

D50 Aloha Puna Update #1 (May 18, 2018)

Aloha D50 Lions!

Thank you for your donations, concerns and interests re: our Puna relief efforts!

Although rather lengthy, this should explain our activities to date, strategies, and implementation plan.

Background

* Since the 6.9 earthquake and subsequent eruptions via 22 fissures (as of today), over 2000 individuals have been forced to evacuate from their homes.

* *Approx. 300 are staying at the Pahoia Community Center; we are estimating another 100 are living in tents in and around the Pahoia District Park Complex; 20-30 in Kea`au; the rest have found temporary shelters with friends, families, strangers across the island (and maybe around the State)*

* *There are multiple issues/concerns compounded with some unknowns: due to recent volcanic explosions, ash is falling as far as in the Ka'u area (20 miles south of the active volcano). This will vary with the direction of our winds. Sulfur dioxide (not to be confused with the falling ash) can be deadly so Civil Defense and others are closely monitoring this. Bottom line: This is an ongoing, unpredictable disaster that also hampers service providers' abilities to reach and serve everyone.*

* *The Big Island Lions, along with 30 plus agencies, are doing their best to offer complementary services without contributing to any chaos that can easily surface because of this uncertainty and uneasiness. Demands for services, goods, etc. are constantly changing as well.*

* *The electronic transfer of funds has been completed by LCIF (\$10K Emergency Grant) to HLF, the holder of this Emergency Grant.*

* *D50 recently appropriated \$5,000 to our Big Island Lions Foundation and donations are still being accepted from any interested Lions and clubs across our District. THANK YOU ALL FOR THIS!*

Highlights/Components of our tiered Plan:

* Thus far, Lions have supported a Children's Day at the District Park issuing backpacks with personal hygiene items, toys, dolls, notebooks, crayons, pens, etc. for the kids to create some level of normalcy. We worked in partnership with the Big Island Substance Abuse Council (BISAC), principal organizers of this event. Lions packed over 270 backpacks!

* Recently Lions have been helping the Food Basket sort and pack non perishable foods for future delivery for Salvation Army, the lead for food

distribution. The Food Basket is in dire need of sorters as tons of canned goods have been dropped off during USPS' Emergency Food Drive. Lions will support this activity every Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 12 noon as food needs to be sorted before it can be distributed.

* **May 24, Thursday: 8:00 a.m. to 12 noon**, our crew will be packing 300 Lions-labeled food bags for direct delivery at the **Pahoa Gym from 12 noon to 3:00 p.m.** (same day). Through our partnership with the Food Basket, they will be offering these food bags for a fraction of the true cost to us. We want to provide these bags to all interested clubs across the Big Island. NOTE: The Food Basket in Kona is willing to make the same arrangements so the Kona Lions Clubs can pack and deliver bags straight from this Kona location.

* ***We are asking that all interested clubs order your food bags; arrange for pick up points in your communities by our relocated evacuees; and deliver food bags, etc. when evacuees show proof of their address***

* **May 26, Saturday: From 4:00 p.m.**, the Lions will be sponsoring a chili and rice dinner for 300 evacuees and families in Puna.

* There are ongoing community partners' meetings and larger events; we intend to be active participants. As the situation and needs change, we will do our best to adapt and remain relevant.

IN AN EFFORT TO ESTABLISH SOME CONSISTENCY FOR OUR LIONS SERVICES:

* **Every Thursday, 8 a.m.-12 noon:** assist with sorting/packing of canned goods at Food Basket

* **Every Thursday, 12 noon to 3:00 p.m.:** Delivery of emergency items at the Pahoa Gym

* **Every Saturday for the next 3 weeks(from the 26th) 4:00 p.m.:** Host a hot meal for approx. 300 individuals via Hawaii County Economic Opportunity Council's certified kitchen. We will also hand out food bags and/or hygiene items until depleted.

* All interested clubs island wide: will arrange for food bags, etc. (BILF and HLF will centralize payments) for intermittent delivery in their respective communities.

On behalf of Region VII & VIII Lions, Mahalo for all of your support and concern!

Lion Blayne

