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- » Akaka agrees to debate
- » U.S. data highlights isles' cost, diversity

PM Update

- » Woman thrown from car, hit by another, dies
- » Man kicks or spits on officers, police report
- » Violence against wife results in man's arrest

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BOY SCOUTS HOLD ON TO ALOHA



RICHARD WALKER / RWALKER@STARBULLETIN.COM
 Tyler Nii, 16, of Boy Scout Troop 611 of San Jose, Calif., spoke to media in Waikiki yesterday about the theft on Sunday of his troop's belongings from their van as it was parked in Waimanalo. Behind him are Scouts Jeffrey Doi, 14, left, and Eric Beutler, 15. At right is troop leader Brian Beutler, Eric's father.

Thieves target visiting Boy Scouts

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Hawaii News

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- » Missing pilot's dream was to fly
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- » Thieves target visiting Boy Scouts
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- » Landfill report deferred 4 months
- » Court finds county lapse in Hokulia case
- » Killed Maui teen was likely run over by vehicle
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 Monica Burkhardt and Kelli Frye

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• Food For Thought



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Their bags were stolen before they participated in a cleanup

By Alyssa S. Navares
anavares@starbulletin.com

TYLER NII and fellow Boy Scouts weren't about to let a theft get in the way of helping clean up a Waimanalo beach.

Only a couple of hours after four of their backpacks with more than \$2,500 in belongings were stolen from a van, the San Jose, Calif., troop spent several hours filling 36 bags of trash at Bellows Beach Park.

"I'm impressed that they were still so open to help the same community these thieves live in," said Suzanne Frazer, East Oahu Lifeguard Association service project coordinator.

"I couldn't believe it," said 16-year-old Nii, who searched for the backpacks along the highway with two Scouts and a leader, hoping that the thief or thieves might have thrown out something.

"I'm just going to remember the good times and try to forget about what happened," said Nii, who lost his digital camera -- and precious photos -- in the theft two days ago.

Someone broke into their van while they ate lunch in Waimanalo, but the robbery did not dampen their spirits. They quickly set aside their losses and went to work cleaning up Bellows.

The 11 teenagers of Boy Scout Troop 611 filled bags with driftwood and trash, and carried fallen tree logs over their shoulders and placed them into piles along the shore.

Their plight has not gone unnoticed. The Visitor Aloha Society of Hawaii has been collecting donations, and its members plan to fill goody bags with souvenirs for all the scouts.

The nonprofit organization assists tourists who have been victims of crimes in the islands, working closely with police and hospitals.

Assistant Scoutmaster Martin Iyoya and his wife came to Waimanalo Beach Park a few years ago and did not leave with a good impression -- someone broke into their car.

"When we drove in with the Scouts, I told some of the leaders that this was not a safe place," Iyoya said.

"We were all wearing our bright orange Scout shirts, not thinking someone would rip off Boy Scouts," Iyoya said.

But the thefts have not crushed their enthusiasm for the area.

The troop, which leaves Oahu on Thursday, will end its trip with another beach cleanup in Waimanalo.

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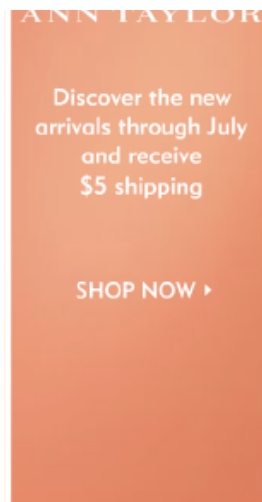
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