

Rotary Club of Kona Sunrise

"Peace Through Service"

The Coffee Press

August 19, 2026

This week: Aunty Aloha Bezilla

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The Rotary Club of
Kona Sunrise
meets the 2,3,& 4th
Wednesdays at
7:00 am
Papa Kona
Restaurant
75-5770 Alii Drive
Kailua Kona HI.
For additional
information contact
Vernon Lowrey
573-465-2874 or
konasuniserotary@gmail.com



Our guest speaker this week is Aunty Aloha Bezilla who teaches the Ho'opono Workshop for Hui Malama Ola Na 'Oiw.

Ho 'opono is a traditional Hawaiian method that can restore balance and

harmony with oneself, families and communities. Rooted in the values of Aloha (love) and Kuleana (responsibility) and Pono (right relationship).

Welcome Aunty Bezilla!

Last week: End Polio Now

Last week we welcomed Past District Governor and current District Chair for End Polio Now, Roz Cooper, via Zoom.

Unfortunately, there were some technical difficulties which included an unstable internet connection. The presentation by Roz was difficult to hear so President Nancy interrupted the presentation, with a thank you and apology.

We will reschedule Roz at a later date, and in the meantime she will send her power point presentation to the club for everyone to view.

October 24, 2026 is World Polio Day and our club is looking at the possibility of doing a fundraiser with Papa Kona. More details to follow.

Our BIGGEST Mahalo to Roz for her understanding!

The
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Foundation



**CREATE
LASTING
IMPACT**



Rotary
Club of Kona Sunrise
"Peace Through Service"

Rotary invitation becomes my life's turning point

By Rita-Stella Nwojiji, Rotary Club of Abakaliki,
Ebonyi State, Nigeria

When I joined Rotary during the 2008-09 Rotary year, I had no idea that I was stepping into a world that would profoundly shape my life and redefine my understanding of service, friendship, leadership, and hope.

At the time, I was a young widow. I had married outside my tribe and ethnicity, only to lose my husband in less than five years of marriage. I was left to raise three very young children, ages five, three, and one. Life seemed to have come to a standstill. I withdrew from social activities, became moody, and kept to myself. Although I worked as a secondary school teacher, I struggled to find joy and purpose beyond caring for my children.

Then, one ordinary day, a colleague approached me and invited me to a Rotary fellowship. That simple invitation became the turning point of my life.

That same week, that Rotary club organized a service project to provide meals for inmates at the Abakaliki Correctional Centre. I participated, not knowing that the experience would change my outlook forever. As I interacted with the inmates, I realized that no matter how difficult my own circumstances appeared, there were countless others facing even greater challenges. More importantly, I discovered that despite my pain, I still had something valuable to offer.

That day, Rotary helped me shift my focus from my own struggles to the needs of others. In serving others, I gradually found healing for myself.

I became actively involved in Rotary — one of the greatest blessings of my life.

Over the years, I have had the privilege of serving in various capacities at both the club and district level. Every responsibility challenged me to grow, broadened my perspective, and strengthened my commitment to Service Above Self.

One of the defining moments of my Rotary journey came three years later when I had the honor of serving as president of the Rotary Club of Abakaliki in 2011-12. That year, our club carried out several projects including the construction of toilet facilities and the provision of clean water to a school for the blind in a rural community in the Izzi Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. We also improved the living conditions by renovating a home for orphan babies.

These projects attracted the attention of the then First Lady of Ebonyi State, Chief (Mrs.) Josephine Elechi. She was deeply impressed that a young teacher could, through Rotary, mobilize resources to execute such life-changing projects.

She remarked that if I could accomplish so much through voluntary service while earning only a modest teacher's salary, then I deserved greater opportunities to contribute even more to society. Through her support, I was offered employment at the National Obstetric Fistula Centre in Abakaliki, as the public relations officer, where I proudly work to this day.

When you serve humanity sincerely and diligently, humanity has a remarkable way of rewarding you.

Another unforgettable privilege was serving as team leader of a Group Study Exchange to three African countries, Burkina Faso, Togo, and Benin Republic. The exchange gave me an opportunity to become an ambassador for my country. Before our arrival, many of our hosts admitted they were apprehensive about hosting a team from Nigeria.

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Message from DG Benson re Lala

The following is an email that was received from DG Benson regarding the recovery following Tropical Storm Lala.

“As we prepare for the impacts of the storm and the recovery that may follow, I want to briefly share the direction I gave our District Executive Team yesterday.

Our approach will be simple: respond locally, coordinate statewide.

First and foremost, please make sure your families, homes, and property are safe. After that, check on your fellow Rotarians, your neighbors, our kūpuna, and others in your community who may need help.

Our Assistant Governors will be reaching out club-by-club to make sure our Rotary ʻōhana is accounted for and to identify local needs. At the District level, Calvin Hara will lead our Disaster Response Team, helping us coordinate information, volunteers, resources, and assistance across the state.

We are also establishing a Rotary disaster relief fund so Rotarians and friends of Rotary can contribute financially. Those funds will be directed where the need is greatest as we learn more about

the damage and recovery needs.

Just as importantly, we will work closely with strategic partners such as the American Red Cross, Salvation Army, and local emergency-response organizations. Our goal is not to duplicate their work, but to fill gaps and bring Rotary’s people, resources, and long-term commitment to the recovery effort.

Please do not self-deploy into unsafe areas. There will be plenty of work to do after the storm passes, and we want every Rotarian ready to serve safely and effectively.

This is our kuleana. This is what Rotary does around the world — and now it is our turn to be ready for our own communities.

Local knowledge. Statewide strength. One Rotary response.”

Aʻohe hana nui, ke alu ʻia.

No task is too big when we work together.

Mahalo,
Benson

Club News

The club has purchased an outdoor furniture set for the Domestic Abuse Shelter, to be placed in the corner of the property near Mike’s Peace Pole. If you have some time to help move it to the shelter and then help to put it together, please let Bev know. The funds used were donated to the club from Mike’s friends and family in his honor.

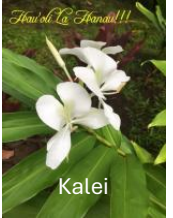


Thank you President Nancy for checking in with our members after Hurricane Lala. From the responses, it seems like there was very little damage to any properties.

If you want to help those affected, check out this site: <https://www.vibranthawaii.org/lala> to see what the needs are and how you can help!

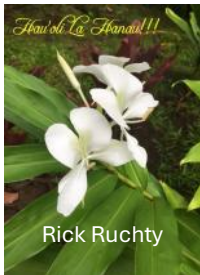
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August 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 
2	3	4 Meet N Eat Kealakehe Intermediate School 4:30	5 	6	7	8
9	10 	11  Nancy/Vernon (12th) → Cooper	12 Regular Meeting Papa Kona 7:00 am Program: POLIO PLUS Zoom with Roz → Cooper	13	14 	15  Bernice/Bruce
16	17	18	19 Regular Meeting Papa Kona 7:00 am Program: TBA	20	21 District Conference 21 - 23 	22
23 	24	25	26 Regular Meeting Papa Kona 7:00 am Program: TBA	27	28	29
30	31					

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September 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Meet n Eat Kealakehe Intermediate School 4:30	2 	3	4	5
6	7 	8	9 Regular Meeting Papa Kona 7:00 am Program TBA	10 	11	12
13	14	15	16 Regular Meeting Papa Kona 7:00 am Program TBA	17	18	19
20	21	22	23 Regular Meeting Papa Kona 7:00 am Program TBA	24	25	26
27	28	29	30 Regular Meeting Papa Kona 7:00 am Program TBA			

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Paul Harris
Founder of
Rotary



Olayinka
Hakeem
Babalola
Rotary
International
President
2026 - 2027



Benson
Medina
District 5000
Governor
2026-2027



Scott Unger
West Hawai'i
Assistant
Governor
2026 - 2027



Nancy
Lowrey
Rotary Club
of Kona
Sunrise
President
2025 - 2027

Rotary invitation becomes my life's turning point - continued

(Continued from page 2)

But by the conclusion of the trip, they didn't want us to leave. Through friendship, integrity, and genuine fellowship, we changed perceptions and built lasting relationships.

One of Rotary's greatest gifts to me has been family. Beyond meetings, projects, and conferences, I have gained brothers, sisters, mentors, and lifelong friends across continents. My Rotary family continues to grow, enriching my life in ways I never imagined possible.

Sometimes I pause and wonder what life

would have been like had that colleague never invited me to a Rotary fellowship. Today, my heart is filled with gratitude, and I remain inspired by Rotary's enduring motto: Service Above Self.

Becoming a Rotarian is not merely joining a club, it's becoming part of a global family committed to service, peace, goodwill, and positive change. Rotary will challenge you, inspire you, and open doors you never imagined possible. Most importantly, it will transform your life.

Come join us. The world needs more people who are willing to put Service Above Self.

Just for fun (we need some humor after this weekend)

A tour bus driver is driving with a bus full of seniors, when he is tapped on the shoulder by a little old lady. She offers him a handful of peanuts, which he gratefully munches up.

About 15 minutes later, she taps him on the shoulder again and hands him another handful of peanuts.

She repeats this gesture about five more times.

When she is about to hand him another batch, he asks the little old lady "Why don't you eat the peanuts yourself?"

"We can't chew them because we have no teeth" she replied. The puzzled driver asks "Why do you buy them then?"

The old lady replies "We just love the chocolate that's around them."



The Coffee Press is published weekly and emailed to club members, fellow Rotarians, and friends around the world. To add or remove your name from our mailing list, email konasunriserotary@gmail.com. All rights reserved.