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**Kakaako Keiki fest**

Mugen Pavo, left, and Keuane Hughes enjoyed the petting zoo Saturday during the inaugural Keiki Street Festival, which filled two blocks of Kakaako with aina-based and Hawaiian cultural activities. Local food vendors, retailers and festival booths with nature-themed “Exploration Zones” lined the streets offering a day of fun and enrichment for the whole family. Above, a bubble machine kept kids busy.

**KOKUA**

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benefits, can call the DOH at 808-586-4462,” he said.

DOH can release information only to those listed as the surviving spouse and/or person who reported the death, he emphasized.

**Q:** What exactly should affected survivors do to limit harm from the unauthorized access of their spouse’s personal identifiable information, which thieves may use to try to open fraudulent

credit and financial accounts in the dead person’s name, illegally obtain government benefits or divert Social Security benefits from a rightful beneficiary? Will the appropriate steps be covered in the letter that DOH is mailing? Will the DOH pay for monitoring services for affected survivors?

**A:** “We encourage individuals to remain vigilant with regard to any remaining unsettled matters such as accounts, estate, life insurance claims or Social Security survivor benefits and to contact the parties handling such matters,” Hamamoto said.

No, the letter doesn’t give step-by-step instructions or mention monitoring; it contains basically the same information as the DOH released Thursday, according to a copy provided to Kokua Line.

You mentioned some risks from this type of identity theft, and there are others as well, including the potential draining of financial accounts from which the deceased person’s name was not removed and the filing of fraudulent tax returns.

The nonprofit Cybercrime Support Network has a to-do list after “deceased family

member identity theft,” which is sometimes called ghosting. Read it at 808news.com/DFMIT, or via its homepage, fightcybercrime.org.

**Q:** Auwe! This was preventable! The government must do a better job protecting information!

**A:** “In response to this incident, we are in the process of expeditiously implementing new security measures for (Electronic Death Registration System) external accounts, including a requirement for more complex passwords, multi-factor authentication, and

automatic account disabling following a period of inactivity. We are also conducting a security review of external accounts for all of our systems.” Health Director Kenneth Fink said in the letter being mailed to affected survivors.

The unauthorized access was possible because the EDRS log-in credential of a former medical certifier at Tripler Army Medical Center remained active after the employee left the job in June 2021. The credential was compromised and sold on the internet. The DOH disabled the credential Jan. 23,

the day it learned of the breach.

**Q:** Who sold the log-in code?

**A:** “The investigation identified two IP addresses: one located in Kentucky and one in the Netherlands. The Office of Homeland Security was informed of the breach,” Hamamoto said.

Write to Kokua Line at Honolulu Star-Advertiser, 500 Ala Moana Blvd., Suite 7-500, Honolulu, HI 96813; call 808-529-4773; or email kokualine@staradvertiser.com.

**RED HILL**

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of permanently closing Red Hill after a fuel leak at the facility contaminated the Navy’s Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam drinking water system, sickening military families. Fuel operations were discontinued shortly after the leak and the Navy is embarking on \$75 million worth of infrastructure repairs and upgrades to ensure that draining the approximately 104 million gallons of fuel sitting in the tanks is done safely.

DOD also is working on a permanent closure plan for the facility, which includes environmental remediation, that must be approved by the state Department of Health. Owners of underground fuel tanks typically have three options when closing a facility: remove the tanks, fill them in or leave them in the ground.

Defense officials have indicated that rather than removing the underground facility, which includes 20 tanks and extensive pipelines that lead down to Pearl Harbor, it wants to keep the infrastructure in the ground and potentially find another use for it. Figuring out how to repurpose the aging facility that’s unlike any other in the country has sparked skepticism from groups including the Hawaii Sierra Club and Honolulu Board of Water Supply.

The 20 steel-lined tanks are encased in concrete and built into massive cavities that were mined into the ground at Red Hill. Those cavities lie under approximately 100 feet of rock. Three underground pipelines run about 3.5 miles to Pearl Harbor fueling piers.

The design of the facility is such that just filling in the tanks with an inert material after its defueled would be risky for workers because there’s so little room to stage material and equipment, according to a recent report from defense officials, while trying to remove the tanks could destabilize the ground below and result in a catastrophic failure.



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**Although the state Department of Health would need to approve the Navy’s closure plan of the Red Hill fuel tanks — whether to completely remove, refill or repurpose them — Meredith Berger, assistant secretary of the Navy for energy, installations and environment, said ultimately it’s up to Department of Defense officials to decide any future uses. Berger is shown at a Navy Red Hill news conference at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.**

The Navy currently estimates that closing the facility in place could be done in two to three years after Red Hill is defueled, and that implementing an alternative use for Red Hill could delay the timeframe by another year, though that estimate is highly uncertain because the Navy hasn’t identified another use.

DOH NEEDS to approve the Navy’s closure plan, but Meredith Berger, assistant secretary of the Navy for energy, installations and environment, told the Honolulu Star-Advertiser last month that, ultimately, it is up to defense officials to decide any future uses for Red Hill. She has emphasized it will not be used for storing fuel or any other potential contaminant.

A critical drinking water aquifer for Oahu sits just 100 feet below the tanks.

“This is a call that we will make in collaboration with the community and with our partners at the Department of Health,” she told the Star-Advertiser’s “Spotlight Hawaii” live-stream program Feb. 8, when asked who gets to decide on what, if anything, Red Hill is used for in the future. “It is a Navy facility and so we are ultimately, because it is our facility, in charge of making that disposition. But this is a place where we are eagerly

seeking the collaboration and inputs of the community because it is something that we want to do thoughtfully and together. But if we are talking specifically, it is a Navy facility so we are the owners of it.”

Nakupuna Cos. was awarded a half-million-dollar public outreach contract earlier this year to solicit ideas from the community. Initially both the Navy and the company were tight-lipped about their plans, refusing to release the names of the subcontractors and details about how Nakupuna planned to gather information from the public.

Since then, the Navy has disclosed that CommPac and SMS Hawaii are the subcontractors.

COMMPAC CEO Kitty Yannone said her public relations firm will be conducting initial one-on-one interviews with 20 to 30 members of the community to gauge sentiment about Red Hill. She said the idea is to delve deeper into the community to get a better read on how people are feeling.

“They may not work on Bishop Street or be in the Legislature,” said Yannone, stressing the company wants to hear diverse views about Red Hill.

Yannone said CommPac’s work will go beyond just asking regular people if they

have an idea about how to repurpose Red Hill.

“I think we don’t resolve things until we hear about how it’s really affected people,” she said.

Yannone said the talk-story sessions, which will be largely open-ended, will assist the work of SMS Hawaii, a research firm that will be conducting community surveys.

One survey will be posted online and available to the general public to provide suggestions for repurposing Red Hill, said Nakupuna spokesperson Andy Minor. He said the survey also will gather information about how people are learning about Red Hill and what more they would like to know.

He said a separate survey will be conducted by mail and sent out to residents in areas surrounding Red Hill, as well as be available online to Oahu residents. This survey will be a followup to information collected from the first survey.

“After the completion of the surveys, Nakupuna and our partners will synthesize the recommendations collected from both the surveys and outreach and present them in a report to the Navy,” Minor said by email. “Our team’s job is to make sure that our community’s voice is represented and heard as the Navy plans for the beneficial re-use of the facility.”

**DEBT**

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many of the company’s retail customers, which compounded the firm’s liquidity problems, according to Boulware.

In 2019 several Kona coffee farmers named Hawaiian Isles Coffee — then known as Hawaiian Isles Kona Coffee — and a dozen or so major national retailers in a class-action lawsuit claiming they were selling “Kona coffee” that contained little or no actual coffee grown in the Kona District of Hawaii island.

According to the suit, the company “deliberately misleads consumers into believing that Hawaiian Isles coffee products contain significant amounts of premium Kona coffee beans in order to justify the high price Hawaiian Isles charges for ordinary commodity coffee.”

“The deceptive marketing slogans, product names, and package designs are all intended to trade off the reputation and goodwill of the Kona name,” the suit said.

In a settlement reached last year the company agreed to pay the farmers \$800,000, remove “Kona” from its company name and email its subscriber list to explain the difference between 100% Kona coffee and Kona coffee blends.

According to Boulware’s



**It just goes to show you how difficult it is to do manufacturing in this state. COVID didn’t help.”**

**Chuck Choi**  
Bankruptcy attorney

declaration, Hawaiian Isles Coffee was able to make only the first payment of \$375,000 due under the settlement.

Meanwhile, landlords on two different islands went to court last year in a move to evict the company from property it was leasing, he said.

“It just goes to show you how difficult it is to do manufacturing in this state,” Choi said. “COVID didn’t help.”

Hawaiian Isles Water was carried by major retail and grocery chains in Hawaii and smaller stores as well. Sheryl Toda, Foodland spokesperson, said its stores stopped selling Hawaiian Isles Coffee before the pandemic due to “production issues.”

Packs of 1.5-liter bottles of Hawaiian Isles Water still might be on some store shelves, she said, adding that Foodland is selling out the rest of its product.



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**The coffee from Hawaiian Isles Kona Coffee Co. was often included in hotel room amenities.**