

The Molokai Dispatch

MOLOKAI NEWS, MOLOKAI STYLE - WWW.THEMOLOKAIISPATCH.COM SINCE 1985

NOVEMBER 23, 2011 - VOLUME 27, ISSUE 47



Ka Lama Hawaii newspapers from 1834 were digitized by Awaiaulu staff; volunteers will now work to transcribe 60,000 pages of the historic material into searchable format. Newspaper images courtesy nupepa.org.

Old News, New Meaning

BY CATHERINE CLUETT

From 1834 to 1948, over 125,000 pages of Hawaiian language newspaper were printed. However, those pages are crumbling, and the knowledge they contain would otherwise be lost if not for the efforts of Awaiaulu, an organization dedicated to publishing Hawaiian texts whose staff has been working for the past 10 years to preserve and digitize the newspaper pages.

Now, an Awaiaulu initiative called 'Ike Ku'oko'a – or Liberating Knowledge – is gathering volunteers statewide to type word for word thousands of Hawaiian articles into a searchable format.

"Not only is this the historical mate-

rial from a time when Hawaiians were the nation, it was set up by consensus to be the national repository of knowledge for the future," said Awaiaulu Executive Director Puakea Nogelmeier, via email.

With excitement for the project growing, nearly 1,000 volunteers have already signed up online to become part of the effort, said 'Ike Ku'oko'a Outreach Coordinator Kau'i Sai-Dudoit. The goal is to have 3,000 volunteers working statewide.

The project will launch on Nov. 28 – the day of the Hawaiian holiday La Ku'oko'a, or Independence Day. Organizers hope to complete the transcription of about 60,000 pages within a year.

"It's about reclaiming Hawai-

ian knowledge," said Sai-Dudoit. "This knowledge helps empower us today."

The first Hawaiian language newspaper was printed in 1834 by Lahainaluna students on Maui as a school project, according to Sai-Dudoit. The idea soon took root in the community, and many Hawaiian newspapers were printed around the state.

"Our kupuna felt it was that important that they spent their lives putting history, mele [and other recordings of culture] into newspapers," said Sai-Dudoit. "One hundred fourteen years Hawaiians were telling their stories in newspapers."

Here on Molokai, Hawaiian language and culture remain alive, especially

ARCHIVES CONT. ON PAGE 2