



PAK President's Report March 2022

NEWS

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PICKLEBALL AND ALOHA

"The world will turn to Hawai'i as they search for peace because Hawai'i has the key; and that key is ALOHA."

-Auntie Pilahi Paki

In 2021, the PAK Board crafted our mission to develop, operate and maintain quality dedicated pickleball venues. At the end of our stated mission, we added “with the spirit of Aloha”. This month’s President’s report will focus on how we think pickleball will be a medium through which Aloha can be spread throughout the world.

In 1970, a respected kupuna addressed the Governor’s Conference on the Year 2000. Prior to her speech, there was much debate about what the definition of Aloha was. She gifted the following from a piece of paper she found after awakening, with these words in her own handwriting, even if she did not recall writing them.

The Aloha Spirit is the coordination of mind and heart within each person. It brings each person to the Self. Each person must think and emote good feelings to others. In the contemplation and presence of the life force, Aloha, the following unuhi laula loa (free translation) may be used:

Akahai *meaning kindness (grace)*

Lokahi *meaning unity (unbroken)*

‘Olu’olu *meaning agreeable (gentle)*

Ha’aha’a *meaning humility (empty)*

Ahonui *meaning patience (waiting for the moment)*

In my February report, I mentioned a company on Maui planning to build a fitness facility including 11 pickleball courts in Kihei, with a projected cost of \$10,000,000. Since that writing, I have been introduced to and become good friends with the founders and their team. They have chosen the name “Aloha Pickleball”. Even though we come from different sectors of the industry, they are a business and PAK is a non-profit, we share the idea that pickleball is probably the game with the most Aloha. There is a mystical aura at the pickleball courts that reflects all of Auntie Paki’s translations and the Spirit of Aloha prevails. I would like to thank Mark, Nancy, Renee, and Makana from Aloha Pickleball for the help they have extended to PAK. Your knowledge and guidance have helped us stay on track with our mission, and we wish you Godspeed with yours.

Let me share some examples of pickleball Aloha. At the Lihue courts, Aloha oozes from the cracks in their courts. Most of the players have been playing for little more than a year but are serious picklers. They regularly celebrate birthdays, have fabulous potlucks, and show their Aloha in other ways. One of the players suffered a serious medical emergency on the mainland. They supported him with handling his personal affairs on Kauai and even started a GoFundMe page to provide support. A younger player that plays tennis and started playing pickleball lost his dad and had his house burn down. The picklers put together a group sympathy card and collected donations on his behalf. When people are sick or nursing injuries, the group regularly provide moral support through text messaging and encourage them to return to play as soon as they can. Many of the players are over 80, and the youngest regular just turned 16. Whole families turn out at the potlucks and now famous Christmas parties. I call these courts “The happiest place on earth”, even more so than Disneyland. In the coming months, I hope to feature other venues around the island and their stories of fun and fellowship. This month, we also feature a Lihue family in our Player Profiles section.

In 2005, I was involved in a project called “Lei of Aloha”. The idea was to spread Aloha by re-gifting graduation lei to unsuspecting tourists, kupuna and others. More than 2,500 people were blessed with a lei that came from the heart of the presenter just for being alive and for being a human worthy of being loved. In 2022, I am now involved in pickleball, and I believe that the spirit of Aloha that is embedded in the game will spread from Hawai’i around the world, fulfilling Auntie Pilahi Pahi’s vision for peace. And we don’t need lei to do it!

Aloha,

Nolan