

Parade for Peace seeks entries

SPECIAL TO NHH

Downtown Honokaa joins the United Nations International Day of Peace on Sunday, Sept. 20 during its 3rd Annual Peace Day Parade & Festival.

Starting off at noon from Honokaa High School, the Parade is a "moving stage" of music, floats, and entertainment with a message, including Chicago's popular Jesse White Tumblers, whose airborne acrobatics wowed the judges on "America's Got Talent." The Tumblers join rock bands, Honokaa High School Jazz Band, award-winning taiko drum groups, keiki hula halau, drill teams and marching bands, ukulele orchestras, modern dance troupes, and many others on parade.

A huge highlight of the Peace Day festivities, the Jesse White Tumblers have soared around the world, including two presidential inaugurations, NBA and NFL halftime shows, TV's "Late Night with David Letterman," "The Tonight Show," "Good Morning America" and movies like "Heaven is a Playground" and "Ferris Buehler's Day



Members of the Jesse White Tumblers who will perform in Honokaa.

Off."

Since the team's inception by Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White, more than 10,000 young men and women have benefited from the program, established in 1959 to promote positive activity for Chicago's youth at risk. (For more information, visit www.JesseWhiteTumblingTeam.com)

The Parade ends at the County Sports Complex

where the community Peace Day Festival begins at 1 p.m., with great local and ethnic foods, artists and crafters, live entertainment and more. Last year's event gave Honokaa a big voice, with more than 2,000 participants and news coverage on all the major local television network stations.

"This is by far the largest and most significant Peace Day event in the state and, as far as I know, the only such

celebration worldwide," said event chair Miles Okumura. "It's a great opportunity for everyone to come out and demonstrate to the world their support of peace, compassion and awareness of universal interdependence. The perfect time to think globally, act locally, and have a lot of fun doing it."

The United Nations has been celebrating the International Day of Peace for more than 25

years but the official Hawaii Peace Day was signed into law in 2007 by Gov. Linda Lingle. Proceeds go towards community services, including educational programs, charities, environmental activism programs and various peace initiatives.

The day before the Parade, Saturday, Sept. 19, the Peace Committee presents a Honokaa Block Party with very special "Drums not Drugs" program

to reinforce good choices for Hawaii's youth. "Drums not Drugs" features Native American, Hawaiian and Taiko drumming, motivational speaker Brian Frejo and unique sidewalk chalk art contest spearheaded by Mar Ortaleza of the Abled Hawaii Artists' Festival. (Contest details to be posted soon at www.PeaceDayParade.org)

The 3rd Annual Parade & Festival for the United Nations International Day of Peace is presented by the Peace Committee of the Honokaa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple in cooperation with the United Nations and numerous community organizations. Major financial support has been provided by the County of Hawaii Department of Research and Development (Tourism Division) and the Honpa Hongwanji Missions of Hawaii.

Block party, parade and festival spaces are now available and groups are urged to sign up quickly. For application forms and more information on how to get involved, call 883-0669, email info@peacedayparade.org or visit www.peacedayparade.org.