



Friends of Honolulu Botanical Gardens

The Bodhi Leaf

FALL 2014

180 N. Vineyard Boulevard • Honolulu, Hawaii 96817 • Phone 808-537-1708

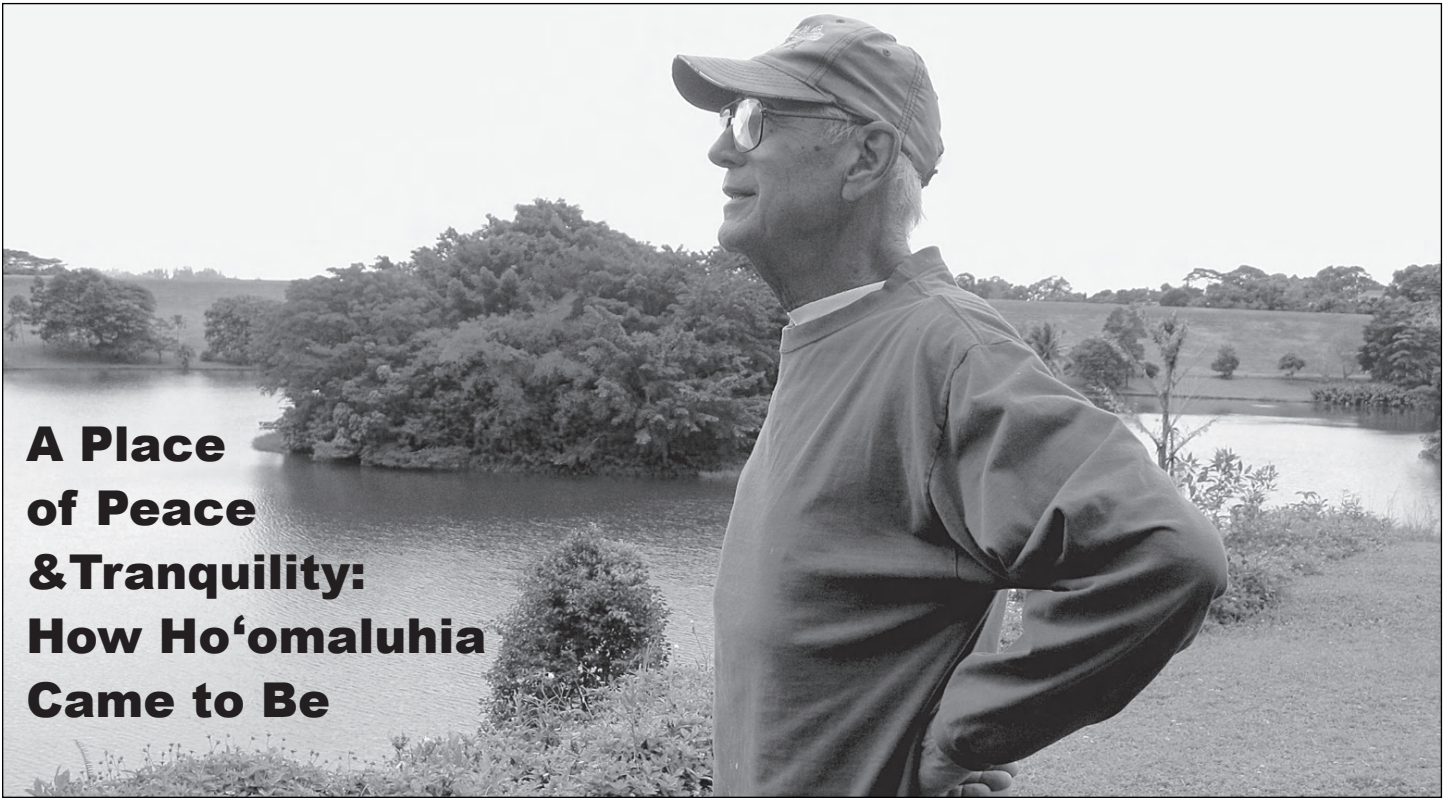


Photo: Barbara Duran

A Place of Peace & Tranquility: How Ho‘omaluhia Came to Be

by Rom Duran

There were two “hundred-year rainstorms” in the Halekou area of Kaneohe, unexpectedly, in the late 1960s. The streams overflowed their banks, and destroyed many of the houses built alongside the water. Just as those homes were being re-built after the first storm, the second one came and duplicated the damage done by the first, except this time there was loss of life. Mayor Fasi, therefore, promised that he would get a dam built there via the Army Corps of Engineers, so that residents of the homes would be safe from floods in the future.

I was Fasi’s parks director at the time. The city’s chief engineer asked me to place a few picnic tables within the proposed 75 acres of flood plain surrounding a 25-acre lake, to increase the “cost-benefit ratio” of the project. That’s because initially the Corps turned down the City and County’s request. I could not believe a few picnic tables would suffice to change the Corps’ denial, but I decided that possibly showing a park around the lake and beside the dam would do so. (As parks director one of my main goals was to acquire as much land as possible for public park usage, especially along our shores and waterways. The economy was strong, growth was occurring rapidly, and State representatives were eager to fund facilities in their areas. Amazingly, we couldn’t even spend all the allocated funds within their required 18-month end dates.)

(continued on page 3)

President's Message

JOIN US

As President of the Friends, I am always looking for and at volunteers. They are wonderful company and a joy to be around. They, or we, like to get things done and want to be part of the doing. Helping with a plant sale that raises money for the early detection of invasive insects is nice work in every way. Yet, recruiting volunteers for our many activities is not easy, and I always wonder why more people, especially young people, don't do it. Time is the normal excuse. But, almost all volunteers are busy people who have found a way to make time in order to volunteer. Yes, there are many who can't and shouldn't volunteer because they are so busy that committing to extra work would cause family or financial sacrifices. Yet, most of us are guilty of wasting time watching TV, surfing the internet, or engaging in other escapist activities. So, if you are one of those who have never tried volunteer work and have the urge to help, give it a shot. Find an organization that's doing good things that you can help with, and offer your time. If you love plants and want to be around others who share that passion, give the Friends a call (537-1708) or send an email (friendsgardens@aol.com) and tell us what kinds of special projects you would like to work on. If you know a potential volunteer looking for a way to support our spectacular botanical gardens, hand them a copy of our membership form (included with this newsletter) and see if they are interested. We are always looking for volunteers or new members with good organizational, computer, gardening, and/or people skills to join our happy community.

Bill Follmer, President
Friends of Honolulu Botanical Gardens



Photo: Winnie Singeo



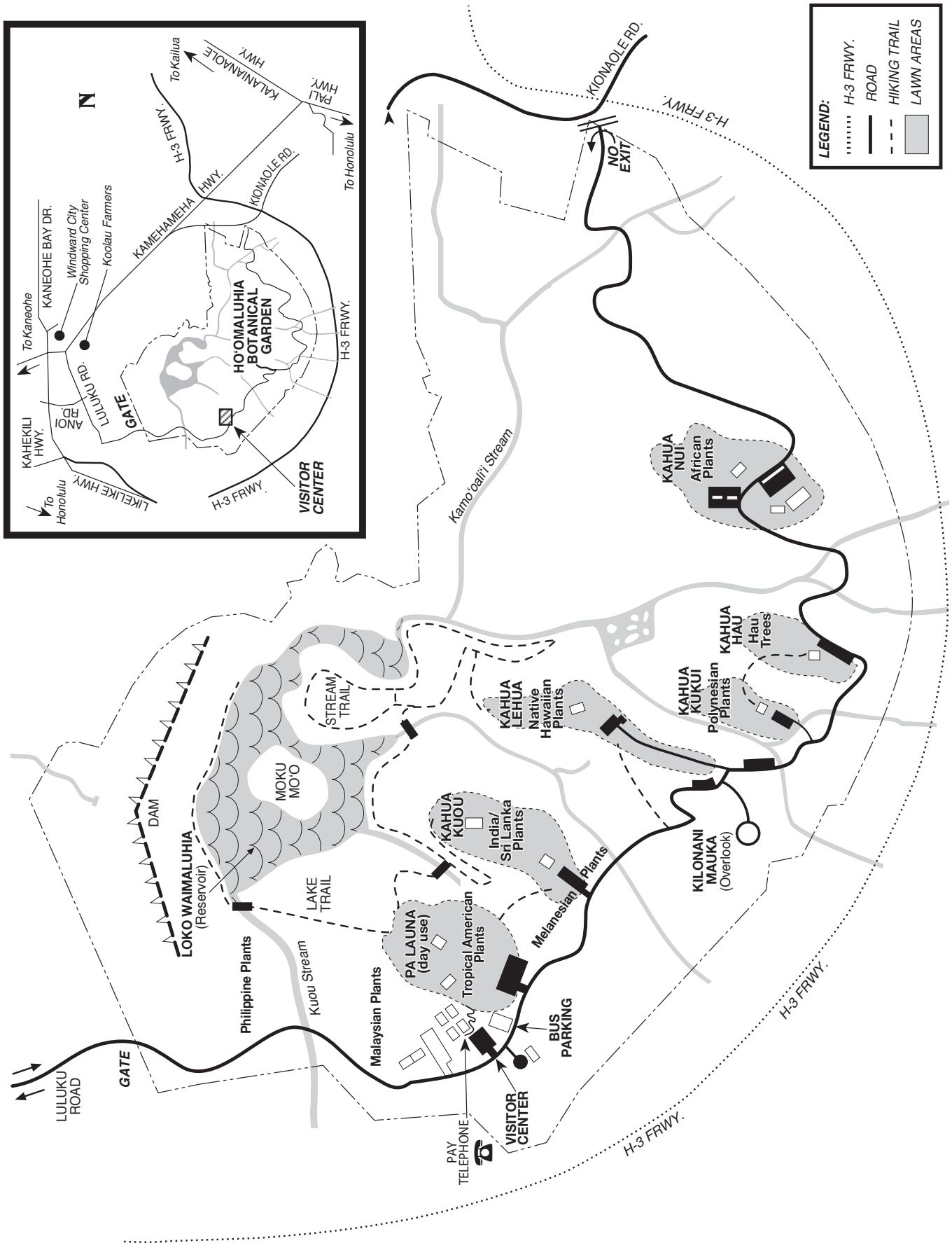
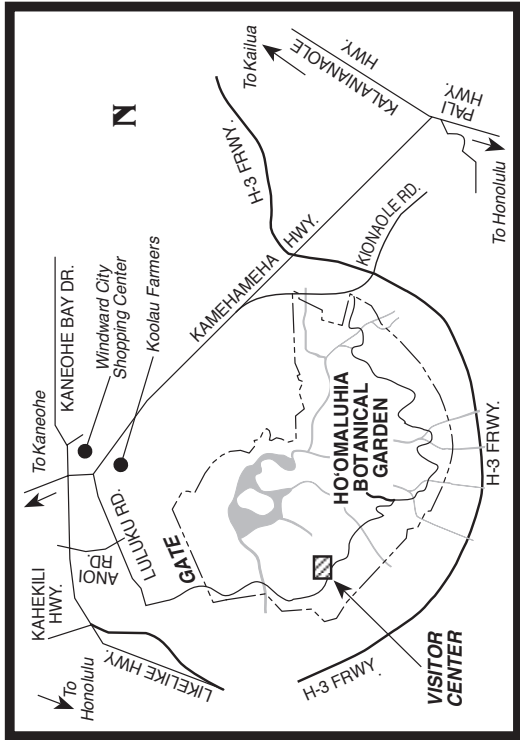
Photo: Dana Anne Yee



Photo: Dana Anne Yee



Photo: Ray Higa



LEGEND:

- H-3 FRWY.
- ROAD
- - - HIKING TRAIL
- LAWN AREAS

From the Director's Desk

I would like to introduce two of Honolulu Botanical Gardens (HBG) newest staff members: Francisco Martin Del Campo Jr. and Ken Edamura.

Cisco grew up in Silicon Valley in Northern California and worked for the Department of Parks and Recreation there for 11 years. He has a variety of experience, including work as an at-risk youth counselor, park ranger, entrepreneur, wilderness survival instructor, and life guard instructor. He graduated with a degree in Recreation Hospitality and Tourism Management.

Cisco is an outdoor enthusiast who appreciates a balance between nature and technology. After graduating, Cisco left the mainland with a one-way ticket to Hawaii to explore nature while enjoying the life of a free-traveling backpacker, with an eye towards putting down roots here.

Prior to coming to HBG, Cisco was a City swimming pool manager for several months. He has been at HBG since March of this year as the Professional Trainee II (Volunteer Coordinator), and is primarily based at Wahiawa Botanical Garden three days a week and Foster Botanical Garden for the other two. One of Cisco's main priorities is to recruit volunteers and coordinate the needs of both staff and volunteers, while providing positive experiences.

Ken has been a Nursery Worker I at Ho`omaluhia Botanical Garden since November 2013. Prior to joining us, he spent 10 years working on Japanese landscaping and a year at a native Hawaiian plant nursery.

Ken's experience in the landscape and native Hawaiian plant industry included irrigation installation, care of plants (plant maintenance), working with horticultural tools and equipment, and proper use of fertilizers and pesticides. He was also involved in a number of restoration projects around the island.

Ken is not only happy to be working for a strong organization as the City and County of Honolulu, but also glad he's at Ho`omaluhia. He prides himself with being a part of a crew that gets along with each other, and gets work done. He sums up his feelings in this way: "The garden itself is beautiful. Not many people can say they work in such a beautiful place as this."

Welcome to the HBG, Ken and Cisco.

Winnie Singeo, Director
Honolulu Botanical Gardens



Francisco Martin Del Campo Jr.



Ken Edamura

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HO'O (from page 3)

Time to get to work, and there was lots to be done immediately. The site had been used over the years for cattle grazing, but over time it had also become a dumping ground for stolen and stripped cars and household debris, a growing area for marijuana merchants, and a “recreational” site for off-road vehicles of every type, which left it crisscrossed with vast areas of erosion from all the trails these bikers and vehicle owners created. Under construction, too, we had to contend with the continuance of the trash dumping and marijuana growing, and widespread vandalism. Two of our almost-completed comfort stations were burned down, to add to our woes, and the residents of Luluku Street picketed at the park’s entrance because they were enraged by what they thought would be unbearable traffic in their neighborhood. They made their complaints widely known at City Hall, believe me.

Because of all the vandalism, we had the project altered to include a caretaker’s house where a resident would be on the property around the clock. No one wanted to be the caretaker though, and live there permanently, until finally Paul Weissich -- bless his heart -- volunteered to do so and he and Pat moved in. Fortunately too, Paul’s son became an HPD officer at about the same time, so in the beginning he appeared frequently too, in uniform and without pay, to discourage the continuing property destruction (including that one night thieves removed and carried away the rear gate from a newly built security fence and came back the next night to take the rest of the fence too!)

Well, in 1982 we finally got our beautiful 400-acre park, with so much of the credit accruing to Paul Weissich, where the importance of his initial efforts in planning it and his ongoing management and oversight can’t be overstated. In so many ways Ho’omaluhia is truly “Paul’s Park.”

I take some pride in my role in it too, and satisfaction in its beauty and ongoing success. There are a number of parks on O’ahu where I worked hard to ensure acquisition: Kualoa; the Boettcher beach property in Kailua; the nursery on Kuakini St. along the Nuuanu Stream (now known as Liliuokalani Botanical Garden), the church camping site next to the Kailua Beach boat ramp, and others. Ho’o is certainly a jewel in the crown, though, with its breathtaking scenic beauty and its atmosphere of tranquility and repose.

