



Aloha Festivals

ALOHA WEEK

NEWS RELEASE

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ALOHA FESTIVALS CELEBRATES 70 YEARS WITH “HĀLI‘A ALOHA – TREASURED MEMORIES”

HONOLULU – It was 70 years ago that a group of former Jaycees – known as the Jaycees Old-timers of Hawai‘i – had the vision to create a public celebration to honor Hawai‘i’s heritage. Thus, in 1946, Aloha Festivals began as “Aloha Week,” a cultural celebration of Hawai‘i’s music, dance and history intended to perpetuate the Islands’ unique traditions.

Now in its 70th year, Aloha Festivals is one of Hawai‘i’s most highly regarded and oldest cultural celebrations, integrating the traditions and cultures of the Islands through music, dance, cuisine and art. The tradition carries on today, with this year’s Aloha Festivals theme “Hāli‘a Aloha – Treasured Memories.”

“We’ve come a long way in the past 70 years,” said Debbie Nakanelua-Richards, Aloha Festivals board of directors’ co-chair. “Each year I am in awe of the collective ideas, the mana‘o and how beautifully the theme is executed by our volunteers and participants throughout all of our events. Hāli‘a Aloha is truly one year not to be missed.”

Hāli‘a Aloha is also the collective account of Hawai‘i’s rich history. It’s the story of the ‘āina (land) and kānaka (people). It’s the story of a seafaring people reaching a new land, the rebirth of a chain of islands into a nation, and the joyful sharing of life spread across the global community, celebrating the cornerstone of Hawai‘i’s uniqueness, the Aloha Spirit.

Over the years, Aloha Festivals has honored and recognized some of Hawai‘i’s most celebrated traditions and pastimes – hula, pā‘ū riding, music, ocean voyaging, Hawaiian art of featherwork, paniolo and lei making to name a few. The festival also has paid tribute to the people, the masters and keiki (children) who have learned and continue to preserve Island traditions, malama the ‘āina and be stewards for future generations.

(more)

"It delights me to see the growth of Aloha Festivals and the involvement of our local community, from the littlest keiki, to the eldest kupuna," said Helene "Sam" Shenkus, Aloha Festivals board of directors' co-chair. "We're excited this year not only to share our theme of treasured memories, but also to make new ones that we'll treasure for many years to come."

This year's Aloha Festivals takes place from Sept. 3 to 24 at various locations on O'ahu, sharing the history and traditions of Hawai'i and the unique spirit of aloha with both kama'āina (local residents) and malihini (visitors).

Schedule of Aloha Festivals events:

All events are free and open to the public. They are supported by the sale of Aloha Festivals ribbons and merchandise from participating retailers. Aloha Festivals merchandise also will be sold at all events.

Saturday, Sept. 3

***Aloha Festivals Royal Court Investiture & Opening Ceremony, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.,
Investiture – The Royal Hawaiian Hotel, Coconut Grove
Opening Ceremony – Royal Hawaiian Center, Royal Grove***

The *Ali'i* – king, queen, prince and princess – take their places in the 2016 Aloha Festivals Royal Court. Court members receive the royal cloak, helmet, head feather lei and other symbols of their reign. Traditional chant and hula kahiko (ancient hula) highlight the event.

Saturday, Sept. 10

Keiki Ho'olaule'a, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Pearlridge Center Uptown

Pearlridge Center will celebrate Aloha Festivals with a variety of activities, demonstrations and continuous stage performances by participating keiki (children's) musical groups and hula hālau (schools). The 2016 Aloha Festivals Royal Court will make a special appearance. For more information, visit www.pearlridgeonline.com.

Saturday, Sept. 17

Waikīkī Ho'olaule'a, 7 p.m.

Kalākaua Avenue

The annual Waikīkī Ho'olaule'a is Hawai'i's largest, most festive block party. Thousands of people will take to the streets for food, fun and entertainment. Top Island entertainers will perform along with hula hālau while Hawaiian crafts and floral lei will be on display and available for purchase.

Saturday, Sept. 24

70th Annual Aloha Festivals Floral Parade, 9 a.m.

Kalākaua Avenue from Ala Moana Park to Kapi'olani Park

A colorful equestrian procession of pā'ū (long-skirted) riders, exquisite floats with cascades of Hawaiian flowers, hula hālau, marching bands and dignitaries will enliven Kalākaua Avenue.

Aloha Festivals would like to acknowledge the following sponsors – Hawai‘i Tourism Authority, City & County of Honolulu, Royal Hawaiian Center, Hawaiian Airlines, KFVE, Hawaiian 105 KINE, Christ Embassy Hawaii, Starwood Hotels & Resorts.

About Aloha Festivals

Aloha Festivals was first held in 1946 as Aloha Week, and over the past seven decades has become a celebration of Hawaiian culture, integrating the traditions and cultures of the Islands through music, dance, cuisine and art. All festivities are coordinated by a volunteer board of directors. Aloha Festivals is funded by the Hawai‘i Tourism Authority, corporate and private sponsorships, and sales of Aloha Festivals ribbons and merchandise.

More information about Aloha Festivals and its events can be found at www.alohafestivals.com, Facebook (facebook.com/AlohaFestivals), Twitter ([@AlohaFstvlS](https://twitter.com/AlohaFstvlS)) Instagram ([@alohafestivals](https://instagram.com/alohafestivals)) or by calling (808) 923-2030.

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