



Posted on: Thursday, March 27, 2008

Remembering Kuhio in Kapolei

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KAPOLEI — It will be more than another month before the state Department of Hawaiian Home Lands officially opens the doors to its new headquarters to the public, but DHHL officials held an early dedication ceremony yesterday so that it could coincide with the birthday of the Kalaniana'ole Building's namesake, Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole.

Kuhio, DHHL officials reminded the hundreds of guests at the all-day celebration, was the key person behind the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act that led to the formation of the DHHL.

DHHL officials also reminded the public that the department is the first state agency to move its headquarters to Kapolei. Now housed on several floors of Ali'i Place on Alakea Street, the agency will vacate their offices by early May and move into the \$21 million, two-story building with 45,000 square feet of work area.

Out of 125 employees, only one has asked to be reassigned to another department as a result of the move to Kapolei, DHHL Director Micah Kane said.

"Other than that, our entire family is giving it a shot out here, to try to make it work and I want to thank them for that," said Kane.

Gov. Linda Lingle said it was important for DHHL to move to East Kapolei because 60 percent of O'ahu homesteaders live on the Leeward Coast.

The new building is also in the midst of DHHL's various Kapolei projects, among them the 226-unit Malu'ohai subdivision completed in 2001, the nearly completed 326-unit Kaupe'a subdivision, and the upcoming 403-unit East Kapolei I.

More than just a few speeches and an untying of a maile lei, yesterday's ceremony included food, craft and informational booths, T-shirts that marked the occasion, and entertainment by major acts such as Ho'okena, Robi Kahakala, Martin Pahinui and Del Beazley.

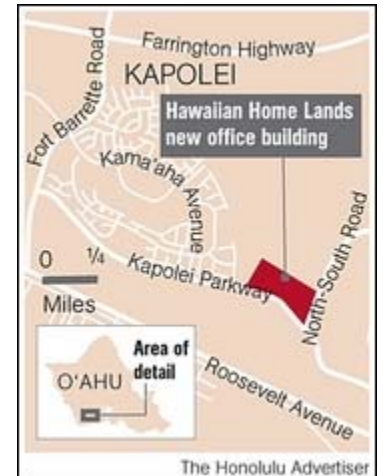
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Peggy Massengill of Kapolei had her face painted by Arwyn Llewellyn, of the Salvation Army, at the new Department of Hawaiian Home Lands headquarters in Kapolei, the Hale Kalaniana'ole, during yesterday's dedication ceremony.

CHRISTINA FAILMA | The Honolulu Advertiser



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