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Making waves for the ocean

A series of exhibitions features artwork by Hawaii students eager to end marine pollution

By Nancy Arcayna

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Eislee Nakamasu, left, Cale Guillermo, Kevin Lee, Victor Wilerson and Jordan Tavares. In the back row is Joshua Hill, left, Jaron Raquel (holding his poster above head) with their posters depicting how ocean debris harms marine life.

"Let's All Work Together to Save Our World" was the slogan Justin Heltman chose in designing a poster depicting the negative effects of marine debris in our oceans.

The 11-year-old's artwork calls attention to the demise of sea turtles, seals and fish due to the presence of harmful plastics and fishing lines in our oceans, which are ingested by sea creatures or lead to their entanglement and eventual death by strangulation or drowning.

Eddie Joaquin, 11, also chose to focus on habitat destruction.

"My artwork is about plastic and rope destroying coral. I hope my drawing will show people why they shouldn't throw rubbish in the ocean."

Joaquin said he didn't really think about these issues in the past.

"I didn't know that it hurt the animals," he said.

He and fellow fourth-, fifth- and sixth-graders at Alvah Scott Elementary and other schools learned about these issues through Beach Environmental Awareness Campaign Hawaii (BEACH), an organization founded in 2006 by Suzanne Frazer and Dean Otsuki to raise environmental awareness.

"Hawaii is located in the middle of the Pacific, and we are collecting a bunch of unusual trash," said Frazer. "We find Asian characters on buoys, plastic cones from Korea, things that come from various countries. It takes years for these things to get here. We want people to understand that something needs to be done about it."

The kids appeared to receive the message loud and clear. Now, Joaquin said he stops to pick up trash he finds along the shoreline during visits to the beach.

"I was surprised at how much stuff is found in the ocean," said 11-year-old Jayvin Alcantra. "We need to try to take care of the ocean because it's getting polluted with debris. ... And, the sand is eroding," he said.

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Ten-year-old Kyle Madriaga titled his piece "Help Pollution Before It's Too Late" and included sketches of baby turtles being eaten by birds.

"If there is marine debris, baby turtles can't make it to the ocean, and birds might eat them," he said.

Kealani Young-Rios, 11, painted a sad-looking turtle entangled in rope attached to a rock.

"If a turtle gets stranded in ropes, it has to struggle to get to the surface and could get stuck. That's sad."

Anesha Bee-Henriques, age 10, decided to sketch a turtle eating a plastic bag.

"The turtle thought the plastic bag was a jellyfish," she explained. "Lots of people are littering and don't seem to care, and lots of animals are dying. Birds are feeding garbage to their babies that they can't digest."

Small plastic items are major culprits, according to Frazer. These include bottle caps, bottles, plastic spoons, lighters, toys, toothbrushes and combs.

Frazer hopes that the children's' artwork -- to be displayed in local libraries and at the Capitol -- will also raise awareness in the community.

"This covers all kinds of things, including science and social studies," said fifth-grade teacher Mary Agor. "We're always talking about the reef, so it fits into our lesson plan."

"It's such an important message," said the school's librarian, Sharon Browne. "Our student council started a recycling program, and we held a recycle fair. We really try to promote this stuff."

Student ocean artwork is on display through June 11, unless otherwise stated, at the following locations:

- » **Ewa Beach Public and School Library:** Exhibition of works by Campbell High School students in grades 10 through 12
- » **Liliha Public Library:** Works by seventh-graders at Hongwanji School and sixth-graders from St. Theresa School
- » **Kapolei Public Library:** Works by Island Pacific Academy seventh- and eighth-graders
- » **McCully-Moiliili Public Library:** Works by University Laboratory School ninth-graders on view through June 12
- » **Kahuku Public & School Library:** Work by fifth-graders at Hauula Elementary featured
- » **Aiea Public Library:** Artwork by Alvah Scott Elementary fourth-, fifth- and sixth-graders on view
- » **Salt Lake-Moanalua Public Library:** Artwork by Alvah Scott fourth-, fifth- and sixth-graders on view
- » **Kaneohe Public Library:** Mokapu Elementary fifth-graders' work on view
- » **Waimanalo Public & School Library:** Mokapu Elementary fifth-graders' work on view
- » **Hawaii State Library:** Show of work from various schools opens June 8
- » **Hawaii State Capitol auditorium foyer:** Show of work from various schools opens June 8

World Ocean Day activities

'Plastic pollution' to be discussed

In celebration of World Ocean Day, Dr. Anthony Andrady, an authority on plastic pollution in the ocean, presents "The Impact of Plastics on the Health of Our Ocean" from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. June 8 at the state Capitol auditorium.

Andrady will discuss the ecological consequences of microplastic particles as they accumulate in the food chain. Solar radiation and oxidation degrades the material until it turns into plastic dust that is now being found in ocean sediment and zooplankton, a basic source of food for ocean creatures.

Andrady is a senior research scientist at the Research Triangle Institute in North Carolina and an adjunct professor of chemical engineering at North Carolina State University, and serves on the United Nations Environmental Program Committee. He has more than 100 published research papers in technical journals and has edited and authored three books, including "Plastics and the Environment."

The lecture is free. Refreshments will be provided by Starbucks and Kale's Natural Foods



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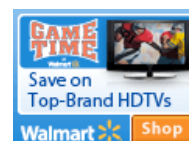
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Andrady will also speak on June 9 at 6:30 p.m. at Windward Community College on the topic of "Plastics: A Major Threat to Our Oceans."

For more information, call 393-2168.

Waikiki Aquarium to do its part

The Waikiki Aquarium will celebrate the United Nations World Oceans Day on June 8 with beach cleanups, at Kaimana, Sandy and Waimanalo beaches.

Volunteers at Sandy Beach should gather at 7:30 a.m. on the undeveloped side (at the Primo tent). Sunscreen, comfortable clothing and covered shoes should be worn. Light refreshments will be provided following the cleanup. Call 923-9741 for details about the other cleanups.

NOAA Pacific Services will be at the Waikiki Aquarium throughout the day, offering kid-friendly activities such as "NOAA's Honua," a science sphere offering data visualizations on oceans and climate, and "Oceans Today," a kiosk presenting video vignettes from oceans around the world.

In addition, Kona Brewing Co. in the Koko Marina shopping center will donate a percentage of its proceeds from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday to the Waikiki Aquarium. And elle Couture Jewellers also will have a promotion, through the end of the year, during which 10 percent of sales of its Roberto Coin sea life-inspired jewelry will be donated to the Friends of Waikiki Aquarium.

Admission to the aquarium is \$9 for visitors; \$6 for local residents, active duty military with ID, students with ID and seniors; \$4 for ages 13 to 17 and persons with disabilities; \$2 for ages 5 to 12; and free for children 4 and younger.

Call 923-9741 or visit www.waquarium.org for more information.

Volunteers will clean Mokauea

Kai Makana Foundation is seeking volunteers to plant native flora, pick up marine debris and remove invasive species 9 a.m. to noon Saturday in celebration of World Ocean Day. Volunteers will paddle from the Marine Education Training Center at Sand Island to Mokauea Island.

Kai Makana is dedicated to helping the Mokauea Fishing Village Association restore the island and clean the surrounding beaches. Mokauea Island is considered to be the last fishing village in the state. The association aims to create an educational center where students, teachers and community members can learn traditional methods that once sustained the fishing village.

Admission is free but reservations are required. Call 282-8012 or e-mail kaimakana@gmail.com.

- ▶ Making waves for the ocean
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- ▶ Health Options: Normalizing nutrition eases eating disorders
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- ▶ Home waters a plus for Manu O Ke Kai
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- ▶ Here's The Deal: Odometer Outer Limits
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- ▶ Natatorium revival deserves scrutiny
- ▶ More thought needed in 'saving' the environment
- ▶ Week is a good time to get more water conscious
- ▶ Letters to the editor
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