the phrase was suggested as part of a class project by eighth-grader Niecea Maia Bala. It also celebrates the cultural practitioners who have provided cultural learning lessons to students throughout the school year.

Many of these practitioners will be attending the program as honored guests.

The theme also reconnects the school community to the school’s “Hero Wall,” which includes nearly 500 handpainted tiles created by students over the years to honor heroes from the past and present.

The eighth grade May Day Court members include King Maluhia Peralta and Queen Tehane Reynolds. Island princes and princesses include Kamaehu Richards and Monica Muskat, Hawaii Island; Kaonohiokala Kaolokahi Muller and Chyanne Miguel, Maui; Tristan Vera Cruz, McClarren and Ayla Silva, Oahu; Andrew Bagger and Coleta Marie Ward, Kauai; Kelson Bagarino and Nahea Marks, Molokai; John Kaawa and Courtney Barro-

Kilimede, Lanai; Mason DuPont and Toni Opanin, Kahoolawe; and Kai Vasconcellos-Rego and Cynde Correia, Niihau.

Accompanying the court representing their grade level are: halihi carriers, sixth-grader Tania DuPont and seventh-grader Helena Saito; halihi bearers, sixth-grader Joseph Hooper and seventh-grader Laan Hansen; and pu blowers, seventh-grader Zacharias Ugaile.

The program will include a series of dances and chants by members of the court followed by grade level presentations. Also included will be formal presentation of the newly established Paahana Puuwai Awards — a people’s choice acknowledgment of multimedia art pieces by Waimea native Hawaiian artists in a recent exhibition at HOEA’s PIKO Gallery. Paahana Puuwai Awards also will be presented for the first time to six students — two per grade level as selected by teachers — for their puaua (hard, industrious work) and puuwai (heart).

Seating is limited and first come. Kupuna, cultural practitioners, families of the May Day Court and parents with infants will be provided preferential seating beginning at 8:15 a.m. Then, as music by guest performers Keali Bertelmann, Chad Paison and Hawaiian Riws begins at 8:30 a.m., doors to the gym will open for the rest of the school’s families and community friends. The formal program will begin promptly at 9. Everyone is urged to wear a lei.

Entry to the gym will be slightly different this year because of large construction equipment on the front lawn of the gym. Those attending should watch for signs.

Still photos and video may be taken throughout the program but only from a person’s seat or the perimeter. The court will be available for a group photo at the end of the program.

Greeneries to decorate the gym is needed and may be brought to the gym between 2:35 and 7 p.m. today or early Thursday. Volunteers are also needed throughout the day Thursday to work with Bertelmann on decorations.

For more information, call Pua Case at 938-5580 or email Pua_.Case@notes.k12.hi.us.