

Serving the houseless at Martin Luther King gathering

Dennis Fujimoto

THE GARDEN ISLAND

HANAPEPE — The Kaua'i Soto Zen Temple will be hosting a Martin Luther King Jr. birthday gathering on Monday from 1 to 4 p.m.

"The Interfaith Roundtable of Kaua'i has always sponsored lectures, forums and activities that remember and honor a man who once had a dream and left his legacy of peace and equality for all of us," said Gerald "Jerry" Hirata of the Kaua'i Soto Zen.

"We need volunteers to help Annaleah Atkinson, a member and Secretary of the IROK, create 300 personal-sized first aid kits for the unhoused residents of the island."

This year, the gathering will start with chanting, and during the project of creating the first aid kits, videos of Dr. King and Spark Matsunaga will be aired.

"There will be some drumming, singing, and sharing," Atkinson said in a release. "And this year, we will be serving the house-



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The Lihue Senior Center Filipino dance troupe performs a colorful, lively floral dance during the Celebrating the Cultures of Kauai: One Garden, Many Flowers King Day observance at the Lihue Neighborhood Center on January 15, 2018.

less by making lightweight, portable first aid kits."

Atkinson said she was inspired to do the first aid kits after visiting with a Project Vision program at The Salvation Army, and was told that large kits don't work because the houseless is scattered and

don't have anyone to coordinate the distribution.

Atkinson took it on herself to create kits that were distributed through the Ho'omana Thrift Store on Kuamo'o Road through a health care professional who attends the weekly relief days.

national Day of Peace after IROK created 100 kits. Additionally, the Storybook Theatre in Hanapepe also has kits that are free."

The kits include a pack of tissues, a hydration electrolyte pack, antibiotic ointment, four each alcohol wipes, four each antiseptic wipes, a pair of hygienic gloves, 10 each cotton balls, 20 each cotton swabs, three individual vials of eye drops and 28 assorted bandages of different sizes, including five large, five medium, five small and four spots.

After learning the Kaua'i Bus has a policy where passengers couldn't ride because they have open wounds, Atkinson provided the service with 75 smaller kits that contain wound treatment materials, including large Band-Aids, a glove disinfectant, alcohol wipes and antibiotic ointment.

Thirty-five kits were provided to the Kaua'i Community Correctional Center for inmates to take with them when they leave or their future care.

In November, the county's houseless coordinator Farah Aquino asked for 100 kits.

"Now, she wants 400 kits to be distributed during the county's Point In Time period when they attempt to count the houseless," Atkinson said. "That Point In Time starts on Jan. 23. We'll try."

Atkinson would really appreciate people's help in putting the kits together during MLK Day.

"We particularly need 3-inch by 4-inch, 2-inch by 3-inch, three-quarter inch by 3-inch, and spots," Atkinson said. "We could also use the Kleenex pocket-sized tissues, and Zip-lock quart freezer bags and the sealable snack bags."

Refreshments will be provided.

"But feel free to bring some to share," Atkinson said. "We plan on having fun. IROK has worked together four times on this project, and we always feel good."

Information: 808-652-7743.