

Local & business

WEST SIDE PLEA FOR PEACE
Community members will rally along the Waianae Coast to call for an end to violence >> **B2**

Trump Waikiki hotel rebranding

The early exit of a management contract will result in the removal of the former president's name and a \$100 million renovation

By Allison Schaefer
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Former President Donald Trump's name is coming off the Trump International Hotel, Waikiki and the property will be rebranded Wakea Waikiki Beach and undergo a \$100 million renovation.

The upcoming removal of Trump's surname from the building follows what's been described as a "mutual decision" for an early departure from the management contract and a significant buy-out, said Scott Ingwers, who served as managing director of the hotel under the Trump Organization and will serve in the same role at the rebranded hotel.

The decision brings an end to Trump's branding for the tower and creates an opportunity for Irongate, which developed the hotel and owns its front desk, to hire manager LXR Hotels & Resorts, a globally growing luxury brand for Hilton, to manage the rebranded hotel, which is undergoing its first major renovation since the property opened some 14 years ago.

Ingwers said the management and brand change was "strictly a strategic business decision" and was not "predicated on political considerations." He said Feb. 7 is the anticipated date for the brand and name change.

The new name, which was chosen for the 38-story



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The Trump International Hotel and Tower will undergo a \$100 million renovation, which includes removal of the former president's name.

property after a series of discussions with cultural advisors and stakeholders, reflects the story in Hawaiian mythology of Wakea, the Sky Father, and Papahaanumoku, the Earth Mother, who created the Hawaiian

islands, forming a timeless connection between the earth and the sky.

Jason Grosfeld, Irongate chairman & CEO, said in a statement, "We are thrilled to spearhead the revival of what I have always felt to

be the 'grand dame' of Waikiki with its timeless architecture and unobstructed views. Irongate's enduring commitment to this property, which dates to its inception with a one-day record-breaking sales success followed by many years of award-winning hospitality, underscores our steadfast dedication to the destination of Waikiki and its residents and visitors.

"Through our collaborative efforts with (Bryan O'Sullivan Studio) BOS Studio on design and with Hilton's LXR Hotels & Resorts as the operator, this iconic edifice embarks on an exciting new chapter."

The Trump Organization did not immediately respond to the Honolulu Star-Advertiser's request for comment. Trump was a

Please see **REBRAND, B4**

KOKUA LINE



CHRISTINE DONNELLY

Kolea Count collects data on beloved shorebirds

Question: Do you have the reporting line for the plover or kolea, as I think they're called in Hawaii?

Answer: Hawaii's annual Kolea Count, a project of the Hawaii Audubon Society, collects sighting reports online, via koleacount.org.

People can report their first kolea sighting of the season (this data is collected July 1 through Nov. 30); count how many kolea spend winters here (Little Counts and Big Counts will be done Dec. 1 through March 31); say where the birds gather for departure and when they leave for Alaska (April and May); and report kolea staying for the summer (June only), the website says.

A Little Count is for those who want to survey a small area, "such as their backyard, a schoolyard, or church lawn," the website says. A Big Count is for people who can count kolea "three times this winter in large areas such as campuses, parks, cemeteries, or golf courses." Reporting guidelines for each are explained on the website. Or, you may report simply your first sighting if you wish.

The Pacific golden-plover, called kolea in Hawaii, is a migratory shorebird that spends about nine months of the year in the islands, including the winter, and flies to Alaska for the summer to raise chicks. Kolea traditionally return to the same Hawaii spots year after year.

As of Oct. 17, 1,355 kolea had been reported, according to a news update on the website. Because last summer's offspring might arrive in November, arrival reporting continues through this month, it said.

People who didn't know to report kolea that arrived earlier could also do so now, but should try to recall and report the earliest date they saw the bird; they can mention in the "notes" field that the chosen date is an estimate.

Q: When will the Hokule'a sail back from California?

A: The Hawaiian voyaging canoe will be shipped back to the islands from Southern California but the date has not been decided, according to the Polynesian Voyaging Society. For now, the Hokule'a is docked at the Maritime Museum of San Diego and will remain there until a shipping date is determined, the PVS said in a news release.

Please see **KOKUA, B4**

Pink pond phenomenon

Maui is getting global attention for the striking magenta hue at Kealia Pond

By Nina Wu
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From up above, the water at Kealia Pond National Wildlife Refuge in South Maui appears to be bright pink — as pink as bubble gum or a Barbie play set.

Photographer Travis Morrin, who captured aerial views of it, thought of it more as "Pepto Bismol pink."

"I was shocked," said Morrin, a Maui chef and restaurateur who takes photos as a hobby. "It was like this Pepto Bismol-Barbie pink, vibrant color."

Morrin, co-owner of Fork & Salad and Three's Bar & Grill, said he visits the pond every so often to take photos and enjoy the serene

setting, but has never seen it turn pink.

The pink phenomenon at the pond, a wetland and bird sanctuary run by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is drawing attention from around the world.

USFWS says its staff has been monitoring the pink water since Oct. 30, and working with the Hawaii Division of Aquatic Resources and state Department of Health to determine a course of action.

Additionally, water samples have been sent to the University of Hawaii for analysis.

Based on a preliminary analysis, the service says the pinkness is likely caused by single-celled

Please see **POND, B4**



COURTESY TRAVIS MORRIN PHOTOGRAPHY

The water at Kealia Pond National Wildlife Refuge in South Maui has turned pink, most likely due to halobacteria, typically found in high-salinity water bodies.



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The unusual algae bloom exacerbated by the shrinking wetlands at the Kealia Pond National Wildlife refuge has caused the water to turn magenta, making the site an attraction for tourists and residents alike Thursday. Cindi Fitzgerald, foreground, Jim Fitzgerald and Dawn Driscoll, visitors from Boston, took in the sight.

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE MARKETS THURSDAY

MARKET HIGHLIGHTS

52 Week		Index	Close	Chg	%Chg	YTD %Chg	52 Wk %Chg
High	Low						
35,679.13	31,429.82	Dow Industrials	33,891.94	-220.33	-.65	+2.25	+5.2
16,717.04	13,230.05	Dow Transportation	14,266.24	-149.54	-1.04	+6.53	+0.9
1,013.30	765.47	Dow Utilities	835.20	-6.63	-.79	-13.67	-11.07
16,458.89	14,471.08	NYSE Composite	15,235.18	-117.01	-.76	+3.4	...
14,446.55	10,207.47	Nasdaq Composite	13,521.45	-128.97	-.94	+29.19	+21.66
4,607.07	3,744.22	S&P 500	4,347.35	-35.43	-.81	+13.23	+9.88
2,743.01	2,322.38	S&P MidCap	2,409.27	-26.80	-1.10	-.87	-4.32
46,570.30	37,261.77	Wilshire 5000	43,538.19	-389.59	-.89	+14.35	+10.45
2,007.31	1,633.67	Russell 2000	1,687.24	-26.83	-1.57	-4.20	-9.67

STOCKS OF LOCAL INTEREST

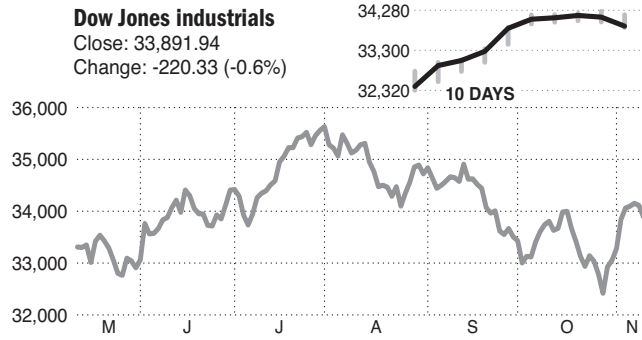
Name	Tkr	Div	Yld	Last	Chg	%Chg	YTD	52 Wk	YTD				
							Chg	%Chg	Chg				
AlexB Inc	ALEX	.88	5.6	15.82	-.35	-15.5	HawaiiEl	HE	1.44	10.3	14.01	+12	-66.5
BK Hawaii	BOH	2.80	5.3	52.46	-.30	-32.4	HawHold	HA	...	...	4.06	-.21	-60.4
Barnwell	BRN	.06	2.5	2.43	+0.1	-17.8	Matson	MATX	1.28	1.4	89.60	-.33	+43.3
CenPacFn	CPF	1.04	6.2	16.80	-.02	-17.2	Mauiland	MLP	...	...	14.95	+19	+58.7
Cyanotech h	CYAN	...	...	.72	-.05	-34.5	TerritBcp	TBNK	.20	2.8	7.09	-.52	-70.5
FsHawaii	FHB	1.04	5.7	18.11	-.08	-30.5							

LOCAL MUTUAL FUNDS

Fund	Ticker	NAV	Buy	Chg
Bishop St. Hawaii Municipal Bond Fund	BHIAH	\$9.59	\$9.95	\$0.01
Hawaii Municipal Fund	SURFX	\$9.62	\$9.62	\$0.01
Hawaii Tax-Free Trust	HULAX	\$10.17	\$10.26	\$0.01
Pacific Cap. Tax-Free Securities	PTXFX	\$9.31	\$9.31	\$0.01
Pacific Cap. Sh./Intrm. Tax-Free	PTFSX	\$9.52	\$9.52	\$0.01

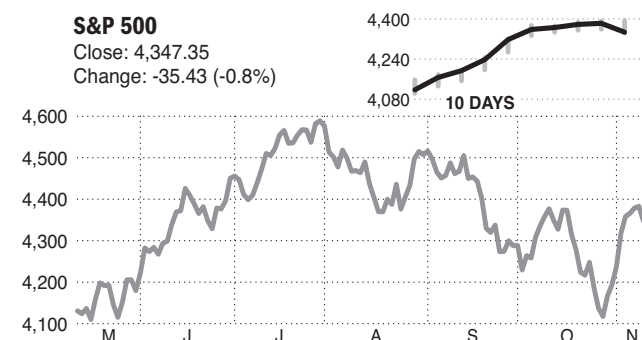
FOREIGN EXCHANGE

Majors	US \$ in Currency	Chg	%Chg	6 Mo. Ago	1 Yr. Ago	Currency in US \$
USD per British Pound	.8183	+0.042	+5.1%	.7922	.8816	1.2220
Canadian Dollar	1.3812	+0.009	+0.7%	1.3377	1.3536	.7240
USD per Euro	.9374	+0.031	+3.3%	.9117	.9997	1.0668
Japanese Yen	151.33	+27	+1.8%	135.17	146.65	.006608
Mexican Peso	17.8075	+2578	+14.5%	17.7737	19.6025	.056156
Swiss Franc	.9037	+0.039	+4.3%	.8900	.9857	1.1065
Asia/Pacific						
Australian Dollar	1.5702	+0.075	+4.8%	1.4784	1.5569	.6369
Chinese Yuan	7.2830	+0.027	+0.4%	6.9205	7.2419	.1373
Hong Kong Dollar	7.8098	-0.069	-.9%	7.8414	7.8494	1.280
Indonesia Rupiah	15873.02	+124.99	+7.9%	14925.37	15873.02	.000063
Philippines Peso	56.03	+1.2	+2.1%	55.79	58.05	.0178
South Korean Won	1319.26	+778	+5.9%	1327.14	1370.80	.000758
Taiwan Dollar	32.35	+1.2	+3.7%	30.74	31.89	.0309
Thailand Baht	35.75	+1.8	+5.0%	33.70	36.89	.02797



INTEREST RATES

	Last	Wk Ago
Prime Rate	8.50	8.50
Discount Rate	6.00	6.00
Federal Funds Rate	5.25-5.50	5.25-5.50
Treasuries		
3-month	5.27	5.33
6-month	5.25	5.33
5-year	4.65	4.82
10-year	4.64	4.92
30-year	4.78	5.04

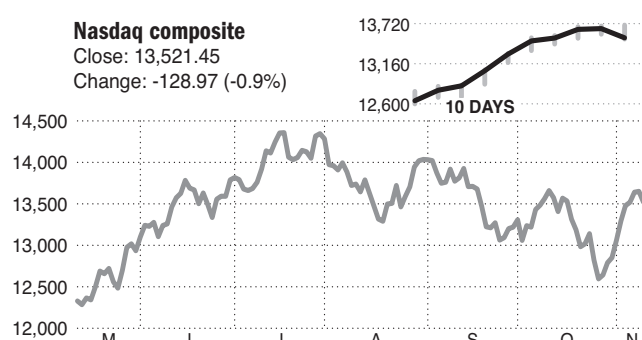


GLOBAL MARKETS

Major Indexes	Close	Pvs Day	YTD %Chg
S&P500	4,347.35	4,382.78	+13.23
Frankfurt	15,352.54	15,229.60	+10.26
London	7,455.67	7,401.72	+0.05
Hong Kong	17,511.29	17,568.46	-11.48
Paris	7,113.66	7,034.16	+9.88
Tokyo	32,646.46	32,166.48	+25.11
Asia			
Seoul			+7.10
Singapore	3,135.32	3,129.72	-3.57
Sydney	7,215.10	7,198.40	-0.09
Taipei	16,735.19	16,740.83	+18.01
Shanghai Comp.	3,053.28	3,052.37	-1.16

COMMODITIES

Fuels	Close	Pvs %Chg	%YTD
Crude Oil (bbl)	75.74	75.33	+0.54 -5.6
Natural Gas (mm btu)	3.04	3.11	-2.09 -32.0
Gasoline	2.16	2.13	+1.52 -12.1
Metals			
Copper (lb)	3.64	3.63	+0.19 -4.5
Gold (oz)	1,964.20	1,951.50	+0.65 +7.9
Platinum (oz)	862.80	871.50	-1.00 -19.6
Silver (oz)	22.83	22.65	+0.81 -4.3
Agriculture			
Cattle (lb)	1.74	1.79	-2.81 +12.6
Coffee (lb)	1.79	1.74	+2.55 +6.9
Corn (bu)	4.68	4.76	-1.68 -31.0
Cotton (lb)	0.77	0.75	+2.18 -8.2
Orange Juice (lb)	4.10	4.07	+0.81 +98.7
Soybeans (bu)	13.28	13.49	-1.58 -12.6
Sugar lb	0.28	0.27	+2.09 +38.6
Wheat (bu)	5.81	5.92	-1.94 -26.7



POND

Continued from B1

organisms called halobacteria, typically found in high-salinity water bodies.

The salinity in the pond outlet is currently greater than 70 parts per thousand, or twice the salinity of seawater, USFWS said, providing favorable conditions for halobacteria.

The pinkness is not likely caused by the toxic algae that produces red tides, the service said.

Morgan Wittmer, ecotour manager for the Pacific Whale Foundation, said she also believes the pinkness is due to salt-loving halobacteria, which is a naturally occurring bacteria.

"It's a result of dry conditions and warm temperatures," she said, "and it's a bacteria that loves salt. Under dry conditions, that pond water dries up."

Without rainfall or any additional flow of water into the pond, the result is evaporation and higher salt concentration. She said it's anyone's guess how long this will last, and that it



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People stopped Thursday at Kealia Pond National Wildlife refuge to look at the pink water, probably caused by an unusual algae bloom.

depends on whether rain will help dilute the salt.

The island of Maui is currently in severe to extreme drought, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor, with the swath where the pond is located in the latter category.

On Wednesday, Wittmer observed birds feeding in

the pond and said there were no signs of dead fish.

"This is a phenomenon that happens around the world," she said. "It's not completely rare, but it's unusual."

An online search yielded images of the pink phenomenon occurring in other

water bodies, including wetlands the color of "strawberry milk" in eastern Australia, a pink pond in the British Virgin Islands, and another pink pond in Santa Clara, Calif.

Kealia Pond near mile post six at Maui Veterans Highway provides habitat

for endangered native waterbirds including the Hawaiian stilt, Hawaiian coot and black-crowned night heron. During winter months, more than 30 species of waterfowl, shorebirds and migratory ducks can be seen visiting the refuge.

Wittmer said it's fitting the pond is pink, representing Maui's color and official flower, the lokelani.

"I think it's part of our everyday rainbow," she said. "Maui's so beautiful. We're adding to the rainbow."

USFWS said UH is doing more analyses to determine the exact strain of the halobacteria at the pond.

"We will be continuing to gather information and will keep the public informed," said USFWS. "As a precautionary measure, we recommend that people keep a safe distance and not enter the water, don't consume any fish from the water, and ensure that pets don't drink the water."



KOKUA

Continued from B1

Health care subsidies

With open enrollment underway on Health Care.gov, the state Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs' Insurance Division is reminding consumers that subsidies to reduce premiums are available for eligible new and returning customers. "The American Rescue Plan of 2021 expanded the availability of financial assistance through the Marketplace and the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 extended these benefits through 2025," it said in a news release. Hawaii residents who don't receive medical insurance through their employers, the government or some other program can find an affordable plan on the Marketplace. The DCCA encouraged consumers to review the plans offered during the open enrollment period, which continues through Jan. 15. To have coverage that starts Jan. 1, a consumer must choose and enroll in a health plan by Dec. 15, it said.

Auwe

Enough with all the new big traffic warning signs! One of the great things about Hawaii is no billboards. Let's not ruin it by putting up a bunch of large traffic signs — they are unsightly and not necessary as far as I am concerned. I know I am in a tsunami zone when I am driving a few blocks from the ocean! — A reader

Mahalo

Especially with the state of the world today, there is nothing I crave more than peace. I want to acknowledge all the U.S. military veterans who through their strength try to ensure that Americans live in peace, and who are ready to fight when that deterrence fails. This goes for all who served honorably, past and present. Mahalo. — A reader

Write to Kokua Line at Honolulu Star-Advertiser, 500 Ala Moana Blvd., Suite 7-500, Honolulu, HI 96813; call 808-529-4773; or email kokualine@staradvertiser.com.

REBRAND

Continued from B1

businessman and a TV celebrity hosting "The Apprentice" when he and Irongate announced plans in 2006 to bring a \$350-million-plus, five-star luxury condominium hotel to Waikiki's Beach Walk project.

The property, which opened in 2009 on the corner of Kalia and Saratoga roads across from Fort DeRussy Park, met with unprecedented global demand for its privately owned units that have the option of joining a hotel rental pool. It sold out and topped \$700 million in just eight hours, setting what was at the time a world record for the total dollars and number of units changing hands at a residential development on a single day.

The hotel also was in the news in November 2017 when Trump made a much publicized visit to the property after a brief presidential stop, where he and first lady Melania Trump spent just over 18 hours in Honolulu before traveling to Tokyo.

Sarah Huckabee Sanders, the then-White House press secretary, said, "The president stopped by the Trump Hotel on his way to the airport. It has been a

tremendously successful project and he wanted to say, 'Hello and thank you,' to the employees for all their hard work."

The Democratic Party has a majority in Hawaii, but during Trump's 2017 visit, he did draw a base of fans to Waikiki, who waited hours to catch a glimpse of him and the first lady. His 2017 visit drew protesters, too.

Trump has grown into an even more controversial figure since his presidency. His attempt to overturn his 2020 election loss and his handling of the storming of the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021 have drawn scrutiny. He testified this week in New York related to a civil fraud case, and is facing four criminal indictments.

Ingwers said, "For our hotel, our international guests were thrilled to be staying at the president's hotel, which made up for some guests who preferred not to stay for their own political reasons. In Trump Hotels we maintain political neutrality. We run great hotels in great cities around the world and we welcome all guests with open arms."

He said Trump International Hotel Waikiki has been a Forbes Five-Star hotel over the past 10 consecutive years. Ingwers said staff will remain with Wakea Waikiki Beach and will join



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Managing Director Scott Ingwers of the Trump International Hotel and Tower gave a target date of Feb. 7 for the Waikiki hotel's rebranding.

LXR Hotels & Resorts.

Greg Hartmann, Hilton's senior vice president, luxury and mixed-use development, said in a statement, "Hawaii has played an important role in Hilton's history and growth strategy across the Pacific. With more than 20 hotels and resorts open and welcoming travelers across Hawaii, we are delighted to introduce the first LXR Hotels & Resorts property to the destination."

Hartmann added, "The signing of Wakea Waikiki Beach complements our Hawaiian luxury portfolio and ensures we continue to

meet the needs of our ever-evolving guests in destinations where they choose to be. We are excited about this new era for the resort and look forward to building upon its award-winning reputation."

There are 462 guest rooms and suites in the property. Ingwers said about 70% of tower owners are participating in the hotel pool. However, he expects even more owners may choose to renovate their units so that they can participate in the hotel, which will be part of Hilton Honors, Hilton's guest-loyalty program, and take advantage of the

uptick in property values.

Ingwers said the bulk of architectural and design work will take place in 2025, and will include, lobbies, pool areas, spa, fitness center, residence corridors, landscaping, and residence interiors. He said the property will remain open during the renovations, which will be phased to minimize disruptions.

He said the BOS Studio underwent a multi-day cultural immersion in Waikiki before defining their luxury design. Ingwers said many of the changes are focused on enlivening the space such as transforming the sky lobby by adding retail space, as well as a bar and lounge.

He said Wai'olu Ocean Cuisine and In-yo Cafe will be reconceptualized, and the street-level space formerly occupied by BLT Steak Waikiki will be built out to accommodate an internationally acclaimed chef, whose identity is under wraps for now.

Ingwers said Irongate is committed to the Hawaii destination and is expected to make further investments.

"They continue to look for opportunities to develop in the state as a result of the success that they have had with both Trump International Waikiki and the Ritz-Carlton Residences, Waikiki Beach," Ingwers said.