

# Kalapana Seaview News

## What's happened to the View in Seaview?

Winter 1994-5

After threatening to bring in power for so many years HELCO amassed heavy equipment and in a few short weeks has changed the image of our subdivision. If your property is in one of the few wooded areas you may not have a view like this picture taken near our office. The project has been temporarily stopped but no matter whether you want power or not no one can rationalize that it is a pretty sight.

Not only affecting Seaview, this project is slated to march along the RED ROAD through Puna Beach Palisades and spread its grid over Kehena Beach taking trees and the view away in its path. Not everyone wants power and if the new Friends Of The RED ROAD has its way we will remain a solar community and Helco can bring the equipment back in and take away this unsightly mess.

### Notes From A Resident

The issue of electrification of the communities along the 'RED ROAD' in Puna is by no means simple. There are several groups of people with different agendas both residents, property owners hoping to be residents, and investors hoping to make money. I volunteered to publish this newsletter for the Kalapana Seaview Community Association so that I may be able to include this letter and express my views.



photo courtesy G. Brad Lewis

### *Who Am I?*

I, for one, fall into a few different categories:

1. I am a resident who moved into the area primarily because of its rural, unspoiled and unpopulated nature. I love the quiet, the beach, the clean air, and the overall beauty of lower Puna.
2. I am a home owner in Seaview and have a working and very livable solar power system which lights my home, runs my computer, and makes my cappuccino. It was expensive to install and is not the easiest to maintain.
3. I am an investor with two lots in Puna Beach Palisades which I hope to sell one day for profit.
4. I run a woodshop in the area for my livelihood and operate a diesel generator, which is always a maintenance headache.

Years ago I learned that the area

was slated to be electrified, and as a wood worker and computer consultant who consumes a fair share of power I was happy that one day I could just plug in. However as much as it might benefit my needs, simplify my life, and increase my net worth, I for one want no part of it and would encourage all owners, residents, and investors to carefully examine the situation.

### *The Present Community*

Kalapana Seaview Estates was subdivided many years ago and has 940 lots. There are very few which are developed, fewer than 75 houses of which most are sub-standard, that is, not built to County Building Code. Street after street exists without houses and very few neighbors are on adjacent lots to one another. Today the County would not let a subdivision like Seaview come into being. Until a few months ago there were only a few telephone poles on some streets, now there are tall power poles on all streets, and in many places it is very ugly. Once the wires are strung and the transformers hung it will be considerably worse.

There is no question of lava risk. Often at night one can see flowing lava from several viewing points in Seaview. The subdivision itself is sitting on a lava flow not yet a half century old. Several years ago the power company put electric poles into Kalapana, and as you may know the lava flow erased Kalapana from the map. That was less than 4 miles from Seaview. A few years ago a Federal Agency suggested that no new buildings

be permitted on the slopes of this, the world's most active volcano.

People living in this remote area are truly pioneers. Living off all utilities and with virtually no local employment opportunities (as well as a high lava risk), makes this an 'undesireable' place to live. Conventional home owners insurance is not available and the high risk lava coverage is very limited and expensive. The County and State both discourage development in the area. This is why after all these years there has been very little development and such a small population. I live here because I think it's magical. Driving down the coastal road one could imagine being in Asia or Central America. At present there are no power poles marking 'modern' civilization. Electrification threatens to spoil this rural nature and once it's gone it's GONE!

### *What is SSPP?*

Electrification under the SSPP program has been going on in Hawaii for many years, in fact it was first described to our community in a public meeting held at Harry K. Brown Park in Kalapana; that whole area is now under lava. It was simply explained that after one customer requested power the people residing along the line would be asked whether they wished to participate in the plan. The power company would subsidize one third of the project and the participants would pay the other two thirds, which would be financed for them by the power company at 9% for eight years making it a reasonable monthly payment. Poles would only be provided for those people subscribing.

### *What's In It For Helco??*

What is actually happening is quite different. Helco decided to electrify all three subdivisions, that is a full grid. Imagine in Seaview where there is vacant street after vacant street which was open land is now a power grid. The economics of this project

leaves a big question? The overall cost of the project is estimated at 1.8 million. With fewer than 15% of the land owners participating, the initial revenue is estimated at less than \$500,000. Thus, instead of Helco subsidizing 33% as the program dictates, it is subsidizing over 70%, and the big question is **why??** With a big loss taken in Kalapana only a few miles away, **why** is Helco so anxious to implement this project that it is subsidizing over twice its original proposal? Some speculate it's tied in to their push for more geothermal development. To me this doesn't make sense because there are so few homes qualifying for power that it won't increase the demand by any significant amount. Another speculation is that it behooves Helco to show a loss and consequently justify higher rates (which by the way are among the highest in the nation). **It just doesn't make sense??**

### *Who Ordered Power And How Will It Impact The Community?*

At a recent community meeting it was announced that some 180 lot owners requested power and over 133 alone in Seaview. This is interesting because there are probably fewer than 10 homes in Seaview qualifying for immediate power (that is having a final electrical inspection). One can only assume that mostly it is speculators hoping to make a profit. As outlined above there are so many factors (lava risk, no employment, insurance, ...) which have kept development in check that electricity may or may not inspire new construction. It's interesting to note that the Kehena resident who requested power and initiated this mess has since installed an alternative energy system and has not signed up.

What will power bring into the area? Speculators think that it will bring higher property values and more people. This may or may not come to pass because of the

many other factors which have kept development and so called progress in check.

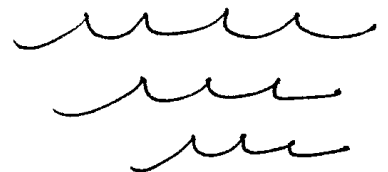
### *Unspoiled Hawaii*

In the 70's Kona was a sleepy village, and the main road along the ocean was unpaved. Today it resembles Orange County with Costco, K-Mart, and Wall Mart on the way. An infrastructure which has not kept up with 'so called' progress makes for traffic jams and dangerous pedestrian conditions. This used to be the summer spot for the Ali'i or royalty. Now it's a tourist trap. This area in lower Puna is unspoiled and maybe, just maybe, it is worth more left this way. I for one certainly think so and have written to find out if there are other owners who are like minded.

I am opposed to power in the area. So much opposed that if somehow the project could be abandoned and the poles removed I would be willing to contribute \$3000 toward having all the poles removed. (This is the amount people were to pay for hookup cost.)

### *Help!*

If you have ordered power and would reconsider your participation, or if you are interested in preserving the area as it has been, or if you just wish to be kept informed, please complete the information on the paid advertisement on the inside of the back cover of this newsletter. Anyone wishing to discuss this further please write Athena Peanut c/o Friends Of The RED ROAD, PO Box 181, Pahoehoe, Hawaii, 96778 or call her at (808) 965-8183. May the force be with us!



county laws and resolutions. It must be challenged!

Less than 15% of the 1287 lots in all three subdivisions signed contracts with Helco. Of the total 180 contracts, 133 Seaview lots were signed up! The vast majority of these lot owners do not live in Hawaii and do not understand the sensitive nature of this land—geologic, environmental and cultural. We are in Hazard Zone 2, directly below the fault line; (a string of cinder cones which erupt quite regularly on the most active volcano in the world). This is one of the most sensitive spots on the planet today — this sensitivity demands carefully thought out policies and actions.

We need the help and support of every one of you. Please read and respond to the paid advertisement from Friends of the RED ROAD. Even if you have signed a contract with Helco you can write and tell them you are more interested in their Mobile PV System (solar photo voltaic mobile units for rural areas) now used extensively on the mainland. You could also write Helco and tell them you have changed your mind!

There is no doubt that there

are several endangered and protected species that inhabit the area. A few years ago the electric utility on a neighbor island was ordered to remove coastal power transmission lines because they caused death of the A'o bird (Newell's Shearwater). The A'o once believed to be extinct nests here, along with the I'o (Hawaiian hawk), the Pueo (Hawaiian owl) and the Hawaiian Hoary Bat. We have legal basis and evidence of a multiplicity of violations on all governmental levels.

We are facing the most formidable opponent. Many say it is useless to fight Helco. But amazingly we have been experiencing small victories every step of the way. Last week Friends Of The RED ROAD filed a preliminarnt injunction to stop work on this project until the environmental statement assessment (EA) and environmental impact study (EIS) process is completed. The court granted Friends a favorable decision and a partial injunction restricting tree cutting and excessive trimming in the Kehena subdivision so as not to cause irreparable damage. Furthermore the court said "...based upon the state of the evidence presented, there is a probability that Friends will succeed on the merits of its argument that an environmental assessment is required." This is a tremendous victory for us although only a small part of the

work to be done. As this newsletter goes to press, the next legal step is being explored, fundraisers and media campaigns are being planned.

I believe we are in the flow, on the crest of an enormous energy wave that will carry our opposition to this archaic, shamefully expensive and inappropriate Helco project to a harmonious conclusion.

Just as Hawaii has become the national model for health care delivery, let us envision our area becoming a model alternative energy community. If life is to continue on this planet we all know radical change must take place. This is our opportunity to become part of this change. Let us design our community to our own hearts' desire and not follow the path of least resistance which has brought us to our present predicament. Let us envision entering the new year and the new century which is almost upon us with respect for the Earth by preserving her beauty.

At one with the Earth,

Athena Peanut, 2nd VP



### Secretary's Letter

I have enjoyed Seaview for many years, first as a visitor, and since 1992 as a lot owner. The a'a flow that created our unique subdivision started a new cycle as a young ohia forest struggled to emerge. The vista opening to that wide blue expanse always uplifted my spirit...we are a special community, living on the edge, striving to co-exist harmoniously with nature in a zone designated Hazard Zone 2, high risk area for lava activity. The ambience of this special area cannot be overlooked or denied.

I am so sickened by this new sea of electric poles that cuts up the once beautiful ocean view. The heavy black cables that are sure to follow will dissect it further. Putting aesthetics aside, is there any REAL benefit in having electric poles in Seaview, in Puna Palisades, in Kehena and along our lovely Red Road? Many of the longer term residents here have already realized the benefits of solar power potential in this area. What are the health risks of being bathed daily in an electro-magnetic stream flow, whether we are hooked up or not? What impact will

Helco have on our endangered species? To not have completed an EA/EIS for this area is an unconscionable act.

Will this myriad of poles and wires actually enhance our property value? Most of us are aware that Hawaii has the highest electricity rates in the nation. We have here the opportunity of a lifetime at our doorstep. With so few areas grid-free today we can become an example for Hawaii and the nation of the workability of an alternative energy community. As one of our teenagers wisely wrote, "power from the heavens, not HELCO."

I am not proposing to lower our standards of living but instead am suggesting continuing a quality of existence in this fragile eco-system that is not dependent upon hooking up into the almighty electric grid. This letter is an appeal to those lot owners, especially those off-island, who have already paid for hook up to HELCO or may be considering it, and may not have been aware of the possible alternatives and environmental issues involved. Many residents in this community are asking for

a little more time so we can view and weigh the alternatives to this line extension project and have the EA/EIS process completed as required by law.

Mahalo and Aloha Aina,

Sabina Ludwig  
Secretary

p.s. There is a substantial solar energy tax credit in the State of Hawaii.

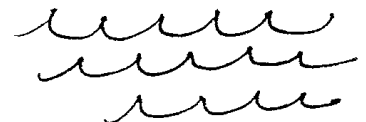
### Treasurer's Letter

Aloha, lot owners,

Thank you for your financial support via community dues which has allowed us to move forward this year. We have purchased a temporary office building, financed other community projects as well as operating and maintaining the office and park areas. I have enjoyed being a part of this process and watching our community spirit grow and becoming more cohesive.

Mahalo,

Christyl Bilyeu  
Treasurer



### President's Letter

Dear Members,

The Community Association has had an active year, welcoming a number of new residents and housing starts. We now have over 75 homes in Seaview with perhaps 180 residents.

Our biggest challenge came in April when it became necessary to move the office out of the backyard of active members Pat Rocco and David Ghee, who were kind enough to allow us to use their spare building as an office and meeting place the first two and a half formative years. A temporary one-room 12 x 20 building was purchased and placed in the center park. Plans for a permanent office/meeting space/picnic pavilion are in progress.

A community library was started with donations of books and magazines from residents and our collection has continued to grow. It was good to see the children in particular take part in this program.

The Neighborhood Watch program continues to be in effect where community members are learning to watch out for each other's

property and safety.

Due to the high local and tourist traffic in the Kehena Beach area just 1 mile from us, trash became a concern and our association agreed to contribute 3 months (\$150 total per year) of trash pick up services. Kalani Honua, Pacific Palisades and Kehena Beach subdivisions contribute the other portion of the year's service.

In order to nurture community spirit, a pool party and barbecue was hosted by the Association in August at Kalani Honua, the neighboring retreat center. Then a Labor Day potluck picnic, was well attended. A small portable deck was built for the band and two 8' picnic tables purchased. Colorful tarps contributed by Graham Ellis contributed to the festivity and protected us from rain and sun. (Unfortunately one table was stolen soon thereafter, but plans are in the works for a resident to build us two more tables.)

The 1995 Annual General Meeting will be held March 6th at 7 pm at the office. Elections will be held for 2nd Vice President and Secretary. Please write or phone us with any nominations for these

offices.

As this year draws to a close, I wish to thank the Board members for their input, efforts and cooperation as well as the Staff Secretary/Bookkeeper, Monica Devlin and groundskeeper Bill Tromp. I also offer my thanks to all the people who have contributed books to the library.

It has been a good year. Let us make 1995 a better one. What can you and I do?

For the future I would like to invite many more people to participate both at meetings and with volunteer work. KSECA has room for more personal involvement from more people. Only with your active participation can we move forward.

Wishing you the very best in 1995.

Bo Rodehn  
President

### 1st Vice - President's Letter

When I was first elected to the Board last year, I thought of it as little more than an honorary position involving attending meetings that would be as much social as business gatherings. How wrong I was!

Seaview is in the midst of

an extremely dynamic period, facing rapid growth and rapid change. Houses are popping up all around the subdivision, bringing in more people, more traffic, more dogs. With higher population density problems have compounded, particularly since with our small lots, houses often stand quite close to each other.

We are also in the process of having a pavilion built in our park, for community use, as well as trying to organize a recreational program for adults and children (so far, this is limited to Sunday afternoon volleyball, but we hope to expand this in the near future).

And, of course, the big issue of the day is Helco - the question of bringing in electricity to Seaview (and beyond, to Kehena). As of now, Helco has installed poles throughout the subdivision. This has aroused a dispute within our community as to the desirability of having Seaview become electrified as opposed to remaining "off the grid".

So, the Board is being faced with many important decisions that involve how we spend your money (the

amounts collected from annual assessments) and how we plan the future of our community. In reaching these decisions, we would like your input and assistance. You are all encouraged to attend our monthly Board meetings and to speak out on the issues that concern us all.

We're all in this together. Let's work together to keep Seaview the wonderful and special place that it is.

Mahalo,

Dan Landau, 1st VP

### 2nd Vice - President's Letter

To many lot owners, Seaview is merely a rural underdeveloped subdivision. In reality we are much more. Seaview along with our sister subdivisions Kehena and Puna Palisades, has been an alternative energy community for almost a quarter of a century. In truth we are pioneers in community and alternative energy lifestyles and are grateful to this land and her people for permitting us to live in paradise.

In October paradise suddenly became a nightmare. Crews working 7 days a week, subcontracted by Hawaii Electric Light Co., Inc.

(Helco) began cutting our rare trees without mercy and intimidating lot owners and residents. High voltage power lines with cross bars and guy lines were installed on almost every street, even on vacant streets. We were caught napping. Although we knew Helco had been soliciting subscribers, we thought that the project was dead because of the small response. It also appears Helco avoided public notification required by law in a questionable manner. There has been a great outcry about this issue not only in the three subdivisions but island-wide because of our beautiful coastal road. The RED ROAD, Kalapana/Kapoho Highway #137 is one of the most exquisite scenic coastal roads in the world. The proposed high voltage power lines will destroy this treasure.

We had a public community meeting with Helco on November 29. We asked for a 6-month temporary halt to operations and were granted 6 weeks. Much research has been done and much has been discovered that proves this project is in conflict with various federal, state and

# Declaration Of <sup>ENERGY</sup> Independence

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for the people to confront the enforcement of unjust, perilous conditions imposed upon the by a small handful of POWER-hungry people, it becomes necessary to take action to restrain those few from overPOWERING the vast majority.

1. The RED ROAD is one of the most beautiful coastal roads in the world and deserving of being declared a national treasure. Power poles and tree mutilation would destroy it.
2. Instead of paying Helco \$3,658, the initial hookup fee any household on the RED ROAD can install a quality solar system. Properly installed this alternative system is more reliable than Helco with little maintenance.
3. Less than 15% of the 1287 lots involved in the three subdivisions (Kalapana Seaview Estates, Kehena Beach Estates, and Puna Beach Palisades) want Helco's services. Only a few of these lots have houses on them.

We the undersigned lot owners of Kalapana Seaview Estates and Friends of the Red Road hereby notify Helco that we do not intend to hook up to the proposed RED ROAD grid.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ TMK: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Paid Advertisement

## Help Friends Of The Red Road

*Friends of the Red Road* is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of beauty of the Kehena to Seaview area and the existing alternative energy community. We have formed a corporation and have retained the prominent environmental attorney, Issac Hall. We are a grassroots organization and are desperately in need of help on all fronts.

- Yes** - I wish to become a member of Friends Of The RED ROAD.
- Yes** - I am signing the above Declaration of Energy Independence and returning it promptly.
- Yes** - I am donating \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the legal fund. (Make payable to *Friends Of The Red Road.*)
- Yes** - I am writing a letter to Helco asking for information about their mobile photovoltaic system.
- Yes** - I am writing a letter to Helco to let them know I am willing to cancel my contract.
- Yes** - I am willing to contribute the following services: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ TMK: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Send to *Friends Of The Red Road*, PO Box 181, Pahoa, Hawaii 96778.

Letters to HELCO will be forwarded, Mahalo.

**Kalapana Seaview Estates Community Association  
1994 FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

Due to careful saving over the past three years, we end 1994 with  
\$16,922.06 in a building fund for a playground/picnic pavillion/office and  
\$5000 CD savings account

**INCOME**

Maintenance Fees	36,080.03
Checking interest	308.92
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>36,388.95</b>

**EXPENSES**

Maintenance Wages	7400.00
Maintenance Expenses	
Repairs and misc.	1277.46
Gas and Oil	368.64
Office Wages	5250.00
Office Expenses	1210.46
Phone	586.56
Payroll Taxes	
Federal	
FICA	774.15
State Unemployment	134.35
Workers' Comp	751.00
Subdivision Improvements	5,555.66
Liability Insurance	1955.47
Land Taxes (on parks)	782.00
CPA fees	395.83
Social Committee	91.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>28,434.87</b>
<b>ANNUAL TOTAL</b>	<b>+7,954.08</b>