

Peace Day Parade looking for entries

Downtown Honokaa joins the United Nations International Day of Peace on Sept. 20 during its third annual Peace Day Parade and Festival. Stepping off at noon from Honokaa High School, the parade is a "moving stage" of music, floats and entertainment with a message, including Chicago's amazing Jesse White Tumblers, whose airborne acrobatics wowed the judges on "America's Got Talent." The group 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.

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 the small town of Honokaa a big voice, with more than 2,000 participants.

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 toward community services, including educational programs, charities, environmental activism programs and various peace initiatives.

On Sept. 19, the peace committee presents a Honokaa block party with a "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 a sidewalk chalk art contest spearheaded by Mar Ortaleza of the Abled Hawaii Artists' Festival. Contest details will be posted soon at PeaceDayParade.org.

The third annual Parade and 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, e-mail info@peacedayparade.org or visit peacedayparade.org.