

# FRIENDS of HALEAKALĀ NATIONAL PARK

Spring 2009

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## Haleakalā National Park Veteran Mike Ing Retires

By Jill Engledow

The man who has lived higher on Haleakalā for longer than any other known human will be moving down the mountain this summer. Mike Ing is retiring after more than 20 years of full-time law enforcement for Haleakalā National Park.

He leaves with many great stories, told with a lot of laughter. "All the people over the years, that's the fun part of it," he says. "Carnivores and vegetarians, the teetotalers and the drunkards."



*Haleakalā Mounted Rangers ...*

*Mike Ing was known for his imaginative Halloween costumes. This one also starred in the Makawao Parade.*

Ing is not the only one who lives at the park--there are seasonal and temporary hires and usually one or two other law-enforcement rangers--but he's been there the longest, spending 20 years in the first ranger residence, built in 1940. Though his job requires that he live there, he pays market-rate rent, which, on Maui, is not cheap.

"I could probably have gotten out of it in one of the past administrations, but it's just been too much fun up here," he says. "A 39,000-acre backyard, clean air, living in one of America's crown jewels." You get the idea, talking to Ing, that he would stay longer, but "in the law enforcement program, we have to retire by the month we hit 57. The Park

## Aloha and E Komo Mai, Superintendent Sarah Creachbaum

By Melissa Nelson

No matter how you have come to read our newsletter you no doubt have at least one thing in common with all who read it. You have a love for Haleakalā National Park and want to stay up to date on Haleakalā Park News. You want to maintain that connection you felt when you first stepped onto her soil. Hawaiians, the first residents here on Maui knew that Haleakalā was a special place long before Congress acted to establish Haleakalā National Park as a unit of Hawaii National Park in 1916. Today, Haleakalā National Park is Maui's number one tourist destination. The protection, improvement and promotion of this unique and fragile resource are team efforts. As a Friend of Haleakalā National Park, you are a member of that team. The Park is also under the care of a dedicated professional staff. This edition of the FHNP newsletter highlights the retirement of one such member, and the return of another. Recently, I talked to Sarah Creachbaum, about her new role as Park Superintendent.

**Melissa:** "Sarah, you recently took on the role of Park Superintendent. What would you like to share about your background and how you will be able to use it to benefit Haleakalā National Park?"

**Sarah:** "I think each experience – whether it is related to work or your personal life, teaches you something you can take forward and utilize in future endeavors. I've had a fairly diverse career, the majority of which has been with the National Park Service, but I have also worked in the US Forest Service. I've been a trails worker, a backcountry ranger, a planner and have worked in NPS legislative affairs in Washington D.C. My last position was in Guam and Saipan, where I was the Superintendent of War in the Pacific National Historical Park and American Memorial Park.

Whether it has been in the construction and layout of a trail or legislation to create a new national park one constant in my career has been planning for the protection of natural and cultural resources and working closely with communities that have a deep, often spiritual connection

Service wants a youthful, vigorous law enforcement force.”

Often, life at the top of Maui's great mountain is just another day in the park. “Nothing really exciting, behind the desk or behind the wheel of a patrol car pretty much. Jimmying cars when tourists lock their keys inside, getting them started, changing tires.”

But there have been some wild times. “There's a mad scramble when there's a plane crash, or a total eclipse. There are some great storms up here. The most fun is driving up in 110-mile-an-hour winds, and a foot of rain during overnight storms. Those are great! The house is shaking all night.”

An occasional stranded hiker requires rescue, “or husbands late coming in from Sliding Sands. We go out with flashlights looking for them and lead them back up. That's probably some of the most fun, going out in the middle of the night, especially in a storm, or with a full moon. Bundle up in all the Gore-Tex and four or five flashlights and candy bars and water and just go looking for the guy!”

There have been fatal car crashes, a suicide, bike accidents, a hiker who went over the falls in Kipahulu. Nine people died in a 1989 plane crash at the summit. “I've done CPR eight times unsuccessfully; I've been on six fatal bike accidents. And we had a case where a guy was threatening to shoot his wife's boyfriend on a filming crew up here.

“We caught marijuana growers in the park, up near headquarters. These guys had this great little plantation going, with special breeds and varieties and hybrids; they experimented and found out what grew best up here. They chopped up a lot of pukiawe plans to hide their crops.”

And there were challenging times courtesy of Mother Nature, often compounded by human nature. Crowds gathered for the “Harmonic Convergence,” a supposedly significant alignment of the planets in 1987, did a lot of resource damage, Ing says. “There were people off trail all over the place at the summit area,” he recalls. “They were making bonfires and campfires and a lot of noise. They probably did some damage to the petrel colonies and silversword seedlings and all the pollinators up there. Cinders were trampled, with large footprints.



*Spring Cleaning at Paliku Cabin. Volunteer Riko Iida scrubs the walls during the May Service trip.*

“There were three or four of those big gatherings over the years. The last one was the Opening of the Door to the Next Dimension.” At centers of spiritual power like Haleakalā and the Pyramids, people gathered together and chanted all the doors open to the next level of consciousness. “We were teasing the people: ‘So, did you buy a round-trip ticket to this thing? If you got a round-trip ticket, why? Don't you think this is going to work?’ It was probably our negative energy that caused it not to happen,” Ing says with a mischievous grin.

Mike Ing's first volunteer trip to Haleakalā was about 1977, installing electric fence with the Sierra Club. He came back a few times, “shooting goats and building fences,” and started a job with the fence crew in March of '82, working a nine-month season. Then Ron Nagata brought him on as a term employee, a one-year job that could be extended to four years, coordinating fence-crew logistics and working on fences. Between his first and second season, Ing went to Santa Rosa to be trained for a seasonal law enforcement commission, and about 1985, he went into law enforcement full-time.

When he arrived, “We had two phone lines coming into the park. Now everybody carries a cell phone,” though they are useless in “dead spots.” Radios

Mike Ing - continued from page 2

provide 24-hour contact with Hawaii Volcanoes Park, “so they can run license plates and driver's licenses and criminal history for us--when the radios work! The equipment has a rough time living in this kind of environment, with all the temperature and weather extremes.”

And, “We're busy a lot later in the day than we used to be. It used to be the usual sunrise madness--that's gotten even more insane--but after one o'clock or two o'clock in the afternoon, it would be quiet. Now people stay for stargazing, and it's starting to get crowded at sunset too.” Ing's opinion: you can catch a better sunset in Lahaina, and it's warmer.

One of the biggest changes since he came aboard is the end of goat damage, with the installation of fences and a concerted hunting effort in which Ing enthusiastically took part. And the summit is a lot quieter than it once was. During the days when hundreds of goats roamed the Crater, “The gunshots just echoed back and forth. Between the goats, all their baaing, and the shooting and the helicopters, there was a lot of noise.” Now there are no goats on the summit, and with a new fence installed down below in the last year, “there are no goats along the fence line. I miss them,” Ing says with mock sadness.

Alas, the park and its people will soon be missing Mike Ing. He says he plans to move down to warm country by the beach. “The big joke is, it's like being 17 again, getting out of high school--have to look for a job, a wife and a home!” ■

*Jill Engledow is a popular Maui author who is working on a book about Haleakalā National Park.*



*Koa in bloom along the Kaupo Gap Trail*



*A Service Trip is not all work. Volunteer Amy Feiner leads the group in a relaxing yoga class.*

### **FHNP 2009 Service Trip Schedule**

Service projects are chosen in collaboration with Park staff and selected according to where help is most urgently needed. This year we will do a variety of planting, painting and weeding projects. *(Tip: Weeding trips have the advantage of getting you to corners of the Park that are off-limits to hikers.)*

Participants must carry in sleeping bag, clothing, rain gear, sun protection and food for the weekend. Anyone who is fit enough to backpack into the wilderness and equipped with a positive and helping attitude is welcome.

#### **Service Trip schedule for the remainder of 2009.**

Jun 13-15	Kapalaoa cabin (Crystal Cave weeding)
Jul 3-5	Paliku cabin Kaupo Gap Service/Learning
Aug 8-10	Waikau tent camping (Waikau North weeding)
Sep 5-7	Paliku cabin Kaupo Gap Service/Learning
Oct 10-13	Kapalaoa cabin 3 night (Crystal Cave weeding)
Nov 14-16	Holua cabin (Waikau, Holua South weeding)
Dec 5-7	Kapalaoa cabin (central crater planting)
Dec 12	Christmas Tree Cutting (day event)

For more info, visit [fhnp.org](http://fhnp.org).

Call Matt at 876-1673 to reserve a spot on a trip. ■

to the landscape. I hope that these experiences will inform my work here at Haleakalā”.

**Melissa:** “Sarah, what drew you to Maui, and what were your initial impressions of the island and the park when you arrived”?

**Sarah:** “From 2002 to 2004 I worked with the NPS Natural Sounds Program which is located in Fort Collins, Colorado. I was the project manager for Air Tour Management Planning for the national parks in Hawaii. One of the highlights of my career was spending several months collecting ambient sound data within the crater at Haleakalā and in the Kipahulu valley. Although I collected similar types of data at all the parks in Hawaii – none of them, I felt, compared to Haleakalā and I always wanted to return. I was particularly interested in the native birds (and their songs) in Kipahulu. It is a truly magical place”.

**Melissa:** “Sarah, here in Hawaii, we feel a special connection to the "aina". Haleakalā is a part of that connection as it is detailed in Hawaiian history. When you were offered the position of Park Superintendent, were you familiar with Haleakalā and the history and legends associated with it? How do you feel that the historic role Haleakalā has played can be best utilized to educate and inform residents and visitors about caring for it and enjoying the park”?

**Sarah:** “From my previous brief time here on Maui, I did learn a bit about the importance of Haleakalā to Native Hawaiians and I hope to understand much more. The Hawaiian way of viewing and understanding natural processes is something that we can learn a lot from. I have a lot of listening and learning to do on this subject”.

**Melissa:** “How do feel, that you as Park Superintendent can utilize your position to set an example for future generations”?

**Sarah:** “That is a very humbling question. The National Park Service is lucky to have a legacy of excellent leadership by employees at all levels of the organization. I hope in some small way to contribute to that legacy by furthering the work of those who came before me. During his tenure at Haleakalā, former Superintendent Don Reeser built a tremendous natural resource program at the park. The staff (many of whom Don hired) continue to work towards the eradication of feral animals from the crater and control of other invasive species in the park. He realized early on that the most effective way to protect Maui’s native

plants and birds is to prevent the introduction of alien species. I would be proud to contribute to that legacy”.

**Melissa:** “What is your take on volunteerism and/or what does stewardship means to you? Can an individual make a difference?”

**Sarah:** “To me, the best definition of stewardship is “responsible caretaking”. I like that definition because it implies that we do not own our natural resources - we care for them - for their inherent value and for future generations. Absolutely it is possible for an individual to make a substantial difference when it comes to preservation – it happens with every volunteer – every minute of every service trip. Every volunteer moves us that much closer to the ultimate goal of protecting the resources of our park. Just as a child is enriched and protected by the love, care and individual talents of each village member – so Haleakalā will be better protected by the care, attention and individual talents of each Maui resident”.

**Melissa:** “What is the Park doing, or what is planned regarding predator control in the Park?”

**Sarah:** “The primary threat to the park is from alien species. The park will continue to prioritize the cooperative work we complete with all our partners, including the Friends of Haleakalā, the Maui Invasive Species Council and the East Maui Watershed Partnership to control the spread of alien species (such as miconia, feral cats, deer and Western yellow jackets).



*Superintendent Sarah Creachbaum*

I would also like to foster within our park visitors a deeper appreciation and understanding of Native Hawaiian traditions, beliefs, and practices. It is my hope that the native Hawaiian community will partner with the park to ensure that the programs and materials the park develops will be products we all can be proud of”.

**Melissa:** “What is it that makes Haleakalā different from other Parks in the system”?

**Sarah:** “I love that the park includes lands from 10,000 feet in elevation to sea level and contains some of the best remaining intact remnants of native rain forest. Sadly, the ecosystems within the park are so unique that many of our hundreds of species of native flora and fauna are threatened and endangered.

Equally important to note is that Haleakalā is an area of great religious and cultural importance to the Native Hawaiian community. The park contains abundant archeological and historical sites.

Most if not all national parks contain unique and special resources. What makes Haleakalā unique, to me, is the sheer diversity of resources of outstanding quality; geologic, scenic, cultural, historical, and natural (did I mention that the crater is one of the quietest places in the national park system?). The park never ceases to amaze and inspire those who spend time here. It is hard to believe that such an abundance of both cultural and natural resources can be contained within roughly 35,000 acres”.

Next time you are visiting the Haleakalā National Park, take a moment to take in not only the unique characteristics that Haleakalā has to offer but also all the hard work that goes on behind the scenes to help preserve her. And, on your way back down, do as I did; nod your head and say “Aloha and E Komo Mai” to our new Park Superintendent, Sarah Creachbaum. ■

*Melissa Nelson lives upcountry on Maui and teaches at the Carden Academy.*

### Citizen Science at Haleakalā

"You hold all the answers to your own questions," says Nan Cabatbat to a visitor at Park Headquarters, and before it began to sound Zen she continued: "we can show you how to use tools, to become a scientist, an observer, to answer these questions." That's the essence of Haleakalā National Park's new Citizen Science Program. Visitors begin or finish at any of 5 activity stations staffed

throughout the park on most days. At each, a broad question is posed such as: "How can small rocks tell us the past and future of this volcano?" At that station, visitors learn how to use a hand-lens, identify minerals, sample an area and record data. "How do we know if a rare species is in danger of extinction?" At Hosmer grove visitors learn how to use binoculars, identify field marks on birds, how to record data. Park staff members are not teachers, but guides, not just answering questions, but showing visitors how to observe their world and contribute. "We hope they will go home to Canton, Ohio, Strawberry Patch, Arizona, or even Lahaina and look at their home in a new way, to become data collectors for the Audubon Society or the National Weather Service," says Ranger Jeff. It's not just a (guided) walk in the park anymore: it's about participation. Come on up play/learn (this is really for adults, but all ages are welcome). For the goal oriented, you can learn to use a scientific tool and for instant gratification, spend a little time at three stations, and you can earn a Citizen Science badge. Who says kids should have all the fun?■



*Volunteer Michelle Pellersels applies a coat of paint to Paliku cabin during a recent service trip.*

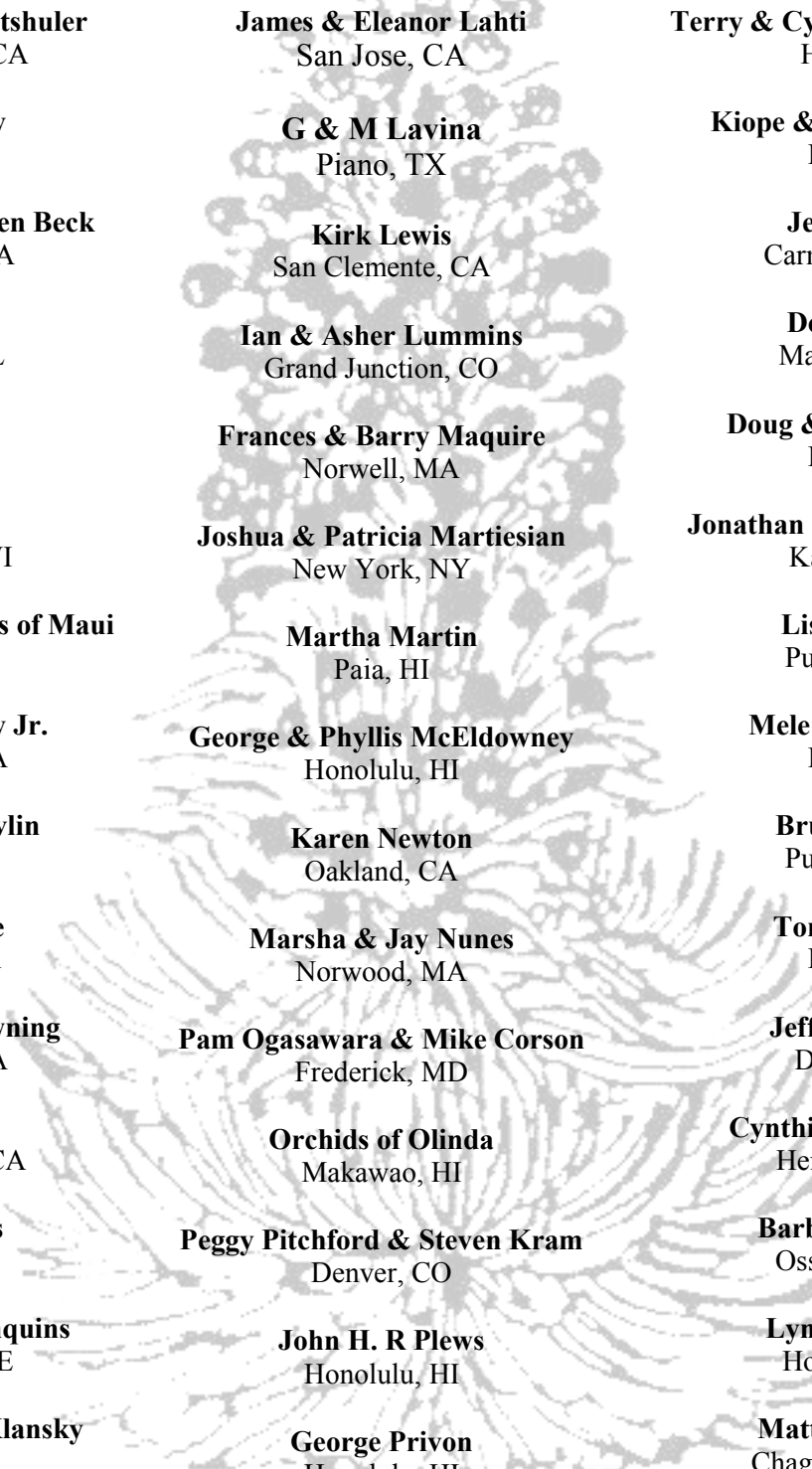
### Upcoming Evening Programs

FHNP will host a series of evening programs this season. Talks are held in the multipurpose room of the Tavares Community Center (the room by the pool) in Pukalani starting at 7:00PM. Light refreshments will be served.

- |              |                 |  |
|--------------|-----------------|--|
| July 16      | Art Medeiros    | Leeward Haleakalā Restoration          |
| August 27    | Valerie Monson  | Kalaupapa Ohana                        |
| September 24 | Cathleen Bailey | Rare and Endangered Birds of Haleakalā |
| November 5   | TBD             | State of the Park                      |

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Mahalo to the following contributors of \$100 or more in 2008. Your generous support of both the Adopt-a-Nēnē program and the Friends of Haleakalā general fund is greatly appreciated.



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# Support the Friends of Haleakalā National Park

## Who we are ...

We are a non-profit organization dedicated to assisting Haleakalā National Park achieve the purposes and goals for which it was established: To preserve Haleakalā's unique eco-systems, scenic character and associated native Hawaiian cultural and spiritual resources so as to leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.

## What we do ...

Facilitate volunteerism to accomplish projects recommended by park staff.

Monitor actions and activities that could impact the Haleakalā.

Urge responsible use of the Park by the public.

Provide financial assistance for the benefit of the Park by soliciting funds from the general public.

Promote programs such as Adopt-a-Nēnē to generate funds that will enhance the protection and preservation of the endangered natural resources of the Park.

Implement programs and activities that increase public awareness and appreciation of the Park and its highly diverse geological and biological resources.

## What you can do ...

**Join** the Friends of Haleakalā National Park

**Adopt-a-Nēnē** – an unusual gift idea.

Become a **Volunteer** in the Park

Sign up to **Service Projects**.

***Serve on the Board of Directors or Advisory Board of the Friends. We need new Board members!***

## The Adopt-a- Nēnē Program ...

was developed as a fun and educational way for you to become a part of the projects that are being conducted in Haleakalā National Park. The nēnē is an endemic bird on the Federal List of Endangered Species, with an estimated population in the Park of 250. By adopting a nēnē, you will be helping protect not only the nēnē, but all endangered species and their important habitat in the Park.

REGULAR Supporters receive “adoption papers” that include information about your nēnē, an adoption certificate and a nēnē postcard.

MĀLAMA Supporters receive a postcard pack and all gifts given to Regular supporters.

ALI'I Supporters receive an exclusive 5”x7” matted nēnē photo and all gifts given to Regular supporters. They will have their names displayed at the Park.

ALI'I NUI Supporter receive an exclusive 8”x10” matted nēnē photo, a special certificate for display and all gifts given to Regular supporters. They will also have their names displayed in the Park. ■



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*Make checks payable (in U.S. Dollars) to: Friends of Haleakalā National Park, Inc. & mail to: Friends of Haleakalā PO Box 322, Makawao HI*



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