

Top Chefs Collaborate to Fight Hunger  
Hawaii Foodbank's annual fundraiser receives support from the community.

# OAHU • Inside Out

MARCH 2014

## Beyond The Sea

The Waikiki Aquarium  
celebrates its 110th  
Anniversary with  
'A New Wave'



**COMEDIANS  
TAKE THE  
CENTER STAGE**

**PAN-AM-DEMONIUM**  
Former airline employees  
organize Aloha Reunion

**CREATURE COMFORT**  
Tucker, the Golden  
Retriever, makes his  
rounds at the Kapiolani  
Medical Center for  
Women and Children

# Beyond The Sea

From a couple-of-fish-per-tank exhibit to a sprawling scene of colorful marine life, the Waikiki Aquarium celebrates 110 years of education, conservation and its dedication to help protect Hawaii's ocean life and friends.

By Kristen Nemoto



Waikiki Aquarium is home to more than 3,500 organisms, including this rare peppermint angelfish, which was found 400 feet of water off Moorea, Tahiti, by Bishop Museum's Dr. Richard Pyle.



**WAIKIKI  
AQUARIUM'S  
110TH  
ANNIVERSARY:  
A NEW WAVE**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH  
19, 9 A.M. TO 1 P.M.**

Royal Hawaiian Band will play from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Representatives from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), Plant Quarantine, Welina Manoa, University of Hawaii Botany Department and Hard Rock Café will be out on the Aquarium's Great Lawn to discuss current marine issues.

**SATURDAY, MARCH  
22, 9 A.M. TO 2 P.M.**

Families are invited to see the musical "Honu by the Sea" by Johnson Enos at 11 a.m., a seal-and-shark-themed birthday presentation, arts and crafts, a Lego build, a chalk art display and other keiki activities.

2777 Kalakaua Ave.  
waikikiaquarium.org

**W**hen Erika Wyrтки first started volunteering at the Waikiki Aquarium in 1974, her first impression was a bit muted. "They weren't here," she says, giggling and pointing to all the scattered fish and glow-in-the-dark pastel corals in the Waikiki Aquarium's Barrier Reef exhibit.

Her eyes gaze through the majestic water underworld before circling in tight to the aquarium's oldest and largest 170-pound *Tridacna* clam. "He's been here since I can remember. Just him and a couple of fish in each tank. It was actually really sad looking."

A newlywed at the time to the late Klaus Wyrтки — a prestigious and beloved professor of oceanography at the University of Hawaii at Manoa — Erika Wyrтки wanted to find "something to do" in her spare time for the community. Through her husband's profession, she grew an interest in the aquatic world and decided the Waikiki Aquarium would be the best fit.

"When I first volunteered there were six to seven of us docents and we were assigned children to our group," says the sprightly 74-year-old who currently volunteers every Monday at the Waikiki Aquarium's Natural Selections Gift Shop. "I just loved showing the kids around and answering their questions. Things have changed since then of course ... I wouldn't be able to remember all the names and places."

More than a century later, the Waikiki Aquarium has grown from a quiet attraction at the end of the Waikiki trolley line to Hawaii's primary educational facility for Pacific marine life and ocean conservation. Revered as the second oldest aquarium in the United States, the facility houses more than 3,500 organisms, 285 volunteers, and welcomes over 330,000 people and 30,000 school-children each year. As March 19 marks the 110th

anniversary, the Waikiki Aquarium will host two celebrations to commemorate and honor the community and its contributing partners.

"The partnerships have given us the opportunity to expand our reach," says MaryLou Foley, the Waikiki Aquarium's director of community outreach. From collaborative efforts of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to the generous donations from Hard Rock Café, Foley is jazzed to know that there are still people and organizations "out there" who care about one of the most treasured assets that Hawaii has to offer: ocean life and culture.

"The Waikiki Aquarium reminds us that our natural resources are still fragile," she says. "We're merely at a tipping point if efforts are not constantly made to show that this is what we used to have in abundance. The Aquarium has done a lot in terms of research and education to the public; and it's the education that allows people to be more aware of their impact on our marine life and to understand that we are not the only ones in this world."

Waikiki Aquarium's director, Dr. Andrew Rossiter, is looking forward to the 110th anniversary as an "opportunity to revitalize (the) facility, exhibits and marine education programs."

"The Aquarium has truly become a leading resource for marine education and conservation in the Pacific," Rossiter says. "We would like to further engage the public in our sustainability efforts."

A particular series of events that represents the Waikiki Aquarium's push for conservation and awareness is the Waikiki Coastal Restoration effort — a roundup of volunteers who generously spend a weekend day scouring and removing thousands of pounds of invasive algae from the reefs of Waikiki Beach. When Wyrтки is not doing her morning swim out at Ala Moana Beach Park, you can find her at every algae cleanup.

"Anyone can volunteer," she says. "It's a great way to see what exactly is happening out in our reefs."

From the restoration project and Hawaiian Monk Seal display to the popular Edge of the Reef exhibit and the hypnotic jellyfish in the Ocean Drifters tank, Wyrтки asserts that there is no other facility that exudes the same intimate and community-minded spirit like the Waikiki Aquarium.

"The growth since I was here has been just marvelous," she says. "I've had visitors come up to me and say that this is such a first-class aquarium. And I agree; it really is beautiful. It's a great learning institution for all of us."



**WAIKIKI AQUARIUM THEN AND NOW** (Clockwise from opposite page) A child presses his face against the popular Hunters on the Reef exhibit; Hoailona, the Hawaiian Monk Seal; the outside of Waikiki Aquarium circa 1970; a docent volunteer shows visiting schoolchildren around the interactive Edge of the Reef exhibit; butterfly fishes; schoolchildren wait their turn to touch a taxidermy pufferfish at the Waikiki Aquarium in 1975; a Hawaiian Green Sea Turtle on display provided by Sea Life Park.

