

HONOLULU

MENU

TRENDING

MORE



3 Creepy Hawai'i Tales That Won HONOLULU's Ghost Story Contest



Feedback

Feedback

Letters 5|07



PUBLISHED: 2007.05.01 12:00 AM

"Hawai'i Design Issue" 04/07

Our April issue looked at how design and architecture—buildings and tattoos, graphic artists and woodworkers, clothing designers and city planners—help define who we are.



✉ It's a profound insult to our city and its proud, long-standing cultural heritage to read the Honolulu Design Center pitched to us as a potential "community center," as if shopping for overpriced, ridiculous-looking barstools has anything to do with who we really are.

What we desperately need are new venues for the performing arts—symphony, opera, theater, dance—that showcase our own organizations, and our own civic pride.

Is anyone else as embarrassed as I am that even Orange County, Calif., now has a world-class concert hall, while Honolulu still doesn't? But, hey, at least we've got our barstools.

—Riely Francis, Honolulu

✉ Congratulations on a succinct and insightful review of architecture in Hawai'i, in your Island Architecture Special Section. I was especially pleased to see the photos and plan of the Hawaiian Energy House, designed in 1975 by project architect James Pearson, who lived with his family in the home on the University of Hawai'i M-anoa campus when it was used as a demonstration of

energy-saving design. The house stands as a benchmark for Hawai'i environmental awareness, as important in its own way as C. W. Dickey's "Dickey Roof" adaptation of a split-pitch roof style.

And Jim's lively pencil-sketch scale plan of the energy house reminds those of us who knew him of the excitement and enthusiasm he brought to this and other Hawai'i architecture before his untimely death in 1985 at the age of 46. Jim wore his passion for the environment on his sleeve, living his beliefs in everything from riding a motor scooter instead of a car to work, to recycling a wine box as a medicine cabinet in the demonstration house.

His work, and that of his associate, Cliff Terry, can still be seen in copies of the *Hawai'i Home Energy Book* published by the University of Hawai'i Press, now out of print but available through several online booksellers. Jim's warnings about oil-dependency and rising energy costs are as vital today as ever.

As Gov. George Ariyoshi said in his introduction to that book, "Energy conservation is 'everybody's business,' and, as with other ethical practices, it should begin at home."



—Walter Wright, Kailua

"Our City on Rails" 03/07

Associate editor Michael Keany explored what Honolulu's mass-transit rail system will look like, showing renderings of how the system may affect our cityscape.

✉ In 1976, Ronald Reagan discussed how, "Most cities, including those of modest size, once had rapid transit, but people abandoned it for their own set of wheels. The automobile gave people the freedom to choose their own timetable and route of travel on a portal-to-portal basis. They do not intend to give up that freedom and government has no right to take it from them by a program of deliberately planned congestion. Is rapid transit an answer to pollution and congestion or are we being sold a herd of very expensive white elephants?"



Fast forward to December 2006, when the Arizona Department of Transportation did a specific analysis in Phoenix and provided costs in cents per person-mile as follows:

High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lane: 1.2 to 2.7

General purpose lane: 1.9 to 4.2

HOV and bus lane: 2.6 to 5.7

Exclusive bus lane: 6.6 to 14.7

Light rail line: 16.1 to 35.8

The Hannemann administration is planning a heavy rail system at a cost of 720 to 920 cents per person-mile to serve 3.2 percent of trips on O'ahu. Indeed, then, we are being sold a white elephant.

By city estimates, in 2030, with rail built, not only will congestion be much worse than now, but also all trips between 'Aiea and the University of Hawai'i will be made faster by car than by rail. Contrast that to properly designed HOT lanes on which express buses, vans and carpools will make Kapolei to Iwilei in about 15 minutes during the rush hour.

—Panos Prevedouros, PH.D.

*Professor of Transportation Engineering, Department of Civil Engineering
University of Hawai'i at Manoa*

"Q&A: Ann Rahall" 02/07

The discussion of Plan B—an emergency contraceptive drug now available over the counter to women ages 18 and older—generated a lot of discussion.

✉ I appreciate Dr. Laurence's comments regarding Plan B ("Letters," April 2007 issue). There has long been debate over when pregnancy begins. Some equate fertilization with conception. The accepted definition of pregnancy by medical experts, including that of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), is that pregnancy begins when the fertilized ovum is implanted in the uterine lining.

Under the ACOG definition of pregnancy, conception is when implantation occurs, not fertilization. I would refer the interested reader to the Guttmacher Institute Report on Public Policy. Emergency contraception does not cause abortion, which is defined as the expulsion of a pregnancy prior to viability.

—Ann Rahall, M.D.

medical director, Planned Parenthood of Hawai'i

AHANA KOKO LELE

In our April feature on Hawai'i design, the "On the Drawing Board" section included contributions from writer Lavonne Leong.

Letters to the Editor may be e-mailed to: letters_honmag@pacificbasin.net, faxed: 537-6455 or sent to: HONOLULU Magazine, 1000 Bishop Street, Suite 405, Honolulu, HI, 96813.



RECOMMENDED STORIES



Feedback

Feedback