



'Umeke Kā'eo

A Well Filled Calabash, A Well Filled Mind

HAWAIIAN ISLANDS LAND TRUST
N E W S L E T T E R

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*"On the last day of the world
I would want to plant a tree."*

- W. S. Merwin

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'Umeke Kā'eo is the newsletter publication of Hawaiian Islands Land Trust, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization committed to land conservation in Hawai'i.

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Letter from the Executive Director

– Edward Sortwell Clement, Jr.

Aloha HILT 'Ohana,

You, Hawaiian Islands Land Trust (“HILT”) supporters, enabled us to achieve something this year which less than 20% of the nation’s approximate 1,700 land trusts have achieved: National Accreditation awarded by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission.

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, based in Saratoga Springs, New York, inspires excellence, promotes public trust and ensures permanence in the conservation of open lands by recognizing land trust organizations that meet rigorous quality standards and that strive for continuous improvement. The Commission, established in 2006 as an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, is governed by a volunteer board of diverse land conservation and nonprofit management experts from around the country. Each land trust that achieves National Accreditation submitted extensive documentation and underwent a rigorous review of their governance, fundraising, land stewardship, land acquisition, finance, and strategic planning efforts. Through Accreditation, land trusts are part of an important evaluation and improvement process that

verifies their operations are effective, strategic and in accordance with strict requirements and nationally recognized best practices.

Over five years ago, the Maui Coastal Land Trust (“MCLT”) worked hard and received National Accreditation. Then in 2011, the merger of four land trusts, including MCLT, created HILT. MCLT’s Accredited status was passed on to HILT. However, three of the land trusts that merged with MCLT were in much earlier stages of development. Thus, there was a lot of work getting our new statewide land trust ready to apply for Accreditation last year. Accredited land trusts must re-apply every 5 years. With a lot of hard work, made possible by terrific, visionary supporters like you, we succeeded in achieving National Accreditation.

HILT takes its job of protecting Hawai'i seriously, and that is why we take Accreditation seriously. The Accreditation process makes us stronger so we can protect our 'āina long-term to sustain current and future generations. Thank you again for your support which enables us to fulfill our land conservation mission at the highest level worthy of this incredible place and its people.

Mahalo,

Edward Sortwell Clement, Jr., Executive Director



On the cover: W. S. Merwin and his wife Paula. Photo: Courtesy of The Merwin Conservancy

HILT's O'ahu Efforts Gain Momentum

Near the ephemeral Punaiki Stream, in the ahupua'a (land division) of Hau'ula on the island of O'ahu sits Maunawila Heiau. Ancestors of the Hawaiian families in Hau'ula consecrated Maunawila Heiau as a sacred place. Oral histories of the area indicate that Maunawila was once a heiau ho'ōla (a healing temple).

Years ago, Louise Aoe McGregor acquired the land where Maunawila Heiau is located as a homestead from the Territory of Hawai'i. Many years later, the McGregor 'Ohana, with 18 heirs, and only 4 under the age of 60, felt pressed to sell the property. In 1992, a potential buyer wanted to purchase the property for development, and many of the sacred sites would have been lost. The 'ohana was concerned that the Heiau and the related cultural sites would be destroyed unless they found an owner who would conserve it.

Meanwhile, the Ko'olauloa Hawaiian Civic Club and Hau'ula Community Association wanted to reconnect the community with the cultural sites and protect what is one of the last relatively intact Heiau in Ko'olauloa from development. The McGregor 'ohana realized, however, they did not have the capacity to provide the stewardship and care that such important cultural sites needed. The 'ohana wanted these sites to be recognized as a significant part of the cultural heritage of the Hau'ula community.

Davianna McGregor, descendant of Louise Aoe McGregor, asked the Trust for Public Land to help her family find a conservation buyer. She was referred to Cynthia Rezentes who was Executive Director of O'ahu Land Trust. O'ahu Land Trust, now merged with Hawaiian Islands Land Trust, were very happy to work with the community and the McGregor 'ohana to raise funds to acquire the property in order to protect Maunawila Heiau. As Hawaiian Islands Land Trust formed, it took the lead in applying for funds from the State of Hawai'i Legacy Land Conservation Program and the City and County of Honolulu Clean Water and Natural Lands Fund.

Hawaiian Islands Land Trust completed the purchase of the near 10-acre Maunawila Heiau property for permanent conservation in July of this year. HILT is collaborating with the Hau'ula Community Association and Ko'olauloa Hawaiian Civic Club to fulfill its long-term kuleana (responsibility) to care for this important site. In addition, HILT is in the process of raising funds to put in the proper infrastructure (interpretive signage, trails, parking, etc.) so Hau'ula residents and visitors can better experience and gain appreciation for this site and Hawaiian culture.



Currents

HILT Happenings



Hawai'i

This year on Hawai'i Island, HILT has participated at the Avocado Festival, Earth/Ocean Day, the Mango Festival, and Hakalau National Wildlife Refuge Open House with outreach tables where we tell our story in pictures and poster boards. These events afford HILT an opportunity to interact with kama'āina and visitors to share our time sensitive conservation efforts and the special places throughout Hawai'i worthy of protection for future generations. If you would like to help at an outreach table, contact Hawai'i Island Director, Janet Britt at janet@hilt.org.



Kaua'i

HILT's Kāhili Beach Preserve is situated along a pristine and spectacular strip of coastline on Kaua'i's north shore. A favorite surf and recreation spot for locals Kāhili Beach is loved and cared for by many. Among those are the HILT Kaua'i 'ohana – staff and volunteers who meet regularly to perform beach clean-ups and monitor the site. Over the past several months numerous beach clean-ups have taken place, some organized by HILT's Kaua'i Island Director, Jennifer Luck, and some organized by longtime HILT supporter and Kīlauea resident, Gary Smith. Groups of 15-20 spend several hours picking up trash and debris, ensuring this special spot remains one of the most pristine beaches on the north shore. To join a beach clean-up, contact Kaua'i Island Director, Jennifer Luck at jennifer@hilt.org.



Maui

Our Talk Story on the Land environmental education series has been extremely popular and a tremendous success. By the end of the year on Maui, we will have held 8 hikes including Waihe'e Coastal Dunes & Wetlands Refuge, Nu'u Refuge and 'Auwahi in 'Ulupalakua. Nearly every hike has been sold out and they have all been a lot of fun. Our final outing of the year will be an opportunity to experience Waihe'e by Moonlight on Saturday, December 6th. Join us! RSVP at (808) 244-5263 or info@hilt.org.

We are already planning to visit new sites next year on each of the islands. Talk Story on the Land is a great way to learn more about our conservation work and visit some very special places. Look for our 2015 Talk Story on the Land schedule posted at www.hilt.org early next year.



O'ahu

On October 25, HILT partnered with Hau'ula Community Association, Ko'olauloa Hawaiian Civic Club, the State Department of Land and Natural Resources, and the City and County of Honolulu to host a Blessing ceremony and all-day open house at Maunawila Heiau Preserve to celebrate the permanent protection of this revered cultural site. The blessing featured guided tours of the heiau, led by docents from the local community, music by Hau'ula Elementary School, cultural demonstrations, and educational outreach booths by HILT, its community partners, and the State Legacy Land Conservation Program. HILT successfully completed the purchase of the Heiau in July of this year and continues to work with the local grassroots community organizations to develop future plans for the property. To get involved at Maunawila Heiau Preserve and other volunteer opportunities on O'ahu, contact Tina Aiu, O'ahu Island Director, at tina@hilt.org.

Aloha Mai Kākou to HILT's New Board Members!



Matthew G. Beall

Matthew Beall started his real estate sales career in Hawai'i in 1998. He has several years of non-profit experience, largely through Realtor organizations. He's served as the President of the Kaua'i Board of Realtors and as a Director-at-Large and Executive Director of the Hawai'i Association of Realtors. Matthew runs a lucrative company, Hawai'i Life Real Estate Brokers, with 170 employees.

"I support HILT because of its comprehensive understanding & commitment to Hawai'i, and its active participation in land conservation and stewardship across the state. It's an honor and extremely fulfilling to support, contribute to, and learn from HILT's work."



Mary Charles

Mary Charles is a 45-year resident of Hawai'i with involvement in both the business community and the philanthropic community. Mary Charles pioneered the corporate incentive and group market in Hawai'i's tourism arena and built one of the leading and most well respected destination management companies in the islands. After selling MC&A, she pursued business interests on Lāna'i, including the ownership of Hotel Lanai and Lanai City Grille, which she recently sold. Mary Charles continues to do projects using her event planning and logistics background and recently provided the logistics and production for the Pillars of Peace programs on behalf of Hawai'i Community Foundation and The Omidyar Group. Yoga practitioner, avid golfer and loves to hike.



Gunars Valkirs

Gunars Valkirs was born in San Diego, CA, and educated at the University of California in San Diego where he received a BA in 1974 and a Ph.D. in Physics in 1982. Gunars went to work for Hybritech Incorporated, one of the first biotechnology companies and invented the first fast and sensitive pregnancy test there. In 1988, Gunars co-founded Biosite Incorporated, a company focused on developing novel medical diagnostic tests. Gunars was responsible for R&D and later for Research while the company grew to 1200 employees and more than \$300 million in annual sales. In 2007, Biosite was sold for \$1.7 billion and Gunars retired to Maui where he lives with his wife JoRene and their three dogs. Gunars has recently come out of retirement to start a cacao farm and make great chocolate.

Conservation Collaboration Turns Into Students' Passionate Ownership

In recognition of Earth Day on April 22nd this year, Hawaiian Islands Land Trust (“HILT”) and Kihei Charter School (“KCS”) signed a Conservation Collaboration Agreement, HILT’s first such agreement with a local school. The agreement was a combination of conservation education, hands on service learning at Waihe’e Coastal Dunes & Wetlands Refuge, and fundraising to earn HILT Young Friends Memberships.

Education is one of the key components of the Conservation Collaboration. A presentation was made to the KCS 7th and 8th Grade Class by Executive Director, Ted Clement, that included an overview of HILT and land conservation. In addition, Director of Conservation, Scott Fisher, shared about Waihe’e Coastal Dunes & Wetlands Refuge, and endangered species found on the 277-acre conserved property.

Another key component of the collaboration was service learning through three environmental cleanups at Waihe’e Refuge, where the students experienced firsthand what they heard about during the HILT presentation and got their hands dirty by collecting ocean debris along the beach and removing invasive plant species. It was an opportunity, led by Land Steward, James Crowe, for the students to see ‘āina that is protected forever and what is

involved in land conservation.

While at Waihe’e Refuge, the students collected driftwood and shells from the beach. They then created “Driftwood Art” pieces that they sold at Kihei’s 4th Friday Town Party, Maui Friday Town Parties, developed by the Maui County Office of Economic Development, showcase a different Maui historic town on each Friday of the month and celebrate the unique nature of their business communities. The students took great pride in their work and over 35 students helped sell their art at the event. The students shared why they were selling their art at 4th Friday and what the money would be used for. They took ownership of the entire concept and were very excited about earning memberships to the land trust. For their efforts, numerous students and KCS teachers are now HILT Members!

KCS’s teacher, Ellen Federoff, shared “The biggest lesson for me was to see how passionate our students can get over a good cause. If they see it first hand, and are afforded the opportunity to become actively involved, and in turn, they really “own” it.”

Kihei Charter School is an innovative public charter school, serving students in grades K-12 since 2001 and is proud to be the first STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and



Math) school in Hawai’i. The mission of Kihei Charter School is to conceptualize, organize, and build innovative learning environments with custom designed educational programs that will prepare students for a satisfying and productive life in the 21st Century. KCS is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

www.kiheicharter.org

We thank Hawaiian Islands Land Trust’s supporters for helping make valuable environmental education projects like this possible. Recognizing that Hawai’i’s natural environment is greatly threatened, that young people have a major stake in the future of our environment, and that together we can better protect Hawai’i, HILT is establishing Conservation Collaboration Agreements with local schools where HILT will educate youth about the importance of land conservation and the youth will be empowered by having the opportunity to give back through HILT service projects and by becoming members of HILT through its youth membership program. To find out more about Conservation Collaboration Agreements, contact your HILT Island Director.

*See page 2 for a listing of HILT Island Directors.

*Photo below:
Demari Gonzales, Sara Salapatura, Janae Wong, & Penina Ben Gershom.*



Cover Story



Renowned Poet and Wife Achieve Life Dream Through Conservation

When W. S. Merwin, a Pulitzer Prize-winning U.S. Poet Laureate and resident of Maui, came upon a parcel of land in the small valley of Pe'ahi Stream in Ha'ikū, Maui in the late 1970's, he found an agricultural wasteland with the soil decimated and eroded by a failed pineapple plantation. Merwin set about a nearly 40-year journey to give back to the land, cultivating and creating a lush botanical garden, which today has become a dense forest of palm trees. Hand planting seedling-by-seedling, tree-by-tree, day-by-day along with his wife, Paula, W. S. Merwin restored the natural environment, transforming a once-barren space into one of the largest and most extensive private collections of palm trees in the entire world.

The Hawaiian Islands Land Trust, along with the non-profit organizations The Merwin Conservancy and Copper Canyon Press, announced on October 14, 2014 the permanent protection of the Merwin Palm Collection near Ha'ikū, Maui with a Hawaiian Islands Land Trust Conservation Easement. This announcement is the culmination of several years of collaborative work by the Hawaiian Islands Land Trust, The Merwin Conservancy, Copper Canyon Press and Mr. and Mrs. W.S. Merwin, to save and preserve forever what has become one of the great private palm collections known to exist anywhere on Earth.

"From the start, thirty-some years ago, Paula and I have hoped to be able to save this bit of the wrecked land and valley of Pe'ahi Stream. To see a fully organized and legally expressed Conservation Easement take form is a reassurance and a great joy to the both of us," said W.S. Merwin upon signing the permanent conservation documents.

Set on nineteen acres on Maui's north shore, the Merwin Palm Collection boasts nearly 3,000 individual palm trees, representing over 400 taxonomic species, more than 125 unique genera and 800 different horticultural varieties. According to experts at the National Tropical Botanical Gardens, the collection is "a living treasure house of palm DNA." This significant botanical and horticultural assemblage is now preserved forever through a perpetual Conservation Easement held by the Hawaiian Islands Land Trust. The Land Trust has permanently protected over 17,000 acres of land throughout the State of Hawai'i.

Ted Clement, Hawaiian Islands Land Trust's Executive Director, stated, "We are deeply honored to have worked with W.S. Merwin and his wife Paula so they could achieve a life dream: the perpetual protection of their beloved palm forest. W.S. Merwin's writings have inspired me over the years in my conservation career, so it was especially meaningful helping the Merwins save their land. With the Hawaiian Islands Land Trust's permanent Conservation Easement in place, we look forward to working with the terrific team of The Merwin Conservancy and the Merwin Family on the long-term stewardship of

this land. We thank the Hawaiian Islands Land Trust's supporters for helping make valuable land conservation projects like this possible."

"The Merwin Conservancy is proud to stand today with the Hawaiian Islands Land Trust, Copper Canyon Press and the Merwin Family to announce the permanent protection of the Merwin Palm Collection, saving the palms and the land from any future development, forever," said Conservancy Executive Director, Jason Denhart. "The Land Trust and their team of conservation experts are great partners, and we look forward to working with them to steward and oversee this amazing project, which is truly Maui's version of Walden Pond."

The Merwin Conservancy is the Maui-based non-profit organization charged with the future management, maintenance and expansion of the Merwin Palm Collection in partnership with Hawaiian Islands Land Trust. The Conservancy also works in partnership with Copper Canyon Press, the non-profit publisher of W.S. Merwin's poetry, to advance the poet's literary legacy and his goal to create a Merwin Fellowship program to support the next generation of poets, writers and artists.

Established in 2010, the Conservancy recently completed a years-long project with the National Tropical Botanical Gardens and world-renowned palm expert, Sir Dr. John Dransfield of the Royal Botanical Gardens Kew, to identify, tag, catalog and map each and every palm tree within the Merwin Collection. A scientific database has now been created featuring detailed taxonomic information about each individual palm specimen, as well as its exact location within the forest using Global Positioning Systems and Google Earth technology. This database and the palm collection will eventually be made available to the academic and botanical community for the future scientific study of the palm species.

Appointed United States Poet Laureate by the Library of Congress in 2010, William Stanley Merwin has a career that has spanned seven decades. A poet, translator, gardener and environmental activist, Merwin has become one of the most widely read and honored poets in America. For more biographical information, <http://www.poetry-foundation.org/bio/w-s-merwin> and <http://www.merwinconservancy.org/about-w-s-merwin>



On the last day of the world
I would want to plant a tree

— W.S. Merwin

Giving Matters

Photos: HILT | LightSea Images



Save What You Love About Hawai'i

What do you love most about Hawai'i?

Do you love unspoiled beaches and open space to get away from the hectic business of your daily life?

Do you believe that cultural and historical sites should be protected for what they can teach us and future generations?

Do you value water resource areas that provide us clean water?

Do you support local agriculture and want ranches and farms to continue to be sustainable?

Do you treasure native Hawaiian flora and fauna ~ many of which are endemic and found nowhere else in the world?

Please consider a year end gift to Hawaiian Islands Land Trust.

Future generations deserve healthy, vibrant lands and clean water in this special place we call home. We need to leave Hawai'i's irreplaceable natural and cultural legacy for those that will come after us. You can help keep more wahi pana, special places, in Hawai'i healthy and inviting for generations to come. **With one simple year-end gift today, you can save the Hawai'i we know and love – one wahi pana at a time.**

Through Hawaiian Islands Land Trust, you take direct action and you see lasting results. This past year, we hired an O'ahu Island Director and protected our first preserve, Maunawila Heiau, on O'ahu, added to the Kipuka Mosaic on Hawai'i Island, achieved National Accreditation by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, signed our first Conservation Collaboration with Kihei Charter School on Maui, and secured an historic conservation easement on the world-class palm forest owned by W.S. Merwin and his wife. We are currently working on a number of land projects throughout Hawai'i to protect additional special places, and you can help.

This is all made possible through your donations. **Help us save what you love most about Hawai'i; and use the enclosed remittance envelope!**

A Most Magical Place Protected Forever

In 1936, Francis Jackson, moved with her family to a most magical place – Volcano, Hawai'i, where they lived in a forest of trees and ferns in a small home – a home where she still lives some 78 years later. Back when she was small, some of her best friends were the beautiful lehua blossoms of the 'ōhi'a tree which she imagined were red and yellow fairies in the leaves. Even at an early age, Fran knew she wanted to protect those magical trees and the land they grew on, so, in 2014, she donated a perpetual conservation easement over her land to Hawaiian Islands Land Trust ("HILT"), guaranteeing that the forest with the lovely red and yellow 'ōhi'a blossoms, will be protected forever.

After growing up in Volcano, Fran and her family moved to Honolulu where Fran was a librarian and archivist for the University of Hawai'i. Still, every summer she and her family would take the steamship back to Hawai'i Island so they could spend summers enjoying the cool, green forest on their lands. Fran also found time to travel the world, often with her partner of many years, Jean Martin. In 2000, Fran and Jean retired to the family home where they live today. Though they still travel the world, having just returned from a boat tour of the Great Lakes Region, they always return to this wahi pana in Volcano, which they helped ensure will remain forested forever.

The property on which the conservation easement was placed consists of five lots on 1.5 acres which are contiguous and are forested with native species such as 'ōhi'a and hāpu'u ferns. The protected parcels are part of a larger effort by HILT, land owners, and community members in Volcano to protect "Kipuka" or small oases of intact forest



canopy in an area that is increasingly being developed. These oases provide green corridors for birds, butterflies and other insects to use while moving around the flank of Mauna Loa's forests and onto adjacent protected lands including Volcanoes National Park, Kahauale'a Natural Area and 'Ōla'a Forest Reserve. Fran's donation brings the total number of conservation easements secured by HILT in its "Kipuka Mosaic Project" to five.

HILT Executive Director, Ted Clement, shared his thoughts, "On behalf of the Hawaiian Islands Land Trust, I want to thank Fran Jackson for helping us create lasting good by adding another perpetual green patch to our conservation quilt in the Volcano area of Hawai'i Island, known as our Kipuka Mosaic Project."



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Mahalo to Nā Hoaloha 'Ekoḷu for hosting BBTB for the 14th consecutive year!

Save the Date!

Save the Date to Mālama Kīpuka, protect Hawai'i's green oases, at HILT's Annual Buy Back the Beach Benefit!

Join us at Old Lāhaina Lū'au, Maui to celebrate the 'āina, enjoy delicious food, listen to great music, and most importantly, support land conservation in Hawai'i

Saturday, January 24, 2015

Purchase your table or ticket at www.hilt.org or (808) 244-5263.



Photo: HILT | Penny Palmer