



*Ka Ho'olaha*

*Kanisehua*

*"...To acknowledge the duty that accompanies every right..."*

## :: | :: President's Message :: | ::

### Thoughts About Independence Day

July brings up thoughts about the Fourth of July, Independence Day. Usually I would think about holiday things, but this year the Declaration of Independence came to mind. With the incredibly disturbing behavior by some of our national leaders, it made me realize how fragile the entire country can be; how fragile independence can be. It shows how much we take for granted what we have inherited. It can really depend on the knowledge, values, and experiences of those we allow to be in charge.

Professionally, I am supposed to be a social studies teacher; but such jobs are difficult to find, so I do other things. Still, I am professionally embarrassed because it seems to me that much of the national turmoil is due to a massive failure in social studies all over the country. I really don't know what has been going on in social studies classes but it sure seems like improvements are needed. It seems like a lot of people don't understand the duties and responsibilities of each citizen in a democracy, and instead expect a magical super hero to fix everything; but it may be fixed in ways that may not be beneficial to them.

In the early Baby Boomer years after World War II, there was a social studies curriculum called Civics. It probably was not provided in a very exciting and attention-getting style, but at least it was an attempt to teach everyone how to do democracy, how to be an involved and effective citizen. Instead of just learning vaguely about how historical people did democracy long ago in faraway places, it was more like an immediate personal how-to-do-it lesson. It was more of a hands-on learning experience.

By the time I was in school, Civics was no longer taught. It could be argued that extracurricular activities such as student government was a good variation of Civics. It probably was for the few students who were involved in this, but most of the school population were not. Notice that it was extracurricular, outside of the formal classroom. Within any classroom, I do not recall any lesson on Parliamentary Procedure; how to make decisions as a group in an agreeable manner. We might have learned in school about...

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**JULY 2017**

**KEN OKIMOTO**

PRESIDENT

**JUNE NIIMI**

SECRETARY

**LANCE NIIMI**

TREASURER

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## Calendar

### July (*Iulai*)

- 12 Business Meeting
- 26 Program Meeting  
(cancelled)
- 27 Hilo Y's Men's 79<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary (charter)

## Christian Emphasis

*"But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak."*

*- Corinthians 8:9*

What do cows wear in Hawai'i?  
A moo-moo!

## ... | Thoughts About Independence Day (Continued) | ...

how the faraway Congress worked on bills, and even got entertaining lessons at home on tv when watching the "Schoolhouse Rock" show; but that was about what the people in Washington, D.C. did, not what we could do where we were.

I should add that there were other aspects of my growing-up years as a social studies student that were lacking; things that were apparently bothering me but I never realized until decades later. The things that were bothering me probably influenced me to become a social studies teacher. We were fed a very simplified and sanitized view of the world and the country. Basically, the message seemed to be that everything was working fine and it was just a matter of keeping things going as they were. So, I couldn't understand why black people were always protesting on the tv news on the mainland about not having civil rights. Didn't they realize that they were already protected by the Bill of Rights and everyone was treated equally by the government?

I vaguely remember in the late 1960's a Honolulu newspaper report about Hawaii's governor, John Burns, giving a speech. He said that Hawaii had been a U.S. state less than ten years, but Hawaii was very, very important to the entire United States. He said that in about 50 years, the U.S. population mix will change and it will need to learn from Hawaii about how to live in a democratic society where everyone is a minority. Well, it is now about 50 years later and that seems to be the case. People who have been used to being the controlling majority in society are now feeling threatened and uncomfortable. Politicians who sense that fear and discomfort among many citizens are offering solutions to sort of "return to the sugar plantation days" (or the "cotton plantation days") and apparently many people seek the comfort of having things back to the way they used to be.

So what does all this have to do with the Hilo Y's Men and Women's Club? Clubs like the Y's service clubs and other such organizations provide direct, relevant training and experience in democracy thru our little meetings. Majorities make decisions for the group, but still respect the views of the minorities. We seem to be successful in avoiding insults and abusing power as we decide matters. We seem to seek benefits for the group as a whole, as well as for our YMCA's and communities; rather than for our personal benefits. We seem to prove every day that this democracy stuff can work, and work well. It is not perfect, but it is open to improving itself. Our clubs tend to follow an ideal example of how to peacefully and effectively function in a society. We are doing Civics. Such clear examples of being independent is extremely valuable in today's strange society.

Happy Independence Day!

— Ken Okimoto

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS



**Y Service International President, Joan Wilson** wrote her last “IP e-News 2016-17” for the year. It’s titled, **HOW QUICKLY THE YEAR HAS PASSED!!!** as her term as President has come to end. Joan writes, “I had many hopes, dreams and goals. As the year progressed, many of them were achieved, some partially, but others not at all”. Nevertheless, we all should congratulate and express our appreciation for her outstanding leadership and dedication to our Y Service Movement. Joan was such a gracious host at the International Y Service Clubs Convention in Taiwan. Best to you Joan and mahalo for your service!



Welcome **Henry Grindheim, International President** from Norway as he assumed his new role July 1. Henry joined the Oostenstad Y’s Men’s Club in 1991 where he served as Club President from 1994-95. He served as Area Europe Treasurer, District Governor and Regional Director. Henry also was a member of the International Council. Served in an excellent manner, combining personal knowledge and dedication in his efforts to build a stronger international movement. Henry is said to be enthusiastic, fair, rational and balanced in his approach to problem solving in challenging situations. The **Y’s Men International** has updated its website. Please check it out – [ysmen.org](http://ysmen.org).

## U.S. Area News



Aloha and congratulations to our **2017-2019 U.S. Area Y Service President, Tibor Foki**. Tibor and his wife, Charl attended our 81st Hawaii Region Convention on Kauai and made some everlasting friendships. Best wishes Tibor from

all your fellow Hawaii Y Service Club members.



Hawaii Region Y Service Clubs goes to Vegas to attend the 2017 Y’s Men International Joint US, Canada, and Caribbean Area Convention in Las Vegas. Representing the Aloha State August 4-7, will be **Eddie Miwa, Regional Director; Duke Chung, Regional Secretary/Treasurer; Regional Counselors Ray Seto, Kaimuki Y Service Club; Rick Lau, Central Y Service Club, Bobby Stivers-Apiki, Hilo Y’s Men & Women’s Club.**

## OVG District News



**JoAnn McCarthy**, Metro District Governor will be convening her first District meeting on Thursday, July 20th at Kalihi YMCA. On the agenda, will be discussion of the 82nd Hawaii Region Convention. Our club, the Hilo Y’s Men & Women’s Club submitted a request to host the 2018 Convention in Hilo at the newly Hotel.

**Russ Lynch**, Hawaii Region Bulletin Editor and Webmaster works diligently to update and maintain one of the best, if not the best Y Service website. Please take a few minutes and visit [ysmenhawaii.org](http://ysmenhawaii.org). Take another minute or two and check-out the awesome Y Service Clubs Facebook. Great picture of our club dinner with our Brother Club members.

## Partnership News – YMCA



State Senator **Kaiali’i Kahale**, District One recently announced **The Island of Hawaii YMCA** received \$678,000 from the Hawaii State Legislature Grant-in-Aid Program to renovate and expand its Y facilities to better serve Hawaii island families. The Board and staff is working together to build a better and stronger Y.

## Brother Club



### A Unique Day In A Y’s Men’s Life”

[Written and spoken memories of Torbjorn Sjoqvist, Charter Member, Vesteras Brother Club of Sweden as a Y’s Men in Hilo some 50+ years ago.]

“*Wake up, the volcano is erupting!*”. Five o’clock in the morning, you aren’t sure if you are asleep and dreaming or if a call from your host (Hilo Y’s Men, Robert & wife, Lilly Chow of Hilo) is a reality. This time it was real! Quickly into our clothes and out to the car. No doubt about the volcano. The red part of the otherwise black shy over Hilo was the solid proof.

My host told me that the erupting volcano was outside the National Park, but we should take the same road as the best point of view uses in Glenwood now when the huge waves from the hurricane Ignnacio had forced the authorities to close the coast road south of Black sand Beach. Coming outside Hilo the excitement increased even more. Seeing an erupting volcano with a lava 300 meters up in the air and the glowing hillside around is an amazing event even if you don’t come closer than 10 kilometers. When no cars are passing, you can even hear a distant roar from the yellow-red ‘monster’ and you can imagine that the sound close to the source must be overwhelming.

But, funny things never last forever. Within an hour, clouds had covered the top of the volcano and the cascade vanished from out sight. Time to return to Hilo after a quite remarkable start of the day.

Torbjorn recalls at length his memorable experiences. It was so great to meet him and his wonderful family. Aloha and Mahalo!