



# Hawaii Florists & Shippers Association

March 2003

## HFSA sets up \$50,000 UH scholarship endowment fund

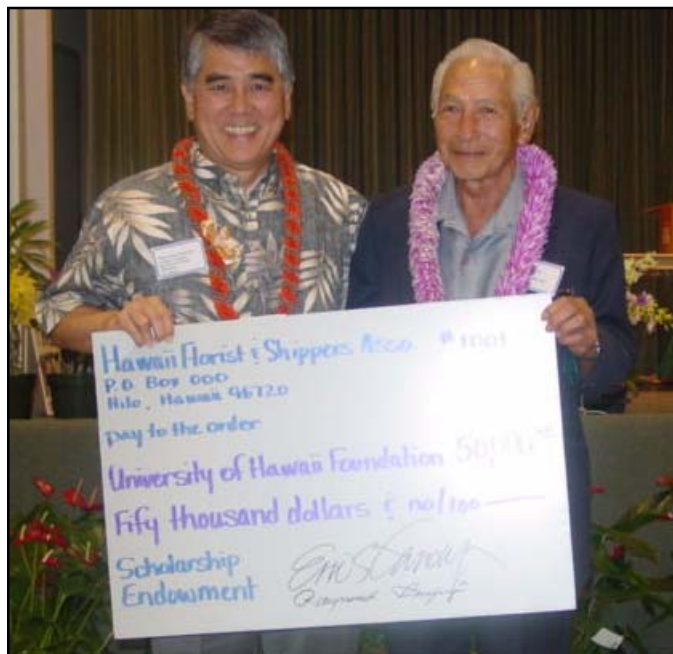
The Hawaii Florists & Shippers Association recently made a major contribution to the education of Hawaii young people who pursue careers in floriculture, the production of ornamentals, and agricultural sciences.

To celebrate the HFSA's 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the organization's leadership presented a check for \$50,000 to the University of Hawaii Foundation to establish a scholarship endowment for future students in agriculture-related fields. Raymond Suefuji, HFSA's outgoing president, presented the \$50,000 check to Dean Andrew Hashimoto of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources.

"This scholarship endowment," Suefuji said, "will provide for the ongoing education of today's and tomorrow's students at all levels of the university system—the University of Hawaii at Hilo and Manoa and our community colleges statewide.

"The funds represent the hard work of the HFSA membership and the continuing support of our community for the organization's projects and programs."

Prospective applicants for scholarships may contact the Financial Aid office at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, Manoa, or a community college.



CTAHR's Dean Andrew Hashimoto, left, displays a facsimile of the \$50,000 check along with outgoing president, Raymond Suefuji, who held the top HFSA post for 14 years.—Photo by Bob Raley

## FedEx now gives HFSA's L.A. customers same-day service

FedEx has launched a new service that lets HFSA members ship flowers on a plane that leaves Hawaii at 1:15 p.m. with the knowledge that buyers in Los Angeles can pick up those flowers at 7 p.m. the same day.

The service is possible because FedEx uses a much larger aircraft—a Boeing MD-11 cargo carrier—that operates between Hilo and Los Angeles five days a week. The plane flies a circular route daily from Honolulu to Hilo, to Los Angeles and Oakland, and back to Honolulu.

Said David Melinkov, Big Island account agent for FedEx: "Almost anything now can be shipped directly to Los Angeles, which is always a hot market for Hawaii products. This is a huge new opportunity for FedEx and

customers here."

Among those praising the new service was Richard Nelson, a member of HFSA's transportation committee and owner of Hawaii Bizlink, which creates transportation strategies for small businesses. Nelson said the MD-11 can accommodate taller, larger plants that previously would have been bent over in shipping or not taken at all.

"They should arrive in better condition and any day of the week," he said. "The direct flight to L.A. is really incredible."

**See FedEx Update on Page 7**

# Classified Ads

Please remember that short classified advertisements (buy-sell-rent in content) are free to HFSA members in good standing.

Send your text of 100 words or less to Jan Genz, P.O.

Box 1042, Mountain View, HI 96771, at least two weeks prior to the next newsletter's publication. Industry can buy a business-card-size ad for \$25 an issue, same deadlines.

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***BE SURE TO PLACE YOUR CLASSIFIED AD IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE HFSA NEWSLETTER! THESE ADS GRAB THE ATTENTION OF SCORES OF YOUR CUSTOMERS AND PROSPECTIVE CUSTOMERS.***

***Support these fine businesses as they support us!***

## ***New President emphasizes need for positive change***

**M**embers of HFSA celebrated the arrival of 2003 by installing a new president and a taking notice of a new emphasis on positive change within the organization.

Incoming president Eric Tanouye of Green Point Nurseries emphasized the importance of change within HFSA when he addressed the membership at HFSA's New Year's party, the 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Shinnenkai held in Hilo January 25.

The event drew more than 100 guests, including Big Island Senator Lorraine Inouye. HFSA's new president and other officers and board members were installed.

A silent auction raised almost \$1,000 toward the \$50,000 endowment of the University of Hawaii Foundation for scholarships in agriculture-related fields.

"A wise man once said that the greatest discovery of any generation is that a human being can alter his life by altering his attitude," Tanouye said when he addressed the gathering.

We learn to live with change, he pointed out, and HFSA itself has proven its ability to survive change.

"If you're not riding the wave of change, you'll find yourself beneath it," he said.

The new president said HFSA's mission is to foster the growth and success of the floral and ornamental horticulture industry by actively supporting its members through innovative programs.

"A buzz word we often hear is team, or teamwork," Tanouye said. "Tonight I am going to ask you to remember that the letters in the word 'team' mean 'Together Everyone Achieves More.'

"With that in mind, please welcome the following committees:

"Our Transportation Committee

chaired by Bob Raley will be investigating all potential forms of transporting floral products both in and out of Hawaii.

"Our Regulatory Committee, which is chaired by Cori Pohle, will be working with Bob to investigate programs that assist our members in moving products and resolving logistical constraints."

The 2003 Membership Committee is chaired by Yvette Hata and the Government Affairs Committee by Bruce Morehead.

Janet Kosaka heads the Show Committee and Richard Nelson the

Golf Committee, which has reserved August 2, 2003, as the HFSA's tournament date at Hilo Municipal Golf Course with an exciting scramble.

Raymond Suefuji heads the Sister City Committee and Richard Kodani the Shinnenkai Committee.

Jan Genz, who chairs the Education/Communication Committee, will use our newsletters, educational meetings statewide, our Web site, [www.hfsa.net](http://www.hfsa.net), which is under construction, and other tools to inform and education our members of new services and technologies available to our industry.

### **Here are the names and telephone numbers of the HFSA Officers and Board Members for 2003:**

<b>President</b>	<b>Eric Tanouye</b>	<b>959-3535</b>
<b>Vice President (Hawaii)</b>	<b>Bob Raley</b>	<b>968-6228</b>
<b>Vice President (Maui)</b>	<b>Cori Pohle</b>	<b>878-2758</b>
<b>Vice President (Oahu)</b>	<b>Janet Kosaka</b>	<b>988-1130</b>
<b>Vice President (Kauai)</b>	<b>Bruce Morehead</b>	<b>742-9989</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Norma Watt</b>	<b>968-6468</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Claudia McCall</b>	<b>968-6468</b>
<b>Past President</b>	<b>Raymond Suefuji</b>	<b>964-5358</b>
<b>Director</b>	<b>Jan Genz</b>	<b>968-8631</b>
<b>Director</b>	<b>Yvette Hata</b>	<b>966-9240</b>
<b>Director</b>	<b>Richard Kodani</b>	<b>968-6004</b>
<b>Director</b>	<b>Richard Nelson</b>	<b>966-7306</b>
<b>Director</b>	<b>Eleana Castro</b>	<b>959-3475</b>
<b>Director</b>	<b>Carol Farias</b>	<b>966-7427 ext.21</b>

### **Would you like to attend a meeting of the HFSA Board? HFSA members are welcome to do so.**

**The Board meets at 5:15 p.m. on the first Thursday of every month. The meeting place is 875 Komohana Street, the Komohana Ag Building in Hilo.**



Here's a photograph of our friends in Sumoto, our Sister City in Japan. A lot of HFSA members will be renewing acquaintances with them soon. So can you.

## ***Want to see your Sumoto friends again? Sign up for the HFSA tour and you will***

Are you ready for a seven-day, six-night visit to Sumoto, our Japanese Sister City, and the surrounding area for only \$1,524?

It's a chance of a lifetime to visit this fantastic place and make friends with our counterparts in a fascinating part of the world.

Here are the details:

You'll leave Hilo at 6:36 a.m. on Tuesday, June 24, 2003, via Hawaiian Air. You depart Honolulu at 11 a.m. the same day via Japan Air Lines for Kansai International Airport (Osaka).

**Wednesday, June 25:** Arrive Kansai Airport at 2:50 p.m. Transfer to Sumoto City via Awaji Pearl Line, the high-speed ferry, courtesy of Sumoto City government. Arrive Sumoto Port. Attend dinner reception hosted by Sumoto City International Association. Motor coach to Shisyuen Hotel for three nights.

**Thursday, June 26:** After breakfast, depart to Sumoto City Hall for courtesy visit to Mayor Keiichi Nakagawa. Mid-morning, depart for a motor coach island tour. Visit Naruto Whirlpool, attend puppet show, visit various public institutions, business establishments, take shopping tour.

**Friday, June 27:** Bus tour to Kobe City. Arrive Mt. Rokko for bento lunch. After lunch, depart for Kitanomachi. Visit Chinatown, shop at Daimaru department store. Back to Sumoto City for farewell dinner hosted by Sumoto officials.

**Saturday, June 28:** Departure for Miyajima-Hiroshima at 8 a.m. At Hiroshima, ferry to Miyajima Island, visit Itsukushima Shrine, see the famous floating torii. Walking tour of the island and leisurely shopping. Check into the Rihga Royal Hotel Hiroshima.

**Sunday June 29:** After breakfast (included), take a walking tour of Peace Memorial Park; afternoon free.

**Monday, June 30:** After breakfast (included), visit Hiroshima Castle. Afternoon free for shopping.

**Tuesday, July 1:** Breakfast at hotel (included). Free day. Depart for Hiroshima Airport at 6:10 p.m.

For more information and to make reservations, call or visit Amy Aoyagi, Kobayashi Travel Service, 688 Kinoole Street, Suite C-123, Hilo HI 96720, between 7:45 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The phone number is (808) 935-5418. The Web site is [www.kobay.com](http://www.kobay.com).

Make your travel arrangements *today!*

## Growing flowers organically in heavenly Hana

People who grow crops for a livelihood mention a variety of reasons for changing over to organic production methods.

Some switch to organic farming to lower input costs, reduce their reliance on non-renewable resources, or boost farm income.

René and Eileen Comeaux of Hana Herbs & Flowers, a certified organic flower and herb farm on Maui, cite a more basic reason.

“We don’t poison our land,” Eileen says. “It is our own small way of helping the world.”

During the 1990s, organic farming became one of the fastest growing segments of agriculture in the United States.

Organic farmers rely on ecologically based practices such as cultural and biological pest management. They virtually exclude the use of synthetic chemicals.

“I am an Irish girl from Iowa,” says Eileen. “My husband, René, is a Cajun from New Orleans. He likes Cajun music and food. He loves to cook. Many of the herbs we first planted were for use in his cooking.”

Eileen and René came to Hana in 1976. They have two teen-age daughters, Lokelani and Danielé, who help with the business.

In 1984, René started growing tropical flowers on their five-acre spread three miles from Hana town.

Eileen started growing fresh herbs, shipping them to Oakland, California, and marketing them locally—first to the Hotel Hana Maui and later to the Ritz Carlton in Kapalua, Maui.

Now the fresh herbs are delivered every Friday to fine restaurants all over Maui.

In 1988, the couple started providing Island gourmets with *pohole* (succulent, edible Maui fern shoots) and continued exporting an increasing volume of tropical flowers to Mainland customers.

“We experimented with our own flowers and found we can grow very nice flowers organically,” Eileen says. “Trial and error have been good teachers. Last year, our company became a certified organic flowers and herb farm. We use no herbicides or pesticides. We use only products that are listed in the Organic Certification Handbook. Maybe it’s a little more work, but farming is all about work: love it or leave it.

“Working as a husband and wife team, we have our own departments. My department is the office and the herbs. His department is packing the flowers. He’s very



**This is the Maui Special, a favorite among customers of Hana Herbs & Flowers.—Photograph © 2003 David Watersun 808.878.3318**

careful. Nothing goes out of here without his say-so.”

The company’s Web site tempts prospective purchasers with color photographs of arrangements of red or pink ginger, heliconias, psittacorums, exotics, and a variety of foliage.

But Eileen and René also believe in time-tested marketing techniques such as participation in local events like Hana’s Taro Fest, the Ulupalakua Thing, the Festival of Lights in Lahaina, and the Onion Festival in Wailea.

Does the fact that the flowers, foliage, and herbs are the result of organic farming methods make a difference to customers?

“To some people, this is very important,” says Eileen. “I am hoping that as time goes on, more people will want to know how the flowers that wind up in their home are grown. I tell people when they telephone that they are buying organically grown tropicals and herbs. Most people like that. And they call again. That’s important—they call again.”

# A Vice President Looks at the Legislature

*By Bob Raley, Hawaii County*

**T**wo bills designed to benefit agriculture and the cattle industry are making their way through the Legislature.

Senate Bill 1495 seeks to earmark \$200,000 in State funds to supplement Federal funding for further planning and development of the Hawaii Drought Plan. Big Island Senator Lorraine Inouye introduced the measure, which passed the Senate and went to the House for action.

House Bill 146 would designate renaissance zones to encourage economic development in rural areas with high unemployment and other problems created by the lack of economic opportunity. The Big Island's Rep. Robert N. Herkes introduced this measure, which passed the House and went to the Senate.

Devastating drought damage to agriculture and the beef cattle industry in recent years is the basic factor behind SB 1495. Costly droughts, particularly on Maui and the Big Island, prompted formation of the Hawaii Drought Council, which developed the first phase of the Hawaii Drought Plan with help from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

The Bureau has provided some funding for continuing drought mitigation, but it may not be enough to fully plan and develop the Hawaii drought plan. If passed, SB 1495 would make an appropriation sufficient to let Hawaii qualify for federal financing or reimbursement.

HB 146 proposes to provide tax exemptions under terms of a formula contained in the bill. This so-called tax holiday calculated to entice investors and encourage businesses with a genuine interest in the economic welfare of the area to help improve the economic climate.

HB 146 is predicated on the assumption of a need for tax relief in rural areas with high unemployment, in particular South Kona and Ka'u on the Big Island.

Earlier in the legislative session, an official of the Kona-based MacFarms of Hawaii testified in favor of the measure. MacFarms, the only major employer in the area, is considering creating a tourist center where visitors could experience authentic aspects of the local culture and become acquainted with commercial activities in the re-

gion—and that would include the production of flowers and foliage.

A third measure of interest to flower growers remains alive in the Legislature. It began life under the title "A Bill for an Act Relating to Invasive Species" in Senate Bill 1505 and House Bill 900.

The original purpose of this measure was to provide a two-year ban on all plants shipped into Hawaii that may contain the Coqui frog or fire ants. Matson Navigation Co. and the Nature Conservancy of Hawaii submitted testimony supporting the intent of this legislation. The Hawaii Farm Bureau submitted testimony opposing it.

The Senate Committee on Energy and Environment found that invasive insects, disease organisms, snakes, weeds, and other pests are among the greatest threats to Hawaii's economy, natural environment, and the health and lifestyle of its people. "Your Committee is aware of the recent dengue fever outbreak, the Coqui frog infestation, the Miconia forest weed invading the watersheds that recharge fresh water aquifers, and the Salvinia infestation choking Lake Wilson and Kawainui Marsh. Thus, your Committee finds that a more general approach to invasive species control and eradication is appropriate."

The committee amended the measure by (1) deleting the two-year ban on all plants shipped into the state that may contain the Coqui frog or fire ants, (2) provided statutory authority for the Hawaii Invasive Species Council to deal with the invasive species problems as authorized by executive order, (3) authorized the Departments of Agriculture, Health, and Land and Natural Resources to enter private and public premises to eradicate invasive species, (4) banned the import or selling of any Salvinia plant within the state, and (5) extended the effective term for plant and non-domestic animal quarantine from 180 days to one year. SB 1505 as amended passed third reading in the Senate and went to the House, where it was referred to committee.

Will any or all of these three measures survive in the Legislature and become law? We'll have to wait and see what happens.



# FedEx Update

By: David Melnikov  
dmelnikov@fedex.com

## Historic Event- East Hawaii now has its own direct cargo freighter to the

**mainland.** On March 3<sup>rd</sup>, FedEx started flying a daily MD11 Cargo freighter from Hilo direct to Los Angeles. All shipments processed through the FedEx Hilo station will be on this flight.

Benefits:

- 1) Higher service level due to aircraft reliability. Expect a sharp decrease in mechanical and "unscheduled" maintenance delays.
- 2) Significant increase in lift capacity. You can now spread your workload throughout the week, instead of concentrating on Mondays. Ship heavy volume any day of the week.
- 3) **Cargo service available soon for heavyweight, container and freight shipments to the mainland and worldwide destinations.**

*(Special rate and next day service available to Los Angeles airport)*

One drawback is the earlier departure time of the new flight. Many of you are experiencing earlier pickup times and/or rushing to meet the new 12:15pm cutoff time at the Hilo station. The Hilo station FedEx employees and I thank you for your patience and support during this transition. The number one priority is to ensure your shipment gets on this plane, so it's natural to be extra cautious at the beginning. We will be constantly looking to improve on the pickup times and I believe you will soon see improvements.

## Blanket "Residential releases" during major holidays.

I believe this will be implemented for all future holidays. FedEx, under specific guidelines can release your shipment, without shipper or recipient permission. The only way to ensure a signature upon delivery is to choose the "signature required" option on your FedEx automation platform.

## FedEx Powership 2 & 3 shipping computers and FedEx ship manager software is being retired soon.

Many of you have been contacted and migrated to our new automation platforms. Here's a recap of FedEx's new automation offerings:

- 1) www.fedex.com- works great if you are on a high-speed internet connection. Thermal label printer available.
- 2) New FedEx Ship Software. Process shipping labels off line and connect when you're done shipping. Thermal label printer available.
- 3) FedEx Powership Café system. \$300/day minimum shipping revenue requirement.
- 4) FedEx server for advanced integration capabilities.

Please direct any questions or emails to dmelnikov@fedex.com or call 982-8312.

## Export readiness seminars slated for three Islands

Seminars on export readiness will be conducted on the Big Island, Oahu, and Maui April 1-4 by the Western United States Agricultural Trade Association (WUSATA) in partnership with the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA).

If you are interested in attending, fax your registration form as soon as possible to the Hawaii Department of Agriculture fax: (808) 973-9467.

Although the registration deadline was February 28, registrations will be taken until the workshop spaces are full.

If you have questions, call Donna Shima of the HDOA by telephoning (808) 973-9465 or contact Kelvin T. Sewake, County Extension Agent, by emailing him at ksewake@hawaii.edu.

The Export Readiness Program offers companies an opportunity to receive individual assistance with their most challenging export issues.

These two-hour sessions provide participants with expert advice from an industry consultant who has more than 20 years of experience in pioneering foreign market development.

## News Items and Reminders

HFSA will have an informational booth selling flowers at The Ulupalakua Thing on Saturday, April 26.

The Ulupalakua Thing kicks off its second decade with the forthcoming event, which is held at Maui's Ulupalakua Ranch and Tedeschi Winery. It's a trade show where food lovers, chefs, wholesale buyers, and store owners come to see what's new in Hawaii-grown products. The trade show is open to VIPs only from 10 a.m. to noon. It will be open to the public from noon to 4 p.m.



Bob Raley, HFSA Vice President for Hawaii County and Transportation Committee chair, was featured in a recent Associated Press article about agricultural tourism. Raley, owner of Volcano Isle Coffee and Tropicals, added the component of ag-tourism to his operation in 2000. He's one of a growing number of farmers showing off their products through tourism-related activities. "We on Hawaii have a lot of unique types of farming, and it's kind of interesting to people," Raley told the Associated Press.

Activities designed to attract visitors and generate supplemental income for farmers range from conducting tours and selling products directly from the farm to operating a bed and breakfast, allowing horseback riding, or holding festivals on the land. A study the Hawaii Agricultural Statistics Service conducted three years ago set the value of ag-tourism related activities statewide at \$26 million, about one-third of it generated by direct sales of farm products. In 2000, the latest year for which figures are available, fully 126 of the state's 5,500 farms generated money from ag-tourism. Another 84 farms had either started or planned to start similar ventures. The article said the majority of the ag-tourism farms, 60 of them, were in

Hawaii County. Maui County had 31 such ventures, the City and County of Honolulu had 29, and Kauai County reported 16. Raley foresees more potential for ag-tourism, particularly if farmers start marketing themselves to tourists who go to the Big Island to visit Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. "You can only look at the volcano for so long," said Raley. "Then they go somewhere else."

### Maui News

Maui Flower Growers' Association was asked to decorate the stage for newly elected Alan Arakawa's inauguration festivities at the War Memorial Complex.

Jody Jewell and the Cooperative Extension Service worked along with Anuheha Farms, Olopawa Farms, and the University of Hawaii Ag Research Station. All donated flowers, and helping hands were provided by Harold Kyser, Clark Hashimoto, Norm Nagata, and the staff at the Cooperative Extension Service.

Many projects are under way in Hana to help the tropical flower growers there.

Matt Keiley has been instrumental in working with the State to find a good location for a hot water treatment plant. Also on his wish list for the area is a research facility for the betterment of the tropical flower industry. In addition, Matt talked to Governor Lingle about acquiring State land near the Hana airstrip for a FedEx cargo facility, which the Governor favors.—*Cori Pohle*

**Hawaii Florists & Shippers Association**  
**P.O. Box 5640**  
**Hilo, Hawaii 96720**