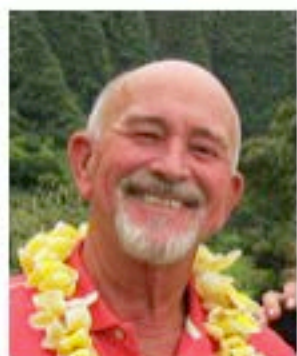


A large, ancient tree with a thick trunk and sprawling branches, set in a park-like setting with other trees and a building in the background. The tree's trunk is massive and textured, with several large branches extending upwards and outwards. The leaves are green and dense, filling the upper portion of the frame. In the background, there are other trees and a building with a dark roof. The ground is grassy, and a picnic table is visible in the distance. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

THE OUTDOOR CIRCLE
ANNUAL REPORT
2018 - 2019

President's Message



As the 2018-2019 year comes to a close and my three-year term as the President of The Outdoor Circle concludes, I want to thank all of the branches, Circle members, the staff, and fellow board and committee volunteers for their time, financial support, hard work, and continued promotion of the goals and mission of The Outdoor Circle.

Over the course of the last three years, both the Circle and its branches have taken outstanding leadership positions on challenges that face our communities. We have always tried to speak with one unified voice that respects the mission of our founding principles, but also upholds the goals and concerns of the communities of the eleven branches.

Over the years, The Outdoor Circle has been involved in planting over a million trees in Hawai'i, and we are not done yet. Our proposed planting projects are continuing throughout the next few decades to help deal with climate change and the pressures of increased urbanization.

We continue to look for new and financially secure ways to best fund the ongoing expenses associated with running the overall operation of the organization while, at the same time, exploring ways to educate both our members and the community about the environmental concerns and challenges that face our island's livability.

The Outdoor Circle has the enviable legacy of being one of the stewards of keeping Hawai'i clean, green and beautiful. Our strong leadership through our TOC staff, Board of Directors, and our branches, working with the City, State, local businesses and community groups, has made significant impacts on how all of these groups can work together towards preserving, enhancing and planting for Hawai'i's future.

It has been an honor to work with all of you over the last few years. I know The Outdoor Circle will continue to be successful under the direction of the new Board of Directors.

Aloha and Mahalo,

Steve F. Mechler

President, The Outdoor Circle

Carbon Neutrality Challenge ~ 2019 Update

The Carbon Neutrality Challenge (CNC) is an innovative program that combines environmental education with the opportunity to become carbon neutral for the year through the planting of native trees. The program, which is a collaboration with the Mora Lab of the University of Hawai'i's Department of Geography and Environment, began in 2015 and has now seen hundreds of participants take the challenge to become carbon neutral.



In 2018, the project expanded from the initial planting site at Camp Palehua to also include reforestation activities at Ala Mahamoe, which allowed additional partners to contribute to the program such as Ko'olau Mountains Watershed Partnership (KMWP), the Garden Club of Honolulu, and the Sierra Club. Through this collaborative partnership, the CNC was able to host a 1,000-tree planting

event on November 17, 2018 which saw over 230 volunteers of all ages plant 18 species of natives, amounting to over 1,100 plants in an area that was once completely covered by a dense grove of Haole Koa. The event was extremely successful and received an outstanding amount of media coverage, highlighting the goals of the program and why it is necessary for Hawai'i to continue planting programs of this nature.

This fall (2019), there will be a follow-up event featuring 10,000 native trees that will be planted around Oahu and allow any interested members of the community the opportunity to not only learn about the many benefits that trees provide, but to also plant enough trees to offset their carbon footprint for the year. Due to the hard work of many volunteers from the University of Hawai'i and the surrounding community over the past several months, all of these trees have been propagated and are now growing at the CNC's greenhouse located at the Magoon Research Station in Manoa.



East Hawai'i Tree Giveaway / Recovery Campaign

On June 29, 2019, the East Hawai'i branch of the Outdoor Circle held its first ever tree giveaway event which saw over 900 trees donated to the East Hawai'i community. This event, which was a partnership with the Arbor Day Foundation and Fed Ex, utilized a \$25,000 grant to help replant trees in the East Hawai'i area that was heavily impacted by the natural disasters that took place during the summer of 2018. The goal of the program was to replace trees that were lost in these events, while at the same time, choosing trees that would be desirable to property owners and would also help mitigate future impacts associated with these disasters, especially flooding.

The outcome saw all 911 trees, consisting of 43 fruit and native species, find new homes not only in the East Hawai'i area, but around the entire island. In addition, the giveaway event proved to be a major publicity event for The Outdoor Circle and its East Hawai'i branch, helping to reach new demographics that had not heard of the organization and seeing new members of all ages join the branch.



While this event occurred due to a competitive grant to replant trees in an area affected by natural disasters, the recent success of the tree giveaway has helped to forge a strong relationship with the Arbor Day Foundation. As such, this partnership can help provide exciting opportunities for other TOC branches that might want to conduct their own tree planting/giveaway events.

Exceptional Tree Initiative ~ Update

Over the past year, TOC's Exceptional Tree (ET) Initiative has continued to grow in popularity and as a result of this, has been featured by numerous media outlets including articles in

Atlas Obscura, *Honolulu Magazine*, and *Civil Beat*. These articles cover the history of Hawai'i's Exceptional Tree program, TOC's role in helping to establish the program and the successes that have been accomplished thus far, while also highlighting future needs of the program. As TOC's Exceptional Tree Map was one of the main features of the articles, this online, interactive resource received aesthetic and content upgrades that corresponded with the release of these articles.



In addition, due to TOC's extensive work on the ET program and Myles Ritchie's graduate research on a global standardized framework for such programs, TOC has proven to be an invaluable resource to various locations around the world that wish to begin or improve their own Exceptional Tree programs. This dissemination of knowledge

has allowed TOC to help improve Hawai'i's Exceptional Tree program and the specimens it protects, while at the same time, acting as a world leader on this topic, thus helping to ensure that some of the world's most magnificent tree specimens are also preserved.

Finally, we are thrilled to announce that the Hawai'i County Arborist Advisory Committee (AAC) was recently reformed and will now begin reviewing ET nominations for Hawai'i Island. This follows a 10 year hiatus which saw no new ETs added for the county, however, with the current group of devoted individuals on the AAC, including Jonathan Sudler of TOC's East Hawai'i Branch, TOC is looking forward to seeing many new Exceptional Trees added across the island.

Branch Highlights 2018-2019

East Hawai'i Island Branch

The East Hawai'i Branch continued its push to save the amazing grove of trees on Banyan Drive, with a historical presentation by Jane Hoff. Our branch Vice President has had an active role in the Hawai'i County Arborists Advisory Committee to the Mayor's office. In response to the 2018 natural disasters, we received a grant from the Arbor Day Foundation that allowed us to give out over 900 trees to residents of East Hawai'i, and we are working with the Hawai'i County Planning Department and Parks and Recreation on future potential tree plantings.

East Honolulu Branch

The East Honolulu Branch helped save a Monkeypod from destruction by Bishop Estate at their construction site for a new mall in Kahala.

Kaua'i Branch

The Kaua'i Branch worked with the contractors responsible for the Lihue Town Core Mobility and Revitalization Project on which trees to remove and which ones to save. Spent time training the Public Works crew on how to prune the shower trees on the Koloa Bypass Road. We are spearheading the efforts to get these trees on the Exceptional Tree List, and continue to be the go to organization when large trees are involved.

Lani-Kailua Branch

LKOC's long-standing partnership with the Women's Community Correctional Center now includes a Goats in the Garden program, in which four goats are managed by the inmates on a daily basis, to help control the underbrush around our Learning to Grow garden nursery. Additionally, the LTG program now includes instructor-lead certified classes in Nurseryman techniques, tailored to Honolulu C&C Nursery requirements for hire, that students will be able to use upon release. A new tree farm has also been added to the program where trees are being grown from seedlings, for distribution on Arbor Day, and includes the teaching of innovative propagation techniques.

Mānoa Branch

The Mānoa Branch had another active year of volunteering to preserve the Kamānele Park heiau and beautify important landmarks like the Mānoa Theater Cemetery and UH President's house. Members educated people about the community during Mālama Mānoa's Historic Homes Tour, and at the Urban Survival Fair, we taught about sustainable gardening, as well as the need to check trees after a storm. In addition, we advocated to save the trees at Noelani Elementary, pause the Ala Wai Canal Project to consider alternatives to the USACE plan, and passed legislation to protect our residential neighborhoods from monster houses and illegal short term rentals.

North Shore Branch

The North Shore Outdoor Circle had a busy year working to preserve Ke Ala Pupukea, assisting with the Sunset Beach Restoration Project, pruning trees in Weed Circle, and volunteering in the ginger garden in Waimea Valley. NSOC also had some marvelous field trip experiences atop Mt. Ka'ala and at a ti farm in Waimanalo. NSOC members also wrote a great deal of testimony for the Honolulu City Council on various bills to preserve the view planes from Waialua through Haleiwa.

Waikiki Branch

One major success occurred in the past year, the avenue of dying Monkeypod trees along the median strip of Ala Moana Boulevard was saved with public advocacy which forced the city into repairing the defunct irrigation system.

Waikoloa Village Branch

Tomatoes, Swiss chard, zucchini, cucumbers . . . wonderful vegetables, fruits and flowers growing in the Waikoloa Village Community Garden since the first planting in March 2019. It is miraculous what will grow in this desolate, windy, blazing sun environment. The right soil mixed with abundant fertilizer is having a profoundly positive effect on our ability to grow an edible garden.

Waimea Branch

The Waimea Branch has begun construction on a new greenhouse in the Nature Park. This will allow volunteers to propagate and grow more plants for the park and the community, including a wide variety of native Hawaiian plants.

Public Policy: Proud Heritage and Future Challenge

OUR HERITAGE

Throughout its history, The Outdoor Circle has provided a public voice to advocate for governmental action to keep Hawai'i clean, green and beautiful.

- **Controlling Sign Clutter.** In its early years, The Outdoor Circle was instrumental in passing the Hawai'i Outdoor Advertising Law that bans offsite outdoor advertising signs (billboards) throughout Hawai'i. This means that any product or service can only be advertised on signs at the place that it is sold. **Only four states in the United States have achieved this goal of eliminating billboards!**

When Hawai'i's urban centers became more densely developed, each island adopted sign ordinances to regulate advertising on commercial property. The Outdoor Circle has always been at the table when these policies are developed and has worked to see that they are enforced.

- **Trees.** The Outdoor Circle has made the case that trees add to the beauty of our islands, so advocating for tree planting as well as protection and maintenance of existing trees has always been a part of our work. Today, we also recognize the importance of trees in mitigating climate change.



- **Green Space.** Preserving green space on both public and private land not only makes our islands more beautiful, but also enhances the quality of life for our citizens. The Outdoor Circle has voiced these principles at the legislature and with other government officials through the years and has succeeded in many cases to protect green space through public policy.



- **View Planes and Natural Features.** Our founders believed that the public should be able to enjoy the view of Hawai'i's scenic beauty as well as its

distinctive natural places. The Outdoor Circle has successfully advocated for preservation of forests, wetlands and historic sites and protected distinctive view planes from being obscured by development or advertising.

- **Clean and Beautiful.** From its earliest days, The Outdoor Circle has worked to keep our beautiful islands clean through public education about litter as well as public advocacy for recycling and responsible waste management.

MEETING OUR FUTURE CHALLENGES

In 2019, the Public Affairs Committee and the Board of Directors of The Outdoor Circle saw the need to identify and explain our public policy goals. We developed a comprehensive policy statement to guide our advocacy work today and in the future. This will make it easier for our Board, staff and Branches to speak with a unified voice when governmental action is needed. Our statement of Public Policies is based on The Outdoor Circle's Mission and Guiding Principles as well as our history of action on public issues.

The public policies and governmental actions we advocate are intended to Preserve and Protect the Natural Environment as well as Enhance the Natural and Built Environment in Hawai'i.

THE OUTDOOR CIRCLE'S WORK IS NEVER DONE

Some of the issues that currently require our action are:

- **Protection of Street Trees and Trees on Commercial Properties.** Construction projects going on today must be carefully monitored to avoid inadvertent destruction of mature trees. Mature trees in private parking lots are often neglected and allowed to die unless our members are vigilant in calling attention to this loss. Development plans too often call for removal of mature trees without proper consideration of the benefits they provide.



There is an urgent need for a campaign to stop the "war on trees." TOC will continue to fight tree loss and work to increase tree canopy across the state.

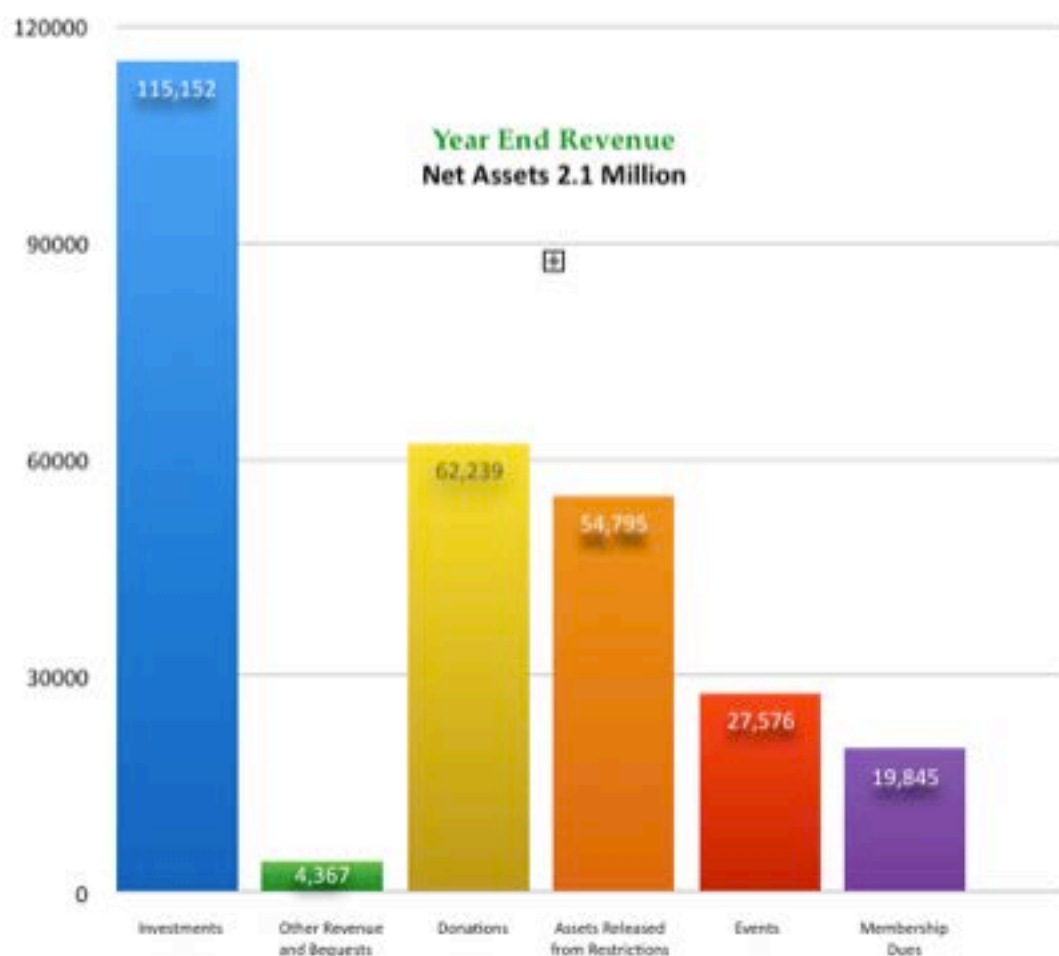
- **Preservation of Open Green Space in Urban Parks.** The past two years have seen more proposals for commercial development in urban parks that would result in reduction of green space. TOC will continue to oppose commercialization of public lands and encroachment of our open spaces by over-development of parkland.
- **Control of Mobile Advertising.** A loophole in the Hawai'i Outdoor Advertising law has been interpreted to allow signs attached to vehicles and other portable



signs. While a law was passed in 2006 to try to close this loophole, mobile signs are again proliferating—as attachments to bicycles and parked cars as well as portable signs illegally placed in road rights of way. TOC and our branches must redouble our efforts to report all sign violations; and we will also need to seek

stronger state and county laws to reduce this new form of visual blight.

Financials for Fiscal Year Ending 2018 Revenue & Expenses





Mahalo to Our Donors & Supporters

The **Outdoor Circle** relies on the generosity of individuals like you. From in-kind gifts and services to bequests and grants, our donors are the backbone of our organization. The Circle is not supported by government funding. Thanks to the consistent support of people like you, we are able to accomplish amazing things for Hawai'i nei.

This Year's Exceptional Donors (donors who gave \$500 or more in 2018-2019)

Individuals

Brian Bagnall

Arlene & Ken Block

Kelly Doyle

Peter Drewliner

Kevin Eckert

Judith Flanders

Diane Harding

Karin Hazelhoff

Donald Inouye

Mary & Harvey King

Lucia Kye

Jean Rolles

Denise Soderholm

Scott Wilson & Christine Yano

Barbara Schneider Yeackel

Corporations, Foundations and Other Entities

Adventist Health Castle

Alexander & Baldwin

American Carpet One

Arbor Day Foundation

Armstrong Foundation

County of Hawai'i

Gravity Payments

Hardware Hawaii Kailua

Home Street Bank

IBM International Foundation

Lanikai Association

LGA Family Foundation

Nicu's Spoon, Inc.

Prisanlee Fund

Sustainable Solutions Foundation

Zadoc and Lawrence Brown Foundation

Mahalo & A Hui Hou



Betty Lou Arnold Nobriga (1931-2019)

Betty Lou Arnold Nobriga, has left us with a legacy of love and dedication to helping others on their rehabilitation path. Alongside other LKOC volunteer friends working in support of the WCCC "Learning To Grow" program, Betty Lou's love of gardening and kindness toward people was ever present in her continuous smile, heartwarming positive attitude and gracious spirit.

Outgoing Board Members

The Outdoor Circle depends on a wonderful group of Board Members to help guide the organization. We thank these outgoing board members for volunteering their time and energy to help uphold our mission.

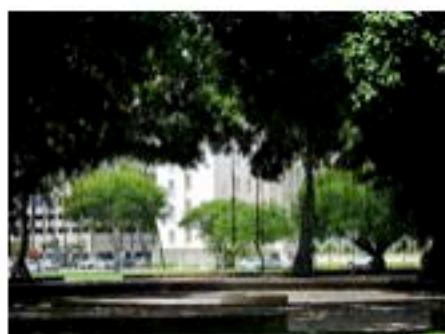


Diane Harding has been an invaluable member of the TOC Board, her last position held was as TOC Treasurer. In prior years she served as Branch Representative, where she has remained an active committee member, as well as the Development and Nominations Committees. Diane has always been the first to offer assistance in a variety of areas: she volunteered to work on TOC's input for the City & County updated Land Use Ordinance and worked extensively to formulate the final version of the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan. Her service to the organization also extends to the community level, where she currently serves as the President of the Lani-Kailua Branch of The Outdoor Circle.

Steve Mechler has served in numerous capacities on the board, most recently serving as Board President. He is also Chair of the Beautification Committee for the Lani-Kailua Branch of The Outdoor Circle and has been a long-time supporter of TOC. During his time on the Board, Steve was instrumental in helping to save the mature trees at Manoa Marketplace, and was involved in many other issues related to tree preservation and protecting scenic views.



Our Mission



To keep Hawai'i clean, green, and beautiful by preserving, protecting, and enhancing our environment for future generations.



Board of Directors 2018-2019

Steve Mechler, President
Scott Wilson, Vice President
Diane Harding, Treasurer
Elizabeth O'Sullivan, Secretary
Cheryl Langton, Branch Representative
Kathleen Bryan, Advisor, Development Committee
Mimi Bornhorst Gaddis, Advisor, Nominating Committee
Lowana Richardson, Advisor
Directors:
Eric Hansen
Christian Palmer
Jennie Peterson

Branch Presidents

East Hawai'i Island: Donald Inouye
East Honolulu: Susan Spangler
Kane'ohe: Mary Yannell
Kaua'i: Maureen Murphy
Lani-Kailua: Diane Harding
Manoa: Jeremy Lam
North Shore: Lea Albert, Ruth Holmberg
Waikiki: Brian Bagnall
Waikoloa: W.S. Lawrence
Waimea: Cheryl Langton

Staff

Winston Welch, Executive Director
Jackie Wah, Operations Director
Myles Ritchie, Programs Director



The Outdoor Circle

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Cover: Kamānele Park, Mānoa Valley, Oahu