

## Features

### Blessings upon all; don't miss the 'Mouse House'

*Merriman's Waimea raises \$20,000-plus for 20 isle charities on 20th anniversary*

Print Page

By Carol Yurth

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Happy New Year. May this year bring you unimagined blessings! Here's a year-end message from Matt Hamabata, Ph.D, entitled "Paradoxically, a Time of Opportunity and Optimism."

Hamabata, the executive director of the Kohala Center, brings this greeting so appropriate for these times:

"With economic and environmental crises swirling around us, I find myself in the most paradoxical place of feeling quite optimistic. The crises we face present enormous opportunities to rebuild our economy and society, to rethink our life strategies, and to recommit ourselves to a future of sustained abundance. At no time has it been clearer that we must move toward energy and food self-reliance and that we must build an economy that enhances ecosystem health.

"All of this requires great agility, enormous creativity, and rigorous thinking. It means that we have no choice but to move forward with building a knowledge-based society, in which all occupations require us to tap into the human potential for growth and learning ... at all times. In order for this shift to occur, we must actively seek out and challenge those who shape public policy.

"And this requires civic engagement. An engaged society, an informed society, a democratic society, a creative society, a self-reliant society, a knowledge based society--not just a vision but a requirement if we are going to do more than just barely survive. We can thrive if we seize moment. We have no choice but to move forward ... and quickly! And that seems like a good thing to me."



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Martha Greenwell's "Mouse House" Christmas village is at Isaacs Art Center through Jan. 4 during the gallery's regular hours, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesdays through Saturdays.

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Heads up: The unofficial parking on Mamalahoa Highway fronting Waimea Elementary School was eliminated this summer to improve traffic flow for left turns on to Lindsey Road and through traffic along Mamalahoa Highway. Road marking for the new left-turn lane begins Monday, Dec. 29, and is scheduled for completion on Jan. 8.

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Merriman's Waimea raises more than \$20,000 for island nonprofits recently at its "20 Nights for 20 Nonprofits," a fundraising event in celebration of the restaurant's 20th anniversary.

During the 20-evening event, which spanned Nov. 1 through Dec. 12, 20 percent of all food sales at the Waimea restaurant was designated support of island nonprofits. Guests during the event also provided additional contributions on behalf of the organizations.

Merriman's exceeded its goal, with a total of \$20,491 being distributed to 20 groups, including North Hawaii Hospice, Hawaii Island United Way, Kahilu Theatre and the Merriman's Culinary Scholarship. (Visit <http://www.merrimanshawaii.com> to see a full list of organizations.)

"Our island nonprofits offer so many important services and benefits to our island home," says chef and restaurateur Peter Merriman, who serves as an advocate in Hawaii's efforts to become more self-sustaining. "We hope our 20th anniversary celebration helps support these great organizations and brings awareness to their efforts."

Merriman's Waimea opened 20 years ago, on Dec. 21, 1988, and the restaurant is now widely recognized as the flagship home of Hawaii Regional Cuisine, the island-based culinary movement that has garnered worldwide acclaim.

Merriman worked closely with local farmers, ranchers and fishermen to create Hawaii Regional Cuisine, which showcases fresh and local produce, meats and fish. Needing a home base for this growing endeavor, Merriman opened the Waimea restaurant and since that time, Merriman's Waimea has consistently earned top honors for its outstanding menu and service, including the Hale 'Aina Award as Best Big Island Restaurant by Honolulu magazine for 13 consecutive years; Award of Excellence, Wine Spectator, for five consecutive years; and the Ilima Award for Best Hawaii Island or Neighbor Island Restaurant by the Honolulu Advertiser for 11 consecutive years.

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Time to register and enjoy discounts for January classes at Waimea Community Education: Early registrants enjoy a 10 percent discount. Classes are added continually. Go to <http://www.waimeaeducation.com>.

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Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope (CFHT) Gallery Exhibition is at Kahilu Theatre Gallery through Jan. 14. Spectacular astronomical images taken by CFHT astronomers were printed on giant canvas to celebrate the International Year of Astronomy. This exhibition is presented in collaboration with Canon USA and Kohala Giclee. Admission is free.

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Martha Greenwell's "Mouse House" is at Isaacs Art Center through Jan. 4 during the gallery's regular hours, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesdays through Saturdays. This is the fourth time this charming Christmas village created by the Kona artist will be on exhibit. The "Mouse House" is delightful and a must-see holiday experience. There is no charge to enjoy Isaacs Art Center at any time. The gallery is a not-for-profit whose proceeds support HPA (Hawaii Preparatory Academy). For more information call 885-5884.

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The deadline is soon for the "Museum Class" at the Anna Ranch Heritage Center. Classes are from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays beginning Jan. 17 and throughout the UHH Spring Semester. This is a three-credit Anthropology 470 course. Students will have readings on Waimea history, ranching life and heritage interpretation, plus hands-on opportunity to work with collections at Anna Ranch and learn to research, catalog, interpret and preserve collections. For more information call Dr. Momi Naughton at 885-4426 or 756-1910.

Carol Yurth's column is published every Sunday and spotlights activities on the Hilo-Hamakua coast. She welcomes items for inclusion in her column. Reach her by mail (46-1240 Kalehua Road, Honokaa HI 96727) at least 10 days before the requested publication date, call her at 775-7101, or e-mail [waiukahe@interpac.net](mailto:waiukahe@interpac.net).

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