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May 23, 2006

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First Annual Big Island Film Festival a Hit at Waikoloa Beach Resort 70 Independent Films Screened, *Golden Honu Awards* Presented

WAIKOLOA, HI - As far as first impressions go, Waikoloa Beach Resort and the beautiful Kohala Coast made a big one with the filmmakers and attendees that gathered for the first annual Big Island Film Festival.

Held this past weekend, May 18-21, at Waikoloa Beach Resort, the festival screened 70 independent narrative films at three venues. Sixty independent filmmakers joined in the inaugural festivities, some coming from as far away as France.

Debra Parmley, vice president of commercial real estate for Waikoloa Land Company, noted, "It was a great first year for a new festival and we see this growing into a big annual event for the Big Island and Waikoloa. The filmmakers were wowed by the beauty of the area and I think the Kohala Coast made a lot of new fans."

A number of first annual *Golden Honu Awards* were presented during the festival. Director/Producer David L. Cunningham was honored with the *Golden Honu Filmmaker No Ka Oi Award*, and actor/director/filmmaker Monty Lapica received the *Golden Honu No Ka Oi Up-And-Comer Award*.

Golden Honu Awards were also presented to the following films:

- ❖ Best Student Short: *Danny Boy*
- ❖ Best Animated Short: *Santa's Camels*
- ❖ Best Family Short: *Rusty Forkblade*
- ❖ Best Hawaiian Short: *Plastic Leis*
- ❖ Best General Short: *A Cigar on the Beach*
- ❖ Best Feature with Animation: *BachelorMan*
- ❖ Best Hawaiian Feature: *Pele O Ka Foodmart*
- ❖ Best Family Feature: *Pirates of the Great Salt Lake*
- ❖ Best General Feature: *Self-Medicating*

Leo W. Sears, founder and executive director of the film festival, is already looking forward to next year. "We appreciate the support of our sponsors, patrons and independent filmmakers. They made it possible to bring a film festival to the Big Island and we're going to build on this success for future years to come," said Sears.

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Festival attendees also enjoyed receptions, parties and performances by local musicians, including Grammy Award winning Charles Brotman and his Hawaiian jazz group Kohala.

The dates for the 2007 Big Island Film Festival will be set within the next month. For more information, visit online at www.bigislandfilmfestival.com.

Waikoloa Beach Resort is situated on 1,350 acres of the beautiful Kohala Coast and offers dining, shopping and entertainment, along with two championship golf courses - the Kings' Course and the Beach Course - and two world-class hotels, the Hilton Waikoloa Village and Waikoloa Beach Marriott Hotel.

For more information about Waikoloa Beach Resort, visit online at www.waikoloabeachresort.com or call (808) 886-8811.

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