



Lifeline

Newsletter of Hui Wa'a Kaukahi

Spring 2006 ♦ Issue 06 - 3

Paddling the Rock Islands of Palau

By: Jean Ehrhorn

Ten adventurous paddlers headed from Hawaii to the exotic, yet somehow familiar, island Republic of Palau to paddle, snorkel, dive and camp out in the Rock Islands. Located a couple hundred miles southeast of the Philippines, the weather is warmer than Hawaii and the humidity close to 80 or 90 percent. Even in late December and early January 2006 when we were there, the water felt just a few degrees cooler than the air.

Our ten days in Palau were idyllic...it now seems like only a dream. We paddled among green rock islands through turquoise waters teeming with an abundance of gorgeous multi-colored coral and marine life of all sorts.



Paddling through Risong Bay

photo by J. Ehrhorn



Campsite "Fantasy Island"

photo by J. Ehrhorn

We went on day trips which combined seeing marine and coral sights as well as hiking to historic places. We camped for three nights on secluded beaches. We paddled through mangrove swamps and a river known for its crocodiles.

We experienced Palauan style "mud" baths at Milky Way lagoon, and sat in awe behind waterfalls. Some members of our group also went diving. All of us snorkeled, swam, and hiked. Having congenial guides who shared their knowledge of the geology, biology, culture, and history of Palau and who took us to secret and little known sights, enhanced the experience for all of us.



Paddling through mangrove swamp
photo by P. Nicholson

(For a brief history of Palau, see sidebar.)

Impressions of the group:

Paul (trip organizer): “For me, paddling the Rock Islands of Palau was pure joy. The adventure of approaching each little jungle-capped limestone islet, looking down into the turquoise lagoon over coral reefs or white sand, jumping in to snorkel in the warm water, made kayaking there the most exquisite experience. It’s everything the pictures seem to promise, a dreamland to explore, the perfect place to paddle.”

Alan: “It’s New Years Day evening in Palau, but still New Year’s Eve in Hawaii. Camping on the beach at Ngeremdiu (Margie’s Beach), we watched the sun set, with thoughts of family and friends celebrating back home. There’s a soft green glow in the ocean and Paul and I jump in our kayaks and paddle out. Biophosphorescence sparkles vibrantly off the blades with quiet luminous contrails streaming brightly behind as we glide through the warm waters. Disney-like fireflies dancing everywhere there is movement. A school of fish light up the shallow waters with their ballet and these darting, streaking submarines churn out a bright emerald and enchantingly silent fireworks show below us. This is a most magical set of islands.”

Peter: “The trip, no matter where we had gone, would not have been anywhere near as successful if we hadn’t all gotten along so well. Everyone was cheerful, flexible, and considerate, even when we were at our tiredest and grumpiest. It is hard to decide who would get the congeniality award.”



Palauan Milky Way “mud” bath
 administered by Jake
photo by L. Reedell

Charlie: “The entire Palau trip was a new experience and everyone I traveled with made it very enjoyable. I’ll go on trips with all of you any day.”

Debbie: “My favorite kayaking experience was watching the rain drops splash on the water as we paddled to Jellyfish Lake. Then, later in the day, just as I was getting a little chilly and tired of the rain, a patch of blue sky grew larger and I felt the energy and joy return as we paddled past a little rock island and landed on picture perfect Yahoo Beach, before heading back to our ‘fantasy’ campsite. What an amazing day!”



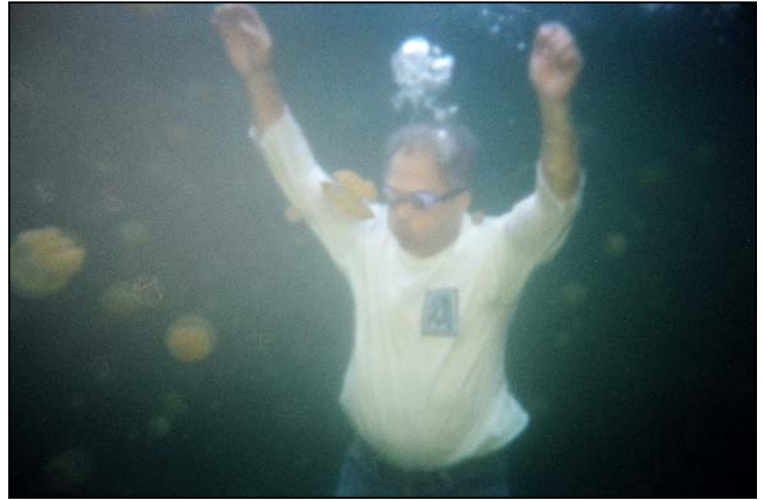
Take-out at Nikko Bay
photo courtesy of guide Butler

Lois agreed: "Paddling in the warm rain, following Paul through the mist was magical, as was swimming with the jellyfish."

Lynn: "The moment that will stay with me forever came from diving at Blue Corner. We dove down to an incredible array of colorful coral into a fast-rushing current. After hooking ourselves onto dead coral, we surfed this flow for 15 minutes. All the while, sharks, barracuda, giant wrasse, and other vibrant fish swam past. The colors, current, and variety of fish reminded me of the "Finding Nemo" movie. I found myself humming the tune "Beyond the Sea."

Jean: "I could have floated for hours over the coral wall shelf in Nikko Bay where we snorkeled. Gorgeous colored coral of all types grew just a few feet below. There was no current, and the water was almost as warm as the air. I felt suspended in both time and space."

Chuck: "A very positive aspect of this trip was the assistance we received from the Palau outfitters, Planet Blue Kayaks (Ron Leidich) and his staff of guides. The guides included Rayda, Butler, and the "Beetle Nut Duo", Jake and Reggie. This crew was highly professional, hard working, and they all had a sense of humor. They not only provided interesting information about the historic and archeological sites



Swimming with the jellyfish
photo by D. Wheeler



Fan Coral at Nikko Bay
photo by J. Ehrhorn



Charlie's King Mackerel, Margie Beach
photo by D. Wheeler

and the flora and fauna, but also made life very easy for all of us. Oh, and one other thing, the fishing was great!"

Victoria sums up our trip with some haiku verse:

Paddling....warm, soft rain
Floating....jellies everywhere
Was it minutes? Hours?

AND

Wide-eyed as children
We relearn color, shape, sound
Forgetting to breathe

For more information about kayaking in Palau, contact Ron Leidich of Planet Blue Kayaks. (www.planetbluekayaks.com). He has designed excellent tour experiences and trained all guides well. And check out Sam's Tours website: (www.samstours.com)



SIDEBAR

Alan and lunch sashimi
photo by L. Reedell



From : *The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia*, 6th ed. Copyright © 2005, Columbia University Press.

Brief History of Palau

“Spain held the islands for about 300 years before selling them to Germany in 1899. Japan seized them in 1914 and was given a mandate over them by the League of Nations in 1920. A major Japanese naval base in World War II, Palau was seized by U.S. forces in 1944 and made part of the U. S.-administered United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands in 1947. Palau's constitution, adopted in 1980, prohibits nuclear weapons, causing a conflict with the Free Association Compact proposed by the United States in 1985–86. Palau became self-governing in 1981. The islands voted in favor of the compact in 1987, but the referendum failed to garner the 75% of the votes then required. In a new plebiscite held in 1993 the compact was approved, opening the door to closer official linkage with the United States. The following year Palau became an independent nation in free association with the United States. Tommy Remengesau, Jr., was elected president in 2000, succeeding Kuniwo Nakamura, and reelected in 2004.”

A SATURDAY MORNING CLUB PADDLE OFF WAIKIKI

By Joe Hu

The sun was shining off Waikiki beach as I pulled into the old Hilton Heliport site on a bright but comfortable Saturday morning in February. The parking lot was crowded as usual with the early morning surfers and beach goers. Fortunately, parking spaces opened up close to shore just before our 9 a.m. launch time. Susan Strinkowski was leading her first paddle in Hawaii, having more experience in river paddling on the mainland.

All boats and equipment including VHF radios were checked out, the waiver was signed, and off we went. The weather forecast predicted a south swell of 3 to 5 feet so we chose to make a decision at the mouth of the Hilton channel as to whether we would be paddling outside or inside the reef. The channel was clear of breaking waves so we paddled through the channel to the open ocean. Everyone easily paddled past the breakers and into deep

water and waited for the group to get together again. The group broke up into two sections. The first consisted of the faster Scupper Pros and a 13' Prowler. The second section consisted of a Scrambler, Cobra Explorer, and an Advance Element sit-in inflatable. These boats were shorter and, therefore, slower but they were fine for a short paddle planned for today. We looked behind us to remember the markers and landmarks that marked the channel so we could find our way back when we returned.

We leisurely paddled parallel to the coast about half a mile offshore, then stopped to watch the Atlantis

subs surface and submerge in front of us. We looked for the buoy that marked the wreck off Waikiki but did not find it. After the last sub submerged, we paddled on to just outside the San Souci channel marked by an orange wind sock that was a small object from where we were paddling. We saw that waves were breaking in the channel regularly but we were not planning on going through the channel on this EZ Glider paddle.

We enjoyed the view of the valleys and mountains off Honolulu that usually only larger boats enjoy. It was then time to paddle back. As we got closer to the channel, we lined up the green channel markers with each other on the left side of the channel and the red channel markers with each other on the right side of the channel so that we would be paddling in the channel and not get caught from behind by breaking waves. Joe

mentioned that you can also do this at night by putting your head close to the water and looking for the silhouettes of the channel markers made by the shore lights behind them. The green markers are square and the red markers are triangle.

We paddled deliberately through the channel as sets of waves would break and crash on either side of us. All of us made it through the channel to calm waters quickly.

After a quick rinse of the boats and gear on the shore, we headed to Harbor Pub which serves a reasonable breakfast and lunch. A good time was had by all as we shared pitchers of refreshments and lunch and talked about our next "Susan" led paddle where food and good company were essential parts of the paddle.

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*Ex-officio voting Board members

7th annual



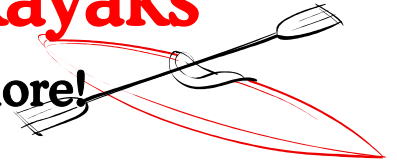
June 10 and 11, 2006

Saturday and Sunday

White Plains Beach, Kalaeloa

RAFFLE DRAWING: 4 kayaks

paddles, roof racks, and more!



**Raffle
Tickets
\$ 5**

Entrants get FREE raffle tickets !

ENTRY FORMS DUE ON MAY 31, 2006

Pick up forms at Go Bananas – Kapahulu or Aiea or download from website at
www.surfaloha2006.com.

A charitable event co-hosted by the United States Navy
and Surf Aloha, a Hawaii non-profit corporation

**Questions?
Call
487-3400**

The Surf Aloha Committee

is fishing for volunteers



Be a part of the action on Surf Aloha 2006 weekend by volunteering to help at the event. Assistance is needed with setting up, judging, timing, spotting, distributing and collecting surf equipment, selling merchandise, and cleaning up.

Contact Maghna at 753-1339 or at mmaliaz@hotmail.com or complete and mail this form by May 31, 2006.

Yes, I would like to volunteer at Surf Aloha 2006. I am especially interested in helping with _____.

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ **Other Phone #** _____ **(cell) (work)**

E-Mail Address _____

Mail to: 46-149 Meheanu Loop #3116; Kaneohe, HI 96744

Check our website for more details: www.surfaloha2006.com



HUI WA`A KAUKAHI AND ACA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND WAIVER FORM

Thank you for considering becoming a member or renewing your membership to Hui Wa`a Kaukahi, a Hawaii nonprofit corporation, "HUI" and the American Canoe Association, "ACA". The purpose of our club is to promote kayaking and kayak safety throughout the islands. You are welcome to attend our meetings usually held at 7:00pm on the third Tuesday of each month at the Church of the Crossroads located at 1212 University Avenue in Honolulu. Please check our website at www.huiwaa.org and our *LIFELINE* newsletter for a list and update of meetings, paddles and events scheduled throughout the year.

Please check one box: New member Renewal

[Please print legibly]

Name _____ Email address: _____

I would like Hui's *LIFELINE* newsletter sent via _____ Email (Color PDF format) or _____ U.S. Mail (Black and White)

I _____ would _____ would not like additional notices and paddle updates sent to my email address.

I _____ would _____ would not like to be listed in a members directory circulated to members only.

Payment is attached for [check one]:

HUI & ACA membership*

Individual @ \$46.00

Family** @ \$58.00

HUI member only

Individual @ \$20.00

Family** @ \$22.00

*The ACA increased their fees effective January 1, 2006. HWK members enjoy a discount when joining ACA which allows them to become full members of ACA. Check out their website at www.americancanoe.org .

**Family membership includes two adults plus children 18 years and younger.

*Membership in both HUI and ACA is encouraged. HUI is affiliated with ACA as a Paddle America Club. Membership to the ACA includes a *Paddler Magazine* and *American Canoeist* newsletter subscriptions, and comprehensive liability insurance for you and the Club for both on-water and off-water events and activities. Non-ACA members will be required to pay a \$10.00 per person insurance fee for each HUI paddle or event they attend.

Make check payable to: Hui Wa`a Kaukahi

PLEASE TURN PAGE OVER TO READ AND SIGN THE WAIVER TO JOIN

Each family member should sign a waiver. Make extra copies of the waiver as needed. Contact us for a waiver form for minors or check our website. Leave ACA # blank if new member or if # is unknown. Indicate phone number entered is your work, home or cell. Add additional phone numbers if you want. Club/Organization is Hui Wa`a Kaukahi.

**After you have completed the front and back of this form please mail with your check to:
Hui Wa`a Kaukahi ♦ P. O. Box 11588 ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96828**

AMERICAN CANOE ASSOCIATION, INC.
ADULT WAIVER AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY

revised 12/2005

IN CONSIDERATION of being permitted to participate in any way in the American Canoe Association, Inc. sports and recreation program and related activities ("Activities") I, for myself, my personal representatives, assigns, heirs, and next of kin:

1. ACKNOWLEDGE, agree, and represent that I understand the nature of Paddlesports and related Activities and that I am qualified, in good health, in proper physical condition to participate in such Activity and willingly agree to comply with the stated and customary terms and conditions of participation. I further agree and warrant that if at any time I believe conditions to be unsafe, I will immediately discontinue further participation in the Activity. If I decide to leave early and not complete the trip as planned, I assume all risks inherent in my decision to leave.

2. FULLY UNDERSTAND that: (a) Paddlesports and related ACTIVITIES INVOLVE RISKS AND DANGERS OF DAMAGE TO PERSONAL PROPERTY AND SERIOUS BODILY INJURY, INCLUDING PERMANENT DISABILITY, PARALYSIS, AND DEATH ("RISKS"); (b) these Risks and dangers may be caused by my own actions or inactions, the actions or inactions of others participating in the Activity, the condition in which the Activity takes place, or THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE "RELEASEES" NAMED BELOW; (c) there may be OTHER RISKS AND SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LOSSES either not known to me or not readily foreseeable at this time; and I FULLY ACCEPT AND ASSUME ALL SUCH RISKS AND ALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOSSES, COSTS, AND DAMAGES I incur as a result of my participation or that of the minor in the Activity.

3. HEREBY RELEASE, DISCHARGE, AND COVENANT

NOT TO SUE the American Canoe Association, Inc., its Paddle America Clubs, affiliated clubs and organizational affiliates, their respective ACA certified instructors, certified instructor trainers, and certified instructor trainer educators, administrators, directors, agents, officers, members, volunteers, and employees, other participants, any sponsors, advertisers, and, if applicable, owners and lessors of premises on which the Activity takes place, (each considered one of the "RELEASEES" herein) FROM ALL LIABILITY, CLAIMS, DEMANDS, LOSSES, INJURIES, DAMAGE TO PROPERTY, OR OTHER DAMAGES ON MY ACCOUNT CAUSED OR ALLEGED TO BE CAUSED IN WHOLE OR IN PART BY THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE "RELEASEES" OR OTHERWISE, INCLUDING NEGLIGENT RESCUE OPERATIONS; AND I FURTHER AGREE that if, despite this RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY, ASSUMPTION OF RISK, AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT I, or anyone on my behalf, makes a claim against any of the Releasees, I WILL INDEMNIFY, SAVE, AND HOLD HARMLESS EACH OF THE RELEASEES from any litigation expenses, attorney fees, loss, liability, damage, or cost which any may incur as the result of such claim.

I HAVE READ THIS AGREEMENT, FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS TERMS, UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE GIVEN UP SUBSTANTIAL RIGHTS BY SIGNING IT AND HAVE SIGNED IT FREELY AND WITHOUT ANY INDUCEMENT OR ASSURANCE OF ANY NATURE AND INTEND IT TO BE A COMPLETE AND UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE OF ALL LIABILITY TO THE GREATEST EXTENT ALLOWED BY LAW AND AGREE THAT IF ANY PORTION OF THIS AGREEMENT IS HELD TO BE INVALID THE BALANCE, NOTWITHSTANDING, SHALL CONTINUE IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT.

Name (print) _____ Date of Birth _____ ACA # _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Date _____ Adult Signature _____

Club/Organization _____

Adult