

Waimea Middle celebrates May Day Friday with royal court and more

SPECIAL TO WEST HAWAII TODAY

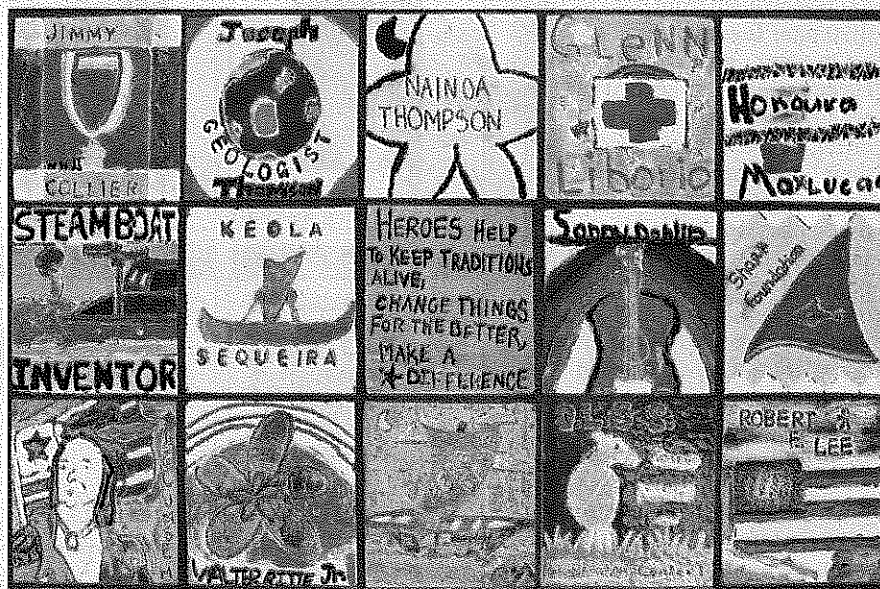
Waimea Middle School families and community friends are invited to what is one of Waimea's oldest traditions — celebrating May Day together Friday in Thelma Parker Gym.

This year's theme, "He Waiwai 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 Niceza Mae 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; Kaonohiokalaeha lohilohinei Muller and Chyanne Miguel, Maui; Triston Vera Cruz-McCarroll and Ayla Silva, Oahu; Andrew Boger and Coleta Marie Ward, Kauai; Kelson Bagarino and Nahea Marks, Molokai; John Kaawa and Courtney Barro-



Waimea Middle School's May Day celebration on Friday will reconnect students and the entire community to the school's cherished "Hero Wall," which includes nearly 500 tiles hand-painted by students honoring heroes of the past and present.

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Kilmede, Lanai; Mason DuPont and Toni Opamin, Kahoolawe; and Kai Vasconcellos-Rego and Cydne Correia, Niihau.

Accompanying the court representing their grade level are: hand kahili carriers, sixth-grader Tania DuPont and seventh-grader Helena Saito; kahili bearers, sixth-grader Joseph Hooper and seventh-grader Laan Hansen; and pu blower, seventh-grader Zechariah Ugalde.

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 paahana (hard, industrious work — a schoolwide theme) 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 Kealii Bertelmann, Chadd Paison and Hawane Rios 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.

Greenery to decorate the gym is needed and may be brought to the gym between 2:15 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 938-5550 or email Pua_Case@notes.k12.hi.us.