



## On the calendar

### April 3

The next HCDA Board meetings will be held. For more information about HCDA, the public hearings or board meetings visit <https://dbedt.hawaii.gov/hcda/>.



## Kupuna Shed

Making friends and giving back

The Honolulu Kupuna Shed recently moved from a warehouse space slated to be redeveloped at the harbor, into a great new temporary space in Kaka'ako.

"We were kind of scrambling," said Nam Vu, the treasurer of the Kupuna Shed. Then, Craig Nakamoto, the Executive Director of HCDA helped. "Craig took a keen interest in it, and he helped us to secure the facility. We are now at Cooke Street, the old Lana Lane warehouse behind the Honolulu Brewing Company. We are super grateful to Craig and KS." Kamehameha Schools, the landowner, has plans to redevelop this area, but has generously offered it to the Kupuna Shed in a one-year lease during the planning phase.

An upgrade from the warehouse space, the new space is compartmentalized so different projects are now grouped together, and there is a comfortable meeting space where the Kupuna Shed board plans to hold safety and educational workshops for seniors.

"I heard about it on the radio. They were doing a little story about Men's Shed and I thought the mission was so good I started driving to the Shed," said Vu. "By the time I got to the Shed, the radio show was still going. I came because I loved the mission and wanted to see what I could do to help.

"Their mission, at that time, was to help elderly men. Basically to help with isolation and depression by giving men something to do after they retire. Age gracefully," said Vu. "The organization started in Australia. We don't like to put it so bluntly, but older guys were committing suicide because they didn't have the social support structure.

"Women tend to have a little bit more of a support structure. They have different friends and different clubs that they can lean on. But men do not have such a strong structure and if they are left alone, they tend to be a lot more at risk. And so, Australia did studies and found that it really helped the



older gentlemen that were there. The Health Department in Australia pays for it (The Men's Shed program)."



Kupuna Shed founder, Glen Sears, through his wife Mary, learned of the network of over 1000 Men's Sheds in Australia, where they provide a place that men can feel included and safe.

She encouraged him to find out if there was one similar to it in Hawai'i, but there was not. He even searched nationally, but there was none.

Sears contacted Australia and he started the very first Men's Shed in the US, here in Hawaii. He went on to help establish the US Men's Shed Association, served as a founding director, and now as Director Emeritus.

The Men's Shed has grown into an international phenomenon with thousands of locations worldwide.

Photos courtesy of the Kupuna Shed and Howard Wolff Photography.





## Kupuna Shed *continued*

Many of the individuals come together in a shared interest of wood-working and using or learning to use tools, but they stay for the camaraderie and support.

The Honolulu Men's Shed is now called the Honolulu Kupuna Shed and welcomes everyone. Its mission is to provide a location for seniors (kupuna) to find companionship, well-being, and purpose in retirement, to share experiences, and work on projects to be donated to the community.

"Glen is still very active," said Vu. "He heads the picnic table project. He makes picnic tables and donates them to elementary schools around town." In 2023, they made twenty benches and donated them to Jefferson Elementary.

In 2023, they also built planters for the Waikiki Community Center, made koa stanchions for the Iolani Palace, handmade fine wood crafts and sold them at craft fairs to fundraise for Maui Strong, helped with the Hokuleia restoration, and much more.

They are all volunteers united to provide a positive place that fosters growth and fellowship for the retired community.

If you have suggestions for a permanent home for the Honolulu Kupuna Shed, about 6,000 to 7,000 square feet, or would like to learn more visit <https://honolulukupunashed.org/>.



*Secretary Haaland in Hawai'i.  
Courtesy of the Department of the Interior.*

## DOI commemorates Hawaiian Language Comment by March 31

In February 2024, in commemoration of Mahina 'Ōlelo Hawai'i, or Hawaiian Language Month, and in recognition of its unique relationship with the Native Hawaiian Community, the Department of the Interior (DOI) announced new guidance on the use of the Hawaiian language, to be used by DOI bureaus and offices for the respectful and proper use of 'ōlelo Hawai'i by personnel whose primary language is not 'ōlelo Hawai'i.

"Prioritizing the preservation of the Hawaiian language and culture and elevating Indigenous Knowledge is central to the Biden-Harris administration's work to meet the unique needs of the Native Hawaiian Community," said Secretary Deb Haaland in a press release. "As we deploy historic resources to Hawai'i from President Biden's Investing in America agenda, the Interior Department is committed to ensuring our internal policies and communications use accurate language and data."

The Department's Office of Native Hawaiian Relations held a virtual meeting during which it presented an overview of the internal guidance, and gave the opportunity to ask questions, and provide feedback and comments.

The draft internal guidance on the use of 'ōlelo Hawai'i will be added to the Departmental Manual in the section pertaining to the Department's intergovernmental relations with the Native Hawaiian Community.

The draft can be viewed at <https://www.doi.gov/hawaiian/proposed-guidance-on-use-of-hawaiian-language>.

A comment period is open through March 31, 2024. Please send all written comments via email to [doi\\_onhr\\_hhl@ios.doi.gov](mailto:doi_onhr_hhl@ios.doi.gov).

For more information, visit the Office of Native Hawaiian Relations' website <https://www.doi.gov/hawaiian>.