

This is the Disability Rights Hawaii Newsletter for January 2012. It is available by email, print, or Large Print. Please contact [ronald@hawaii.edu](mailto:ronald@hawaii.edu), or call 961-5601, to add or remove your name from the mailing list, or to change the format of your Newsletter.

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..... January 31, 2012, Meeting Announcement .....

Disability Rights Hawaii will meet on Tuesday, January 31, from 12:00 noon until 2:00 PM at the ADRC building at 1055 Kinoole Street in Hilo. We will discuss accessibility problems and solutions on the Island of Hawaii. Among the ongoing problems we will address are parking spaces at Hilo Shopping Center and Walmart. We will also hear a report from Chris Cholas and colleagues about their survey of the accessibility of the trails at the Volcanoes National Park. The meeting is free and open to the public.

..... November 2011 DRH Meeting Notes .....

Present:

Daniel Grant-Johnson, Linda Toms Barker, Wesley Tanigawa, Donald Haumea, Gail Yoshishige, Chris Cholas, Martin Hodapp, Marianne Hodapp, Sada Anand Kaur, Ron Amundson, Officer Reynold Kahalewai of the County of Hawaii Police Department

Our first topic was a discussion of the Hilo Jaycees Christmas Parade. During the months that we had been researching the possibility that we march in the parade, we discovered that it was scheduled to begin at 5:30. This means that it would be mostly after dark. This made things almost impossible for many DRH members, for two reasons. One fact was reported by several allied organizations. It was that many of us have low vision, and do not feel safe on the streets after dark. Another problem was that transportation alternatives dried up in the evening, especially weekend evenings. Many of us would be unable to even *attend* the parade, let alone participate in it as a community group.

There was a somewhat heating (slightly warm) exchange of views regarding whether and how DRH would deal with the Jaycees about the inaccessibility of the parade. Linda pointed out that there were good reasons for the Jaycees to favor a later beginning for the parade -- the Christmas lights and ornaments are delightful then, and the celebration was not as dramatic during the daylight hours. She thought that we should not request for such a benefit to be given up just because of our desire to participate. Ron argued that we should inform the Jaycees of the problem anyhow, even if we decided not to ask them to change the timing of the parade. Their decision eliminates the participation of disabled community members in the parade, and even as

viewers, and they should be aware of that. We need not insist that they change their policy about the timing of the parade, but we should point out how we were 'disenfranchised' by their decision. We might also ask if they knew of other community parades -- especially daylight parades -- that DRH members might be able to participate in during the year. This was the eventual decision.

Officer Kahalewai came to the meeting to report on the results of our September meeting, and the policies that DRH had recommended. One was the installation of bollards to protect the access aisle next to the Accessible Parking space near Coconut Island. Officer Kahalewai said that he had met with Corp Counsel, and Corp Counsel has said that the bollards would be a liability problem to the County. Groans went around the table. The Officer was only suggesting plastic bollards glued to the pavement. This was not something that most people are likely to injure themselves on. He also reported on the efforts made by Officer Pauole, who is in charge of Traffic, to work out a policy of towing violators of Accessible Parking spaces. Officer Kahalewai said that we need to have advocates who were willing to work with Councilmembers to explain our concerns about these problems. The advocates need to talk to a number of different venues. For example, the old argument "Then we'd have to do it everywhere" had come up in a meeting with Parks & Rec. ("No, you'd only have to do it *where the harm is so great* -- like Coconut Island" -- that's the response.) The Mayor's Committee might be a good venue also. Wesley Tanigawa is a member of the Mayor's Committee, and both Chris and Ron are members of their online site, but it is not very active. Bob Fitzgerald is head of Parks & Rec. It was suggested that Teri Spinola-Campbell might be willing to discuss our problems with him and possibly support them.

It was pointed out that the problem with Coconut Island is uniquely important, and not a plausible case for the "Then we'd have to do it everywhere" complaint. When the access aisle is pirated at Coconut Island, the entire entryway to the Island is blocked for wheelchair users and users of other accessibility devices. This is a much more damaging result than simply losing a single parking space. The problem is that no one can get onto Coconut Island when that access aisle is blocked. The route onto the sidewalk is inaccessible from the general parking area -- you have to travel *in the roadway* all the way back to Lihiwai Street to get onto the accessible sidewalk. Those who pirate the accessible aisle at Coconut Island are very harmful.

Teri reported on the County repair of several curb cuts and broken up sidewalk locations that had been reported by Danny. These included locations on Keawe St., Hualalai, and Ululani. We all discussed the locations and tried to map them in our various heads. Danny was the best at this task, of course. Some wondered if his ancestors had been on the Lewis and Clark expedition.

Donald reported on emails he has seen regarding loss of Social Security and Medicare. This was worrisome to all of us, because it may apply to many other members as well.

Sada reported on the special problems that people with disabilities have when they are forced to park in areas that are not covered by overhangs. She pointed out that Hilo Shopping Center used to have some Accessible Parking spaces under their overhang. But when they re-striped the parking lot, those spaces were relocated out into the general parking area. When people with disabilities have to embark from their vehicles in the slow manner that many of us do, they get drenched. With the old system, those who found a sheltered (rain-sheltered, that is) parking space could stay dry. Now they are obligated to get drenched. The group voted that the Manager of Hilo Shopping Center should be contacted, and informed of this problem. Perhaps the next restriping of the parking lot might protect some disabled people from an unwelcome drenching.

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Youtube from AAPD.

The American Association of Persons with Disabilities (AAPD) has posted a nice video regarding bullying. Brings back not-so-tender memories. Here it is:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m-1yVFH3gn8>

While we're on Youtube, here are some videos of lever-driven wheelchairs:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mMBYmCCFOjQ&feature=related>

This is very old-fashioned technology, however. There were lots of this kind of device in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

But the AAPD is a good organization. Consider joining it, here:

<http://www.aapd.com/>

It has even helped to introduce accessible taxis in New York City (although nearly all of the politicians opposed it). The web site also shows which major companies and organizations have supported the rights of pwds. Keep track, and buy your trinkets from them.